Deal for Robe ESPRITES at Atlantic Studios in Cape Town

Posted on December 8, 2023



DWR's Johnny Scholtz on the left with LD Daniel Louw. Photo by Louise Stickland.

Atlantic Studios, Cape Town, South Africa, is a cutting-edge multi-stage film and television production facility and a bustling hub of creative activity serving the Western Cape and far beyond.

One of its current productions (produced by HBC Broadcasting Solutions) is the South African edition of *Deal or No Deal* (DoND), the popular risk-taking gameshow where contestants make seat-edge decisions on whether to accept a cash offer from 'the Banker' in exchange for what might – or might not – be contained in a series of unassuming boxes.

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Lighting designer Daniel Louw is using some brand-new Robe ESPRITES which were purchased by HBC for this show and delivered by Robe's South African distributor, DWR at the start of the recording period in February.

Dan is a freelance lighting designer / director and has worked on several projects at the studios which also has other Robe moving lights – Pointes, miniPointes, LEDBeam 100s and ParFects.



Photo: Louise Stickland

When he created the original lighting design and specification for *Deal or No Deal*, he wanted some moving lights to add dynamics and movement to the overall pictures and shots.

The recording schedule is intense with a total of 260 episodes which are broadcasting on SABC 1 until the end of March 2024. Twenty contestants start each round of the competition, hopeful of scoring the big money, and it's proving a massive hit with South African audiences.

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Dan wanted a light that was versatile, with a good CRI, a great selection of CT whites and that was available at short notice as the investment was green lighted with only weeks to spare before shooting commenced!

Luckily, DWR had some ESPRITES in stock, the deal was done, and the units were delivered to Cape Town, where Dan, series director Geoff Butler and producers Paul Venter & Jaco Loubser, are delighted with the results.

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Photo: Louise Stickland.

The four ESPRITES are all positioned on the studio floor where they can be easily accessed and moved to new positions as needed.

They are used for beam work, eye candy and for cool back-of-camera effects and gap filling as well as to create interest and movement and help to build the tension at appropriate times.

They are the only moving lights on the rig and Dan is delighted with the results.

“We knew we would be shooting at high light levels generally, so I wanted something that could punch through for the cameras which they do brilliantly! They are consistent, the shutters are accurate, the colours from the LED engine are excellent and they are a robust and sturdy fixture.”

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In addition to the high light levels from the 48 profile fixtures on the overhead rig used for key and back lighting, Michael Gill’s slick modern set contains a lot of integral LED, making the whole environment even brighter!

Dan adds that the ESPRITES really “hold their own” in this context and will be great for other productions once DoND wraps up! “They are a solid overall asset,” he concluded.

He is running the lights using a grandMA3 console.

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Dan has worked as a lighting professional since 2012, up to the pandemic this was mainly for music shows and assorted events. When that side of the industry crashed in 2020, he managed to transfer his skills and experience to the TV, film and broadcast world which he also enjoys, and which can benefit from crossover ideas gleaned from working in other disciplines.

He has utilised Robe products on his various projects for many years – BMFLs, Pointes, MegaPointes, etc. He remarks that Robe's products are "great workhorses, good quality and almost never break," while he believes their most recent LED moving lights have properly addressed the needs of television and broadcast lighting.

Photos: Louise Stickland.

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