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MASQUE SOUND WHISTLES A HAPPY TUNE FOR BROADWAY REVIVAL OF RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S EPIC MUSICAL, *THE KING AND I*

Custom Audio Equipment Package Delivers Elegant Sound for Lincoln Center Theater Production

NEW YORK, APRIL 7, 2015 — When *The King and I*, the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, made its triumphant Broadway return at Lincoln Center Theater's Vivian Beaumont Theater, **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, was whistling a happy tune as the team worked hand-in-hand with Tony Award®-winning Sound Designer Scott Lehrer to put together a custom audio equipment package for the epic production.

Set in 19th century Thailand, *The King and I* tells the story of Anna Leonowens, a widowed English teacher who is charged with teaching the King of Siam's myriad royal offspring. Upon arrival in the country, Anna and her son, Louis, find the country's culture overwhelmingly alien and the King himself to be a severe and cold employer. Though their relationship is marked with conflict and tension, eventually a bond begins to grow between the King and governess, one that eventually blossoms into a mutual attraction, one to which neither of them is brave enough to admit. Starring five-time Tony® Nominee Kelli O'Hara and Academy Award Nominee Ken Watanabe in his American stage debut, the revival is directed by Bartlett Sher, with choreography by Christopher Gattelli based on the original choreography by Jerome Robbins, and the original Robert Russell Bennett orchestrations.

Lehrer and his team had great success collaborating with Masque Sound to design the sound system for the 2008 production of *South Pacific*, for which he received the first Tony Award for sound, as well as the Drama Desk, at Lincoln Center Theater. He wanted to once again utilize Masque Sound's expertise and build upon previous successful experiences for *The King and I*, while incorporating the latest technology, including Out Board Electronics' TiMax Tracker system, into the production. Ultimately, Lehrer's goal was to create a focused sound system that did not use a lot of reinforcement in keeping the audience's attention on the stage.

While the use of newer technologies that were not available in years past was a very important part of Lehrer's design, it was also one of his biggest challenges. "For *The King and I*, the use of the automated TiMax Tracker system was very important in moving the sound around LCT, which is a big thrust house," he says. "The technology was great but challenging, as it took time for us to figure out how to program it. The team from Out Board Electronics helped us to calibrate the system and ensure that it interfaced with our console. It was a bit daunting at first, but now the extremely large number of console cues is taken care of by the tracker system, and it works great. We were really happy that Masque Sound was able to provide it to us."

For the console, Lehrer wanted a really pristine sound, which is why he chose the Studer Vista 5 Digital Live Console. "I love the sound of the Studer," says Lehrer. "We were going for a super transparent sound system, one in which the desk has a very clean and open sound, like the Vista does."

The PA package provided by Masque Sound was primarily comprised of d&b audiotechnik loudspeakers and included C7s for the mains, T10s and E6s for the front and rear balconies, as well as Q1s for the rear orchestra and B4 subwoofers. "My preferred choice of speaker is d&b, and I was happy Masque Sound

(more)

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was able to supply them to us," adds Lehrer. "I know that they are going to sound the way I want them to without much EQ. Not having to worry about the EQ allows me to spend more time balancing the system in the show and getting the delays right. The tonal character of the d&B is pleasing to me and I find them easy to work with."

For microphones, Lehrer's setup included Sennheiser MKH 80s on the strings, Sennheiser MKH 40s on all the reeds, spot mic'ing on the percussion and overheads, as well as Royer Studio R-121 ribbon microphones for the brass instruments. All actors wore DPA d:screet™ 4061s.

One of the interesting components of Lehrer's sound design was in the show's wireless microphone package. The output of radio microphones is 100% digital with no analog audio whatsoever from the Sennheiser 3732 RF receivers all the way to the speakers. The 48 channels of the Sennheiser 3732 receivers used DirectOut Technologies ANDIAMO devices that convert the 3732 AES outputs to a MADI stream and allow a digital cross patch so that Lehrer could always patch the RF microphones in the digital domain.

"Masque Sound was once again wonderful to work with," concludes Lehrer. "The team always makes sure that everything is ready to go from day one, and they are incredibly supportive and readily available. In addition, my associate sound designer, Alex Neumann; mixer, Mark Salzberg; and A2s, Adam Smolenski and Bridget O'Connor, as well as the great team at LCT all did a wonderful job in putting this show together."

The King and I officially opens on April 16 at LCT's Vivian Beaumont Theater, located at 150 West 65th Street in Manhattan. Previews began on March 12. For more information on the show, visit www.lct.org.

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 led by President Stephanie Hansen and the firm's third generation owner, Geoff Shearing. 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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