sound reinforcement

McCauley Crashes Mansion

LOS ANGELES, CA—Nightspot Crash Mansion LA recently opened with numerous McCauley Sound (www.mccauley.com) systems, including SA422-2 loudspeaker systems installed as stage side fills and a center cluster for FOH monitoring.

Cyrus Sings With Sennheiser

NEW YORK, NY—The Best of Both Worlds Tour, featuring Disney teen sensation Miley Cyrus performing as herself and in character as Hannah Montana, found her using a Sennheiser (www.sennheiserusa.com) MD 5235 dynamic capsule atop the SKM 5200 wireless handheld transmitter nightly.

QSC World WideLine Tour

CHICAGO, IL—The QSC (www.qscaudio.com) World WideLine Tour, offering multiple line-array system demos, system hardware and software training, and hands-on "live mixing" sessions to attendees, will land in Chicago May 13-14. Contact your local QSC rep for info and passes.

ISP Wedges into Clark Center

ARROYO GRANDE, CA—The Clark Center for the Performing Arts recently upgraded its stage with ISP Technologies' (www.isptechnologies.com) TriWedge floor monitors.

Frozen Liquid

by Clive Young

CARROLL VALLEY, PA—Ah, winter time…the time of year when sound systems stay indoors—*not*. At least, that's what Honey Brook, PA-based Liquid Audio Productions (LAP) found recently when it took on a gig providing sound for SnowCross Christian Concert Day on March 1 at Liberty Mountain, a ski resort in Carroll Valley, PA.

Headlining the show was Baltimore-based indie band, Ashes Remain. Now, did the act perform inside the lodge, perhaps in a nice, toasty lounge area where steaming hot cups of cocoa might be nearby? Nah—when this band decided to play Liberty Mountain, it meant the mountain itself. Accordingly, Liquid Audio had its gear out in full force—in the full depths of winter. "It was a painfully cold day at the bottom of a ski slope," sighed Vince Emondi, LAP's owner.

Dan Alkive worked as both house mix and monitor mix engineer, while Emondi did triple duty as house, monitor and system engineer. Wesley Emondi, meanwhile, worked as assistant engineer and tech.

Delivering the decibels to skiers across the mountain and the band alike was an Allen & Heath GL 2400-424 console, sending signal to a variety of Clair Brothers, JBL and EV loudspeakers. The monitors were proprietary, and all the various boxes were powered by QSC amplifiers.

The gig was unusual for the company, which can typically be found providing live sound, lighting and recording services. LAP also spends its days running a small recording studio and working in the residential systems field, able to install full residential home automation, security, audio, video and networking.

The crew of Liquid Audio Productions brave the elements in the name of rock 'n' roll.

While the crew was cold at Liberty Mountain, the gear held up admirably, and the rest of the month will find the sound reinforcement company in hopefully warmer climes, tackling a number of tavern gigs for local acts, a benefit concert at Villa Julie College, and more. In fact, the company's audio gear won't have to face the elements again until May when it tackles five days worth of the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire.

Liquid Audio Productions
www.liquidaudioprod.com
www.myspace.com / liquidaudioprod

Ashes Remain
www.ashesremain.com

Wireless Improving Wired Sound

by R. Maxwell

LOS ANGELES, CA—For years, high-end audio cables have been a staple of the recording industry and the products that constitute that segment of the pro audio market. Upscale vendors have used these products for patch bay cables in large-format recording consoles and, similarly, condenser microphones have used high-end cable as a means of better converting acoustical energy into electrical energy, all in the interest of keeping the signal as true as is physically possible to the source. Recently, a trend has developed whereby touring acts are now more often integrating better quality cable into their equipment rigs; while cable is often viewed as a disposable commodity, a number of factors are changing that perception within the touring community.

Interestingly, the widespread adoption of wireless systems for both microphones and instruments such as guitar are placing a new set of demands on the technicians responsible for building touring equipment racks, as well as those charged with running the gear during concerts. With stages getting ever larger and more elaborate, performers are venturing further and further away from the base stations that ultimately feed their equipment. As more guitarists, for example, go wireless in order to facilitate the freedom of movement so commonly required as part of an act's staging routines, this is necessitating longer cable runs for ancillary equipment such as guitar

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Wireless

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stomp boxes and other devices that feed into the equipment racks toward the back of the stage.

Duane Burda, head technician for the North Hollywood, CA office of Tour Supply, a firm that caters to the touring market, believes wireless systems actually contribute to the need for better cable. "It's not uncommon for wireless systems to actually create the need for more cable," said Burda. "As an example, a guitarist may be wireless on stage, but this frequently increases the distance between his onstage rig and the actual place where he or she may stand. Because of this, those floor pedal effects boxes are frequently further away from the guitar rack, and this creates the necessity for longer cable runs."

Such is the case for Eli Ward, crew chief and keyboard tech for the Alicia Keys "As I Am" World Tour, which kicked off in February in the U.K. and is touring Europe before heading stateside this spring. "We've deployed Mogami cable extensively," says Ward. "There are so many electrical, radio, Wi-Fi and other signals in the performing environment these days and, because of that, it's very easy to induce noise into the audio path. This is a large tour playing in a number of arenas, and we're using isoboxes for the guitar and bass rigs that are 40 to 50 feet from the player's positions. These are 1/4-inch runs that are really quite long. There just aren't many cables that can handle this sort of thing without significant signal loss."

Duane Burda, head technician for Tour Supply, in the company's workshop where he assembles equipment racks for a number of major touring acts.

Tour Supply's Burda has found a similar situation that routinely occurs: "Even if a guitarist is wired and is using a fairly simple rig, high onstage SPLs can cause issues. Cheap cables have been known to induce microphonic noises into the guitar rig—much of which is handling noise from moving about—and this can be extremely bothersome. Every pedal and connection in the chain increases the possibility of this occurring. Between this and the increasing amount of RF noise in the environment, many performers are looking to higher-quality cable to minimize the potential for problems."

Henry Austin, president of Escondido, CA-based Professional Production Associates, deployed Mogami cable last fall during *Love In: A Musical Celebration*, a theatrical performance about the music of 1967 that served as the performance foundation for a DVD video project. "Mogami's shielding is exceptional," notes Austin. "*Love-In* was an RF- and EM-rich environment; we were running in excess of a hundred channels, and this included a lot of lights and some power distribution in close proximity to the cables, as space was at a premium. Having the level of shielding from interference that Mogami cable provides was extremely beneficial. I also used a lot of their high-impedance cables—they have very low capacitance, as do the connectors, so it keeps the signal up front and present. The build quality and the jacket are very rugged, which translates to reliability."

Ward summed matters up by saying, "Using high-quality cable is particularly significant because it results in less signal loss. You end up with much better signal-to-noise ratio, so the signal going to FOH and, ultimately, the audience, ends up sounding clearer, has higher gain structure, and as a result, makes everything sound better. The bottom line is this: The highest-quality cable allows us to provide our artist with the best possible sound, period."

Tour Supply
www.toursupply.com

Mogami
www.mogami.com

China's National Centre Finds RTS

BEIJING, CHINA—Since opening in December, China's National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing has been wowing crowds with its performances—and its architecture.

The structure is a 200,000-square-meter dome, with a shell made of glass and titanium that is surrounded by a man-made lake. Inside, it contains three performance venues, including an opera hall, music hall and theater hall that seat 6,500 people in total.

The facility uses a combination of wired digital matrix and synthesized dual-channel wireless components from RTS for its intercom system. At the heart of the system is an array of Zeus II matrices.

User stations that were applied include KP-32 Classic series keypanels, BP-325 wired beltpacks, and BTR-800/TR-800 wireless base stations and beltpacks. The National Centre for the Performing Arts chose the high-end BTR-800 system because the massive titanium structure presented unique challenges for wireless transmission, and users could not risk dropped communication during a performance.

RTS
www.rtsintercoms.com