

Martin Audio MLA Compact Floats RG Jones' Boat at Henley Festival

TORUS' high-profile debut is Pure Heaven

Photography by Alex Wood



After its enforced break last year, the traditional black-tie Henley Festival returned this summer with sound system providers, RG Jones Sound Engineering's association with the event now approaching 40 years.

However, the site on the banks of the Thames is not without its challenges when it comes to creating optimum audio. This is highlighted by its main Floating Stage, situated on the river itself. The auditorium here is only around 40m from front to back, but over 100m wide. Obtaining even coverage without hotspots for audiences, both inside and outside the main sound field, is a challenge that has been met head on by a combination of the service providers' technical expertise, led by designer Simon Honywill, and their deployment of Martin Audio's award-winning MLA.

The Festival production team had previously acknowledged that MLA's advanced control technology had enabled them to dial in exactly the required coverage area to ensure compliance with the licence conditions.

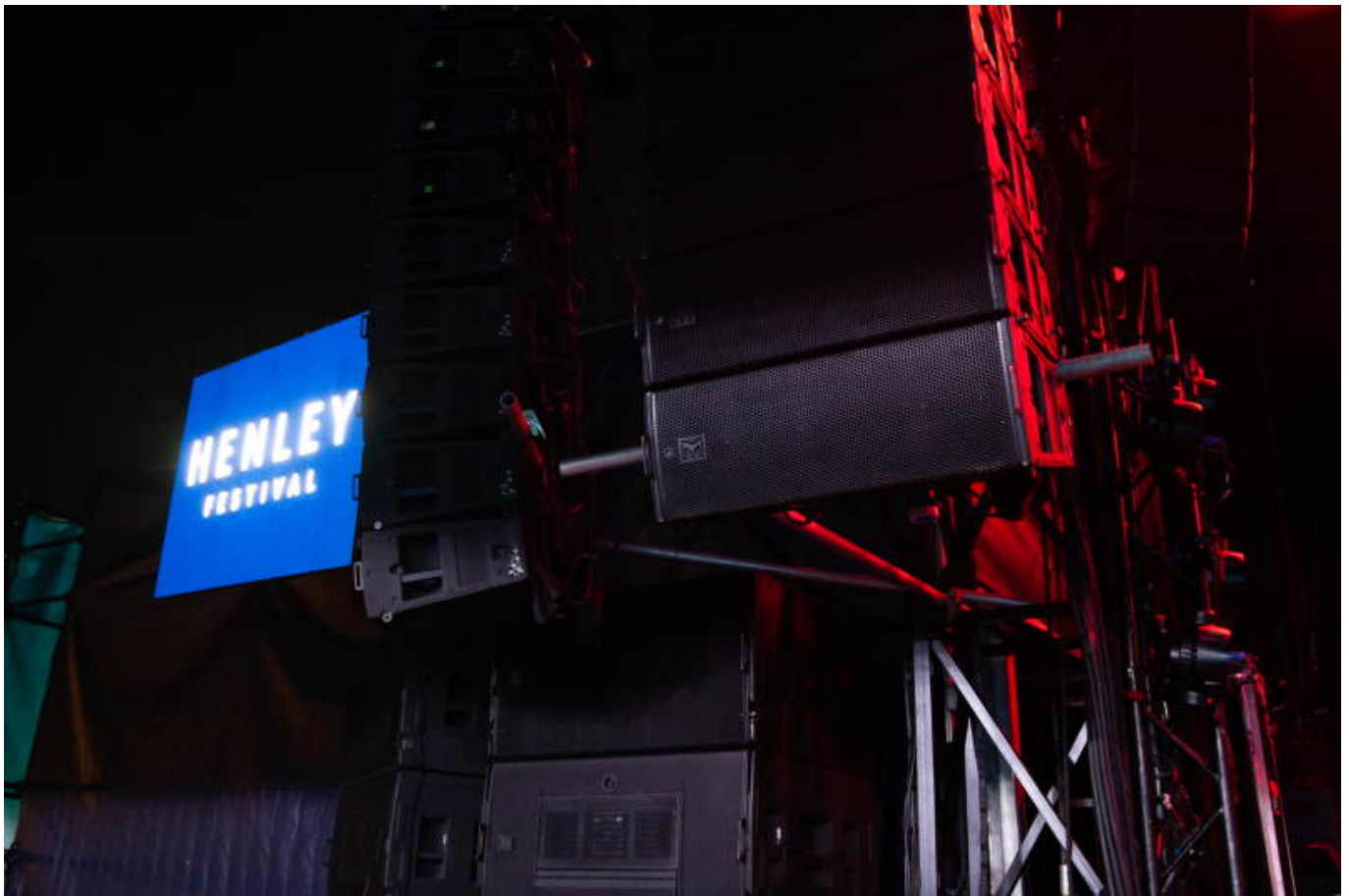


Once again, the system tech responsible was highly experienced MLA technician, Mark Edwards. With his adept use of Hard Avoid in the DISPLAY optimisation software, RG Jones comfortably maintained offsite noise limits at 65dB(A) over 15 minutes while achieving appropriate levels within the defined coverage areas.

While this year's five-day festival saw headliners Madness, James Blunt and Sophie Ellis-Bextor supported by Sara Cox alongside Sounds of the 80s, Disco Classical Featuring Kathy Sledge, and Don't Stop Me Now rock symphony revue shows, RG Jones also provided Martin Audio solutions for a number of support and specialist club stages - largely using MLA Mini. The one exception was Pure Heaven, combining two major clubbing brands. And this saw the deployment of the new Martin Audio TORUS advanced constant curvature system.

RG Jones' project manager, Jack Bowcher- who is also responsible for maintaining their cutting-edge rental inventory - had been keen to audition TORUS and immediately earmarked Pure Heaven as a likely destination. "I contacted Ben [Tucker] at Martin Audio and asked if I could try it out in the 25-metre big top," he said.

Three TORUS enclosures were on top of three MLX subs for the occasion, and Bowcher delivered an unequivocal verdict. "As a 12" box it sits neatly on top of the sub - the rigging was solid and straightforward.



“We ran the TORUS in portrait mode. They easily covered the space and provided the 20m-30m of coverage as promised. The constant curvature array allowed perfect coverage. “In addition, situated behind each of three VIP seating areas in Pure Heaven were a pair of Martin Audio’s popular white DD6 (differential dispersion) speakers to mitigate slapback,

Bowcher project managed the audio for the whole site in tandem with Production Manager, John Harris. As with 2019, a seven-elements-a-side MLA Compact flown PA rig provided coverage on the Floating Stage, with a further nine elements per side of MLA Compact providing outfills and four a-side MLA Mini for infills. Providing LF extension were two stacks of three MLX subwoofers, designed in cardioid pattern to prevent bleed back onto the stage, while DD12’s delays ensured intelligibility was maintained at the back of the Grandstand, where the roof obscures the top of the main system.

In addition to Mark Edwards, Steve Carr handled monitors on the Floating Stage and Rosie Tarrant was stage patch, with responsibility for RF.

Elsewhere, Sam Liddiard supervised Salon Comedy Club, Olly Wickes was FOH in the Jazz Club, Dan Langridge was at the Riverside Restaurant and Sam Millen ensured the sound ran smoothly in the Bedouin Lounge Bar.

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As for TORUS, RG Jones say they can see plenty of uses for it in their 2022 calendar. The flexibility of the system would fit well into the diverse applications the company deals with across its hugely varied client portfolio.

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