Celebrating international friendship at a virtual 2020 Junior Eurovision

In 2020, Covid-19 regulations meant that Junior Eurovision, usually an event promoting unity and friendship across Europe, had to be produced with most of the contestants unable to attend in person.

In this case study you will find out how Poland's VxR Studio, RazorlightSTUDIO and Wizja Multimedia worked together to deliver the much loved song contest to millions of remote viewers, using disguise xR.

At a glance

The event, held in Warsaw, Poland, took place at Studio 5 in Poland's state broadcaster TVP's headquarters. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, some competing songs were performed in a studio in each participating country while the rest were filmed at Studio 5.

The production teams at VxR Studio and Wizja were able to use disguise xR and AR workflows to make the televised broadcast feel as though contestants were all present in the same space, pushing the boundaries of the live studio event.

The concept

The project aimed to bring to life the theme "Move the World". The main stage, designed by Polish production designer Anna Brodnicka, was circular, "inspired by the rich symbolism of a circle and its connection to our lives," she explains.

The challenge

The team had to achieve full integration with the studio cameras, signal processing hardware and camera switching in order to have the set extension, AR and xR perfectly aligned, and so that the TVP team wouldn't have to change their existing workflows for the show.

The studio where the opening ceremony was placed, had to also accommodate the second set for the Junior Eurovision main show and the crew had to ensure that it wasn't visible in any of the studio cameras.The studio space was further confined by the LED screens and scenography, therefore the team had very limited options for placing the markers for infrared camera tracking systems.

Another challenge was integrating live triggers in the content to match the opening ceremony running order draw and the actions on stage.

Preserving the look and feel

The majority of the performers were unable to travel because of the pandemic, but Junior Eurovision usually features individual and group performances, so producers wanted to keep these features of the event as much as possible, along with the sense of being a large scale, immersive event (the previous year's event took place in a 17,000 seat arena).
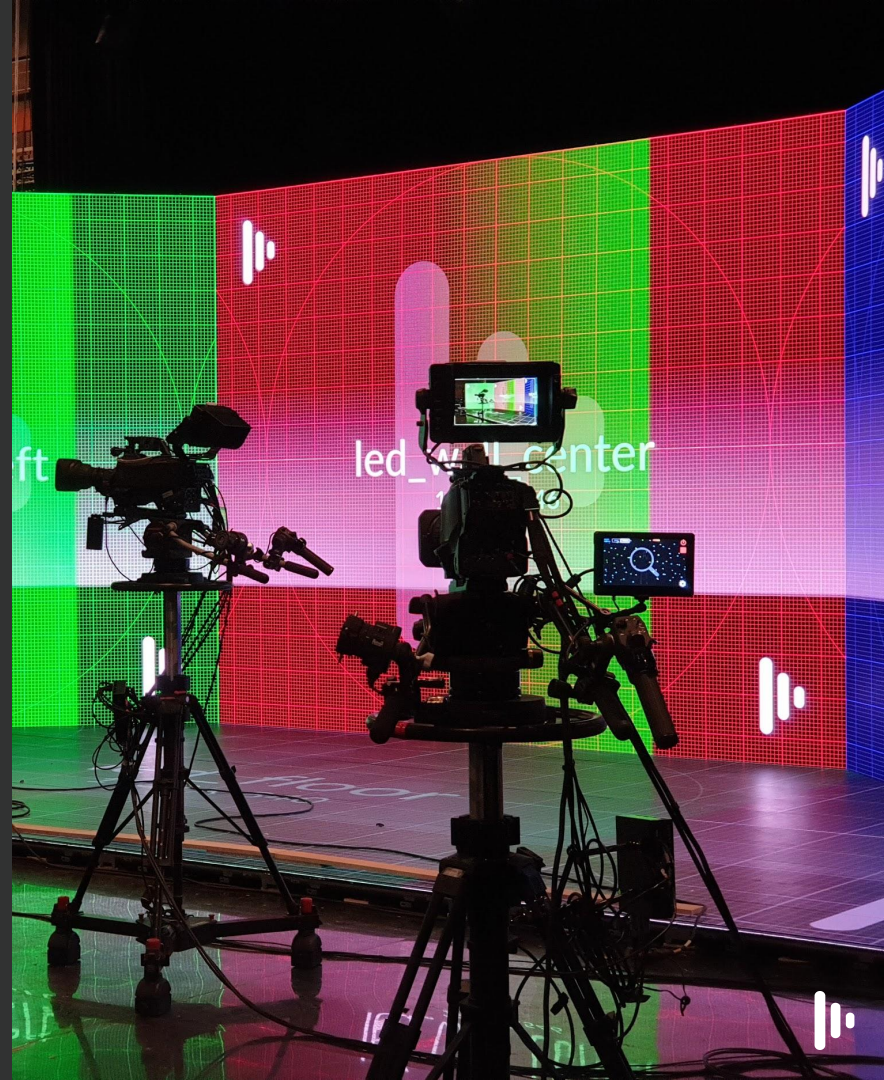
Solution

From stadium to studio

While this years fans couldn't gather to watch the show, disguise xR and AR technology enabled a truly immersive viewing experience for audiences at home. Virtual set extension turned the small studio space into a vast and animated environment in-camera.

Scaling the production down into a TV studio with disguise LED arrays also meant that production could be controlled more tightly and Covid regulations could be adhered to. Cast and crew were regularly tested and wore masks backstage. Even with these restrictions, xR and AR enabled the stage to feel more expansive and immersive.

On-the-spot renegotiations

The stage for the main show was being built in the same studio, interfering with some of the camera planning at the last minute, so the team had to improvise with the camera track the day before the event. **"Without disguise, it wouldn't have been possible to solve the problem," said Krzysztof Grabowski,** Technical Solutions Specialist at VxR Studio, the production company behind the event.

Solution

Additionally, because the country flags and the corresponding numbers couldn't be pre-programmed, they had to be selected live. "Thanks to disguise's versatile triggering capabilities, the producers could pre-program just the elements required", Krzysztof added.

Integrating live and pre-recorded performances

All contestants pre-recorded their performances prior to the contest - some at Warsaw's TVP Studio and others in their home countries. The interval acts in-between were performed live during the contest.

In order to promote fairness, each country agreed to certain technical parameters, and participating countries were presented two versions of the stage to film their contestant's performance on. One version of the stage featured LED screens, while the other more simplified stage used projections instead.
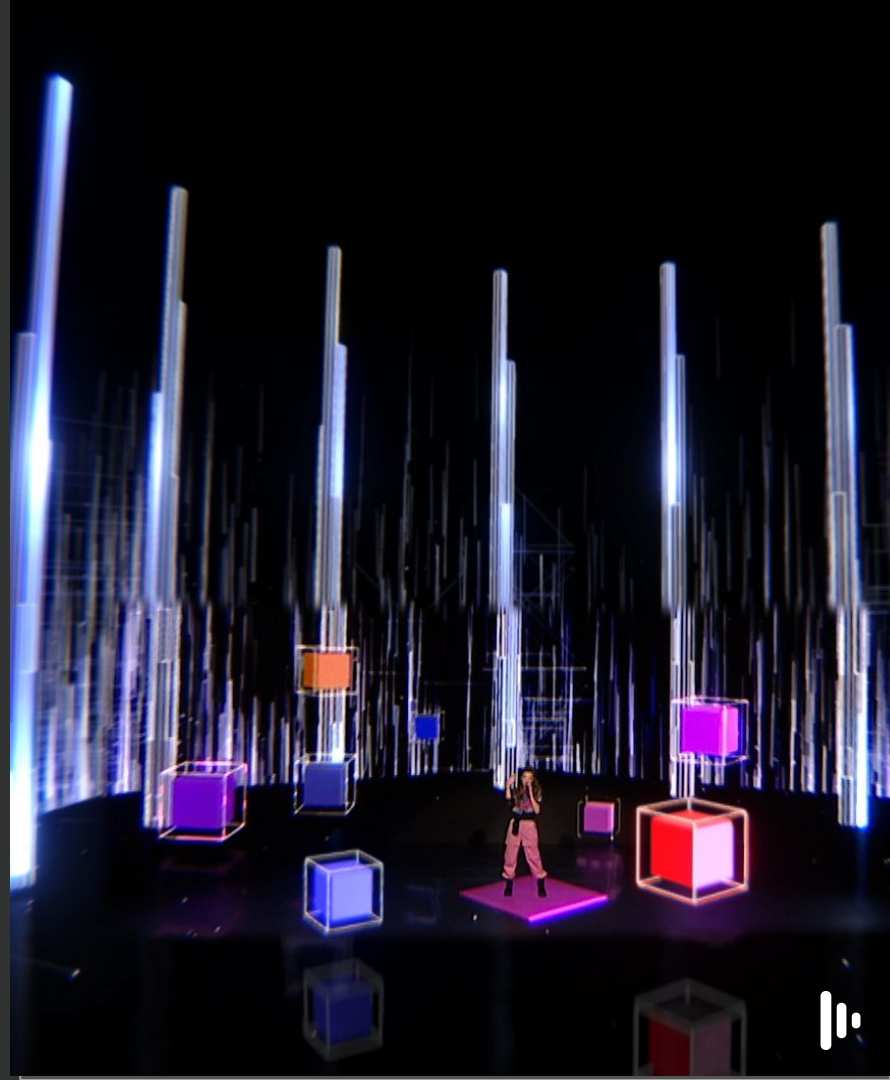
Results

Bringing performers together

Duncan Laurence, adult Eurovision winner in 2019 performed via AR as part of the interval act with Junior Eurovision 2019 and 2018 winners Viki Gabor and Roksana Węgiel, both performing live in Poland. Because they could see and interact with the video content mapped on the LED walls surrounding them, the performers could feel more comfortable and natural on stage.

Moving the world

The team was able to seamlessly use AR to bring all the contestants virtually into the studio, overcoming the enforced distance and creating a memorable group performance. The European Broadcasting Commission praised the first use of xR in a Eurovision contest after the show.
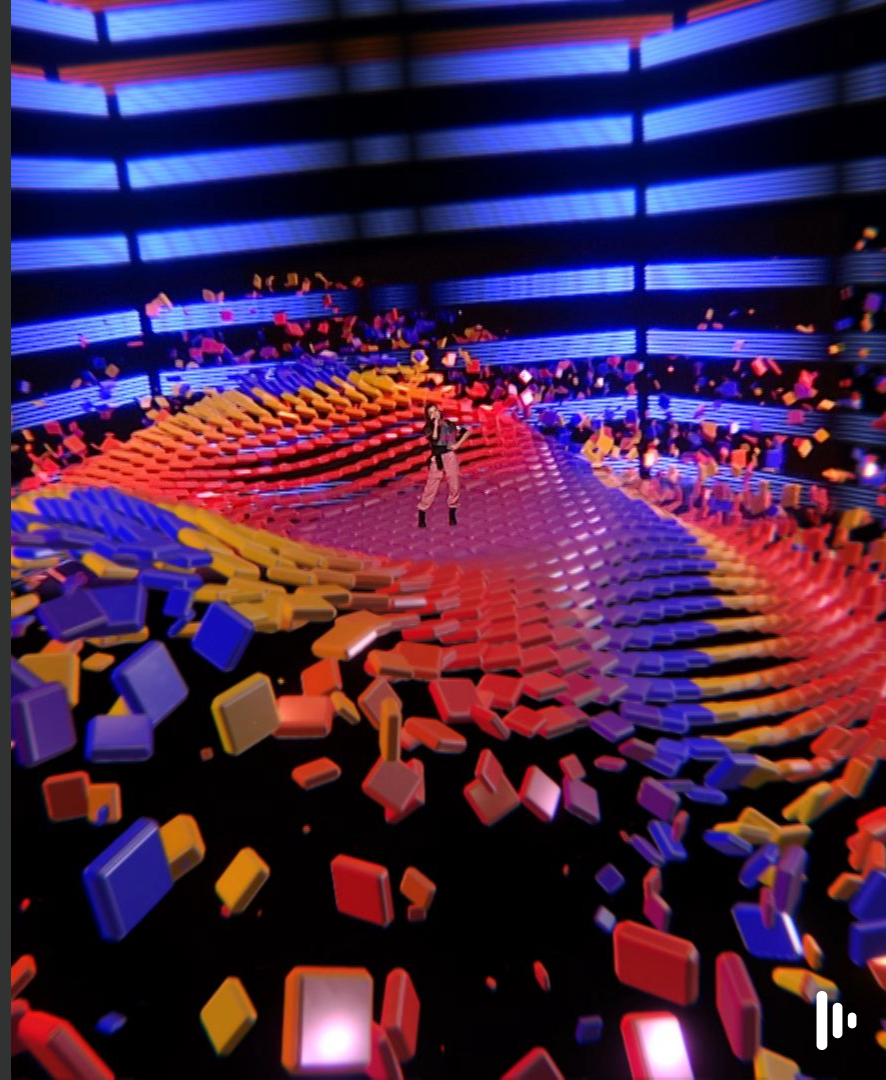
Success

6 million
tuned in to the live broadcast

25 million +
views on YouTube

"Thanks to the disguise spatial calibration features we could react quickly and accurately recalibrate the cameras when needed, which wouldn't have been time-effective and maybe not even possible using different solutions. We were able to manage it because of the superior calibration required, that only disguise can provide."

Krzysztof Grabowski, Technical Solutions Specialist at VxR Studio.

disguise equipment used

Designer software
r17.4
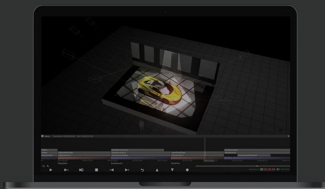
Release 17.4 unlocks RenderStream support to enable truly engine-agnostic real-time content, all managed from the disguise timeline.
Find out more.

gx 2c

Built to enable the latest in xR workflows, the gx 2c media server powered real-time Notch assets for the event.
Find out more.

solo

Designed for the next generation of content creation, the solo is ideal for studio setups, small theatre shows and fixed installations.
Find out more.

In partnership with:

powered by

disguise

xR

WIZJA
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Curious to know more about us? Want to master our production toolkit? Need support on your project? Our team will be happy to speak to you, whatever your query:

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