

New grandMA2 control for new Emperors Palace venue



Kevin Stannett from Emperors Palace with Robert Izzett from DWR (left)

When Johannesburg based Emperors Palace upgraded their control desk, they decided on a new grandMA2 lite system. This forms part of an entire revamp as Emperors Palace Theatre of Marcellus has been transformed from a multi-purpose venue to become a complete state of the art, permanent 1 008-seater theatre.

“Basically we redeveloped the theatre from a multi-functional venue to a permanent theatre capable of handling large scale, long running quality theatre productions,” said JP de Vernon, Entertainment Technical Manager at Emperors.

After consulting with Dream Sets and Effective Events, a decision was made by Emperors Palace to build a stage out of stage decks that would fit into the venue perfectly and come within a reasonable budget. “We have proper comfortable theatre/cinema seating, the theatre is warm and inviting and the team itself is very passionate about what we do,” said JP. “Importantly we wanted a reliable system with complete back up where we would not have to worry about a desk crashing and where any outside operator would feel comfortable to run a big show. The biggest thing we also had to consider was the support. Whatever products we’ve purchased from DWR in the past has always included incredible back-up.”

DWR Distribution supplied the new solution. “A critical requirement was to have a full trekking auto back-up solution. On larger shows this is becoming a critical component,” said Robert Izzett from DWR.

Kevin Stannett Head of Lighting for Emperors Palace, visited DWR and spent time with Nick Britz. Kevin wanted faders, so Nick suggested a grandMA2 system with a motorised fader wing.



Nick Britz from DWR who presented training to Olebogeng Boinamo (MJ Event Gear) and to JP de Vernon and Kevin Stannett from Emperors Palace.

“For a back-up scenario, we included an 8-port node that sits on the stage and a grandMA PC Command Wing as a second control interface,” said Robert. “We ran new Ethernet lines into the venue from FOH to the stage. Both the FOH control desk and the 8 Port Node on stage each run on their own dedicated UPS, a back up for power failures.”

Furthermore, a wireless remote grandma was supplied, enabling the plotting and focussing of fixtures prior to a show. The scenario means they have a full tracking back up for large shows, but the current set up also means they could have three different control systems to run three separate smaller shows in three separate venues with a MA Lighting in one Venue, an 8 Port Node in the other and lastly a Command Wing.

The Emperors Palace Hotel Casino Convention and Entertainment Resort in Kempton Park is a vibey and busy venue hosting world-class performances. In the next few weeks alone the line-up will include The Crown of the Russian Ballet, a charismatic performance by comedian Kama Sutra 2, and a local production Aspoestertjie (Cinderella), a lovely romantic comedy for the family as well as a dynamic, authentic Casino style dance extravaganza.

“We really want a perfect mix for our diverse target market and draw in the audiences through not only dining in the variety of restaurants and gaming, but also by staging excellent productions in a beautiful theatrical environment,” said JP

The new theatre is a huge success, the calendar is already full for 2015 and DWR wishes the Emperors Palace team every success for the future.