

PRO THIS



COURTESY FERGUS BURNETT PHOTOGRAPHY



GK WAY

ROCKART DESIGN CREATIVE
DIRECTOR NICOLINE REFSING
ROCKS PRODUCTION DESIGN

/// BY MEGHAN PERKINS



Nicoline Refsing was earning her Master's degree from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design in Denmark, when she discovered production design. A friend who was working on a large show asked for help with some drawings. Refsing effectively immersed herself in the world of entertainment design when she agreed to help to design the show. The gig in question was held in a venue in Copenhagen that was run by an old rock 'n' roll crew, who welcomed her into their realm of soundchecks, product demos, and creative discussions.

"When I was introduced to that theory of production design, I just thought that this makes sense to communicate through space, movement, color, lighting, sound," says Refsing.

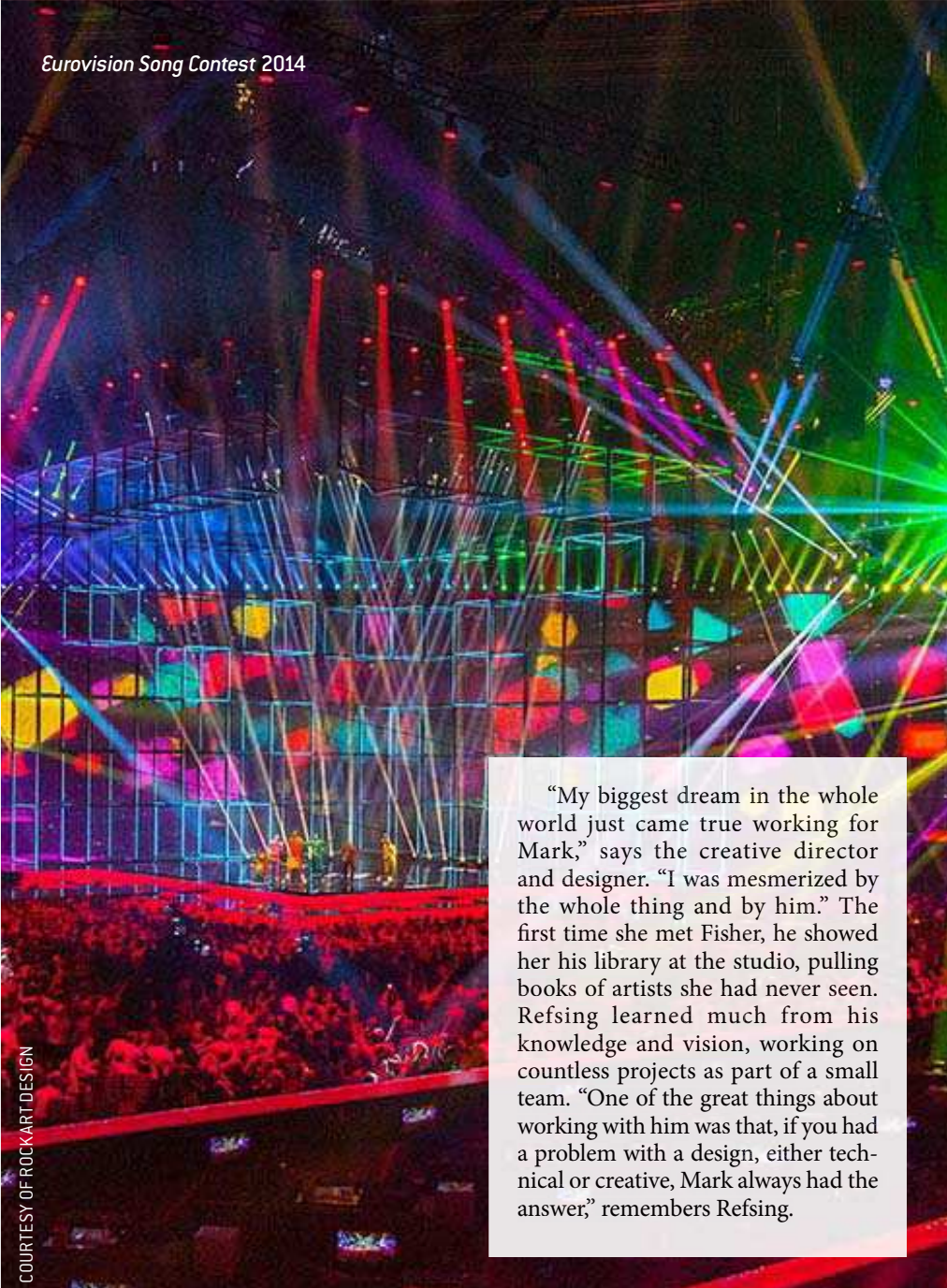
In 1998, Refsing saw The Rolling Stones' *Bridges To Babylon Tour*. "I just thought I'd gone to heaven," she states. "It completely blew my mind, and that was where I decided that this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life." Near graduation, one of her mentors pointed out that it was "the same guy who designed all the big Pink Floyd, Rolling Stones, and U2 tours." She looked at her mentor and replied, "I'm going to work for him." Indeed, she did, spending six years under the wing of industry icon Mark Fisher, founder of Stufish.



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Diamonds Are Forever Gala Event for the Duke of
Edinburgh Award's Diamond Jubilee



Eurovision Song Contest 2014

“My biggest dream in the whole world just came true working for Mark,” says the creative director and designer. “I was mesmerized by the whole thing and by him.” The first time she met Fisher, he showed her his library at the studio, pulling books of artists she had never seen. Refsing learned much from his knowledge and vision, working on countless projects as part of a small team. “One of the great things about working with him was that, if you had a problem with a design, either technical or creative, Mark always had the answer,” remembers Refsing.



COURTESY OF ROCKART DESIGN

While working at Stufish, Refsing worked on the design for Pink's *Funhouse Tour* from the London office, and Fisher collaborated with the creative team on site. "She's just so *powerful* and extraordinary in all kinds of ways," Refsing says of Pink, "so when it landed on my desk, I thought, 'I'm going to give her something really, really strong.'" It became the fifth highest grossing tour of 2009, according to *Billboard*. Refsing believes that the design helped give the tour a strong brand, matching the identities of both the artist and the album.

In 2011, Refsing struck out on her own and founded Rockart Design, combining production design with creative direction and show branding. "I always wanted my own business," she says, "but what I found

a little surprising was that there was sort of a demand for me doing bigger and wider roles than just design, and that creative flexibility has been very exciting." Refsing has since delved into screen content as well, resolving the border between set and screen. "It is very magical," says the designer. "You add a lot of layers to it, but it is almost like watching it in an old theatre or a more theatrical storytelling way."

As creative director and content producer for *Eurovision Song Contest 2014*, Refsing put the new skill to work. "My aim was to create content that was interesting both in the wide-shot and the mid-shot and the close-up," says the designer of the live international broadcast. As a result of the show, the Rockart Design team developed

REFSING'S FIRM HAS ALSO DESIGNED FOR HIGH-PROFILE EVENTS SUCH AS THE NATIONAL TELEVISION AWARDS, THE BRIT AWARDS, AND X-FACTOR.





COURTESY OF ROCKART DESIGN

a new visualization software that displayed the set with surfaces, reflections, lighting, projections, and screen content while in realtime jumping from one camera angle to the next to effectively present a close visualization to the director. Refsing and the Rockart Design team created engaging designs for the 37 countries, giving each country its own light in which to shine in front of 195 million viewers. Refsing was creative director for Latvia in 2015 and for Italy and Australia at this year's contest, which achieved the show's record-breaking 204 million viewers.

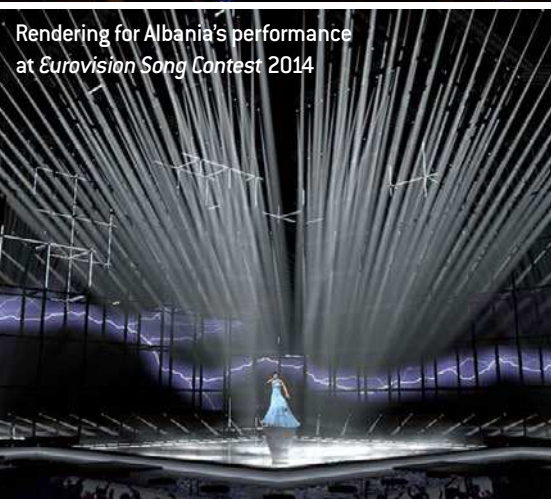
Refsing continues to branch out into new areas, taking on the production design for the 2015 World Championships for League of Legends. "When they first called me, I was rather surprised," says the creative director. "I told them I don't

know much about computer games." They pointed out that she knows how to create a show and make a spectacle. "It was a completely different game," she says, but her expertise in production helped her successfully combine the authenticity of the noise and action with innovative technology and design into a feat of entertainment.

Refsing's firm has also designed for high-profile events such as the *National Television Awards*, *The Brit Awards*, and *X-Factor*. Refsing most recently designed the Diamonds Are Forever Gala Event for the Duke of Edinburgh Award's Diamond Jubilee. She looks forward to upcoming projects, focusing on the spirit of creative collaboration because, she believes, "the way you work with people is essential."



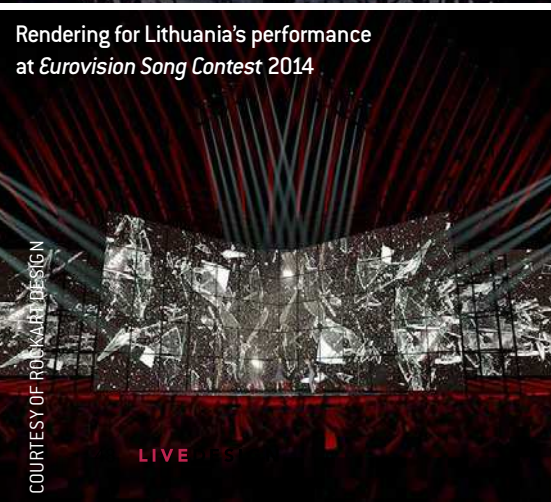
Rendering for Albania's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest 2014*



Rendering for Greece's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest 2014*



Rendering for Lithuania's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest 2014*

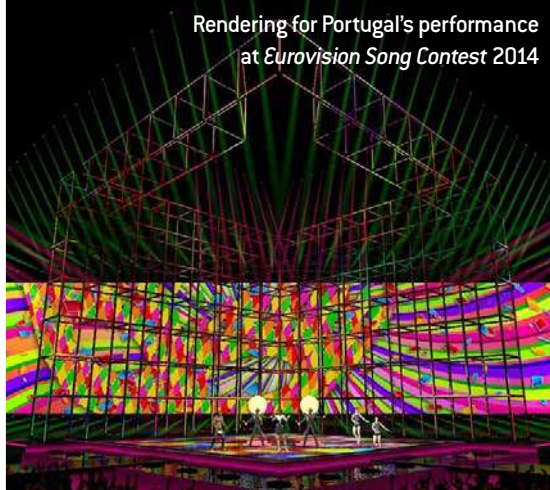


Rendering for Malta's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest 2014*

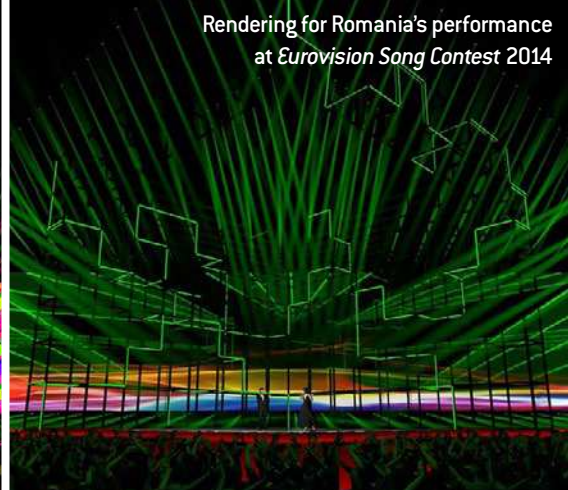


LIVE

Rendering for Portugal's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest* 2014



Rendering for Romania's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest* 2014



Rendering for San Marino's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest* 2014



Rendering for Slovenia's performance
at *Eurovision Song Contest* 2014



Rendering of main set for *Eurovision
Song Contest* 2014



Rendering of main set for *Eurovision
Song Contest* 2014

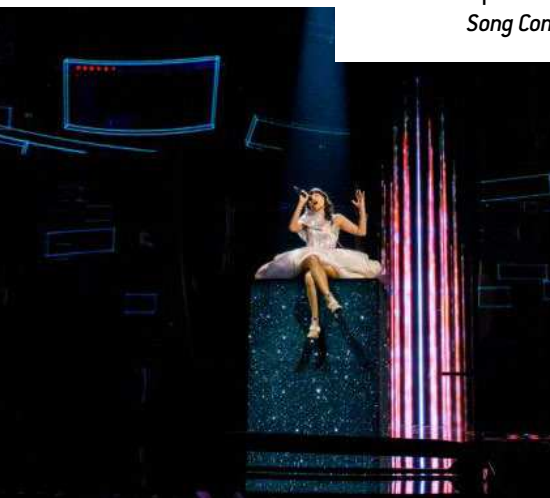


Latvia's performance at
Eurovision Song Contest 2015





Australia's performance at *Eurovision Song Contest 2016*



Italy's performance at *Eurovision Song Contest 2016*



2015 World Championships for League of Legends

