

News

Albert Hall. Besides its internal use for operas and concerts both classical and pop, the mobile will also be available during certain periods for external projects, and according to Clancy there is already considerable interest from some of the classical labels.

Alongside news of the BBC's new mobile comes the announcement of the sale of an *Axiom* system to ABC for use at its New York production headquarters. ABC will install a specially configured *Axiom* with 24 mono and 24 stereo channels, together with a 48-track *DiskTrack* recorder-editor.

SSL, UK. Tel: +44 1865 842300.

SSL, US. Tel: +1 212 315 1111;

SSL, Japan. Tel: +81 3 5474 1144.

SSL, Japan. Tel: +81 3 5474 1144.

Thames wins BBC contract

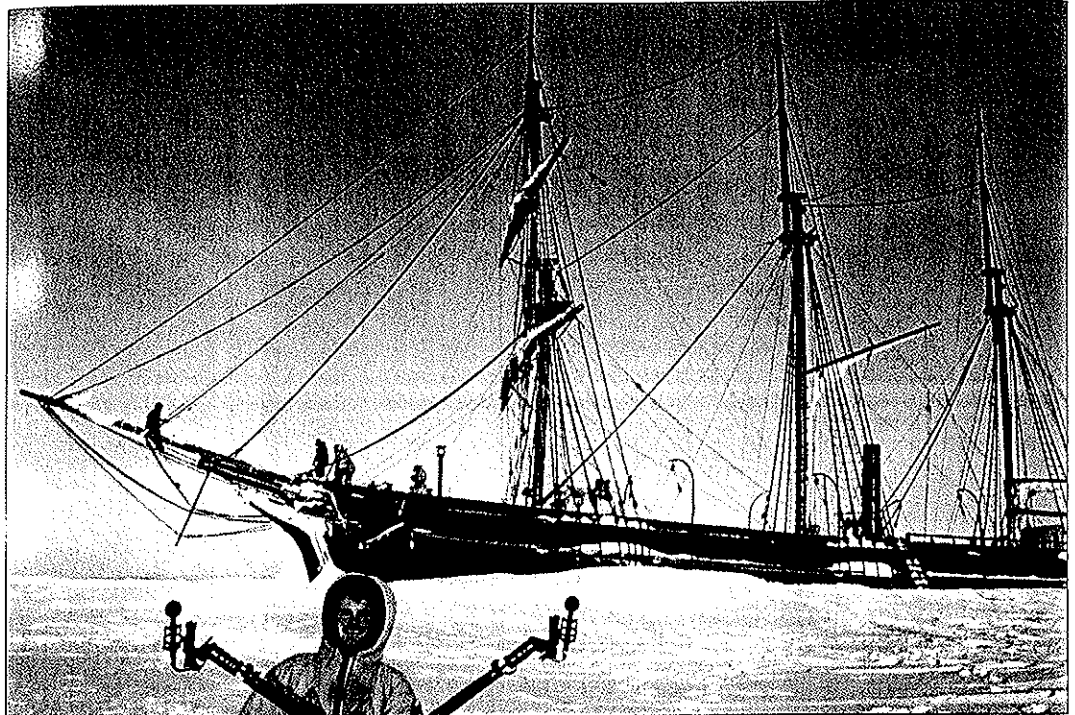
Thames Engineering, formerly part of independent TV company Thames Television, have been awarded the contract to supply, install and commission a new dubbing suite at the BBC's new White City building for BBC Postproduction Resources. It will be used primarily for the popular science programme *Tomorrow's World*. This is the second BBC contract Thames Engineering have won in recent weeks, following the commission for a digital edit suite at Broadcasting House in Cardiff.

All signal routing and most processing in the new suite will be AES 44.1kHz digital audio. A Yamaha *DMC1000* desk will complement the *Avid AudioVision* with *MicroLynx* edit system. Technical facilities for a commentary booth will be constructed as part of the contract, with other sources including a Nagra-T, DAT, CD (including a CD jukebox) and a *PCM800*. Both video and audio routing switchers will be provided by Pro-bel.

Thames Engineering, UK.
Tel: +44 181 614 2800.

Mics below zero

ORF Austria have completed an extraordinary project on location in the icefields of the Arctic archipelago known as Franz Joseph Land, 600km from the North Pole. The film-making team called themselves 'The Glacernauts' and for Sound Engineer Florian Camerer it was the third



The Arctic: ORF Austria's Florian Camerer on location in the Arctic. The severe weather conditions made equipment choices particularly critical — a selection of B&K mics and a Soundfield *ST250* withstood the sub-zero temperatures

expedition to the Arctic. To capture the atmospheric background, including sounds of ice cracking, various bird noises and winds of up to 90km/h, Camerer used a DAT recorder encased in a heated bag to cope with temperatures as low as -47°C. Most of the microphones were B&Ks, chosen partly because their nickel diaphragms have a very low temperature gradient compared with other materials like Kevlar which stiffen in the cold, altering the frequency response. Camerer

elaborates: 'I used a number of B&Ks—4006s, 4007s and a matched pair of 4011s—and the omnis proved especially good for atmosphere recording. As omnis are, by design, some 20dB less susceptible to handling and wind noise than pressure gradient microphones, they are well suited to this task.

I made quite extensive use of the *APE* adaptors. Firstly, they altered the directional sensitivity characteristics of the 4006 to varying degrees depending on size. At the

same time, the on-axis frequency response of the microphone is altered. With windscreens, you tend to lose highs around 5kHz–10kHz, and I like the way that the *APE*s compensate acoustically for this.

I created a special mount for the two microphones, forming an AB stereo configuration, which could be carried on my backpack, allowing me to have my hands free. By the way, this strange-looking mount was nicknamed "the fluffy elk" because of the long-haired wind jammers!

During almost six months of working in the Arctic, I never had one single problem with the B&K mics—they performed without a fault and were reliable partners in even the hardest conditions. They are very remarkable tools for a recording engineer, and should certainly not be left at home when working in demanding circumstances like the North Pole.'

Also included in Florian Camerer's microphone kit was a SoundField *ST250*, which was also found to perform faultlessly down to -30°C. Used for its coincident stereo image and remote adjustment, the microphone was used battery-powered mounted in its Rycote windshield. Danish Pro Audio, Denmark.
Tel: +45 48 14 28 28.
SoundField Research, UK.
Tel: +44 1924 201089. ►



Japan: The latest Far Eastern Capricorn installation is at the prestigious Nihon TV Video Corporation where the console will see service in a completely digital postproduction environment on Japanese television work. AMS Neve, UK. Tel: +44 1282 457011.