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Robe in the Spot-Light

Products Involved

ESPRITE® Tarrantula™ MegaPointe®

Auckland based Spot-Light Systems – now part of the NEP Live Group – is among New Zealand's leading lighting live show and event rental companies, and one that has continued to invest in Robe moving lights as the country emerged from the pandemic, adding 24 x MegaPointes, 12 x Tarrantulas to their existing fleets, and for the first time, 20 x ESPRITES joined the inventory.

While New Zealand managed – via strict quarantine and travel restrictions – to keep Covid cases to a minimum, full-scale and capacity shows and live events did not properly re-start until several months into 2022, when things became crazy busy, related Spot-Light Systems' head of lighting, Matt Tong, and this is what drove these latest Robe purchases.

Business and enthusiasm for the arts, performance and events is now surpassing 2019 levels as promoters, organisations and event organisers jostle to squeeze in shows that didn't run for two years and accommodate the many new ones that the creative world imagined during that time. Touring has now re-started with a slew of national and international bands hitting the road, further fuelling the demand for production technology.

With nearly 400 Robe moving lights already onboard, Spotlight Systems returned to a brand they know and trust for a multipurpose LED profile type fixture, settling on the ESPRITES to join the mix of Robe BMFL Spots, BMFL Blades, MegaPointes, Tarrantulas, LEDWash 600s and LEDBeam 100s and 150s.

It is currently the largest concentration of Robe moving lights in the country.

"Robe is ubiquitous in New Zealand and elsewhere, so that offers great value for money, firstly for servicing our own shows then as a cross rental item when available," stated Matt, adding that their Robe luminaires have been constantly busy.

"All the Robe products are worked hard and offer great performance, and everyone is happy to use them," he said.

The ESPRITES were ordered quite soon after the acquisition of Spot-Light Systems by NEP Live. The mother company also owns broadcast lighting and video rental specialist, Big Picture, which, conveniently for continuity, also has Robe moving lights in stock.

The brand has a strong presence in New Zealand thanks to the proactivity of distributor Jands New Zealand.

"We needed a general purpose 'workhorse' LED moving light that was bright, quiet, had great colour mixing and was lightweight," Matt notes, expecting the ESPRITES to become a signature fixture type, just as 700 series moving lights did during their era.

They did however conduct a shootout with selected competitor products before fully committing.

Beam uniformity and the overall quality of light were also factors in the choice, "ESPRITE basically ticked all our 'essential' boxes and more, like Ethernet connectivity, framing shutters and a good menu system that's straightforward for technicians to set up plus many other refinements."

The quest to produce more sustainable events was also a consideration in choosing an LED source which needs less cooling and heat management, reducing electricity consumption in addition to that saved by light engines themselves.

The benefits of Robe's TE (TRANSFERABLE ENGINE) technology, allowing different or new LED engines to be swapped in and out the fixtures in less than 5 minutes to cover different applications, were also of interest.

Furthermore, ESPRITES also tied into the prolific broadcast, TV and awards show work covered by Big Picture, and now in the house, they can move between the two companies to maximise use.

"All 20 x ESPRITES are out most of the time," Matt elucidates.

Spot-Light Systems' ESPRITES were recently on a George Thorogood tour and have featured on many others, while their BMFLs, MegaPointes and LEDWash 600s were on the rig for a recent show at Spark Arena by George Ezra (lighting design by Cate Carter, operated on the road by Chris Taylor).

Matt describes the BMFL as the "light that keeps on giving". Although now nearly 8 years old, the luminaires are still a popular industry standard.

Spot-Light Systems is the first dedicated lighting division of NEP Live in Australasia, and during the pandemic, they saw the potential for growth and invested heavily, as the opportunity arose, predicting

that the industry would get exceptionally busy once everyone returned to work and it re-booted.

Big Picture owns a massive amount of LED screens and video control systems, and as the media of lighting and video continue to converge in visual design, the two companies will work together increasingly to offer clients a superlative service.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland

