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Robe Steps Up The Action for Let's Dance Germany

Products Involved

ColorSpot 2500E AT™ ColorWash 2500E AT™

Over 100 Robe moving lights are in action for the sixth series of the popular reality TV show 'Let's Dance' produced by ITV Germany, which is being recorded in Studio 32 of the MMC Film & TV Studios in Cologne.

The Production Lighting Designer is Manfred Ollie Olma, one of Germany's best known LDs. His company, mo2 design GmbH, is also based in Köln, and has Executive Lighting Designer & Director of Photography David Kreileman taking care of the week-to-week running of the show's lighting. He's working alongside mo2 Project Managers Sebastian Kirsch and Matthias Allhoff.

They are using 40 x Robe ColorSpot 2500E AT fixtures and 70 x ColorWash 2500E ATs, together with a large generic and white light rig including some 270 x 1K fresnels hung around the side walls for a special tungsten 'starlight' effect.

An important aspect of the lighting is to make the couples appear dynamic on screen without using too many potentially distracting lighting or video effects, at the same time highlighting their faces and accentuating the drama, tension and emotion of their performance.

The Robes are positioned above the dancefloor allowing them to easily reach all the various points of action, including the entrance steps that sweep around an eye-catching abstract diamond shaped video centrepiece at one end of the studio.

"It's a fine balance," says Allhoff. "This is a ballroom not a stage, so it requires a very specific approach and style". This combines elements from several different lighting disciplines - including theatre, cabaret and dance.

All the HD cameras are balanced to daylight, which means that the tungsten bulbs exude an especially soft, warm and glowing 'ballroom' atmosphere which is a welcome side effect in addition to the cameras being able to reproduce the colours of the LED elements very accurately.

Robes are used for all the key lighting. Using moving lights for this task is a really fast and flexible solution that gives the director complete freedom to place the dancing couples anywhere in the space ... and for them to be quickly and properly key-lit.

It saves a massive amount of time compared to a few years ago – and involves a lot less crew!

Some of the ColorWashes are placed behind the 1000 or so live audience who pack enthusiastically into the studio each week. These fixtures subtly colour the crowd so that they have a presence on camera ... but are not really 'seen'.

Another essential for the lighting is ensuring that the couple's legs and feet are clearly visible! This is where people – including the three studio judges and all those voting on TV – will be watching intently to see how their dance moves are flowing.

In addition to this, there's some elegant gobo-work produced by the ColorSpots on the dancefloor, which really enhances the atmosphere and vibrancy of the camera shots – both close up and wide.

"Robe's 2500 series is really powerful with a good light output and excellent gobo projections and that's vital to the ambience we create," states Kreileman.

Having worked with Robe products for around 10 years now, he knows first-hand that they are very reliable and just keep on working!

Lighting is controlled by three grandMA2 full size consoles - a main and backup for show lighting plus one for key lighting, with another completely separate one running video.

Lighting equipment is supplied by Cologne based Magic Sound & Light, the set and video design was created by Florian Wieder of Wieder Designs, and the series is directed by Marc Achterberg and broadcast live on Friday nights on RTL Television.





