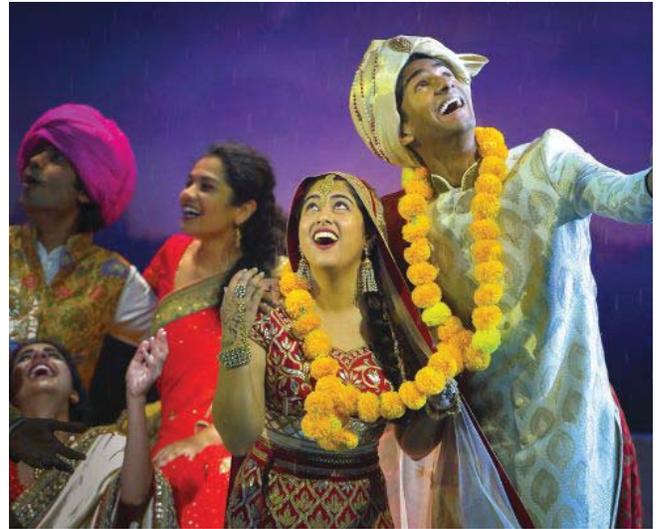


UPSIDE IN A STEADY DOWNPOUR

Overcoming the elements for a stage production of “Monsoon Wedding.” *by Live Sound Staff*



CREDIT: KEVIN BERNE/BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE

Based on the 2001 film directed by Mira Nair and written by Sabrina Dhawan, the live production of “Monsoon Wedding,” which enjoyed a run earlier this year at the Berkeley (California) Repertory Theatre, tells the story of a traditional Punjabi Hindu wedding in Delhi, India.

Audio for the complex musical stage production was the responsibility of sound designer Scott Lehrer, associate sound designer Will Pickens, and James Ballen, audio supervisor at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, supported by an extensive gear package from Masque Sound (East Rutherford, NY). Angela Don delivered the house mix, while Annemarie Scerra served as the stage A2.

In fact, the term “complex” doesn’t quite cover a primary challenge the audio team faced in terms of a finale each night that required the cast and gear to experience

a simulated monsoon with a torrent of real water, highlighted by a passage in the show’s official press

release: “The forecast

calls for drama, love, hope, laughs, and a whole lot of rain.”

One of the keys was ensuring that the actors were outfitted with microphones capable of withstanding the torrential downpour, night after night, with the sound team electing to

Performers outfitted with Point Source Audio lavalier mics (concealed) in the production of “Monsoon Wedding.”

utilize Point Source Audio CO-8WL miniature lavaliers. They offer an omnidirectional pattern and a capsule measuring just 4 millimeters in diameter so that they can easily be concealed within costumes or hidden within hairlines. And, perhaps most importantly for this application, the mics also carry an IP 57 waterproof rating.

“Knowing that the cast would be actually rained on in the finale of each show, we knew that mic choice would be a key consideration,” Ballen explains, “and the CO-8WL microphones were the perfect choice. They’re extremely small and low profile, sound wonderful, and are fully waterproof.” Also factoring into the decision was the fact that Lehrer had utilized the same mics previously on larger projects with great success, backed by strong support from Point Source Audio.

The production required 30 CO-8WLs, all working with Sennheiser SK 5212-II wireless transmitters (and EM 3732-II receivers). Scerra was tasked with managing the mics on a daily basis, maintaining them and ensuring that they recovered from their nightly drenching during eight shows per week for more than 10 weeks.

“We never had one issue with the mics,” Ballen concludes. “They recovered every time, which is quite remarkable.” **LSI**

A closer look at the miniscule CO-8WL from Point Source Audio.

