Martin Audio ADORN A55 for Westfield London



The Westfield London Shopping Centre is inviting its customers to “step into a world of light, colour and wonder” for an inaugural winter light experience called Here We Glow. Based around a number of outdoor light art sculptures, it is designed to dazzle visitors of all ages, and will run until the beginning of March. Of the eight commissioned exhibits, two - Shifting Visions by Adam Povey Lighting and Tessellis by Italian Angelo Bonello - are brought to life by sympathetic soundscapes delivered through Martin Audio loudspeakers. The audio system for both of these quite diverse features has been designed by David Gregory, at London-based Clay Productions.

The company specialises in delivering large scale immersive projects, and in the case of Shifting Visions they have deployed Martin Audio ADORN A55 - one atop each of the 38 x 3m high light columns, mapped across a 12m by 12m square. Providing additional warmth to the four-and-a-half-minute soundscape, which he commissioned from composer Max Pappenheim, are two Martin Audio SX112 subwoofers. However, sensing that he could match the trompe l’oeil lighting effect with correspondingly disorienting spatial sound to enhance the visitor experience, he turned to sister company TiMax panLab’s 3D rendering engine - which he had previously deployed successfully on a Carnival Excel class cruise ship.

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David Gregory explained how his search for the optimum product partnership had led him to the ADORN/panLab combo for Shifting Visions - described as “a mind-bending fusion of light and mirrors.” He said, “In this case I was looking for a small, lightweight IP-rated speaker on a budget that would deliver great sound. “I had heard good things about Martin Audio’s compact ADORN range and knew copious amounts of hire companies had invested in them. I got one to try out and it met all requirements.” An added SX112 sub in each corner provided the added warmth.” Electric Foundry who built and fabricated the light columns also custom fabricate a bracket to bolt the speakers to the scaff bars, enabling them to fire down at the optimum angle.

After his earlier success with the panLab mapping tool he could see that Shifting Visions would be an ideal project on which to deploy it again. And so he again turned to TiMax Senior Product Designer, Dan Higgott for technical support. “It was a question of how we were going to put sound through the columns and make it sound interesting.” The solution was to distribute the instruments across each different area. “Stand in front of it and it’s as if you are immersed in a complete orchestra. But as you wander around you hear a different instrument at different times,” he observed. “I used panLab to do the gain sharing between the cabinets; by clicking on an object I could slightly move that object to increase the gain share. This saved me having to try and work out values; it gave me the opportunity to look at [the challenge] creatively, rather than mathematically. panLab is extremely easy to configure and Higgott provided excellent advice, he said. The Pappenheim soundtrack plays continuously on a loop, under QLab control, running over Luminex GigaCore switches. Summarising the installation, David Gregory says the impact on the visitors has been huge: “It has a real wow factor as they wander round and get lost in pillars of light.”

Clay Productions were on more familiar ground when specifying 18 CDD8 and four further SX112 for the Tessellis exhibit. Here visitors are invited to explore glowing tesserae “that blend ancient symbols with futuristic design” with LEDs mapped like a film to an abstract soundscape. David Gregory has used CDD many times in the past for its warmth, overall superior sound and the fact that it comes in a weatherised version. ”Although the design team for Tessellis weren’t familiar with the box, once they heard it, they agreed that this is a very good speaker, backed up with the Martin Audio brand name.”

The CDD8 inventory was supplied by Stage Sound Services and the ADORN A55s were hired from Adam Povey Lighting. Clay Productions are now contemplating their next series of projects which further push the envelope, and for which they are again planning to deploy ADORN A55 … as well as investing in Martin Audio’s newly launched A80T for other future projects.

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