

Robert Juliat Topaze followspot added to New York's El Museo del Barrio's renovated theatre, El Teatro



New York City's El Museo del Barrio's multipurpose theatre has added a Robert Juliat Topaze followspot to its rejuvenated lighting rig during its extensive renovation.

4Wall was the lighting integrator for El Teatro which was meticulously restored in 2018 and reopened early in 2019. Originally called The Heckscher Children's Theater, El Teatro was built in 1921 and boasts a Landmark-Quality interior with a remarkable series of 30-foot murals and stained-glass roundels. It was the original home of the Joseph Papp New York Shakespeare Festival. The theatre seats approximately 600 and is a venue for museum-hosted performances and rental events.



The restoration included an upgrade to the theatre's lighting plot, which included Robert Juliat's Topaze, an economical yet full-featured followspot with a 1200 W MSD source. The fixture's long lamp life and low running costs make it a powerful, cost-effective solution for mid-size theatres and shows. Among its features are a fully closing iris cassette, universal adjustable gobo holder, frost filter, individually removable colour frame, colour changer and easy focus reference.

"The Topaze is mounted in the projector booth above the balcony and shoots through glass to the stage," explains Mark Mainolfi, Technical and Production Coordinator for El Museo del Barrio.

"We're impressed by the reach and ease of Topaze. It also offers control parameters for focus, frost and iris."

Most recently the museum used the Topaze to highlight dancers during a performance by The Manhattan Ballet School. "The lighting director was pretty impressed by this state-of-the-art spot," Mainolfi recalls. "He appreciated the ability to quickly switch between multiple gel frames at once for precise colour matching and correction."



Topaze also was used for the return of the 1983 musical about African-American singer Doris Troy, “Mama, I Want to Sing!” The show made its debut at The Heckscher Children’s Theater and has toured worldwide for decades. The musical came back to El Teatro to mark its 35th anniversary late last autumn.

At El Teatro, Erica Vargas is the Director of Operations. Dan Snyder is Assistant Project Director at 4Wall.

Courtesy: David Joseph Architectural Photographer