

# COSTUME DRAMA

David Atkinson has used theatrical lighting techniques to give this Russian ballet exhibition a dramatic feel to emphasise its revolutionary story



David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD) recently completed the lighting design for 'Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes' exhibition at the V&A, London.

This major exhibition explores the world of the influential artistic director and impresario Serge Diaghilev and the most exciting dance company of the 20th century, the Ballets Russes. Diaghilev collaborated with the most important artists, composers and designers of the era, astonishing audiences and revolutionising ballet. The exhibition features 300 objects including original costumes, set designs, scores, props, posters and film clips and celebrates Diaghilev's enduring influence on art and design.

The exhibition designers, Tim Hatley & Drinkall Dean, briefed DALD that the lighting was to create a sensitive yet dynamic theatrical approach to the exhibition. The installation is set out in three main galleries. The first looks at the origins of the Ballets Russes in the context of Tsarist Russia up to the start of World War I. The display explores the 1913 production of The Rite of Spring, which at its first perfor-

mance provoked a riot in the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Several costumes designed by Nicholas Roerich for the opening night are on show.

The second gallery takes visitors behind the scenes of Ballets Russes productions, with a close examination of set creation, costumes and make-up design, choreography and the selection of the music.

The third gallery examines Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes in the 1920s, presenting the work of artists, authors and musicians with whom he was associated, including James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Leon Bakst, Georges Braque, Henri Matisse and many others.

On entering the first gallery a sense of drama is created with a large angled introduction wall being up lit in red by recessed fluorescents. This strong hue of colour is reflected into the entrance corridor drawing visitors in.

Sections entitled 'Dance Before Diaghilev' and 'European Dance' display paintings, prints and artefacts, which are all externally illuminated from high level track

DALD's use of theatrical fittings such as hired prop lights and Spotlight Mini Fresnels (supplied by AC Special Projects) creates a sense of drama at the exhibition

## Project Details

### 'Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes' exhibition, V&A, London

Client: V&A, London  
Lighting Designer: David Atkinson Lighting Design  
Exhibition Designer: Tim Hatley & Drinkall Dean  
Lighting Suppliers: AC Special Projects, ETC, Light Projects, Enliten, Spotlight, UFO  
Photography: Nick Wood Photography

## Lighting Specified

Philips Selecon Astral Fresnel 150W CDM-T / Track Mounted  
Philips Selecon Aureol Beam Shaper 65W  
Spotlight Mini Fresnel 150W CDM-T / Track Mounted  
ETC Source 4 Zoom (Enliten) HID 150W CDM-T  
ETC Source 4 PAR (Enliten) HID 150W CDM-T  
Enliten VSFx Fleecy Cloud & Flame  
Rosco Animation disks & filters  
Strand Coda Asymmetric Flood 500W  
James Thomas Engineering Par 16 (G5.3) 20/35W  
Light Projects Toucan 2 & Raylight AR111 65W (45.24 & 8 degree) / Track Mounted  
Hired Prop Lights – Ancient Lights (Jim Laws)  
Universal Fibre Optics – All F/O projectors & Harnesses  
Lee Filters

lighting fixtures. DALD chose to use a limited palette for the exhibit lighting, which included AR111 based track fixtures fitted with a combination of spreader and diffuser lenses with internal dimming and energy saving lamps.

To evoke the idea of costumes in motion, the 'First Season' section features a motorised circular plinth with a revolving display of costumes backed by large mirrors. To enhance the effect of animation DALD installed a counter rotating projected spiral that throws hints of light across the costumes. Carefully controlled washes of blue light from Spotlight Mini Fresnels (150W CDM-T) are shone across the plinth to add depth and dimmed period light fixtures are positioned on the plinth for theatrical effect

The next space, 'Poiret & Nijinsky', is framed by painted gauze panels onto which dappled light is projected to create a sense of smoke drifting across the set. Once inside the Nijinsky theatre space, rich amber washes of light, again from Spotlight Mini Fresnels (150W CDM-T), are applied to emulate a gold quality.

The 'Rite of Spring' is a bold space painted in a fluorescent green. Costumed mannequins positioned at different heights on a graded stage are top lit from acute angles, to accentuate their beauty and form. Animation to the space comes from a projected 'Fleecy Cloud'.

The North Court opens with a stylised 'prop store' incorporating typical back stage elements. Here low level fluorescents fitted with steel blue filters uplight the rear wall and five period prop lights with dimmed internal light sources are set within the display. Accent lighting picks out the exhibits from track fixtures.

The 'prop store' is a deliberately dark space to evoke the back stage feel and create dramatic contrast to the next gallery.

Emerging out of the 'prop store' visitors come across the magnificent Firebird back-cloth designed by Natalia Goncharova for



The 'prop store' is a deliberately dark space to evoke the back stage feel and create dramatic contrast to the next gallery. The Backcloth is illuminated from asymmetric flood fixtures and wash lights positioned one metre out from the top of the cloth. The lighting to the Backcloth was sequenced to fade up & down in conjunction with large scale digital video projections of dancers within the space

## JAPANESE

デイヴィッド・アトキンソン・ライティング・デザイン(DALD)は昨年、ロンドンのV&Aで行われた「ディアギレフとバレエ・リュス黄金時代」の展示会の照明デザインを完成させました。展示会デザイナーのティム・ハトリーとドリンコール・ディーンがDALDに依頼したのは、繊細でありながらも大胆な劇場的手法で展示会を演出するような照明です。第一ギャラリーに入ると、埋め込み蛍光灯で真っ赤に照らされた大きく、曲がった壁がドラマチックなシーンを展開します。この強い色彩は入り口通路にまで届き、訪れる人々を導き入れています。動きを感じさせる衣裳という感覚を呼び起こすため、「ファースト・シーズン」のセクションでは回転式衣裳ディスプレイのついたモーター式の丸い台座が、大きな鏡を背に置

かれています。動的効果をさらに増すため、DALDは突出したスパイラル構造を回転させるカウンターを設け、そこから衣裳に向けて何本もの光を当てました。緻密にコントロールされた青い光が台座の向かい側で光り、深みを与え、台座に取り付けられたほの暗いスポットライトが劇場らしさを演出しています。

## CHINESE

David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD)最近为在V&A, London 举办的展览“佳吉列夫与俄国芭蕾舞团的黄金年代”提供了照明设计。根据展览设计师Tim Hatley与Drinkall Dean的要求,照明应为展览营造一个敏感而动态的戏剧效果。进入第一画廊,迎面由采用嵌入式红色荧光灯的大型直角展示墙营造出戏剧氛围。强烈的色彩反射到入口走廊,吸引参观者进入一

探究。为了表现动感服装这一概念,“第一季”采用了电动式圆形底座,旋转展示由大镜子支撑的服装。为了增强生动效果,DALD安装了一个反向旋转投影灯,向服装挥洒光色。此外,以小心调节的蓝光照射底座,增加深度感,并在底座上设置昏暗的定时灯具营造戏剧效果。

## FRANÇAIS

David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD) a récemment achevé la conception de l'éclairage de l'exposition « Diaghilev et l'âge d'or du ballet russe » qui se tient au musée Victoria and Albert de Londres. Les designers Tim Hatley et Drinkall Dean ont été en charge d'expliquer à DALD en quoi l'éclairage devrait permettre une approche théâtrale mais dans le même temps sensible de l'exposition. Dès l'entrée dans la première galerie, une atmosphère dramatique est créée à l'aide

d'un grand mur angulaire éclairé en rouge par des lampes fluorescentes en retrait. Cette teinte de couleur très forte se reflète dans le couloir d'entrée qu'empruntent les visiteurs.

Pour évoquer l'idée de costumes en mouvement, la section « Première Saison » comporte une plinthe circulaire motorisée présentant les costumes reflétés à travers de larges miroirs. Pour améliorer l'effet produit par cette animation, DALD a installé une spirale rotative projetée qui jette des traits de lumière sur les costumes. Des douches savamment contrôlées de lumière bleue ont été ajoutées pour renforcer la profondeur et sont positionnées sur la plinthe pour un effet théâtral.

## DEUTSCH

David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD) hat kürzlich das Beleuchtungsdesign für die Ausstellung "Diaghilev und das goldene Zeitalter des rus-



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the wedding scene in the 1913 production of The Firebird. The cloth is the largest single object in the V&A's collection, measuring 10 x 16 metres. DALD illuminated it (to strict conservation levels) from asymmetric flood fixtures and wash lights positioned one metre out from the top of the cloth. The lighting to the Backcloth was sequenced to fade up and down in conjunction with large scale digital video projections of dancers within the space.

On the reverse side of the Firebird Cloth is Le Train Bleu front cloth, designed by Pablo Picasso in 1922 and painted by scene painter, Alexandre Shervashidze. Apparently, Picasso was so pleased with the results that he signed the cloth, dedicating it to Diaghilev. The cloth has been called 'the largest Picasso in the world.' The same lighting technique as used on the Firebird cloth was applied. Displayed on the adjacent wall are Picasso costume illustrations. These are part illuminated by three suspended period acting lights. Two recreations of the cubist 'Mangers' costumes are lit in intense colour to highlight their enormous scale.

The last Gallery contains light sensitive materials such as works on paper, that were illuminated by fibre optics or carefully controlled incandescent light sources. A number of different lighting techniques were used including colour, shuttering and intensity. The final objects on display are garments by Yves Saint Laurent inspired by the Ballets Russes that are tightly lit from acute angles. Strong colours and carefully controlled lighting give perspective depth to the space.

Rebecca Lim, V&A's Head of South Kensington Exhibitions, said: "The lighting design played a critical part in creating drama in the exhibition and highlighting the incredible objects on display."

[www.dald.co.uk](http://www.dald.co.uk)



sischen Balletts' im V&A, London, beendet. Die Ausstellungsdesigner Tim Hatley & Drinkall Dean haben DALD Anweisungen gegeben, dass die Beleuchtung einen einflussreichen und dabei gleichzeitig dynamischen Ansatz für die Ausstellung zu schaffen hat. Beim Betreten der ersten Galerie wird ein dramatisches Gefühl durch eine breitwinkelige Einführungswand geschaffen, die durch versenkte fluoreszierende Leuchten beleuchtet wird. Dieser starke Farbton wird in den Eingangskorridor reflektiert und zieht so die Besucher an.

Um die Idee von Kostümen in Bewegung heraufzubeschwören, stellt der 'First Season' Abschnitt einen motorisierten kreisförmigen Sockel in den Vordergrund mit einem drehenden Display von Kostümen, das durch Spiegel unterstützt wird. Um die Wirkung der Animation zu steigern, hat DALD eine Spirale mit entgegengesetzter Drehrichtung installiert, die Andeutungen von Licht durch die Kostüme wirft. Sorgfältig kontrollierte blaue Lichter

erstrahlen durch den Sockel, um Tiefe zu verleihen und Lampen mit abgedunkelten Perioden sind auf dem Sockel für einen theatralischen Effekt platziert.

## ITALIANO

La David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD) ha recentemente completato il progetto di illuminazione per la mostra "Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes" al V&A, Londra. I creatori della mostra Tim Hatley e Drinkall Dean hanno chiesto alla DALD che le luci dessero alla mostra un approccio teatrale delicato ma allo stesso tempo dinamico. Entrando nella prima galleria viene creato un senso di drammatico con una parete introduttiva a grandangolo illuminata in rosso da fluorescenti ad incasso. Questa forte sfumatura di colore è riflessa nel corridoio d'entrata, attirando i visitatori. Per rendere l'idea di costumi in movimento, la sezione della "Prima Stagione" presenta un piedis-

tallo circolare motorizzato con un display rotante di costumi chiuso da grandi specchi. Per accrescere l'effetto di animazione la DALD ha installato una spirale controrotante a proiezione che getta lampi di luce attraverso i costumi. Scie di luce blu sapientemente controllate vengono mostrate attraverso il piedistallo per aggiungere profondità e impianti di luce che si abbassano sono posizionati sul piedistallo per un effetto teatrale.

## ESPAÑOL

David Atkinson Diseño de Iluminación (DALD) completó recientemente el diseño de iluminación para la exhibición 'Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes' (Diaghilev y la Era de Oro del Ballet Ruso) en el V&A de Londres. Los diseñadores de la exhibición, Tim Hatley y Drinkall Dean, le informaron a DALD que la iluminación tenía por objetivo crear un enfoque teatral sensible pero

dinámico a la exhibición. Al ingresar a la primera galería, se genera una sensación de drama teatral con una gran pared introductoria angulada que está iluminada de rojo en la parte superior por medio de fluorescentes escondidos. Este tono de color fuerte se refleja en el pasillo de entrada invitando a los visitantes.

Para evocar la idea de trajes en movimiento, la sección la "Primera Estación" ofrece un plinto circular motorizado con una muestra giratoria de trajes en cuyo fondo hay grandes espejos. Para realzar el efecto de la animación, DALD instaló un espiral proyectado giratorio que arroja luz indirecta a través de los trajes. Estelas de luz azul cuidadosamente controladas brillan a través del plinto para agregar profundidad. Asimismo, dispuestos en el plinto, hay artefactos de luces tenues para lograr el efecto teatral.

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