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MASQUE SOUND FILLS CHARLESTON WITH SWEET MUSIC FOR 38th SEASON OF SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

*Custom Audio Equipment Package Turns on the Charm for Celebration of America's
Premier Performing Arts Gathering*

CHARLESTON, SC, JUNE 10, 2014 – When the 38th annual **Spoletto Festival USA**, America's premier performing arts festival, kicked off on May 23, **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, was on-hand to provide Sound Supervisor Lew Mead with an extensive custom audio equipment package for the multi-venue, two-week long celebration.

For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto Festival USA fills Charleston, South Carolina's historic theaters, churches and outdoor spaces with performances by renowned and emerging artists and performers in opera, theater and dance, as well as chamber, symphonic, choral and jazz music.

As sound supervisor, Mead is given the incredibly challenging task of piecing together all of the different equipment and staffing needs of the various companies at each venue, to not only provide them all with exactly what they need for their shows but also to allow them the flexibility to coordinate with multiple performers in one space. In order to pull this off, Mead begins his pre-planning as early as November of the previous year and works with an audio staff of 10 engineers during the festival.

"Months before the festival, we compile all of the drawings and requirements for each artist and performer," says Mead. "I then work with the venues directly to discuss which equipment we can place in each location. Lighting Supervisor Andy Cissna, Special Projects/Carpentry Coordinator Paul Hunter, Director of Production at Spoleto Festival Rhys Williams and I are in constant communication to try to blend all of the different requirements for each venue together so that it works for all parties involved."

In addition, Festival Engineer Kate Foretek spent two weeks in the Masque Sound shop, piecing together the various custom equipment packages that the festival events required before shipping the packages to Charleston.

"The crew at Masque Sound has been fantastic to work with and incredibly helpful in terms of assisting our team through the engineering and extensive planning that goes into all of the different events," adds Mead. "Everyone at Masque Sound is very forward-thinking, and they were all quick to anticipate and address our needs. Additionally, the depth of their inventory is great. They are always able to provide us with the exact equipment we are looking for."

One particular instance in which Masque Sound was able to provide Mead with specific equipment to accommodate a performer's request occurred during preparations for acclaimed recording artist Lucinda Williams' performance. "Lucinda Williams requested two DiGiCo SD10 Live Digital consoles for her performance at the TD Arena," says Mead. "We haven't used the SD10s in the past, because they've been quite a rare commodity in the industry, but Masque Sound stocks them in its inventory and ensured that the consoles would be made available to my team. We were thrilled to be able to supply Ms. Williams with these fantastic consoles, as the sound quality was impeccable."

(more)



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Mead also credits Masque Sound's customer service and hands-on approach as a big part of the festival's success. "When I'm looking at these venues, I try to do it with an open mind, envisioning the different equipment that Masque Sound can offer me and seeing if I can make it work. Scott Kalata, from Masque Sound, came down to Charleston and toured all of the venues with me and came up with some suggestions, which was very helpful. The fact that I can call anyone on the team—whether that person is Scott, Gary Stocker or Dennis Short—and quickly be offered equipment advice is a huge benefit. It is really great to be able to rely on them as a resource, and it is very reassuring to know that with their extensive inventory, they can accommodate my needs for an event of this size and scope."

In total, the festival utilized more than 200 microphones, 100 speakers and 5 digital consoles from some of the audio industry's top manufacturers, including DiGiCo, Sennheiser, JBL and Meyer, all adding up to an incredibly successful premier performing arts festival.

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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