



# A HOLY ECLECTIC MIX

NOT MANY CHOIRS ARE DOUBLE GRAMMY AWARD-WINNERS, HAVE SUNG ALONGSIDE U2, AND PERFORMED AT A FIFA WORLD CUP EVENT... BUT THE SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR IS NO ORDINARY CHOIR. THIS MULTI-TALENTED 24-PIECE HAS BEEN ENTERTAINING AUDIENCES ACROSS THE GLOBE SINCE 2007 WITH ITS DULCET TONES, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF CO-FOUNDER, BEVERLY BRYER...

**Carefully selected from churches in their namesake town, the Soweto Gospel Choir is out on the road between six and nine months each year. For the current US leg, and upcoming Australian stint, FOH engineer, Helge Schlosser, steps into the fray... With some cool new kit.**

“On this show, it’s paramount to get the balance of the choir right. It has to sound big, so I use condensers in stereo pairs to create a bit of space and depth to the sound, but the problem we have always faced is feedback, because the stage is so loud,” explains Schlosser, whose role prior to the tour was house engineer at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre. “To remedy this, I opted to bring in a myMix [personal monitoring] system, which has saved me a lot of hassle, and has allowed me to get rid of some of the wedges and all of the backline.”

Schlosser’s monitor mix count is now down to 10, thanks to his deployment of four myMix units.

“Four of the choir members are also band members, and for the non-a cappella numbers, they head behind the rest of the choir, pick up their respective instruments, and play, now using a myMix each to monitor themselves,” he continues. “Beforehand, each band member had their own backline and wedge, and there were also wedges across the front for the choir and any soloists, but because I can DI analogue into the myMix,

it’s changed everything; and furthermore, the ambient noise on stage has been reduced to an absolute minimum, so the feedback has gone. It’s pretty much as good as it gets now, and the clarity of the choir has dramatically improved, which is great, as it’s what the show is all about.”

To summarise, Schlosser runs analogue out of his desk into the inputs of his myMix IEX-16L-A Input Expander, then he runs one Cat-5 cable to a network switch (housed on top of the keyboard player’s sampler). From there, audio travels over Ethernet into his five myMix units.

“I have four units for the band and one spare, in case one should go down - but that’s never happened,” he says. “It’s proven to be a very reliable and flexible solution - a bit of a game-changer, in fact. The real beauty of myMix is that I just give them a static level, and they can then adjust their own mixes, creating profiles for various songs along the way. I now have no issues whatsoever with band monitoring, and workflow has vastly improved.”

It took some time for the choir to get used to a quieter band playing behind them, but Schlosser overcame that by rearranging the remaining wedges, and tweaking the choir’s monitoring of the band.

“Because there’s 24 of them, and 20 sing-



ing to the band, there is no way I can put 25 myMixes on the choir, but we did manage to get the overall vocal mix spot-on,” he smiles. “There’s a lot of low end in there, and because African culture is a loud culture, it’s still pretty loud on stage; the difference is, I can control that now, as opposed to a musician just grabbing his guitar amp and turning up, which is always a nightmare!”

“Productions are always wanting to cut costs where possible, so the fact we can tour such a high-end product in such a small package has proved very, very useful. It’s made myMix the perfect touring system for us.”

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