

# Pioneer

CASE STUDY

## IMMERSIVE AUDIO

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PUKKELPOP, BELGIUM

Pukkelpop bathes crowds in sound with immersive  
Pioneer PRO AUDIO system





## IMMERSIVE AUDIO



There's nothing ordinary about Pukkelpop. Since starting as a one-day event back in 1985, it's grown to become one of Belgium's largest festivals and has cultivated a reputation for consistently delivering some of Europe's most eclectic and creative line-ups. Staged near the city of Hasselt in a sprawling area of fields and woodlands, the four-day festival resembles a pop-up city boasting ten stages, as well as a host of activities, eateries and shops. International superstars from every conceivable genre combine with an alternative fringe to produce a melting pot of music that attracts a diverse audience of 66,000 people each day.

“It was beyond amazing to see and hear it come to life – it gave me chills! We were very happy to see not only the reaction of the audience but also of audiophiles who understood all the technical aspects. It was great to be able to showcase all the hard work and energy that Pioneer PRO AUDIO, KAGE and KRANKk had put into making this work. It was a whole new way of experiencing music and one of my personal highlights of the festival. We are definitely looking forward to working with them again.”

Tanja Engelen | Partnership Manager | Pukkelpop

For Pukkelpop's 2022 outing, Pioneer PRO AUDIO teamed up with production specialists KAGE Audio and innovative electronic collective KRANKk to create an immersive audio experience at the Booth stage. Always keen to push boundaries, Pukkelpop's organisers commissioned KAGE to develop an immersive set-up at the festival that would be suitable for a live electronic band, as well as for DJs. Their objective was twofold: to create the best 360° club sound possible for the audience and to explore the way that the sound could be contained within a specific location to reduce noise pollution to the surrounding area.

KAGE have been working with immersive set-ups for a number of years, so the Booth stage was an ideal environment to assemble a 7.1.4 surround system. Pioneer PRO AUDIO speakers were chosen because according

to Karel Geukens of KAGE: "Pioneer PRO AUDIO GS-WAVE stacks in combination with XY Series and an immersive processor deliver the best club sound it's possible to achieve!"





# DESIGNING SOUND TO FULFILL A VISION

Creating a club sound in an outdoor space is difficult enough, but doing it in a way that contains the sound in a specified area is even more challenging. Pioneer PRO AUDIO systems have successfully achieved this many times before though, thanks to a range of speakers offering high-quality and powerful audio, set-up flexibility and focussed sound dispersion.

Sound Designer Erik Loots designed the 7.1.4 system which was based around two GS-WAVE dancefloor stacks at the front, working in combination with XY-122 three-way hybrid bi-amp loudspeakers, which were selected for their 90° dispersion and high output. Two of those units were used as centre fills, with four more per side (left and right) and another four that were elevated. For outfills, two XY-152 two-way full-range loudspeakers

were used at the front, while two XY-3B dual 12" three-way hybrid loaded bi-amp loudspeakers were used at the back and ten XY-81 two-way full-range loudspeakers were used as sidefills. For the low-end, XY-218HS dual 18" horn-loaded subwoofers were chosen for the short response of the sub attack and arranged in a cardioid set-up of nine units. More XY-3B units were used for stage monitoring along with XY-215S dual 15" quasi-bandpass subwoofers.



KRANKk delivered successive sets on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Pukkelpop and were excited to be part of this ground-breaking collaboration as group member Aram explains: "Pukkelpop had picked up that we were creating new music for immersive audio, so they gave us a call and proposed that we showcased it at the Booth stage. We jumped at the chance and partnered with KAGE Audio to present a 30-minute set each day through the massive Pioneer PRO AUDIO immersive system. It was a great success, and we actually celebrated the opportunity with a new release, 'Ça Fait Longtemps ft. RabbaDance', during the first set we played!

"We feel really blessed that we got the chance to share our music on a system it was designed for. We had full control over our sound through Fletcher software, which enabled us to perform

special effects over and around the crowd. Having the opportunity to work with Pukkelpop and Pioneer PRO AUDIO on breaking the barriers of sound was a dream come true."





## DRAWING A CROWD

Having placed their faith in KAGE and Pioneer PRO AUDIO to expand musical horizons at the Booth stage, the organisers of Pukkelpop gave the system and the whole experience an unqualified thumbs-up. Partnership Manager for Pukkelpop Tanja Engelen was in no doubt about the success of the project: "It was beyond amazing to see and hear it come to life – it gave me chills! We were very happy to see not only the reaction of the audience but also of audiophiles who understood all the technical aspects. It was great to be able to showcase all the hard work and energy that Pioneer PRO AUDIO, KAGE and KRANKK had put into making this work. It was a whole new way of experiencing music and one of my personal highlights of the festival. We are definitely looking forward to working with them again.

Karel Geukens sums up from KAGE Audio's perspective: "We heard nothing but positive reactions from the audience and artists through the stage management team, and we even received many compliments from the

sound engineers from other stages who came to take a listen. I know the organisers were really happy with the results, describing the system as 'very impressive'".



## HEARING THE FUTURE

The success of this partnership without doubt opens the doors for future collaborations, expanding the potential to develop this immersive format across a range of applications, concludes Joeri Verholen, Pioneer DJ Country Manager for Belgium: "The Booth stage immersive audio set-up at Pukkelpop not only wowed the crowd but clearly attracted much wider interest judging from the enquiries we've received in the short space of time since the festival. The experience definitely captured people's imagination and it's one we're excited to build on for the future".

### SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

#### MAIN SYSTEM:

- 2 x GS WAVE dancefloor stacks
- 10 x XY-122 12" two-way full-range loudspeaker
- 2 x XY-152 15" two-way full-range loudspeaker
- 2 x XY-3B dual 12" three-way hybrid loaded bi-amp loudspeaker
- 10 x XY-81 8" two-way full-range loudspeaker
- 9 x XY-218HS dual 18" horn-loaded subwoofer

#### STAGE MONITORING:

- 2 x XY-3B dual 12" three-way hybrid loaded bi-amp loudspeaker
- 2 x XY-215S dual 15" quasi-bandpass subwoofer





**About AlphaTheta Corporation (former company name: Pioneer DJ Corporation)**

AlphaTheta EMEA Limited is the subsidiary of AlphaTheta Corporation responsible for sales and marketing in EMEA. For more than 20 years, the Pioneer DJ brand has been a market leader in the design and production of innovative DJ equipment and software. The company works closely with DJs and clubs to deliver next generation products that inspire and shape the global dance music community and has recently launched a new range of musical instruments for production and live performances. Its portfolio includes brands such as TORAIZ, Pioneer Professional Audio, and Pioneer DJ Radio as well as social platforms KUVO and Djsounds. AlphaTheta Corporation is in the Noritsu Koki (TSE:7744) Group, headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, and is led by President and CEO Yoshinori Kataoka..