Antiknock introduces Martin Audio TORUS system



Since opening in 1985, Antiknock has become a hall of fame for punk and hardcore bands, and many of today's major artists originally set down their roots there. Now the venue, situated in the burgeoning Shinjuku district of Tokyo, has become the first in Japan to install Martin Audio's new TORUS constant curvature array.

Speaking of the installation, Mr. Sekikawa, CEO of Hardaway Corporation, which manages the venue, said the renewal of the sound system was a gift to the many artists and patrons who volunteered to sell T-shirts and make donations to keep the venue alive during the COVID pandemic. "This was my first thought when trying to thank them all for their cooperation during those difficult times," he said.

The system previously installed had been huge and featured old long-throw cabinets. Their disproportionate size not only made the stage looked small, but the clarity of the low end during live performances left much to be desired. When seeking a replacement system, there were several key criteria that needed to be met: these included being suitable for multi-genres, with a reasonable size footprint, and offering good stability.

Phoca PDF

Mr. Hashimoto, CEO of Enter Sandman, who designed the new system, explained the rationale. “Having had a relationship with Antiknock for 10 years, I was able to determine several important factors. One was the theme of the venue, bearing in mind the type of bands who perform there. Another was the physical shape of the venue and the construction of the building, as well as the size of the loudspeakers. And finally, of course, there was the capability of the loudspeaker itself. “A speaker with medium-throw capability would fulfil the demands of this venue and match the concept perfectly - and the new TORUS was the obvious solution.”



Phoca PDF

As a result, he specified a pair of T1215 onto two SXCF118 subwoofers per side, in a simple ground stacked configuration. Mr. Hashimoto confirmed that the height of the system had been carefully pre-arranged so that the size issue was resolved while achieving the optimum quality of sound. As TORUS has three compression drivers which have 35mm voice coils, he knew it would be sufficiently powerful for loud bands performing at Antiknock, while rasping lead vocals could be reproduced in the mix with vastly improved intelligibility.

One challenge was the siting of the PA itself. Since sight lines on the audience floor are obscured by columns and joists, and the floor level increases at the rear, the loudspeakers needed to be set inside the stage area. But TORUS is nothing but versatile, and can be flown from the T12GRID inverted, to allow stereo arrays to be mirrored with the high frequency horn either to the left or the right. This would maintain both the intelligibility, and the wide Left/Right separation. During the initial simulations, Martin Audio's DISPLAY3 - its proprietary 3D prediction software - was used to great extent by Mr. Hashimoto, with optimum results. He goes on to explain, "TORUS has a unique feature in that we could easily change the waveguide's dispersion between 30-45 degree. We could also change the dispersion, setting the horn asymmetrically to avoid unnecessary reflections from the wall."

Due to Antiknock's unique shape this solution worked well, as DISPLAY3 can simulate different settings of the horn graphically," said Takahisa Ota, from Martin Audio Japan. The multi-genre mode could be achieved by using the Lake controller to tune the system, by engaging the relevant saved presets to easily change the tuning.

"Antiknock is the venue where loud rock bands choose to perform, and this is reflected in the high SPL," adds Mr. Kunii, the venue's operator. "However, the sound from the new system is always clear and transparent, and I have never felt tired. The audience also tell me that despite the volume, they feel comfortable and excited." 'Excitement' and 'clarity' are two features that don't usually co-exist comfortably, he emphasises.

The final word came from venue manager, Mr. Yanagisawa. "A live venue such as this cannot survive on reputation or culture alone. The sound system is a good additional solution and we believe TORUS can adapt to the many demands placed on it. Consequently, we believe it will help us rebuild the live scene."

www.martin-audio.com

Phoca PDF