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## A Heads Up with Ned Siuipys

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic ... we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

Ned is originally from Lithuania but has been living in the UK for 3 years. He is a final year Technical Theatre student at Falmouth University and will be coming to London in the Autumn to do his master's degree in Lighting Design at Rose Bruford College.

He's been working as a lighting designer for many local bands and artists, including Hockeysmith, Milo Gore and The Velvet Hands as has also worked closely with companies Red Van Records and Cloud 9 Events.

His LD career has included a placement for one of the biggest Lithuanian lighting companies Stage Lite, which was great for honing his practical skills, and he's worked on shows like X-Factor and Du Balsai Viena Sirdis.

Before the pandemic, he also worked on events for Falmouth Week which hosted groups like SClub 4, Martin Kemp, and DJ Craig Charles.

Robe: Where are you right now?

Ned: For most of lockdown, I have been in the UK, but I am now back home in Lithuania, visiting my friends and family. And I continue to attend Robe NRG meetings on Zoom each week, whilst also doing loads of online training.

Robe: How are things emerging from the lockdown in your region / country?

Ned: Because I was in the UK when the lockdown took place, I can't say much about Lithuania. To my knowledge, they closed the borders quite fast, so the numbers were reduced immediately and are still very low. Everyone is enjoying the freedom!

Robe: How did you spend your time during lockdown?

Ned: Mostly taking several online training courses and getting used to the industry-standard software such as Vectorworks, WYSIWYG and GrandMA2/3.

Robe: What are your biggest concerns / considerations as lockdowns ease worldwide?

Ned: One of my biggest concerns is how busy life will seem post lockdown, and how hard it will be to adjust being back in a social setting again?!

Robe: Do you have any thoughts / predictions about how and when live events and the industry will re-start?

Ned: No one knows when the industry will come back... I hope it will be as soon as possible! It will take a while for audiences to be confident that attending a show or a festival won't kill you! It could be months away. It could be more than a year.

Robe: Going forward, how do you think live events and the entertainment technology industry will change in a post-Covid 19 world before there is a vaccine widely available?

Ned: It will be difficult for lots of people to feel comfortable in large crowds for a while and especially whilst there is no vaccine. And this will directly impact the entertainment industry that relies on crowds of people attending events.

Robe: How sustainable do you think these changes will be?

Ned: This could be incredibly unsustainable for entertainment providers who are now catering for much smaller crowds than previously. They are therefore getting less money coming in, whilst having to put more funds into cleaning and providing single-use equipment such as masks and other items.

Robe: Has anyone / anything particularly inspired you since this crisis started?

Ned: Attending the weekly meetings and being a part of NRG has inspired me so much! During these hard times, we have had loads of incredible guest lighting designers talking to us and giving the confidence boost we have all needed.

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you would like to say?

Ned: The main key to get through this pandemic is just to keep positive and optimise the time wisely!  
Live in the moment and enjoy it! We will get through this together!

