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ROB CLARK

As Allen & Heath celebrates 50 years, we talk to Managing Director, Rob Clark.

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MEDUSA & GOTHA



CANNES, FRANCE
EMEA

Two unique spaces located side-by-side in the world famous city of Cannes, run by the same owner, and kitted out by the same design team comprising TW AUDiO, Colorsonic and Prospect Design.

Best known for the summer Film Festival, the city of Cannes, located on the French Riviera is famous for attracting the rich and famous by oozing luxury in all forms - hotels, restaurants, clubs, beaches... the list goes on. Steeped in history, the Palm Beach Resort - situated adjacent to La Croisette, a promenade linking the beach and the city - was closed for a number of years, before undergoing a huge transformation to restore it to its former glory. The new complex is now home to two nightlife outlets operated by Cannes-famous duo, David Barokas and Patrick Tartary. The pair collaborate through their respective businesses, DB Group and Cannes Balneaire, combining to run more than 15 entertainment hubs in the region.

Long-term friend and contractor, Colorsonic, headed up by Managing Director, Gerard Giraudon has been working with David and Patrick for more than 20 years, and has spent the last three years planning their latest venture. Gerard's favoured partner, Samy Chams, owner and founder of Prospect Design, who assumes the role of architectural and interior designer, has also been part of the journey. The finished article is two distinct venues, located side-by-side at the Palm Beach



Resort that boast ultimate opulence and sophistication. Both Medusa, opened last season, and GOTHA opened this season, have received rave reviews, the latter being described as 'the best club in Europe', according to Samy.

These highly exclusive venues required nothing but the best for every single aspect, from audiovisual technology and interior design materials, right down to the glassware and cutlery. Even the staff are trained to top-notch standard to ensure all guests - which regularly includes celebrities - are treated to faultless service.

The evening for most begins at Medusa, a cabaret restaurant with a difference that takes its name from the Greek myth for 'femme fatale par excellence', which embodies the power of femininity. Extracting tokens from its history, the mythical and legendary venue presents diners with a magical and artistic performance that awakens all the senses. The unique show is orchestrated by Italian company, Nu'Art, and its Artistic Director, Gabriele Rizzi.

Medusa has two dinner services - 8pm

and 10pm - with guests drinking in the bar area throughout the entire evening. During the dinner service, a cast of performers from singers and dancers to trapeze artists interact with the audience to create a 360° show performance. "We were afraid people would only come and see the show once, but actually it has taken a different direction, and people come two or three times per week, while they are in town. We have one and a half shows, you could say, so the show isn't exactly the same every night."

When it comes to design, everything is under the management of Gerard and Samy. He continued: "Everything has to be designed by us, it's not just the ceiling, the walls and the floors, and then handing it over to someone else. Some architects work like that, but not us - we decide as a team. We propose what we want to achieve to the client and, if they are happy, we go to our partners and specialised companies to draw up a detailed plan." The design started with the 1930's history of the building using some brass materials and rusty colours, even the shape of the tables is a nod back to the original

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"TW AUDiO do more than sell a sound system, they sell a design. The sound is perfect, there are no delays inside or outside, just everyone listening to the same audio experience."

form. "There has to be a balance between the technology and interiors, we want cutting edge for everything, not just the audio and lighting, so we also look for new materials and new designs. Most importantly, we don't copy ideas; you will never see anything that looks like this venue anywhere else in the world," Samy continued.

That said, Samy takes a very keen interest in the audio setup in the venue, not only from an aesthetic perspective, but from a listening angle, too, as it's all part of creating the sumptuous ambience. And, on this occasion, he is over the moon with the TW AUDiO installation. He continued: "I think this sound system is more delicate, in comparison to other brands I have worked with in the past. You can go from very low to very high, and that is a great advantage. TW AUDiO do more than sell a sound system, they sell a design. The sound is perfect, there are no delays inside or outside, just everyone listening to the same audio experience."

When specifying the PA, Gerard needed to keep in mind that Medusa has three modes - restaurant, cabaret and club - so it was essential the system was flexible, and capable of background music, live performance and DJ sets. At the same time, the owners wanted the system to be as discreet as possible.

Coupled with these requirements is the fact that the venue is half indoors and half outdoors, split by glass bi-folding doors that stretch the full length of the elongated room. The solution was to install one system inside and one outside, however, they do function as a single solution.

Gerard explained further: "Inside we had to consider reverberation times, as well as the fact the room is essentially open on one side. We needed enough power from the cabinets to provide even coverage across the space, but not too much, to avoid any interference."

Inside, Gerard selected 12 TW AUDiO T20i loudspeakers with a 90° by 50° dispersion angle mounted horizontally around the perimeter of the room. Thanks to the sophisticated driver arrangement and passive crossover the T20i has constant directivity, even when installed horizontally, which was necessary due to the low ceiling at Medusa. To supplement the T20i cabinets, Gerard also selected two TW AUDiO B30 subwoofers, and eight TW AUDiO B14i subwoofers, the latter of which was specifically designed by the company for this project, at Gerard's request.

He approached TW AUDiO founders and brothers, Bernhard and Tobias Wüstner to ask if they could collaborate on a customised product. Bernhard furthered: "The B14i was the first of two products we developed for this project. Both were necessary to be able to fulfil the sound requirements and both were critical to producing the perfect sound. I feel with the B14i we have created something really special."

At just 24cm in height, the newly designed B14i allowed Gerard to place the subwoofers into spaces the height of a typical eight-inch subwoofer, in this case, mostly under the sofas. What makes the B14i even more special is that TW AUDiO placed a specially developed 14-inch long excursion driver in a bandpass



DRIVING HUMAN AUDIO EXPERIENCE



• Above
The central
DJ booth at
GOTHA.

enclosure when designing it, which provides up to 6dB more SPL compared to a traditional double eight-inch subwoofer of identical size. The benefit of this design being the extension of usable frequency response from 39Hz-120Hz, offering Gerard countless possibilities in a very compact box.

Bernhard continued: “The development of any product has a distinct process. In our case, Tobias (TW AUDiO’s R&D Director) has a special design in mind, a specific sound. It’s a very natural, warm sound, which can be found across the entire portfolio. It’s pleasant to listen to, no matter what the environment, because of that warm, natural sound.”

Outside, with the obvious difference in acoustic environment, Gerard opted for 18 TW AUDiO M10’s - a significant amount for the size of the space, but he had his reasons for the quantity. “There are a lot of loudspeakers outside to avoid any noise issues. It’s a big area to cover, but we didn’t want any sound to leak out, as we are situated on the beachfront. The M10’s have a short throw, so the sound isn’t projected too far and lost, but coverage is even thanks to the quantity of boxes. Present, clear, natural sound is what we strive for and we have definitely achieved it here, thanks to the adaptable range of products from TW AUDiO,” he said.

Bernhard added: “You don’t want to have two large loudspeakers in this kind of environment. But with the three modes

and the levels changing, getting louder with each mode, you do need power and precision.”

Amplification for the system is taken care of by eight Powersoft X4DSP+ETH amplifiers with built-in DSP, three for inside and five for outside. The two companies often work together, with the products containing standard presets for a quick and easy setup.

Completing the audio line-up at Medusa is the DJ equipment, which comprises a further four TW AUDiO M10’s powered by a single Powersoft Quattrocanali 4804 DSP+Dante amplifier, Pioneer CDJ-2000 NXS2 multiplayers and Pioneer DJM-900 NXS2 DJ mixers, as well as a Yamaha QL1 mixing console for the live show performances and two Pioneer Pro Audio XPRS 10’s for DJ monitors.

Looping back to Samy’s comment and how important every aspect of the venue is, he and Gerard were also responsible for the lighting installation. At Medusa, the majority of the lighting fixtures are hung on a truss grid outside, so the movers can really highlight the show performers, as well as double up as dancefloor lighting, later in the evening.

The weatherproof lighting inventory includes 10 Tronios Tiger 7R moving heads, four BEAMZ LED Orbic Wash Corolle moving heads, 10 BEAMZ Ignite 180B LED 150W moving heads and five Starway 10R beam spot moving heads, alongside a full complement of intelligent fixtures from Briteq, all of which are

controlled via a Sunlite FC+ software interface.

Samy said of the completed project: “I’m really proud of Medusa, it’s one-of-a-kind, although it’s the second venue I have built with an integrated show. Everything about it just works, and I have no doubt we will be asked to replicate a similar concept elsewhere.”

This incredible technology setup, along with the exquisite menu, the dazzling location and the simply stunning interiors screams pizzazz, and it will come as no surprise that the venue operates a strict reservations policy, as it is currently one of the hottest places in town. But the fun doesn’t stop there, it continues next door at GOTHA.

Recognised around the world as one of the most famous clubs in Europe, GOTHA in Cannes is considered an institution based on a magical discotheque equipped with the latest technologies. Like Medusa, GOTHA offers its clientele a unique experience with the greatest DJ performances, refined extravagance cocktails, VIP service and a state-of-the-art PA system that shakes clubbers to their core on the dancefloor, as they are mesmerised by the iconic LED rings flown above the central DJ booth. The GOTHA design was inspired by the ‘30s ‘Les Années Folles’ era when secret parties took place in decadent locations. GOTHA’s different brass patterns and velvet furniture is a look that denotes luxury. ▶

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION

MEDUSA

SOUND

18 x TW AUDiO B14i subwoofer; 12 x TW AUDiO T20i-90 loudspeaker; 2 x TW AUDiO B30 subwoofer; 22 x TW AUDiO M10 loudspeaker; 8 x Powersoft X4D-SP•ETH amplifier; 1 x Powersoft Quattrocanali 4804 DSP•Dante amplifier; 5 x Pioneer CDJ-2000 NXS2 multiplayer; 2 x Pioneer DJM-900 NXS2 DJ mixer; 1 x Yamaha QL1 mixing console; 2 x Pioneer Pro Audio XPRS 10 DJ monitor

LIGHTING, VISUAL & EFFECTS

10 x Tronios TIGER 7R moving head; 4 x BEAMZ LED Orbic Wash Corolle moving head; 10 x BEAMZ Ignite 180b LED 150W moving head; 8 x BEAMZ 180 LED 180W moving head; 5 x Starway 10R moving head; 8 x Briteq wash zoom moving head; 3 x Briteq LED strobe; 6 x Briteq Wash BT Orbit moving head; 6 x Briteq BT Theatre 250W Zoom projector; 10 x Contest wash zoom projector; 1 x Sunlite FC• interface; 4 x Magic:FX mini CO2 jet; 1 x MDG ATMe smoke machine

medusacannes.com

Opening at 12.30am GOTH attracts some customers from neighbouring Medusa, but of course, it welcomes an army of revelers simply based upon its brand name, too. Each venue was designed to have its own identity to keep the crowds flocking in time and time again. With GOTH being such a prestigious club, it certainly had a reputation to uphold. Gerard and Samy worked in partnership here too, and the project was 18 months in the planning. Its semi-circular appearance didn't make the design easy, and Gerard advised that more than 1,000 drawings were produced to achieve the final setup. Built from scratch, but within the original structure, there were some architectural limits, specifically where a PA system could be flown. It was equally important that the overall aesthetics were not interrupted and that other residents in the building were not disturbed.

Likened to Jimmy's in Monaco - a project also completed by Gerard and Samy - in terms of exclusive clientele, once again the technology installed had to be nothing but the best. GOTH is after all, now the biggest TW AUDiO install in the area, so it's a flagship project for the German manufacturer, too. Gerard said: "To use a French phrase, it's a 'human-sized' company that I love working with. We get great support from TW AUDiO when we need it. Its products are a combination of what we've been used to working with over the years, but with the advantages of new technology."

The main dancefloor PA comprises clusters of TW AUDiO's T24N loudspeakers. "I like these loudspeakers, I have used them many times before - in Jimmy's most recently," Gerard continued. "It's a great

point source cabinet."

The T24Ns operate in conjunction with five subwoofers under the DJ stage - four TW AUDiO B21i bass enclosures and one TW AUDiO BSX in the centre for infra bass. The B21i single 21-inch subwoofer is the second product that was specifically designed for this project. Bernhard said of the bass enclosure: "Good things take time, but patience has made a perfect product. No two clubs are the same, but the introduction of this customised subwoofer has really made this a unique venue for us."

Asked about the difference between the two subwoofers, Gerard said: "The centre one produces a drier bass, while the others are for the low-end. Even though we have combined different models it still operates as one source." The dancefloor system can achieve 126dB peak SPL for those who want to truly feel the energy of the system. For clubbers who still want to be part of the mix, but not centrally, the seating areas wrap around the dancefloor, and are looked after by a ring of TW AUDiO T20i loudspeakers. The same models are also used in the adjacent bar area, that is still part of the main room, but again offers a slightly different atmosphere. Behind the DJ booth are the VIP and VVIP areas, and the latter has its own personal PA, to guarantee the most elite customers are treated to the best of the best at GOTH. More T20i loudspeakers are utilised alongside more T24Ns and two T30i cabinets and four C12's.

Low-end aside from the dancefloor is covered by a combination on B14i subwoofers - having been used next door to spectacular effect, it was a no-brainer to use them again - as well as B141's, B30i's, >



B18i's and B17i's. "The difficulty was to cover the entire space, due to the layout and the size of the venue, there are some shadows. We had to ensure everywhere was covered," Bernhard said.

"There are a number of zones, but all areas are covered harmoniously, added Gerard. "TW AUDiO has a great product range, meaning we could select what we needed for this project - they really have a complete range." Acoustic treatment on the ceiling and textured walls also assisted Gerard's final vision, and together his dream plans were transformed into a reality.

Amplification at GOTH replicates its sibling next door with a selection of Powersoft X4 DSP amplifiers to drive the PA. The four-channel amplifiers feature a built-in digital audio signal management system based on ARM Cortex A-8 processor and TI C6000 DSP platform, leading the way for an innovative level of signal processing, so yet again ticking the cutting-edge box that GOTH craves. Another Yamaha QL1 digital mixer is also in place at the club.

Aside from the impressive audio configuration, the central DJ booth is very much a visual focal point, as three 3D LED rings are suspended above it. Motorised so the rings can move up and down, as well as tilt, are built by Zhejiang DGX Electronic Technology and provide the club with dynamic animation across the entire space, since the rings offer a three-sided view. A unique design feature that was implemented at GOTH, after taking inspiration for the circular structure from

OMNIA club in Las Vegas.

Further LED screens for the front of the DJ booth, the pillar facades and two external promotional screens were also supplied by DGX, a Chinese manufacturer that Gerard describes as having a lot of innovative ideas. All the screens are controlled using a Resolume software package running on a PC.

It's the job of Lighting Operator, Cristobal Bachler Klein to take charge of the video content. He is also responsible for the intelligent fixtures, which at GOTH includes more than 100 Briteq moving heads, strobes, projectors and blinders. For control of these, Cristobal utilises an MA Lighting MA onPC command wing, as well as another Sunlite FC+ interface. He said: "I came to Cannes one week before opening to programme the lighting, I was here day and night. But, everything we do with the lighting and visuals is live, it isn't pre-programmed. I use many tools and compose with colour, gobos and effects, feeling the influence from the DJ and the atmosphere of the audience."

With all of the technological aspects at GOTH, in combination with the equally exuberant interiors and the five-star status the brand name has acquired, once again, it is very easy to see how popular a destination the Palm Beach Resort actually is. Arguably one of the most exclusive parties in the region, you know you've made it when you bag an invite to what could be considered a once-in-a-lifetime experience. ^{cr}

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

GOTHA

SOUND

2 x TW AUDiO B18i subwoofer; 14 x TW AUDiO T20i loudspeaker; 14 x TW AUDiO T24N loudspeaker; 4 x TW AUDiO B21i subwoofer; 1 x TW AUDiO BSX subwoofer; 16 x TW AUDiO B14i subwoofer; 2 x TW AUDiO B30 subwoofer; 2 x TW AUDiO T30i loudspeaker; 4 x TW AUDiO C12 loudspeaker; 2 x TW AUDiO B17i subwoofer; 12 x Powersoft X4 DSP amplifier; 2 x Ecler Mimo12x12 digital matrix; 1 x Yamaha QL1 mixing console; 4 x Pioneer CDJ-2000 NXS2 multiplayer; 1 x Pioneer DJM-900 NXS2 DJ mixer

LIGHTING, VISUAL & EFFECTS

8 x Briteq BT-GIGAFLASH LED strobe; 36 x Briteq BTX-TITAN projector; 12 x Briteq BTX-CIRRUS moving wash; 12 x Briteq BTX-BEAM 5R moving beam projector; 8 x Briteq BT-RETRO fixture; 60 x Briteq BEAMSPOT1-TRIAC projector; 240 x Contest PIN15QC beam projector; 24 x Contest RAY1R moving head; 1 x MA Lighting MA onPC command wing; 1 x Sunlite FC+ interface; 8 x Magic:FX mini CO2 jet; 1 x RVB 25W laser; 2 x Haze Base HZ-350 smoke machine

gotha-club.com