

Vi provides finely controlled power for historic church.



Emmanuel Centre, Westminster, UK

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Autograph Sales & Installations

Setting the scene

Nestled in the heart of Westminster, UK, the Emmanuel Centre is a trans-denominational church serving the broad Christian community

in the area. Designed by architect Sir Herbert Baker and completed in 1928, the building has a 1,000 capacity circular main auditorium with a domed glass roof supported by twenty four pairs of marble columns between high arched windows. The panelled walls and tiered seating are of original polished English oak.

Establishing objectives

Like many venues of its type, the centre is an increasingly multipurpose space. Where once the sound reinforcement needs were for speech only, today the schedule at the venue features a wide variety of live music performances and concerts, from rock and roll to jazz.

Although an architectural gem, the venue presented an interesting sound reinforcement

challenge. The reverberation time in the main auditorium measured around three seconds, a significant obstacle to speech intelligibility. Furthermore, the Grade II listed status of the building meant that drilling into the structure of the venue was forbidden, ruling out the installation of flying points.

To bring the sound at the centre up to date, Elvis Uriona, Emmanuel Centre's head of sound, approached long term sound system partner, Autograph Sales & Installations.

Peppe Mallozzi, who led the system design for Autograph, was familiar with the acoustic challenges and structural limitations of the venue and was well aware that a ground supported flown solution would be visually

imposing. Fortunately, the Emmanuel Centre's sound team already had a positive experience of the only acceptable alternative - a ground stacked system - as one of their biggest clients, Hillsong Church (whose services feature full rock and roll shows), had for some time been bringing in its own PA: a d&b V-Series system.

Keen to cater for visitors, Emmanuel Centre wanted a permanent system which would serve a big rock and roll show, and which Hillsong would be happy to use, while still providing the highest level of speech intelligibility for every seat in the auditorium.

The solution

To meet the challenge of coverage without over exciting the acoustics of the room, the design proposed by Mallozzi harnessed the highly controlled directivity of the V-Series loudspeakers and the passive cardioid design of the V-SUBs.

With the effectiveness of the system confirmed, the installation was project managed by Adam Broom, Technical Sales Engineer at Autograph. The final design features Vi loudspeakers, the installation specific variant of the V-Series.

Seated on 600 mm risers, two Vi-SUBs per side are topped by two Vi12 cabinets, their 120° horizontal dispersion targeting the front half of the room, while above these two Vi8s per side, with 80° horizontal dispersion, neatly target the further reaches. Four d&b E8s on the stage lip serve as frontfills, while a further two E8s per side are mounted on the ground stack as outfills, completing an even 180° coverage.

The system is powered by three d&b 30D amplifiers, and user friendly access to system presets is enabled via the d&b R1 Remote



control software. Ensuring the venue has control tools enough to satisfy the needs of any visiting sound engineer, Autograph also provided a DiGiCo SD12 compact digital mixing console.

Summing up the response from the client, Mallozzi says, "Jonathan, the main inhouse sound engineer, called me and said, 'It's incredible, it's getting better and better.' Now the Emmanuel Centre can really predict what a show will sound like and they have a huge amount of stage rejection, so can really push the live microphones, which couldn't be done before. The centre has its DiGiCo SD12 and d&b R1 Remote control, so they can play all sorts of clever tricks with it. They're very, very happy."

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➤ **System: Vi8, Vi12, Vi-SUB, E8, and 30D**