

Lemon Grove, Exeter University

Huge sound system for Exeter students courtesy of BEAT Audio and Funktion One

Oxford-based Beat Audio has designed, supplied and installed a fully integrated Funktion One audio system throughout the newly refurbished Lemon Grove venue at Exeter University Student's Guild with support from Dave Cole of Blue Box London Ltd.

The 800 capacity venue has just undergone a £100,000 technical refit as part of an overall £1 million facelift to the entire student complex.

Beat Audio's Mark Kelly - an individual renowned for being passionate about sound - first came into contact with the venue after working with one of the Exeter promoter/bookers at the Glade Stage in Glastonbury. He's supplied kick ass sound with his F1 Resolution system for five or six shows over the year at the Lemon Grove - relishing in taking on awkward sonic challenges that would send shivers up their spines of most other installers.

Beat Audio also has a special ear for reggae, hip hop, rap, urban, dance and R 'n' B music, and is renowned as one of the premier sound systems in the country to showcase these genres of music. Everyone was impressed with Beat Audio's consistent live sound at the Lemon Grove gigs. At the end

of a Killa Kela show - arguably the world's most innovative multi vocalist and beatbox musician - Kelly was approached by George Foden, general secretary of the Students Guild, and asked to advise them on a Funktion One installation for the Lemon Grove. Kelly conducted several site visits, designed a system and sorted out a great deal with Funktion One. The Guild also asked if he could help arrange lighting for the venue, so he introduced Neil Marsh of Hayden Cruickshank's Colour Sound Experiment to advise, design and supply this element of the project.

Neil specified 12 Martin Mac250s, 16 Martin MX-4 units, three Martin Atomic strobe, three Martin Atomic colours and four Bars of 6 Par Cans which were mounted on two semicircular and one circular truss, suspended from existing roof structure. Control is via either an Avolites Pearl, for live performance, or Martin Lightjockey software installed on a PC in the DJ booth with touch screen and second monitor for visualization software.

The main gig is geared towards DJ performance with some live acts and an emphasis on hip-hop and urban which the sound system

had to reflect. It was a prerequisite that any genre of DJ could turn up and be happy with the facilities - and as is often the case, there was a tight timeframe to complete the job.

The new system features Funktion One equipment throughout - speakers, amps crossovers and even the DJ mixer and monitors are Funktion One - with all elements designed to work together.

Kelly started at the bass of the matter, with two Funktion One 218 bass bins per side, added to which are two Res Four flown full range speakers per side. Both weight issues and aesthetic considerations made him choose the skeletal version cabinets - weighing just 38 Kgs and running passive at the top end.

Amplifiers are the new F1 E-Series manufactured by MC2. There's E45s on the subs and low mids and E25s running the high mids, with passive crossovers inbuilt into the speakers.

The Resolution 1 DJ monitors - the first time these have been used as such in the UK - have their own E25 amplifier and are also running passive so they can be run in stereo.

The DJ Box was an interesting area to design, explains Kelly.

Here Beat Audio specified two industry standard Pioneer CDJ1000 Mk II CD decks, Technics 1210's complete with Stanton 680 carts and Funktion One's definitive FF-6000 DJ mixer. Background music is supplied via a computer music source, and voice alarm interfacing is via a Formula Sound Guardian CX4. The new look Lemon Grove was officially opened for Fresher's Week by the university's VC Steve Smith - and they have had nothing but positive feedback ever since. "This is a world class sound and lighting system that puts the Lemon Grove right up there on the professional touring and performance circuit in the West of England" states Kelly. Exeter University Students Guild Ents Manager George Campbell comments, "The new system is fantastic! Our audiences and performers absolutely love it!"

CREDITS

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Lighting Installation : Colour
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