

Old meets new

A EU cultural heritage programme initiated the beginnings of a new way of hearing performances at a 125-year old theatre, writes **Tom Bradbury**



Tradition meets innovation:
the Stefan Jaracz Theatre
opened in 1888

When the EU comes knocking with a new initiative or with tightened guidelines, it isn't very often that it is ignored. Given the Stefan Jaracz Theatre's cultural importance to the Polish city of Olsztyn – having been opened in 1888 and steeped in playhouse traditions – it was only a matter of time before the EU put the venue on a cultural heritage programme to bring its audio system up to scratch.

[INSTALLED]

AUDIO

- All Dynacord
- VL122, VL212, VL62, VL262, D-Lite D 12-3, D-Lite D 8A speakers
- CMX-15 stage monitors
- SUB28, PSD 215 subwoofers
- CMS 1000-3 mixer
- H2500 amplifiers
- RCM-26 controller module
- P64-1500 controller



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SOLUTIONS: STEFAN JARACZ THEATRE



Beneath the balcony
VL262 and VL62
loudspeakers set the tone

Bialystok-based systems integrator Delta collaborated with Dynacord partner Tommex for the audio part of the project, which encompassed a brand new sound reinforcement system.

Given the reputation of the theatre, the expectations placed on the new sound reinforcement system were very high. The stipulations were that it deliver the highest possible audio quality as well as being both highly reliable and versatile.

"The Stefan Jaracz Theatre is dedicated entirely to drama," explains Piotr Wosiek, the head of Tommex's Olsztyn office. "That means the sound has to be crystal clear and flawlessly intelligible – even at very high volume levels. For this reason, we adopted a complex, modular sound design as our solution."

FOUR IN ONE

The Stefan Jaracz Theatre is in fact three theatres in one: the Large Stage, the Margines Stage and the Kameralna Stage.

The largest of the three performance spaces, the Large stage can accommodate audiences of up to 420 visitors. To ensure the highest possible levels of intelligibility as well as homogeneous coverage throughout the seating area, a sound design based on three zones was adopted.

The first zone comprises the stage area, where Dynacord VL212 and SUB28 cabinets are mounted on mobile trolleys in the rear. The second zone covers the seating area and is the main sound system. Dynacord VL212 loudspeakers are flown to the left and right of the stage at a height of 10m.

The third zone, the section of the stalls beneath the balcony, posed an acoustic challenge that was solved by two Dynacord VL262 and VL62 loudspeakers on a delay line to compensate for their position halfway up the hall. Presets are available for all the loudspeakers, with FIR filters employed in each case. "These make life far easier," says a grateful Wosiek. "With FIR filters, there's no phase shift and the characteristics of the sonic image remain linear at all times."

The principle underlying the installation in the Margines Stage is maximum flexibility. The stage is mobile, allowing it to be placed in any corner of the auditorium. To ensure even coverage whatever its location, the sound system is split in three, with four VL122 cabinets shared equally between front and back trusses and, to reinforce the low frequencies, two SUB28 cabinets mounted on the equipment bridge. The signals emanating from the Dynacord CMS 1000-3 mixer pass through a P64-1500 controller and then via IRIS-Net to a total of six H2500 amplifiers with RCM-26 modules.

The Kameralna Stage uses a Dynacord Madras sound system that was already there prior to the renovation: this active system has had a Dynacord P64-1500 controller added to allow its integration into the network via IRIS-Net.

MOBILE AND MODULAR

A mobile system rounds off the complex installation. The mobile sound reinforcement system is a new acquisition and offers new possibilities

[ABOUT THE INTEGRATOR]

■ Delta started business operations in 1991 and specialises in designing systems for applications that include conference facilities, theatres, concert halls, sports facilities and retail displays

■ Delta has a specialist studio preparing 3D spatial visualisations and designs

■ Other specialties include audio guide systems, PA/VA and room acoustic protection

to the creative staff. The theatre management intends it to be used for rehearsals as well as outdoor productions, roadshows and other such events. It consists of a CMS 1000-3 in a prewired mixer case and two Dynacord PSD 215 active subwoofers. Depending upon the requirements, these can be operated with two passive VariLine VL262 tops or with active D-Lite D 12-3 and active D 8A cabinets (two of each).

The newly purchased Dynacord CMX-15 stage monitors have greatly enhanced the monitor system that was already in place (Dynacord AM12 and M12 cabinets) and the sound on stage is now, according to Wosiek, "beyond reproach".

If necessary, the sound components of all four systems can be connected and controlled via IRIS-Net software. ■

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