

5.7.2024

The Robe Songbook So Far with Calum Scott

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Popular UK singer and former Britain's Got Talent contestant Calum Scott is back on the road in 2024 with a new campaign, "The Songbook So Far" a world tour, which is playing larger venues than before for headliner shows, together with a run of high-profile festival slots reflecting his ever-growing fanbase.

A new lighting rig for the tour was created and specified by LD Elliot Baines of Spiralstagelighting. Elliot has been working with the artist since summer 2022, initially as the lighting operator, and was then asked to design lighting for this new tour, for which he specified 30 x Robe ESPRITE and 54 x Spikies which are being supplied for the UK full production shows by Hampshire-based Liteup.

Calum's management wanted fresh and different styling for this tour, so Elliot presented an eye-catching design that was scalable and highly practical to tour and play a variety of venues and stage sizes.

The tour narrative encompasses the artist's journey – personal and musical – so everyone was keen that while some elements threaded back to previous designs, essentially, the aesthetic was new and looked forward.

Five upstage set pods are the main architectural feature, positioned at the back of the main riser platforms behind the band. Initially inspired by the "Biblical" music video, each of the five pods – for the larger shows – are rigged with a 3 x 3 matrix of Spikies, so these fixtures are very prominent in the aesthetics.

While previous tours had included a basic riser system, explained Elliot, he wanted a proper stage set for this, resulting in large full-stage-width custom risers and stairs. Part of the reasoning behind this was also to encourage Calum to use all available stage space.

The riser fronts are backlit with strobes / floods adding an extra layer of depth.

The set also functions as a vehicle for The Songbook's theatrical story. "I really wanted something visual to be happening and changing constantly throughout the show with either set or lighting or both, so you get the feeling of evolution," notes Elliot.

The original visuals for the song "Rise" had included the white cliffs of Dover, and onstage, Elliot found that he could even light part of the set to resemble the landmark, so it was highly versatile. "The idea was that every piece of the set brought something to the overall story," says Elliot.

The ESPRITES are positioned all in the overhead rig and on the floor, with the numbers variable depending on the venue size.

There are always 8 x ESPRITES on the front truss for key lighting and specials, with the others dotted around the over stage trusses covering Calum and the band for back lighting and effects. Elliot likes their brightness, refined output, and feature range.

For those European venues when they are using house 'top' rigs and bringing in their specials, a quantity of the ESPRITES that are part of their touring rig will be deployed on the floor.

Apart from providing an elegant and dynamic space in which Calum can perform, Elliot's goal of being highly flexible with the design ensures a distinctive look for every performance.

However, the LD mentions that when the shows scale up to a certain point, he will be very keen to start using Robe FORTES, another fixture he definitely rates for its power and versatility.

For the recent shows at Hammersmith Apollo in London, Elliot had the full rig and added a RoboSpot system on which he ran two of the ESPRITES which were following Calum.

The Spikies are used for multiple effects, allowing Elliot to drill down into the more intricate effects he likes to create. "At 20% brightness, you can create a very delicate fading twinkle which looks beautiful," he says describing the look used during the chorus of "Biblical".

In the middle of "Heaven" he also creates a subtle undulating animation effect with a 20% Spikie fade which is another favourite, and in the following song, he bumps into the white flower effect during a loud bang in the chorus for maximum contrast.

This always gets a great reaction from the crowd, and even the FOH sound engineer comments on it. “You know you’re hitting the right buttons when the sound guy comments on the lighting!” quips Elliot with a smile.

“There really is so much you can do with Spikies,” he declares.

Elliot likes working with Robe products for many reasons, “Intensity, features, colours including a great range of whites, the reliability and just the overall quality of the luminaires and the light output” are high on the list. “I have never had a Robe fixture fail on a show and it’s one of the brands I most enjoy working with!”

His programmer for the current tour Olly Walker is also a big Robe advocate.

Elliot is the first to compliment the “fantastic” team at Liteup. “They are very friendly and welcoming, the kit is excellently prepped and looked after, they are always super helpful and take care of everything I need,” he states.

He also has a great working relationship with the artist and his team, and both of them being from ‘up north’ helped this off to a great start.

The Calum Scott tour is scheduled to continue throughout 2024, and Spiral is enjoying a busy year so far working with several other excellent artists.

Photo Credit: Luke Dyson





