



With a jam-packed training calendar, South African based DWR Distribution takes pleasure in hosting workshops throughout the year, but their favourite part is being able to offer motivational talks that remind people of what is possible, why they love the industry in the first place and ideas they can apply to their next show. International lighting designer, Roland Greil, was invited to present a lighting design workshop in Johannesburg, Durban, Gqeberha and Cape Town earlier this year and on this occasion brought his family along to share the beauty of South Africa and its special people.

“It was an absolute blast for my family and myself to spend some quality time with the team at DWR Distribution and the South African industry, but as always it was way too short,” Roland smiles.

While Roland presents a selected handful of lectures around the globe each year, he has never done as many workshops in one country as he has in SA, and this was his fourth motivational talk. “It was an absolute pleasure to be back again and share a few tips and knowledge with the industry,” says Roland. “It was slightly different as this was the first time I did lectures in multiple places, which allowed me to meet more of the outstanding local talent. Everywhere we went there was the uprising feeling of everything in our industry coming back to life after the pandemic, which is a very positive and great feeling. Add to this the great hosts, my friends at DWR.”

Based in Munich, Roland is a well-recognised lighting designer, associate, programmer and lighting director who has worked for artists like *The Rolling Stones*, *Adele*, *Phil Collins* and *Rammstein*. Besides his natural talent, creativity, and methodical organisational skills, he has a warm nature and is easy to work with.

When asked to share three vital tips for lighting designers, Roland answered, “Here are my three bullet points which I think are key for success in our weird but lovely business of lighting design! Always think out of the box and push boundaries to leave your own fingerprint! In doing so, never forget that we all are service providers and at no point in time is it about us. Lastly, never forget to be humble and a nice guy to each and everyone, including the cleaning lady.”

His words resonated with Michael Taylor-Broderick, a lighting designer for over three decades who is also part of the DWR Distribution team. “The workshop was excellent, insightful on so many levels and not alienating despite Roland being a really big player,” said Michael. “A lot of things he said resonated deeply, like ‘less often being more’ and ‘it’s never about you the lighting guy but about the client.’ There were so many things he

touched on that made me feel like he is a man after my own heart, his statement, “never use technology for technology’s sake,” sits very well with me.”

result



The Roland Greil Lighting Design Workshop was initiated by DWR’s Duncan Riley and entry was free of charge. “There are so many wonderful people in the South African live events industry and our aim was to lift up their spirit, present new skills or ways of thinking when tackling a lighting show and of course to give them an opportunity to meet someone like Roland. Many people may never have the experience of working abroad or attending an international trade show or event. Workshops like these provide people with the chance to be encouraged by one of the most talented lighting designers in the world, gain a better understanding of working on large-scale productions and to applying the creative process when working on their day to day events. We appreciate everyone who attended! Thank you Roland for making this workshop possible. You have become a friend to all of us and we appreciate you and your family.”

DWR would like to extend sincere gratitude to the venues that hosted the workshop, namely Rivers Church Kyalami, Rivers Church Durban North, Mandela Bay Theatre Complex and The Baxter Theatre. “We were overwhelmed by the hospitality of the personnel at each venue and their willingness to help us,” said Duncan. “Thank you very much.”

There were many DWR staff working behind the scenes, and a special mention extends to Stuart Andrews, who headed the project, and Amanda Miranda for their logistical planning and ensuring that the event ran smoothly.