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## **MASQUE SOUND BRINGS THE SONGS OF JEFF BUCKLEY TO LIFE IN THE NEW ROCK MUSICAL, *THE LAST GOODBYE***

**NEW YORK, OCTOBER 28, 2013** — When *The Last Goodbye* said hello to The Old Globe in San Diego on October 6th, sound designer Ken Travis wanted to make sure that the audience knew this wasn't going to be your typical musical. In order to create the edgy, evocative sound he was looking for, he turned to **Masque Sound**, a leading theatrical sound reinforcement, installation and design company, to provide a custom audio equipment package.

*The Last Goodbye* is a new musical fusing Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with the incendiary songs of the legendary singer-songwriter and late rock icon, **Jeff Buckley**. Conceived and adapted by **Michael Kimmel**, the rock musical is directed by two-time Tony Award nominee **Alex Timbers** (*Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*). This unique work of theater is a remarkable synthesis of the classic and the modern, melding Shakespeare's tragedy, in its original text, with Buckley's no holds barred rock music.

Travis' goal in designing the sound was to go big. "Even though the theatre is only 600+ seats, the show calls for a large rock and roll rig," says Travis. "It's definitely not musical theater sounding, and that was something I was adamant about. We hung probably three times the amount of PA than they previously had in the house and the producers were great about it. I never have to worry about the equipment with Masque Sound. They are one of those family companies that you just call up and they are there, and that is one of many reasons why I use them for most of my shows, and knew they were the right choice for this rock musical."

In addition to a large rig, Travis also wanted a flexible system that allowed him the ability to be edgy, while remaining somewhat conventional, without compromising the audio. His vision required additional equipment and in order to achieve the flexibility he was looking for, Travis utilized a d&b speaker rig from top to bottom. Travis used five d&b line arrays across the proscenium, instead of sticking to the traditional left, right and center setup. "The stage is zoned, so every position is timed out," adds Travis. "At points in the play when we need to convert back into the traditional music theater world, it transitions really well and doesn't sound like a rock PA. Then, when it's time to go into overdrive, it's really easy for us to open up the whole PA and go for it. My sound team, including engineer Cassy Givens and associate Justin Stasiw, did a fantastic job."

Masque Sound also provided Travis with a Digico SD10T digital console, which he likes for its quick programming capabilities. Since *The Last Goodbye* is an extremely physical show with lots of sword fights, smaller but powerful Sennheiser MKE-1 mics were employed and hidden in the hairline of the actors, allowing Travis to capture the vocals over the action. Travis also employed a wireless package from Sennheiser.

One unique aspect of the sound design is the large band source speaker system on stage. "We have a d&b Q7 rig on stage built into the set, which is not typical for a musical," adds Travis. "But since we feature a rock band on stage, it is necessary. There are times when that system is really ripping to make

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sure everyone knows the band is playing. We can't have the guitar amps on stage, because the actors wouldn't be able to hear, so all of the guitars and amps are remote."

When using such a large speaker rig in a small theatre that is not designed for a rock and roll style musical, there are always going to be challenges. Since The Old Globe has a very wide stage and not a lot of height to hang the PA, one of Travis' biggest obstacles was getting even coverage everywhere. In order to overcome that challenge of the height restriction, the PA had to break the portal, and although not ideal, nothing was obstructed visually and the show still sounds great.

"Dennis Short, Scott Kalata and the rest of the team at Masque Sound always make sure that everything is taken care of and we get all the gear that we need," says Travis. "For *The Last Goodbye*, we had a limited budget and Masque Sound made sure that we didn't compromise on anything, and that's rare when working on an out-of-town show. They did a great job once again. The audience is enthralled and every performance plays to standing ovations."

*The Last Goodbye's* limited engagement run officially opened on October 6 and is slated to close on November 3 at The Old Globe in San Diego.

### **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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