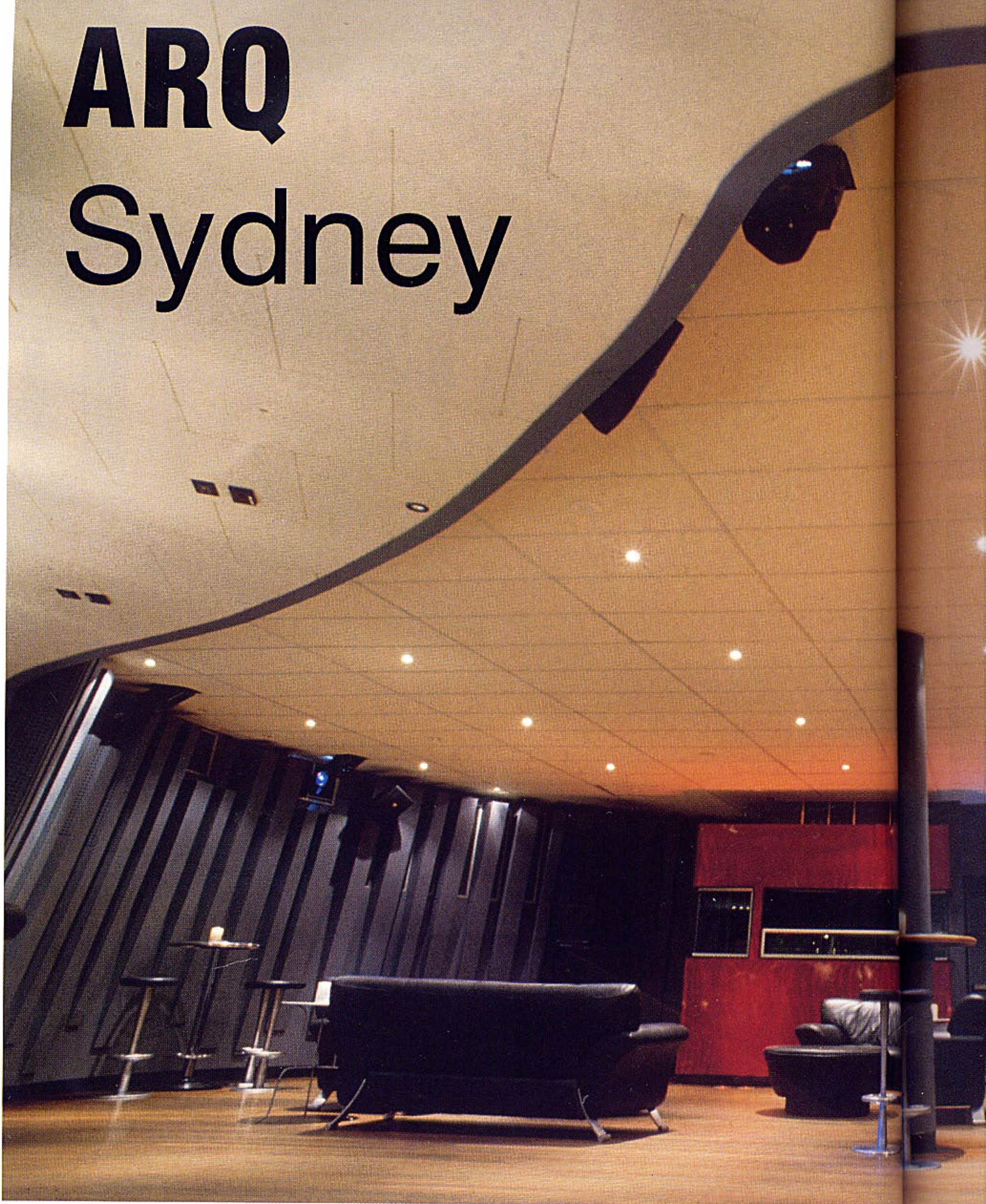


ARQ Sydney



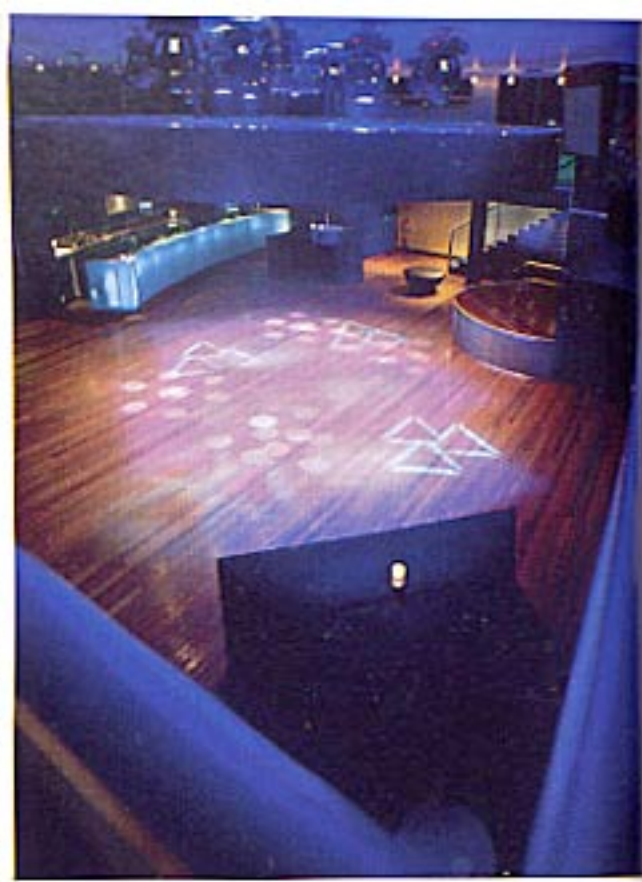
LOWER LEVEL OF ARQ, COMPLETE
WITH CLAY PAKY MINI SCAN HPES
SET INTO THE CEILING

Some eight thousand ancient glass bottles lay beneath the foundations of ARQ Sydney, on the site of Taylor Square's original water hole. It quenched horses and other animals at the turn of the 20th century. In its next phase in the 30s and 40s, the site became a truck depot and later a motor mechanics operation servicing Italian sports cars.

These days the only purpose built venue of its kind in Australia is surrounded by quaint shops, cafes and private residences, despite which there have been no com-

plaints of noise pollution. The whole building was designed every inch of the way by an acoustic engineer, who during the course of construction, came to be known as "God". A toilet couldn't be put in the place without clearing it with "God" first.

The entire roof superstructure has a column free portal frame roof that floats on rubber bearing pads preventing external noise transmission. There are five layers of fire and sound insulation and nearly 3 metres of headroom were sacrificed to create the necessary air gaps to contain low frequencies. Says co-owner Chris Curtis, "The



project acoustic engineer has effectively designed rooms within rooms in an effort to contain the sound. This can only be done if, as here, the base structure is designed to support the weight of such treatments (not only but also) to ensure that the acoustics in both rooms for live and recorded material are second to none."

The "higher deities" of ARQ's customised audio system is a collaboration of New York's Steve Dash and Sydney's Slave Pty Ltd. The lighting operator is the world renowned Allan Parkinson who, apart from some select major Australian and overseas dance parties is exclusive to ARQ Sydney.

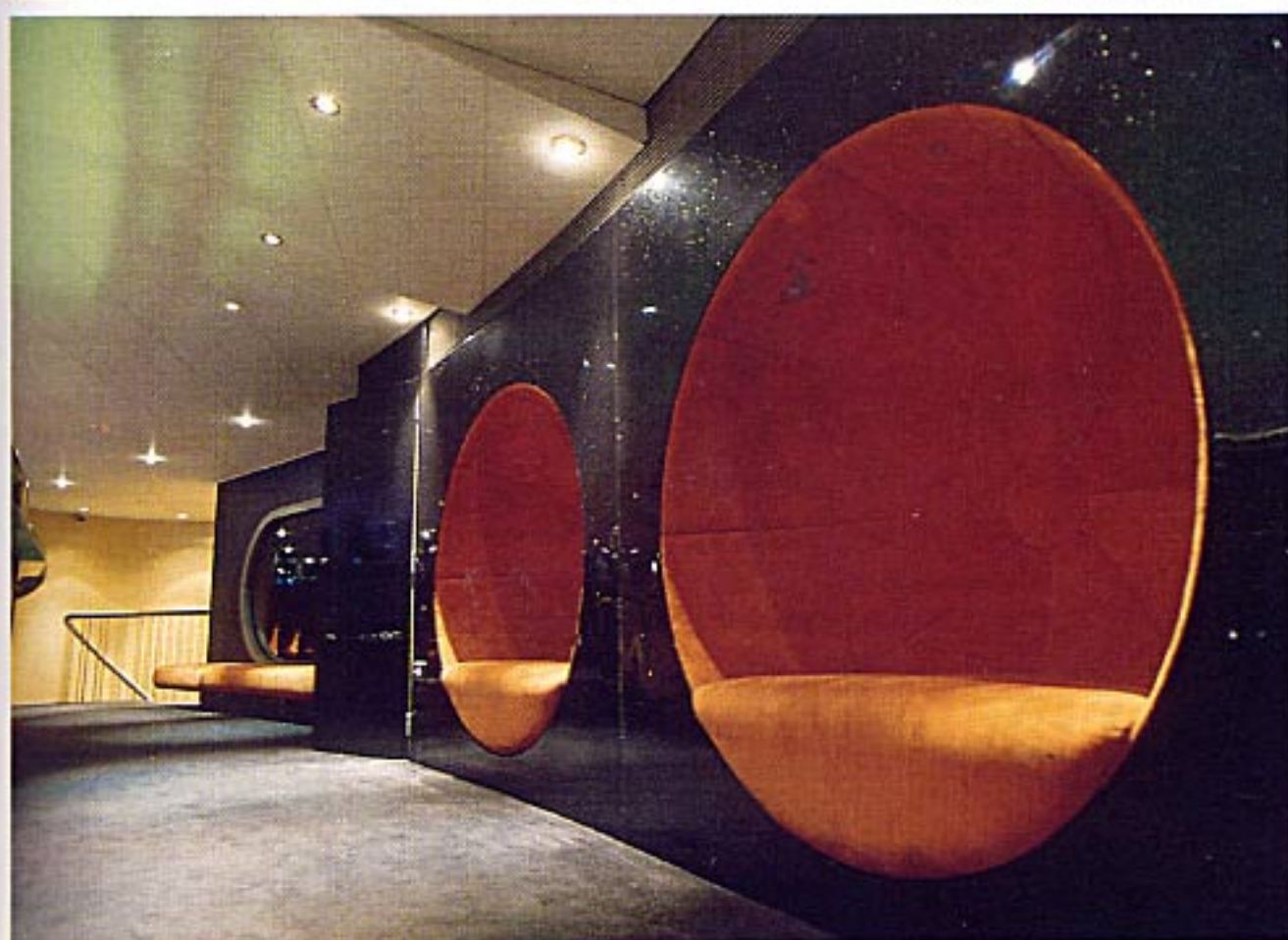
The project was originally conceived in 1991. There were over 15 days of litigation and 4 separate court battles to get a 24 hour licence and to increase capacity to 900 people. Fortunately Mr. Curtis is a barrister, who approached not

only licensing but the entire project as a brief. With property developer Shadd Danesi, their major source of information and inspiration was our very own entertainment technology publication formerly known as WDR. Construction began in June 1998 and lasted continuously till the club opened on 13 August 1999.

Design objective was to create a truly multi-functional space, to achieve the one thing which all research suggested was the most difficult - "The creation of an aesthetic space that could transform itself into a superclub without looking like an empty disco when being used for other purposes." To achieve that, tenders were solicited from around the world, all of which were rejected. Consequently they designed it themselves, triumphantly resulting in such major innovations as telescopic light poles and the "waffle iron" rig through which they pass, in effect a 7.5

tonne computer that's also a sculpture and supports intelligent lights and other effects. The actual 'how?' of the the rig and telescopic poles remains a trade secret.

When "God" anxiously decreed that it could easily be turned into a giant echo chamber, each cell was created with perforations on only two of it's faces. Additionally each cell can be operated independently from the others. When lowered there are infinite trim heights, that can shrink or expand the volume of the room, thereby creating environments that are comfortable with a cluster of corporate executives or several hundred totally "ARQ"ed patrons. All wooden floors are sprung on rubber to return vibration oozing bass up through their feet. And as guests and even "higher deities" are known to get hungry on occasion, absolutely no expense was spared on the kitchen - designed by four executive chefs,



providing a-la-carte meals of the highest standard.

Then there are the spirits, both piped in and haunting - not only is this one of the few venues in the world with scotch, bourbon and vodka on tap, there's reported to be a resident friendly poltergeist that operates the flap on trash containers. All house spirits and beers are pumped in from just one area, the total space is designed so that no trash ever has to be carried across the public floors in a venue air-conditioned with 99% pure oxygen. ARQ even has its own substation arrangements, construction of which included the closure of Oxford Street, one of Sydney's busiest arteries.

There are no dead ends so patrons never have to back track, Swedish Ecophon acoustic panels throughout, five thousand dollar acoustic doors, airlocks within airlocks, (see pic) a veritable

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

- **THE 'WAFFLE IRON' LIGHTING RIG HOLDING A MYRIAD MARTIN PROFESSIONAL MAC MOVING HEADS**
- **MORE MARTIN MACs ON THE SECONDARY DANCEFLOOR**
- **VODKA, BOURBON AND SCOTCH ON TAP, OPERATED BY THE RESIDENT POLTERGEIST**
- **COSY ALCOVES AND THE SOUND-PROOFED, AIR-LOCKED DOOR**
- **THE BASER SPORTING REQUIREMENTS ARE STILL CATERED FOR**
- **THE TELESCOPIC NEEDLE LIGHTING RIG - ANOTHER HIGHLY SECRETIVE INNOVATION**



THE BAR AREA



THE IRREGULAR SOUND DISPERSION WALL - PART OF THE CUSTOMISED AUDIO SYSTEM USING JBL COMPONENTS

floating submarine of sound and light. 20 ISDN lines allow video-conferencing and outside broadcasts and its own network of cameras to televise live. And lest the rest of Australia forget ARQ, every Sunday night at 6 PM, ARQ Sydney is host to the Pepsi Chart which is broadcast nationally and to other parts of the world, featuring major international recording artists and performers. There's an in-house Auto Teller Machine and tastefully capricious embellishments like

restrooms. This is a venue that magnificently transcends the axiom of impermanence that pervades international clubbing - the concept that the best venue in any given city varies from night to night depending on the entertainment, staff and patrons, though often true, is forgotten as soon as one enters ARQ. Whilst many other clubs are covered with façades that conceal an inner flyby night seediness, the deeper one digs in ARQ the more pleasant surprises are found. Spread over two levels and a mezzanine, an unassuming entrance, and an even lower key lane way entrance that conceal the wonder that lies within. And if cynically concluding that this is a place made exclusively for the filthy rich, beautiful, and famous, note that one of the most outstanding facets and perhaps an indication of Australian egalitarianism is the "Inclinor" (no relation to Arnold Schwarzeneger), a simply wonderful apparatus to make sure that the disabled and incapacitated are able to enter ARQ with a minimum of fuss and bother.

What is a nightclub of truly world class standard? Obviously there are thousands of elements that contribute but when you have the rare privilege to be inside such an establishment you know you're there. @

TECH SPEC

Exact specifications of ARQ Sydney's sound and lighting systems are highly confidential, however we can divulge the following...

Upper Level Audio: Digitally controlled active 5 way by Slave Sydney and Phazon New York; JBL speaker components in custom enclosures; Modified Crown and JBL amps; Processors by Rane, Brook Siren Systems, dbx; Custom built crossovers and programme equalizers; Technics SL 1200 MkII turntables; Pioneer CDJ500 mixed via modified Rane Mmx8 mixer

Lower Level Audio: (Comprised of two systems - background and dance floor) Background System; JBL Control 28 speakers; JBL Marquee sub bass cabs; JBL amps; Rane and dbx processors Dance floor System; Digitally processed active 4 way w/ JBL array, HLA speaker cabs and custom UHF speakers; Rane and dbx processors with modified JBL DSC280 digital controller as main management; Crown & JBL amps; Technics SL 1200 MkII turntables; Pioneer CDJ500 mixed via modified Rane Mmx8 mixer DJ booths x 2, both with active 3 way custom speaker enclosures, JBL amps and Rane equalizers

Foyer & toilet Audio: JBL Control speakers including 28s and ceiling speakers; Crown amps; Rane & dbx processors Mike System; Shure U-Series UHF Diversity System with Beta 58A handheld mike

Upper Level Lighting: Customized 7.5 tonne light rig; 4 x

Martin Mac 250; 4 x Martin Mac 500; 4 x Martin Mac 600; 4 x Martin Roboscan Pro 400; 2 x Clay Paky Power Raggi; 4 x Clay Paky Mini Scan HPE; 4 x Dynamo Hum 1500 watt strobe; 40 x par 36 pin spot; DMX switches; Jands Echelon lighting console, dimmers & distributors; DMX controlled JEM Stage Haze machine; 15 individually operable & motorized stainless steel telescopic poles

Foyer Lighting: 3 x Clay Paky Mini Scan HPE; Elektralite controller

Lower Level Lighting: 8 x Clay Paky Mini Scan HPE; Jands Echelon 500 controller; DMX controlled JEM Technohazer

February 2000 Laser System addition: 3.5 watt Oracle Septor full colour laser dual scan; Oracle 3D laser controller

AV System: Panasonic PT-L595 LCD Data Projector; Custom rear projection module; Expanded rear projection surface screen; Metal film surface coated mirror; 2 x JVC HR-J635EA HiFi VCR; KM-1200 Vision Mixer; KY-F55BE CCTV Camera; RM-LP57U camera control unit; HZ-615MDU 15:1 lens; AA-P700EG powerpack; KY-D29E ENG Walkabout camera; VF-PIIE Viewfinder; KA-27E Camera Adapter; A16x9BRM 16:1 Zoom lens; RxTx AV Transceiver Link; Monitors; Dual channel UHF mike system; Secondary mike antenna site; Secondary camera antenna site; MATV system; RGB selector; RGB distributor; Exterior vid/mike pick-up cabling Upgradable dmX distribution system throughout entire to space to allow for future additions and technological innovations.