Skrillex in SA

08 March 2013

American electronic musician, Skrillex, entertained South African fans in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban at the start of March 2013. The main technical supplier in Cape Town was Gearhouse, while in Johannesburg it was supplied by CES and in Durban by Insane Sound.

At the Wavehouse in Durban, Lighting and Video Freelancer Thomas Peters assisted with the lighting. Thomas has given us great feedback on the event.

Words and photos by Thomas Peters

The Skrillex rig in Durban consisted of (in chromatic order):

8	x	8-light Molefaye
4	x	4-light Molefaye
20	x	Robe Robin 600 LED Wash
10	x	Robe Robin MMX Spot with air kits
18	x	Clay Paky Sharpys
16	x	Martin Atomic Strobe
2	x	Le Maitre MVS
2	x	Martin ZR-44

Reading through the Skrillex rider and adjusting accordingly for Durban, Vimal Rawjee (Insane Sound) and I came up with what we thought would be a viable rig for the show, which the production's management (Skrillex's Production Manager is Baptiste Chavaillaz) quickly approved. While we did not have most of the first-choice fixtures available in the quantities requested, the substitutes we offered were all perfectly acceptable. The MMXs blew the touring LD away: they REALLY hold their own.

With the help of the great Fog-Horn Herman Wessels we flew a front truss in two sections to account for the curve of the roof beams and built an MPT ground support on stage to give us the 3 overhead trusses as requested in the rider. Herman also burnt his ass on his first bunny chow ever- welcome to Durban buddy!

Having done my research

beforehand I was expecting some serious blinding from the Atomics and Moles, so I decided we needed to separate the fixture types to maintain the maximum headroom at all times on each outlet. The Molefayes were patched carefully to two Avolites Powercubes and the Atomics on single lines to a dedicated Socapex Hot Power distro. The rest of the rig, being all reasonably and comparably low-powered Sharpies, LEDs and MMXs, was patched to another dedicated Socapex Hot Power Distro. Data-wise I kept the Atomics to their own universe as well, effectively minimizing any opportunity for any "Umtagati problems" in the rig during the show.

The entire control package came from MGG Productions. We ran a grandMA Series 1 Full Size with a Series 1 grandMA ultra-light for backup to an NSP2 on stage, all on v6.701 software and via CAT-7 Cables with three gigabit ethernet switches. The Fullsize was the same one used in JHB the night before so Mark Gaylard from MGG express air-freighted it down for us so we already had the LD's show file loaded when he walked in- a real confidence booster!

For the opening DJs I ran a Yamaha Motif XF7 to trigger executers set to Flash buttons on the grandMA ultra-light via MIDI which allowed me to approach the rig from a "musical" rather than "cued" angle. We were able to have two people operating at the same time, one literally "playing" the music on intensities while the other handled colour, gobos, focus and movement. We stuck to the C-Major scale because the white keys are a hell of a lot easier to hit when you're partying every bit as hard as the punters.

Andrew Nissley Skrillex's

LD, brought some intersting additional custom hardware of his own- a modded Marshall 4-button footswitch, a netbook running a custom-written Max/MSP patch and a Novation Launchpad control surface that all triggered the console to give him the absolute maximum amount of flexibility possible. It's safe to say that Andy actually does know what every button on the desk does!

The show was an absolute success. Herman kept an eye on the racks throughout the performance, and while the needles jumped we had planned for the worst and came out on top. The bass dropped and the strobes went wild but the breakers stayed up!

Herman Wessels with his first ever "bunny chow"