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Robe Still Has the X Factor

Products Involved

BMFL™ Blade **LEDBeam 150™** **MegaPointe®** **onePATT™** **RoboSpot™** **Spiider®**
Spikie®

The X Factor UK continues as a much anticipated and influential reality TV talent show that is also known for its spectacular productions.

Lighting for the past three years has been designed by award-winning LD Tim Routledge and for the latest edition again featured a large amount of Robe moving lights – nearly 300 in fact!

The 2018 series was staged for the third consecutive year at the LH2 Studios in Park Royal, north west London, running for six weeks of Saturday night live shows with eliminations on Sundays, and a final at Wembley Arena.

As in previous years, Tim has used the opportunity to showcase lights from several leading brands including Robe, and this year he integrated the 300 odd Robes in the weekly rig which totalled around 1200 lights... all supplied by leading UK rental company Neg Earth Lights (NEL).

Tim was the first to use Robe Spiiders on a high-profile TV show in 2016 just after the product launched... and in 2017, he debuted the MegaPointe on the series. Both fixtures were a big hit, so Tim kept them in the show for this latest series, and brand new for this year were some of Robe's SuperSpikies which were officially launched at the PLASA expo in London in September.

The Robe count this year included 24 x MegaPointes, 36 x BMFL Blades, 130 x Spikies, 30 x Spiiders, 35 x LEDBeam 150s and 40 x OnePATTs.

One of the BMFL Blades was operated via a RoboSpot system and utilised as a rear follow spot.

The 20 x SuperSpikies were integrated into the set header piece.

The Spikies were rigged in between long strips of LED screen; the Spiiders were on the floor and dotted around the overhead rig; the MegaPointes were also positioned in the roof and strategically around the deck, with the BMFL Blades positioned for the optimum overall coverage throughout the rig.

The onePATTs were wrapped around the back of the audience and also rigged throughout the green room to give an interesting and atmospheric back-of-camera presence.

The set was designed by Florian Wieder of Wieder Design, featuring multiple LED screens and bringing a strong video presence to the show's aesthetics. He and Tim worked closely to achieve a good balance between the two mediums.

In addition to the substantial 'house rig', each song has its own lighting 'specials' packages each week, and some artists had additional/specific sets or props, as designated by the individual creative team for the relevant contestant.

One of the biggest challenges was the intense lighting programming required. With between 16 and 20 songs to process per week, a massive rig plus all the floor packages... each song's cues had to be completed and in the desk in the space of a hectic 25-minute slot... and at the end of it, all look completely special and unique!

Naturally, Tim and his chief programmer/associate Tom Young are used to producing great results under this pressure, and while the concentration and nimble thinking required is still a galvanising task, thinking out-of-the-box and on their feet is also what they love about this show.

"In that time, we have to produce concert worthy lighting for a diversity of musical genres - from hip hop to grunge to whimsical or power ballads - which needs to be thought-through and properly programmed. It's like doing a one-off arena show each week with a completely different set list and a festival line up!" stated Tim.

The songs can often change right up until the afternoon of the show and the judges can also shift their thinking about the creative treatment they want for the presentation of a song.

"Our aim is to be as fully flexible as we possibly can, and having these Robe fixtures on the rig is a big part of helping us achieve these goals" concluded Tim.

X Factor UK 2018 was directed by Julia Knowles and produced by Caroline Davies for Thames Freemantle & Syco Productions.

The winner was Dalton Harris who was mentored by Louis Tomlinson.





