

Integrated acoustics and audio for Chinese opera – Xiqu Centre, Hong Kong

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ABSTRACT

The acoustical design for the Xiqu Centre considered the heritage and expectations of Hong Kong audiences and theatre practitioners, along with those of visiting artists from mainland China and international patrons and artists. Vocal technique is very different from Western opera, and the orchestrations and relation to the singers are quite different. As in Western opera the acoustics must deliver very good balance between the singers and orchestra, but also clarity of the vocals similar to a good drama theatre. Over the last 50 years Cantonese Opera has evolved indoors by developing along with technology, becoming more amplified to adapt to the poor acoustics of existing venues. In the Xiqu Centre natural acoustics and audio design were deeply integrated in order to achieve appropriate indoor balance between the loud instruments and softer voices. The room acoustics and audio design allow fine gradations between fully natural and fully amplified sound.

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