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A NEW APPROACH TO MIKING PIANOS PROVIDES DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS

Many churches struggle with piano sound problems in their sound reinforcement systems and television broadcasts. Churches typically mike their pianos by one of the three methods: single mic over the edge of the piano, two mics higher up, or a mic inside the piano on a pad.

In most cases, none of these microphone placements will provide the desired amount of sound level (gain) before acoustic feedback. In addition, the piano lid will not close, allowing the piano microphones to pick up the sounds of other surrounding instruments. Not to mention

the unsightly appearance of microphone stands or booms sitting in front of the piano.

Franklin Denham, minister of music at Highland Baptist Church in Meridian, Mississippi, said he has found the solution to all of these problems by using the new Earthworks PianoMic™ System.

“It has always been a struggle to get a high-quality piano sound where we could hear the full range of the piano (i.e., low, mid and high strings) with equal quality and sound level,” said Denham. “We have never been able to adequately capture the

high and low strings of the piano. We have tried a microphone on a pad inside the piano, and we have also tried putting microphones on booms at either or both ends of the piano. None of these methods, or anything else we’ve tried, would produce the quality of piano sound that we desired.”

Additionally, according to Denham, they struggled with the problem of not having enough piano sound in the choir monitor speakers.

“Typically, we run into acoustic feedback problems before we can get enough



The PianoMic™ System requires no microphone stands, it fits inside the piano, and it performs superbly with the piano lid either up or down.



sound level for the choir members to hear the piano in their monitors,” he said.

The Earthworks PianoMic™ System consists of a specially designed telescoping tube that easily sits above the strings inside the piano and is supported by two arms that rest on the sides of the piano case. This telescoping tube incorporates two very high quality High Definition Microphones mounted on flex arms that point directly at the piano strings. The PianoMic™ System requires no microphone stands, it fits inside the piano, and it performs superbly with the piano lid either up or down. With the piano lid down, it will not pick up the sound of other instruments located close to the piano. Best of all, it cannot be seen from outside the piano.

“When we use the PianoMic™, the

singers can hear the full range of the piano, there is a substantial increase in sound level and feedback is no longer a problem,” said Denham. “When we had piano and organ duets in our services, the organ overpowered the piano, and we could not get enough piano sound level without going into feedback. In contrast, using the PianoMic™, we could actually make the piano louder than the organ and still had gain left on the piano. We had plenty of gain before feedback. This resulted in excellent piano and organ duets in our services.”

One of Denham’s favorite features of the PianoMic™ is that it captures the sound of all 88 strings and provides a rich full sound of the piano.

“With other mics, there always tended to be hot spots, making certain frequency

ranges of the piano stand out more than others,” he said. “In contrast, the PianoMic™ provides an even coverage throughout.”

Another benefit of the PianoMic™ is that it is not visible outside of the piano.

“The PianoMic™ sits inside the piano and provides an excellent sound and plenty of gain before feedback with either the piano lid up or down,” Denham said. “The small electronics box that feeds the microphone lines is housed in a leather pouch that attaches to the piano leg via Velcro straps. Aesthetically, it is a dream, because it produces this magnificent sound while it is not obvious that it is there. When we use our orchestra, we simply put the piano lid down and the PianoMic™ does not pick up the sounds of other instruments.”

Also, Highland Baptist Church broadcasts its services on live television, and the PianoMic™ gives them the ability to have a quality piano sound on the television broadcasts, as well as in the sanctuary.

“With the PianoMic™, we are able to have a great deal of control over what we get from the piano for the broadcast as well as for the sanctuary sound system,” said Denham.

“We have used the PianoMic™ for several months. It is a real answer for both quality and control of the piano sound,” Denham said. “I like to provide quality piano sound to the choir through their monitors, for the sanctuary, and for our television broadcasts. With the PianoMic™, all three have a great sound with a wide latitude of control and absolutely no worry about acoustic feedback. For us, the Earthworks PianoMic™ System is a dream come true.” **RPN**

For information on the Earthworks PianoMic™ System or to request a free demonstration in your church, call 603-654-6427 ext. 14 or visit www.EarthworksAudio.com.