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MASQUE SOUND BRINGS THE POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL LYRICS OF TUPAC SHAKUR TO THE STAGE IN *HOLLER IF YA HEAR ME*

Custom Audio Equipment Package Keeps the Beat for First Hip-Hop Musical in Broadway History

NEW YORK, JUNE 23, 2014 — As the curtain rose and the beat dropped on Broadway, the rhymes of Tupac Shakur engulfed the Palace Theatre during the highly anticipated hip-hop musical *Holler If Ya Hear Me*. Sound Designers David Patridge and John Shivers turned to **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, to provide a custom audio equipment package for the riveting new production.

Holler If Ya Hear Me transports audiences to the world inside Tupac Shakur's lyrics, and blazes to life in a non-biographical story about friendship, family, revenge, change and hope. The production brings to light the struggles for peace against the daily challenges of inner city life in this entertaining and original musical. Through the poetry of one of the 20th century's most influential and culturally prominent voices, audiences are given a window into realities of the street, which are still relevant today.

Unlike a typical musical, which focuses mainly on reinforcing the audio coming off the stage, Patridge and Shivers' goal in designing the sound for *Holler If Ya Hear Me* was to not only reinforce but amplify the audio to bring it to a level that was much more impactful. To do so, they worked with Masque Sound to obtain a custom equipment package, which included a DiGiCo SD7T Live Digital Console, d&b audiotechnik V-Series line array system, d&b D80 amplifiers and a Yamaha PM5D-EX digital console. The performers were outfitted with Sennheiser SK5212-II radios and EM 3732-II receivers, as well as DPA d:fine microphone booms fitted with a 4066 element.

"This was the first time that we used the d&b V-Series and D80 amplifiers and we were very impressed. The PA system needed to have more volume than a typical Broadway show in order to adhere to the punchy, hip hop score," says Patridge. "The capacity and quality of the d&b D80 amplifiers was excellent. Working in an older theater also presented its challenges, architecturally speaking. We needed a line array system that was compact enough to fit the space, not block sight lines and not weigh too much; the V-Series was the perfect choice. Masque Sound went above and beyond in purchasing an abundance of high-end equipment for us, because the team knew that it was necessary for a show of this caliber. We are very appreciative that they were willing to go that extra mile to help bring our vision to life."

The designers called upon two different d&b models in order to more evenly disperse the audio throughout the theatre. "We put the 120 degree boxes at the bottom of the array and had the narrower pattern going further distances, so when the audio opens up, it keeps some of the energy off the walls of the room," adds Patridge. "When designing for sonic signature, you have to look at everything—it has to sound good, be coherent, be able to control the pattern and it has to have power. The d&b PA that Masque Sound provided allowed us to do just that."

The location of the mix position also presented a unique challenge for the designers. The seating of the Palace Theatre is configured with a continuous slope, which provides a stadium seating effect instead of

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the traditional separate levels (orchestra, mezzanine and balcony). As a result of the angle of the chairs, the FOH mixer cannot see the actors on stage, as he would have to look through the console.

“Not having a good line of sight can be quite a challenge, so we incorporated a video monitor system into the design,” says Patridge. “As a one-stop shop, Masque Sound was able to supply the video component that we needed to overcome this unexpected challenge.”

In addition to his praise of Masque Sound, Patridge also credits his long-time production engineer Kevin Kennedy for a job well done. “The sound turned out great, and we are really excited and thankful to be part of this history-making musical,” concludes Patridge.

Holler If Ya Hear Me opened on June 19, 2014 at the Palace Theatre. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.hollerifyahearme.com.

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 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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