

Meeting up with Josh Groban's audio engineers



Chris "Cookie" Hoff and Mickey Beck

Audio Engineers Mickey Beck has been with Josh Groban for 12 years and Chris "cookie" Hoff has been with Josh for 3 years. They recently came to South Africa on the "Stages" tour where they worked on two DiGiCo SD10 consoles with waves and two 2SD Racks. It was a privilege to find out their thoughts on DigiCo. The Stages Tour was held recently in Johannesburg (Ticketpro Dome), Durban (ICC Durban Arena) and in Cape Town (Grand Arena, GrandWest) with the full technical supplied by Gearhouse South Africa.

Over to Mickey and Chris:

The main reason we have chosen DiGiCo consoles for the Josh Groban "Stages" tour was it's scalability with a cohesive UI throughout the model range. There is no typical Josh Groban configuration. A show may be just Josh with piano or a trio which adds a guitar. There have been shows where Josh has sung with an orchestra or orchestra and full electric band. We needed a console line that would allow us to move our work up or down in input list size without having to start from scratch every time.

The DiGiCo platform helps us achieve our goal with it's straight-forward UI, ease of use, sonic quality, and scalability of input racks. We love the stage rack sharing ability as it helps us meet our daily production/rehearsal schedule by allowing us to line check onstage while FOH is tuning and we know that if we have the input on stage, FOH will certainly have it as well.

Our first real dive into DiGiCo was August 2015 starting with Josh's PBS special recording.

We both use Waves MultiRack with our DiGiCo consoles as well as a pair of Bricasti M7 reverb units at both console locations. MultiRack is on the console using the DiGiCo/Waves IO with Waves Extreme Servers and we send to and receive from our Bricasti units via the local AES IO on the surface.

Working with Josh has many highlights. Josh is a tremendous vocalist. His power and technique is in a class far beyond a typical pop vocalist. He cares about his craft and works very hard to constantly refine his abilities. This translates to a quality vocal for us to work with. We have great gear and great musicians. We hide nothing.

South Africa is not a typical destination for most American artists. We feel very privileged to be able to travel to distant lands and put on our shows. We had great audiences, great local musicians, great weather and great gear to work with thanks to DWR Distribution and Gearhouse.

Jakobus de Wit from Gearhouse South Africa was involved in the project. “The crew from Josh Groban are of the best around the world. That should say something about the equipment they choose to use. This was a show of high standard and we all feel proud that we played a part in it.”

Kyle Robson from DWR also toured with the team. “I made sure their DiGiCo system was set up at each venue and I was there for support.” That said, the system was solid and ran without a hitch.