

Philips Vari-Lite VL3500 Wash FX luminaires deliver mesmerising lighting for The 1975



UK – Critically-acclaimed indie pop four-piece The 1975 have been driving fans wild on their world tour, including a sold out show at London’s majestic Royal Albert Hall where the power and brightness of 12 Philips Vari-Lite VL3500 Wash FX luminaires provided spectacular illumination for the Manchester-born boys.

Show and lighting designer Tobias Rylander, of design house Seven Design Works, worked alongside lighting designer Darren Purves to specify the VL3500 Wash FX luminaires which complemented the remarkably physical design’s clean lines and epic style aerial projection. This concept was inspired by Rylander’s passion for architecture and art, particularly the artist Anthony McCall, who is renowned for his work with forced perspective and light off of reflective surfaces.



“The band had a very distinct graphic design in the album artwork,” explains Rylander. “They also like everything

to be in black and white and their logo is this strict square which they use everywhere. When it came to building the concept I just began to layer what they wanted and play around with forced perspective and dimensions, creating graphic aerial projections with lines and squares.”

Rylander specified the VL3500 Wash FX for its intensely bright 70,000 lumens output, which performed in harmony with the projection. It can also be used as a spot when the luminaire’s VARI*BRITE mode is engaged, which works in conjunction with its internal zoomable optics system to offer a tight column of remarkably intense light from almost any zoom position.



“The VL3500 Wash FX is an extremely dynamic luminaire. It was the workhorse of the rig and the only moving light I used in this tour as it also performs brilliantly as a spot,” explains Rylander. “The VL3500 Wash FX consistently delivered at different intensities and zooms which worked perfectly to not ‘over-shine’ the projection aspect whilst still being the ideal intensely bright wash.”

Rylander’s design seamlessly blended lighting and video to produce an edgy and distinctive show that suited the band’s alternative aesthetic. The moody and architectural design comprised of breath taking aerial projection and video content, sharp geometric shapes and silhouettes, which continuously morphed from organic dripping content to sharp solid structures, heightened by the VL3500 Wash FX’s open rotating FX pattern wheel effects system and interchangeable front lens system. “The effects features of the VL3500 Wash FX make it stand out over other wash lights and I really like the ‘cat eye’ lens,” continues Rylander.

Striking and undulating lines were produced through moving gobos and five on-stage projectors and two at FOH, with the projectors placed behind the LED video frame creating a framed tunnel perspective that gave depth to the stage. Looks created went from single light on one person to dynamic almost physical lighting and frenzied strobing with the power of the VL3500 Wash FX adding a gritty evocative atmosphere to the sometimes chilled, sometimes energetic look.



The 1975 are on a fast track to super-stardom, with a plethora of global headline shows scheduled to come later

in the year, including exciting performances at several festivals this summer such as Glastonbury and Benicassim.