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Robe Lights Up Jam Factory Arts Centre in Lviv

Products Involved

LEDWash 300X™ ParFect 150™ RGBW

The Jam Factory Art Center is a lively and invigorating new contemporary art centre and a collaborative community event space, set in a charismatic and brilliantly reimagined Neo-Gothic former distillery and one time Jam factory in picturesque Lviv, the largest city in western Ukraine.

All technical elements – lighting, sound, video, trussing, cable infrastructure, automation and the control systems – for the main auditorium and performance area was supplied by Dnipro-based Sound House, one of Robe’s Ukrainian distributors, with Robe LEDWash 300s and ParFect 150s on the lighting rig.

Sound House won the tender and undertook the technical design, specification, installation, commissioning and delivery of all Jam Factory’s technical production components.

The Jam Factory project started in 2015 when the then derelict building was acquired by the organisation of cultural entrepreneur, Harald Binder. Construction work commenced in 2019, and the Art Center was opened in late 2023 despite Ukraine being engaged in a full-scale war with its neighbour, which invaded in February 2022.

For the main stage lighting installation, the LEDWash 300s and ParFect 150s were chosen based on Jam Factory’s multipurpose needs to be able to stage anything from a concert to a seminar, a choir or a rock show, a dance piece to a wide variety of different events and theatre productions, plus laboratories and experimental workshops for trialling new concepts.

There are many reasons for people to come and utilise and enjoy Jam Factory’s spaces and appreciate the stylish architectural and interior design that skilfully combines heritage with modernity.

Sound House’s Andrii Garkavy has also worked on many similar installations, both in the Lviv area and around Ukraine, he and his team’s experience played a role in winning the job.

They were initially contacted in 2021, a year ahead of the projected opening, but the onset of war made its own adjustments to the deadlines!

Despite the obvious challenges of being in a warzone, everyone had the determination, commitment and foresight to press ahead and finish. While not a huge installation project in terms of physical size, the realisation of Jam Factory is a massive achievement in these adverse circumstances.

When Andrii assessed their needs for lighting, he considered the size of the auditorium space and the incoming natural light as well as the venue's comprehensive music programme curated by Ivanka Tarnavska which encompasses a vibrant range of classical, jazz and electronic performances.

Compact sizing of equipment was important, and quietness was also an issue especially for classical and jazz music and some of the physical theatre and performance concepts. Every piece of kit specified needed to be versatile, multipurpose and capable of being worked hard, plus easy to use, for scenarios where there may only be one technician to deal with all technical.

The Robe LEDWash 300 and the ParFect 100 both ticked all these boxes.

"Small, unobtrusive, easy to rig, programme and operate, quite running and yet powerful enough to cover multiple different lighting scenarios," explained Andrii, mentioning in particular the wide zoom range and colour temperatures from 2700K to 8000K in the LEDWash 300X were real winners.

ParFect 150 was picked as "an excellent static companion to the LEDWashes, with similar colour and colour temperature characteristics, super-smooth dimming and 3.8 - 60 degree zoom range."

It's a combination that Sound House has used before very successfully and will continue to do so. Andrii notes that the "good design and quality engineering" of the Robe products mean that even a few lights will make a substantial difference to how effectively a space can be lit.

These are the first batch of Robe fixtures for Jam Factory, and while it is planned to add more to the rig as the project develops, everything is completely fluid during the current situation.

The kit is looked after day to day by technical manager Dmytro Chyryk, Jam Factory's chief AV engineer who is from the frontline city of Kharkiv in the east of the country, Ukraine's second city.

He was delighted to discover that he would have Robe lights when offered the job at Jam Factory, as he had previously worked as both a lighting designer and engineer at Kharkiv Philharmonia which has Robe Pointes, LEDWash 600s and ParFect 150s plus LED PARs.

"I like Robe fixtures very much, they are fast, robust and reliable and offer many creative options," he stated, "I have had only positive experiences with Robe products!"

Dmytro and Jam Factory operations and executive director Tetyana Fedoruk explained how they all worked as a team on defining the required details of the technical tender. They consulted with various specialists in relation to the process and made decisions based on available budget as well as the brands and equipment that they thought offered the most breadth and value to enhance Jam Factory's repertoire.

The installation also included an Electro-Voice / Dynacord sound system with Midas control desk and MILOS trussing, the latter also a Czech brand.

The main challenges for the installation were "fulfilling the obligations you are bound by as a contractor in the unpredictability that comes with wartime, from delivery times through to the cost of logistics, and the skills shortages which are particularly acute in the technical production industry as so many have joined the armed forces and are defending the country.

"Any technical challenges with any project right now are absolutely dwarfed by these wider and overarching ones," noted Andrii, adding that the actual physical installation went super-smoothly on site for them.

"It an honour to be involved in such a brilliant project that is dedicated to bringing creativity alive and into touch with people of all backgrounds, experiences and ages in entertaining ways. It was a pleasure to work with the team there on site and share their enthusiasm and zest for the project, which is like a beacon of positivity for the future."

About The Jam Factory Art Center

The Jam Factory Art Center, Lviv is living proof of resilience and vibrance as much as the importance of art and expression anywhere anytime whatever the circumstances. It is actively hosting an array of exhibitions, theatrical performances, music events, educational

initiatives, and community-oriented projects that are inspiring dialogue, interaction and entertainment.

There are six energising and different spaces – a mix of old and new – across the 35,000 square metre premises which dates to the 1820s when the land was purchased by local innkeeper Moses Kronik. During the 1850s, it became a distillery for alcohol and in 1908, when most of the original buildings burnt down, it was re-built in the neo-Gothic style.

It was during the Soviet occupation of the 1990s that it briefly served as a state-run food packaging plant that was later privatised before closing completely in 2008.

The first pop-up art event was staged there in 2009.

With the completion of this latest phase of new development, a much-anticipated opening night was attended by over 3000 people in terrible weather, to celebrate The Jam Factory taking on a new lease of life and looking to the future as a showcase for Ukrainian and international creative activities.

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