

# lighting today

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COVERSTORY

## ATLAS BAR

Bugis, Singapore



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## entertainment lighting in the west

## LOBO Lasers at the Asian Games

With an enormous display of cutting-edge technology, LOBO lasers created an unforgettable highlight of the opening ceremony at the 15th Olympic Asian Games in Doha.



LOBO lasers with total whitelight power of almost 100 Watts created an unforgettable highlight at the Doha Asian Games. source: Alex Hennig, LOBO Laser and Multimedia Systems

**THREE BILLION PEOPLE WATCHING THE LIVE BROADCAST** or sitting in the sold out Khalifa Stadium are holding their breaths: a magnificent 14-metre tower of shimmering metal rises from a mysterious cloud of mist at the centre of the stadium, a small boy perching on its very tip. As he raises his hands, he is instantly surrounded by thousands of bright, gleaming laser beams. Just seconds later, laser effects shoot out of the platform he is standing on in every direction. Then the stadium seems to transform into a pool of glistening water.

This gigantic dream sequence was the start of the opening ceremony of the 15th Asian Games on December 1 in Doha, the capital of the Arab Emirate of Qatar. Since 1951, the IOC has been organizing the Asian Games as a sister event of the Olympic games with exclusive participation of Asian athletes.

For the world's second-biggest sports event with more than 10,000 athletes from 45 participating nations, huge sports venues were constructed in the desert. In keeping with the well-known Middle Eastern philosophy of thinking big, the entire city had been remodelled to fit the vision of the games. Naturally, the opening ceremony was designed to

reflect the ambition of hosting the best games in the world.

None other than the Australian producer and director David Atkins, who had also been responsible for the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics, designed this spectacular event at Doha on a scale that certainly eclipsed the memory of all other events of its kind.

For the breathtaking laser sequence, David Atkins cooperated with LOBO, the international market leader in laser shows. LOBO's Managing Director Bopp commented: "Having completed a number of government projects in the Middle East, we felt particularly honoured to be part of the Asian Games, especially since the Doha games placed more emphasis on the potential of the latest laser technology than any other event in Olympic history. It is without a doubt one of the most interesting show laser projects of the past years."

Indeed, the amount of backstage technology involved was enormous: The 3-minute sequence involved 6 laser projectors connected via special high-performance glass fibers to a multi-colour laser system under the arena that needed 300,000 watts of electricity and 200 litres of coolant per minute

to produce a total light output of about 100 watts. It took seven months of top-secret preparations. Following the first two on-site meetings, a team of five designers and engineers came to Doha three weeks before the opening ceremony to install, program, and test the technology.

Nothing was left to chance. Parts of the installation were safeguarded by a four-tier security system. From lasers to projectors, only the best components were used, and everything had been thoroughly tested beforehand. Special projectors were developed for the event, to be integrated almost invisibly into the tower. Installing and protecting the highly sensitive glass fibres inside the slim, hydraulic tower was a scientific feat.

Despite the project's enormous scale, the Asian Games were by no means LOBO's only Middle Eastern activity at the time. In Abu Dhabi, about an hour by plane from Doha, the next project saw it completion only a day after the opening ceremony of the games. On the occasion of a national holiday there was the official dedication ceremony for a 12 metre sundial in which LOBO lasers take over the sunlight's function at night.