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Robe LED is an efficient solution for TUT's Breytenbach Theatre

Products Involved

LEDWash 600™

Energy efficiency and practicality were top of the list for the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) when Robe ROBIN LEDWash 600 moving lights were chosen as a solution for the renowned Breytenbach Theatre in Pretoria, South Africa.

Affectionately known as 'The Breytie', the new lights form part of a recent technical upgrade. The lighting elements of this project also included new dimmers all of which was delivered by Johannesburg-based DWR Distribution, Robe's South African distributor.

The re-fit was co-ordinated by the Breytie's Technical Manager Wandile Mgcodo and DWR's Eazy Moeketsi and Dave Whitehouse.

The Breytie is a practical training ground for TUT's Performing Arts & Technology students, and a showcase for the technical and creative skills and services that they can provide to the industry. This involves a stream of dynamic productions year-round, including musicals, dance, drama and opera productions, together with live music shows presented by other departments of the University and its Alumni. The venue is also a receiving house for external productions, as well as being at the hub of a series of community programmes and initiatives.

Wandile is also involved in teaching the technical modules - including lighting - of several courses run at the TUT, including Entertainment Technology, Music Theatre, Dance, Vocal Art and Drama ... so he knows first-hand how important it is to have the latest technology available to students in this environment. Especially with them being tomorrow's potential theatre professionals!

For some time, the Breytie has had some Robe ColorSpot 250s in its lighting rig. From using these - still going strong after several years' active service - and Wandile's previous experience at the SA State Theatre in Pretoria which has also invested in Robe moving lights, he already knew it was a well-made, quality, reliable brand.

However, it was only when they actually had their three LEDWash 600s delivered and in situ at the Breytie that he really began to be realize their full potential as creative lighting tools.

"I'm impressed with the nice even zooming, the smooth dimming curve ... and the fantastic colour options are phenomenal" he states.

It is making everyone on the lighting team's lives infinitely easier now having colour changing wash lights. It means that can use just one fixture for the same effects when previously they would have had to rig a dozen! Being moving lights, the LEDWash 600s are also far quicker for focusing sessions, so rigging and technical time can be more efficiently optimized.

Additionally, they also save substantially on the costs of consumables like gels and gobos, obviously there are no lamp replacements required ... and of course, the LED technology means they also save on power consumption!

Clearly this is a winner all round!

On the support from DWR, Wandile says it's, "The best ever - they put the personal touch into everything they do".

The installation of the new Robes was completed by Eazy Moeketsi and former TUT student Setshaba Moumakwe, who is a new member of the DWR team - in a nice start to his time with the company! In fact, the LEDWash 600s have been such a success and so popular at The Breytie, that they are already planning to buy more when possible!

About The Breytie

The Breytenbach Theatre's colourful history started humbly as a German Community Hall and it's also been a hospital and a film and artist's studio. In 1955 the National Theatre Organisation (NTO) acquired the building and turned it into its current form as a theatre.

After the NTO was split into various Performing Arts Councils, the Performing Arts Council of Transvaal (PACT) continued to stage productions at the Breytie until the SA State Theatre in Pretoria opened in 1981.

Its stage has been graced by the great-and-the-good of South African theatre and the back stage facilities have been the learning ground for countless leading technicians.

Technikon Pretoria bought the Breytenbach Theatre in 1984 as a training venue for its Drama, Opera and Theatre Crafts students.

Today the Breytie is the primary venue used by the Tshwane University of Technology's academic programmes to present live shows to the public, giving students the practical experience they need to excel in their respective fields of study.

It is a well loved and highly respected landmark on the SA Theatre scene.

Photo Credits: Barbara van den Berg





