

## Pyramid Power

**B**radford High School in Kenosha, WI, was chosen from over 100 schools by theatrical licensing agency Music Theatre International to premiere the student version of the Tony award-winning musical *Aida*. The design team was comprised of costume designer Kirsten Singer, lighting designer John R. Dolphin, set designers Holly Stanfield and Jodi Williams, and sound designer Eric Mielke. The orchestra was composed of professional musicians.

Mielke, of Wausatosa, WI-based Professional Audio Designs, got to work with brand new gear, thanks to the first of a two-part sound system, installed in the 1,200-seat Bradford Auditorium by his company. The FOH equipment includes loudspeakers

from EAW (two AX364 speakers and four MK5394s) powered by two QSC CX902 amplifiers, a Biamp AudiaFLEX digital signal processing platform, and a 64-channel Midas Verona console. For the performance run, Professional Audio Designs augmented the installed equipment with their own rental gear, two more EAW loudspeakers and two EAW SB850 subwoofers. Completion of the design/install project will see a similar speaker complement flown.

The biggest challenge to putting the sound system together, says Professional Audio Designs VP Kim Leonard, was finding a 40-channel wireless mic system to work in the extremely RF-congested corridor between Chicago and Milwaukee. “We contacted



just about every manufacturer of wireless systems,” she says, “and the most any one of them could give us was 12 channels for simultaneous use in this corridor. But I didn’t want to mix manufacturers in a system, which would have given us multiple active antennas, and could have easily created problems for the Bradford Theatre department when they reconnect the system after taking it out on the road. I wanted one pair of active antennas to cover the entire 40-channel rig.”

Leonard worked directly with Shure and Jim Rice, wireless tech support, on

the solution: a 40-channel wireless lav system (12 Shure UC’s and 28 ULX’s) with 18 base/programmed frequencies and 22 custom frequencies. “No other manufacturer could come up with a 40-channel system that would work in this corridor that even approached this price-point,” says Leonard.

Mielke has worked with the show’s director, Stanfield and Professional Audio Designs over the past five years. “The community knows the quality of what Holly and the department are producing here, and they are willing to support the program,” he says.