

## **Sennheiser Supports Cirque du Soleil's "One Night for ONE DROP"**

*Sennheiser helps realize technically ambitious vision as Cirque du Soleil combines seven shows for a single evening and a great cause*

**Las Vegas, April 29, 2013 – Last month, Cirque du Soleil presented "One Night for ONE DROP" at the "O" Theater, located in the Bellagio on the Las Vegas Strip. The one-night-only production, which combined talent and production expertise from seven other resident productions, was held on World Water Day on 22 March to help raise awareness on the increasing global water crisis. Audio specialist Sennheiser, which has a longstanding relationship with Cirque du Soleil that extends over two decades, loaned several channels of wireless equipment through its Global Relations team to help ONE DROP realize its creatively and technically ambitious production.**



Established by Cirque du Soleil founder Guy Laliberté, ONE DROP is a non-profit organization whose mission is to 'ensure that water is accessible to all, today and



forever.' According to some estimates, nearly one billion people in the world live without clean drinking water, while another 2.5 billion people lack access to modern sanitation facilities. In the show "One Night for ONE DROP", Cirque du Soleil illustrated the fragility of the Earth's water

ecosystem and the impact of water needs around the world in beautiful stage sets, breath-taking artistics and music to remember.

### **Building on Enduring Success**

One Night for ONE DROP was planned to run concurrently to "O", Cirque's resident show at the Bellagio since its 1998 opening. Therefore the Cirque team needed to augment the existing Sennheiser wireless system to accommodate the additional

onstage talent. Gavin Whiteley, Technical Manager of Audio for Cirque du Soleil's Resident Shows Division, reached out to Sennheiser to ensure the upgraded system would perform flawlessly and would meet the stringent technical demands of the show. "Sennheiser's product line is not only proven industry-wide, but also within our own shows," Whiteley says. "It is a known quantity and we knew we could count on it. Krista Monson's [director] vision was to have more live musicians onstage than "O" normally does, so that's when we were looking to get those additional resources in the theater so we could achieve her vision," he recalls.



Kristy Jo Winkler, Sennheiser's global relations manager for the Americas, comments: "Our relationship with Cirque du Soleil spans many years and Sennheiser has always maintained a deep and meaningful connection with the performing arts. We were inspired to play an integral role in ONE DROP – firstly because it represented another chance to push our technical boundaries and secondly because it was for such a worthwhile cause."

"As soon as we got the call from Gavin, Sennheiser's Global Relations team quickly provided ten additional wireless channels – all racked and preconfigured so it would be 'plug and play' for this unique one-night spectacle," explains Dave Missall, national market development, professional systems, Sennheiser USA.

### **Reinventing the Fundraiser, with a Little Help from Their Friends**

"Our founder, Guy Laliberté, wanted to reinvent the fundraiser the same way he reinvented the circus 29 years ago," says Gavin. "One Night for ONE DROP was to be performed only once, therefore we needed all our systems to be incredibly reliable and trustworthy."

The 90-minute performance featured more than 230 artists and performers from neighboring Cirque du Soleil productions, an original composition for string quartet by award-winning film composer Danny Elfman, a dance piece choreographed by

Sonya Tayeh of “So You Think You Can Dance”, a special guest performance by certified platinum recording artist Jackie Evancho and many other creative acts.

Gavin wanted to build on the capabilities of the wireless system that was already in place while using the existing frequency coordination and antenna distribution system – which had already been laid, filtered and optimized for the operation of the “O” show. “We wanted to work within our current frequency range so we didn’t have to open the doors to any new potential RF interference,” he says.

To accommodate ONE DROP, Gavin says he had to roughly double his wireless equipment to support additional instruments, singers and speaking parts – including Elfman’s string quartet composition, which was being performed in public for the first time. “It was a balance of working within the limits of the existing system, but still fulfilling the requirements each show needed to do it right.”



According to Sennheiser’s Dave Missall, reliable wireless performance is a critical dimension of any Cirque du Soleil production, especially for One Night for ONE DROP: “Everything has to be completely in sync, and of course you can’t have a wireless monitor or wireless instrument system fail,” he explains. “The entire show is timed perfectly from the very beginning, so precision and accuracy of cueing is everything.”

### **Flawless Performance from Beginning to End**

In addition to the “O” Theater’s existing eight channels of Sennheiser EM 3732-II receivers, Sennheiser provided ten more channels of EM 3732-II receivers, eight SK 2000 bodypack transmitters, four SKM 5200-II handheld transmitters and two SK 5212-II beltback transmitters to handle the additional wireless requirements of One Night for ONE DROP. “We ended up using all of it – on instruments, clowns, spoken word performers, you name it,” says Gavin.

One of the highlights of the show, Gavin says, was Danny Elfman's string quartet, performed by musicians moving fluidly across the stage. "We used the extremely small SK 5212-II bodypack transmitters and mounted them either to the instruments themselves or directly on the performers," says Gavin. "They were ideal for picking up the sound of each instrument." Jackie Evancho sang through an SKM 5200-II wireless transmitter coupled with a Neumann KK 104-S capsule. "We asked her staff what kind of microphone she's comfortable singing with, and they replied Sennheiser," he says.



According to Gavin, the system performed flawlessly as expected from beginning to end: "Cirque is known for its visuals, its music and its top level production quality for every show it has in place. One Night for ONE DROP was no exception," he says. "From a sound perspective, we wanted to get more of the audio quality we were already experiencing in "O", one of Cirque's longest running shows. We certainly achieved this and everyone was more than happy with how good it sounded."

The Sennheiser Group, with its headquarters in Wedemark near Hanover, Germany, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. The family-owned company, which was established in 1945, recorded sales of around €531 million euros in 2011. Sennheiser employs more than 2,100 people worldwide, and has manufacturing plants in Germany, Ireland and the USA. The company is represented worldwide by subsidiaries in France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Germany, Denmark (Nordic), Russia, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Japan, China, Canada, Mexico and the USA, as well as by long-term trading partners in many other countries. Also part of the Sennheiser Group are Georg Neumann GmbH, Berlin (studio microphones and monitor loudspeakers), and the joint venture Sennheiser Communications A/S (headsets for PCs, offices and call centres).

You can find all the latest information on Sennheiser by visiting our website at [www.sennheiser.com](http://www.sennheiser.com).

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**Photo captions:**

*Cirque1.jpg*: "Carnival", a scene from Cirque du Soleil's One Night for ONE DROP.  
(Credit: Christina Russo)

*Cirque2.jpg*: "Seed of Consciousness", a scene from Cirque du Soleil's One Night for ONE DROP.

*Cirque3.jpg*: "Stingray", a scene from Cirque du Soleil's One Night for ONE DROP.

*Cirque4.jpg*: "Ice Caps", a scene from Cirque du Soleil's One Night for ONE DROP.  
(Credit: Christina Russo)

*Cirque5.jpg*: The Audio Crew from One Night for ONE DROP, clockwise from top left: Gavin Whiteley, Technical Manager of Audio, Resident Shows Division; Chris Crump, Audio Technician; Brian Smith, FOH Sound Mixer & Sound Design for "One Night for ONE DROP"; Eric McFall, Lead Audio Technician and Monitor Mixer; Glenn Griger, Assistant Head of Audio; Bill Mansfield, Head of Audio for "O" and Sound Design for "One Night for ONE DROP"; Tony Kearns, Audio Technician