

grandMA & DigiSpots for Juanita

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Three thousand fans filled the Big Top Arena at Carnival City to be part of Juanita Du Plessis ten year Platinum concert which was recorded for

DVD on 28 February 2009 and run by a grandMA full size. It was the biggest show presented by a South African artist and focussed on AV using Robe's DigiSpots and was further complimented with dancers, flying acts, pyros and an 18 piece band.

MJ Event Gear catered for all the AV and lighting and subcontracted the stage to Stage Works. Francois van der Merwe from MJ designed, programmed and operated the show. "Juanita's team came to us and said they wanted to do a DVD with all her hits which would run in conjunction with her ten year anniversary.

Juanita was very involved with the whole design of the show and provided about sixty percent of the media that went onto the screen using the DigiSpots. "The DigiSpots are amazing units," commented Francois. "The band was seated in front of the screen. With a normal projector we would have casted a shadow on the screen, but with keystoneing we projected over their heads. The footage was kept in sync by the network, and we were able to play two movie clips running at the same time on four different units. We had something on screen with every song."

Francois was given free range as far as the lighting design was concern. Because all the hits were songs people knew, the show was rocking with high energy and consisted of some 763 cues.

"I went into off-line four days before the show," said Francois. "It makes a huge difference and what's nice is that the client can see what will happen before we go to show. This is what we want."



The show was run by a grandMA full size and two NSP units. “In this day and age, I wouldn’t attempt any show without it,” he grinned. “It’s my new long last love! I am still happy with the unit but hopefully we will get a grandMA 2. I just love the way the whole system works, it is quick, flexible and there is no other desk at the moment that can do what it does.” Francois ran on PC with a second PC as back-up and a third for the grandMA 3D Visualiser. “While programming, we had a problem with incoming sound, but that was sorted out overnight... that’s German efficiency!”

The rig consisted of a back truss on which 10 x Mac 2000 Washes, 8 x Mac 2000 Profiles and 2 x Strong Followspots were hung. “We actually had to turn the Strong units down they were so bright,” said Francois. “They have a nice smooth beam field. And they kick!”

On the centre truss was an additional 8 x Mac 2000 Washes and 8 x Mac 2000 Profiles. A separate truss in a “V” shape was placed front centre stage and hosted 4 x DigiSpots. The FOH truss consisted of 37 Source Fours, 6 x Mac 550s were used for effects in the audience and on stage deck were 14 x Mac 250 Entours. Two Media Spinners, with branded flats suspended on them, opened as doors for Juanita to come through.

“Juanita is the first South Africa female artist to sell over a million copies in South Africa,” said Francois, who also did her very first DVD. “She is a very good artist, a real performer and that’s what makes it nice.” Juanita is a huge drawing card to any venue and tickets to this event sold

out before any comps could be allocated.