L-ISA delivers exceptional sound experience to Festspiele Zürich

Hyposound AG delivered an exceptional experienceby using L?ISA's Hyperreal Sound for the 150thanniversary concert of the city's famous Tonhalle Orchestra at this year's Festspiele Zürich.

A highlight of this year's FestspieleZürich was the 150th anniversary concert of the city's famous Tonhalle Orchestra, performed as a thank you to its faithful concertgoers. Swiss event technology company Hyposound AG chose L ISA's Hyperreal Sound technology to deliver an exceptional experience for this very special occasion which featured guest pianist Yuja Wang. L-ISA is a multidimensional, object-based mixing and sound reinforcement technology and toolchain that achieves extremely clear and natural results with accurate localization of sound sources.

Hyposound owner Christoph Müller has worked with the Tonhalle Orchestra on a regular basis and has been dealing with natural sound reproduction for several years. "Using L ISA gave us the chance to take things to a different level," he says. The concert took place on a specially built stage in the Münsterhof (town square). "We knew it would be well suited to L ISA, but the results were incredible."

The L-ISA system comprised a combination of L?Acoustics Kara distributed across the stage

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width, ARCS Focus as frontfill, and a central
sub system of SB18 in an end-fire
configuration.

Müller designed the system using the French manufacturer's Soundvision 3D simulation software. Soundvision enabled him to determine the various heights needed for the loudspeaker hangs and give the stage builder exact information for both heights and loads.

"Because L ISA is a relatively new system and we were using it for the first time, we worked closely with L Acoustics on the design, particularly with Touring Applications Engineer Thomas Mehlhorn," explains Müller. "It was really valuable to have people with us who have in-depth knowledge of L ISA and can work with the stored design parameters." Additionally, Frédéric Bailly, L-Acoustics Application Engineer, was on site to provide support for the L-ISA Controller.

At 16m, the stage was very wide. With guests of honour seated as close as three metres from the stage, it was important that the L-ISA configuration provide optimal coverage for the front, centrally positioned seats, but equally important for the rest of the space, which was open to the public.

The final L-ISA design comprised five hangs of nine L Acoustics Kara each, distributed across the stage width and flown heights of 8.5m with 5m between each hang. Four X8 were deployed along stage lip as frontfill and with an ARCS Focus each side as outfill. A central sub system was flown behind the Kara centre hang, comprising six SB18 in an end-fire configuration. The entire system was powered by 10 LA8 Amplified Controllers.

Guest pianist Yuja Wang plays with the
Tonhalle Orchestra.

"As the concert was open-air, it was important to give the invited audience a spatial impression," says Müller. "However, as the concert was also open to the public, we knew the whole square would be crowded and we wanted an even sound for the entire audience, not just for those standing

or sitting in the middle. L ISA's multichannel technology gave us the tools to be able to provide the perfect solution, delivering a crystal-clear sound with a great foundation in the low frequencies."

The L-ISA system comprised a combination of L Acoustics Kara distributed across the stage width, ARCS Focus as frontfill, and a central sub system of SB18 in an end-fire configuration.

Lighting designer Markus Güdel, worked in collaboration with Hyposound to ensure that both the L-ISA system and lighting design achieved the desired production outcome."Thanks to the truss in the venue, there were sufficient hanging points for flexible positioning of the light sources," explains Güdel. "And what we heard from L-ISA was unbelievable! On this basis, lighting designers will be happy to plan stage lighting concepts that are compatible with the L-ISA technology."

Rehearsal time for the show took place in brilliant sunshine, but heavy rain arrived for the performance. By using the Air Compensation EQ tool in LA Network Manager, however, Müller easily adapted the system for the change in conditions, allowing sound engineer Ueli Würth to fully focus on the balance and dynamics of mix.

L-Acoustics' Frédéric Bailly at the L-ISA Controller.

"The sound of the orchestra was fantastic despite the rain," recalls Regula Weber, Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich, Project Leader for the concert. "You could hear the individual instruments and where they were positioned on stage from everywhere, which was what impressed me most. The entire production had a lot of energy and we had a lot of positive and enthusiastic feedback from the audience."

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"I was fascinated by how spatial the sound feels, even though we played outdoors," adds Andreas Berger, Solo Percussion for the orchestra. "It's fantastic how detailed it is; you can distinguish the individual instruments from the deepest bass to the piccolo flute in the overall sound. The sound always appears complete, big, lifelike, and consistent."

During his 20-plus years of working on classical concerts and musicals, Müller says he has been searching for the sound they achieved at the Tonhalle Orchestra's anniversary concert. So much so that he can hardly imagine going back to a traditional L/R system.