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Rainbow Production Services Covers SoulFest With Meyer Sound

Now in its eighth year, SoulFest 2005 recently completed its most successful celebration to date. This August, the grassy slopes of Gunstock Mountain Ski Resort welcomed over 15,000 attendees to the Northeast's largest faith-based festival. Over 125 national and regional artists and speakers, including some of the biggest acts in Christian music, performed on three stages. Hampstead, N.H.-based Rainbow Production Services provided audio, lighting and production services for the event, including two large line arrays built from Meyer Sound's most popular curvilinear array loudspeakers: MILO® and MICA.

Over on the "Inside Out" stage, C.J. Danek took time off from his regular gig mixing the Boston Symphony Orchestra to work a system comprised of 18 MICA compact high-power curvilinear array loudspeakers and eight 700-HP subs. The stage hosted performances by a mix of heavier acts, including Dead Poetic, Haste the Day, Pillar, Stretch Armstrong and Adelaide. Danek mixed on a Yamaha PM4000 FOH console, which fed another LD-3.

"The MICA rig was truly phenomenal," marvels Rainbow's Scott Tkachuk. "We were completely blown away by the fact that so much sound could come out of something so small. C.J. was running at around 104 dB SPL, A-weighted, for most of the weekend, without overdriving the console or the stack, and it was totally smooth and transparent, with great tone."

Tkachuk helmed the main "Revival" stage, mixing performances by Michael W. Smith, Rebecca St. James, Jars of Clay, Steven Curtis Chapman, Jeremy Camp, Audio Adrenaline and a host of others. He commanded a rig consisting of 20 MILO high-power curvilinear array loudspeakers and four MILO 120 high-power expanded coverage curvilinear array loudspeakers. The low end was covered by 14 700-HP ultrahigh-power subwoofers, with frontfill provided by four UPA-1P compact wide coverage loudspeakers. The system was driven by an LD-3 compensating line driver, whose atmospheric compensation features are essential for handling weather changes at outdoor events. Tkachuk moved between Yamaha PM5D and Midas Heritage 3000 consoles to mix the shows.

Tkachuk was particularly pleased that the system used virtually no equalization to achieve its stellar performance. "We actually physically removed the EQ from the system," he reports, "and no one complained. In fact, Ryan Rettler (Audio Adrenaline's FOH engineer) and John Van Hook (Jeremy Camp's FOH engineer) both said it was the best sounding festival rig they'd heard all year."

Imaging was also a strong point for both arrays, according to Tkachuk. "The FOH positions were not in the center for either stage, due to sightline considerations," he says. "We were about 110 feet off the downstage edge and on-axis with the house right PA stack. The PA stacks were about 90 feet apart, and we still got a great stereo image."

With SoulFest's attendance growing yearly, the festival has cemented a reputation as a major annual event on the faith-based cultural calendar. As for Rainbow, Tkachuk knows their mission for next year will be to grow with the festival and repeat what they have done each year so far: give SoulFest's audiences an energizing and uplifting experience. "Our first priority is to take care of the client and do whatever we need to do to make them feel warm and fuzzy," Tkachuk concludes. "You can't cheap out when it comes to that. You get in there and do the best job you can, and the rest will fall into place."

ABOUT MEYER SOUND

Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc. designs and manufactures high quality sound reinforcement loudspeakers, studio monitors, equalizers and sound measurement tools for the professional audio industry. Founded in 1979 by John and Helen Meyer, the company has grown to become a leading worldwide supplier of systems for theaters, arenas, stadiums, theme parks, convention centers and touring concert sound rental operations. Meyer Sound's main office and manufacturing facility are located in Berkeley, California, with field offices and authorized distributors located throughout the USA and around the world.

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