

Robe at the Romanian National Opera

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The Romanian National Opera in Bucharest (Opera Națională București), Romania's leading national opera and ballet company, has invested in Robe moving and LED lights, which were delivered at the start of the year via Robe's Romanian distributor, Senia Music.

The new investments include iFORTES, Spiider LED wash beams, LEDBeam 350s, Tetra2s and ParFect 150s, totalling over 100 fixtures, a decision that was overseen by the Opera's maestro, Daniel Jinga.

Daniel is also the creative director and general manager - as well as chorus master and principal conductor - of the Muntenia Symphony Orchestra in Târgoviște.

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He has been at Opera Națională București for four years, where he immediately recognised that a technical upgrade was overdue and set about getting the funding in place.

An upcoming production in 2026 of the epic musical *Phantom* was a further catalyst to kickstarting the process of getting contemporary production lighting installed. Daniel led the lighting team into looking for a solution.

The most important change – apart from being able to light shows more imaginatively than before using lights with greater scope and more features – was that the Opera has advanced from being dependent on rental and external factors for moving lights, to being practically self-sufficient.

This is a boost for efficient workflow and adds value to the shows, as well as being seriously more cost effective operationally.

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Lighting designer Stefan Dragu has worked at Opera Națională București for 30 years and recalls how the previous moving lights in the house - from other brands - were getting old and tired, so the need came to replace them.

The lighting department produced a wish list of essential features for any new luminaires, which included power, functionality, silent running, high CRI, and good shutters, among other things. They then started looking at the options ... and Robe was unanimously voted as the best choice.



They had previously had a couple of old Robe ColorSpot 1200E ATs in the house, and Robe products were frequently among the rented-in items for various shows, so they did know the brand, but are now in the excellent position of being able to fully service their own productions.

A typical season will see two musicals and one opera running in rep, and over the year there are nearly 40 operas, musicals and ballets presented in the 1000-seater classic horseshoe shaped main auditorium, lit by a giant illuminated chandelier.

The lighting crew of 10 will support the LDs of incoming shows when there is one, and when there is not, will step up and design lighting themselves in conjunction with that show's producer and director.

“Having the new Robe fixtures onboard has made everything much easier and more streamlined,” noted Stefan, mentioning that although it was a huge investment, it was worth it for making such a significant improvement for every lighting professional working in the building. It is even helping reduce the energy consumption since the older fixtures were replaced.



Stefan also notes that they have had a great working relationship with Senia for over at least 15 years, as the company has also supplied them with audio kit and MI products.

“We are all very happy!” he concludes.

The current opera house, located in the buzzing heart of central Bucharest near the Cotroceni neighbourhood, is a historic monument designed by Octav Doicescu and Paraschiva Iubu, and the stage is notable for offering a large technical area of 24 metres wide by 20 metres deep, with a lofty 30 metres of headroom. The building’s façade has striking monumental arches and bas-reliefs celebrating opera and ballet.