Black diamonds of the industry

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Denis Hutchinson (right) with DWR Distribution’s Dan Riley and Gobo Distribution recently loaned Denis Hutchinson (Hutch) Robin 300 LEDs and an MMX to use a production at the University of Johannesburg. We asked Denis for his feedback.

1. What was the name of the show you worked on at UJ?

The show is a locally written musical for students called FLASH (as in flash-mob).

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2. What was your involvement?

I was the consultant on the theatre at UJ and they ask me back to light at least one show a year. I love working with the students, and it also gives me a less commercially pressured environment in which I can play; trying ideas that might be risky commercially and most importantly, using equipment that I've not used before in a real theatrical environment. I hate demo rooms…

3. How many Robin 300s were made available to you?

DWR were extremely generous to me – they sent six Robin 300 LED washes and an MMX spot.

4. Where were the fixtures positioned and for what effect?

I used four of the Robins as backlight – right upstage – and the other two on the ends of the balcony rail which in that theatre is much like a box boom position. The MMX went on the orchestra bar.

5. What is your opinion on these lights?

Killer! Four Robin 300 LEDs and you have a full stage wash that rivals parcans with saturated colour but is oh so much easier and quicker and environmentally friendly. Give me spill rings and Y instead of W (I know that red and green theoretically yield yellow, but let's be honest it's more like khaki!) and I don't think I'll ever want to use a parcan again. Except for white light. And yellow/ambers at the moment…

The MMX was not stretched for this show, but behaved as one has come to expect of Robe spots – it turns on, does what you ask of it and doesn't talk back. Where I did use it, it worked well and I particularly like the 'scribble' gobo.

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6. Your feedback on the “green” issue?

Going ‘green’ is a fact of life, and with the Robe 300/600 LED series, I’m seeing units that have the balls and reliability we need in the theatre, with the low energy consumption we’re aspiring to. Works for me.

7. Would you recommend them and for what type of installation?

I have no hesitation in recommending them for any application where washes (or beams) of solid colour are needed. I particularly like the ‘fat’ beam on the 600 which reminds me of the 10” beam projectors and pageant lanterns of old. For more demanding theatrical applications, I would like to see spill rings (the top hat doesn’t cut it for me) and yellow instead of white would broaden the colour range and still allow a degree of pastel colour.

Robin 300 LED

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