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A Heads Up with Juanjo Llorens

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic … we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

Juanjo Llorens is one of Spain's leading Spanish performing arts lighting designers and he works on a variety of musicals, theatre, dance and circus shows. He is the same lively kid looking for new adventures that make it possible to always learn from his colleagues and life situations!

During the lockdown Juanjo has taken part in many different talks and discussions with colleagues from the Spanish Lighting Designers Association – AAI.

Robe: Where are you right now?

Juanjo: In Madrid (Spain).

Robe: How are things emerging from the lockdown in your region / country?

Juanjo: Theatre seems to be starting up again little by little, always respecting the capacity limitations imposed by the autonomous local authorities. Small format shows and public theatres are the ones that have gradually begun to wake up from this nightmare we have experienced and are still living!

Robe: How did you spend your time during the lockdowns?

Juanjo: At home, I switched off my computer and did not want to do anything related to work until the future situation was clearer.

I spent my time enjoying being at home and then realized I have never spent so many days in a row inside! Reading, listening to music, working out (limited by my home space) and getting back my life! Conversations with friends, despite being in a virtual mode, have been my day-to-day.

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Robe: What are your biggest concerns / considerations as lockdowns ease worldwide?

Juanjo: That we will find it hard to continue being aware that the pandemic is still not over … and so we will witness many irresponsible attitudes!

Robe: Do you have any thoughts / predictions about how and when live events and the industry will re-start?

Juanjo: With regard to the area I know best, public theaters will start their show schedule since they do not depend on the capacity limitations given that their budget comes from public administrations.

Private sector theaters will try to schedule their programming soon with small-format shows so that the costs derived from maintaining an open theater are covered.

As for big musicals, figures do not add up so they will not be able to reopen until the vaccine is available in order to cover the expenses with so much staff and crew required.

Robe: Going forward, how do you think live events and the entertainment technology industry will change in a post-Covid 19 world before there is a vaccine widely available?

Juanjo: This lockdown has obviously made many people search for new solutions in the digital world and some of them have come to stay. As an example, face-to-face meetings of large corporate events have been held as usual but through digital platforms and reducing costs, so this will surely have an impact in the future.

Robe: How sustainable do you think these changes will be?

Juanjo: As I said before, some of them have come to stay.

Robe: Has anyone / anything particularly inspired you since this crisis started?

Juanjo: I believe that reading books and painting are the ones that have maintained my bond with the profession as during these months I have not wanted to even have a look at the technology linked to it!

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you'd like to say?

Juanjo: We need to be aware of what we have experienced and what we are currently going through so as not to fall into the mistake of running towards the quickest solution! Rather let time take its

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course, no matter how difficult this is.