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## **MASQUE SOUND CUSTOM EQUIPMENT PACKAGE PROVIDES INTIMATE AUDIOSCAPE FOR LINCOLN CENTER THEATER'S NEWEST PLAY, *THE OLDEST BOY***

**NEW YORK, NY, NOVEMBER 12, 2014** — When visionary playwright Sarah Ruhl's newest play, *The Oldest Boy*, made its debut at Lincoln Center Theater's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater on Monday, November 3, Sound Designer Darron L West once again turned to **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, to supply a custom audio equipment package for the much-anticipated production.

In this moving and delightful exploration of motherhood, love and letting go, *The Oldest Boy* tells the story of Tenzin, the toddler son of an American woman and a Tibetan man who is recognized as the reincarnation of a high Buddhist teacher. Differing cultures contend with competing ideas of faith and love when two monks seek permission to take Tenzin to a monastery in India to begin his training as a spiritual master. His parents must decide whether to send their young son away or keep him home.

Designing the sound system for *The Oldest Boy* posed its own unique set of challenges; the first of which was the design of the stage itself. "The stage is a really beautiful, wooden formal circle in the middle of the theater, and in designing the sound I wanted to be able to create layers from the center out," says West. "We placed an enormous amount of speakers in the theatre to accomplish this, which gave us the added ability of being able to move the majority of the sounds around the room with ease. It was all about radiating the sound from the center out, and the system Masque Sound provided allowed us to achieve our goal."

For West, his associate, Charles Coes, and Beth Lake, his assistant, however, the biggest challenge in designing the sound was dealing with the delicate nature of the music. Since the musical numbers are all composed on Tibetan instruments, such as bowls and tone bells, with a single, live musician performing onstage, the sound designers had to find a way to integrate all of these understated instruments to work inside the system's surround.

"We designed the system in rings," adds West. "There is a center system that only outlines the edge of the round stage, which means that the musician can be performing in the middle of the stage and get a lot of gain before feedback on his microphone. Most of the music in this show is multi-channel, so the audience is almost sitting in a bowl with all of these layers going on behind them that are creating a whirlwind of surround soundscapes. The show features beautiful scenic changes and the sound layers help shape the story for our audience, not only in terms of where it is going, but where it is ultimately headed."

In order to create the sound he was looking for, Masque Sound provided West with a large Meyer Sound speaker package, including UPA-1P loudspeakers for the mains, a variety of UPMs for fills, UPJ-1Ps for the center ring and USW-1P subwoofers. "It's about the clarity at the top end," says West. "With musicians loudly playing these pure tone bells and bowls to fill up the room, it is important to rely on a fast speaker that boasts a lot of top end. To get the dynamic range we needed in the show, the Meyer rig was the only way to go for us. There was no question as to what we wanted to use, and we were very happy that Masque Sound was able to provide it."

*(more)*

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In terms of consoles, West was looking for an efficient board with as much flexibility as possible, which he found in the Yamaha DM1k. The DM1k allowed West to use MADI to send out the multiple outputs, between 26-32, in each with separate QLab channels allowing for the detailed soundscape. For microphones, West employed a selection DPA 4021s and 4022s, as well as a DPA 4061, which is worn on the head of the musician playing the traditional Tibetan nylon stringed instrument.

"We have such a long relationship with Masque Sound, and I know that I am in such good hands when I am working with them and never have to worry about anything," concludes West. "With this show in particular, there were massive amounts of changes. It's a brand new, world premiere with a lot of different levels and moving parts. To not have to worry about the implementation of the sound system was just fantastic. Masque Sound also provided its frequency coordination services, which is another item I can check off my list and not even have to worry about. In addition, our mixer at Lincoln Center, Stephen Bettridge, did an amazing job in helping this all come together."

Directed by Rebecca Taichman, *The Oldest Boy* is scheduled to run through December 28 at the Lincoln Center Theater's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, located on 150 West 65th Street in Manhattan. For more information, including where to purchase tickets, please visit [www.lct.org](http://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 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](http://www.MasqueSound.com).

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