

Robe Turns Up Heat for Prolight+Sound 2023

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Czech Republic-based lighting manufacturer Robe turned up the heat, the spectacle and the topicality and importance of respecting the planet in presenting the finale of its “All Environments” live performance show trilogy.

This dazzling display of creativity and imagination featured 350 of Robe’s latest iSeries of IP rated products plus three performers including a silks acrobat at the Prolight+Sound 2023 expo in Frankfurt, Germany, last week.

Adding extra performers, excitement and energy to Hall 12.1 of the Frankfurt Messe complex, the 5-times a day show attracted record crowds who also enjoyed a carefully curated pre-show ‘Voice of God’ sequence, highlighting the technical elements and innovation of each of the featured

iSeries products.



“All Environments” was presented in a dynamic, specially devised 270-degree theatre / arena style format, designed and produced by Robe’s in house creative team. It illustrated how the different fixtures can be used, specifically demonstrating their robustness to elements like water, dust, fire, wind, snow, etc., thanks to a host of original patented features developed by Robe.

All of this expertise and smart engineering ensures that these products are among the best IP rated solutions for lighting designers working worldwide in all sectors.

Robe CEO Josef Valchar commented, “Prolight is always a good show for us and 2023 was no exception! We have all seen how business has bounced back over the last year in spite of some extreme challenges, and everyone is looking forward to the future and to using all these great new technologies and creative tools we have brought to market”.

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A full Robe team plus most of their European distributors enjoyed the buzz. “We were delighted to see a fantastic international response with guests from every continent including leading designers and specifiers, all visiting the stand and getting immersed in the show and most importantly, being face-to-face with one another again,” added Josef.

Two constantly busy demo rooms – one private and one public – were dedicated to Robe’s now and future technologies – enabling closer up product presentations.



For the final two hours of the expo on the first three days, Robe’s ‘Meeting Hour’ saw the booth take on a more social vibe as the famous Czech hospitality was rolled out and the good vibes continued to flow.

Robe’s full international team was joined by staff from all over Europe, the USA, Latin America,

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UK, Asia, Australasia and the pan-Pacific, plus a lively team of Robe Germany's NRG (Next Robe Generation) students.

A special invitation booth party on the Wednesday night was popular, with guests entertained by musician Beatrix Löw-Beer and friends.

Robe's "On the Road" show truck - a 45ft artic truck / trailer rig - was parked outside Hall 12 providing additional meeting areas and interest. This is a fully kitted out and expandable mobile showroom / studio / meeting facility, complete with roof deck, which will again be touring selected European festivals through the summer.



The Products

Starring in Robe's Prolight 2023 "All Environments" show was Robe's iFORTE, iESPRITE, iPAINTE, iTetra2, iSpiider, iBeam350 and TetraX moving lights; the T11 Profile, PC and Fresnel and TX1 PosiProfiles all specially refined for theatre and performance applications, together with three RoboSpot systems running with T1 FollowSpot fixtures.

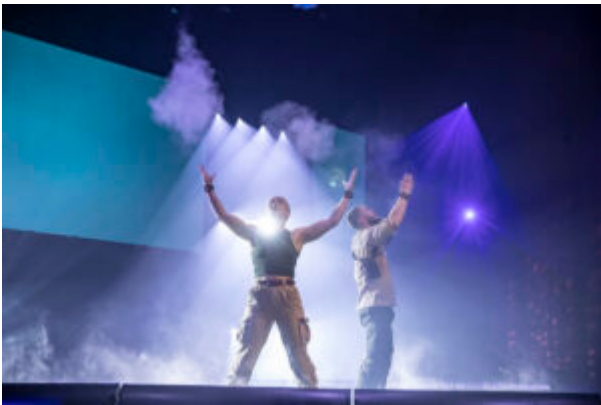
Robe also introduced its IP65-rated FOOTSIE fixture which truly redefines the concept of

traditional 'footlights', effectively removing the visual barrier between audience and performers.

"All Environments" Finale

Being the finale show, the challenge was to increase the epic nature of the "All Environments" show, explained Robe's lead creative Nathan Wan, who worked closely with his own team including lighting associate designer Andy Webb and lighting operator Jordan Tinniswood, together with exhibition manager, Tomas Kohout. The three performers were choreographed by Jay Marshall.

The goal was also to illustrate the newest products in the environment for which they were designed, so a 4 x 4 metre square rain curtain was central to the stage design, with iSpider fixtures completely immersed in the water tank below, lighting upwards as well as a grid of iSpiders in the centre of the roof, plus multiple other lights coming in from different heights and all sides of the room ... as well as from the floor and stage deck.



The almost in-the-round design was chosen to give the maximum viewing angles and a large 9-metre-wide by 3.6-metre-high LED screen at the back - cleverly ground supported - was split into three sections to provide narrative context for the show and clear and concise product technical information during the VOG presentations.

In addition to the rain curtain, other environmental effects included jumping water jets, flame jets, a snow machine, an MDG The One and a low fogger, all woven into the story to show the resilience of these Robe iSeries products in the most extreme weather conditions.

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Nathan enjoyed using all the new products, remarking that the iPAINTE packs a brilliant punch for such a compact luminaire, and that the iFORTE is every bit as awesome as the standard FORTE. Robe has designed the iSeries to be as identical to the standard no IP rated products of the same name allowing the flexibility of mixing the two types without compromise.

Nathan and the team started work on the show several months in advance after receiving a brief from Josef and an outline of what products will be being promoted and should be available at that time.

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All of this multi-layered bespoke production – from compiling the soundtrack to the stage, set, video, screen content and show design and implementation – is produced in-house, which makes some elements more fluid and cohesive on one hand and adds pressure on the other. “The buck stops with us basically,” stated Nathan, “We aim to raise the bar every time, and with that everyone’s expectations ramp up!” he notes, adding they also need to impress the industry generally, and that’s people who are working on amazing creative projects all the time!

Adding the aerialist brought a unique WOW factor and also a throwback to Robe’s popular “Cirque” show staged at Prolight in 2018.

The lighting – over 2,500 cues across 61 DMX universes – in the 90-minute cycle that included the All Environments show and all the VOG presentations, was programmed on an Avolites D9 console.

Robe’s international marketing manager Pavel Nemeč commented, “As always, we were really impressed with the number of people visiting the stand – it was packed throughout the show! We generally have a strong brand image, and the live shows are a great way to reinforce that by

entertaining and showing how our kit can make stages look great while emphasising other messaging like the power of people and communication that underpins the whole entertainment technology industry.”



Anolis & Artistic Licence

Adjacent to the main Robe booth were the stands of Anolis and Artistic Licence, two vibrant and complementary Robe businesses: Anolis, a manufacturer of high-quality LED lighting for architectural and archtainment projects, and Artistic Licence, well known for their market-leading intelligent lighting controls for architectural, entertainment and commercial lighting.

Anolis showed new products from all their current ranges and Artistic License also highlighted some practical new control solutions and met some potential new distributors, appreciating the international flavour of the expo.

Both of these brands also saw plenty of action.

Artur Frantz, Anolis Germany’s architectural lighting & installations manager, commented, “We saw a lot of customers, old and new, who were interested in our new products – particularly the Calumma M and S and Ambiane SP16 fixtures. Having our own stand area adjacent to the main Robe one has been a huge positive and really helped ensure visibility for the Anolis brand. We’ve

Robe Turns Up Heat for Prolight+Sound 2023

also enjoyed a great synergy with Artistic Licence being next door, and it has been great to see and interact with so many people face to face.”

For Artistic Licence, CEO Wayne Howell stated, “It has been a particularly interesting show because we are new to the ‘Robe family’. The stand positioning has resulted in a large footfall of high-quality personnel, with a great mix of distributors and actual customers / end-users. It has been very productive for us, and has felt considerably busier and more proactive than last year’s first post-Covid Prolight.”

Photos: Louise Stickland.