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Robe BMFLs Hit The Beauty Spot in SA

Products Involved

BMFL™ Spot ColorWash 2500E AT™ LEDWash 800™

Rising to new challenges is one of the many elements making South African designer Joshua Cutts of Visual Frontier passionate about creating spectacular shows, and for the live telecast of Miss South Africa 2015, he picked up Producer / Director Gavin Wratten's gauntlet to help bring a fresh look to the high profile beauty pageant staged at Sun City Superbowl.

Central to his lighting and set design was the specification of 24 x Robe BMFL Spots moving lights. Gavin's re-imagining of the show in a new and contemporary context involved a 30 metre long black high-gloss central runway emanating from the stage, traversing to the centre of the venue. Sic Productions produced the event for Sun International. The traditional gala dinner set up was ditched in favour of tiered VIP seating – fashion show style – flanking the catwalk. Fundamental to Gavin's vision for the show, this clean, elegant and NOW aesthetic worked brilliantly on camera as well as for the 2500 live audience.

Broadcast live on leading TV channels MNET and Mzansi, this exciting redefinition of traditional beauty pageant presentation was hailed as a major success by the media and received with great enthusiasm by the public.

Twelve of the BMFLs were positioned on a 30 metre spine truss flown directly overhead the runway, with the other 12 rigged on trusses above five upstage LED screens at the back of the stage set featuring a series of wide staircases. The staircase set, three metres high at the back / highest point was split in two by a central tunnel through which the 12 contestants walked out onto the runway. The tunnel and the catwalk were both dramatic and different departures from anything previously seen on a Miss SA show.

At the back of the tunnel entranceway was a seamless plasma screen wall. The inside edges of the stairs were clad with mirrored ABS surface allowing the video material displayed on the plasma wall to bounce around the void providing interesting backdrops and texturing behind the contestants as they strutted their stuff.

The BMFLs mounted on the spine truss were used to create graceful, perfectly timed moving light-pathways that followed the contestants up and down the runway.

The vast array of BMFL features also enabled Josh to create super-cool effects like the lights having a crisp hard edged beam at the start of the pathway sequence giving way to softer effects as the

contestant walked further along the catwalk and into the front camera shots, adding great depth and dynamics.

"The extra brightness of the BMFL Spots and the fact that I still had loads of headroom in terms of intensity was fantastic" comments Josh, adding that "the quality of the light, the CRI, the crispness and the uniformity are all amazing".

The BMFL Spots on the upstage trusses were used for strong beam looks and vigorous texturing and reinforcing the colours onstage.

In fact, it was only Josh's second beauty pageant design, but he was very energised by the brief of making it alternative and current.

It was also the second time he had used BMFLs - the first being the final of Idols SA 2014, another show directed by Gavin Wratten.

He used four BMFLs on that occasion which whet his appetite, so this was a great opportunity to spec more!

Johannesburg based Dream Sets supplied the full technical production for Miss SA which also included another 70 Robe moving lights.

Seventeen LEDWash 800s were rigged over the stage and used to wash across the whole stage area and to boost the back light.

Sixteen "trusty" ColorWash 2500E ATs on the front trusses were utilized for keys and fills and 12 ColorSpot 700E ATs provided another layer of accent lighting above the stage.

Twenty-four little LEDBeam 100s positioned on trusses out in the auditorium were used to zap around the crowds and the arena perimeter catching the vibe and hubbub of the occasion.

These and a number of other lights were all programmed into Josh's grandMA2 full size console and programmed over four nights.

Josh also selected the ambient playback video content which was output to the five onstage LED screens and the plasma wall at the rear of the runway entrance, which was programmed onto four Coolux Pandora's Box media players and triggered via his grandMA2.

The show was hosted by Proverb and live performances from Gangs of Ballet, Beatenberg, AKA and Sterling EQ all helped make it a memorable and entertaining evening culminating in Liesl Lauria, a 23 year old B.Com graduate from Eldorado Park, Johannesburg, being crowned Miss South Africa 2015.

Photo Credit: Duncan Riley



