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Robe Survives Another Day in SA

Products Involved

ColorSpot 250 AT™ ColorSpot 700E AT™ Scan 575 XT™

Lighting designer Mauritz Neethling of LCD Productions used Robe moving lights at the core of his rig for the much hyped finale of Survivor South Africa Santa Carolina, which was broadcast from M-Net's Studio 6 in Johannesburg.

The brief was to recreate the "rustic" feel of Paradise Island in Mozambique, where the bulk of the action took place, complete with a technical team and equipment from sister company Blond Productions who were supplying lighting for the location episodes of the series.

The studio measures 18 metres deep by 30 metres wide, with 10 metres of headroom, and the Robe fixtures used were 12 x ColorSpot 700E ATs, 12 x ColorSpot 250 ATs and 12 x Scan 575 XTs.

The 700s were used as front light for the 'tribal' area, and to create realistic fire effects across the set, for which the animation wheels proved the perfect tool. These are one of his favourite Robe features, and he uses them time and time again to create lifelike natural effects like fire and water.

The Scan 575 XTs were used as back-light over the audience, rigged on trussing above them. This looked great in wide camera shots, for which they were corrected to CT blue - one of the many handy functions of the unit.

Leading South African pop band Freshly Ground were the guest artists, so for the performance area, Neethling sought to create a classier and more subdued feel to contrast with the rest of the studio.

This is where the 12 ColorSpot 250E ATs came in. They were positioned on the floor, primarily to create beam looks into the jib camera. Eight additional ColorSpot 700E ATs were rigged on the grid over the performance area, with much use made of the glass breakup gobos.

The band, who also wrote the series' theme song, performed 2 songs to camera and entertained the audience in the commercial breaks.

All the lighting - which also included 1 and 2K fresnels, Softlights, PARs and LED fixtures off a grandMA full size console operated by Kevin Rieck.

Neethling comments that he was extremely happy with the performance of the Robe's.

He has used Robe products since 2004, when he ordered some of the first units in the country - 10 x ColorSpot 1200E ATs, 8 x ColorSpot 575E ATs and 4 x ColorSpot 250E ATs, whilst he was still the lighting director at e.tv, and all these units are still in use!

He likes many things about Robe products, and comments, "I would definitely say that the zoom function is far superior than some of the competitor units, especially in certain studios here in SA, where roof height is often challenging!"

The get in for the Survivor finale was on the Sunday for a Wednesday live telecast - always simultaneously both exhilarating and nerve-wracking for those involved in production. The set was already built, so only half of the moving trusses could be lowered and much of the rig had to be hung using scaffolding and step ladders - all additional challenges for the Blond team, who worked hard to help bring spectacular visual results to the show.

This third series of Survivor was won by exotic dancer GiGi.





