CASE STUDIES

Cinema

Unite Your Audience
The Martin Audio Experience
At Martin Audio we believe that uniting audiences with exciting sound creates shared memories that sear into the consciousness delivering more successful tours, events and repeatedly packed venues.

We achieve this by an obsessive attention to detail on the professional sound system’s acoustic performance, frequently challenging convention and involving a sophisticated mix of design, research, mathematical modelling and software engineering, to deliver dynamic, full-frequency sound right across the audience.

With over forty years of live sound and installation expertise to our name, Martin Audio offers a wide range of premium professional loudspeakers so customers can be assured of selecting the right system for their chosen application, whether it’s a small scale installation or a festival for over 150,000 people.

Clearly intelligible dialogue, spine-tingling music and mind-blowing sound effect reproduction add up to a fuller, more satisfying shared audience experience that sears into the consciousness – good for business, but only deliverable by cinema sound reinforcement that’s fully up to the job.

Our love affair with Cinema stretches back to the early 70’s when the Rank Organisation commissioned four systems for seminal theatres around London. At the time, power and muscularity of new wave show production was early in its infancy and the initial demo by our founder Dave Martin blew the minds of Rank representatives. Around this time, Dave Martin also undertook quadraphonic cinema sound tests with Stanley Kubrick for “A Clockwork Orange”. Cinema has obviously developed enormously since that time, but again in the mid 2000’s Martin Audio took a giant leap forward with its 3-Way THX approved Cinema Series that were capable of delivering the powerful, consistent sound generated by modern digital sound tracks, to every member of the audience. Martin Audio’s Cinema Series has also delivered a reputation for being quick to install, easy to align and exceptionally reliable for optimum performance day in, day out.
Martin Audio has been the system of choice for Vue Cinemas for many years and each system is purpose-built for Vue. A significant highlight was the provision of cinema sound systems for its Princes Quay Hull cinema, Europe’s first new-build, all-digital multiplex cinema.

Throughout Hull’s ten screening rooms Martin Audio’s purpose-developed Screen 5 or Screen 4 systems (depending on room size) were fitted, accompanied by Screen Sub 1A’s and Effect 5 surround speakers. Designed for ‘behind the screen’ placement, Martin Audio’s narrow-profile, three-way, THX-approved loudspeakers have been purpose built for cinema environments. Both the Screen 4 and 5 incorporate a 2 x 15” LF section plus dedicated midrange and HF (the former offering 90° x 40° dispersion pattern, the latter 90° x 50°).

These were accompanied behind the screen by the Screen Sub 1A, which uses a single 18” long excursion high power driver, while large area tapered twin ports ensure minimum turbulence down to the lowest frequencies demanded by today’s digital soundtracks.

Featured throughout the auditoria is the Effect 5, Martin Audio’s THX-approved two-way passive surround system, housing a 100° x 60° horn.

At the time, Mark Buck, the projection manager at Vue Hull, confessed that although well aware of Martin Audio’s pedigree, this was his first exposure to the company’s signature sound. Mark said, “The sound systems in the screens are incredible. I have never heard anything like it. The sound can be amazingly discreet and there is no bleed whatsoever. The amount of power the Martin Audio system provides is remarkable. Above all the sound system has run faultlessly from Day One”.

A strategic partnership between Martin Audio and cinema distributor Beijing Instar Trading ensured that the Jackie Chain multiplex chain operated by the Sparkler Roll Group exclusively used Martin Audio equipment.

The first Martin Audio-equipped cinema has already opened in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, with movie icon Jackie Chan attending. The Changzhou installation comprised a full suite of Martin Audio product including Screen 5 and Screen 4 supported by S218+ subwoofers, Effect5 Surround speakers with MA2.0, MA3.0, and MA5.2K power amplifiers.
Artech Cinema, Poland

“Golden Terraces” in Warsaw remains a Martin Audio benchmark.

Martin Audio has been providing its Polish cinema partner, Artech Cinema, with screen solutions for many years. However, enormous progress is continuing to be made, according to the company’s Marek Macierzanka.

Artech Cinema has routinely specified Martin Audio’s three way bi-amped/tri-amped and THX-approved Screen and Effects systems in main network installations as they come up for replacement.

Products like Screen 4, 4B, 5, 5B, 6 and 6B, along with low-distortion Screen Sub 1A, Effect 3 and 5 continue to be heavily specified. “We sell these systems all the time, and they remain top-shelf systems in cinemas,” confirms Marek.” All screening houses using Martin Audio systems remain loyal to the brand — because Martin Audio goes on working forever.”

One of the best examples, he says, remains the main screening room at Golden Terraces (Złote Tarasy) in Warsaw. “We haven’t installed any similar solutions and there is no comparable screening room in Poland to this day. After seven years the Martin Audio extended system remains, the only change having been the projection system, which is now paired for dual 3D projection. This is a real flagship for Multikino and, of course, for us.”

But of course Poland has experienced exponential progress in the development of D-cinema since that installation.

Marek reports that there are now in the region of some 1000 digital screens in the country, mostly in multi-hall cinemas, with the new National Digitisation Programme boosting this further. Sponsored by the Polish Film Institute, so far some 200 small cinemas
have been able to go digital as a result of this initiative, with another 50 set to join the digitisation programme in the coming year.

“Since only the projection systems are donated, a small number of these cinemas have also decided to upgrade their sound systems. They have to cover 50% of the digitisation costs, which can be difficult; sound system’s upgrades are at their own expense” says Marek.

There are two main large networks controlling the market: the larger Cinema City (with 344 screens, 96 screens under construction, and now joined with Cineworld) and Multikino (today the property of Irish company Vue Entertainment, with 253 screens plus 15 screens in Latvia and Lithuania, 15 screens in two locations presently under construction and some 30 new screens planned). Next comes Helios which is significantly smaller (with 180 screens, 34 under construction and 36 planned), while the fourth, NoveKino, is a much smaller network, with just 15 screens in six locations (having had to close several cinemas due to economical problems). There is also a fifth operator — Cinema 3D, established in 2010 and targeted at small towns, with 15 screens in four locations (and five further locations planned).

With the progressive move to HD, 2K and 4K resolution — as well as 3D — the demand for ‘visual realism’ has also extended into sound, with the first installation of Dolby Atmos having taken place in Multikino Katowice. “Since the requirements for better sound are growing, we expect to see further Dolby Atmos screening rooms in the future,” predicts Marek.
Martin Audio’s relationship with the Roundhouse extends back at least 40 years. One of Dave Martin’s original systems was installed in the venue at the end of the 1960s before migrating to the new Sundown Theatres at the start of the following decade.

On the eve of staging the BBC Electric Proms in 2009, the Roundhouse in Camden commissioned a new Martin Audio dedicated cinema system for its 102-seat Studio Theatre.

The venue ordered three Martin Audio Screen 3s as a conventional L/C/R system, along with eight Effect 3Rs as a cinema surround sound, along with a Screen Sub1A (1 x 18”).

Purpose-designed for screening rooms, the Screen 3 is a 3-way system, with dedicated mid-range and high frequency sections, while the Effect 3R two-way passive system is a reduced-height enclosure specifically made for screening rooms with low ceilings such as this, to ensure that it can still be optimally installed at the correct level.

Venue technician, Ben Vaughan, said “I specified the Martin Audio solution based on its tonal quality, ease of installation and cost-effectiveness. Also I felt that Martin Audio had the stronger brand name.”

He added, “We have developed the Studio into a flexible space and it was important that we could wheel in the L/C/R/ system on dolly platforms when using the full cinema facilities and reconfigure the room quickly for use as a conventional auditorium.”

With eight Effects 3R enclosures offering a left/right rear system, the true 5.1 Martin Audio system is optimised using the dedicated CMX1A cinema controller.

This enabled the Roundhouse to meet its remit to provide an educational programme to support workshops in new media, broadcast and all elements of the performing and visual arts — giving young people a chance that they would ordinarily be denied, to make films. “This Martin Audio system has become a core function of that and has enabled us to extend our range,” said Vaughan.

Summing up, Ben Vaughan says, “This has proved to be a wise acquisition and I am delighted we opted for a dedicated cinema system. Having given the Martin Audio system a good workout we have achieved everything we wanted to in terms of performance.”
This is just a small selection from a wealth of examples from around the world that you can find out more about by visiting www.martin-audio.com