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Robe on German Idol

Products Involved

ColorSpot 2500E AT™ ColorWash 2500E AT™ ColorBeam 2500E AT™

Lighting designer Manuel da Costa used Robe's most powerful series of moving lights – ColorSpot, ColorWash and ColorBeam 2500E ATs – as key fixtures on his rig for the latest series of German Idol (Deutschland sucht den Superstar). This was recorded in Studios 30/31 at the Coloneum complex in Koln and broadcast live on national TV channel RTL in a prime time Saturday night slot.

Da Costa has lit the show (this was the 8th series) since the start, and in that time seen the demands and challenges of the lighting become increasingly sophisticated. Over the 9 shows in the series, he had to programme for about 120 different songs and performances ... ensuring that each one looked interesting, fresh and unique for the competitors, the 1300 live audience as well as several million TV viewers.

Robe fixtures were originally planned and specified for German Idol by Cologne based design house MO2, who's Mathias Allhoff created the lighting scheme, working closely with the show's lighting cameraman.

The set design was by Florian Wieder. It featured multiple LED surfaces that were used in several variations - to clad curved scenic elements, as straight back and side 'walls' and as conventional flat screens, with LED also embedded into the stage floor. Special content for each show was created by Falk Rosenthal from Gravity Hamburg, and lighting and video were combined give the show a truly epic and spectacular feel.

Da Costa used a total of 42 x Robe ColorSpot 2500E ATs, 22 x Robe ColorWash 2500s and 12 x Robe ColorBeam 2500E ATs in the rig, supplied along with the rest of the lighting package by rental company Magic Light & Sound of Cologne.

The ColorSpots formed the main backbone of the system, and were chosen for their intense brightness. For the lighting to hold its own and have an impact amidst all the LED surfaces, it was crucial to utilise really bright lightsources for which Robe's 2500 Series was perfect!

"Reliability, light output and colour are all excellent features on these units" states da Costa, "along with the speed of movement and the smooth dimming".

He added that it was also important to use a series of luminaires that could offer a continuity across Spot, Wash and Beam versions - another reason for Robe being a great choice.

The ColorSpots and ColorWash fixtures were positioned in the roof of the studio above the stage and used for a myriad of dramatic theatrical looks, moody moments, for big 'rock-out' numbers and some impressive 'beam technology' as well as for the traditional 'camera-candy' and more twinkly looks. The ColorBeams were positioned on one of the rear roof trusses and also upstage on the floor, where they provided distinctive back lighting and striking beam effects.

Da Costa says, "The Beams have an extremely high output which is strong and punchy, plus great effects like the rotating gobos and prisms, which can be used to create very subtle as well as spectacular effects". He elucidates that adding the variable frost filter also allowed wash effects to be created with the ColorBeams.

To transform the stage for each competitor and to cover numerous musical genres, it was important he had a totally flexible rig, and he believes that using Robe really added to this dimension.

Da Costa's chief technician on the series was Christoph Dahm, who works for the Magic Music Company (MMC), technical production suppliers via Magic Sound & Light for the Coloneum Studios. He says that from a technical standpoint, the Robe units have been "Totally reliable" throughout the series - which is exactly what they want!

"They are definitely among the best lights that we own," he confirms. He first used Robes - the now legendary 1200 Series - on Top Of The Pops in 2005, which was recorded in the same studio complex.

Da Costa has been using Robe on all of his major shows since 2007, when Robe's German distributor LMP first arranged a demo for him.

Da Costa operated all the 2011 German Idol moving lights - which included some other fixtures - from a grandMA Series 1 console, with another for all the generics that was run by David Kreileman.





