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Robe Finds another Voice

Products Involved

**BMFL™ Blade   CycFX 8™   LEDBeam 1000™   LEDBeam 100™   LEDBeam 150™
miniPointe®   pixelPATT™   Pointe®   Spiider®   Spikie®**

Robe was the moving light of choice for the second season of The Voice South Africa. Multi-Media were again appointed as technical production company by TV producers AMPN, with Joshua Cutts of Visual Frontier once again appointed as lighting designer.

The show, aired on M-Net, and this year moved from a 500 capacity studio to the 3000 seater Mosaiek Teatro in Fairland, Johannesburg, reflecting the popularity of and anticipation for the popular singing contest. With that came the creative brief from series director Darren Hayward to "go for it" with more drama and excitement.
Josh didn't hold back when offered this great opportunity! He specified over 200 Robe fixtures across the series, a package co-ordinated by Multi-Media's Chris Delancey.
The set was designed by Dewet Meyer, who also thought bigger in his design, adding a mezzanine level to the stage which was utilised for performers and dancers, adding another new and very cool dimension.
Dewet and Josh worked closely, and the scenics lent themselves ideally to being lit in terms of angles, textures and surfaces, "Dewet is great to work with in that respect" commented Josh, "He really understands how light works and gives me a good degree of control over how the appearance of the structures and shapes can be changed with the application of light".
As well as lighting the artists, stage and set, Josh paid a lot of attention to the audience lighting. With the larger crowds, it was important to pull them into the action and involve them with the show … so he adopted a bit of a subtle EDM-style approach this season.
Lights were rigged on a set of 'finger' trusses running upstage / downstage, fanning out from the centre, facilitating a fantastic dynamic range for the focus positions.
Twenty four LEDBeam 1000s were among the first fixtures to be placed on the rig as he drew up the plot, dotted around the fingers, their immense power zapped to create primary beam-work above the space and rich colour washes sweeping across the stage.
With the scale of the room more prominent this year and all the long shots reminding people of the large and enthusiastic audiences … he upped the BMFL count to 12 BMFL Blades, all

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used from key and front lighting plus a range of specials.

In the upstage filler positions 18 x Pointes were distributed around the fingers, working closely with 24 x miniPointes on the floor, and – in the trusses - LEDBeam 100s for supplementary beams and 16 x CycFX 8s to fill in the black holes upstage. This enabled sufficient beam coverage, facilitating effects and other looks and tricks to permeate the performance space.

For a special episode featuring leading SA rockers Prime Circle, Josh added a specials package of 12 Spiiders which were located on truss totems upstage of the band.

They pixel mapped the Spiiders and alternated between running them as a standard wash beam light and as pixel effects or the tight beam and the central flower effect combined, which "worked like a dream".

For the finale, 40 Spikies were added to the rig and used to accent the lines of the set and to delineate the stage / mezzanine, etc., and these were also highly effective.

Whenever he has the opportunity, Josh likes to highlight architecture and its form with multiple Spikies, and currently this is becoming one of his unique signature looks!

He was among the first people to trial Spikies when they arrived in SA via Robe's distributor DWR Distribution, and now loves the opportunity to use multiple amounts, which he always positions carefully.

He can make them soft, tightly beamed or create a collection of sparkly effects. "They are really so versatile, and especially when used en masse".

Because Spikies have RGB colour mixing, he can also easily add them into his pixel mapping palette. "A quick 120 bpm effect on the pan / tilt and they are really rocking!" he declares!

When this is happening, they will also work incredibly harmoniously with Pointes and miniPointes.

Multiple guest artists appeared throughout the eight episodes, for which they used a pool of additional fixtures including Pixel PATTs and the brand new LEDBeam 150s, among others.

They had "huge fun" using the pixelPATTs said Josh who discovered and created some stunning colour chasing effects, and also experimented to great effect with the zoom on the LEDBeam 150s.

He was assisted with the programming by Andre Siebrits. They utilized two grandMA2 light consoles and ran a VPU for the pixel mapping.

There was a lot of video making up the set, so seeing that the two disciplines worked smoothly together was a paramount consideration to which everyone devoted lots of energy.

Josh and Andre have now worked on six different elements of the Voice in under two years – South Africa and Nigeria twice, Angola once as well as a Francophile edition.

Each season they will programme around 300 tracks, so taken together this all adds up to an impressive 1800 songs … and a shed pile of programming time and ingenuity!!!

"It's a great environment. All departments can put ideas forward with the goal of enriching the end result, and in the meantime, we all get on with our own specific areas, but aware of
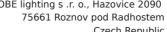
the fact we are one big team. There's a lot of creative buzz and many smiles," he concludes. The Voice South Africa 2017 was won by Craig Lucas, with Parlotones' frontman Kahn Morbee clinching the title of winning coach for the second year. More than 1.6 million votes –an all-time record for The Voice SA – were cast in the final week of voting.

Photo Credit: Duncan Riley

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