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It's a Beautiful thing for Robe

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The show, directed by top Czech Republic-based Jiri Adamec, was broadcast live on Slovakia's largest private television channel, Joj TV (pronounced 'Yoy') in front of a live audience of 4,000 at the National Tennis Centre in Bratislava.

It is one of Slovakia's largest annual media events, and attracted a phenomenal domestic audience of 4 million people – 80 per cent of the country's population ... for its Thursday night prime time slot. The 12 finalists were chosen from over 1500 initial applicants.

Lighting and sound production was supplied by Slovakia's number one rental house, Q-99, co-ordinated by Marek Adamik. Kubanka is the country's highest profile TV lighting designer/director and works on the hottest and highest profile events and programmes. He now always uses Robe as his first choice of moving lights.

The Miss Universe Slovakia set – an asymmetric series of white-scrimmed trapezoidal shapes piled on top of one another, integrated with 8 giant scenic windmill fans – was designed by Michael Klank – and was ideally suited to being lit.

"It was absolutely essential that I had a dynamic selection of moving lights available to light the set" explains Kubanka, *"And to keep the show looking different and vibrant for all its various sections"*, which featured appearances by assorted guest artists including top Czech international singer and recording artist, Karel Gott.

"I chose Robe because I have worked with the fixtures many times before and they are the best lights for the job" confirms Kubanka. *"They have all the features I need, and they are extremely reliable for the tough operating world of TV lighting"*

He used 20 Robe ColorSpot 575ATs, 16 ColorSpot 1200 ATs, another 16 ColorWash 1200 ATs and twenty Robe 575 XT scanners on the show.

These were arranged across three over-stage trusses measuring 16, 10 and 12 metres respectively and also scattered over the stage floor for low level infill lighting.

Kubanka really maximised the Robe's creative capabilities including the 'shake' effect and various gobo and colour combinations used to paint the set with interesting patterns and textures. This highlighted the architecture perfectly. He also utilised the units to bath both set and stage floor in a spectrum of bold hues, and the ColorSpot1200s for powerful rear 'beam technology'. The lighting generally added valuable pizzazz to the fast paced show. *"Robe allows me to use less lights than in a traditional TV lighting scenario" he says, "I can be ultimately more flexible"*. This was particularly useful as many of the creative and directorial decisions were made while the show was being rehearsed, so reacting 'on the fly' with the lights was essential. *"I simply would not have this option with no moving lights at my disposal"*.

He adds that the fixtures also produce an excellent quality of white light for the cameras. The colour temperature flags in the 1200 Wash and Spot fixtures are a really useful feature for TV work.

The Slovakian Miss Universe Pagaent is run by the Bratislava based IN Agency, headed by former beauty queen Sylvia Lakatosova, who comments, *"Good lighting is absolutely fundamental to the whole show and production – I would say it's even more important than the costumes! Q-99 are the best company in the country to provide the creative and technical services we need for a show of this profile"*.

Kubanka operated the show himself using a GrandMA console – his desk of choice. Q-99's crew totalled 14 for sound, lights and rigging. They had to work fast to meet the schedule of a Monday/Tuesday get in for the Wednesday and Thursday rehearsals and a Thursday evening show.

In addition to the Miss Universe title voted for by the judges, the public were able to vote for their own favourite finalist by text message. Over 1.5 million text were received to decide the title of Miss Intercontinental.

Photo caption: back row from left to right: Marek Adamik (Q-99), Michal Zelenak (Q-99), Jaroslav Satinsky (KVS Light Technic), Lubomir Majercik (Q-99), front row from left to right: David Srba (ROBE Show Lighting), Martin Kubanka (Lighting Designer, Q-99) + Miss Universe Slovakia 2005, Michaela Drenckova

Miss Universe Slovakia 2005 was won by Michaela Drenckova, who will represent her country in the final on May 31st in Bangkok.

For more press information on ROBE please contact marketing department on +420 571 751 506, e-mail: marketing@robe.cz.







