Sennheiser Microphones for The Grand Jam



This summer, The Grand Jam brought together several hundred live performers to create a huge rock band. The venue for this XXL music spectacle was the Deutsche Bank Park (formerly the Waldstadion), the home stadium of Eintracht Frankfurt. 150 wired Sennheiser microphones were set up in the football stadium to provide professional-quality sound for “Germany’s biggest live band”. Added to these were 40 Neumann microphones and wireless channels from the new Sennheiser EW-DX series.

The vocalists were miked with 70 Sennheiser e 935 and various e 845 and e 835. The show’s presenters used EW-DX handheld transmitters with MM 435 microphone capsules. evolution e 609 and e 606 mics were located in front of the guitar amplifiers, while the woodwind and brass sections were picked up by 12 classic Sennheiser MD 421. The strings were miked with the Neumann Miniature Clip Mic System (MCM 114 Set).

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The number of drum sets lined up around the stage was quite impressive, although only a few of the kits were miked. The microphones used included Sennheiser e 904 (snare, toms) and Neumann KM 184 (hi-hat). A total of 40 Neumann KM 184 small diaphragm microphones were available in Frankfurt, and these were also used for the performance by the SAP Symphony Orchestra that kicked off the evening’s entertainment.

“For The Grand Jam, almost 200 channels came together at our three digital audio consoles,” said Jens Heuser, master for event technology (stage/studio) and a specialist in event safety (TÜV/DPVT). With his company Music & Lights Veranstaltungsservice, Heuser was responsible for implementing the lighting and audio technology for this mega event. The Sennheiser microphones were provided by SOUNDLINE Ton+Lichttechnik. The Grand Jam 2023 was organised by Eintracht Frankfurt Stadion GmbH in cooperation with PK Events GmbH.

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Almost 11,000 delighted spectators in the main stand made their voices heard as they cheered the musicians down on the pitch. It was not only friends and relatives of the performers who had travelled to Frankfurt, but also many people who didn't want to miss this very special event. The programme included familiar pop and rock hits from the repertoire of bands such as Coldplay, Nirvana, Queen and The Rolling Stones.

The vocalists and instrumentalists were supplied with their monitor signals, including announcements and click tracks, through their headphones via a "silent disco" system. LED boards between the tiers of the main stand also provided song lyrics and the music score. The decisive factor in ensuring perfect timing was the synchronous reproduction of the monitor sound and video content.

Sound for the audience in the main stand came from three line arrays – operating at quite a high sound level as it was necessary to compensate for the sound coming directly from the musicians on the pitch. Due to the weather conditions, the roof of the Frankfurt Arena was closed, forming a huge reflective surface. "The PA system was operated at around 3 dB above the level of the direct sound," said Jens Heuser. "In fact, you couldn't hear the direct sound in the stands at all. That was actually quite remarkable, because the levels of sound coming directly from the performance area were pretty awesome, as we could clearly hear during the unamplified rehearsals."

Sennheiser was a partner for the event, and Andreas Möller and Thomas Holz, two of the audio specialist's experienced managers, were on hand to offer their support. "The sound for the audience was rich and powerful," said Andreas Möller, Sennheiser Sales Manager Germany South/West – Professional Audio. "I received an exceptionally large amount of positive feedback praising the sound in particular. You could clearly hear the lyrics of the songs, and the instruments really came into their own. In the end, the whole package was just right, also thanks to the amazing light show and the dramatic pyrotechnics – it was an incredible spectacle that sent shivers down your spine!"

Thomas Holz, Sennheiser Relations Manager, can only agree with his colleague: "The show was fantastic, and all those involve did a brilliant job! Presenter Tobias was great at motivating everyone in the stadium, and he did it in a very pleasant way. I spent the first part of the show on the pitch among the musicians and then later I joined the spectators in the stand. I must say, the sound was excellent – I

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never expected such an impressive sound quality given the large number of people involved and the fact that the stadium roof was closed."

Jens Heuser summed up: "An event with so many musicians is in itself a special challenge, particularly because most of them are not professionals. Coordinating all these different people in a football stadium is not a trivial matter: some of them are understandably quite nervous before their big appearance. But I think that, together with the team from Music & Lights, we did a good job of mastering our part of this challenge. And not only that: the musicians and the audience had a great time together!"

Patrik Meyer from Eintracht Frankfurt Stadion GmbH is considered to be the initiator and bandleader of The Grand Jam. He, too, was extremely satisfied with the premiere: "The thousands of hours of preparation were more than worthwhile! You could really sense the enjoyment among the musicians, and everybody in the audience was either singing, dancing, or playing air guitar! We would like to say a big 'thank you' to all the jammers and especially to all our partners and the whole team for making this event such a huge success."



Patrik Meyer

All those involved will definitely have lasting memories of this concert experience. Where else can (amateur) musicians get the opportunity to perform in a huge stadium supported by professional sound, lighting and pyrotechnics in front of over ten thousand spectators? After this great success, The Grand Jam will be held again in Frankfurt in summer 2024.

www.thegrandjam.live

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www.jh-music-lights.de
www.soundline-online.de
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