

DiGiCo sextet at Pavarotti tribute show



On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the death of Luciano Pavarotti, Friends & Partners Group and the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation produced “Un Emozione senza fine” (An endless emotion), a show paying tribute to the world-famous tenor with a stellar cast including Plácido Domingo, José Carreras and top Italian pop stars, staged in the unique setting of Verona Arena, Italy and aired live in prime time nationwide on TV and radio.

As well as a 70-piece orchestra, an electric rhythm section and numerous singers performing virtual duets with ‘Big Luciano’, the engineers had the unenviable task of mixing an incredible variety of sounds, from the raunchy tones of Zucchero, to the crystalline flute of Andrea Griminelli, Giorgia’s soaring jazz-tinged vocals and young opera talents from the Pavarotti Foundation.

Agorà of L’Aquila, the event’s audio and lighting contractor, deployed no less than six DiGiCo consoles at the impressive event, manned by several of the country’s most respected engineers.

At the FOH platform, Daniel Tramontani (audio chief and designer of the event’s complex set-up) and Marco

Monforte, were supported by Francesco Passeri.



“I used an SD7 for the orchestra mix and sent a L/R feed to Marco, who manned another SD7 and added the rest – band, vocals, etc., putting together the final mix for the audience,” Daniel explains. “I’ve worked with DiGiCo consoles for years and recent applications have included Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with Zubin Mehta conducting in Milan cathedral and Carmine Burana at Caserta’s Royal Palace.



As well as the great sound quality, my favourite SD7 features are its great resources and the Optocore protocol. In this specific case, it was a great help, because on large important events, the availability of resources (channels, groups, aux sends, matrices, etc.) is fundamental, as has the possibility of sharing part of them over an extremely reliable network.”

“As well as his crucial role as FOH assistant, Francesco manned an SD11 handling speech mics and external contributions (including Andrea Bocelli from Rome and Ron Howard from Los Angeles),” adds Marco. “This left us free to concentrate exclusively on the very delicate musical aspects. I’ve been a frequent DiGiCo user since the D5 and my favourite SD7 features are its extreme flexibility and the endless resources, which can be modified on the run, enabling sessions to be tailored to exactly meet your needs, a characteristic which, in my opinion, makes it the perfect choice for such complex events.”



On stage, an identical console set-up on monitor duty was helmed by Umberto Polidori (electric band, guest vocalists, MCs and guests) and Gianluca Bertoldi (orchestra members’ and conductors’ monitors), assisted by Luca Scornavacca.

“On the two desks we used 168 of the 224 input channels via an Optocore ring and four DiGiCo SD-Racks,” explains Umberto. “The SD7 is definitely my favourite for handling numerous monitors rapidly on projects with so many inputs and outputs, thanks to its organization speed, setup, configuration, power, versatility and the

immediacy of its user interface and operation. I began using it ten years ago, as soon as it arrived at Agorà and, on this production, it helped me organize the layers, enabling me to find channels fast, and its intuitive customizable patching was fundamental.”



Daniel Tramontani was designer and head of audio for many of the Modena Pavarotti & Friends charity concerts and, regarding the 2003 edition, featuring Bono, Queen, Deep Purple and Eric Clapton, for which Agorà fielded its three new DiGiCo D5s, recalls, “I met (DiGiCo technical director) John Stadius and other technical staff, who gave us great assistance before and during the operative stage to facilitate handling the hundreds of channels involved.”

The audio engineers had a surprise visit from Stadius, at the Arena for the memorable event.



“For me to see a show like this, knowing it all hinges on one of my designs is emotional,” says John. “Sitting in a lab designing these products is one thing, watching them being used to their full potential is fantastic. It inspires me to keep working on new ideas that make engineers’ work easier.

“However, it’s not just my contribution, but my whole team of hardware and software engineers that make these products. The potential for a very complex show like this having issues is always a risk and we need to design our consoles to be responsive and easy to use to minimise any unforeseen problems.

“I go to many shows where DiGiCo consoles are used, and every time I feel proud for my contribution to each show. Electronics and audio is my passion, it is not just a job but an extension to a lifetime hobby. I have been designing consoles for almost 40 years now and I still feel I can make something better.”