



## **XTA and DiGiCo tame Rochester Castle**

**The summer Rochester Castle Gardens concerts traditionally feature a wide range of artists, designed to encourage a true cross-section of Kent's Medway Towns population to enjoy fine live music in a historic setting.**

With six shows taking place from 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> July, the 2007 concerts featured Jools Holland, Smokey Robinson, Michael Bolton, Ray Davies, the Royal Philharmonic Proms Orchestra and The Australian Pink Floyd Show.

Such a variety of music requires a versatile audio system, so XTA loudspeaker processing and a DiGiCo D5 Live console helped to bring the music to the masses.

The 5000-capacity Rochester Castle Gardens site has neighbouring residential areas and sound levels are a sensitive issue. So XTA's AudioCore software was essential for system tech Al Woods, working for audio company Capital Sound, to tune the Martin Audio PA.

The system comprised a Martin W8LC line array with eight Martin subs, driven by MA4.2 and I-Tech 8000 amplifiers and controlled by XTA DP226s.

"We had to work to try and reduce the noise levels, because there are houses nearby and we're restricted to a certain noise level outside," says Al. "That's one of the reasons why we flew the PA this year, rather than ground stacking it, so that we could get the sound down onto the audience rather than skimming across their heads and outside into the problem areas. We also had the eight subs stacked in a cardioid configuration, which helped to further reduce any low frequency issues."

To achieve the required compact area of maximum volume, but then having the sound level rapidly dropping outside that area, Al used a Cisco wireless tablet system and AudioCore, which allowed him to walk the entire open air site making adjustments to ensure that noise for the nearby houses was kept to a minimum.

At front of house, the DiGiCo D5 console meant that every band's FOH engineer had the choice of the versatile D5 or easily patching in their own, whichever they preferred.

"I put the stage box and the local rack at the mix position with a MAD1 link, because some of the guest engineers brought analogue consoles and I could just cross patch input, rather than having to introduce another box at the stage end," says Al. "I mixed the Royal Philharmonic Proms Orchestra on the D5 and I was very happy with the results."

He continues: "The system worked well and, although we had a good level at FOH, we managed to stay inside the very stringent noise limits outside the Castle Gardens very successfully. Considering the Castle is - by its nature - on high ground, it demonstrated how successfully the system worked."

[ENDS]

Picture caption: Ray Davies at Rochester Castle © Phil Dillon

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