



# ORCHESTRA IN A FIELD AT GLASTONBURY ABBEY WITH AUDIO PLUS AND FUNKTION-ONE

**THE GROUNDS OF GLASTONBURY ABBEY PROVIDED THE SETTING FOR A UNIQUE TWO-DAY FESTIVAL OF CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRAL MUSIC. THE ECLECTIC PROGRAMME RANGED FROM TCHAIKOVSKY'S ROMEO AND JULIET TO TUBULAR BELLS BY WAY OF HIP HOP, HAND BELLS AND OPERA. A FUNKTION-ONE PA BY AUDIO PLUS PROVIDED THE VERY NATURAL SOUND. SIMON DUFF REPORTED.**

Orchestra in a Field is the brainchild of conductor and broadcaster Charles Hazelwood, aiming to bring together the best qualities of the concert hall with those of an outdoor festival. On the main stage highlights on the first night included Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, with improvised sections added by Goldfrapp's Will Gregory and Portishead's Adrian Utley, prior to a performance of Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells*. On the Sunday, Professor Green and Labrinth performed for the first time with a symphony orchestra.

Bizet's *Carmen* had a line up of nine principle singers, a fifty strong chorus plus a 100 strong children's chorus. Other notable performances, across a diverse and exciting range of performers included The British Paraorchestra,

the UK's first orchestra featuring world-class musicians with disabilities, the Post War Orchestra, who perform using decommissioned military hardware and the Hip Hop Shakespeare Company.

How to concurrently handle the different requirements of an orchestra, rock band, opera, and hip hop in a way that avoided the need for complicated changeovers was the main challenge for stage management. In total some 160 channels of audio were used at FOH, with mixing duties split over three DiGiCo consoles. One SD8 was used to mix the orchestra. Another SD8 looked after the band and different line-ups. An SD10 took further channels as and when required by the line up as well as acting as the master console. In monitor world mixing duties were carried out on a Yamaha CL5.





Opposite: Orchestra in a Field took over the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey. Below: Highlights included Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*; DiGiCo desks were used to mix the orchestra at FOH; Four Funktion-One F221 subs per side; Andy Rose, Main Stage FOH Mix Engineer.



The main stage was designed and built by G-Stages to accommodate the full symphony orchestra, plus support bands and production rig. Sound was provided by Colchester based Audio-Plus with their operations manager, Mark O'Neill, in charge of system design, planning and production liaison.

Audio Plus has one of the largest stocks of Funktion-One in Europe, currently based around the Resolution Series point source systems. Their inventory includes around 72 boxes of Resolution 5, over 40 F221 and a number of F218 subs, Resolution 4 and RM18 monitors. DiGiCo consoles MC2 amps and XTA processors help complete the companies impressive rental line up. Audio Plus recent high profile clients include The Glade Festival, Pleasure Island, Prague, Faster Than Sound and Glastonbury 2011.

The PA hang on the main stage consisted of nine Resolution 5 point source per side, hung through rows three wide, and three deep with down fills. For subs, positioned underneath the hang, four F221's per side were used. The system was powered by MC2 E100 amps with XTA 448's handling processing. Mark comments on the PA. "It sounds totally effortless, powerful and subtle. It always does. I don't ever go onto a show worrying about whether this system can deliver. Everything sounds really natural, especially in the mid range which is really

important for an orchestra. Resolution 5 is a high intensity three-way, mid-high loudspeaker used to create high accuracy point-source arrays. The unique and patented mid-range Axhead loading device not only gives incredible efficiency and dispersion control, but also increases high frequency output from the eight-inch cone driver. Directivity is a key factor for this venue as it is in a sensitive residential area. If you are on the outside of the arena, by the food stalls, the sound level drops off dramatically which is perfect as this was one of the requirements of the brief."

Mixing at FOH was Andy Rose, who regularly

the same time, hence part of the reason that we are using three consoles. So many things are happening at once. In terms of outboard requested by Andy a TC 6000 high-end studio reverb was hired in from Concert Clair. Just to add bit of sparkle. It is a great reverb unit that sounds fantastic on the orchestra and opera singers."

With the DiGiCo SD10 used as the master console, five outputs were taken from the mix matrix. Subs for Left and Right, the main left and right hangs and one used for the set of four Funktion-One PSM12 point source fill fills which were used to cover the audience at the

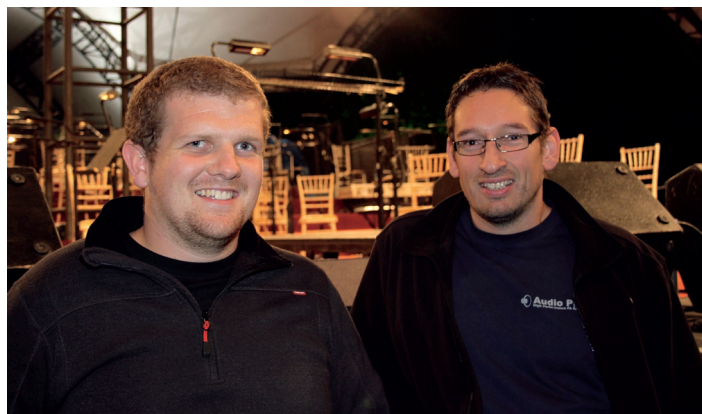
**"Hand on heart, it is an absolutely visceral experience listening to an orchestra like this."**

works with Charles Hazelwood on his orchestral concerts and recordings. Mark explained how mixing was approached: "Andy doesn't drive the head amps too hard. He pushes up the fader levels and then if he needs further level he drives the head amp more. In the way of scene memories we are not doing much on this because so many channels are being used at

front. "The PSM12's are compact 12-inch coaxial floor monitor speakers which are also capable of handling PA duties. They are nice and discreet and sound excellent," Mark adds. Andy's main challenge is dealing with around 160 channels of audio and all associated connections. "All our twelve way stage boxes and cables are by VDC. We have not had one line down and every



Below: The stage management team needed to handle different requirements of an orchestra, rock band, opera and hip hop whilst avoiding complicated changeovers; Mark O'Neill, Operations Director at Audio Plus and Stefan Imhof, Owner of Audio Plus; Charles Hazelwood, Orchestra in a Field Founder and Tony Andrews, Funktion-One.




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one worked first time. Microphone positions change depending on the line up. All in all it has been a huge success for us."

On hand at Glastonbury and most welcome at FOH control was the affable Tony Andrews, founder of Funktion-One. Happy to give his views and talk about loudspeaker design and pleased to give a final tonal tweak to the system before Orchestra in a Field began. One of the live music industry's most respected figures his career spans over forty years during which time he founded Turbosound and was responsible for many ground breaking products including TMS3's, Flashlight and Floodlight systems prior to the formation of Funktion-One in 1992.

At the start of Funktion-One Tony spent a number of years in concentrating on R&D, working on new designs with Resolution 5 one of the products to come out of that research. He comments: "In a way Resolution 5 goes all the way back to 1977 when we first started evolving this way of loading cone loudspeakers, which was a reaction in the 70s to the horror of compression drivers running down to 1.5kHz which is still going on today amazingly. Subtly, over the years the Resolution 5 has got better and better. As we find out more we introduce it. We are not talking about fancy DSP but things like more interesting compounds of paper and bolting certain things down tighter, getting better damping materials inside, all the subtle stuff. It has been a 12 year life and has steadily got better and better. To this day I don't know how anyone is going to get more power out of such a compact enclosure. Currently we are working on a new large format

system." He continues with more of his fascinating views. "My drive in speaker design, if you like, has not been with the electronics, it is to develop the loudspeakers and enclosures. It seems that everybody is more or less using the same drive units in more or less the same arrangement these days and then whatever they haven't got quite right they are correcting with DSP. We do it in the drive units themselves and that to me is a far superior way of doing it. If you have got problems in your system, if you shove more energy in sometimes you make the argument bigger. Whereas if the speaker wants to do it, that is altogether more natural."

It is that natural sound that makes the orchestra at Glastonbury such a delight for the audience and Charles Hazelwood certainly agrees. Talking directly after the performance of Tubular Bells he commented: "Before we started today, I did manage to run out a couple of times to have a listen at Front of House. It's wonderful. We are using amazing kit. We have used it before and we will again. Let's face it, making an orchestra sound good through a PA is virtually impossible because you have got such an extreme tonal spectrum. This Funktion-One kit really does make us sound good. Hand on heart, it is an absolutely visceral experience listening to an orchestra like this."

**TPI**

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