



VARI-LITE

STRICTLY COME DANCING STEPS FORWARD
WITH VARI-LITE'S VL1100 LED

London, UK - The new season of Strictly Come Dancing, the multi-award-winning celebrity dance show which has been a UK television audience favorite since 2004, kicked off in September with the usual spring in its step. This year David Bishop, part of the show's lighting team since its inception, took on the role of lighting designer and introduced a significant new upgrade to the Strictly lighting rig - the VL1100 LED luminaire from Vari-Lite.

Introduced as the LED generation successor to the popular tungsten-based VL1000, the VL1100 LED delivers clear advantages over its conventional predecessor. "I chose the VL1100 LED as an upgrade to a fixture we already knew worked well in our show environment," says Bishop, who is using the fixture for the first time. "The original VL1000 had served the program well for many years, but the extra output of the VL1100 LED, combined with removing the vulnerability of the traditional bulb, made the new fixture an obvious choice."

Bishop is using 25 VL1100 LED fixtures, providing a mixture of front-light and cross-light. "They feature prominently when we have lots of people on set," he says, "whether during a dance number, or to provide the color-changing keylight for the elimination sequence."

Speaking of the requirements for a lighting fixture on this production, he says, "We need fixture reliability across all functions, combined with high-output and consistent color temperature - avoiding the color variation you often find with discharge source fixtures. And maintenance needs to be kept to an absolute minimum, as every minute in the studio is needed by performers or the other show departments, to deliver the high standard of show our viewers have come to expect."

And when it comes to a high standard of television picture, keylight is all-important. "Whilst Strictly is a dance show, it's also a celebrity show, and our viewers expect to see their favorite stars looking as they do on the pages of magazines," says Bishop. "That means that well-controlled keylight, at the correct angle for each shot, is very important. There are fixed positions which we return to on a regular basis, but flexibility is all important to give the show its spontaneous feel."

Discussing other performance features of the VL1100 LED, Bishop says, "The zoom range is important to us - narrow for the significant throw from end-to-end of our ballroom, and the wide for dance taking place downstage. And swapping to LED is a significant benefit in colorimetry and reliability."

He adds, "The fixture's framing ability is a primary factor in the choice of any keylight fixture. To maintain Strictly's sharp look, whether providing the proper people lighting, or in delivering the voting sequence in particular, it's very rare that a VL1100 LED is used without the framing system."

As the current season of Strictly continues, the VL1100 LED has more than justified Bishop's faith in the brand. "It's everything I hoped for," he says. "The output is much greater than the VL1000 ever delivered, and you'd never know the source wasn't a tungsten bulb!" ■



PRODUCTS FEATURED:
VL1100 LED

LIGHTING DESIGNER: David Bishop

LIGHTING APPLICATION: TV & FILM