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12-June-2018

Elation Lights Floyd Central HS Production of “Newsies”

Chosen to pilot popular Disney musical, southern Indiana high school taking the play to The International Thespian Festival

Southern Indiana’s Floyd Central High School puts a special emphasis on the performing arts, a focus that has produced one of America's premiere high school theatre programs. Last year, Floyd Central was one of a handful of schools across the U.S. selected by Disney Theatrical Group to test the Tony award-winning Broadway musical “Newsies” before it is made available to schools everywhere.



“Newsies” ran at the high school, located in Floyds Knobs, last November, selling out all six performances. Lighting industry pro and Floyd Central alumnus Michael Nevitt of Crossfade Design, LLC served as lighting designer and lighting mentor on the production. “Disney wanted to see what the challenges would be for high schools and Floyd Central could then provide them with feedback,” explains Nevitt, who has kids that attend the school. “For example, how to get around the fact that there are lots of boy characters in the cast while many, sometimes most, theatre students are female. That meant they had to test out casting girls in roles originally written for boys. Another challenge is staging a play like this on a school’s more limited budget.”

Not only does Floyd Central High School have one of America's top high school theatre programs, they have a full Elation lighting rig to boot. Nevitt had at his disposal a house rig of Elation fixtures that the school purchased in 2015 from Phoenix Lighting of Louisville, Kentucky. The package consists of LED-based Arena Q7 Zoom™ PAR wash lights and Platinum Spot 5R Pro™ moving heads, along with Colour Chorus 48™ LED batten wash lights and white-light Cuepix Blinder WW2™ lights. For “Newsies,” Nevitt added to the rig Elation Artiste DaVinci™ LED moving head spots and Elation EMOTION™ moving head digital lights.

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The Artiste DaVinci is a high-performance CMY and graphics luminaire with a 300W LED engine and 7° to 48° motorized zoom. “We chose to add in the Artiste DaVinci fixtures because a lot of the set is tall with performances up high and we needed a strong LED light with zoom to light those top performers,” Nevitt said. Working from three overhead electrics, the DaVinci fixtures were used as fill light on top of platforms for specials and for gobo texture onto the stage floor. The EMOTION digital lights – a plug-and-play DMX moving light with on-board media server – filled the show’s projection needs, for example to project scrolling headline news onto a chalk board and other visual tasks.



The designer spread the Arena Q7 Zoom wash lights across three overhead electrics for backlight and downlight wash with more fixtures on three booms for low side light. “The color system is well suited for a theatrical application and the zoom range is terrific,” Nevitt stated. “The wide 10° - 60° zoom range allows them to be used as tight spots and beams in the air while also zooming to become excellent stage wash lights.” Also working from the three electrics were Platinum Spot 5R Pro moving heads used as specials and for gobo pattern projections. The 4-foot long Colour Chorus 48 LED batten wash lights played a role as backdrop lighting while the Cuepix Blinder WW2s were used more as work lights during rehearsals, according to the LD.

Floyd Central High School’s Director of Theatre Arts, Robbie Steiner, directed the production and is thrilled they will be taking their production to The International Thespian Festival in Nebraska in June (they also performed “42nd Street” there in 2016) with a couple of warm-up shows scheduled at the Kentucky Center for the Arts’ Whitney Hall just prior to that. It was Steiner who took his concern about the quality of the school’s theatre lighting to school administrators several years ago, starting a process that ended with the purchase of the Elation lighting system. He comments, “Many of our students pursue careers in technical theatre and I am thrilled that they are able to work with some of the newest lighting technology out there. They have been able to learn technology that they will encounter in the professional world and gain valuable experience that can be transferred to work at the college and professional levels.”

Elation Equipment on “Newsies”:

- 32 x Arena Q7 Zoom™
- 22 x Colour Chorus 48™
- 10 x Cuepix Blinder WW2™
- 8 x Platinum Spot 5R Pro™
- 6 x Artiste DaVinci™
- 5 x EMOTION™



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About Elation Professional

Elation Professional is one of the world's leading lighting and visual solutions providers and is the global brand of Elation Lighting. Founded in 1992 and headquartered in Los Angeles, with European sales, distribution and support based in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative yet affordable lighting and video products that are distributed through a global network of dealers and distributors. Made up of a spirited team of dedicated personnel, Elation is setting new efficiency and performance standards in Platinum lamp and LED technology and is acknowledged for a comprehensive commitment to Total Support. As a company in expansion with a presence in a growing variety of market segments, chances are you've experienced Elation lighting at a concert, special event, TV, theater, late night venue, House of Worship, theme park, cruise ship, exhibition, architectural space or elsewhere. For more information, please visit www.elationlighting.com

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