

Robe rig for Blood Brothers SA Supergroup

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Photos courtesy Louise Stickland

Blood Brothers, South Africa's first ever supergroup, is a project featuring 10 of the country's best known musicians and rock heroes, who recently played a special one-off concert to a hugely enthusiastic 3500 capacity audience at Johannesburg's Carnival City Big Top venue.

Lighting – almost entirely Robe, a mix of Pointes, MMX Spots, LEDWash 600s and 300s, LEDBeam 100s and PARFect 100s – was designed and operated by Magz Schoeman, head of lighting at the busy venue.

Magz was very excited when the opportunity arose to light such a unique and high profile event, and put substantial energy and detail into designing a rock-tastic rig for the occasion.

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A pre-production meeting revealed who was in the band. Magz had already worked with some of the individual bands involved, and learned that the set would be three hours long and be a mix of the greatest and best loved hits of the key bands making up Blood Brothers plus their interpretations of classic rock anthems – Smells Like Teen Spirit, Highway To Hell, et al. which have inspired them.

The task of actually lighting the show was then left completely to her experience and instincts! “It was great to also be given this freedom and trust,” commented Magz, who has been heading up the Carnival City lighting team for two years.



Three trusses were installed over the stage all flown at slightly different heights. An upstage LED screen neatly filled the space at the back, running special content throughout the show, so lighting also had to work with this. On the back truss – also flying the video screen – Magz

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positioned four LEDBeam 100s a side to light the two drum kits located upstage left and right.

Over the mid stage areas were two V shaped trusses. The downstage one was rigged with four MMX Spots, four LEDWash 300s and eight PARFect 100 LED PARs, and the upstage one with 16 x PARFect 100s – used highly effectively for retro ACL looks – a dramatic staple of all the greatest historical rock ‘n’ roll designs!



Four LEDWash 600s were positioned on the front truss and used for general stage and band washes, together with 36 x PAR 64 wide conventionals. Four MMX Spots on the same truss were used for patterning and texturing the stage floor and set.

On the floor, four totem (upright) trussing sections were tucked in each corner, each with four PARFects cutting right across the performance space for additional punchy low-level ACL looks.

Floor based effects coming from six Robe Pointes, positioned on the drum risers at the back, the stage risers in front and the floor gave a multi-level beam coverage as well as a myriad of effects. Magz was also able to use them as beam, spot and wash fixtures.

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There was a strobe in front of each drummer, with the third stage-centre, and three hazers pumped out some serious atmosphere, without which no self-respecting rock gig would be complete!

One of the challenges was lighting the epic set, maintaining the high energy levels and ensuring that each of the 34 numbers had its own distinctive look and feel.

Thanks to the versatility of the Robes and the dynamics of the design, Magz kept the pace and variety flowing with a mix of rock-out beam technology looks, powerful colour combinations and the stripped back elegance of basic profiles and washes for the slower numbers.

Magz lights a huge variety of shows at Carnival City and comments that having the Robes at her disposal is invaluable.

The Blood Brothers concert was a huge success and also raised funds for the Vrede Foundation, an initiative helping to educate young people about cancer.