

New Tobin Center for the Performing Arts Chooses Robert Juliat
followspots

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When San Antonio's Tobin Center for the Performing Arts opens in September its H-E-B Performance Hall and Alvarez Family Studio Theater will boast Robert Juliat Cyrano and Buxie followspots, respectively.

The new Tobin Center rises behind the façade of the former San Antonio Municipal Auditorium along the famed River Walk downtown. The 1,750-seat multi-purpose house will be the home of the San Antonio Symphony and other resident companies; its inaugural 2014-15 season will feature such diverse performers as comedy legend Bill Cosby, radio icon Garrison Keillor and "The Prairie Home Companion" and the Scottish Ballet's production of "A Streetcar Named Desire."

The four-level H-E-B Performance Hall is the largest of the Tobin Center's performance spaces; it has installed four Cyrano 2500W HMI followspots whose narrow beam angle makes them the perfect fixture for long throw distances. The Alvarez Family Studio Theater is a black box-style space with multiple seating arrangements; it has acquired a pair of Buxie 575W MSD ultra-compact followspots, which deliver a powerful punch in a small package.

Technical Director Stefan De Wilde was familiar with Robert Juliat followspots from his tenures with Disney and Cirque du Soleil. De Wilde confidently selected the followspots, stating that Robert Juliat followspots "were the industry standard for top-of-the-line fixtures," he says. "They were the most flexible, light-weight units with high output and extremely high quality. The Tobin Center is booked through 2017 so these lights will get a lot of use. We need products that will hold up under a lot of use and still provide a beautiful, powerful output of light."

The Cyranos were an ideal choice for the large H-E-B Performance Hall. "We needed a long throw, flicker-free unit since we will accommodate broadcast level television production," notes De Wilde. "The design was also important. The Cyrano's color changer is mounted on the center of the fixture, which is more ergonomic for the operator, and the fixture is balanced."

Likewise, the compact Buxies were a good fit for the Alvarez Family Studio Theater because of their "small footprint, great output and quiet operation," he reports. "This is a small theater. I can mount the Buxies on a tripod, put them in a spot tower or clamp them to the catwalk railing. They have beautiful optics and will last a long time thanks to their high-quality construction."

The Robert Juliat followspots were obtained from the Texas Scenic Co.