



Valy Tremblay

The concert, *Beladi - A Night at the Pyramids*, took place on 07 Sep 07 and is set to air on television worldwide this winter.

Chantal, who was born in Alexandria, Egypt, and raised in Montreal, Canada, was finally able to return to her roots for this spectacular event, singing before an audience of several thousand and accompanied by none less than the Cairo Symphony Orchestra. The concert filming was led by award-winning French Director Gérard Pullicino and featured an international cast of technical and artistic talent, including notable Quebec Lighting Designers **Matthieu Larivée** and **Valy Tremblay**.

While many concerts have taken place in front of the pyramids, this was the first time the Egyptian government allowed the filming of a show in this area of the site, facing the sphinx. These tight access restrictions, combined with unbelievable time constraints, and difficult physical terrain made for one of the most challenging jobs ever faced by Matthieu and Valy, who have a combined 35 years of experience in the entertainment industry.

The pyramids of Giza glowed with stunning colour and the great Sphinx looked on regally as Quebec singing sensation **Chantal Chamandy** performed for an enthralled audience in the first-ever concert to be filmed in this exotic location.

With such restricted access to the site, Valy (President of Proluxon) could only imagine designing the show with plotting and pre-programming in *wysiwyg*. “It has been our primary tool for eight years now, and I couldn’t imagine managing a concert this size without *wysiwyg*,” he says. “From the final approval to the actual concert, we had only one month to get everything set – plot, list, cargo, set up, and program nearly 600 fixtures over a square mile of ‘sacred land’.”

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And the actual time they had to program with the full rig before the concert? THREE days (including the concert)! Valy says: “In these conditions everything is hard and painful. We knew that. We also knew that we couldn’t afford to be on our own and would need to use many local resources (generators, scaffoldings, workers, etc.) who might approach things a bit differently than we do. A major *wysiwyg* session was needed to get as much work done as possible prior to our three programming nights!”

It all started last winter when Lighting Designer Matthieu Larivée (also a *wysiwyg* User) approached Valy, asking for assistance with managing the concert and providing additional *wysiwyg* skills and enhanced solutions. With more than eight years of solid experience with *wysiwyg*, Valy was a logical choice for a partner. The two worked together for months to study, pre-plot, and prepare the budget for the design as best they could – and all this before the concert was even confirmed.

"wysiwyg was an exceptional tool for the success of this show"



RENDERING BY Matthieu Larivée and Valy Tremblay

It turns out, it was time well spent. "Within a week, everything was suddenly confirmed, and we had to quickly close all the deals with our providers since all the cargo had to be shipped within a few days. Thankfully, our preliminary study was solid enough that we were able to squeeze all the final deals into that crazy schedule," says Valy.

The final approval came on 07 Aug 07 and with it Valy's last push to do his final plotting and designing work in *wysiwyg*. By 28 Aug 07, he and Matthieu were already on the other side of the globe setting up the show in Cairo. With such a tight schedule, they had to count on a lot of help from local providers while trying to work as seamlessly as possible with international companies, such as Procon of Belgium that provided all the lighting gear.

"Since we had our full rig for only two days before the concert, *wysiwyg* was an exceptional tool for the success of this show," says Valy. "There was no other way to get the most out of our rig in that short timeline."

Valy worked in a variety of roles, assisting head LD Matthieu Larivée at almost every turn, managing all the DMX data, patch information, and MA network, along with the wireless DMX requests and follow-up. He also acted as the third-most senior MA programmer throughout the show. And as if this weren't enough, Valy's studio also provided all of the advanced *wysiwyg* services.

"We worked over an MA network, with four full-size GrandMA consoles, eight NSPs, and a WDMX system for the sphinx and the pyramids," says Valy. "As three senior programmers/operators attacked this monster, we clearly specified who would be managing which part of the rig/show. Hubert Gagnon, our main programmer, managed all the stage and musical set, as well as the main cue list of the show. Since Matthieu and I were managing all kinds of things (mostly during setup), we could jump into our *world* at any time while Hubert crunched almost 1000 cues with *wysiwyg*".

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"Using a very strong MA network feature (multi user + word filters), we could easily work on the whole rig or any of its parts according to our availability. We also kept one MA on the side as a sort of 'hotel room *wysiwyg* studio,' taking it by truck to all the remote locations for testing and basic positioning. These days, I couldn't imagine managing this size of a gig any other way. What a nice night it is to be travelling with an MA in a pick-up truck, firing up our rig as we travelled in the desert around those giants," says Valy.



RENDERING BY Matthieu Larivée and Valy Tremblay

Remote locations and challenging terrain aside, the sphinx and pyramids posed their own difficulties too. Especially since they were "stars" of the show and needed to be treated as such. "Our main challenge was the set!" says Valy. "There was no way we would hide any part of the beautiful background, which meant we couldn't use any of the usual staging and had to set up tons of scaffolding. This process took forever!"



PROCON (BELGIUM)

“They even moved a road and built a wall through the site a few weeks before setup was due to start. And of course, they did it without letting us know!” says Valy, who took it all in stride. “Final positioning and construction of our seven towers had to be revised drastically on location. But since we were expecting some messy situations, we were very well prepared and kept adjusting our rig and schedule according to the real ‘on-site situation’.”

Despite the “roadblocks” and minor setbacks, the team had no major programming issues. Valy explains that the only thing they needed to pay a bit more attention to was the group dynamic caused by having three programmers with free access to the whole rig/show file at the same time. “This is still a new dynamic even for senior operators. A group synergy is indispensable for getting the most out of such a powerful system,” he says. “From that synergy, a solid team effort can emerge!”

Matthieu Larivée is a Lighting Designer and consultant whose artistic talent is widely recognized. He has designed the lighting for many major entertainers performing live and for television broadcast and has worked with various famous Canadian artists. His career has taken him throughout Canada, the U.S. and Europe. For more information, visit www.e-luz.ca.

Valy Tremblay is a Lighting Designer and console operator whose core experience consists of lighting and technical management of events and concerts around the world. In 1999, he launched Proluxon, a CSP wysiwyg studio specializing in 3D visualization, CAD support, visual designer support, console programming, show control and integration of new technologies. For more information on Proluxon, please visit www.proluxon.com.

Valy in Egypt

As a teenager, while I was going at rock concerts, I dreamed about doing large events. But I don’t think that anyone has ever dreamed off lighting up the pyramids! I also remember, still as a teenager, a Jean-Michel Jarre concert at the pyramids. I was amazed and thought “What a crazy and lucky guy. Nobody will ever do this again!”

Almost 25 years later, here I am, crawling on my knees and focusing a bunch Kolorados at the base of the Keops pyramid. From drafting to final delivery, we were constantly excited to have this unique challenge. Once on location, every minute spent on the site was worth a “stop and look around.” A few nights later, we went out on a night safari with an MA on top of a little van, firing up the rig, and preparing all the preliminary tests, troubleshooting, and basic positioning.

Having this site as a playground is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! On the other hand, you sure don’t want to mess it up! Throughout this emotional rollercoaster, there is only hard work. Changes, adjustments, breakdowns, delays, political issues... There is no way we could achieve our goal without focusing constantly on solutions. And *wysiwyg* was one of those!



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CREDITS

Director:

G rard Pullicino

Artistic directors:

Chantal Chamandy, Genevi ve Dorion-Coupal

Director of photography:

Jean-Philippe Bourdon

Lighting designer, programmer, operator:

Matthieu Lariv e, Luz Lighting Design

Set designer: Guy St-Amour (Productions Art fact inc.)

Assistant LD, programmer, operator:

Valy Tremblay, Proluxon

Programmer, operator:

Hubert Gagnon

Lighting co-director:

Michel Pomerleau

Lighting co-director/production head electrician:

Denis Ayotte

Wysiwyg services provider:

Proluxon Inc.

Lighting vendors:

Procon, Belgium

Procon Project supervisor:

Axel Lemaitre

Procon site director:

Denis Adrien

Sound Design:

Richard Lachance

Sound Provider:

Solotech, Montreal

Production:

Nine Muse Entertainment



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Equipment list (including spares)

- 110 x Griven - Kolorado 2.4
 - 60 x Zap technologies - Biglite 4.5k
 - 2 x Zap technologies - Mirror XL
 - 70 x Vari-Lite - VL3000 spot
 - 15 x Vari-Lite - VL3500 spot
 - 10 x Vari-Lite - VL3000 wash
 - 20 x Vari-Lite - VL500
 - 80 x Martin - Mac2000 wash
 - 110 x Color Kinetics - CB 12
 - 4 x Robert Juliat - Ivanhoe
 - 4 x Robert Juliat - Cyrano
 - 24 x Thomas - 2-lite par 36 blinders
 - 24 x ETC - pars
 - 15 x Strand - Nocturne 1k
 - 4 x GrandMA full size
 - 8 x NSP
 - 5 x WDMX - transmitters
 - 10 x WDMX - receivers
 - 4 x MDG - atmosphere hazers
 - 8 x MDG - 5000 fog generator
- TOTAL FIXTURES: 548



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