

Keane20 tour chooses DiGiCo Quantum 338 and SD12 with KLANG-DMI for streamlined, efficient workflow



Keane20, Hope and Fears, was the hotly anticipated tour from Keane, celebrating 20 years since their debut album was released in 2004. The tour continues with festival dates around the world over the summer. For Philip Harvey at the front of house position and Hannah Brodrick on monitors, it was important the set up was as streamlined as possible, so using DiGiCo consoles for shared stage racking was essential. Utilising KLANG for immersive mixes kept the monitor footprint compact, while at front of house, the integration of Quantum's onboard technologies ensured the workflow was efficient and consistent across all venues.



Harvey is an engineer with over 25 years of experience touring with exceptional artists. For the *Keane20* tour the brief was clear: working within the ethos of a striped back, clean-lined stage design, the sound set-up needed to justify every centimetre of space and DiGiCo's hard working consoles were the way forward.



“In the formative days of the tour, the request was made to keep production as simple and as compact as possible,” Harvey says. “The Quantum 338 features were a key factor in the choice to use DiGiCo. The availability of dynamic EQs and multi-band compressors on every channel provides a safety net to catch and compress potentially offending frequencies that might jump out of an input (or output) inadvertently from song to song.”



Brodrick has also toured with high profile artists for many years and is co-director and co-founder of Women in Live Music. For her, it is KLANG that has been a surprise bonus. DMI-KLANG integrates seamlessly into the workflow of the SD12, creating immersive mixes without any additional outboard equipment.



“I’m using an SD12 96, running at 96kHz, with one SD Rack and a Nano Rack for extra inputs, all with 32bit input cards,” she says. “I don’t need any external kit for KLANG or recording, just the two cards that sit in the back of the desk and a couple of bits of ethernet! I had read an article about rock band Sigur Ro’s’s monitor set up and they were using a SD12 with KLANG. Everything fitted neatly into a flight case that was the same width as the desk sitting on top and I thought ‘Yep that’s how I want to roll (quite literally) this summer!’. I was a little daunted by the idea of KLANG to begin with, but talking to Phil Kamp and following the YouTube videos really helped. It’s a compact set-up and the processing power of the SD12 is just right.”

Having an intuitive set-up is important for any console, but when mixing monitors it is important that response times are quick. The onboard Macro function guarantees that often-used functions can be executed at the touch of a button, and the versatility of the SD12 has meant that Brodrick is very comfortable using it on this extended tour.

“I needed a powerful desk that can handle anything I throw at it. With DiGiCo I never have to reply to an outlandish request with ‘Sorry that’s not possible,” Brodrick continues. “I can programme a Macro to fire several commands at once which other desks simply can’t do. Timecode functionality for Snapshot changes is useful and although I’m quite happy using other consoles for smaller one-off gigs, I’m sure I would hit a limit with most, in terms of versatility and automation in the long run.”



Macros are also an important function at the front of house position, with Harvey using them in a variety of ways.

“There are a couple of key features that I really love about DiGiCo consoles; namely Macros, but also the availability of dynamic EQs and multi-band compressors on every channel,” he says. “I have a few Macros set up: engage Copied Audio for virtual soundcheck; select the Alt Input for our Lead Vocal Spare mic; turn drum gates on and off; as well as Save Session and engage my ‘Between Songs’ setting. This last setting mutes all vocal effects, but leaves the vocal mics unmuted so all band members can speak to the audience as they prefer. I rely on the Macro buttons quite heavily.”



The powerful flexibility of DiGiCo consoles ensures they suit any engineer perfectly. With so many features and often so little time, it is easy to get stuck with the safe and familiar but, for Brodrick and Harvey, unusual solutions have arisen throughout the tour, with Brodrick using built in features to support her artists on stage and Harvey utilising the onboard integrated technologies to stay ahead of the game at front of house.

“Years ago, I started incorporating timecode to fire my Snapshots, which I’ve really grown to appreciate,” says Harvey. “It keeps my mind in creative mode and means I can think of mixing moves vs logistical ones. I’m also really enjoying the different types of Mustard compressors for use in parallel on the Groups with my introduction to the Q338. These are a really nice addition to the Quantum desks.”



“I used the onboard oscillator to help a backing vocalist pitch once for a particular song,” Brodrick explains. “I dialled in 440Hz (middle A) and would fade it into her mix so she could make sure she was in tune. We also had a short notice stand-in guitarist for a few shows. I set up sessions for him where he could practise playing along with the live multitrack using the listen safe function on guitar and talkback channels. This allowed me to work with him on his mix, if another band member wanted to join in, it was great to be able to just hit listen safe and switch from playback to live without having to stop the session.”

Keane20 is a celebration of 20 years of growth and evolution, with music that has defined a generation and is still being enjoyed today’s teens. With the release of the DiGiCo D5 Live in 2002, it is a timeframe of growth that DiGiCo consoles align to.



“I still remember mixing on the D5!” Harvey concludes. “I think the evolution of DiGiCo’s desks, with their technological and user workflow advancements, has been extraordinary. The Quantum Series is definitely the pinnacle of this evolution. The ability to walk up to one of these desks and easily dial in a show on the fly with a limited amount of time to do so, or drilling deep down and creating very complex programming for a mix is equally attainable. With the inclusion of technologies such as OSC, L-ISA, KLANG and Fourier all natively onboard, DiGiCo is really keeping pace as well as pushing the envelope in the evolution of live shows.”

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