

Gearhouse supplies Loeries 2010

26 October 2010



Courtesy Louise Stickland

Gearhouse South Africa supplied full technical production to the 2010 Loerie Awards staged at the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town, South Africa for the second year running.

The event was again produced by H-Factor, with a production and set design by H-Factor and The Loerie Awards Committee, to celebrate the coolest and most innovative creative talent in advertising, communication design and experiential media from Africa and the Middle East. The two nights of prestigious Award presentations is the biggest seated awards show in the country, and a high pressure event in terms of design and technical production, requiring plenty of invention and originality to match the occasion.



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Rigging

The Good Hope Centre is a challenging space in which to work, having an unusual shape with a double vaulted ceiling and limited weight loading in the roof. It was down to a collaborative effort from H-Factor, Sets, Drapes, Screens and Gearhouse Rigging to ensure that there were enough hanging points in the roof in the right places to fly all the production equipment including sound, lighting, LED and projection screens, etc.

The main house lighting pods are the primary positions that can be rigged off – just a half tonne load from each – and these are arranged in 3 concentric circles radiating out from the centre of the room. Then there are a further 10 points capable of handling 1.5 tonnes on concrete beams in a cross shape in the centre of the venue.

To get everything hung in the right positions 2 mother grids were installed, stage left and stage right of the venue, 2.4 metres wide by 14 metres long, trimmed at 14 metres, and the majority of the equipment was sub-hung from these. There were 2 additional lighting trusses and other lighting elements were flown directly off some of the house pods.

Two large oval screens stage left and right were an essential part of the set, and these moved in and out during the evenings.

There were a total of 56 points excluding the audio which used separate house points



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AV & Media

Video is central to any Awards show and particularly to this one, with the Gearhouse Media department run by Chris Grandin and Marcel Wijnberger looking after this aspect. Grandin designed the video systems and co-ordinated the multi-layered playback and its output to screen.

The set divided the stage space into 3 circular ‘performance’ areas – centre, left and right – and the 2 large oval/cylindrical upstage projection screens left and right of the stage were key to the design. These were fed with Awards content, credits, graphics and logos for most of the evening, plus some IMAG camera images.

In the middle of the set was a “floating” 14 metre wide by 7.3 borderless screen which received front projection, and there was also a 27 panel wide by 3 panel high Lighthouse R16 LED (1756 pixels wide by 144 high) screen running edge to edge of the stage.

Inbuilt into the centre of the set was a back wall, constructed from Layher scaffolding. Rigged to this were 36 x LCD screens, configured as two large 6 wide by 3 high blocks, used very effectively for running twinkly effects in the background.

Two Christie HD 18 projectors fed the main centre screen. Christie Roadster R16s were supplied for the oval screens, complete with a pair of shuttered Christie M Series 10Ks for backup.

All the content output was routed and mixed through a Christie Spyder X20, configured by Grandin, programmed by him and Wijnberger and run by Kevin Larson during the shows.

The playback material was all stored on 4 Wings Platinum slaves controlled by a Wings Platinum master. They ran the technical rehearsals with two Wings masters in action so Wijnberger and Grandin could programme simultaneously.

The Awards content for the 2 show nights – for print media on the Saturday and digital/TV/Cinema/web based and mixed media, etc. on the Sunday – was supplied by 2 different production houses – MEME and Wicked Pixels respectively.

This consisted of background overlays for the main categories and a credit template of how it should look, with the final content composited on site for the screens by Gearhouse Media and Andrew Shelly’s teams. However, the collaborative process to facilitate all this coming together on the night actually starts a good 8 months earlier, with meetings and discussions between all parties as to how the screens and the content will look and function on the event.

The show programming and editing process was also started in advance, 3 weeks ahead of the actual event days, with Grandin and Wijnberger spending 2 weeks at H-Factor’s offices in Johannesburg. In total, about 270 Awards were involved – not all of which were presented live, but all had graphics and associated VT material which needed to be incorporated in the video.

Cameras – directed by Warren de Vos were supplied by SABC, together with one of their OB vans, and a special programme on the Awards nights was broadcast a few days later. Four camera feeds from the OB truck were fed into the Spyder for outputting to the production screens.

Audio

Gearhouse Audio's Jako de Wit and Tom Gordon designed the sound system, working closely with Revil Baselga on monitors. It was his first year mixing the event in Cape Town, although he has done it a few times previously when it was staged in Margate.

He chose to run an L-Acoustics Kudo system in left-right configuration for the main hangs, with 9 Kudo speakers left and right angled at 45 degrees, and 12 x dV-DOSC speakers for the centre hang. Fourteen SB118 subs were ground stacked neatly behind the AV walls, all powered by LA8 amps.

He chose a Yamaha M7 console with an Opticore fibre link for running the show, with Baselga utilising a Soundcraft MH4 console onstage. Audio for all the VT play-ins and Awards stings was supplied via a link from the Media department's Wings system.

There was a Band and DJ first night, DJ and dancers 2nd night with singers and tracks. Saturday evening kicked off with Springbok Nude Girls being revealed behind one of the screens, and on Sunday it was The Front Row entertainment dancers. For monitors they ran a combination of L-Acoustics HiQ 115 wedges and Sennheiser IEMs.

It was a relatively straightforward gig for audio, the main challenge being the concave shape of the space and the height in the middle, which makes it very reflective, throwing up a few idiosyncrasies. However, they achieved excellent results. De Wit has worked in the venue many times before, and has a few sonic tricks up his sleeve to make it all come together.

His mixing style also slightly differed across the 2 nights to match the contrasting atmospheres – loud, bold and in-the-face for the first night with the band, and more subtle and refined for the second.



Lighting

Lighting was designed for the second year by Phillip Chames from Gearhouse's Cape Town branch.

The back wall that housed the 36 LCD screens was also rigged with lighting fixtures – 24 of the new Robe ROBIN 300 Spots, 12 x Robe ColorSpot 700E ATs, 24 Atomic strobes and 36 2-cell Moles. These were used for creating spectacular rear lighting effects and their positioning and layout also increased the perceived depth of the stage space. On the top edge of this wall were 3 x 1.2K 'truss' follow spots.

Three circular trusses were flown above the 3 stage areas below, and each of these had 4 Martin Professional MAC 2K Profile and 4 MAC 2K Wash moving lights on them. The stage areas were also lit with 9 x 5K fresnels rigged on 3 room trusses.

The 2 oval screens were each framed with 12 x i-Pix Satellite LED brick lights clamped to the inside of the set element (vertical veins) – a bottom detail of each oval screen. There were 18 MAC 250 Wash moving lights on the floor behind the 3 stages for low angle beam effects and eye-candy for the wide camera shots, plus 8 Robe ColorWash 2500s.

Eight giant custom chandeliers were built by SDS and flown above the audience around the venue, each of which contained an integral MAC 2K profile light and 5 short nosed PAR 64s.

Two FOH follow spots were positioned on the balcony at the back of the auditorium, and the show lighting was run by Chames using a grandMA full size console.

Bar & Exterior

To add extra razzmatazz, excitement and magic to the 2010 Awards shows, Gearhouse's brief this year also included lighting the exterior of the Good Hope Centre.

For this they used 12 of their new Panther 5K colour-changing searchlights, placed around the front of the building blasting up into the sky, film premiere style. At the entrance and around the red carpet area, 12 x 2K fresnels on wind up stands were used to up-light the venue walls.

Inside the bar area, utilised for pre and after show drinks, 24 LED PAR cans and 12 ETC Source Fours were installed on a truss flown in the ceiling. Lighting for both these different areas was run on separate Avolites Tiger Touch desks.

Gearhouse power supplied 2 x 300KVA and 2 x 100 KVA generators, used for all technical production power.

Success

The huge success of the 2010 Awards maintained the Loeries' profile as one of the liveliest and most talked-about events in the southern hemisphere, which brings a large, vibrant vibe to the whole city for the weekend, with numerous additional events and parties taking place throughout.

Gearhouse's Philip Beardwood also presented an Award! This was Best Live Event, and was won by The VWV Group, producers of the acclaimed 2010 FIFA World Cup Closing Ceremony, a show for which Gearhouse SA also provided all technical production equipment, plus lighting and sound design.