

BrightSign-enabled Projection Mapping Brings Creative Performance Theater to Life at the Panther Room



In late-April 2017, key players from Blue Man Group, Queen of the Night and STOMP! assembled at a secret location to workshop a top-secret stage production. The two-week event was a test-run to showcase a unique stage performance to theater insiders, investors, family, friends and other VIP guests.

The show was set in Prohibition-era New Orleans. Dubbed the “Panther Room,” performance acts were spread out across two basement areas within the building. Traditional seating was dropped in favor of a less formal, more interactive layout that invited guests to immerse themselves in the experience.

“BrightSign’s players enabled me to manifest my creative vision without breaking the bank. Pairing BrightSign’s media players with projectors made it possible to experiment with a rich tapestry of projection media to produce a final product that simply wouldn’t be possible with traditional signage components.”

- Melissa Ulto, founder and CEO of MULTO.com





Empty rooms were transformed into rich, textual spaces by projecting video content on a diversity of surfaces. Melissa Ulto of creative agency MULTO.com brought together striking creative assets that married perfectly with the organic elements upon which they were projected.

One room – the Congo Room – employed a dual rear-projection set-up that projected images of New Orleans’ Congo Square on a dozen large strips of paper stretched from floor to ceiling. The images evoke a bygone era and perfectly set the stage for the other rooms. The Swamp Room, which used projected images on both paper and mirror, served as a stage for live music performances by guitarists dressed in period attire. A third area featured dancers and other performers holding up pieces of fabric, upon which old black-and-white images were projected. Additional rear-projection was used on hanging fabric, evoking ghostly images as the fabric swayed.

In addition to the creative execution, Melissa Ulto also built the video network that distributed video content throughout the performance. Projectors were attached to BrightSign media players, which enabled Melissa to control precisely which content was fed to the various projectors throughout the performance. Using a single Mac to interface with the media players, she created and carefully controlled the vibe in each area of the performance. In some cases, Melissa used VDMX to alter the color, speed, opacity and mapping size to create precisely the feeling she wanted for each segment of the performance – taking great care to key map particular areas while blocking out the rest of the area, resulting in a perfect visual fit.

The project was met with great enthusiasm and plans are underway to find a permanent home for the show.

