Zvezdara Theatre Belgrade Invests in Robe

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Zvezdara Theatre in downtown Belgrade is the first theatre in Serbia to take delivery of Robe lights since Light and Sound Design (LSD) took on distributorship of the brand in late 2023.

The bustling 300-capacity space is now the proud owner of four Robe LEDBeam 350 moving lights and four T11 Profiles, taking the concept of ‘small is beautiful’ to heart in the process of producing great theatre.

Zvezdara Theatre was opened in 1984 and quickly became a prominent cultural hub, renowned for promoting contemporary (then) Yugoslav writers and their works. It gained recognition for

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championing innovative and thought-provoking drama, comedy, and music, and for offering high-quality modern theatrical expression that reflects the realities of Serbian life and community.

Lighting designer Aleksa Cosic, who has been working there for just over a year, is delighted with the Robe products. When he arrived, the theatre was already in the process of transitioning to LED lighting in stages, and the purchase of the Robe fixtures is an important part of this.

He is one of four regular LDs who work on lighting the theatre's many productions, and they all collectively attended open days staged after LSD took on the Robe distribution, to illustrate the breadth and dynamics of the various product ranges available.

After initially seeing the Robe products in action there, the next move was to take some of their existing conventional fixtures to LSD and test them side-by-side with the Robe options in one of LSD's large demo areas. Here, they specifically compared a 2000W profile to Robe's T11, which has a 350W equivalent multispectral light source.



They compared absolutely every parameter there was measurable about the T11 and concluded

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that it was even more powerful than any of their 2 – 5 kW range sources several times over, and with no heat output, which is another consideration for a cosy space like Zvezdara.

The overall result was that the T11 “absolutely blew away the profile,” stated Aleksa, who was impressed by the quality of the light, the fabulous flat beam field, the sharpness and accuracy of the framing shutters, and the hybrid design, which means – utilising different lens options – that it can be a profile, a PC or a fresnel fixture.

For a space like Zvezdara, where all technology must work hard and smartly, T11 offered enormous value, especially given the longevity of the LED engine.

It doesn’t need any gel or colour correction filters, it can be transformed into a gobo projector with motorised rotation, and “it’s a massively more adaptable and useful luminaire that consumes an eighth of the power of the old fresnel,” Aleksa noted.

The LEDBeam 350s were also purchased for their versatility and multi-purposefulness, and Aleksa loves the fact one LEDBeam 350 can wash the whole stage there or be zoomed right in to pinpoint and focus on a single item.

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That’s lighting designer Aleksa Cosic on the left with Milan Scepanovic from Robe’s Serbian distributor, Light and Sound Design (LSD).

All the lights were delivered in time for the new autumn season.

DMX-controlled moving lights in a theatre are still relatively rare in Serbia, as there is still a proliferation of classic dimmed light sources and control boards that have been in place since last century, so once again the venue is trailblazing and setting standards for others to follow, this time on the technical front.

The fact that lighting techs do not need to use a ladder to adjust any of the Robe products also means that the lighting department can work substantially quicker to light and tweak during rehearsals and tech sessions.

Aleksa started off studying to be an actor and then became fascinated by the technical side of performance and decided to switch his career. Before arriving at Zvezdara, he was a lighting tech and designer at the Belgrade Drama Theatre and at commercial broadcaster Tanjug TV. He was

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delighted to take up the post at Zvezdara knowing that the Robe lights had already been ordered and were on their way there.

“They are faster, more convenient and more efficient – so it’s a win-win,” he concluded.

Aleksa is one of four technical staff at the venue, all of whom are involved in running shows, and while they are lighting, audio and video specialists respectively, due to the collaborative nature of the production structure, they also crossover and assist each other as needed to find the best show solutions for all departments.

Photos: by Louise Stickland

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