



CASE STUDY

Flexible events at Kings Place

Client: Kings Place

Location: Kings Cross, London

Product(s) supplied: **AW-HE130**

Challenge

To cater to the flexibility of their clients with camera technology to suit any genre of performance or corporate event.

Solution

The installation of six AW-HE130 cameras to facilitate their flexibility with ease of use and installation.

"I looked at similar venues to benchmark against not only what they using, but also how they were using them. We did this because, for me that's the real answer to if they are going to be the right fit or not."

Chris Phillips

Director of Technical and ICT for Kings Place.



Opened in 2008, Kings Place, the independently-funded arts and conference venue, presents a diverse range of music and visual arts.

Situated in the heart of London's King's Cross, it is the first new public concert hall to be built in London since the completion of the Barbican. It has hosted a number of artists, including its resident Aurora Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and London Sinfonietta.

The venue consists of two concert halls, two art galleries and a handful of spaces, suited to a variety of events. With limited direction over what can be hosted at the venue, they have the flexibility to offer a variety of performance styles.

The architecture of Hall One emerged from a collaboration between Dixon Jones and Arup's acousticians. Seating 420 people, it is built to the regular shoebox geometry, i.e. a double cube, which is considered most successful for small concert halls. Inspired by halls in Japan and Finland, Hall One is a building within a building: a box that sits on rubber springs to give it complete acoustic separation from the outside world.

Structural columns around the hall are set away from the walls to allow curtains to be drawn between the columns and the wall, to modify the acoustic for speech or amplified music. Even the seats in the hall were fully tested in an acoustics laboratory, having been sourced in Italy.

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While the venue mostly holds classical music events, Kings Place has hosted individuals from the world of contemporary, folk, jazz, comedy, live podcast recordings and spoken word events, as well as a multitude of corporate events, which reflects its diverse clientele. "As long as it sits within our values, as these guide every aspect of our operations, we are happy to consider performance from across the arts," comments Chris Phillips, Director of Technical and ICT for Kings Place.

Priding themselves on their world-class facilities, Kings Place are able to deliver a superior standard of both cultural and corporate events, providing purpose-built facilities and striving to deliver excellence in all they do.

When the canal side venue of Kings Place first opened, the balance of what it could offer its clients was just right. "There are a lot of venues out there which don't offer the break-out spaces, yet have an amazing auditorium. I think we have got the balance just right with what we can do, and what we can offer our clients." adds Chris Phillips.

"Many London venues are grade-listed, which reduced the flexibility considerably, so it's great that we can offer a much more modern building, that allows us to build up or strip back our AV systems, offering to meet our clients needs and requests," adds Dave Wells, Recording and Broadcast Manager for Kings Place.

It was when the original cameras purchased for the venue began to depreciate, that Kings Place considered which solutions were best suited to its needs.



The AW-HE130 positioned for stage use



Adam controlling the HE130 via the control room



Live recording using the HE130



This is when the team began to look at the PTZ remote camera technology, hiring a number to conduct side-by-side product testing. "We just kept coming back to the AW-HE130's as they just ticked all of our boxes. They are so discrete and you can put them up anywhere really quickly, making them ready to use within such a short period of time," comments Dave Wells.

"We looked to similar venues to see what technology they were using. We read Panasonic case studies for installations at The Barbican and The Royal Academy of Music, and arranged to meet the teams at both venues. We have become close contacts, benchmarking both equipment and the underlying infrastructure it sits upon so we get the most out of them. We did this because for me, you can't just look at the cameras and know it's going to be the right fit - you have to really look at how they integrate in to the existing control systems back of house," explains Chris Phillips.

"The nice thing is that when we went to The Barbican and saw how they used the HE130's, it was noticeably different to the Royal Academy of Music. This was really interesting and demonstrated the flexibility of the camera, which was the real deciding factor. Having peers introduce and endorse the technology, was also incredibly powerful," continues Chris Phillips.

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A big factor Kings Place had to consider when selecting these cameras was; are they futureproof? The ability to look years down the line, and still rely on their camera systems to provide the highest quality recordings, was a requirement for the expanding venue.

Due to hosting such a varied programme of events, the system installation must also be able to accommodate the venues lighting requirements. Arts events in particular are often quite a bit darker, so investing in a quality camera which can shoot in low light was a must.

This led to the integration of six AW-HE130 cameras to be positioned throughout the performance spaces, fulfilling their aspirations with regards to recording and broadcast, as well as providing the ability to expand the level of interaction Kings Place has with its clients.

"We are very impressed with how the cameras have performed so far. The 1/2.86 - type MOS sensor allows for high grade filming, even when in low lighting, which is perfect for recording arts events," comments Chris Phillips.

While it's easy to offer a generic streaming system, for the level of clients Kings Place attracts, the team want to offer the best quality service possible. Thanks to the ability of the AW-HE130 to offer four channels of IP Streaming video (H.264) in Full HD, such possibilities are now open for Kings Place to explore further.

"We will be exploring the IT functionality of these cameras, and the on-board streaming, which is an awesome touch, and we do intend to roll this out," explains Chris Phillips.