

UNITED KINGDOM

Digidesign sponsors hush events at the Royal Albert Hall

A unique co-operation within the music industry recently put Pete and The Pirates, a misfit quintet producing raw, melancholic and raucous music, and the enigmatic Mathew Sawyer & The Ghosts on stage at the Royal Albert Hall. The sell-out gig, held on April 22, was part of the venue's 'hush' series of showcase events

The hush concept is the brainchild of the new programming department of the Royal Albert Hall. It is a series of intimate 200-capacity nights held in the venue's historic Elgar Room. hush features a host of upcoming artists and independent record labels, marking the international landmark's commitment to championing new and independent music in the UK. For the Royal Albert Hall this both



Reading five-piece Pete and the Pirates play at The Royal Albert Hall

broadens its cultural offering and introduces the venue to a new generation of music fans.

Lucy Noble, head of new programming at the Royal Albert Hall, commented: "hush is our first venture to work with breaking young artists – those that will hopefully go on to become some of the hottest industry names in the next year. In 2008 we hope to work much more with young British and international talent through both the hush series and various other initiatives which we will be announcing soon."

The event in April was the third in the series and was held in collaboration with Stolen Recordings, a young label that has gained much respect in the past couple of years for unearthing the cream of the underground. Stolen chose two of its key signings to perform at the Hall; Reading five-piece Pete and the Pirates, and Mathew Sawyer & The Ghosts, giving an unusual and well-received balance of free-spirited punk-pop and Leonard-Cohen-esque romanticism.

Paul Jones of Stolen Recordings said: "The Hall, including the building and its organisation, are from a very different world to our traditional pub and club scene, and this has added to make the gig a really different experience. For a young label and new talent it's a mixture of a lot of hard work and a few breaks – hush is a very welcome break and great promotion for these two very talented bands. The bands also got to perform with top engineers and equipment – I'm particularly looking forward to receiving the Pro Tools files of the event."

The third part of the hush collaboration is its sponsorship by leading digital audio manufacturer, Digidesign. This has enabled an affordable entrance fee and added a focus on the highest quality for the sound system. FOH and monitoring was mixed on a D-Show Profile, with Pro

Tools HDR recording of the gig. The console was provided by Digidesign distributor HD Pro Audio, with full support from HD's Digidesign expert, Andy Huffer, who was on hand throughout the event to offer training and support.

Huffer explained the set-up: "The D-Show Profile surface in combination with the Mix Rack was the perfect choice, due to the small location and need for an integrated FOH and monitoring system. The Mix Rack has the benefit of combining all stage, local audio I/O, and DSP processing into a single compact rack enclosure.

"This connects to Pro Tools HD, directly recording from the HDx card, which can then be taken to the studio as a Pro Tools session; giving access to the same plug-ins that are available in the studio. The audio can be mixed and released for further revenue or promotional activities."

The stage sound was provided by Woking-based Sound by Design, which has had a long relationship with the Royal Albert Hall. Senior engineer, Griff Hewis, was responsible for the sound for the event, which used Meyer UPJ-1Ps plus subs and Galileo system processing, with



Andy Huffer, Digidesign expert

EM Acoustics M12 on-stage monitoring. Engineer for the evening was John Gale, who was using the D-Show Profile for the first time. "I've used most other digital consoles, but this was my first time with the Digidesign. It's incredibly flexible and is really intuitive to use."

Charlotte Dawson of Digidesign, summed up: "It's been a very worthwhile collaboration for all parties, an opportunity for combining a showcase with an investment in the future of the music business." ■

www.digidesign.com

www.hdproaudio.co.uk

www.soundbydesign.net

www.stolenrecordings.co.uk

www.royalalberthall.com



(L-R.) Andy Huffer, John Gale and Griff Hewis