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Robe Rocks with DEEP PURPLE

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Lighting designer is UK-based Louis Ball, who lit the band initially from 1984 to 1987, and then continuously since the mid 1990s. Ball's own high profile career started at 18, with the Alex Harvey Band in the late 1970s. Since then he's lit some of the best known names in rock 'n' roll, including Judas Priest, Ozzie Osborne, Slayer, Anthrax, Wishbone Ash, Climie Fisher, plus a host of other diverse artists like UK popsters Wet Wet Wet and French superstar Johnny Halliday.

Ball was first introduced to the power and potency of the Robe ColorSpot 1200s by Robe's German distributor, L.M.P. who supplied the gear to the Germany based rental hire company, T.D.A. Ball was then contacted by Randy Wade of Robe America - the two having worked on many of the same shows and productions over the years. Ball had never used them before, but is always up for experimentation, and so seized the opportunity of putting the new fixtures through their paces.

Eight ColorSpot 1200s are rigged on the rear truss, and the other six are on the floor - 4 upstage of the backline for up-lighting the jungle-themed backdrop, and 2 at the very downstage edges of the stage deck. The latter units are used for kit and keyboard pick ups and the riser scrims, and to introduce some low cross-lighting dynamics.

The rear truss Spot 1200s are used for the bulk of the show's special effects and beam work, their incredible brightness easily cutting through every other fixture on the rig! The fixture's durable design has kept them performing flawlessly from the beginning of the tour, night after night. *"I'm very pleased with the ColorSpots"* Ball states, *"They're intensely bright, have a real impact onstage and have proved very reliable"*. He adds that he's also impressed with the smooth dimming and movement, and is considering at least doubling the ColorSpot 1200 count when the tour hits North America in January and February 2004. Robe will also be supplying a set of custom gobos for the US tour.

The colour mixing capacities of the ColorSpot 1200 have also proved ideal for Ball's show, which features a myriad of bold and definite primary and secondary colour mixes, combined in an almost sculptural style. Even in the darkest colours, the Color Spots are outstandingly bright.

Ball operates the light-show himself using a WholeHog II with Extender Wing, and his rig features a full complement of generics, other moving lights and three 3ft mirror balls. Equipment for the European section of "Bananas" is supplied by German based TDA, including the sound - an EAW rig, engineered by Moray McMillan at FOH and Rob Hodgkinson on monitors - plus the four trucks.

Deep Purple's highly energetic performance is a full-on kick-ass blend of new material, plus a selection of their classics like "Smoke On The Water", "Black Knight", "Hush" and others.

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