

**Solid State Logic Live L550 Plus and L100 Plus on "Ages & Stages Tour"
with Sir Tom Jones throughout U.K., Europe and North America**

*FOH Engineer Gavin Tempany says the transient response of preamps is 'unbelievably fast', and mix bus is 'deeper, wider and more detailed than any other console'*

**Oxford, UK, March 11, 2025 — Sixty years into his career Sir Tom Jones is still going strong, recently wrapping a 74-show tour of the U.K., Europe and North America, covering 24 countries in all. The Ages & Stages Tour, showcasing an exciting and varied selection of Sir Tom’s repertoire throughout his outstanding 60-year career, featured an SSL Live L550 Plus at front-of-house, as well as a Live L100 Plus on a B rig for some tight turnarounds on the European leg of the tour.**

Gavin Tempany has been FOH mixer on the Ages & Stages Tour since December 2023. As he puts it, he has been “on both ends of the multicore” during a career that has seen him mix either monitors or front-of-house for artists such as Tame Impala, Genesis, Mark Knopfler, Kylie Minogue, Hans Zimmer and David Gilmour. Speaking during the European leg, he explains, “With the routing of this tour we have to have two sets of equipment. On the A rig, I have an L550 Plus, which offers 38 faders as standard. On the B rig, I’m using an L100 Plus with an external Fader Tile, providing a total of 26 faders — 14 on the console itself and 12 more with the remote Fader Tile.

**Ease of showfile usage, superior sonics**

One significant benefit of working with SSL’s Live console system is the ease with which a showfile can be loaded into console models of different physical configurations, such as between the L550 Plus and the L100 Plus, Tempany says. “You don't need any conversion software to make it work. If you don't have enough DSP or channels available, then the board goes into compatibility mode. When you're on a smaller console, you can choose which channels are active. The next time you take that showfile to a bigger console, the other channels just reappear.”

Tempany can recall the first time he heard an SSL Live desk. “We had them at Brit Row very early on, in 2013 or 2014. The transient response of the preamps is unbelievably fast, which gives you more of what it's like to hear an instrument live. That's the first thing. I also feel that the mix buss, at 64 bit floating point, is deeper, wider and more detailed than competitors’ consoles.”

**Mixes that are clear, wider and deeper**
When he programmed the SSL Live showfile at the warehouse, Tempany worked with a multitrack from an earlier leg of the tour that was recorded through the previous console. “I could listen to my mix and with one button I could flick over to the recorded mix, and the difference was staggering. The SSL mix was clearer, wider and deeper,” he reports.

The only outboard effect on this tour is a Bricasti reverb, Tempany says. “Everything else is on the console. Whereas, on the previous console, I had to have a Waves rig. I always try and have as little stuff hanging off the console as possible." As for other onboard effects, he says, “I'm using the Blitzer, which is like a Distressor, a couple of plate reverbs and a chamber reverb.”

As for processing, he continues, “I don't use any compression on the mix bus. But I do use just a tiny bit of dynamic EQ, just a bit of 3k (Hz) and a bit of 800 (Hz). When a mix gets loud, it can get a bit shrill, so I like to have that and a little bit on Sir Tom’s iconic vocal. His mic technique is consistent night to night. I know what lines he sings loud so rather than compress it, I just do it manually. There is a compressor on it, but it's set at 2:1 and a threshold of -10 dB; it maybe comes on once in the show.”

**Programming mixes with VCAs**

Like many engineers, Tempany mostly mixes using VCAs, programming 12 faders as VCA groups with another block of 12 faders for more granular control of individual channel sources. As he explains, he programs the band — which includes drums, bass, two guitarists with multiple electric and acoustic instruments, keyboards and tracks, where applicable — as well as Jones’ vocal effects into VCA groups and stores them at 0 dB.

“The unique thing is that the Live has a store scope. I have everything in the store scope except for those VCAs, so no matter what I do, they won't get stored in a weird position,” he elaborates. “Every time I go to a new scene, all the channel faders have moved to their preset positions and the VCA is reset back to zero. That is one reason why I can get away with fewer faders, because my VCA’s always reset.”

When Tempany moved to the SSL Live mid-tour earlier this year, he says, “I pulled up one of the template files — which I highly recommend everyone starting from, because they're really good — and then transferred all the settings of the channels and groups from the previous board. Within that template show file there is the ability to submix using stems, and the effects are also set up using stems. Stems afford the ability to have another set of variable auxes that sit between the channels and the auxiliaries in the signal flow. They can feed anywhere onwards, but they could also feed other stems. It lets you subgroup things to auxiliaries, that's the bonus. If you're doing monitors and you want to subgroup all of the drum kit to one stereo stem group, you can. And everyone can have that group at a different level. I have a kick stem, a snare stem and an overall drum group stem, a band stem and a vocal stem.”

It might sound complicated to some, he says. “But I think there's a misconception about the SSL Live. People think that it's a difficult board to operate. What I will say is that it’s different — but it's not difficult.” In any case, it’s up to the operator to program the console appropriately for the show. “I find with rock and roll sometimes the way to keep things sounding good is to keep it quite simple,” Tempany says. “It's good to not overthink it.”

*Solid State Logic is the world’s leading manufacturer of analogue and digital audio consoles and provider of creative tools for music, broadcast, live and post production professionals. For more information about our award-winning products, please visit:* [*www.solidstatelogic.com*](http://www.solidstatelogic.com)*.*

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