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Robe Announces Technical Partnership with RADA

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Robe Lighting is very proud to be working with London's world-famous Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), supplying technical equipment and resources.

The arrangement was driven by Josef Valchar Robe s.r.o.'s CEO, Ashley Lewis, Robe UK's Key Account Manager for Film, TV & Theatre and Matt Prentice, Head of Lighting at RADA. RADA has taken delivery of a number of different Robe moving light products from Robe's current ranges which were selected by Matt as especially appropriate to theatre productions, following a visit to Robe's HQ in the Czech Republic.

The equipment includes DLS Profiles, DLF Washes and LEDWash600s, together with two of the new MMX Blades – all from Robe's ROBIN series. There is an emphasis on LED technology and all the benefits that brings to both designers and venues, coupled with features that are essential for theatrical performance like framing shutters and barn doors.

The lights will be used across RADA's three main performance spaces, the 200 seater Jerwood Vanbrugh Theatre, the George Bernard Shaw Theatre (GBS) and the John Gielgud Theatre, all in RADA's central London buildings. It will also provide very convenient locations for Robe to stage demonstrations, showcases and training sessions.

RADA offers vocational training for actors, stage managers, directors, designers and technical stagecraft specialists, and has built an outstanding reputation for excellence, offering the best possible teaching facilities and strong links with the industries associated with its graduates.

Josef states, "It is a complete honour for us to be involved with RADA given the reputation and respect that the institution commands. Theatre and performance is something I am really passionate about, and the more we can do to assist future young professionals in this very exciting sector by offering interesting products to enhance their work ... the better".

Matt comments, "Robe is an awesome brand and has a great line up of new and innovative products. Having access to these in house will be a huge advance to all our students who are involved in lighting shows."

Ashley adds, "It's great to have the opportunity of encouraging emerging lighting talent and increasing their creative options in a practical and specific way".

RADA produces around 18 of its own shows per year embracing a wide variety of performance genres. Students on several different courses take lighting modules which are integral to their studies, and all will come into contact with the new Robe technology.

Matt examined all the options thoroughly when in the Czech Republic before making his final choice of fixtures. He looked for quiet operation which is essential in any theatrical space, brightness, a good range of subtle colours and shutters or barn doors.

He comments that the MMX Blades in particular are "epic fixtures made for the theatre world!" and that having the fixtures on hand will make a massive difference to the creative scope the student LDs will have in their toolbox.

As soon as the new fixtures arrived at RADA, they all went straight onto their first production "The Witches of Edmonton" staged at the Jerwood Vanbrugh Theatre and lit by third year Technical Theatre & Stage Management student Peter Small. He combined the Robes with a large rig of generics and they played a key role in the show.

Matt adds that being able to talk directly with Josef as CEO of Robe has been a "Fantastic experience - his friendliness, grounded attitude and vast technical knowledge are all really impressive!" he concludes.

In addition to staging their own high level productions lit by student lighting designers, RADA also has a regular stream of accomplished professional LDs who work alongside the students on their projects, present lectures and engage in seminars and discussions. They too will be able to use the new Robes.

Matt and a contingent of students are currently visiting the Robe factory in the Czech Republic to get a complete picture of how the products are designed, developed and brought to the market.

Photo Credits: Linda Carter



