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Tannoy and Lab.gruppen Reinforce Audio at Dallas Hall

By SCN Staff On October 23, 2014

For many years, a North Dallas couple has invited artists to perform at their home to entertain friends and business associates. Those events, however, invariably involved a substantial amount of work to reconfigure their home to accommodate both the artists and audience. Ultimately, that led the family to construct an addition to their residence; one that houses a dedicated concert hall that features an audio system comprised of Tannoy loudspeakers driven by class leading Lab.gruppen Contractor Series amplifiers.

Designed by David Marsh of Marsh/PMK International LLC, (formerly Pelton Marsh Kinsella), the system provides sound reinforcement for the roughly 125-seat venue using 8 Tannoy CMS 601DC loudspeakers - each wired to a dedicated channel of a Lab.gruppen C 20:8x amplifier - and 2 Tannoy VSX 10BP subs powered by one Lab.gruppen C 10:4x.



Initially, the owner envisioned the space as a pure concert hall with no sound reinforcement system, Marsh said. "Holly Hall of HPD Architecture contacted me to ask if I'd do the acoustic design for the project, but the client was essentially the construction manager on the project and was emphatic that there would be no sound system."

As the project progressed, however, in order to ensure the multi-purpose space met the needs of guest speakers, the classical, pop, and jazz performers invited to perform there and the audience itself, the client realized some degree of sound reinforcement would be necessary - particularly for artists running background tracks. That said, the client stated, "My goal was that the audio infrastructure be concealed so the room would be very much a continuation of our house and could be used for both dinners and as a concert venue."

Marsh began working on the project in 2012 and finished out in December 2013. During that time, he worked closely with local integrators, Dallas Sight and Sound, on the design of the audio system and infrastructure; laying out the components necessary to provide intelligible sound reinforcement throughout the space, without detracting from the aesthetic Hall envisioned.

"We provided a simple distributed system in the ceiling, which has coffers that vary in height between 14 and 15-feet," Marsh said. "We had to work the loudspeakers in around the coffers, sprinkler heads and lights including a large chandelier." The 8 Tannoy CMS 601 DCs were wired direct to voice coil. "Two were placed in the centre of the ceiling area and three down each side. And two Tannoy VSX 10 BT subwoofers were placed under the front of the stage. The Lab.gruppen C10:4x amplifier driving the subs was bridged to provide 500 watts to each of the subs."

"We've been using Tannoy for many years," Marsh continued. "About as long as they've been making ceiling speakers. What attracted us to Tannoy's CMS line was their unique Dual Concentric design; they sound more consistent over a wider dispersion angle than anything else we've heard."

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Marsh considered a number of subwoofers, but ultimately chose Tannoy's VSX 10 BTs because of their low profile. "The stage isn't that high, so we had to find something that would fit underneath it. The VSX 10BTs are located in the middle of the stage front, side-by-side in a mirrored arrangement with the slot-shaped ports as close together as possible to achieve the greatest coupling effect. These subs in combination with the CMS ceiling speakers provide a warm and a highly musical sound quality."

As for the choice of Lab.gruppen: "They're one of the better amplifiers out there," Marsh said. "They're reliable and provide a lot of power in a small package, which was ideal in this case because we didn't have much rack space to work with."

Other system elements include multiple playback sources, BSS BLU-100 DSP, a Yamaha LS9-16 digital console, a Shure ULXD 24 wireless system and a compliment of portable gear.

"It was an unusual project," Marsh summed up. "And to do it properly took a considerable amount of vigor and commitment on the part of the client."

"In the end, the clients were thrilled," said Hall.

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