

Collective Works is launched

Collective Works is a brand new creative visual design practice launched by three highly talented and respected live event production industry professionals – Christopher Bolton, Joshua Cutts and Bradley Hilton.

All are well known for their work in South Africa and across the African continent.

Bringing all the energy and vibrancy of the region to an international marketplace, the trio specialise in the disciplines of lighting, video and set / scenic design and digital content production.

They have known one another and worked together in different capacities for some time, designing and delivering a variety of high profile music shows, live events, theatrical and TV productions.

Sharing this vast experience plus the core values of passion for their work, imagination, creative flair and the ability to think ‘out-of-the-box’ in creating extraordinary audience experiences, Collective Works is a new and exciting venture.

It offers clients an enthusiastic and innovative approach to live show and event design – whatever the genre, scenario, size and budget of the project.

From the raw material of fresh ideas, to the complex modelling of 3D and virtual simulations, to the equipment specification and co-ordination, client liaison, lighting and video programming delivery and execution on site, Collective Works will provide a complete creative service for those wanting great looking shows.

“There is a great chemistry and fluidity of ideas and thoughts between all of us” says Chris, explaining that while Collective Works is a really natural synergy between the three of them, their totally different personality attributes and characters add yet more to the dynamics of the team.

With three strong creative minds, projects requiring full technical design lighting, video and set – including automation – is the key target.

At the essence of Collective Works is using a variety of technologies wisely and appropriately to help communicate with audiences, bringing narratives, performances, presentations, installations, public art and any other form of expression alive with visual magic like vast projections, incredible set architecture, pixel mapping or amazing lighting ... ensuring the emotion and drama of the moment is captured and remains infinitely memorable.

Immediate work confirmed in the months ahead includes Afrikaans is Groot and Starlight Classics, both in Cape Town and the 2017 series of The Voice.



Chris Bolton

Chris was born and raised in Durban, KwaZulu Natal.

Music and performance was always in his bloodstream as a child ... via his father who was an international touring musician.

He developed an appetite for theatre whilst still at school, initially as an artist / actor. Whilst working at Durban Playhouse after school, when Chris first stepped onto the boards with lights, flybars and scenery ... and knew the stage and theatre was THE career for him!

His first contact with lighting was also during this period, working as a follow spot operator at the famous Sneddon Theatre in Durban.

He studied Electronics Engineering at college, continued performing and then switched the further education focus to Performing Arts Technology to be more in tune with ambitions to work in theatre. He left in his final year to take up his first professional engagement, which was as a sound engineer in Johannesburg!

Generic lighting didn't really appeal at the time to the technical in Chris, but the first time Chris saw moving lights – some big old SGM Galileo 4 mirror scanners – being programmed properly for a show, it fired his imagination! His company in Johannesburg had some Clay Paky Tiger Scans, so he started teaching himself moving lights after finishing work in the audio department!

As soon as Chris started doing lights, his career developed quickly and his reputation as a lighting designer and programmer grew.

He founded Keystone Productions in Johannesburg in 2003 with Warren Liss and Jonathan Le Roux. They have worked for a variety of elaborate corporate events and brand activations which have been challenging, stimulating and a great forum for Chris's sense of drama and creative ideas.

As Keystone Productions, Chris has helped shape many ground-breaking shows and events as a lighting designer and production director, while running the company has taught him the benefits of good organisation. Over time he's developed a unique MO that fuses technical precision with creative style.

Chris is a great communicator and enjoys seeing all the elements of a production harmonise and unite into an incredible end-result for the audience.

Keystone Productions is also a partner in Bradley Hilton's company Pixel Native which specialises in video and projection systems design, direction and content production.



... time chilling with his family, and if he gets a moment or two he also enjoys ... – and its many challenges!

Joshua Cutts

Joshua Cutts was born and grew up in Johannesburg. His father was an actor, so he spent a lot of time with him in theatres as a child and fell in love with the performing arts early on. He also had an inquisitive mind and an aptitude for technology ... which inspired him to pursue stage lighting as a career as soon as he left school.

After eight years working hard as a lighting designer and technician in theatre, Josh left that sector on a mission to broaden his knowledge and experience of lighting in other sectors.

Serendipitously in 2002 he landed the job of designing lighting for a large music talent TV show called Project Fame catapulting him into the world of television and broadcast, where he impressed with his unique application of certain theatrical techniques and style in a new context.

His reputation in TV lighting grew rapidly and he went on to design some of the highest profile TV shows in South Africa including Idols, The Voice and the 2012 SAMA Awards.

Visual frontier was founded in 2011 to create some space in a busy industry for independent lighting and visual designers and programmers wanting to operate without being tied to any of the major technical companies and organisations ... a step he hoped would grow and develop the whole industry.

Apart from his great eye for drama and good lighting, Josh is known for his quick grasp of new technologies and ability to incorporate this appropriately into a show.

He became an advanced programmer due to his knowledge and understanding of networking and large lighting rigs with complex elements like pixel mapping and server control.

This has also enabled him to appreciate the bigger picture and combine video and set with lighting to create

complete and harmonious visual environments. A big part of the thrill for Josh is always “achieving the almost impossible” whatever the parameters!

Josh’s work schedule has been pretty insane in recent years and any spare time is spent on family activities.



Bradley Hilton

Bradley embraced the entertainment industry from birth ... his father is well-known South African stand-up comedian, actor and TV personality Barry Hilton, so lights, cameras and action have always been a part of his life.

Born in Cape Town, he grew up amidst the buzz and energy of Johannesburg and became involved in video as a teenager, filming daring skateboarding feats and tricks and cool music videos for and with his friends.

Being associated with the stage and performance, the production industry was a completely natural career choice for Bradley who cut his teeth as a video designer, editor, programmer and operator of large playback and mapping systems on one hand ... coupled with his penchant for content creation and management on the other.

This balance of knowledge in the different elements of ‘live video’ means he has a great understanding of ‘the bigger picture’ needed to create stunning digital show material and use it inventively.

One of his first breaks was managing a multi-projector blend mapped over a 3D set for Johannesburg based company Keystone Productions, after which his profile as a trusted FOH video engineer and director grew.

As Pixel Native, formed three years ago with Chris Bolton after they worked on a job together, Bradley has had the chance to work on some ambitious projects in SA and internationally. Bradley had immediately liked the vibe of Chris and Keystone Productions, so they started the company to develop and integrate more complex video projects into their work.

Bradley enjoys the challenges of every job, striving to be the best at what he does and the rush of delivering a great show for the audience.

He doesn’t get much spare time as work is constantly busy, but any that does present itself is spent enjoying life with his young family.

