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**MASQUE SOUND KEEPS IT COOL FOR NEW YORK
THEATRE WORKSHOP'S RED HOT NEW FOLK OPERA, *HADESTOWN***

Custom Audio Equipment Package Heats Up Highly Anticipated Off-Broadway Production

NEW YORK, JUNE 21, 2016 — When the New York Theatre Workshop's hellishly good new production, *Hadestown* recently opened, Tony Award®-winning Sound Designer Robert Kaplowitz was keeping cool with a custom audio equipment package from [Masque Sound](#).

With *Hadestown*, celebrated singer-songwriter Anais Mitchell and inventive two-time Obie Award-winning director Rachel Chavkin transform Mitchell's critically acclaimed concept album into a bold new work for the stage. This folk opera follows Orpheus' mythical quest to overcome Hades and regain the favor of his one true love, Eurydice. Together they travel from wide open plains where love and music are not enough nourishment to survive the winter, down to *Hadestown*, an industrialized world of mindless labor and full stomachs. Inspired by traditions of classic American folk music and vintage New Orleans jazz, Mitchell's beguiling melodies and poetic imagination pit nature against industry, faith against doubt and love against death.

One of Kaplowitz's major goals in designing the sound for the production, which takes place in the round, was to transfer the lushness, energy and clarity of the album into a live setting without sacrificing storytelling. "It was a really exciting challenge, to try and re-create some aspects of what record producer Todd Sickafoose arranged and created on the album. He created all of this amazing space and motion around the words, giving the music such complexity and depth," says Kaplowitz. "As I was listening to the album, I realized that one way Todd achieved a lot of that was through a remarkably nuanced use of stereo space, so I knew I wanted to create a really detailed surround system to provide that stereo feel."

Director Rachel Chavkin requested that Kaplowitz keep the imaging very central throughout the sound design process. She wanted to make sure that the actors' voices were coming from where they were standing. In order to accomplish this, Kaplowitz decided to combine his surround sound idea with cross point delay matrix imaging to lead the audiences' ears to where the sound was coming from.

"I was pleasantly surprised that Masque Sound was able to help me achieve what I wanted to do within our budget," adds Kaplowitz. "I had designed the ideal system on paper, sent it to them with my fingers crossed, and they came back with a nearly perfect match. They were simply amazing to work with. At each stage, Masque Sound accommodated my needs. I've been working with Masque Sound for close to 20 years. They made an investment in the Off-Broadway sound community just as I was coming into my own, and they have provided me incredible equipment and support ever since."

At the heart of the custom audio equipment package, provided by Masque Sound, was an Avid VENUE Profile console. Kaplowitz chose this console because, not only does it sounds great, but it allowed him to fit all of the required outputs into a fairly small footprint. Kaplowitz knew from the start he wanted to use a Convolution Reverb on the show, which can be run natively through the Profile. Then, using the AVID Stagerack's DIO cards, he was able to create an incredibly clean signal chain, staying digital all the way through the Yamaha DME's delay matrix and into the d&b audiotechnik amps.

(more)

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For his speaker selection, Kaplowitz chose d&b audiotechnik Q7s for the mains, along with E8s. He then used E3s for the entire surround system. "The Q7s provide exceptional warmth and a great coverage pattern that gave me the control I needed in the round," says Kaplowitz. "With the delay imaging, I've found you want to keep the speakers to an 80-degrees or narrower pattern for the imaging to work and the Q7s, at 75x40, work perfectly. I really appreciate Masque Sound providing such a great PA system."

In addition, Masque Sound provided a selection of microphones including Sennheiser 5200's and Point Source Audio CO-8WDs and CO-8WI's for the show. In all, 19 channels of wireless were used, alongside four very distinctive hardwired vocal mics made by Ear Trumpet Labs out of Oregon.

"*Hadestown* was an amazing team effort and collaboration from everyone involved, including Masque Sound," says Kaplowitz. "My Assistant Sound Designer Bobby McElver, Mixer J. Alex Huerta and A2 Emily Grace Caldwell, all did a fantastic job. In addition, the entire artistic team was great. Everyone was committed to seeing how we could make this show as great as possible. It looks and sounds amazing."

Hadestown opened on May 23rd and is currently scheduled to run through July 3rd at the New York Theatre Workshop (79 E. 4th Street). For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.nytw.org/show/hadestown.

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 Vice President 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*, *The Book of Mormon*, *Once*, *Kinky Boots*, *Aladdin* and *Fun Home* to yearly Super Bowl broadcasts and installations of varying sizes, including Western Connecticut State University, the Jim Wise Theatre at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) and the historic St. Patrick's Cathedral. 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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