

La Geode optimizes its stage management with Analog Way's Eikos



OMNIMAX Theater of La Geode

La Géode, Paris, architecte Adrien Fainsilber

Interview with Emmanuel FRANCOIS, La Geode's Audio Visual Officer.

La Geode, a place of choice for the OMNIMAX projection system

Opened in 1985 and located in the heart of Paris, La Geode is an impressive mirror-finished geodesic dome structure that holds an OMNIMAX theatre with 400 seats. The structure itself is a feat of architectural elegance that has been offering a uniquely sensorial experience to visitors for more than 25 years. La Geode's OMNIMAX theatre has become a true centre of excellence for cinema and technology buffs alike seeking spectacular shows, and a wide, varied programme offers the visitor immersion of their auditory and visual senses, with a mixture of culture and fun.

Movies are projected in IMAX format onto a giant hemispherical screen that covers more than 1000 square metres (11,000 square feet). Pictures projected with such a system are ten times bigger than those projected in classical cinemas.

La Geode entered the digital arena with 2D and 3D projections using a High Definition video projection system, broadening its appeal. Emmanuel FRANCOIS, La Geode's Audio Visual Officer explains, *"The installation of fixtures and fittings at La Geode was a very*



complex affair because we were one of the first companies to invest in the IMAX system on a hemispherical screen. La Geode is ageing well but we felt the need to modernise our audio visual equipment, notably with Analog Way solutions. Essentially we realised that we cannot survive with the IMAX only. Nowadays we have to diversify by offering 3D projections, room rental and concerts....ultimately everything that can be proposed in an auditorium”.

To meet this new technical challenge, La Geode chose Analog Way's Eikos (Ref. EKS500) a High Resolution, multi-layer seamless switcher scaler with multiple modes of operation, to optimise the equipment in its control room, and put activity on a more professional footing.

Analog Way's Eikos: optimising efficiency

How long have you been working with Analog Way's solutions?

Emmanuel FRANCOIS: “At La Geode we have been working with Analog Way products for the past ten years, notably with the Octo Plus mixer.”

What was the reasoning behind your installation?

E.F.: “Analog Way's Eikos was installed in order to replace the existing system. This was in a context where we truly needed to optimize our control room that was overloaded at that time. The requirement was to have much more powerful and handy devices.”

Why did you choose the Eikos?

E.F.: “We regularly added new sources such as HDcam, Betacam, Blu-Ray, satellite, DTTV as well as internet on PC; it became a requirement to mix between these sources as professionally as possible. I mean we wanted to be able to adjust and set up all our sources without the audience being aware, before being made 'live' on screen.

The fact that the Eikos manages to maintain the aspect ratios for each of the sources was also a crucial factor. This was heightened by the fact that we used to have two High Definition processors, each of which was configured in a different way when it came to displaying an image. This could sometimes be confusing for our staff members.

Today, we turn on the Eikos and all of the set up parameters are automatically recalled when a source is selected. We simply have to switch on our sources, change the macro lens on the projector and then press the 'play' button. Everything is systematically converted to output from the Eikos at 1080i which is really handy for us.”



Eikos (Ref.EKS500) in the control room of la Geode

Which of operating modes are you most likely to use?

E.F: “We are using the Eikos in Mixer mode, feeding the Main output to a Barco DP3000 2K projector as an HD-SDI signal. This signal is sent through 60 metres (196.8 feet) of cable to a second control room where the projector is installed. The Eikos is configured beforehand so we only have to select our sources according to our needs.”



OMNIMAX projection at La Geode

What are the main sources used?

E.F: “We are mainly using satellite, computer sources, particularly PowerPoint, and increasingly Blu-Ray. So connected to the Eikos we have one Blu-Ray player; one PC computer; two demodulators, (one for satellite, the other for HD DTTV); one DVcam and one cam.”

Do you use the video output of the Eikos?

E.F: “We use the video output to provide the Barco DP3000 with an HD-SDI signal. In addition we often use it for the autocue which is positioned above the control room so that the speaker can read these images directly from the stage. As the Eikos has multiple outputs we sometimes use the video output to provide an on stage monitor so that the presenter can see their exact position as regards the camera.”

What advantages do you attribute to the use of the Eikos?

E.F: “The Eikos helped us to improve our activity and made it more competitive from the first utilization. All of our sources are connected and configured before the presentation, so that by using the preview output, a source can be chosen, adjusted and selected to go ‘live’, followed by another, and so on, so that the operation of the auditorium becomes seamless. For this kind of application the Eikos is a magical device, because we are able to make the adjustments in a ‘live’ situation without the audience being aware of any changes having been made, which has professionalized our service offers.”

In terms of what the Eikos offers your client has anything changed?

E.F: “Having the Eikos on our equipment list was a very good way of saying that we were able to manage everything. That is to say, in a very short space of time we are able to change the source whilst maintaining a high quality image. As a matter of fact, when our clients come to look at the room with their technician they are always pleased to see that we are equipped with a Mixer, because they know that they will not have to bring their own equipment.”

Are you satisfied with the Analog Way’s Eikos?

E.F: “I have not had a major problem with the Eikos, because it is a very intuitive, user friendly device. I contacted Analog Way’s Technical Support once for help with a problem. It took a few minutes to resolve my issue over the phone. I felt that I was well advised, which was great because I was in a test session with my client.”

**Analog Way, Pioneer in Analog, Leader in Digital**

Analog Way is a leading designer and manufacturer of presentation switchers and image converters. The company designs a wide range of seamless switchers, computer to video scan converters, scalars and up/down converters. The products provide the most advanced solutions in the Broadcast, AV, Rental & Staging, Church, Corporate and Industrial markets.

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