

17.2.2010

Strictly Come Dancing Goes Live with Robe

Products Involved

ColorSpot 2500E AT™ ColorSpot 700E AT™ ColorWash 2500E AT™

ColorWash 700E AT™ ColorBeam 700E AT™

Over 150 Robe moving lights, including the new ColorBeam 700E ATs, feature extensively on the rig for the current UK arena tour of the hit TV show "Strictly Come Dancing Live".

The lighting design is by Mark Kenyon - who also does the TV series, and the lighting equipment is being supplied by Welsh-based Sonalyst. The touring show was programmed onto a grandMA2 light during production rehearsals in Manchester Arena by David Bishop, Roger Williams was the assistant LD, and the touring console operator and lighting director is Alex Murphy.,

Sonalyst - who has supplied the previous 2 Strictly Live tours - purchased 31 chrome finished Robe ColorBeam 700E ATs specially for the tour, 28 of which are deployed around the perimeter of the dancefloor. The chrome colour was deliberately chosen to bring a special televisual feel to the live show, which features 8 couples shimmying, jiving, tangoing and strutting their stuff, 4 judges and a real competition each night, voted on enthusiastically by audience members.

Apart from looking exceptionally cool, these chrome ColorBeam 700E ATs are proving a big hit with everyone. They are used for large, majestic beam and gobo looks and for producing light curtain effects when tipped at 45 degrees across the dancefloor, along with plenty of TV-style crosses in the air. They are also ideal for blasting a large mirror ball flown in the centre of the space, flanked by 6 smaller ones.

Mark Kenyon thinks the ColorBeams are, "Spectacularly bright", with a nice parallel beam, and capable of "Amazing" effects.

Alex Murphy says that they are "Fantastic" and is particularly impressed with the speed of the units, specially when flipping through colours and gobos. He also thinks the facility of being able to put gobos on top of the tight, collimated beams is great.

Rory Madden of Sonalyst adds, "From a rental company standpoint, we have already invested heavily in Robe moving lights which have proved rock-solid reliable as a rental item.

Robe is continually developing new and interesting fixtures, and I jumped at the chance of buying some of their latest technology".

In addition to these, there are 112 Robe ColorSpot and ColorWash 2500E ATs dotted around on a series of 12 trusses above the dancefloor, which intersect with one mega-long 'spine' truss running vertically down the centre.

These are used extensively throughout the 3 hour show for colour washes and gobo texturing onto the dancefloor - for which Kenyon custom designed a special set of gobos. A really bright lightsource was needed for this task as the brown polished wooden floor has a rapacious appetite for consuming footcandles!

There are 14 Robe ColorWash 700E ATs around the band stage area, together with 6 ColorSpot 700E ATs for backlighting the musicians.

Kenyon's primary imaginative challenge was in taking the show out of a TV studio environment and transposing all the intimacy, excitement and drama into an arena several times the size. He had to maintain all the popular visual elements that TV series fans could relate to, whilst also making the experience theatrical and emotive on a vastly increased scale for audiences up to 16,000 per show. The nightly tour action is captured on 7 cameras directed by Richard Ellis and beamed onto 2 IMAG screens, aiming to replicate some classic TV camerawork and cutting, so Robe's 2500 Series proved the perfect bigger and brighter lamps needed to take the spectacle out of the BBC's TC1 studio in Wood Lane, west London. The 6 week sold out tour is produced by Phil McIntyre Entertainment and production managed by Andy Colby. It's proving every bit as popular as the annual TV series, which is a consistent ratings-topper for the BBC.





