

Dido and MILO Make Themselves Clear on North American Tour

PHOTOGRAPHS



The reviews of pop-electronica star Dido's concert sound have been so outstanding that Jeff Berryman, director of Sound Art Touring, the sound services provider for the singer's North American tour, says, "I've been doing this for over 30 years, and I can't remember a tour with as much good news coming back about the purity and the clarity of the sound."

The sound quality is so impressive that the singer has even been moved to comment, reports Berryman. "Dido herself has absolutely noticed and made that clear."

The international superstar is in the United States for the first time in three years, playing in support of her sophomore release, *Life For Rent*, the much-anticipated follow-up to her multi-million selling *No Angel* debut album. *Life For Rent* has racked up over eight times platinum sales worldwide and reached the top chart position in 22 countries. Over two million U.S. sales have kept it in the Billboard Top 200 album charts for over 30 consecutive weeks.

Sound Art Touring, in conjunction with AVM of Toronto, is supplying 20 MILO high-power curvilinear array loudspeakers and 12 Meyer Sound M3D-Sub directional subwoofers for the tour. But Mark LeCorre, longtime FOH engineer and production manager for the U.K.-based singer reveals that the tour nearly went out with a competing line array system.

"Then we checked out MILO," he recalls. "It sounded great. We had an M3D rig out when we did a shed tour in America in 2001 and we all really liked it, but we knew we couldn't bring it into theaters."

Fortunately, Meyer Sound introduced the compact and lightweight 4-way MILO system in 2003. LeCorre continues, "The MILO is the perfect box. The coverage is great, and the top end clarity is amazing. I wanted that Meyer Sound top end for this act." According to LeCorre, the extraordinarily clean concert sound has been created by combining the MILO system with premium microphones, premium on-stage preamplifiers, a digital console, and an all-important precision word clock.

MILO's operating range extends to 18 kHz thanks to the use of three dedicated very-high frequency transducers, offering extended high frequency headroom and allowing the system to reproduce even delicate transients. Although smaller in overall volume than the M3D-Sub, MILO systems are physically and sonically compatible with the cardioid subwoofers. That allows the seamless configuration of arrays with the low-frequency depth, headroom, and pattern control to deliver every nuance of the modern dance grooves of Dido's five-piece, rhythm-heavy band.

With Dido and her band playing a range of differently-sized venues on this tour, the production is carrying additional subsystems to provide coverage for any situation. Eight UPM-1P ultra-compact wide coverage loudspeakers provide front fill, and four UPA-1P wide coverage, four UPA-2P narrow coverage, and six MSL-4 horn-loaded long-throw systems are available to supplement the sound system as needed. LeCorre says these are arranged differently depending on the venue and the coverage that they need up front.

System tech Jamie Howieson reveals that, "I have two M3D-Subs in the air and four on the ground (per side). That works great in theaters, to get a little more punch up into the top balcony. It really helps with the bass guitar and percussion notes. And, that way, we're not annihilating people on the ground."

Howieson finds that MILO makes his job easier on a day-to-day basis. "It's very predictable," he explains. "It's a good sounding speaker and it also works really well when you start to array it. When I put a bunch of them together, the rig acts like it's supposed to. I find MILO easier to work with than any other line array I use right now. The rig sounds good, and it's easy to equalize, even in the hardest rooms."

Precision arrayability is often overlooked, he believes. "Once you get boxes working together, the rest of the math is predictable. That's what a lot of manufacturers are missing today, is getting



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FEATURED PRODUCTS

- [MILO](#)
- [M3D-Sub](#)
- [UPA-1P](#)
- [UPA-2P](#)
- [UPM--1P](#)
- [MSL-4](#)
- [MAPP Online](#)

that first step correct." With the basics in place, he says, it's then simply a matter of applying the physics of equalization to make the system react correctly within the room.

Howieson's motto is: Be prepared. "I do as many predictions as possible and I do research on the venues that we're going to. I use (Meyer Sound) MAPP Online (acoustical prediction software) whenever I have a chance. I use the architectural layouts to get a good idea where the PA is going. It's a little difficult to get drawings for some of the bullrings in Spain, of course! But when you use MAPP Online, it's dead-on."

The Dido experience has firmly established the value of placing high quality elements at all stages of the signal path. Berryman quotes John Meyer: "Everything matters." And, at the end of the chain, MILO is the ideal delivery tool.

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