

## grandMA review

23 July 2008

World-wide *grandMA* is becoming the most specified console. This trend is no different in South Africa, where at least twelve new users have opted for the MA Lighting brand as their console of choice within the last 20 months.

In a recent review carried out in South Africa, users were asked for feedback.

### AV Unlimited – Victor Vermaak

Just over six months ago, AV Unlimited purchased the *grandMA ultra-light*. In the industry for the past five years, Victor Vermaak started programming on a Compulite desk and now enjoys the user friendly approach of the *ultra-light*. “The *ultra-light* is so much easier to use and there are so many ways of doing a thing. It’s so simple to make changes while the show is running and I’ve not had a problem yet.”

Victor has started working on 3D rendering and so far things look positive – he particularly likes the idea of programming at home and being prepared to do a show the following day.

“DWR have called on us a couple of times, I have had a PDA from them, and sometimes they also come to shows just to make sure that we are alright,” said Victor regarding the back-up support in South Africa.

### CS Audio – Willie Botha

When Cape Town based CS Audio looked to upgrade their console, they had to consider various options. “We went for what we thought would be flexible and the most powerful console for going forward,” comments lighting designer Willie Botha, who finally decided on a full size *grandMA*. “It’s extremely powerful, it’s very logical and I enjoy it very much. I am still learning, but it’s not that difficult and I’m getting there more quickly. There is so much more you can do. I have so many ideas in my head that I couldn’t do on other desks or which would take too long to complete. Now it is possible.”

Willie says there is nothing to compare the *grandMA* to, and nothing he would rather have, except perhaps the MA2! “We have plotted nice shows, it has never let me down and there are so many features. The support is great and if I need anything, if Nick Britz doesn’t have the answer, he is normally able to find out and get back to me within a day.”

### Gearhouse SA – Sean Rosig



"The *grandMA* has been the best console I've ever used,"

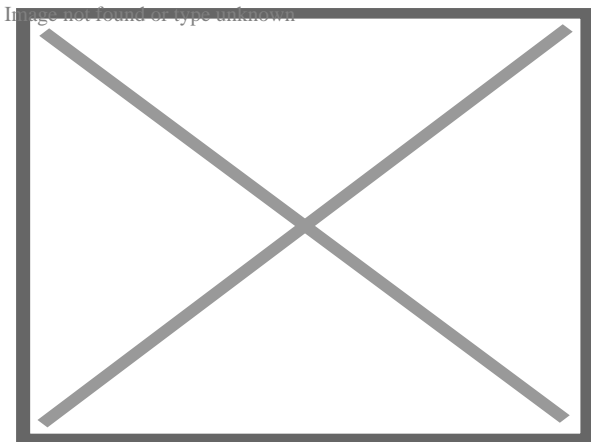
commented Sean Rosig, Lighting Designer at Gearhouse SA. "It is extremely user-friendly and all the functions are fully customizable and you can make it work for you instead of you working for the console. I enjoy everything about it, especially the networking capabilities."

Gearhouse did a lot of research before purchasing their five *grandMA* consoles, with Bill Lawford doing his fair share of investigation. "*grandMA* is the desk of the future," says Sean. "It is something we can keep for the next ten years. It is a solid console that has never crashed during playback."

Sean in the past has received most of his support directly from MA Lighting, before DWR was awarded the dealership. "Since then, Duncan Riley has been extremely helpful and enthusiastic about this product. When we have approached DWR with questions they have always found the answers and I am sure that things can only progress from here."

Gigs: 46664; Strictly Come Dancing; FIFA Draw; Africa Day; MPH; CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting); Bidvest Annual Chairman's Awards; other large television shows.

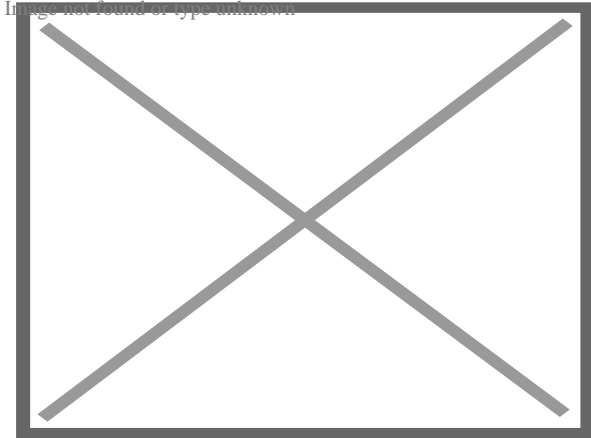
### Global Events – Robert Grobler



Robert Grobler from Global Events has made a joke on

Facebook, “I have a big gun for a big boy!” referring to his recently acquired full size *grandMA* console. He believes the purchase was the only way to go. “For the type of shows I’m running (television, DVD and theatre productions) and the features it has, it’s the perfect desk. One of the big reasons I’ve bought the *grandMA* is that for a whole year running there will be a tribute to Pink Floyd going from venue to venue.”

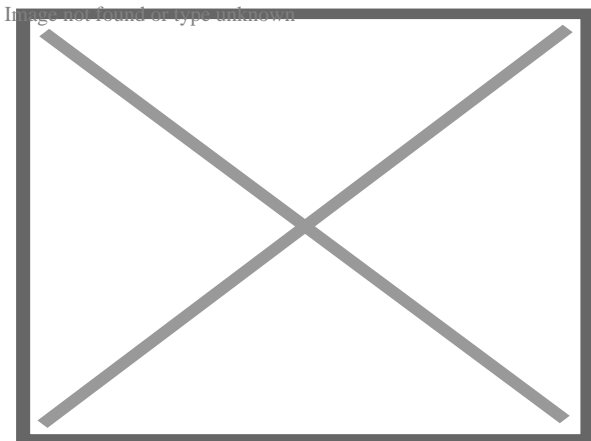
### Gold Reef City – Johan Cilliers



Lighting Designer Johan Cilliers has been at Gold Reef City for

the past six years, and recently took ownership of the *grandMA light*. “I love the desk it’s the best I’ve ever worked on. If I could rate it, I would give it a hundred out of a hundred,” he said. He finds the *light* easy to work with and enjoys the added features, particularly the 3D rendering, which will enable him to work from home. JR (John Roughly) recommended the desk to Gold Reef City, and since then, it seems there has been no looking back.

### Grand West Casino – Sean Caie

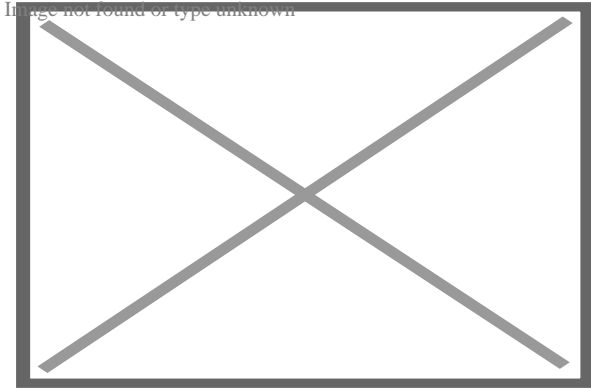


“The *ultra-light* is a little smaller than the console I wanted due

to a budget restraint, said Sean Caie from the Grand West Casino, “But it’s fantastic if I could just figure out one or two small things! I don’t have anything to compare the desk to, other than a Zero 88, but there are features that I haven’t seen on the Frog and in that respect there is positivity on user ability.” While Sean says he is probably only using 25% of the console’s capability, he is confident of the desk. “There is nothing bad I can say

about the console and the support has been more than can be expected.”

### Lyric Theatre – Glenn Duncan



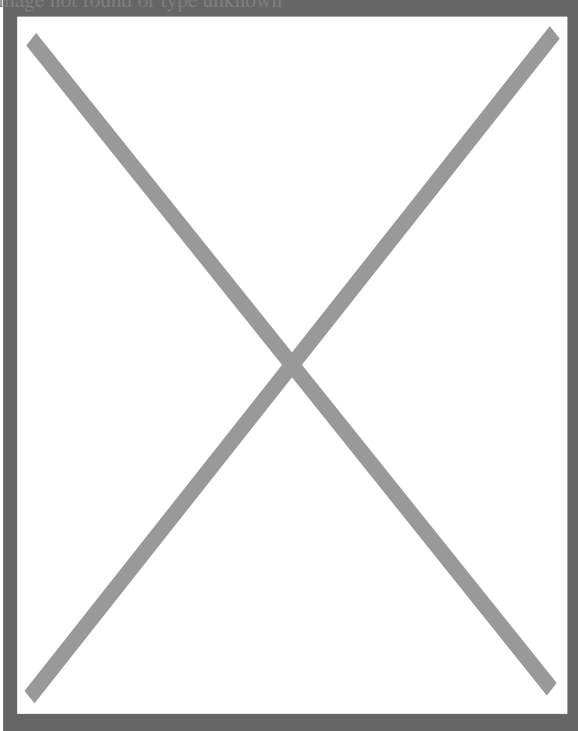
Glenn Duncan was the lighting programmer for Hairspray as well as Saturday Night Fever, the first two shows to feature at the newly established Lyric Theatre at Gold Reef City in Johannesburg. “I was very happy with the *grandMA* and it did all I needed it to do,” says Glenn. “It is a powerful console and I think a good choice for the theatre. We use a lot of gear which does keep the desk busy and it has been very stable.”

Glenn says the *grandMA* has a couple of nice features that could take longer to program on another desk, and he adds that there is a way to do everything.

“The support has been great,” says Glenn. “This was also one of the deciding factors that made the purchase worthwhile.”

### MGG – Mark Gaylard

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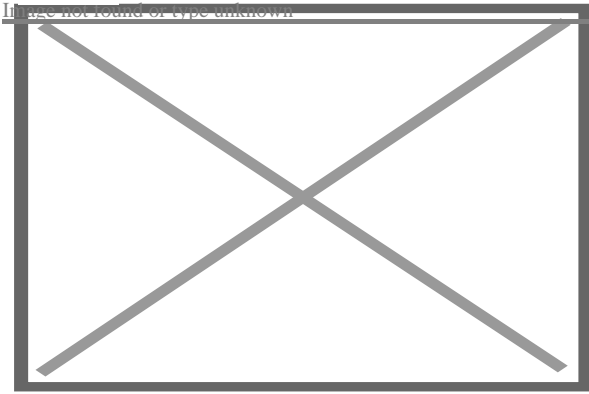
Mid last year, Mark Gaylard bought the *grandMA ultra-light* console. His Pearl was out on hire for a long term period and he was short of a desk. Although he personally hasn't worked much on the *ultra-light*, Mark found the buy good value for money with some great features included. "It will allow me to expand on MA video source at a later stage, I like it because it's easy to busk on and it is already working hard."

MGG have hired out their console to lighting designer Denis Hutchinson who will be using it for the Full Monty production. "The console is a recognised specified desk, and for Denis as an example, it travels light and is easy to fly with."

MGG have received training from DWR on the console and are happy with the back-up.

Mark has just ordered a *grandMA* Full Size, another *ultra-light* with a NSP to cater for the up-coming theatrical productions he has secured.

**MJ Event Gear – Francois van der Merwe**



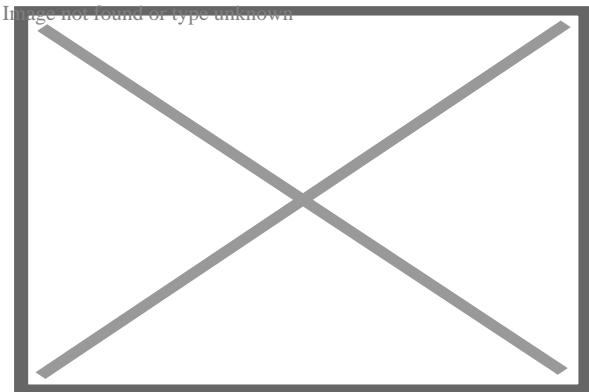
MJ Event Gear took ownership of their console some ten

months ago. "To date I have had no problems and no crashes, and trust me," says Francois van der Merwe, "I can crash a desk!"

When working on a gig in Germany for the Soccer World Cup, Francois became aware of the enormous popularity *grandMA* enjoyed. "We saw the whole of Europe going *grandMA*," he says. Mike Jones, owner of MJ, spoke to Belgium Luc Pullman from Painting with Light, and as he only uses *grandMA*, it was added confirmation that the *grandMA* was the benchmark in consoles.

"When you buy a *grandMA* you are not only buying a console, you are buying a whole system which is backed up. Everything uses the same show file and the desk is very comfortable, very user friendly and very powerful. I like everything about the desk and the support is very good. If there is a problem, Nick Britz or Duncan Riley sorts it out immediately, and sometimes it works the other way round, I give them support!"

### Pretoria State Theatre – Simon King



"We actually purchased the full size *grandMA* because of the

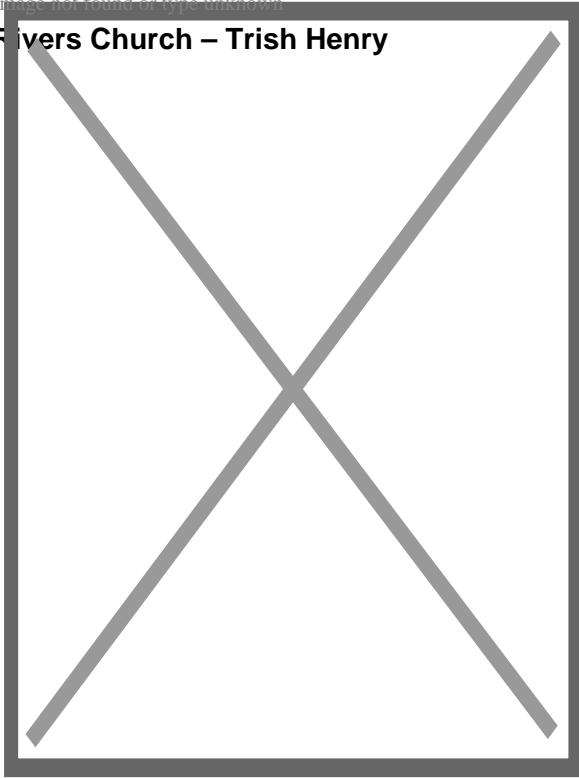
service we get from Duncan Riley," commented Simon King from the Pretoria State Theatre. "The console is great and totally different. It's quite a big challenge, but something that is steps ahead of the rest."

Simon admits to sometimes getting impatient when he can't do the things he wants to, but knows that Nick Britz is always a phone call away and information is always readily available. A particular feature he enjoys are the

five monitors presenting him with information.

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Rivers Church – Trish Henry



When Trish Henry from Rivers Church started looking for a

console, she contacted every hiring company the church had ever used and even lighting designers such as Declan Randall, to ask what they would recommend. “In the end I chose the *grandMA light* because of the great back-up service offered by DWR. The console may be a little more than we currently need, but I felt confident that we would have excellent support service from DWR as we have had with the Robe lights for the past few years,” she says.

Trish, only previously having had first hand experience on a Frog, has nothing to compare the *grandMA light* to, but says the operators are very comfortable on this new console. “We are not 100% proficient yet, especially on trouble shooting, but Nick Britz is always very helpful,” says Trish. “The best thing about the unit is its flexibility, ease of use yet large capacity and having two screens so you know what’s going on at a glance. I suspect that we’ve only scratched the surface of what the *light* is capable of and I am looking forward to learning more.”