

Robe Lights TPi Awards 2018



It's THAT time of the year again ... the 2018 Total Production International (TPi) Awards, produced by TPi Magazine, part of Mondiale Publishing was staged at the Battersea Evolution venue in London, and Robe was once again delighted to be right at the heart of the action, lighting the event utilising some of its latest technologies.

Nathan Wan put together a stunning lighting design that supported this year's visual theme of 1980s / early 1990s New York 'golden age' rap / hip hop ... complete with eye-catching cityscape video design reflecting the musical diversity and innovation of the period ... with a few humorous twists and other cultural nuances – like neon tagging and spontaneous graffiti art – included!

The lighting scheme involved around 300 Robe fixtures in the main room, plus more which were lighting the foyer and the Robe VIP Area where guests partied their way long into the night once presenter Russell Kane – back for the fourth consecutive year – ripped through the 27 trophies accompanied by some side-splitting humour!



Nathan worked with lighting director – and regular FOH team collaborator – Andy Webb and assistant LD Jordan Tinniswood, a lighting design student at Rose Bruford College who underwent a rigorous selection process to get the gig ... initiated through NRG (Next Robe Generation).

The calibre of the NRG applicants for the assistant LD post this year was so high, that Nathan created extra roles to offer more opportunities, so the NRG crew this year included another five who worked on lighting and tech'ing the main bar / reception areas and the Robe VIP afterparty lounge.

When it came to the look and feel of the main room lighting, Nathan had the physical parameters to take into account which is a long wide space with a low ceiling and the New York street style theming which he wanted to

reflect with the lighting – lots of contrasts.



His own creative twists included having a baseball arena / practice arena / stadium flood-light feel ... so the architectural starting point for lighting was four grids of trussing, two at either side of the room, each loaded with 15 Robe Spider LED wash beams.

These were all tilted around 40 degrees and replicated the arena / stadium lighting bank feel really well. Having the Spiders in these positions, in close proximity enabled him to run video inputs as well as programming the fixtures as a lightsource.

In addition to the grid, there were three 'horseshoe' shaped trusses traversing the room and an upstage truss, with five 2 metre high vertical trusses each side of the stage, extending out to the corners of the room, each with a Pointe on top and a PixelPATT on the front. They were perfect fillers for these black areas.

Forty MegaPointes were the main effects lighting, rigged on the three horseshoes and used extensively for all the aerial work with their radials, prisms and gobos. It is a large space to fill and the power and brightness of the MegaPointes was needed to get plenty of light and funky looks.



Forty-eight LEDBeam 150s were arranged in groups of four on the horseshoes and used for ACL-style finger looks – ideal to match the period feel. Its excellent zoom feature was great for getting the effect just right!

On the upstage truss, six Pointes provided back-light on Russell Kane and the various awards presenters, mirrored by another six upstage on the deck.

Getting the lighting levels onstage correct was an intricate and challenging task that combined several fixtures and a lateral approach. A pair of Robe DL7S profiles was supported with DL4F LED fresnels doing the side / cross stage filler, two more Spiders boosted the lumens at the back, needed to make people pop out from the intense video backdrop. For additional stage key and front lighting there were two BMFL Spots with motion

cameras ... operated remotely via two RoboSpot base stations at FOH.



Seventeen ColorStrobes spread across the trusses kicked in high-powered, great quality LED flooding and also specials to boost the light levels in the room, with an MDG theOne ramping up the atmosphere and haze.

All the lighting was programmed and run on two Avolites Arena consoles with a couple of days pre-vis at Robe UK in Northampton the previous week.

Nathan, Andy, Jordan and the NRG crew worked closely on site with Evolution's house lighting suppliers Hawthorn and their project managers. They got-in the day before mid-morning and worked the day and through the night to get everything prepared.

After a short break, they were back ready for tweaks and the first rehearsals in the afternoon. Apart from the compressed timeframe, the challenge on this one is always that your work is right there being judged by the whole industry!

The seats don't get much hotter than that!



For Jordan, it was a fantastic experience to extend his knowledge of programming and the creative and practical skills and considerations required to light a show like this, as well as an insight into the communication and political skills needed to work harmoniously with all the other departments ... all under the same time-pressure.

The other NRG crew were Adam Davis (Robe VIP Lounge LD / operator), Alex Merrett (Main Bar LD / operator) James Matthews (assistant LD in the Robe VIP Lounge & RoboSpot operator), Owen Yelland (Avolites systems tech) and James Marshall (tech crew and RoboSpot operator).

In addition to supporting the show, Robe's UK and International teams and their guests had a fantastic evening and Robe again sponsored the 'Favourite Lighting Rental Company' Award, which was presented by CEO Josef

Valchar and won for the fifth year running ... by Neg Earth Lights.

The TPi Awards remembered the too many 'absent friends' who have departed in the last 12 months including Robe's own Kevin Loretto from the North American sales team. The show stopping evening which honoured some of the best, most creative, innovative and technical achievements of the last year in great style ... was also a fitting celebration to their incredible characters', lives and contributions to the industry.

Photos : Louise Stickland