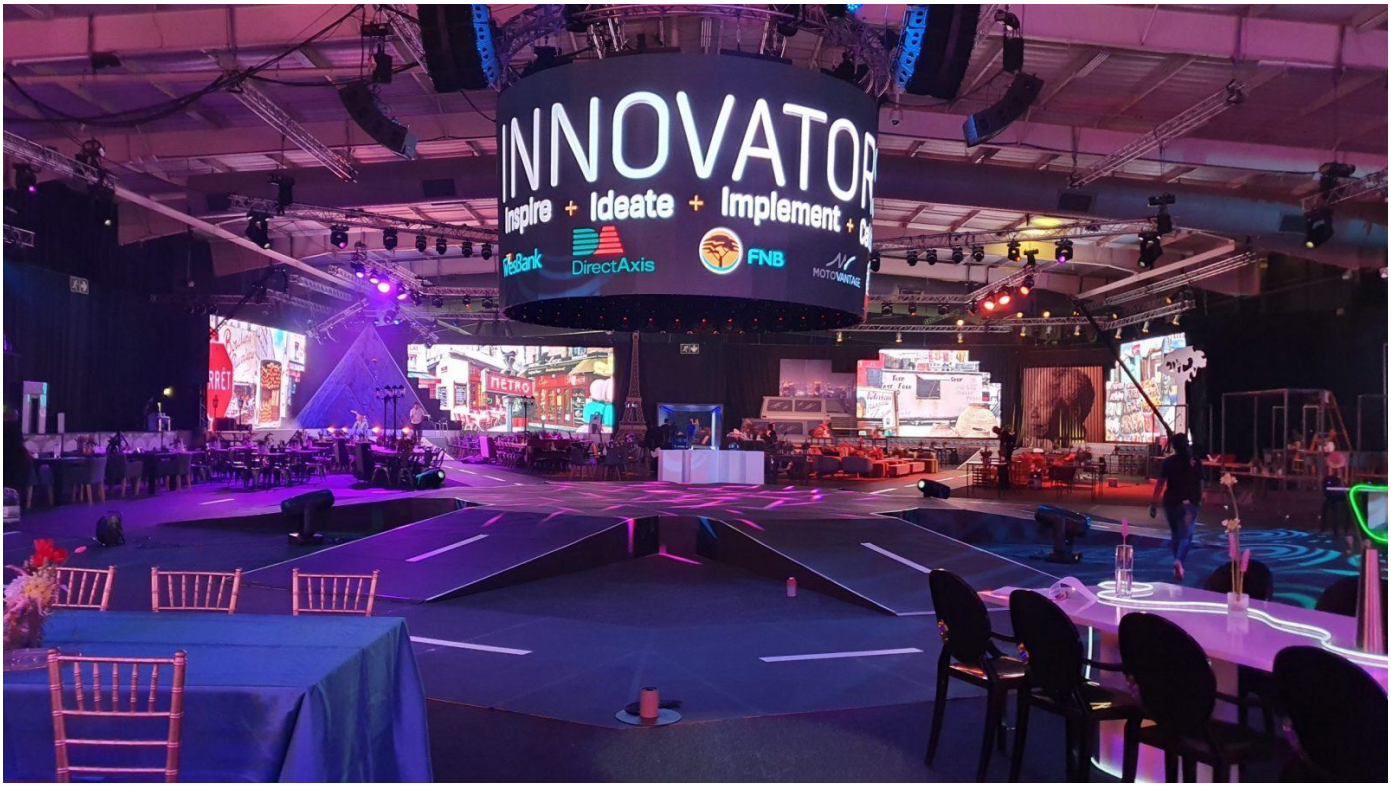
Marius Coetzee (LD) debuts Robe’s Esprite in South Africa

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Marius Coetzee is a freelance technician that is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the country’s most promising up-and-coming lighting designers. He started his career as a musician and decided that he wanted to establish a long-term career in the entertainment industry but knew that performing would not provide the stable income needed to gain his independence. As a result, Marius studied sound engineering and started working in clubs and on festivals as an audio technician. As his career developed, he discovered lighting and his passion for the discipline has

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seen him specialise as a lighting designer over the past few years.

Marius has gained extensive experience as a professional lighting designer, programmer and operator. He has worked with a range of rental and production companies, in a range of vertices, from large productions to small niche corporate events. As he expands his portfolio, Marius is gaining a reputation for being dedicated, highly skilled and willing to go the extra mile.

Late last year, Marius was contracted to work as a lighting designer for local technical services suppliers, AV and Beyond, who provided technical and creative services for the FNB Innovators Award evening, held at Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand.

In the months leading up to the event, AV and Beyond placed an order for twelve Robe Esprite LED automated luminaries from local distributor DWR Distribution. The Esprites were delivered by Duncan Riley and the DWR team during load-in for the event, allowing Marius the opportunity to be the first LD to work with Robe’s award-winning Esprite LED automated luminaire in South Africa. Marius shared his experience with us in a recent interview.

What was your first impression of Robe Esprite?

The Esprite is an amazing fixture because it can do just about everything that you would want an automated LED fixture to do for a corporate event. The Esprite is one of the most versatile fixtures that I have experienced and supports an amazing range of features, making it a lot more than a simple one-trick-pony.

While the Esprite may be a bit too big to put on stage at a corporate event, you can use them for just about any other application that you can imagine. They are relatively lightweight for their size, which makes them easy to hang in the roof where they can provide beams, gobos, backlight, front light – you name it. The fixture’s output is amazing, and together with the beam angles, gobos, colour wheel and prisms that are onboard, it is a really great product.

How did you cope with receiving the fixtures so close to the event?

Initially, we were not sure if we would receive the fixtures in time for the FNB Innovators Award, so I made sure to leave room for them if they did arrive in time, but I added other fixtures to provide key lighting should we need to. Fortunately, Duncan and the DWR team did manage to deliver, as they do, and we received them on our final day of load in ahead of the show.

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We were able to set the units up, and after downloading a fixture profile, we were up and running in no time. Duncan showed me a few tips and tricks, such as the fact that if you index one of the colour wheels just right, you can produce three colours simultaneously!

What are some of your favourite features on the Esprite?

The Esprite is equipped with fast framing shutter blades, which make framing quick, easy and extremely accurate. I enjoy working with gobos, and I was very impressed with the gobos that are included in the fixture. The fixture is also equipped with two colour wheels, one with saturated colours and the other with pastels, which allows for a lot of creativity and range.

What really stands out for me though, is the fact the Esprite is jam-packed with so *many* features, all of which work really well. In the South African market, this is a huge benefit as we often have to do more with fewer lights and therefore having a fixture that can only do one thing is not ideal.

What are some of the benefits of the Esprite for rental companies in SA?

For rental companies, I think that the Esprite makes for a good investment because it is so versatile. There are a number of fixtures on the market that are designed for one specific application, and therefore cannot be used for anything else. I can really see the Esprite being used as a workhorse fixture that is ideal for key lighting and a range of other applications. Also, unlike older luminaire fixtures, the Esprite has a LED engine, which means that rental companies no longer have to budget for replacement lamps, making it more affordable to run and maintain over the long term.

What is your overall impression of Robe products?

A really good illustration of the quality and longevity that Robe brings to the table is the fact that I had several generations of Robe lights on the rig for the FNB Innovators Award, and all of them performed perfectly. The lighting rig for the event comprised more than 400 fixtures, which included ColorSpot 700E ATs first launched in 2007, the MMX Spot that became available in 2011,

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and the LEDWash 800™ from 2012. In addition, we had BMFL Spots that became available in 2014, miniPointes which were launched in 2015, the LEDBeam 150 from 2017, and finally, the Esprites that were launched late last year. It’s a solid testament to quality and reliability for which Robe is renowned as well as their commitment to innovation.

Would you recommend Robe’s Esprite to others?

NEVER – I want them all to myself! On a serious note, I would definitely recommend the fixture to others in the lighting industry. I am looking forward to having the opportunity to play with them a bit more and therefore am hoping that other rental companies include the unit in the inventories in the near future.

Follow Marius’ work on FACEBOOK

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