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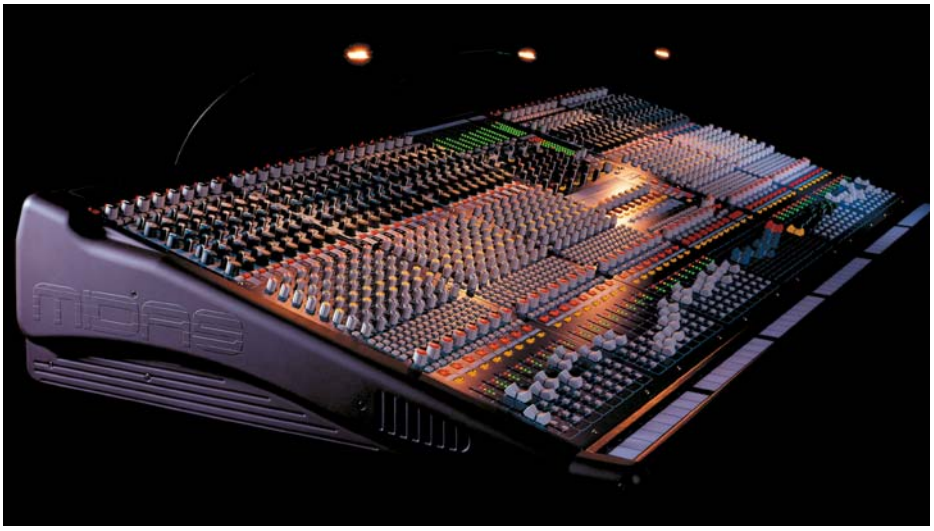
Live

Midas Verona 320 Mixing Console

By Tom Young

Expanding on the highly successful Midas Venice, the Verona analog mixing console has been recently introduced to address the midrange sound reinforcement market. Delivering more inputs, outputs and features along with Midas sonic characteristics, the Verona takes sound to the next level on mid market sound reinforcement consoles. The 32-input version I evaluated has a retail price of $15,651. Offering six different frame sizes from 24 to 64 inputs, the Verona presents true quality and value in an affordable package for budget minded live sound applications.



Features

The Midas Verona mixing console is semi-modular construction in eight channel blocks. At first glance its modest dimensions on the 32 input version is 9.15 inches high x 30.76 inches deep x 62.24 inches wide, and at a weight of 121 pounds. is very manageable in setting up. Each Verona includes as standard eight groups, eight aux sends, one stereo master output, one mono master output and a 12 x 4 matrix section. The price of the Verona varies from $13,635 for a 24-channel Install Package to $32,896 for a 64-channel Tour Package.

At the top of the mono input module are switches for phantom power (48 VDC), pad (15 dB attenuation), microphone phase, and insert switch. The gain control for the microphone preamp gives continuous adjustment from +15 dB to +60 dB. The Verona microphone preamplifier is designed by the same team responsible for the XL4 and Heritage series, using XL4 mic preamp circuitry with a lower CMR (Common Mode Rejection) ratio of +20 dB. This assures improved RF rejection and low noise performances similar to the Heritage series.

The sound of the EQ section compliments the mic preamps and overall puts this mid-priced console a class above its competition.

The equalization section features a four-band sweepable EQ with a separate I/O switch; an additional adjacent Aux Pre EQ switch is to send desired signals pre EQ to

Fast Facts

- **Applications:** *Live sound, installation.*
- **Key Features:** *24 - 64 channels; 8 subgroups; 8 aux sends; four-band sweepable EQ*
- **Price:** *starts at $13,635*
- **Contact:** *Midas at 952-887-7445, www.midasconsoles.com.*

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the auxiliary sends 1 - 6 (an internal jumper can add Aux 7 and 8). It provides a range on each band of ±15 dB and a fixed Q of one octave in each bandwidth. Each mono input channel has a variable high pass filter (20 Hz - 400 Hz) with I/O switch for removing handling noise and unwanted low end in the input signal.

The Verona input module has eight mono-auxiliary sends. Each mono aux has a separate gain control knob to adjust level from off to +6 dB. Auxiliaries 1 - 6 are sourced pre-fader after the channel insert, mute, and EQ. A global switch for each of the 1 through 6 Aux Sends enables pre or post fader. Auxes 7 and 8 are assignable pre or post fader with separate switches on all input channels.

Above the long throw fader is a four-LED segment meter (18 dB, 0 dB, +12 dB, +18 dB). Completing the mono input module is a mute and solo switch with LED indicator that illuminates to depict when active. The Verona has four automute busses that can be controlled from the center section of the console. Any input channels can be assigned to an auto-mute as desired.

In addition to mono inputs, the Verona comes standard with eight Multi Function Modules. These inputs can be used as mono mic, stereo line, or both. The stereo line jacks are for use with either balanced or unbalanced line level signals and are protected from 48V phantom power, a nice feature.

The routing section consists of 8 subgroup bus assignment switches, stereo and mono bus switches, panning control and a spatial imaging system control (SIS). Pressing the SIS button on any input configures that module for left center right (LCR) mixing. This is the same type of routing offered in the more expensive Heritage series consoles, and a nice feature to offer in a mid priced console.

The center section of the console is fitted with the master group, aux, stereo, mono, and matrix outputs. All output modules have graduated LED bar graphs with 16 segments that provide good monitoring of output signals. All main outputs are balanced with XLR connections on the back of the console. Matrix outputs have direct-in connections for interfacing with another console or can be used for additional line inputs - a nice design consideration usually found on higher priced consoles.

If you desire to use the Verona as a monitor console, you can swap the group faders to auxiliary mode for fader control of your individual mixes making this console very flexible. This makes the Verona usable in FOH or monitor applications.

All Verona consoles come with an internal power supply. In addition, a multi pin connector is provided for interfacing an external linear backup power supply, which is a well, thought out design feature to ensure reliability. When purchasing a 40-channel model or larger, the Verona comes with dual switching supplies for faultless backup operation. The power supply units are current-sharing, voltage-sensing, auto-switching that provide the proper assurances that might be necessary to save a show.

In Use

I had the opportunity of evaluating this console during a show at the historic Rainbow Room atop Rockefeller Center held for Jerry Seinfeld's 50th birthday party. Having worked in this room numerous times, it unfortunately, does not have an elevator large enough that travels up to the 65th floor to accommodate a large console like a Yamaha PM4000 without taking it out of its case and putting it on its side. So upon initially seeing the relatively small footprint of this 32-channel console, it became an obvious fit for this show.

The music consisted of a six-piece band led by Tony Bennett's musical director Lee Musiker. The instrumentation was piano, bass, guitar, sax and drums with Tony Bennett as the surprise guest. In addition, the console was used for video and CD playback.

This room is notorious for its poor grounding, with no isolated power for sound. Upon turning the sound system on, I immediately notice that the sound system was the quietest I had ever heard in this room, with not even a hint of 60-cycle hum. And when idling, you would swear it wasn't even on. This is testament that the Verona was a well-designed sound reinforcement console.

With a mid-level price point in mind, design consideration was given to provide no VCAs (Voltage Control Amplifiers) and unbalanced inserts on the inputs (single send/return on a single TRS phone jack). It would be nice if the direct outs on each input were switchable to provide balanced separate send and return flexibility if desired. This would eliminate sound companies from rewiring certain fan-outs to accommodate this console.

Upon listening to the microphone preamps with an assortment of acoustic instruments and vocal, they provided an extremely natural, warm and distinct sound, similar to Midas's higher priced consoles. The location of the metering in the center output section is well thought out with a good range. The input metering is minimal at best but similar to consoles in this price range. The sound of the EQ section compliments the mic preamps and overall puts this mid-priced console a class above its competition.

Product Points

Plus
+ Extremely quiet
+ Sound Quality
+ Very flexible

Minus
- Unbalanced inserts

The Score
A lot of features packed into a well-designed compact package.

Summary

The Midas Verona is a well thought-out product addressing the needs of the mid priced sound reinforcement market. When considering its price, certain features cannot be expected, however, sonically it will not disappoint. It is a high-quality, professional mixing console for sound reinforcement. When specifying a console for a fixed installation, a musical performance or corporate show, the Midas Verona needs definite consideration when keeping budget with quality in mind.

*Tom Young, a regular contributor to **Pro Audio Review**, is currently the live sound engineer for Tony Bennett.*

Review Setup

Meyer M1D self-powered line array; Klark-Teknik DN 3600 equalizers, Yamaha Pro R3 reverbs, Summit DCL 200 compressor; Sennheiser, Neumann microphones.

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