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Robe Helps Deutschland Find a Superstar

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The 2018 edition of Deutschland sucht den Superstar (DSDS) is featured another exciting and eye-catching lighting design created by the show's long term LD Manuel da Costa and Jonas König of MDC Lichtgestalten, utilising over 100 Robe Pointes which were supplied by Magic Light+Sound from Cologne.

Manuel has been involved with the top TV series since the very start in 2002! It was again recorded in studios 30 and 31 of the Coloneum complex in Cologne and broadcast on RTL's Saturday night prime time. Now the 15th series, DSDS has become one of the most successful shows on German TV.

The set was designed by Florian Wieder of Wieder Design who also has a long standing relationship with the series. He always produces a spectacular, multi-layered environment fusing interesting structural and geometric elements with innovative video and digital aspects.

It is the set that is always the starting point for Manuel in the run up to each season.

This year Manuel worked alongside his associate and chief technical lighting supervisor Christoph Dahm. It is important to have a close-knit team on hand, familiar with the format and specific demands of the show, where the challenges are always to transform the stage and setting for each competitor, covering a wide range of musical genres.

For this they need the rig to be as flexible as possible, hence the choice to have a large contingent of Pointes on the rig.

The fixtures were distributed in the mid-stage area, around the second of two large circular trusses and along the back of the set in high positions on what they called 'the matrix' as well as left and right beside the LED wall. Another 12 were positioned on top of different height LED columns onstage.

They were used for various big, epic looks – from sweeping multi-beams and aerial effects to funky and fast-moving sequences which looked fantastic on camera and for the enthusiastic live audience who packed into the studio each week to enjoy being part of the live telecast. Manuel has been using varying numbers of Pointes on DSDS since the fixture was launched in 2013 as their brightness and multi-functionality makes them perfect for the job.

“They are small, bright, fast and therefore excellent for this type of show, and even though I have been using them for some time now, I still don’t run out of modes, effects and colour combinations, or ideas, of how to create fresh looks”.

He adds that they are a perfect luminaire for music TV shows and he constantly optimises ‘favourite features’ like the zoom, frost and the prisms. “They are simply a great signature fixture,” he concludes.

Manuel has utilised Robe moving lights generally on DSDS for over 10 years, dating back to the original workhorse ColorSpot 1200E AT when that was ‘product of the day’.

The proportion of Robe on the rig has grown steadily since then.

For this 2018 series they used a Robe RoboSpot system for the first time, with a BaseStation controlling a BMFL Follow Spot upstage centre, working as an essential back lighting position for creating silhouettes and other moody looks.

This was a position where they need a follow spot but it is not possible to place an operator. The remote operator stood with the BaseStation underneath the main seating tribune and the luminaire was in use for almost all the artists. They faced towards the stage, however not being able to physically see it made concentrating on their RoboSpot screen a lot easier!

Also for the first show in this series eight MegaPointes were utilised as a floor specials package for artist Lucas. The lights were placed around him in close proximity and pointed upwards making a cage like enclosure above his head, interplaying nicely with the Pointes rigged on the circle in the roof.

Lighting was controlled via a grandMA2 console, with another one at FOH running the playback video.

Manuel, Jonas - operating the moving lights - and Christoph were joined at FOH by Tim Franken, a busy person with three roles - as gaffer, key lighting operator and spot caller and Oliver Heuer was also a key lighting operator. Bjoerge Block was the video operator, working alongside server farmer, Tilman Schultz.

The series had two directors, Bastien Angemeer and Volker Weicker.

Just across the hallway in Studio 32 another 120 Pointes were in action with LD David Kreilman on the 2018 season of “Let’s Dance”.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland





