

Electric Zoo Festival Powers Up with d&b audiotechnik Systems

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NEW YORK — The Electric Zoo Festival rocked Randall’s Island in the East River here over Labor Day weekend with wall-to-wall sound and light, growing from a total draw of 26,000 in its first year (2009) to more than 100,000 over three days in 2012. Sonic Lab Audio, Integral Sound and Eighth Day Sound supported the festival with d&b audiotechnik gear for all four stages.

More details from d&b audiotechnik (www.dbaudio.com):

Where once electronic dance music (EDM) filled a fashionable niche, it has now achieved critical mass. Nowhere is this better exemplified than this year’s Electric Zoo on Randall Island New York which returned on Labor Day weekend with an ever more robust line up of the world’s leading names in EDM. The highest grossing EDM artist in the US for 2012 Tiësto is joined by

Axwell from Swedish House Mafia; and Steve Aoki to name just three. “Along with the producers, we organize events of this scale worldwide and draw on a wealth of experience in this genre,” said sound specialist George Stavro of Sonic Lab Audio and Integral Sound, “And we contract in what we know to be the best equipment to make the weekend fizz.”

Stavro projects as a typically plain speaking Australian sound man, but beneath his leathery left field humor there lurks a specialist of remarkable technical proficiency. “There are three of us at Integral Sound to oversee this event, Steve Dash, a legend in EDM from the very early days, Mike Bindra our event production guru, and myself with a specialty in sound system design and configuration. For Electric Zoo I’ve specified loudspeaker systems from d&b audiotechnik for all four venues on the island; Main Stage; Riverside Stage; Sunday School and Hill Top.

“With EDM shows, if it’s done well it gives people a sense of joy and elation; that’s what we specialize in. But when you’re listening to EDM for a sustained period as you are during the three days of Electric Zoo, then ear fatigue can become a problem. To counter this we have developed a specific PA tuning regime that relieves the condition without any compromise to the listening experience.

“That might sound a little glib, but think of the d&b systems as the canvas for a painter; our special tuning is the layers of wash an artist will apply to present a specific luminosity in the finished work. The thing is, when you apply specific tuning to a PA it can badly influence performance elsewhere in the audio system: but not with the d&b systems.

“Although I specialize in EDM I’ve worked with all kinds of live music and I find with d&b systems their inherent response is so smooth, even and consistent, that it doesn’t matter what art form you apply, it will always perform beautifully. The d&b J-Series is the prime component for three of the four venues and is typical; a loudspeaker system that is absolutely flat straight out of the box, allowing me to make the EQ lifts and cuts that suit EDM and delivers that bangin’ experience without overburdening the senses of our audience.”

“We subcontract Eighth Day Sound for all the equipment, all to our specification,” said Stavro. “They supply all the J-Series, as well as elements of Q and C-Series, and the large quantities of subs we need, including the notorious d&b B2-SUB, which we use in CSA mode to great effect.” Stavro creates defined sub-arcs across the front of all the stages neatly avoiding the bludgeoning tunnel of power that can easily sap the energy from the audience core.

The main J systems are flown high to enable maximum downward tilt, “It might be an island but we don’t want to upset the neighbors across the river,” said Stavro. “With the pattern control these systems achieve we also avoid coloring the adjacent stages. Some people think what we do is pretty unorthodox but as I said, it’s what we’re known for, and it works.”

More info at www.integralsound.com, www.soniclabaudio.com and www.madeevent.com/ElectricZoo.

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