



An overall view of the theatre's auditorium, with Coemar lighting system and Outline loudspeakers to the fore

LED lighting, video projection and surround sound come together at a new theatre belonging to Italy's leading amusement park. Mike Clark reports

Lakeside views

Installed

AUDIO

- Outline Bomber enclosures, Top Sub Plus subs, Micra II enclosures, 115SP stage monitors + SFX812 surround speakers
- Outline Pulse Width Modulation amps
- Outline Genius DSP units
- Allen & Heath iDR8 processing matrix
- Yamaha M7CL 32-channel digital mixing console

LIGHTING

- Coemar ParLite LED fixtures
- Coemar Linea LED 'sticks'
- Coemar ShowColor 3200, iSpot 575EB, iSpot Flex 2000 + ProSpot 250LX moving-head fixtures
- High End Systems Catalyst DL1 moving-head video projectors
- FPS Whole Hog 3 desk
- FPS DP2000 DMX processor
- FPS Hog 3PC backup system

www.allen-heath.com
www.coemar.com
www.highend.com
www.outline.it
www.yamahacommercialaudio.com

Located on the shores of Lake Garda in the north of the country, Gardaland is Italy's leading themed amusement park. Like all such attractions, however, the park cannot afford to rest on its laurels in what is an increasingly competitive market, and for the peak season in 2006 the management inaugurated an impressive art-deco style 1,300-seat theatre.

Hardware by Italian pro-audio manufacturer Outline had already been installed in several of the park's spectacular attractions and the company's Italian sales manager, Francesco Ferretti, has a 16-year working relationship with the venue. "Before we even began talking speakers, we ran some simulations of the

'We're considering the first year's activity as a running-in period, during which the theatre's entire production process will be fine-tuned' Gianfranco Bollini, artistic director

room, to show the management what was required as far as sound treatment was concerned," says Ferretti. "Having solved the acoustic problems, we proceeded with specifying the sound-reinforcement system."

The final system design was conceived by Guido Noselli of Outline, and revolves around four Outline Bomber enclosures flown from truss bars above the stage – these are able to handle a hefty 1,450W each and are beefed up at the bottom end by a floor-mounted Top Sub Plus (a twin 18in woofer rated at 1,400W) installed either side of the stage.

"We proposed a 5.1 system along the lines of a cinema setup," Ferretti continues, "so the soundtracks used in the shows are recorded specifically in Verona and Milan for use with that setup. The same is true of the audio for events such as presentations and TV shows, which are other applications for which the hall is intended."

Sixteen Outline Movie SFX1 surround speakers are recessed in the panelling in front of the theatre's boxes and covered by sound-transparent fabric, so that they are to all intents and purposes invisible but surround the audience with high-impact effects. There are also eight bracket-mounted Micra II enclosures installed in small niches along the perimeter of the stage on front-fill duty.

The speaker system is driven by four of Outline's Pulse Wave Modulation amps (three T44s and a T6.5) while loudspeaker processing is entrusted to three Genius DSP units – two 26s and a 24). Other key components include a Yamaha M7CL digital 32-channel console and an Allen & Heath iDR8 matrix. The latter has an 8 x 8 configuration and has been fitted with expansion cards to

enable eight further automated mic inputs and eight further automated line outputs. At any one time in the park's calendar, there are various shows alternating within the auditorium, so the theatre's audio team need to be able to store settings for each, ready to be recalled when required.

The theatre's lighting rig was designed by Mauro Favalli of the in-house technical team at Coemar, the manufacturer responsible for almost all the room's fixtures. "The brief we got from the client was for an extremely flexible system able to meet the needs of various types of shows, as well as other events held in the hall," reveals Favalli. "Apart from a request for halogen fixtures for TV

ParLite LED units, which give the set a greater sense of depth.

"The iSpot Flex units play a really important role in the shows, since – apart from their 2,000W lamps – their numerous features make them really versatile," says Favalli. "They've got three layerable gobo and effect wheels, prisms, two colour wheels, CMY and more."

Gardaland's artistic director, Gianfranco Bollini, wanted the stage's scenography to be similarly versatile and, with this in mind, requested video projection. "High End Systems' Catalyst DL1 offered the ideal solution for this concept, as it can project video 'scenery' all over the set." The two DL1

coverage and video recording – for which we supplied 16 of our 1,200W Showcolor 3200K moving-head units – Gardaland's only other stipulation was that they wanted a powerful, leading-edge rig with no skimping on investment."

One clear example of this unusually go-ahead client approach is the willingness with which the management accepted Favalli's suggestion to use LED technology, as a result of which there are some 18 Coemar ParLite LED fixtures (each fitted with 36 Luxeon 1W LEDs) recessed into the stage floor which. As well as RGB colour mixing, these feature an electronic strobe function. There are also 160 Linea LED 3/50 Multicolor Sticks, installed along the perimeter of the stage and on the four 'wings' on either side. In parts of the show, the wings are also illuminated by further

fixtures receive their content from an Apple PowerMac G5 dual-processor computer, running version 4 of HES' Catalyst software.

Lighting control is via an FPS Whole Hog 3 console with a DP2000 DMX processor and a Hog 3PC backup system, which is automatically enabled via a DMX manager. The theatre's timecode setup has been designed to ensure perfect synchronisation between video, lighting and audio.

"Our project is quite ambitious, so – although we've got off to an excellent start – we're considering the first year's activity as a 'running-in' period, during which the theatre's entire production process will be fine-tuned," concludes Bollini. "But we felt that the products we were having installed were all top grade, and the results so far have certainly borne this out." ■



Gardaland employs a range of in-house technicians



'Broadway Celebration' – a typical theatre performance (above left) and the venue's impressive, art deco-inspired façade (above right)

