Martin Audio for Chalke History Festival

The Chalke History Festival is the UK’s largest history festival, bringing together many of the world's most prominent historians, speakers, living history actors, performers, and musicians. The 2026 edition took place in June, drawing 25,000 heritage enthusiasts to the Wiltshire countryside to engage with more than 175 talks, debates, dynamic living history encampments, and live music entertainment. For a festival focusing deeply on the past, event production specialist Hire Frequencies deployed thoroughly modern Martin Audio sound reinforcement solutions across all five stages on the 70-acre site. “It’s a fantastic festival,” says Will Smith, Founder and MD of Hire Frequencies. “The stages all feature panel discussions and presentations, so we provided a full AV solution including staging, lighting, LED walls, video - we filmed the entire event - and obviously the audio performance was incredibly important.”

As a new technical supplier to the festival, Hire Frequencies was tasked with substantially enhancing the audio performance and coverage compared to the festival organisers’ experiences in previous years. To achieve this, the team turned to the Martin Audio portfolio, where they found solutions for every stage on the site. “There was a Martin Audio product suitable to cover every audio requirement of the festival,” comments Smith. “The range covers all bases, so there was no need to look anywhere else.” The two main venues in terms of presentations were known as the Guildhall and the Moot.

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In both locations, main left and right arrays comprised Martin Audio TORUS T1215 constant curvature enclosures combined with SXC115 subwoofers. Three pairs of Martin Audio FlexPoint Series FP8 8” point-source loudspeakers acted as delays flown overhead, with front fill provided by FP6 6” cabinets. The entire system was powered by multi-channel Martin Audio iKON amplifiers. “We did the usual DISPLAY programming beforehand to make sure that the coverage was perfect,” notes Smith.

A third venue, known as the Forum, doubled as a presentation space by day and a music venue for evening entertainment. Here, Hire Frequencies deployed Martin Audio’s WPS Wavefront Precision line arrays, ground-stacked five cabinets per side and supplemented by high-output SXCF118 subwoofers on each side. Once again, FlexPoint FP8s were installed as delays, with ultra-compact FP6s acting as front fills. “Due to the configuration of the site, when the live music started in the Forum we needed to actively control spill into the other presentation venues, particularly the Moot,” explains Smith. “The cardioid subwoofers and Martin Audio's Hard Avoid optimisation feature really came into their own in this regard.”

Two smaller stages were also equipped with dedicated Martin Audio solutions. The Henge - an open-sided tent - utilised CDD-LIVE 12 and CDD-LIVE 8 coaxial active systems, while an outdoor performance stage featured FlexPoint FP12 12” point-source models combined with a pair of SXP118 subwoofers. “We've had really positive feedback across the board,” Smith concludes. “Speech intelligibility was pristine and a massive improvement on last year. We’ve had nothing but fantastic comments from both the organisers and the audiences. The Martin Audio kit just performs.”

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