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A Heads Up with Jacob Shooter

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.

Before lockdown, Jacob worked as a lighting and video programmer via his company Jacob Shooter Lighting Design (JSLD) www.jacobshooter.lighting, working on projects including Celebrity X-Factor, Dancing on Ice, Secret Cinema's Stranger Things, The Voice, Grace Jones, End Game at the Old Vic, and the Moschino Fashion show. Sadly, this has all come to a halt at the moment, but he's positive everyone will be back to work soon!

Robe: Where are you right now?

Jacob: I'm currently at home in Sidcup, South London.

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

Jacob: It looks like things are very slowly starting back up in the television world, however, live events seem to still be quiet for obvious reasons.

Robe: How did you spend your time during lockdown?

Jacob: I've been trying to learn how to code, so studying the basics of Swift and C Sharp programming. I have also been expanding my knowledge of the disguise media server systems, as JSLD invested in the platform earlier this year.

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

Jacob: My biggest concern is that the government support package will stop, and most industries will be back at work, whilst live events, theatre and concerts will still very much be cancelled. It is very

easy for people to suggest that someone in this industry finds a different job, however that would mean being unavailable for that last-minute call to push buttons on a show tomorrow morning at 5am!

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

Jacob: I imagine we will be slowly returning back to work around March next year. If there isn't a second spike, my guess is that we will have a quiet Christmas and that sadly this will be without panto, followed by us springing back with some concerts and tours early next 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?

Jacob: I think, as we see already, 3D augmented reality stage sets will become much more mainstream and popular. Companies like Notch and disguise are already making huge leaps, so the technology is accessible to a range of productions. Also, I imagine we will continue to see more productions live streamed, and concerts broadcast with minimal audiences in the venue.

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

Jacob: I don't think these will be sustainable changes at all. From what I've seen, most audience members enjoy festivals with their friends, and enjoy having some food and a drink at the bar. This just isn't the same experience sat in your car!

Likewise, West End theatre productions are popular for their costume, huge sets and colourful lighting. I don't believe the excitement of a meal out in London and a visit to the West End is replicated by a pizza on the living room sofa.

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

Jacob: Gardeners World. I've recently taken up an allotment and have started growing pumpkins, sweetcorn and cucumbers. Hopefully I'll have something to eat by October!

As well as this, the Robe NRG Zoom calls with other industry professionals have been brilliant to learn new tips and gain more knowledge.

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

Jacob: I'm not sure when we will be back to work and as busy as we were before, but let's hope when we are ... that there is too much work so we all need to work 2 jobs a day!

