

MASQUE SOUND STEPS UP WITH CUSTOM AUDIO EQUIPMENT PACKAGE FOR BROADWAY'S NEWEST MUSICAL, *KINKY BOOTS*

NEW YORK, MARCH 21, 2013—When Broadway's newest musical, *Kinky Boots*, strutted into the Hirschfeld Theatre earlier this month, it earned rave reviews from preview audiences. To bring the show's music-and-dance-filled score to life for audiences, Sound Designer John Shivers, along with his long-time associate and collaborator, David Patridge, turned to **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, for a custom audio equipment package.

Kinky Boots enjoyed its pre-Broadway world premiere this past October at Chicago's Bank of America Theatre. Based on the 2005 film and inspired by a true story, *Kinky Boots* follows Charlie Price, an aspiring young businessman forced to give up his dreams of living in London in order to save his late father's shoe factory in Northern England. Charlie finds inspiration in Lola, a fabulous entertainer in need of sturdy stilettos. As the unlikely pair works to turn the factory around, they find they have more in common than they thought. Their story, directed and choreographed by the Tony award-winning Jerry Mitchell, is brought to life by music and lyrics from Grammy award-winner Cyndi Lauper and a book by Tony-winner Harvey Fierstein.

When Shivers designed the audio system for *Kinky Boots*, he wanted to ensure the sound was evenly distributed to every seat in the theater. To do so, he worked with Masque Sound, which provided him with a custom equipment package, including a DiGiCo SD7-T digital mixing console, Sennheiser 5212 transmitters, d&b speakers for surrounds, L-Acoustics 108Ps for the foldback and TC Electronics 6000 for reverb. He also utilized Meyer M'elodie and Mina ultracompact high-power curvilinear array loudspeakers for left, right and center systems and 500 and 700HP- subwoofers.

Shivers, who has worked with Masque Sound since the early 1990s, collaborated with the company for *Kinky Boots*' Chicago run, so moving the show to Broadway was a comfortable transition, though not without its challenges. "The box seats in the Hirschfeld Theatre pretty much tuck right up against the proscenium, so the seats running along the sides of the orchestra seating section are very much shaded from the side arrays, says Shivers. "The team at Masque was able to provide additional speakers to make sure those seats were covered, so we were able to overcome that obstacle."

Since *Kinky Boots* is a pop-music show, Shivers wanted to make sure he had a fair amount of control over the musical instruments. "When working with pop music, if you can achieve good isolation between instruments, you can really get a lot of clarity from them," says Shivers. "For *Kinky Boots*, we are quite isolated. In fact, the drummer is up on the fifth floor, completely isolated from the rest of the band. We provided monitoring for him so he can hear and see what is going on, along with a video camera allowing the conductor to see him. He still feels like part of the band because they are connected musically. We achieved isolation and clarity quite nicely with this system."

Also important to the production was a streamlined equipment setup, ensuring the proscenium was kept as clean as possible for the audience. "We did everything we could to keep the speakers as unobtrusive as possible on the proscenium, so we tucked them as far off and up stage as possible to keep them out of sightlines and the visual picture in general," he notes.

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"I've had a long working relationship with Masque Sound, and in that time, have built a lot of trust and familiarity with its team," concludes Shivers. "Gary Stocker is truly a genius in all things audio and Scott Kalata and Dennis Short always stays on top of managing logistics. In addition, the company provides customized gear and fabrication for any sort of unusual rigging components that we might need, it's really a full-service shop. The entire team provides excellent service. For this show, once again, Masque Sound did a great job."

Kinky Boots is currently in previews at Broadway's Al Hirschfeld Theatre. The production's opening night is slated for April 4.

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 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" and "Once" 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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