



Final Copy:

‘The Fearless Vampire Killers’ take on Roland M-48 Personal Mixers in Paris

10th June 2015

For immediate release

A total of thirteen Roland M-48 Personal Mixers have been specified by renowned sound designer Thomas Strebel for use in the acclaimed production of ‘The Fearless Vampire Killers’ at the Mogador Theatre in Paris. This new production of the musical comedy by Oscar Winning director Roman Polanski is an adaptation of his 1967 movie of the same name. The musical has been produced in a number of European cities since it debuted in 1997, but this version marks the first time it has been staged in Paris, where the 81-year-old Polanski resides.

Supplied to the theatre by sound, lighting and video specialists DuShow, the Roland M-48 Personal Mixers are used by the orchestra in the pit and enable each musician to control exactly what they want to listen to during their performances. All musicians, plus the musical director, have their own M-48 with each individual monitor mix set by the musician to their exact preferences with volume, pan, 3-band EQ and built-in reverb per group all instantly adjustable by convenient encoder knobs.

In charge of the daily production of ‘The Fearless Vampire Killers’, this was the first time that the theatre audio manager Bertrand Billon had used the Roland M-48’s. Commenting on Strebel’s choice, Billon said ‘I had heard about, but never used or saw them (*the M-48’s*) before but I have to say this product was very exciting. The local ambient mic, the inboard reverb, and the possibility to really customize the mixes per musician made them ideal for the show’.

A Stagetec AURUS console at FOH feeds a mix of direct outputs, AUX’s and groups to a Roland S-MADI REAC Bridge. The signal is then sent to two Roland S-4000D Splitter/Power Distributors and then to the M-48’s in the pit. The S-MADI REAC Bridge is a bi-directional signal converter between REAC (Roland Ethernet Audio Communication) and MADI. This bridge enables up to 40x40 channels of digital audio transmission between digital audio mixers/systems that are equipped with the universally accepted MADI protocol to any REAC-based devices such as the M-48. Both BNC and Optical I/O ports are included along with support for 56/64Ch mode.

REAC Embedded Power transfers both power and 40 channels of audio to the M-48 via a single CAT5e cable dramatically simplifying wiring and stage layouts. This low latency all-digital connection results in a low noise floor, improved musicality and crystal clear sound that is ideal for the complex setup of the orchestra. The REAC protocol allows the Digital Snake’s signal to be "split" to as many positions as required such as monitor, broadcast and recording splits using the S-4000-D or any standard gigabit Ethernet switch.

The benefit of using the Roland REAC/MADI setup in this application is the additional flexibility and control that it offers when compared with fixed outputs. With more digital paths to choose from, the sound designer is able to tailor the allocation of channels between the FOH and monitors to their individual requirement. Making it simple to record the performances, the REAC SPLIT OUT port provides the audio signal from REAC or MADI as a separate monitoring or recording audio signal from the main stream. The SPLIT OUT supports REAC Embedded Power which supplies both the audio stream as well as power to the M-48 Live Personal Mixer or S-0808 Digital Snake.

The M-48's can be setup and controlled on a PC/Mac when using with an existing console via the serial port on the S-1608/S-4000S series Digital Snakes or S-MADI. At the Mogador Theatre, the M-48's are controlled by a PC that is positioned in the orchestra pit.

The M-48 enables control of up to 40 audio channels via 16 stereo groups and 38 of these channels are used for this production. Channel assignment on the M-48 for up to 16 stereo groups is set using a simple matrix. Describing the setup, Billon commented 'We use almost all the channels – 38 in total - to give each musician the best opportunity to split their own instruments as the drummer wants separate drums mics, the percussionist also, separated guitars for guitarist, and so on. This means more work for us during rehearsals, but then it's a real pleasure "not to hear about musicians mixes issues". As our shows goes for one year, that's exactly the kind of enhancement we are very happy to achieve. Another big saving in terms of design is that in this particular type of musical setup, we usually have to take care of the output channels counts that we have to share between FOH, stage monitors and pit monitor at a very early stage. Since this system allows us to build a custom matrix out of 40 channels, and then again to mix 16 channels out of those matrixes, we are free to achieve the best distribution setup with a free mind.'

For live production in a theatrical environment, the audio quality of the headphone outputs needs to be superior as well as giving plenty of headphone power without distortion. The M-48 is designed to provide the highest level of sound monitoring quality for both headphones and IEMs (In-Ear Monitors) thus creating the ideal monitoring environment for live performance, recording and studio applications. With mini jack and 1/4 inch phone jack headphone outputs, balanced TRS line outputs and an independent stereo output mini jack, the M-48's support wedge or other types of powered monitors and enable high quality recording. On a practical level, the LED indicators on the control knobs of the M-48 enable instant adjustment and visual confirmation at a glance, even in a dark theatre.

REAC Embedded Power is a unique Roland technology that enables the transfer of not only the digital audio signal but also the power required by the connected device - all via one CAT5e cable. The Roland S-4000D Splitter and Power Distributor is equipped with 10 REAC ports including 8 ports of REAC Embedded Power and will automatically detect and distinguish a product not supporting REAC Embedded Power. The S-4000D is required to use the M-48s.

Proving to be the industry standard in personal mixing solutions for theatre, Roland M-48's are also being used in productions of 'The Commitments', 'Charlie & The Chocolate Factory', 'Miss Saigon' and 'Made in Dagenham' in London's West End.

For more information please contact: