

# VARI\*LITE Strand

## THE UK'S READING REP THEATRE OPENS BRAND NEW VENUE WITH STRAND ACCLAIM LED FRESNELS

England's Reading Rep Theatre, which is located around one hour west of London, is the beloved playground for many of the UK's leading theatre-makers. It has always welcomed regular collaborations and co-productions with leading regional and London theatre, and looks set to continue, ensuring this new venue sits at the heart of the national theatre landscape.

Multi-award-winning, the Reading Rep has a mission is to make and produce the highest quality productions, with, by, and for the Reading community. Having recently relocated to its newly converted 170-seat venue, formerly a Salvation Army Hall, the company chose to invest in a plethora of the latest Strand Acclaim LED Fresnels.

The fixtures were originally specified by theatre consultancy, Drama by Design, the company responsible for the entire £1m conversion from Salvation Army Hall to 170-seat, technically adaptable, multi-purpose venue.

The fixtures have been well received by both the technical department and incoming designers, as head of production for Reading Rep, Jordan Harris, discusses: "The project went really well, and the theatre is now a creatively welcoming space. We love the Strand Acclaims, the dimming curve is good, the light quality is excellent. In addition, the fixtures are lightweight, small, and are easy to set up and program. With community at the heart of Reading Rep's artistic vision, everything in our theatre needs to be accessible, easy to understand and operate. It also needs to be energy efficient, work hard, provide good return on investment, plus be easy to maintain and store."

The second production in Reading Rep's inaugural season, and the first using the all-new equipment was local born Beth Flintoff's adaptation of family friendly classic *A Christmas Carol*. Lighting designer for the show, Simeon Miller, first to use the new Strand lighting equipment said: "The new Strand Acclaim LED Fresnels at the Reading Rep Theatre made my time working on *A Christmas Carol* a breeze. Being able to be flexible with bright and saturated colors, as well as subtle tones and pastels, allowed me to make and remake the world of the play as needed. Despite needing to rapidly move from location to location and through time, I always felt like I had another card to play while using the wide array of LED kit available to make memorable and good-looking lighting states."

Andrew Stone, managing director of Drama by Design, describes why he specified the Strand Acclaim LED Fresnels: "Sustainability was a key consideration throughout this project. Wherever possible, we ensured the most energy efficient, robust and versatile equipment was purchased. The Strand Acclaim LED Fresnels were an ideal choice. Energy efficient, great optics, and excellent color rendering. They also offer the saturated colors required for backlight, the pastels and softer colors for front and side light, and the natural daylight colors for atmospherics. These fixtures are easy to program and rig, so will make really useful workhorses for all of the Rep's productions."

Equipment was supplied by Strand and Vari-Lite partner Henley Theatre Services, Henley on Thames: "I always value working with the team at Henley Theatre Services," adds Stone.



“They are an appreciated partner from initial concept and design discussions through to final installation, training, and support.”

In addition to the Strand Acclaim LED Fresnel, Signify brands Strand and Vari-Lite have donated a number of Vari-Lite VL800 EVENTPAR and Strand PLP1PROFILE MKII fixtures. Grant Bales Smith, Regional Sales Leader, Entertainment Lighting for Signify comments: “Reading Rep’s mission is to put community at the heart of its artistic vision and to provide access to the arts for Reading’s most vulnerable communities. These are important values that resonate with the Signify entertainment brands, which is why we feel it’s important to support. What might be a relatively small donation by us will make a big impact on the technical and production values of Reading Rep’s upcoming shows, and we are delighted and proud to be able to support that.” ■

**PRODUCTS FEATURED:**

VL800 EVENTPAR  
ACCLAIM LED FRESNEL  
PLP1PROFILE MKII

LIGHTING DESIGN: SIMEON MILLER,  
*LIGHTING DESIGNER FOR A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

PHOTO CREDITS: © HARRY ELLETSON

CONSULTANT: ANDREW STONE, MD, DRAMA  
BY DESIGN AND JORDAN HARRIS, HEAD OF  
PRODUCTION, READING REP

LIGHTING APPLICATION: THEATRE

