Kings Place delivers Sound Unwrapped with d&b Soundscape



Picture: Monika S Jakubowska

Kings Place, the thriving arts venue in London’s Kings Cross, is launching its Sound Unwrapped season of performances for 2023, in partnership with leading live sound company, d&b audiotechnik, and its ground-breaking immersive audio system, d&b Soundscape.

Gerardo Marrone, Audio & Recording Manager for Kings Place Music Foundation, says, “Even a spotless stereo mix is almost like a still image. It can’t unexpectedly call for your attention from far away or right behind your head, jumping from one

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side to the other of your body, trespassing your idea of three-dimensional. d&b Soundscape brings a new, immense canvas that artists are called to fill by adapting their existing shows to sound like a completely new experience."

He adds, "d&b Soundscape aims to cover every single member of the audience and welcome them into the artists' world and visions of their craft, from pure sound design to hybrid performances."

The official partnership will see Kings Place deploy the state-of-the-art d&b Soundscape system as an integral part of its Sound Unwrapped programme. The performances will work with the d&b Soundscape to explore spatial dimensions in live performance and new creative possibilities in sound and space, through the music of innovative, pioneering artists and composers.

d&b Soundscape presents an exciting opportunity, both as a powerful new creative tool for the artists, and as a method of presentation, delivering to audiences a live sound experience like no other. At a basic level, d&b Soundscape gives artists and composers the ability to precisely 'place' sounds within a space. It can present a degree of realism such that the entire audience will be able to pinpoint each source, their aural and visual senses precisely corresponding. Sound can be perceived to emanate exactly from a singer, or from an instrument, that we can see at a point on the stage.

But the creative possibilities are greater still. In the hands of an artist or designer, sounds can not only be placed, but moved and manipulated as effects to build and enhance the listening experience: voices and instruments can pan across a room, swirl around our heads, or fill a space. What's more, Soundscape has the power to change a room's acoustic signature – opening an even greater range of possibilities for the presentation of musical art, and to an audience's experience of live performance.

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Picture: Viktor Erik Emanuel

The relationship between d&b audiotechnik and Kings Place goes back several years. Wayne Powell, Artist Relations at d&b audiotechnik, says, “Kings Place has trusted d&b to deliver across all its venues and spaces for a wide range of musical genres, corporate clients, art and AV. Being attentive to the audience experience as well as the programme, this feels like a natural progression for them. We are very positive about what we’ve achieved together with Soundscape and its potential for the Sound Unwrapped series.”

Powell has been busy supporting the Kings Place team, initiating talks with artists, composers, record labels and management, and organising workshops and studio time to help them explore the possibilities of immersive audio. “It’s very much about recognising their creative ideas and articulating them using Soundscape: creativity always sets the trajectory, our technology is there to make it happen,” says Powell.

Marrone concludes, “I truly believe d&b Soundscape represents a huge opportunity for audience members to be part of something they don’t even believe is possible from a large-scale live PA system. It creates a much more intimate and inclusive space.” Sound Unwrapped kicked off on 20 January and runs through 2023.

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