

Millikin University upgrades with Martin Audio TORUS



Located in the Perkinson Music Centre at the 122-year-old private Millikin University in Decatur, IL, Kaeuper Hall is a 167-seat auditorium that has just taken delivery of the very first white Martin Audio TORUS system, matched to the room décor. In fact it is the Hall's first ever permanently installed sound system, despite its multipurpose usage. "There was no PA in there previously, they had just been using speakers on sticks ... since forever, yet it runs pretty much the whole gamut of performance," according to designer Graeme Brown, whose company Advanced Audio & Lighting Systems carried out the integration. This includes events ranging from lectures to individual recitals and opera rehearsals to guest performances and intimate concerts.

The University contacted his company for a quote, and Brown was soon on site carrying out a survey. His concern was not so much the boutique size of the room as the fact that the superstructure was largely wood framed concrete, and the room had not seen a cable run in its life. But the clients did know precisely what they wanted.

Brown's initial instinct had been to specify a WPM line array (from the Wavefront Performance series). But recognising the room was too small for a line array, he quickly turned his attention to Martin Audio's TORUS constant curvature, knowing this to be perfect for the throw distance and dynamics of the room. "TORUS actually provided a much more even coverage pattern [due to its size], and thanks to the wood frame we could rig it hard and tight to the ceiling - in fact it was a super clean install."

Sensing a slight dead zone centre in front of the stage he added a Martin Audio CDD10 coaxial differential dispersion speaker over the proscenium arch to cover the front rows. Low frequency extension was provided by an SX118 single 18in sub mounted on each side behind each TORUS array, which comprised a pair of the T1230 (12in 30° fixed angle) speakers. The system is powered by an iKON iK42 and iK81 multichannel amplifiers.

The company had worked diligently on creating the optimum outcome, carrying out modelling and pre-vis in the EASE environment, with assistance from Martin Audio's Joe Lima. "We made good use of the asymmetrical horn flares," he said, adding that the adjustable horizontal pattern could be adjusted to 75° via the Dynamic Horn Flare. "Essentially, what this means is the outside is all the way narrow and inside all the way wide on the adjustable horn flares."

Once TORUS was fired up, the results were palpable for all who heard it. Graeme Brown reports, "The tuning experience was wonderful - really quick and simple, and one of the fastest system tunes I can remember doing. There were minimum EQ changes it immediately came alive. The system was very responsive, and extremely well behaved, as is the room itself."

"TORUS appears to be an extremely versatile system," he concluded. "It's the second one we've done but the first one I've done vertically. These boxes are certainly pretty magical for what they are, and the University is in love with the system." His company will be carrying out the next phase of upgrading the infrastructure when they return to replace the old lighting and dimmer structure.

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