



*By Louise Stickland* Lighting and set designer Tim Dunn from Gearhouse South Africa specified Robe ROBIN 600 LEDWash and PureWhite moving lights to illuminate award winning VR Steel's spectacular new booth, premiered at the recent Mine Expo International 2012 exhibition and trade fair at Las Vegas Convention Centre.

Expo International is the mining industry's premier showcase for companies specialising in every facet of mining – open pit, underground, processing and preparation, mine site development, exploration and surveying, smelting and refining and reclamation. VR Steel is a global leader in the manufacture of cutting-edge products for dragline mining.

Dunn took a brief from VR Steel's CEO John van Reenen and created a radically elegant new stand for the South African company which will tour to international mining expos worldwide over the next two years.

He comments, "It was amazing to work on this project and for John to put his trust in me to design a stand that represented his vision for the future".

A set of four stunning steel arches spanning a 6 x 6 metre central booth space (the whole booth was 20 x 20 metres in total) to form the stand's core architecture. The entire stand is self-standing with nothing flown or rigged from the roof, making the build process as straightforward and cost-effective as possible.



Lighting is absolutely essential to the aesthetics and finishing details of the design and has been carefully considered to further enhance the distinction and character of the booth. "The whole stand has to be multi-functional. It has to make a statement, have a presence, encourage people to look at the products and services on offer and be easily identifiable in a frenetic and busy exhibition hall," explains Dunn.

Four custom towers are rigged at each corner of the stand outside of the arches to form the main lighting positions, which can be moved and fitted into different booth spaces as required. The sixteen Robes are rigged on these.

The lighting towers are counterweighted with links from the massive drag bucket chains of the excavation



machinery that VR Steel manufactures – which look very cool as well as bringing a product-related context into the booth design.

It is the first time that Dunn has used Robe fixtures for an exhibition stand design – although he's specified them many times for concerts, live music shows and special events.

The 16 Robe units – four on each lighting tower in Las Vegas – were 12 standard RGB LEDWash 600 and four PureWhite DL (Daylight) fixtures. They highlighted and brightened all parts of the stand, its display walls and graphics as well as the structural elements, plus VR Steel's butterfly logos – a unique design conceived by Van Reenen – which were integrated into the printed floor. The Daylight PureWhites were a perfect complement to



Dunn chose Robe because he thinks they are by far the

“smoothest and most solid” LED moving lights currently available, and because he knows the brand is reliable and well-engineered.

The PureWhite versions of the LEDWash 600 series are specifically designed for exhibition stand and TV studio work.

Additionally, the VR Steel arches were internally lit with blue LEDs and there were also nine integral 5 Watt blue down-lighters inbuilt into the stand.

Dunn took a team of five people with him from Gearhouse South Africa, set builders SDS and leading sales company DWR Distribution to build the stand from scratch in Las Vegas, all of it constructed from bespoke pieces. Robe lighting Inc. helped source the fixtures.



The stand caused a massive stir and was one of the most talked about and photographed of the exhibition.

VR Steel recently won the 'Minister's Overall Excellence' category of 2012 Technology Top 100 (TT100) Awards – South Africa's premier business excellence Awards, celebrating the country's best innovators and drawing attention to the importance of developing excellence.