

## Small digiFLEX is Beautiful for Squarepusher

UK-based screen specialist displayLED has helped electronic musician Squarepusher stretch artistic boundaries on his current world tour with the use of possibly the smallest ever LED screen in a live performance.

**The artist uses just a single tile of displayLED's flexible LED product digiFLEX to create a futuristic display on a helmet.**

The helmet uses the musician's own software to convert sound to graphics, which appear on the visor during the performance and tie in with imagery on the larger screens of the show's backdrop. The artist has toured in the USA, Europe and Brazil and appeared at events including Sonar 2012, Spain, Bloc 2012, London, UK, and Dour Festival, Belgium, this summer.

The helmet was conceived by Squarepusher himself, who commissioned technical project manager Gilbert Roper of Star Acre to create the effect.

"For the last five years Squarepusher has been developing a very visual live show with graphics created in real-time," says Andy James, Squarepusher's manager. "The mask creates a juxtaposition with the much larger rear screen. This really brings the show alive, creating a tangible immediacy between the music and the images."

"When Squarepusher first told me what he wanted to achieve with the mask, I had no idea how to do it within a reasonable budget," says Roper. "As soon as I knew digiFLEX was both bendy and sticky, I was interested. Looking further, I realised it is also a very high quality video product with excellent contrast ratios and high bit depth. The software allowed me good control and there is plenty of room for expansion when we want to develop the show further."

"Gilbert approached us looking at using a flexible tile to clad a helmet," explains Paul Hine, general manager at displayLED. "He wanted the tile to be the 'face' of the headwear, using visuals to reflect music. To create the prototype he brought us a welding mask and we replaced the visor with a digiFLEX 10mm pixelpitch LED tile."

Two bespoke fibreglass helmets were fabricated by FBFX, the company which made the helmet for Hollywood movie Judge Dredd, and digiFLEX was added, while Roper made a belt pack containing the scan boards with a five metre 'umbilical' cord to the artist's effects rack containing the power supplies and processing.

"We were concerned at first that the mask would be swamped," Roper explains. "But it turns out that the human-like movement creates a further contrast which stands out even with very large rear screens."

The spare helmet was particularly useful when Brazilian customs carried out an over-vigorous inspection of the unusual item. “They weren’t content just to look in the box but felt the need to take the digiFLEX tile off the front of the mask,” he continues. “They didn’t realise they were handling an electronic product and ruined one of the chips. displayLED provided fantastic support at very short notice and provided a solution which enabled the next show in Europe to go on as planned and uninterrupted.”

While Roper was impressed by the technical qualities of the digiFLEX, he adds, “What also made me want to use the product was the help and support I got from displayLED. They really got behind the project research and development and helped make it workable for the future.”

“Squarepusher is known for custom programming his sound from the ground up and he took the same approach to visuals,” says Tom Mudd, LED screen specialist for displayLED. “This started off as a leftfield LED project but it took off into a phenomenon that everybody’s tweeting and blogging about. This may be a small project but the ‘wow’ factor can’t be over stated because he’s used the digiFLEX so cleverly.”

“This is a unique project,” agrees Paul Hine. “It’s a creative application for digiLED where the client has thought outside the box to link video and sound. Squarepusher has demonstrated the potential for digiFLEX to be used in so many creative ways.”

[www.digiLED.com](http://www.digiLED.com)

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

- digiFLEX uses one-to-one DVI pixel mapping in a magnetic mounted, flexible PCB package. With a choice of improved LED technologies, the super-black level performance that makes digiFLEX so suitable for TV has been enhanced, while brighter characteristic LEDs allow for near sunlight levels of screen environment.
- displayLED has increased the number of pixels driven from a single Power Data Distributor (PDD) with digiFLEX, so a greater surface area of LED is supplied by fewer boxes behind the scenes. It uses a rigger-friendly connection system with light-weight cables, allowing power boxes to be located up to five metres away from the screen.
- digiFLEX meets all necessary standards for professional use in both the USA and Europe and comes with the certification required in these territories.

For further information, photographs or interview opportunities, contact:

Media Ink PR Ltd

T: +44 (0)844 544 2901

M: +44 (0)7909 905 882

E: [anna@mediainkpr.com](mailto:anna@mediainkpr.com)