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MASQUE SOUND'S CUSTOM AUDIO PACKAGE SHINES WITH SHIMMERING SPLENDOR FOR BROADWAY'S NEW MUSICAL COMEDY, *ALADDIN*

NEW YORK, APRIL 24, 2014 — When the highly anticipated Disney musical *Aladdin* was brought to theatrical life at Broadway's New Amsterdam Theatre on March 20th, **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, supplied a custom audio equipment package to support Sound Designer Ken Travis' creation.

Aladdin's journey sweeps audiences into an exotic world full of daring adventure, classic comedy and timeless romance. It is an unforgettable experience that includes all the cherished songs from the Academy Award®-winning score, along with additional tunes written and produced specifically for the Broadway production.

Travis' objective in the design was to create a big cinematic sound. "With the show featuring the mystical genie and all of his wild antics, we really wanted the sound to be magical so we needed an extremely flexible sound system," says Travis. "The audio for *Aladdin* has the feel of an old-fashioned Broadway musical, featuring a big brass band in the pit with lots of over-the-top elements."

Travis and his team, which consisted of Alex Hawthorn, associate sound designer; Lucas Indelicato, production audio head; and Gabe Wood, front of house mixer, chose several of the specific products throughout the design process, as the sound requirements of the production evolved and the different audio elements started to piece themselves together.

"What we were trying to accomplish in the sound design for *Aladdin* had never been done on this scale before," he says. "In collaboration with Masque Sound, we implemented the TiMax Soundhub2 control software from Out Board. Basically, it allows us to control each speaker individually, so that we can send sound to any speaker in the house. In addition, we designated 200 channels of amplification around the audience so that we could program anything to go anywhere at any time. This incredible technology allowed us to really immerse the audience in the show as they felt the sound move around them. Gary Stocker from Masque Sound and the crew at Out Board started from scratch and spent weeks working until everything was ironed out. A lot of collaboration was involved as we worked it through its paces, and it was worth it, as the final result is quite amazing."

To provide Travis with the flexibility and dynamic sound he was after, Masque Sound supplied a Studer Vista 5 digital mixing console. "The Vista 5 is extremely transparent, reliable, easy to program and sounds amazing," adds Travis. "I laid out my hit list for the crew at Studer and they nailed it."

Masque Sound also provided an extensive PA for *Aladdin*, which was comprised entirely of d&b audiotechnik speakers. The new V-series comprised the mains, and the hundreds of surround speakers were a combination of E6s and E5s. Because Travis wanted to be able to immerse the audience and have incredible control, he created rings of speakers that wrapped around the audience. On the mezzanine and orchestra levels, there are inner rings of surround speakers. This allows the sound levels to remain consistent and evenly distributed keeping the audience from hearing the audio from a specific direction

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or speaker location. In addition, delayed rings provide audience members with an ambient feel, so that they are comfortably enveloped and immersed in the sound.

"There is some really subtle stuff like dripping water in a dungeon or the spooky voice in Jafar's Lair, and as you are sitting in the audience, it is actually moving around you slowly, so you can never be entirely sure as to where the voice is coming from," adds Travis. "When Jafar gets angry and yells, we send an immense amount of energy to an entire ring of subwoofers that circle the house, which causes the floor to start vibrating. Audience members feel the pressure of the multitude of sound waves beating at them, but it's never too over-encompassing, because it's not one speaker blasting but a combination of 60 speakers."

The subwoofers include a pair of D&B J-INFRAs in the box seats to really get the room shaking, as well as B2s for the orchestra and mezzanine levels. The band system is made up of a series of V-sub, with six of them located on a truss over the audience. As an additional element to the intricate sound design setup, Travis utilizes a TiMax Tracker system to image the vocals to the actors.

The 40 channels of wireless included in the equipment package are from Sennheiser, along with DPA 4061 microphones. One of the interesting aspects of the sound design is rooted in the microphone package. Some characters wear three microphones during the show. For instance, since Aladdin takes his turban on and off in the middle of a song, there is a microphone built into his turban. This also helps to ensure that the sound emitting from the microphone on his forehead is never masked by the turban. The genie's mics are built into his prosthetic beard. Travis wanted to ensure that the audience never sees a microphone on the genie.

"The producers were wonderful in providing me and my team with every tool we needed to be successful, and Masque Sound was great in providing us with all of the gear necessary to bring our vision to life," says Travis. "Masque Sound is really a wonderful shop to work with. They made a really big investment in this musical and had to buy a lot of gear for us. I have enjoyed a long relationship with Masque Sound and it felt really good that they trusted the fact that we were going for it. I hope they are as proud of this as I am."

Directed by Tony Award®-winning director-choreographer Casey Nicholaw, *Aladdin* features a book by Chad Beguelin, music by Alan Menkin and lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice. The show stars Adam Jacobs (Aladdin), Jonathan Freeman (Jafar), James Monroe Iglehart (Genie) and Courtney Reed (Jasmine).

About Masque Sound

Founded in 1936 by a trio of Broadway stagehands, Masque Sound evolved into one of NYC's most successful theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design companies specializing in theatrical, house of worship, sporting, corporate, TV broadcast and live concert events. Celebrating more than 75 years in the industry, the company is lead by Geoff Shearing, the firm's 3rd generation owner, and Vice President and General Manager Stephanie Hansen. The company also operates Florida-based Professional Wireless Systems, a leader in the development and implementation of wireless technology. Credits range from major Broadway shows and tours including "Phantom of the Opera," "Mamma Mia!," "Lion King," "Jersey Boys," "Memphis," "The Book of Mormon," "Newsies," "Once" and "Kinky Boots" to yearly Super Bowl broadcasts and installations of varying sizes, including New York's New Victory Theater and historic St. Bartholomew's Church. Masque Sound's 70,000 sq. ft. corporate

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headquarters and main assembly facility is located at 21 East Union Ave., East Rutherford, NJ, 20 minutes from midtown Manhattan. For more information, call (201) 939-8666 or visit www.MasqueSound.com.

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