

INFORMED VISION

Inside new Staten Island-based loudspeaker manufacturer 1 SOUND.

by **Live Sound Staff**

Last year, 35-plus-year pro audio veteran Lou Mannarino launched 1 SOUND a new loudspeaker company based in his hometown of Staten Island, NY with a primary goal of creating loudspeakers in the United States.

“I believe in product being available at all times,” he states. “The Amazon model of everything, right now, has put pressure on audio providers to deliver. Producing in the U.S. is more efficient, especially for the U.S. as a customer base. Quality control is also at its best. It’s certainly less expensive than certain locations, and we’re finding ways to compete on cost with other off-shore sources.”

During his career, Mannarino has designed and engineered for some of the biggest artists in music – across multiple genres – including Akon and Jay Z, Dizzy Gillespie, Paul McCartney and Jon Bon Jovi, Rihanna, Wynton Marsalis, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic, among many. He’s also created systems and mixed in classic venues like Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, The Beacon Theater, Lincoln Center, and The Hammerstein Ballroom, for theatres at educational institutions such as Columbia University, and at spaces that include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Waldorf Astoria and MoMA.

On top of all that he’s the founder and owner of Staten Island-based L&M Sound & Light. This resume informs his overall vision of creating compact, full-range loudspeakers with versatile mounting accessories, clean and elegant form factors and detailed control over coverage, as well as fueling a desire for innovation.

“My experiences in our field empowers with many new ideas to develop,” he notes. “It seems that most of my inspira-

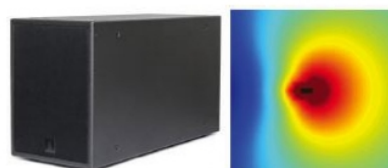
tion comes from necessity and want. What does that mean? For example, I looked at front fills and want to make sure that part of the audience has the same experience as everyone else. Two years later, with a lot of hard work and a team of talented people, MS loudspeaker technology is our answer.”

EXPANDING THE IMAGE

Perhaps best described as a “2-channel point source loudspeaker system,” MS (mid/side) technology starts with deconstructing a stereo left/right signal, dividing it into a mono (mid) plus figure-8 sides. The result is a mono plus stereo sides from a single compact loudspeaker – all listeners in the sound field hear full dimensional stereo imaging along with a phase coherent mono center, eliminating the need to be in the “sweet spot.”

The initial model with this technology is the MS34, a low-profile enclosure (just 5.5 inches tall in horizontal position) loaded with a 4-inch coaxial driver (1-inch compression driver), dual 4-inch full-range transducers, and dual 3.5-inch passive radiators. It also includes an M+S/Mono switch that transforms it into a mono line source (vertical or horizontal) for long throw with 5 dB more output than MS mode.

“I still mix the New York Philharmonic shows with a limited stereo image, so



The CSUB210, steerable sub with a choice of omnidirectional, end-fire and cardioid modes, joined by an isobaric plot of its performance.



Lou Mannarino at 1 SOUND headquarters in Staten Island.

the addition of a nearfield reproducing a coherent mono and the space created by the stereo is an important development,” Mannarino explains. “It’s not an effect or even a digital sampling. It’s analog, and something very useful for not only front fill but also distributed installations, under balconies, outdoor parks, and other applications.

“Locations currently covered by distributed loudspeakers can now be better served by the MS34, providing mono clearer than usual because the stereo image is separated out – plus the space intended by the original mix.”



The low-profile MS34 loudspeaker with mid/side technology, available in both black and white enclosures.

The 1 SOUND line also includes compact coaxial loudspeakers designed to provide natural sonic quality and precise imaging, as well as compact subwoofers. One model, the CSUB210, is a steerable dual 10-inch sub with a choice of omnidirectional, end-fire and cardioid modes via amplifier presets.

WHERE THE PROCESS BEGINS

In Mannarino's view, everything starts with the right drivers: "Selecting transducers is first about setting clear targets and objectives for performance with respect to form factor, and then designing them to achieve those goals. Almost every transducer is something that has been developed for us with much prototyping.

"We utilize four Clio testing systems to triple check every aspect of the production phase, with field and final testing as well," he continues. "I've always believed consistency of each transducer in a loud-



The MS Controller is a necessary for the MS34 to operate in MS mode, but isn't needed when the loudspeaker is in mono, line source mode.

speaker system must sound the same. Our tolerances are tight."

Manufacturing also presents its own set of unique challenges, including the critical aspect of managing the supply chain to work in a timely and consistent manner. It's also crucial to identify and rigorously uphold a list of objectives as well as setting the stage for the production team to succeed.

Another vital facet is this regard, he adds, is being a good listener in truly hearing the challenges of others in the industry, noting, "It's not about making the kick drum sound like my favorite kick drum."

IT TAKES A TEAM

Key players joining Mannarino at 1 SOUND include a product design team led by Mario Dicola of Contralto Audio, with Lindsey Mannarino (Lou's wife and partner) serving as the production supply manager, with the production team headed by Jose Luis Leon. Industry veteran Josh Radin operates as head of sales and the customer relationship manager, with long-time colleague Ron Lorman assisting with his years of expertise and passion for audio.

"I grew up in audio decades ago when there weren't many choices for good working gear," Mannarino concludes. "Today there are many wonderful companies to choose from with many of the exact tools that are needed. I believe the most important role our company plays is to support sound designers, engineers and integrators with our collective experience, knowledge and product to help them make the best available choices for their customers." **LSI**

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