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A Heads Up with Eugene Kostyra

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic ... we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

We zoom to Ukraine to meet rising star young lighting designer Eugen Kostyra from Alight - the largest lighting rental and production company in the country - who is usually busy working on music festivals, concerts, tours, music awards and other TV shows. Recent work includes The Voice and Dancing with the Stars.

Robe: Where are you right now?

Eugene: I live in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Robe: What are you doing to fill the time whilst isolating / on lockdown?

Eugene: I am the happy father of a little girl and spend almost all my free time with my daughter and my family. We often go for walks to the forest or around the river.

I am also trying to learn new software and follow all the current trends on the profession development horizon.

I really like to play the guitar, and music has always been my passion, but because of the (usual) lack of time, I have not practised for a while! However, self-isolation made this possible!

Robe: What's the most creative thing you're able to do in isolation?

Eugene: We managed to still stage the final of the television project "Voice of the Country" (The Voice Ukraine), following all quarantine restrictions.

It turned out to be a "new normal" show that changed the history of television projects in Ukraine.

Our project team created a unique studio design that was different from the standard one.

Lighting became the basis of the show direction and helped to achieve an atmosphere of self-isolation on the stage at the same time creating a beautiful picture for viewers. For me, it was a great inspiration.

As a lighting designer, I tried to create the most diverse performances for the different participants in terms of emotions and lighting design.

Robe: Are you looking after anyone else during the Covid-19 crisis?

Eugene: I take care of my family and relatives who are living close by.

Robe: Has anyone inspired you since this started?

Eugene: I am always inspired by my colleagues and their massive projects all over the world. Looking at their work gives me the desire to create something new and impressive.

Currently, my main inspirations are my family and my creative team at Alight - even during this quarantine time we are keeping in touch and working on new ideas.

Robe: Favourite book / movie / Netflix series / viral video

Eugene: I really like Jonathan Safran Foer's "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close" (first published in 2005, the book's narrator is Oskar Schell a nine-year-old boy who discovers a key in a vase that belonged to his father, a year after he was killed in the September 11 attacks in New York) which I am reading right now.

I listen to music - and cannot imagine my life without it. During last month, I am into (Icelandic multi-instrumentalist and producer) Olafur Arnalds, Audioslave and The Weeknd.

Robe: What's the first thing you'd like to do when we are through this?

Eugene: Get back to work as soon as possible, preferably go to a music festival at the seaside.

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you'd like to say?

Eugene: Love the music and try to imagine it with light.

