

Case Study: Alev Lenz Music Video

Casio Laser LED projectors take production to new creative highs, capturing cutting edge music video.

Alev Lenz' latest music video, Memphis, captures high-definition, dynamic dual image projection using two Casio XJ-Short Throw LED Projectors.

Jan Urbanowski's production treatment of acclaimed European musician, Alev Lenz, was always set to be cutting-edge. As an avant-garde video director, Jan was thrilled to receive a commission to create the high definition video to support Alev's latest haunting single, Memphis. After just one airing, Jan was intent not to distract from the natural beauty of the song and lyrics, but instead to add an extra dimension of spirituality and sensuality through the use of transposed fluid imagery within the video. To achieve this, Jan started

exploring the idea of creating a 'double' choreographed performance that portrayed 'Alev moving on Alev' using dual projection linked with motion sensoring.

"It's a concept that we hadn't tried before in the studio. Most video effects are achieved post production, not via projection directly in a shoot. We could see tremendous creative potential in using Alev's silhouette to suggest other images and to take that one stage further by transposing her own movements directly back onto herself." Jan explained.

Key features

- Lamp-free
- 60" screen from just 80cm
- Intelligent Brightness Control
- 3000 ANSI lumens
- XGA resolution
- HD ready
- Quick start and stop
- Free Creston Roomview Express® control software available
- Extensive connectivity options, including LAN, WLAN and USB
- Can be retrofitted to existing installations

Critical to the successful mix of projection styles would be the emphasis on crystal clarity and intensity of the light source to create contrast, shadows and mood. Jan had the benefit of previous experience of using large scale image projection within contemporary dance theatre productions, driving his desire to amalgamate techniques further still within a music studio shoot. In the theatre production, Jan had used a relatively new light projection source offered from Casio; LED & Laser, portraying continuous extreme high brightness projection directly onto the dance subjects. This level of brightness opened new creative options for Jan, who was keen to create mood contrast using alternative materials such as translucent materials within the Alev's shoot. Using the projectors, he envisaged that fabrics could be creatively manipulated to appear floating and liquid, giving the appearance of soft, flowing edges. Jan contacted Casio who obliged by loaning two short throw projectors, from the Casio XJ-ST (short throw) Short Throw range. The shoot commenced across two days in a London studio. The Casio XJ-ST155 acted as the primary projector, based on the studio floor; with the Casio XJ-ST145 located in an elevated position



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Jan Urbanowski



just above. It was essential that the floor based projector offered the greatest light source with a powerful 3,000 lumens serving as the principle and the secondary XJ-ST145, producing a crisp 2,500 lumens for re-imposing. With only two days of studio time available and booked, it was essential that set-up time was minimised.

“It could have been a nightmare scenario wasting precious studio production time on the set up of projection units. As it happened, both units were simple plug and play, wirelessly connected, offering menu wizards for easy installation. Powering up and down was also near instantaneous, so no time wastage there either.” Jan notes.

Space was also at a premium within the studio. As both projection units were short throw units, they were placed less than two meters away from the dark grey background display surface (although Jan was aware that they could have been closer still, up to 1 meter if required). Both units self-calibrate, adjusting automatically without the need to zoom-in or out. Critically, both feature Intelligent Brightness Control which, on location, automatically adjusted to the ambient lighting conditions in the semi darkened studio via inbuilt sensors to counteract any light pollution. This feature was essential to success in the second days' choreography of matching and re-projecting images as an overlay.

Day 1 of the shoot dawned and a full days filming commenced with Jan capturing multiple frames of Alev's head and shoulders, alongside full frames of her body together with interesting, artistic shadows on her frame. Day 2 was shot in darker ambient conditions utilising ten different graphical overlays and differing projection angles. Live motion sensing was engaged using a Kinect unit to track Alev's movements

and then transpose them with animated graphics made to appear, in real-time, onto Alev's body. The end result left the viewer with a mesmerising mix of beautiful images, combined with a technological, 'How did they achieve that?' impression.

“Using transposed projections, the graphics literally stuck to Alev's frame; appearing as images or patterns, so, when she moved, they moved simultaneously with her, producing an eerie sense of déjà vous.” Jan muses.

And one would expect Alev to feel some consequence of ongoing projector glare after two continuous days in front of the projectors. Not so. Like other professions of heavy XJ users like teachers, Alev reported that she was remarkably surprised at how little the glare affected her eyes.

The resultant veracious images displayed by the Casio XJ-ST projectors are captured in high definition video with both projectors offer high definition streaming. (Both models offer component video and integrated HDMI as standard connections for ongoing, high definition video flow). They also offer an integral high contrast ratio for unrivalled depth to shadowing and colour alongside fluidity of Alev's image.

“The end product stands testimony to Alev's talent and the commitment and support of everyone involved in the artistic production. Central to all the imagery stands the Casio XJ-ST LED projectors, reliably providing the backdrop to outstanding images that we were able to manipulate further still. It will be great to see the public's reaction online as soon as it becomes available as a download.” Jan concludes.

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