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Robe Spiiders for TPAC

Products Involved

Spiider®

The spectacular Taipei Performing Arts Centre (TPAC), which contains three world class performance spaces – The Grand Theatre, the Globe Playhouse, and the Blue Box, has recently invested in 40 x Robe Spiider LED wash beam luminaires, which will help light an array different of productions staged at the venue.

Production values are high on the agenda at TPAC which has around 150 full time employees, a third of whom are designated to work across assorted technical disciplines, including TPAC senior technical officer Yi-Ming Liu (AKA "Birdie"), who explained that Robe's Spiider was the "most powerful and efficient solution with the best range of authentic colour temperature whites and optimal energy savings for all types of production design". He was instrumental in picking the Spiiders, together with TPAC's head of lighting, Pang-Yan Lin Ling, and others from the lighting team.

Sustainability was a major consideration when getting these moving lights, as well as multi-functionality, and this was the basis for them seeking out the best option LED washes.

After careful deliberation, they decided that Robe's refined LED engine offered the longevity they wanted as well as being the smallest, lightest and neatest units to service their different spaces.

The Spiiders, recently delivered via Robe's Asia Pacific subsidiary in Singapore, arranged by local Taiwan dealer DLHG run by Jackson Yu, will be used in all three main performance spaces in this bustling producing and receiving house.

TPAC's impressive and eye-catching contemporary building was designed by David Gianotten and Rem Koolhaas from the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and features different geometrical shapes offering a total space of 50,000 square metres.

The 800-seater Playhouse is sphere shaped, the asymmetrical shaped Grand Theatre has a 1500 capacity, and the Blue Box studio space can accommodate up to 840 and is fully flexible.

The building is owned by the Taipei City Government's Department of Cultural Affairs and the process of procurement is extremely rigorous.

Knowing the type of luminaire needed to add to the approximately 2000 generic luminaires in place when TPAC opened in 2022 after a 10 year build period, Birdie and the lighting team created a spec for the ideal LED wash beam. The fixture was identified as the most useful addition for fulfilling lighting designs plus saving person-power and time when facilitating productions.

Some of the crew travelled to Robe's factory in the Czech Republic to see the production process, further in depth demonstrations and to receive hands-on maintenance training.

"We were all impressed with the quality control and the whole set up at the factory," stated Birdie, noting that many of the lighting designers they are working with still need convincing about the advantages and characteristics of LED as opposed to tungsten and discharge sources.

"So many of Robe's ranges have been properly designed and finessed with theatrical performance in mind," he underlined.

TPAC does not have in-house LDs but works with a range of freelancers who are commissioned to light their own productions on a per-project basis and are primarily from Taiwan. International and touring productions will often bring their own designers or lighting directors.

"We also needed a brand of moving light known and respected internationally," said Birdie, "and Robe also ticked that box."

TPAC is the first theatre installation in Taiwan to feature Robe Spiiders in the rig, and the technical team - all driven by their passion for performance and dedication to producing great shows - are very proud of this.

Birdie already knew Robe through his touring experiences, but his association goes back around 20 years or so, when he worked at the famous Ministry of Sound superclub in London, which had Robe in the house. He's observed that Robe has become a favourite with rental companies and installations worldwide, and that the brand has "an excellent reputation" for being a robust, well-engineered creative tool.

He and all the technical team enjoy the interesting mix of shows staged at TPAC, from some of the best Taiwanese dance and performance groups to drama, opera, musicals, a range of dynamic Asian co-productions all the way through to acclaimed international works, all enjoying the same high levels of staging, perfection and expectation that has made TPAC a nationwide production powerhouse under the creative direction of CEO Austin Wang.

The performance spaces are also used for commercial, industrial, business, and special events, presenting constant technical challenges and offering the chance for creatives and technicians to learn and improve their knowledge and experience every day.

"Having Robe fixtures specified for a high-profile site like TPAC with so much potential for groundbreaking staging and presentation that reaches engaged and enthusiastic audiences, is a great honour," commented Jens Poelker from Robe's Asia Pacific office.

Taiwan's rich and diverse performance culture means its need for top-of-the-range luminaires is ideally suited for Robe's theatrical LED product ranges, and the revered National Theatre has also recently invested in a large quantity of T11 luminaires.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland



