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Strictly Come Dancing South Africa

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Lighting and sound kit was supplied by leading SA rental house Gearhouse South Africa. The lighting design was created by Hugh Turner and the show's lighting was programmed, operated and directed by Sean Rosig.

A box truss was flown over the low ceilinged dancefloor, approximately 14 metres long by 10 metres wide, giving about 4 metres of headroom, and this was interlaced with 4 trussing ribs traversing the width of the space.

The principal dancefloor lighting was provided by 22 Robe ColorSpot 700E ATs hung all over the trussing grid, and 24 Robe ColorWash 700E ATs, lined up along each of the long edges of the dancefloor.

These were used for all the main effects, including to colour and texture the dancefloor and the dancers, produce swirling seas of gobos and dramatic slices of light cutting right across the floor.

The design had to ensure that there was enough latent flexibility in the lighting rig to give all of the individual dance pieces each week a different and distinct look encompassing a myriad of styles and genres. *"It was a question of keeping it fresh and visually interesting"* says Turner, adding that Rosig's programming and command of the rhythm and pace of each show was also instrumental to this happening smoothly and seamlessly.

Also rigged on the grid was a mix of PARs, profiles and fresnels. An additional two trusses for audience illumination and set lighting ran down each side of the edges of the room.

Over the stage were two smaller box trusses, rigged with scanners, PARs, fresnels and profiles to illuminate the band at the far end of the room.

All lights were programmed using a GrandMA Lite console complete with hot backup and 2 NSP nodes. This was a highly pressured process as the programmers only received the music tracks and costume information the day before the show, along with any other special requests for effects, all of which had to be ready in less than 24 hours for the broadcast.

The brief, explains Hugh Turner, was to keep it as close in look and feel to the BBC's original version of the show as possible, for which they were afforded some artistic licence, taking into account it was staged in a totally different venue. The South African series also had a considerably tighter budget for all technical departments.

It's the second Strictly series on which Gearhouse has used Robe fixtures. Turner comments that the zoom train on the ColorSpot 700E ATs *"is really wide and was just perfect for the height of the dancefloor, enabling us to create exceptionally dynamic effects"*.

The Robes also kept going without a hitch in soaring temperatures which sometimes hit 40 degrees.





