

Robe Roadshow in South Africa

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Article and photos courtesy Louise Stickland



Robe's "The Future Is Digital" hit sunny South Africa on penultimate stop of 2008.

Robe's favourite Roadshow double act of Harry von den Stemmen and Gerald Heise joined Robe distributors DWR, who's Duncan Riley had arranged sessions in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Also joining the Roadshow team for the week was DWR's technical support engineers Bruce Riley

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and Nick Britz, while Cherine Viney and Sherryn Riley took care of everyone's travel arrangements, catering, merchandising and general administration for the 3 events in 2 locations.



The DWR

Team with Harry and Gerald from Robe, and above right, with guests attending the 4pm JHB session. The week kicked off in buzzing Johannesburg, with 2 sessions on the Tuesday at DWR's HQ in Strijdom Park. Both were packed with over 40 industry professionals working across all sectors, who had travelled from all over SA to attend, with one even jetting in from Namibia.

Robe's Digital range - the DT3000 and 7000s took centre stage, along with the REDWash 3Y192 and others in the new RED Series. Also featured strongly was the 700 Series and the Robe Dream Box, with a keen interest shown in all products .. so much so that Duncan was already receiving phone calls for quotes on the Digital series from people leaving the first Johannesburg session on their way back to the airport!

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Fixtures arrive for Miss World 2008 on the day of the Jo'burg Roadshow... guests kindly help unload truck!

An extra frisson of excitement came with the arrival on the day of the Jo'burg Roadshow of the 12 DT7000s and 35 REDWash fixtures that were utilised by lighting & visuals designer Tim Dunn on the Miss World 2008 event, staged in the City the week after the Roadshow. This design incorporated the largest numbers of these fixtures used on one show to date, in a stunning design hailed as the most visually spectacular Miss World ever!

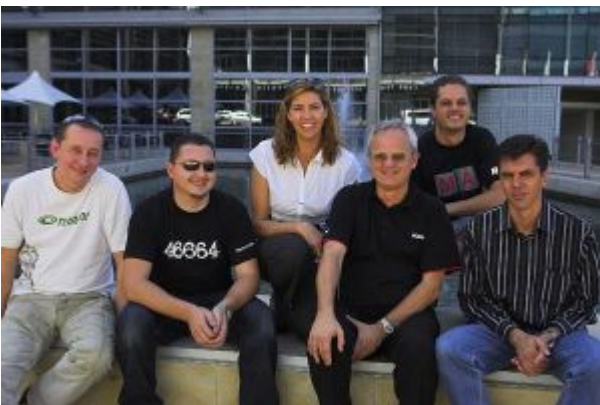
Both Johannesburg sessions - which included the technical product presentations plus general Robe information and Q&As - were followed by ongoing lively and informal discussions imbuing the very relaxed DWR ambience.

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Lighting and video designers mingled with hire companies, programmers and operators active in clubs, theatres and TV to live concerts and events Duncan Riley says "The response was absolutely amazing. It's the busiest time of year, and people really made a major effort to shoehorn the Roadshow into their hectic schedules".

LD Michael Broderick, making the trip from Durban, could hardly contain his enthusiasm, "What a mind- blowing experience!!! I am still reeling from the sheer power of the Robe products we saw, and feeling a massive weight of expectancy and responsibility as an LD, and simultaneously hugely excited, challenged and inspired by this technology and what it offers."



Gerald Heise, Nick Britz, Cherine Viney, Harry von den

Stemmen, Bruce Riley and Duncan Riley in Cape Town

On Wednesday, the team decamped to beautiful Cape Town and more fabulous weather, and set all the Roadshow equipment up in the one of the conference rooms at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

One Roadshow session was held here, which was attended by 36 people, again repeating the success and vibrance of the 2 Jo'Burg shows. People again flew in to attend, including SA's best known theatre LD Dennis Hutchinson, who'd been unable to attend the Jo'burg event.

Harry von den Stemmen says, "Duncan and DWR made a fantastic effort to ensure that the events were all highly organised. All 3 seminars were very focussed, generating lots of interesting questions and genuine interest in the Digital route".

Gerald Heise weighs in with "These were definitely among the best Roadshows we have experienced yet, the level of interest was impressive and reinforced the very personal relationship that Duncan and DWR has with its clients"

Theatre LD John T Baker adds, "I think the technology is amazing, it has huge potential in theatre, and it's great that Robe and DWR have given us this opportunity to see it first hand".

So the Robe Roadshow finishes the year - the last show is in Chicago on 8th December - on a high note with the future most definitely being Digital and mirroring the immense positive energy in the South African production industry.

The Roadshow resumes in January 2009, first stop Poland.