Les Escales Sets Sail for Greener, More Immersive Festival Sound with L-Acoustics

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B Live and Altis bring L2, L-ISA and L-Acoustics DJ to three stages on the Saint-Nazaire waterfront

For three days every July, Les Escales music festival takes over the working port of Saint-Nazaire in western France. Since 1992 it has filled Île du Petit Maroc, a sliver of land between the Loire estuary and the Atlantic, with a crowd which ranges from toddlers on shoulders to longtime regulars. Les Escales means “ports of call” and its programme runs from pop and rock to rap and electro, drawing artists from around the globe. This year’s 34th edition brought Archive, Gaël Faye and Benjamin Biolay to the quayside, and opened with a private evening for 6,000 of the city’s shipbuilders.

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L-Acoustics DJ brings more immersive festival sound to the Saint-Nazaire waterfront at Les Escales.
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Les Escales is run by a non-profit association with a long record of auditing and shrinking its carbon footprint, and it has an appetite for new ideas. In 2026 it turned its site into two things at once, a proving ground for the next generation of festival sound and a field laboratory for measuring how much power that sound really needs.

L2, L-ISA and L-Acoustics DJ Each Answer a Different Need

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Certified Provider B Live, based in Carquefou near Nantes, has supplied Les Escales with L-Acoustics systems since the festival’s earliest editions as the company Altis for the 360°

stage. For 2026, B Live technical director Samuel Birais worked with Julien Potin, technical director of Les Escales, and with the L-Acoustics team to rethink what each stage could offer.



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“Engineers love to talk about equipment, but in the end the only thing that matters is the

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audience," says Birais. "We asked ourselves what would give the public a better experience, and the answer was a different technology for each stage: L2 on the main stage, L-ISA on the Estuaire stage and L-Acoustics DJ in Club 360."

The plan had to work within firm limits. The festival had trimmed its capacity and its budget, and visiting productions still expected their riders to be met. Several stages share a small island, so bleed between them is a constant concern. Les Escales also wanted to draw its power from the local grid, which put every amplifier channel under scrutiny.

L2 Covers Scène du Port on Fewer Amplifier Channels

Scène du Port, run by system engineer Laurent Pinet, flew two L2 over one L2D per side, with one L2 over one L2D per side as out-fill. Low end came from 18 KS28 in cardioid configuration, split between left, right and centre, while four Kara II per side covered the front rows. LA7.16 and LA12X amplified controllers drove the system, and the team compared flown and ground-stacked subwoofer options in Soundvision before settling on the final design.



B Live and Altis bring L-Acoustics to three stages on the Saint-Nazaire waterfront.

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“L2 gives us the main stage coverage we need with fewer amplifiers, which made it the right choice for a festival that wants to run on mains power,” says Birais. “And if you add up the rated power of every amplifier, you plan for far more power than you need.”

Visu Énergie Logs What the L2 System Really Draws

To replace that assumption with evidence, the L-Acoustics team worked with energy monitoring specialist Visu Énergie to log electrical consumption across the main stage for the length of the festival. The work feeds M.A.T.R.I.C.E., a three-year French research programme into the environmental footprint of touring, led by live music union Ekhoscènes with Live Nation and L-Acoustics among its partners and backed by the national France 2030 investment plan. Les Escales gave that research a full festival site running real shows, something a laboratory could never reproduce.

“We all had expectations based on lab results, and a real festival was the chance to test them,” says Axelle Meunier of the L-Acoustics CSR team. “The system consumed much less energy than we expected, and its consumption was very linear. This evidence helps a festival decide whether it needs generators at all.”

L-ISA Gives Every Instrument Its Own Place on Scène Estuaire

On Scène Estuaire, B Live system engineer Pierre Tranchant worked on a frontal L-ISA configuration of five arrays, each of two A15 Focus and one A15 Wide, with eight KS21 subwoofers, two X12 as out-fill and seven X8 as spatial in-fill, powered by LA12X and LA4X.

A festival gives a visiting engineer very little time to acclimate, and an L-ISA stage asks an engineer to think about the mix in a way a stereo rig does not. B Live and La FabSonic briefed the visiting engineers ahead of the festival so that they arrived knowing what the stage could do.

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Greener, more immersive L-Acoustics festival sound at Les Escales in Saint-Nazaire.
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“Pushing a new technology at a festival is a challenge,” says Birais. “In a venue in winter you have four hours of rehearsal. At a festival the band arrives at the last minute and goes straight on stage, so the work has to happen before they get there.”

The preparation paid off. The engineer for French rapper Georgio rebuilt his touring mix object by object during soundcheck and used the L-ISA technology to full effect.

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L-Acoustics DJ Puts the Crowd Inside the Music in Club 360

Club 360 is the open-air dance floor at Les Escales, ringed by shipping containers with the DJ at its centre. The team has spent two years experimenting with immersive formats there, and L-Acoustics DJ was the natural next step. Saint-Nazaire company Altis, under technical director Wojtek Rola, equipped the stage. Two L2D with KS28 form the main system, and six stacks of one A15 Focus and one A15 Wide, mounted on purpose-built structures on top of the containers, complete the circle, with eight X8 around the central stage and LA7.16 and LA12X providing the power.



B Live and Altis bring L2, L-ISA and L-Acoustics DJ to the Saint-Nazaire

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waterfront for Les Escales.
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DJs played stereo sets from the decks they know while L-Acoustics DJ separated each track into vocals, synth, bass and drums in real time and placed them around the dance floor, surrounding the audience with music from every side. Rola walked every artist through the system before their set, and DJs including Tina Ardor and La Louuve made it their own.

“Once they understand what L-Acoustics DJ does and hear it for themselves, every artist is immediately on board,” says Birais.

P1 processors and LS10 switches carried Milan-AVB across all three stages, with L-ISA processors handling spatial audio on Estuaire and Club 360.

Soundvision Keeps Three Stages From Bleeding Into Each Other

B Live built all three stages into a single Soundvision file, which let the team judge how each system would behave next to its neighbours as well as in front of its own crowd.

“It is a small site with a lot of stages, so we used Soundvision to concentrate the sound exactly where we needed it and make sure the stages can live together,” Birais explains.

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Les Escales delivers greener, more immersive festival sound across three stages with L-Acoustics Photo © Brice.Photo 2026

During the festival the L-Acoustics team went further, capturing the entire site in a lidar scan to give Soundvision a precise 3D model of quays, containers and buildings, then using that model to study how sound travels beyond the perimeter. The findings will help the festival best position its stages in 2027.

L2, L-ISA and L-Acoustics DJ Set the Template for 2027

Les Escales gave its audience a main stage with headline impact, a second stage where every

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instrument had its own place and a club where the music wrapped around the dance floor. It also leaves this edition with something less visible, a measured record of the energy that each of those systems drew from the grid.



Three stages on the Saint-Nazaire waterfront run on L-Acoustics at Les Escales.
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“The best feedback is simple: everybody was dancing for the whole festival,” says Birais. “The audience was happy and the artists were happy. This was a real partnership between Les Escales, L-Acoustics and B Live, and because we measured what we used, we now know what that

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experience costs in power. We need more stages like these as we strive to create better experiences for everyone.”

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