

Franck Sono Deploys Big MLA Compact Rig at Bercy Arena in Paris

Written by Frank Hammel
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PARIS — The largest MLA Compact rig to date recently made its French debut at the Paris Bercy when a capacity crowd of 17,000 attended a six-hour marathon concert, *La Nuit de l'Outremer (The Overseas Night)*.

Franck Sono, the first French production company to acquire the new MLA Compact Multi-cellular Loudspeaker Array System 36, deployed the system.

More details from Martin Audio (www.martin-audio.com):

This technical deployment could hardly have provided a more exacting challenge for a production company. Themed as a French Caribbean festival, the event featured a succession of highly popular artists in the local community, including Admiral T, Kreyol La, Akiyo, Daly, Esy Kennenga, Desiré François, Stony, Princess Lover, Jean-Marie Ragald, Tanya St Val, Jean-Marc Ferdinand, Daddy Yod, Tiwony and many others.

Since Franck Sono wanted to achieve coverage over the vast space without setting up delay points, they rigged 24 MLA Compact elements per side as the main array, with 24 DSX subs designed in a broadside progressive array across the front. An additional eight W8LC and eight W8LM enclosures were used for outfills while 12 of Martin Audio's LE1500S floor monitors provided artists with their reference sound on stage.

Said Martin Audio's Nigel Meddemmen, who provided on-site support, "Since the objective was to provide coverage without delays, we simply doubled the size of the rig. It was the first time in the world that we have flown 24-box MLA Compact hangs and it sounded superb—the coverage was excellent. Everyone was really impressed that so much sound was coming from these tiny enclosures."

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Meddemmen's views were supported by Bruno Dabard, technical director of Audia, the pro audio division of French Martin Audio distributor, Algam.

"Just by using the optimization process we were able to achieve very smooth coverage of the system across the 295 ft. throw distance, and up to the back rows, 59 ft. high, where the presence of the sound was just as obvious. This included the left and right top of the bleachers where the delay systems are generally set up.

"In fact this was probably the smallest cabinet format ever used for a concert in the Bercy arena."

Dabard added that the DSX broadside array also demonstrated both clarity and high impact. And with a succession of rap, hip hop and reggae artistes pounding relentlessly through the system in quick succession over the six hour period, Franck Sono director, Franck Lichtlé, was left in little doubt about the wisdom of his investment.

"We are grateful to the teams at Martin Audio and Algam for their support in helping us to meet the high level requirements within really challenging set-up constraints." He also credited the personnel at Miel production company, for their confidence in MLA Compact, promising further big projects to come using the system.