

Blue Array rock out on a DiGiCo at +LIVE+



It must have been a peculiar sight, seeing a shaking OB van in the backstage loading area rocking to the sound of +LIVE+. The culprit for the commotion was Eban Oliver, founder of Militia Broadcast, who was sitting, or rather dancing, inside the van, about half a meter from the audio monitors, during the live streaming of The +Live+ Reunion World Tour.



The +Live+ Reunion World Tour, by AMP Events, played to sold out houses at Time Square's new Sun Arena in Menlyn Park on 10th and 11th November last year. To accommodate fans across the globe, the American rock band's performance was recorded for DVD and live streaming. Positioned at the OB van, Audio Engineer Marinus Visser from Blue Array Productions operated on a DiGiCo SD5, almost maxing out the console!

Blue Array were contracted by Militia Broadcasts to handle the multitrack for both shows. On the second night, Marinus was also responsible for the live broadcast mix for the web streaming. "Eban sat with me and just loved it," grins Marinus. "He said the sound was amazing."

Another person equally pleased with the audio from the DiGiCo SD5 was Eric Shenyo

international FOH Engineer / tour manager. "He came to the van a couple of times before the show and just wanted to have a listen to what I had done and give me a few pointers on certain songs where he wanted certain effects," explained Marinus. "I took some notes and would then audition and play back what it sounded like. It was great as anything he asked to listen to and try out was right at my fingertips."



When asked for a room reverb for the drums, Marinus was able to add it instantly. “I showed him some of the other effects I used on the drums. We went to the guitars, I showed him the plug-ins strips I used and how I placed the guitars and he replied, ‘I should actually go try this on my board in the venue just now.’ Having the ability to populate the board with tons of effects meant I could easily and quickly switch to something he liked. A rewarding feeling when you get told ‘it sounds great’”.

The pair discussed the vocals. “Every single effect Eric Sheny, asked for I had.” They soon realized that what Marinus was doing in the OB van was notably similar to what was being done at FOH, the only difference being that the DiGiCo SD5 achieved these results without relying on dozens of external plugins.



Making use of effects, routing and bussing, Marinus came close to maxing out the SD5, the console Blue Array purchased a year ago. “There were things I could never do before because I was limited by the gear. There are old studio tricks I would sometimes use to fatten things up or to add a certain flavour. Now I have the ability to do this in a live environment, and probably better live due to the high resolution available to us with these amazing consoles.

“That’s what’s great about the SD5 – the music we buy and listen to is not normally at a high

resolution. I think there are only a handful of people in the world that have true 96kHz, 24-bit files to listen to. I believe in not insulting people's ears, that is why we specialize in high-quality audio. We routinely run little corporate shows with two mics and two playbacks on that kind of resolution. Digital conversion should only have happened once by the time you hear it. Again, with things like that we've surpassed the quality of audio of general music distribution. We're in a different audio quality space and I feel they need to catch up now," laughs Marinus. "Fans can now go to concerts and hear more detail and be moved even more by the artists they love and support!"

The magic happens for Marinus when the show runs. "I have my pre-show processes of doing things and I know that by the time the show starts I've built everything I need and probably end up only using half of it! But, it's there if I need it and at any time in the show, when I feel it's the right moment, I can push that fader and watch the crowd respond – it's like playing an instrument, I become a part of the act and production rather than just sitting there pushing faders."



In this regard, Marinus as an Audio Engineer is one of the performers. "You're the guy who firstly makes sure that the performer and audience connect and feed off each other, and then your work is to make it sound great. It's more than just the music, it's how a performance makes people feel and that goes beyond the science and theory of sound."