



BROADWAY DEBUT STARS WATCHOUT

Comedian Billy Crystal's smash one-man show, "700 Sundays," has moved onto Broadway — taking its projected scenery along with it. Designed by Michael Clark, the backdrop is created with Dataton WATCHOUT™ and three Christie video projectors. Overall control is provided by Medialon Manager. New York-based Scharff Weisberg supplied the hardware and expertise for the production.

BILLY CRYSTAL MAKES HIS BROADWAY debut in *700 Sundays* playing at the Broadhurst Theatre. The show is a two-act play about family and fate in which Crystal plays numerous characters that have influenced him during his life. The set features Crystal standing outside his childhood home while images are projected in the windows and across the stage.

"When we originally did the show at the La Jolla Playhouse in California, we realized that Billy was going to want to improvise some of each night's performance, and we needed a way to manage the media to adapt to the changing scenario," projection designer Michael Clark explained. "I suggested WATCHOUT, which offers instant access to stored video clips, as a way to archive and play back segments as needed, and that worked great."

Three projector set

When the show transferred to Broadway, Clark wanted to streamline production, integrating media and control.

"I immediately thought of asking Scharff Weisberg to work with us. I have a long relationship with them, and they have advanced integration experience." New York-based Scharff Weisberg's credits include WATCHOUT installations for the Broadway production of *Vincent in Brixton; Sinatra: His Voice, His World, His Way* and *The Harlem Song* at the Apollo Theater.

Scharff Weisberg employed a three-screen WATCHOUT system controlled by Medialon and featuring three Christie LX100 projectors. Two project on rear projection screens that form part of the windows of the house set; the third projects across the entire front of the house. The projectors switch back and forth between virtual windows, transitional window-blinds effects, videos and montages of images from Crystal's childhood.

Easy to edit and control

"We used WATCHOUT as the video source because it was the easiest way to coordinate three projections and have lots of easily-editable footage and stills," commented Derek Holbrook, project manager at Scharff Weisberg.

"Employing Medialon allowed us to take light board commands and execute WATCHOUT without the need of a separate video operator," explained Michael Clark. "The show operator simply pushes a button on the lighting board triggering Medialon, via MIDI, which in turn controls WATCHOUT."

With the show and its projections earning praise from critics and the public alike, Michael Clarke awarded his own accolade: "Scharff Weisberg made the whole thing seem easy, and I look forward to working with them again."

700 Sundays can be seen at the Broadhurst Theatre, 235 West 44th Street, New York, until May 21, 2005.