



Sound of Music utilised a NEXO STM PA package for Derby arena's first major live music concert, rigged and tuned by its expert technical team.

HAPPY MONDAYS LIVE IN DERBY

What does a mid-size rental house and an arena size gig have in common? NEXO, of course. Sound of Music trusts the French manufacturer with keeping the Mondays happy.

Nineties rock giants Happy Mondays were the first major music act to play at Derby arena, some 16 months after its £27m doors opened. The October gig, which featured lead vocalist Shaun Ryder and dancer / percussionist Mark 'Bez' Berry took to the stage in what is hoped to have been the first in a long line of well-known artists set to play Derby. Local rental house Sound of Music (SoM) deployed a NEXO STM system for the occasion.

Since its conception in 2002, SoM has been providing event production services to the live entertainment industry. Although initially conceived as a concert PA rental company, its portfolio of production services has expanded to meet the needs of its growing clientele. Its in-house stock of lighting, video projection, staging and rigging expertise has made owner Sash Pochibko head of an increasingly dynamic production house. He told TPI: "Now in our 15th year, we have nine full-time staff and 15 regular freelancers who are capable of delivering in-depth and unique event production solutions."

As such, Pochibko's experience has been interesting to nearly 200,000 viewers online, probably because SoM is a rather typical medium-sized hire company. It services a wide variety of local events and venues - everything from festivals to firework displays, film premieres to awards

dinners, corporate presentations and arena concerts. Therefore audience capacities can range from 120 to 30,000 people. SoM even has a steady stream of sub-contracting work flowing in from other production companies.

It's clear that a good reputation is blossoming, and as part of its audio offerings, SoM has invested heavily in NEXO equipment, a speaker brand it has remained loyal to throughout the years. It was NEXO which was relied upon for the Happy Mondays' recent performance. A performance which had to prove successful for the arena, a brand new live sound venue now competing in the British marketplace. Pochibko looked back on his relationship with the brand: "The first Nexo system I bought was an Alpha-E point source system to install into Nottingham Trent University's live music venue. And," he smiled, "we haven't looked back since! I've yet to know another system that you can turn on, turn up and still have it sound great, straight out of the truck."

More recently, SoM took delivery of its first tranche of STM modules in August 2014, adding the modular line array to an inventory that already included NEXO's GEO S12 line array alongside plenty of 'workhorse' Alpha-E cabinets and the RS18 sub-bass units. Since then, the working relationship with NEXO UK has grown even closer; SoM has invested in the GEO M6



From old school to new school; SoM's Sash Pochibko points up to the Alpha-E and towards the STM system. Viva la NEXO!

compact line array and, most recently, the super-compact ID Series.

For the important execution of the Happy Mondays sound design, SoM supplied two hangs of eight STM M28 omni modules under three B112 bass modules. Additionally, 12 S118 sub cabinets in a double stacked sub array along the front of the stage, with an additional two M28 as utilised as front fill.

Visiting engineers on the day were very complimentary of the system and indeed of the venue. "It was like listening to a big hi-fi rather than the expected battlings of a large PA in a 'verby' arena. The Derby Velodrome is by far the best sounding arena I've ever heard - as both engineer and punter. The black-box draping they've installed makes a massive difference. Then, the absorbent properties of a good sized audience complete the equation."

He concluded: "For us, it was great to have been the first touring PA company to work in this new venue. Especially as we are based only a km away!"

TPI

Photos: Shirlaine Forrest
<http://pahire.com>
www.nexo.sa

SASH SAYS: THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A TYPICAL NEXO SYSTEM. . .

AT A SMALL FESTIVAL

A weekend festival, hosted at a racecourse with an audience size of 5,000, SoM supplied the festival for the last four years. Starting with a GEO S12 system in 2013, then using STM groundstacks for two years, and an Alpha E system in 2016 because all the STM systems were all booked out.

FOR A FESTIVAL VIP STAGE

STM groundstacks are a favourite SoM configuration. Each stack uses two S118 subs, one B112 bass module and three M28 omni cabinets. This set up was recently used in the super-cool Studio Cocktail Bar at Creamfields where Tall Paul and other leading DJs spin their tunes.

THE FIREWORKS DISPLAY

With an audience of about 5000, this local event is a regular client for SoM. Serviced with just two STM groundstacks, Pochibko said: "This is our most frequently used mobile system because all the speaker cabinets, NUARs - NEXO Universal Amp Racks - and cables fit easily into our Sprinter van."

A CLASSICAL CONCERT EXPERIENCE

At the Darley Park Classical Concert and Fireworks, in Derby, STM was used to scale up easily for the large events - 30,000 people to be exact. SoM flew two main hangs of six M28 omni modules under two B112 bass modules to cover an audience area 350m wide x 120m deep. Because of the width of the field, outfill hangs of 12 GEO M6 were also used.

OPERA ON FILM

For an outdoor screening of *Don Giovanni*, broadcast live from London's Royal Opera House, SoM supplied a simple L-R PA with six M28 modules per side, below two B112 bass cabinets. This compact and very low profile system seamlessly covered an audience of 5000, over 100m deep in Wollaton Park, Nottingham.

OUTDOOR FESTIVAL

The Confetti Stage of the Splendour Festival hosted The Darkness, Stiff Little Fingers and The Fratellis this year. With flown arrays of nine M28 plus three B112 bass modules, the system was

comfortably throwing 80m. A sub-array across the front of the stage used 12 STM S118 subs, augmented by four RS18's. "You don't actually need a large number of STM cabinets because you can make more combinations out of the inventory," he said. "When you account for the hardware and the accessories as a proportion of the investment, you can see that the cabinets offer very good value."

LARGE CORPORATE PRESENTATION

SoM often sub-contracts to other technical production companies, supplying specialist audio systems and expertise. The SoM engineers assisted Aventeq with the first gig for its new GEO M6 system, where just 12 boxes of GEO M6 were used for an audience of 1500. Two groundstacks, each with six M6 cabinets, were used in this extremely large venue - all material was speech and musical stings - supplementing LS18 subs with RS18's. Pochibko furthered: "GEO M6 is a better technological solution for corporate AV than the classic PS Series because it lends itself to NS-1 modelling, so you can predict the performance accurately."

AWARDS DINNER

A small corporate awards dinner for 120 people was an opportunity to use the new ID Series super-compacts. With four ID24 cabinets, and two ID110 subs, the system was ultra low-profile as well as providing excellent coverage. "Most of the time, we use the ID24's as front fills. They are so compact, they are ideal as a supplementary speaker; they are much smaller than the PS8 which we would have used in the past. We thought ID was a perfect solution for a conference, but this awards dinner showed us how well it performed with music, and with speech over music," he explained.

As SoM prepares to place an order for more ID Series, Pochibko made a point about the return on he sees on his ongoing NEXO investments: "Both the GEO M6 and ID Series are extremely reasonably priced, compared even to the well-known PS Series cabinets. I judge this in terms of the better coverage and better sound quality, which enables us to use them in more varied places and in different combined systems."