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# Robe Gets the Festive Spirit

Fourteen Robe ColorSpot 1200 AT's were the hub of Helena Kuukka's lighting design for the Fort Lauderdale Christmas Pageant, staged in the 2.500 capacity First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale.

Fourteen Robe ColorSpot 1200 AT's were the hub of Helena Kuukka's lighting design for the Fort Lauderdale Christmas Pageant, staged in the 2.500 capacity First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale. The show, an annual production organised by The Church, celebrated it's 22nd year by running for two sold-out weeks in December, playing to over 50,000 people during the period. It was also broadcast on national TV and to several foreign countries during the holiday season. The show has won 2 local Emmy Awards and is produced into a DVD each year.

Lighting equipment and programming expertise was supplied by locally-based Paradigm Productions, and the show electricians and installation crew came from Majestic Productions.

Kuukka had a 70 ft wide stage and a cast of about 300 to cover, so she needed really bright fixtures, and chose the Robes as key moving light tools for the job, which also included a large conventional rig. "*I was looking for a fast and bright spot, with colour mixing. One of the scenic elements we had was a white Austrian curtain, about 80' in width, which needed plenty of rich colour and texturing.*" She explains.

The ColorSpots were positioned in the roof over the stage and on the front of house truss. During the course of the extremely busy show, she used just about every feature – the gobos were utilised extensively, plus the prism, zoom, iris, and of course, the colour mixing - which was really fundamental to the show.

It was the second year Kuukka has utilised Robe fixtures in her design "*The speed is great!*" she comments "*I also love the zoom and the brightness, as well as the different prism options. The colour mixing gives fabulous warm tones*".

The show is specifically challenging for lighting because it's essentially two shows in one. The first act is a big Christmas Revue with hi-energy dance numbers, a student section, a 200-strong choir concert and a collection of big productions numbers that use lots of colour, movement and special effects, etc.

Act 2 was a biblical play with music, and was treated more like an opera in terms of lighting, with very little movement and effects, and the lighting primarily just 'painting' pretty and dramatic pictures.

The lighting rig needed to be versatile enough to cover both shows, and to provide anything from full-on rock 'n' roll looks to a subtle theatrical scenes.

They used the Robe's colour spectrum to the max, she explains, from the super-saturated to almost imperceptible pastels and skin tones. Pan and tilt moves and dimming went from zero counts in Act I, to 20-30 second fades in Act 2, so they "*Really pushed the fixtures at both ends*". The added production element of it being recorded for TV added yet another dimension, and the lightshow was also reprogrammed for the cameras for the 2 nights of live recording … while still trying to preserve the stage picture intact for the live audience.

The 2005 show featured approx. 500 light cues and took 2 weeks to program into the Grand MA console, for which Kuukka worked closely with Mike Smrcka of Paradigm. "*It's vital for me to have a great relationship with the programmer, the crew and the lighting company. We spend a lot of time together and the right team, as well as the right equipment, is critical for the success of the show.*" She concludes.

The Production Electrician was B.J. Schnettler and the Production Manager: Ryan Bates, both from Majestic Productions.

For more press information on ROBE please contact marketing department on e-mail: marketing@robe.cz.

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