Southern Lighting invests in grandMA3 compact & compact XT

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Southern Lighting, a well-known film lighting rental company in Johannesburg, has added MA Lighting’s grandMA3 compact and compact XT consoles to its inventory, supplied by DWR Distribution.

Southern Lighting has been a trusted name for more than fifty-five years, providing specialized lighting equipment for TV, film, and events of any size. Their recent upgrade to the grandMA3 compact and compact XT supports both their staff and freelance users.

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(Pictured Above): Southern Lighting’s Vincent van Niekerk (far left) and Lardo Botha (far right) with DWR’s Jaques Pretorius, Kevin Stannett, and Duncan Riley.

“When it was time to upgrade our existing consoles, we reached a point where it wasn’t just about control,” agree Sean Boyce and Vincent van Niekerk from Southern Lighting. “Freelancers are now being trained on MA3, and with so few experienced LDs left in the country, we have to accommodate everyone’s needs. It just made sense.”

Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution added, “That’s why we offer ongoing MA training. If you walk into one of our sessions, you’ll always find freelancers there, eager to learn. We’re focused on

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supporting the industry and helping people grow their skills.”

Before purchasing, Southern Lighting rented a grandMA3 for the T20 Auction. “It was Lardo Botha’s first time using it,” said Vincent. “Within an hour, he found it simple and intuitive compared to other consoles.”

Four years ago, Lardo Botha joined Southern Lighting. “I came from live events into the film and broadcast world just after COVID-19 — two completely different industries, and I love it,” he shares. “I did the MA training, and moving to the hardware was simple and straightforward. The T20 Auction was my first show, but even before that, I’d worked with MA3 consoles brought in by overseas clients. Patching and grouping lights is super easy. The capabilities of the MA3 are incredible — it’s not a console that will sit on a shelf.”

Duncan Riley says the jump from other consoles to MA2 was quite a big one, but moving from other consoles to MA3 is much easier. “Interestingly, the jump from MA2 to MA3 is the biggest leap, and that’s what makes it so powerful.”

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The grandMA3 compact and compact XT consoles are known for their portability, performance, and full grandMA3 system functionality. Both offer powerful control in a small footprint and are perfect for owner-operators and smaller venues. The compact XT provides additional playbacks, faders, and an extra multi-touch monitor, giving users even more hands-on control.

“Let’s be honest, all consoles have the same buttons — they’re just in different places,” says Vincent. “If you have general knowledge, moving to MA3 isn’t rocket science. The phases take a bit of getting your head around, but once you do, and once you understand recipes, that’s where the power lies.”

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Southern Lighting’s next major project is *The Bachelor*, a popular reality television show filming later this year. “Their prerequisite was two MA consoles,” said Vincent. “So we’re thinking ahead. We’re not just catering for one show — we’re preparing for the future.”

For Duncan Riley, it was a personal honour to supply the consoles to John Harrison, CEO of Southern Lighting. “I’ve known John my whole life,” said Duncan. “He’s old-school — honest, straightforward, and true to his word. It felt like going back in time to when business was done with integrity and a handshake. That’s rare these days, and it’s what makes Southern Lighting special. People work there for a reason — it’s about trust and values.”

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