d&b audiotechnik CCL for Pretty Woman: The Musical

The South African premiere of Pretty Woman: The Musical, produced by Showtime Entertainment, has officially marked the regional debut of d&b audiotechnik's highly anticipated CL-Series, deploying the brand-new CCL compact cardioid line array system. Supplied by Cape Town-based rental premier Eastern Acoustics and supported by local distributor Stage Audio Works (SAW), the cutting-edge system has set a new benchmark for theatrical sound reinforcement in the country.

Brought to South African stages by Showtime Entertainment, the high-energy musical production features a rock-infused score by Bryan Adams and Jim Vallance. To deliver the power, clarity, and precision required for a production of this scale, South African Sound Designer David Classen chose the d&b CCL system as the centerpiece of his audio design. Single-channel broadband directivity control is the standout technical achievement of the CL-Series, bringing advanced low-frequency cardioid behavior into a compact form factor. For a theatrical environment, where open lapel and headset microphones are constantly moving across the stage, this exceptional rear-rejection is a gamechanger, greatly reducing mic bleed and virtually eliminating onstage feedback.

“The d&b CCL system completely transformed how we approached the sound design for Pretty Woman," explains Sound Designer David Classen. "In musical theater, stage spill is always the enemy. The passive cardioid behavior of both the CCL tops and the flying CCL subwoofers kept the stage incredibly quiet. This clean stage environment gave us significantly more usable gain before feedback than

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we’ve ever had with a compact rig, allowing the vocals to sit effortlessly on top of the mix."

Classen also notes the pristine acoustic performance of the system: "Beyond the raw control, the high-frequency detail in the CCL boxes is exquisite. The HF headroom is remarkable, ensuring that every piece of dialogue and subtle vocal nuance carries cleanly without a hint of distortion. Combined with d&b’s ArrayProcessing, we achieved perfectly even coverage and a consistent tonal balance throughout the entire auditorium. Whether you are sitting in the front row or the back of the balcony, the listening experience is identical."

To accommodate the venue dynamics, Eastern Acoustics specified an extensive d&b system built around the new cardioid line array modules:

- Main Left/Right Hangs: 14 x d&b CCL tops perside
- Low-Frequency Extension: 6 x d&b CCL-SUBs per side
- Fills & Center Cluster: a curated mix of d&b V-Series and E-Series loudspeakers
- Amplification & Networking: d&b D25 and D80 digital amplifiers, fully integrated into a high-speed, redundant Milan-AVB network infrastructure for pristine digital signal transport.

This successful deployment of new technology sets a milestone for the local industry, highlighting the rapid adoption of international audio standards by South African creative teams, producers, and rental companies. “We are absolutely thrilled to see the latest generation of d&b audiotechnik products adopted by a South African production of this magnitude so soon after its release," says Nathan Ihlenfeldt, CTO of Stage Audio Works. "The CL-Series represents a major technological leap, packing world-class broadband directivity control into an incredibly lightweight and efficient footprint. Showtime Entertainment has put together a world-class production, and Eastern Acoustics has done a phenomenal job deploying this system to match that same standard."

Pretty Woman: The Musical continues its successful South African run, moving from its opening season at the Artscape Opera House in Cape Town to the Teatro at Montecasino in Johannesburg.

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