

28.4.2016

Robe Gets Up to Speed with MPH Australia

Products Involved

BMFL™ Spot **LEDBeam 100™** **LEDWash 600™** **MMX Spot™** **Pointe®**

MPH Australia is a busy lighting rental company based in Melbourne, headed by Matt Hansen, a well-known personality in the Australian production world.

The company has enthusiastically embraced Robe as an in-house brand – with LEDWash 600s, MMX Spot, LEDBeam 100s - and was an early adopter of Robe's game-changing BMFL series fixtures.

MPH started as 'Matt's Party Hire' 11 years ago with the fabulously tongue-in-cheek trestle table and balloons logo for which Matt is still known and loved, a free-spirited attitude to life plus a selection of niche LED products, control and media servers also offering bespoke and off-beat lighting system designs.

This was a great success, and through his contacts, imagination and ability to think 'out-of-the-box' Matt designed and toured internationally with a number of top Australian bands, leaving his own kit with his colleagues and friends at Clifton Productions – also a major rental house - whilst away. Around 2010 an opportunity arose to grow MPH, initially by developing a working partnership with Clifton Productions.

MPH originally looked after and co-ordinated the lighting elements of Clifton's as they focussed on and grew their heavy-duty steel staging / temporary venue division. This move was then consolidated with the founding of MPH Australia, based in the Preston area of Melbourne but working all over the country, which also took on the existing lighting rental stock.

MPH Australia works extensively in the festivals and touring sector of the market, where Matt's own experience and connections, together with a reliable rental inventory including all the Robe moving lights, helped the business establish itself. Between MPH Australia and Clifton's, there is now stock of around 1100 moving lights, mostly Robes.

The original stock included Robe's classic workhorses like the ColorSpot and ColorWash 1200 and 2500 series ... which are still going strong! More recently, MPH has invested in newer products like the BMFL Spots, MMX Spots, LEDWash 600s, LEDBeam 100s and Pointes, all of which have been delivered by Australian distributor, the ULA Group.

Experiencing the reliability of Robe's product first hand was just one of the factors prompting Matt to continue the investment trend.

The BMFLs were purchased last year, but even without the legacy of Clifton's stock and their commitment to the brand, Matt would have been looking at BMFLs anyway for their output and feature set.

Apart from that, he noticed that they very quickly started appearing on specs and riders from visiting international artists so the demand was definitely there. Still currently the only company in the state of Victoria with BMFLs, the next nearest supplier is Elite Sound and Lighting in Canberra and there's plenty of cross-hires going on in both directions.

"The output, speed and the animations are what people seem to like best about the BMFL Spots," he observes.

Matt is also still active on the design front. Recent events for which he was the lighting production designer include The Falls Music & Arts Festival, a multi-day, multi-site event over New Year across four locations with the lighting for two locations, Lorne and Marion Bay, supplied by MPH.

The main stage lighting – which this year featured 36 BMFLs and 76 Pointes – was replicated across the two MPH sites - Lorne in Victoria and Marion Bay in Tasmania, with Byron Bay in New South Wales supplied by Chameleon, another major lighting rental company, using the same design with non-Robe fixtures. Southbound in Busselton Western Australia was cancelled due to bush fires in the area.

One of the many advantages of using a combination of BMFLs and Pointes is that a host of different artists can have a totally different looking show using the same top rig, as there are simply so many different options and combinations.

MPH also recently supplied the Melbourne gig on Passenger's Australian tour with BMFLs (LD Louis Ball), and there are a host of Chinese pop artists playing Australia right now who frequently request our Pointes he says.

In answer to where he thinks the Robe brand 'is at' right now, Matt comments, "Without doubt the brand is gaining momentum and traction.

Pointes and LEDWash 600s are almost universally known now, and even if people aren't yet familiar with BMFLs ... they are generally very happy to use them".

He believes Robe's reliability and quality is synonymous with the name, and that crews like working with Robe for this and also for the sensible size which makes them so much more physically handle-able.

