

Kick Off celebration by Gearhouse

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Gearhouse South Africa supplied full technical production for the FIFA World Cup™ Kick-Off Celebration Concert, staged at Orlando Stadium in Soweto, Johannesburg.

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The show was broadcast to tens of millions of music and football fans worldwide on June 10th, the night before the first match.

The exciting and eclectic mix of African and international artists was executive-produced by Los Angeles-based, Control Room, the leader in producing massive global music events. Control Room's technical director, Jim Baggott, and Gearhouse's project manager Bill Lawford oversaw all technical disciplines offered by the Gearhouse Group, including rigging, lighting, sound, LED screens, power, stage and set to ensure the highest standards of production for this once-in-a-lifetime music event.

Gearhouse Audio supplied all audio equipment along with Britannia Row, a U.K.-based company with whom Gearhouse has a long-standing relationship. These elements included racks-and-stacks for the Main stage and B stage, with Britannia Row supplying front-of-house and monitor consoles, all the RF equipment – mics and IEMs – plus a crew of six led by Derrick Zieba who worked with Gearhouse Audio's team led by Dave Tudor.



The L-Acoustics V-DOSC/Kudo sound system was designed by Gearhouse's Dave Tudor and system tech'd by Jako de Wit. Tudor and Britro crew chief Derrick Zieba started work on the show several months previously, renewing an already strong working relationship between the two companies.

The Main stage audio console was a DigiDesign Venue supplied by Britro, and the B stage was run off a DigiDesign Profile supplied by Gearhouse and looked after by Johan Griesel. Another Britro Profile was used by engineer Vance Powell to mix the 9-piece house band. Also at FOH was a Yamaha PM5D from Gearhouse, dealing with all the MCs, playback artists and VT play-in tracks, and a Midas for Shakira's FOH engineer Mike Keating.

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The Main stage monitors were 26 L'Acoustic HiQs with 8 D&B M2s and 4 D&B M4s for the house band, who needed their own dedicated wedges due to the extremely tight change over times. Side fills were 4 L-Acoustics Kudos per side offering an over abundance of sub bass courtesy of 6 SB 118s per side as requested by the Black Eyed Peas. The Main stage monitor console was a Yamaha PM1D. The B stage monitors were 20 Clair Bros 12ams mixed through another Yamaha PM5D console.

All FOH consoles were run through a Yamaha DME 24 matrix router which fed 2 Dolby Lakes to take care of all PA zoning. Main stage acts included Shakira, Black Eyed Peas, Alicia Keys and Juanez.

Gearhouse's StageCo system provided the 25 metre wide stage and roof. This was built in record time of 2.5 days by the Gearhouse Structures crew when the initial access time to the stadium was reduced due to the finals of the Super 14 Rugby competition. The stage featured a standard Layher decking system and large PA wing areas which were scrimmed as part of the production/set design by Ray Winkler from Stufish, plus two side IMAG LED screens offstage from the scrim area, each comprising 64 panels of Lighthouse R16 LED, supplied by LEDVision.



SDS, Gearhouse's set company, fabricated the 154 contemporary African shields, and devised the steel wire framework that was used to position and attach them to the sides of the extended mezzanine structure. SDS also manufactured the scrims and had them printed. A custom printed Marley floor of 1000sq m was used to cover the performance area. Gearhouse In2Structures built the 2.5 metre high mezzanine level that ran around the stage and also supplied the rolling risers for the changeovers.

Gearhouse delivered all necessary lighting equipment for the concert including, over 200 moving lights, over 300 conventional lights, 15 Atomic strobes, 30 Molefays and over 100 i-Pix LED fixtures – a mix of BB4s and Satellites. The lighting rig extending all over the stadium as well as the stage posed some unique challenges, resulting in amongst other things dimmers being set up

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in a 3rd floor toilet cubicle.

Gearhouse's new StageCo delay/followspot towers were in action and also making their debut in South Africa. Each tower can extend up to 20 metres on a very small footprint, and take 4 follow spots vertically stacked below each other to the front of the mast, with a PA delay array to the rear.



In addition to the 6 Gladiator follow spots on these towers, there were 4 x 1200W HMI truss troupers rigged on one of the over-stage trusses.

The lighting was designed by Patrick Woodroffe. Tim Routledge programmed the stage lighting

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using a grandMA full size console, while Gearhouse's Hugh Turner looked after the audience lighting using another grandMA full size. In total, they were controlling 17 universes of DMX.

Jim Baggott comments, "It was a special, high tech show and a great celebration for the World Cup being in South Africa. Dealing with Gearhouse for the complete technical production package made things very easy - they are all very experienced and excellent people, and we speak the same language."