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VARI-LITE'S VL2600 PROFILE IS A FLEXIBLE MOVER FOR SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE

Los Angeles, USA - Lighting the many and varied styles of dance performance for Fox's popular TV show, So You Think You Can Dance, requires a diversity of looks as different from one another as the dances themselves.

To achieve this for the final stages of the show's 16th season, which completed in September 2019, multiple EMMY Award-winning lighting designer Bob Barnhart chose to use 80 of Vari-Lite's new, LED-based VL2600 PROFILE luminaires as the "workhorse" fixture in his rig. The VL2600 PROFILES help Barnhart to deliver the wide variety of looks he needs, in the tightest of time-frames.

Produced by 19 Entertainment, Dick Clark Productions, and Conrad Sewell Productions, So You Think You Can Dance sees around 900 dancers compete to be declared "America's favorite dancer." In the course of a single season, Barnhart will light almost 80 dances in total. "The challenge is keeping the different looks fresh," says Barnhart, "so we try to use lighting equipment that can do a wide variety of things. A 'workhorse' in this situation is much more valuable to me than a 'one trick pony'."

He adds, "The other challenge that this particular show brings is a very short schedule. We get 20 minutes to light each dance the day before the broadcast. No cameras, just the lighting department, the dancers and the choreographers."

For Barnhart, the VL2600 PROFILE'S four-blade framing shutter system, which allows the designer to precisely shape the light from each fixture, has been key to achieving that essential variety. "The shutters give us a whole new tool to play with," he says. "We





used to have a custom square gobo, just to get away from the usual 'dots' look. Now we can make the square any size, and vary shapes from squares to triangles. It's been really helpful in finding that variety we need to separate each dance."

The VL2600 PROFILE'S framing is an appropriate tool, as Barnhart's much-celebrated lighting depends on precision. "If you watch the show you'll see that I like 'control' of my light," he explains. "I don't like 'loose lumens,' so I shy away from wash-style fixtures. As a matter of fact, in the last six years I have hardly used a wash fixture on any of the 20-25 different shows I do every year."

Barnhart positions the majority of the VL2600 PROFILES in his overhead rig, which, he says, "is used for everything from back light to step front light, and a magnitude of floor pattern opportunities. Then there are some units placed in key positions to help with the odd occasions."

In addition to its framing versatility, Barnhart praises the camera-friendly features of the VL2600's light output and color temperature control. "What I really like about the VL2600 is the flat field and consistent color temperature from fixture to fixture," he says. "The VL2600, with that consistency, and tools like the variable CTO, is good to have in your toolbox."

Completing in September 2019, the 16th season of So You Think You Can Dance was won by Bailey Muñoz. ■

PRODUCTS FEATURED:
VL2600 PROFILE

PHOTO CREDITS: © FOX

LIGHTING DESIGNER: Bob Barnhart

LIGHTING APPLICATION: TV & FILM