Robe sponsors TPi Awards 2023

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Robe was proud to be the lighting sponsor of the 2023 TPi Awards, supplying over 250 of its latest moving lights plus a stunning design to the event produced by TPi Magazine, part of Mondiale Media, which honours some of the best creative and technical achievements in the world of entertainment.

This year, the TPi Awards returned to its traditional late February slot at Evolution London, and was hosted by comedian Suzi Ruffell, who unleashed her wit and acute satirical intelligence on

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over 1,700 industry professionals in the room. She presented 30 Awards covering numerous production aspects from set design to catering and sustainability.

The very latest Robe technology was showcased by lighting director Nathan Wan, associate LD Andy Webb and lead programmer Jordan Tinniswood who were integral to the TPi creative team responsible for delivering an extravaganza of colour and visuality that supported the video content produced by Observatory.

A high impact opening sequence was followed by the slick and streamlined Awards presentations based around this year's theme of "Around The World". The opening show featured a rocket blasting off to visit various international performance venues and spaces before returning to Evolution.

Preceding the Awards presentation, the main room lighting was also required to create a great ambience and a sense of anticipation for the walk in, and then also facilitate the dinner in two parts.

A different vibe was required in the bar and pre-show / after-show gathering areas, so lighting again played an important role here, and for the first time, the exterior of Evolution was lit, in this case with 10 x iFORTES from Robe's IP rated series, setting a cool and dramatic tone for the evening and guest arrivals.

Robe also used its involvement in the event to offer some of its NRG (Next Robe Generation) students a chance to be involved in the action, with seven people joining Nathan and Andy taking on a variety of different lighting production roles from associate LD to RoboSpot operators, providing invaluable hands-on experience.

After TPi's team led by commercial director Fran Begaj presented the initial theme, Nathan and Andy created the lighting design and also suggested some tracks that could be integrated into the musical intro, complete with specific lighting, from which TPi chose which elements to include in the final track.

The 1 minute 34 second intro was central to the evening, an intense kick-start to the Awards ceremony which needed maximum impact to pull everyone's attention to the stage and ready them for the Awards presentations.

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A 5 metre diameter circular screen was at the centre of the stage surrounded with 10 Robe 360-degree rotating TetraX fixtures, vertically rigged, which were perfect for achieving the crazy, whizzy beamy effects that helped set the scene and ramp up the excitement as each Award and winner was announced.

Nathan explained that these were installed as multi-use fixtures, and one of the ideas was to mimic effects in the video content which was highly successful.

The central screen was flanked by four 6×4 metre screens, two a side, radiating out from the centre, and in between these were more TetraX fixtures on angled trusses, part of a smart design to accentuate the depth of the long and relatively low height stage area.

“Having worked in this venue and on this event a few times now, it is always interesting to find original ways of maximising the space with a bit of lighting trickery!” Nathan commented.

Twenty LEDBeam 350s were installed above the stage in a grid above the main presentation area, enabling this to be washed with colour and movement, and another 52 x LEDBeam 350s were dotted around the room trusses in clusters of four where they could also provide pseudo-ACL beam looks as well as wash the room.

Twenty-four of Robe’s new PAINTE smaller, brighter, lighter TE LED technology moving lights were deployed in the main room, 14 above the stage and 10 on the stage deck, stage left and right on risers.

A total of 30 Tetra1 and Tetra2 moving LED battens were distributed around the room and on the

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stage. The Tetra1s were mainly rigged vertically between the screens and the Tetra2s were distributed across the four above-audience trusses.

Also on these four audience trusses was a combination of 27 x FORTES, positioned, along with the 52 x LEDBeam 350s, to cross light the stage area and as much of the room as possible. Nathan noted that it was “essential to light every part of the room and not just the stage to help create immersive effects and ensure that everyone felt involved.”

Five T1 Profiles on the front truss were used for the essential key lighting of presenters and award winners, and four FORTE FollowSpots with integral cameras running on four RoboSpot BaseStation systems were used for remote follow spotting.

For atmosphere, two MDG The One foggers were utilised in the room, and Strictly FX brought in a number of lasers to embellish the visuality further, together with pyro and CO2 jets.

As always, the high pressure of designing a show to impress the production industry with a get in the day before and one night of onsite programming were the major challenges, and while Nathan and Andy did achieve a lot in pre-vizzing, meeting all the expectations certainly ratcheted up the pressure.

The main room lighting was run from an Avolites D9 console programmed by Jordan and operated by Will Grubb who was the assistant LD for the evening.

He commented, “The whole experience is invaluable and something that I never even thought was possible – being at the TPi Awards, surrounded by leading industry professionals. It’s

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fantastic to have on the CV, and I would encourage more students to join NRG and explore these opportunities! The whole Robe team is super friendly and working hard to assist students in connecting with the right scenarios and the right people."

The Reception / Foyer / Bar area was lit with 10 x FORTEs and 16 x LEDBeam 150s, with the LEDBeam 350 once again proving its versatility and usefulness while the FORTE added extra oomph and power!

A key objective in this space was to create a cool, lively mood for pre-dinner mingling, for which these fixtures were a perfect choice, rigged on the house trusses above the bar.

Nathan noted that the success of the design and ensuring all this lighting was rigged correctly and working as it should was thanks to plenty of hard work and attention to detail by the whole lighting team on the get in and show days.

He added that it was also a testament to how well these latest Robe LED fixture ranges all work together in various combinations, with continuity of colour and quality of light.

For the first time at a TPi Awards, the exterior of the venue was lit as part of the production lighting / sponsorship package, for which 10 x iFORTEs underneath the roof, paired with 16 LEDBeam 350s ensured the front façade shimmered in the night as guests arrived.

Andy commented that it was a great opportunity not just to show off the capabilities of the lights but being able to light the exterior "completed the picture in terms of visual and lighting presentation."

Other Robe lighting crew on the night included Jack Barlow who programmed and operated the Avo Tiger Touch II console in the bar. Another Tiger Touch II was used to run the architectural lighting, programmed and operated by Kyle Evans, while Andy used a third TT II for white / key lighting in the main room.

The four Robe NRG students operating the RoboSpot systems were Alison O'Shea, Avram Rosewood, Lewis Bradley and Liam Fox.

Robe also sponsored the 'Lighting Designer of the Year' Award, which this year was presented by

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Robe UK sales director Ian Brown and won by Ed Warren who is known for his creativity and uncompromising imaginative ingenuity. His recent clients include Idles, Friendly Fires, Four Tet and Skrillex, and Ed also won the TPi Award in 2016.

Other 2023 winners included Mark Cunniffe who picked up the Mark Fisher Set Designer of the Year Award for his work on Ed Sheeran's ground-breaking +–=÷× Tour and Ant Barrett, Coldplay's video director, who walked away with the 2023 Des Fallon Video Visionary Award.

Will Grubb (NRG), Tomas Kohout (Exhibition manager, Robe SRO), Kyle Evans (NRG), Alison O'Shea (NRG), Avram Rosewood (NRG), Liam Fox (NRG), Jack Barlow (NRG) and Lewis Bradley (NRG).

Robe UK's head of marketing Theresa Gibson concluded, "It was an electric evening celebrating the success and achievements of our awesome sector and recognising the incredible talent, passion and creativity of the live entertainment industry.

"We were proud to again be the TPi Awards lighting sponsor and to see Robe's creative team pushing the boundaries and delivering a brilliant lighting design with some of our latest fixtures adding to the vibe and atmosphere in the room. Coupled with the usual meticulous attention to detail for all aspects of the show, this ensured the scene was set from the moment guests arrived

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with the new exterior lighting scheme.

“It was a perfect opportunity to involve seven NRG students with practical experience in various lighting production roles, and for them to become part of the overall TPi Awards production crew, capturing the magic and essence of the Awards phenom.

“It was also a fantastic night to reconnect with industry friends and colleagues under one roof and be part of such a special evening. Huge congratulations to all the winners and nominees, the Mondiale Media team and all the suppliers involved in delivering such a superlative event!”

‘Robe TPi Awards 2023 4 C’ shows Robe UK sales director Ian Brown on the left with ‘Lighting Designer of the Year’ award winner, Ed Warren.

Photos: By Joe Okpato, courtesy TPi.

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