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Robe LEDBeam 350s Play the TV Game

Products Involved

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Lighting designer Bas van der Poel from design practice Light Image used Robe's brand new LEDBeam 350 moving light fixtures for the recording of a new series of German games show "99 - Eine:r schlägt sie alle!" (99 - One Beats Them All!), which was recorded in the Netherlands at the fabulous circular Westergas venue – part of a former gasworks now sustainably reimagined as a popular event and cultural space – in central Amsterdam.

The 32 x LEDBeam 350s – the first to arrive in the Netherlands – were delivered to lighting rental company Eventec which specialises in supplying lighting for the television and broadcast sector by Robe's Benelux distributor, Controllux.

Eventec works regularly with the show's production company, Fabiola BV, and was asked to supply lighting and rigging for the series' three-week shooting period at Westergas. The show action starts with 100 competitors who play a series of crazy games and knockout rounds until only one – the winner – is left standing!

Bas and director Bastien Angemeer discussed initial ideas for lighting, and Bas created the design based on this plus having an adaptable and versatile rig to be able to quickly cover multiple requirements of the fast-paced show and tight recording schedule.

Recorded in the Netherlands, this was a German edition of the show, so key elements included having a fuller and more prominent production that had featured in the Dutch version, and the director also wanted to be able to conceal props and scenic elements at strategic times with clever lighting and a few tricks while other games were being prepared.

All of this appealed to Bas's sense of visual adventure!

Apart from that, Westergas is a beautifully stark industrial heritage building that was designed by Isaac Gosschalk in the Dutch 'Neorenaissance' style which does not need much

enhancement. It dates to the 1890s when the original West Gas manufacturing plant opened to serve the western part of the city.

Bas had already produced a kit list for the lighting design when Eventec's owner Wijnand Mol and operations manager Stefan Bensch mentioned that they expected to have the LEDBeam 350s by that time ... and did he want to try them out? Naturally, Bas jumped at the chance of being the first LD in the Netherlands, and indeed Europe, to use this cool new tech on a TV show!

A 20-metre diameter circular truss was installed in the roof space of Westergas mimicking its impressive circumference, and this was surrounded by a series of 21 x 'arm' trusses of two different sizes that alternated around the circular shape of the venue, in the space between the truss and the perimeter wall.

The LEDBeam 350s were positioned at the top end - nearer the outside - of each of the 21 x sticks of 'finger' truss, with a MegaPointe at the other end, and two Spiiders in the middle. In addition to these, also on the lighting rig were another 82 Robe fixtures - 40 x Spiiders, 20 x MegaPointes and 22 x ESPRITES - plus other lights.

The Westergas floor had to be kept relatively clear of kit and set allowing the games to be set up, played, and filmed, so the ESPRITES were on trusses hung in the middle of the circular truss and were optimised for key light.

The remaining 11 x LEDBeam 350s were deployed on the floor in different positions ... used as punchy and flexible lightsources around the back wall that could be moved to wherever they were needed according to the shots.

It was the first time that Bas had designed lights for this show, although he's previously worked on several other Fabiola productions.

He was "super-excited" to be using the LEDBeam 350s and well impressed with the brightness and speed of the fixture. "It's a large space and they are right at the furthest lighting points from the centre of the room, and they throw really nicely and brightly into that area," he commented whilst on site.

A LEDBeam 150 fan ever since that fixture was launched, Bas has also always liked using the rarer LEDBeam 1000 for front light due to its "excellent soft skin tones."

He rates the white LED source of the ESPRITES and the fact that the luminaire also has multiple uses, making it a “truly versatile workhorse” fixture and great for television or theatre front lights as well as show effects for multi-camera and festival environments.

A major challenge of lighting “99 - Eine:r schlägt sie alle!” was the speed at which games and shots needed to be set up and recorded. Bas needed to accommodate the director’s wishes and requests quickly and efficiently as they simply didn’t have the time to fart around, so all these Robe fixtures made a perfect combination.

He worked alongside lighting programmer and operator Thijs Benschop also from Light Image using a grandMA2.

Eventec was founded by Wijnand in 2007, and in 2012 the company started investing in Robe moving lights, a process that has continued steadily for the last 9 years as the brand has become well established in the Dutch television sector and Eventec has stayed at the forefront of new and emerging lighting technologies and trends.

With 80% of their turnover in TV world, Eventec has been lucky enough to keep working throughout the pandemic as the sector has been going full steam to meet the massive demand for new entertainment and general TV content.

The ESPRITES were another new addition to Eventec’s inventory in 2020, and the initial order was quickly followed by another one as they were specified like ‘hot cakes’ and they also discovered ESPRITE is great in combination with their RoboSpot remote controlled follow spotting systems!

They now have over 200 of the newest Robe fixtures in rental stock – LEDWash 600+s, BMFL Blades, LEDBeam 150s, LEDWash 300s and MegaPointes, ESPRITES and now the LEDBeam 350s – and are expecting the LEDBeam 350s – like the rest of the kit – to be in constant demand going forward.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland

