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## **Robe's a Eurovision Winner!**

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Robe was approached by Spectra Plus from Stockholm Sweden, Eurovision's technical production co-ordinators for the last 5 years. They were looking for a European lighting manufacturer to team up with, and had been monitoring Robe's profile and position in the marketplace over the last 2 years. They decided the time was right to approach Robe about being a partner in this extremely high profile show - renowned for its ambitious visual aesthetics - marking the landmark 50th anniversary of the Eurovision.

Robe's Josef Valchar and Harry von den Stemmen were initially approached by Spectra's Ola Melzig and Jan Erik Jansson and National Television of Ukraine's director of International Relations, Pavlo Grytsak, at PLASA 2004.

After this extensive testing of the suggested Robe fixtures were undertaken in Sweden, in conjunction with Robe's Swedish distributor Bellalite, after which everyone concluded that they had the right fixtures for Per Sundin's elaborate lighting design. They were impressed with the brightness and easy programming of the ColorSpot and Wash 1200s, and the standard range of gobos in the ColorSpot. Everything then went quiet at the end of the year whilst the Ukraine was embroiled in political turmoil surrounding the allegedly fraudulent November election, the subsequent 'Orange Revolution', and the re-run on December 26th, resulting in the victory of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko. After this, with time ticking away, everyone quickly re-focussed on The Song Contest. Melzig went to Kiev to reccie the venue - the Palace of Sport - and to finalise the creative concepts and operational logistics with NTU.

The production period runs from 20th April to 25th May, the highlight of which is the final. This takes place in front of a studio audience of 8000 and will be watched worldwide by over 200 million TV viewers. For the first time ever, the Song Contest is being beamed live to the US.

Robe then sought rental and production companies prepared to invest in a large amount of fixtures at this specific time, who were also prepared to make them available for use on the Eurovision event.

From the UK, Blackburn-based HSL Productions came forward and has just purchased 200 fixtures in a deal brokered by Robe UK's Ian W Brown and HSL's Simon Stuart. The balance will be supplied from Germany, in a deal negotiated by Robe's Business Development Manager Ingo Dombrowski via German distributor, LMP Lichttechnik GmbH.

On April 10th, three Spectra artics will collect the 330 fixtures from Robe's factory in Roznov, Czech Republic and drive to Kiev for the start of the load in on 22nd April. Robe is also supplying two on-site technicians to oversee the Eurovision operation and ensure it runs like clockwork.

Robe's Harry von den Stemmen says, "*We've been waiting for an opportunity like this to show the level to which we have taken our products in terms of design and quality. The Eurovision Song Contest will be another step in a run of high profile TV productions that have successfully used the ColorSpot and ColorWash 1200 AT. Designers love these fixtures and The Song Contest is the jewel in the current crown.*"

For more press information on ROBE please contact marketing department on +420 571 751 506, e-mail: [marketing@robe.cz](mailto:marketing@robe.cz).

