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Loving Rex Orange County is Easy for Robe

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Talented rising star singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Rex Orange County (Alexander O' Connor) has been making a big impact across the UK on his first full production tour ... and ensuring that the lighting has also looked fresh, interesting and appropriate is Will Kinnaird.

Will maximised the small size, brightness and versatility of Robe's LEDBeam 150 moving lights, taking 24 of these on the bus-and-trailer tour where the 24 fixtures fitted neatly into three small flightcases. They proved a perfect tool for the low-profile aesthetic that he crafted for the tour, working closely with the artist's show designer, Jed Skrzypczak.

The LEDbeam 150s and some other lighting were used at every show in conjunction with the 'top' rigs at each venue.

When it came to the London gig at the iconic Hammersmith Apollo, the LEDBeam 150 count was boosted to 51 and six MegaPointes were added to the rig, all supplied by High Wycombe UK based rental company, Siyan.

For the main tour, the 24 x LEDBeam 150s were deployed in three horizontal lines across the stage - upstage, mid-stage and downstage - where they accentuated the clean and straightforward appearance of the performance space, adding depth, dimension and a degree of structural shaping. For Hammersmith, Will enlarged the touring design and added 25 x LEDBeam 150s in the air on five LX trusses overhead, which were combined with 26 on the floor.

Together these proved great for constructing numerous scenes, lighting the set pieces and providing an array of bright beamy looks and aerial effects.

"They were the workhorse fixtures" he explained, "creating the main architectural looks as well as washing across the whole stage where they were ideal for covering the space and the band members, or for rapid movements, quick flicks and accents on the faster and bouncier numbers".

In addition to the brightness and small size, Will also likes the zoom and the smooth colour mixing. He'd previously used LEDBeam 150s on another gig, also working with Tom Grant, the account handler / project manager from Siyan who took care of this tour. Suitably impressed, he went on to spec them for the ROC tour.

"It was really a no-brainer" he confirmed, adding that they also fitted the budget ... which was joy to the ears of tour manager Adam Carr.

For Hammersmith, he wanted some additional oooph onstage and strong side lights with good colour mixing as well as gobos to craft various looks. Additionally he needed a high-impact 'mirrorball moment', and MegaPointes were another obvious choice.

He describes the MegaPointes as "fantastic ... and currently my favourite hybrid fixture!"

He programmed and ran the lightshow using an Avolites Sapphire Touch console.

The biggest overall challenge of lighting on the tour was to maintain continuity in every venue and having the LEDBeam floor package helped achieve this.

At Hammersmith the goal was to maintain the sense of intimacy and cosiness that permeated the touring gigs, even though it was a much bigger venue and ROC's largest show to date. Such is the buzz and his popularity that it sold out in a day, so there were many expectations.

Will has been using Robe products in his work since the start of his professional lighting career eight years ago. As a freelance LD and programmer he ran lighting for several London club nights and that's where he first used Pointes - and loved them.

On Robe generally he commented, "They are simply going from strength to strength".

From the rental company angle, Tom Grant explained that Siyan has been buying the LEDBeam 150s since their launch in Spring 2017 and MegaPointes have been a major part of 2018's new moving light investments.

The company has been a Robe customer for some time and has a lot of fixtures in rental stock.

"Both these fixture types are popular and flexible" stated Tom adding that the LEDBeams can also be very used in very discreet applications due to the tiny size.

MegaPointe fits their inventory as an ideal all-round medium sized hybrid fixture ... and the units are constantly busy both on Siyan's own shows and tours, and as a cross hire item.

Tom has enjoyed servicing this ROC tour and comments that Will is "fun and very easy to work with".

Will started his lighting career at Hertfordshire University where he took an Aerospace Technology with Pilot Studies degree. Getting a part time job in the student Union's well known Forum venue ... he realised that he preferred lighting to his course ... and eight years later, he's still doing it!

He's worked with ROC since the summer and his first gigs with them were as part of the Leeds Reading Festival weekender which was televised live ... just adding a bit of extra pressure!!

At Hammersmith, Karl Lawton was lighting crew chief, working alongside technicians Jon Barlow and Ted Parker, all from Siyan.

Photo Credit: Lindsay Cave





