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Robe in Fast Lane at Autosports 2011 Live Action Arena

Products Involved

ColorBeam 2500E AT™ColorSpot 1200E AT™ColorSpot 2500E AT™ColorSpot 700E AT™

Lighting designer Nathan Wan used Robe moving lights at the core of his rig for the FIFTH GEAR Live Action Arena at the 2011 Autosports International show, staged in Hall 5 of Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre in the UK.

The Live Action Arena - the largest indoor tri oval racetrack in the UK - took up the entire hall, with a performance area of approximately 120 metres wide by 100 deep, and was the focus of the exhibition for the most serious petrol heads, speed freaks and performance car enthusiasts. They were treated to a series of hair-raising races and stunts by some of the fastest vehicles on four - and three - wheels for 55 minutes of burning rubber, screeching brakes and adrenalized excitement. The 5 show-a-day schedule on the 2 public days attracted up to 4700 people per session packing the grandstand to capacity!

It was the third year that Wan has lit the show - working for sound and lighting contractors Network Productions. Each time, Robe fixtures have been an integral element of his design, the main criteria of which is the smart utilization of enough bright lightsources in a dark and extremely lumen hungry environment, renowned for absorbing however much light is thrown at it!

So brightness is primarily why he chose Robe. This year 30 ColorSpot 1200E ATs and 12 ColorSpot 2500E ATs were the main workhorses of the show, joined by 18 of Robe's super bright ColorBeam 2500s located along the short walls of the track perimeter for hi-impact low level aerial effects.

The ColorSpot 2500s were all on the overhead trussing, consisting of a massive 56 metre octagon in the centre, with 3 x 30 metre 'finger' trusses shooting off from either side, plus 416 metres of A type trussing making up a series of long straight front and back trusses traversing the full width of the space.

The ColorSpot 1200s were on the 'finger' trusses. "They must be one of the most reliable and durable moving lights on the market and they just keep on going without any faults," confirms Wan.

For this show they were used for breakup effects on the floor and for lighting and colouring the race track and the action.

On the front truss were 6 x ColorSpot 700s for key lighting the presenters, Fifth Gear's Jason Plato & Tiff Needell, and their guests.

Wan had been hoping to use some of Robe's hugely popular new LEDWash 600 fixtures, but the demand is so phenomenal that none could be sourced in time for the event. "I am so looking forward to putting the LEDWash 600s through their paces," says Wan, adding that he will definitely be using them for his future work.

In the three years that Wan has been lighting the Live Arena, he has gradually introduced more theatricality and drama with the lights, which has been a big hit with both audiences and the organisers.

"We try and keep it evolving technically and imaginatively," explains Wan, "A show like this needs to keep moving to keep pace with all the featured vehicles!"

Using Robe fixtures certainly enhanced his creative options, which balanced the visual spectacle and WOW factors demanded for a high energy live show with practicalities like not dazzling the drivers and ensuring that the track is always well lit!

He says, "Robe is definitely my favourite moving light at the moment. The company is spot-on in terms of intuition and interest about what LD's want, combined with a great understanding of how the products can be used to achieve the best end results".

This year, the Live Action Arena had a Tron style look and theme, with two large central LED screens and several pillars of medium res LED surface dotted around - all supplied by XL Video.

In addition to the Robes, Wan used over 100 PixelLine LED battens hung vertically on drop bars at the end of the finger trusses, some LED moving lights, 300 odd PARs and strategically placed 4-lite blinders.

The whole system was run over ArtNet, with all lighting programmed and run by Wan on a Jands Vista T2 console using the new Byron software.

The Live Action Arena was again a hugely successful element of the 4 day Autosport International event, which is the largest dedicated global motorsport exhibition in Europe.





