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Posted on September 3, 2025



TORONTO, Ontario, Canada - September 2025 - Drake is getting his steps in. On his current \$ome \$pecial \$hows 4 U Tour, currently on its European leg through mid-September, he not only closes his own show but opens it, as well, bookending performances by co-bill Party Next Door. And Drake is doing it on a very big stage. The tour features a stage which forms a ring around the standing room audience, with walkways running along the long end of the floor and larger stages at opposite ends of the arena, and Drake typically performs across all the stages during a show. It's a lot to keep up with, but the pair of DiGiCo Quantum852 consoles on an Optocore network

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that also supports three SD-Racks and one SD-MiNi Rack—all supplied by tour vendor Eighth Day Sound, a Clair Global brand—are more than up to the task.

“The Quantum852 is extremely flexible,” states tour Monitor Engineer Chris Lee. “Whatever we need, whatever anybody requests, I can do it. It’s the Swiss Army knife of consoles.” In fact, it’s that in more ways than Lee had expected.

For instance, in addition to mixing monitors for the complex production, his Quantum852 is also managing SMPTE timecode for virtually the entire show. “We’ve had a few issues with some of the video, automation, and pyro and lighting receiving timecode from one of our sources, so, instead, I receive it digitally,” he describes. “I’m able to output it as analog and send it to our lighting controller, who then distributes it on to multiple different departments in my area, over our Optocore network. It’s been saving the show! With this new console, DiGiCo has definitely worked on the timecode input and output and made them even more valuable.”



In yet another example of the features he’s been utilizing, Lee sends the talkback comms signals through the console’s Mustard processor, specifically through the MSE (Mustard Source

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Enhancer), a new dynamics processing feature available on Mustard that is designed to reduce unwanted background noise and provide more gain-before-feedback for selected audio sources.

MSE really came in handy for Drake's stage design. "Our show is in the round, and the entire time that the artist is performing, they are in front of the PA system," Lee explains. "Front of house and a lot of the other technical positions are in front of the PA, and so MSE reduces the level of ambient noise and enhances what the people are actually saying, versus just having a bunch of ambient noise when they open up their mic to talk. So it really helps with speech intelligibility, and that ensures that everybody can be heard."

Drake has another distinction, and that is that he was the officially the very first artist to take a new Clair Global-supplied DiGiCo Quantum852 console out on tour, for last year's It's All A Blur Tour - Big As The What? outing. Since then, says FOH Engineer Demetrius Moore, the experience has only gotten better. He's also using the MSE, in this case on vocals, in combination with effects such as a BAE 1073MPL mic pre and an Avalon VT-737 tube mic pre for Drake's Sennheiser 9000 mic.



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Combined with the DiGiCo-distributed Fourier Audio transform engine, a Dante-connected server designed to run VST3-native software plugins in a live environment, he has everything he needs to manage a physically spare but dynamic and complex production, complicated by the need to manage gain-before-feedback.

"The problem is that everybody's in front of the PA almost all of the time," he says. The solution for FOH is the application of MSE along with applying the Quantum console's Chilli 6 six-band, dynamic, multiband compressor/expander and Avalon VT-737 to Drake's mic tube processor, pulling back on sensitive frequencies while leveling the gain. "The MSE is the only thing I've added since the last tour, but I keep on finding new ways to use the Quantum852, because there's so much in there," he says. "It's an amazing platform."