



VARI-LITE @Strand

DALLAS' AT&T PERFORMING ARTS CENTER UPGRADES ALL MAIN VENUES TO VARI-LITE AND STRAND

The magnificent, \$360 million multi-venue AT&T Performing Arts Center in Dallas is one of America's foremost cultural institutions. Designed by world-leading architects, including Foster + Partners, it hosts a huge variety of productions, ranging from local community groups right up to The Dallas Opera, with Broadway tours, regional theatre and stand-up comics in-between.

The entire complex was recently upgraded with more than 200 Vari-Lite and Strand products, supplied by Houston-based Bell & McCoy, to transform looks and effects and reduce power consumption.

At the heart of the complex is the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House – called 'America's finest' by Opera magazine – within which is the principle 2,200-seater Margaret McDermott Performance Hall. This huge space is now lit by 32 Vari-Lite VL2600 PROFILE, 40 VL800 EVENTWASH and 24 Strand LEKO LED PROFILE, Full Color luminaires.

"I have had a relationship with the AT&T Performing Arts Center since 2011 and their lighting team had previously purchased Vari-Lite fixtures from us, including the SL BAR 660," says Bell & McCoy's Mandy Stockhausen. "In this round, they were looking to expand what I like to call 'Vari-Lite quality' throughout the Center, and we were able to offer them a complete range of LED fixtures that out-perform their previous lighting package. The VL800 EVENTWASH blew them away with its powerful brightness, rich color ranges, Vari-Lite quality movement, size, and price point."

Lee Terry is Head Electrician at the Center, focusing on the opera house's McDermott Performance Hall. "Our gear was outdated, and we needed to take a big leap in technology to be current. In addition to that, we wanted a more homogenous inventory that we could share and care for more easily. We needed new lighting equipment that had the capabilities to light every kind of show, allow us to easily maintain the equipment, and not have a dozen different fixtures.

"The VL800s have become my favorite fixture. My designs are bold and saturated with color and that's what this fixture does best. It's fast, has a great zoom range and speaking as the house electrician, I love the low power consumption. I always need more back light on stage to compete with 20k projectors and video walls, and for some events I have to cover 15,000 sq. ft of space with light. I can now do that easily with the VL800s."

Although the Hall is used for a multitude of productions and events, The Dallas Opera is in situ for much of the year, and there are regular ballet and modern dance performances. To ensure that the right Profile fixture was chosen to complement The Dallas Opera, Terry invited their Lighting Director to consult.

"The Vari-Lite VL2600 PROFILE is the only light that won her over," says Terry. "In the demo it was bright enough, quiet enough, had good CTO correction, had good gobos, and shutters that could go full swipe. Finally, we had found a light that could work for theatrical events as well as rock & roll!"



The Strand Leko LED Profile luminaires are mainly rigged in the Hall's balcony rail to light its impressive proscenium arch. "I enjoy the flexibility they've added to the space," says Terry. "It's nice to have one more tool in the tool bag for lighting the space and we've already used them on a number of operas, as well as rock & roll concerts and dance events. With all these new lighting options we can operate more cost effectively and jump from show to show without missing a beat."

The Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre is also within the main AT&T PAC complex and is known as 'one of the most versatile theatrical performing spaces in the world.' Its Potter Rose Performance Hall can be shaped into various configurations, including thrust, proscenium, or flat floor. In here, further Vari-Lite VL2600 PROFILE and Strand LEKO LED PROFILE, Full Color luminaires are installed. The smaller Hamon Hall 200-seater venue in the opera house is mainly lit by VL800 EVENTWASH luminaires, as is the Studio venue.

Over in the Strauss Square outdoor space, named after the late former mayor of Dallas, Annette Strauss, VL800 EVENTWASH luminaires are complemented by ten VL5 LED WASH fixtures.

"We are happy to say that we have built a great relationship between Bell & McCoy, AT&T PAC, and Vari-Lite and Strand," says Mandy Stockhausen. "We are involved in training all their technicians to service and operate their new luminaires and we will always work tirelessly to support them in any way we can. The whole process has been fun and exciting!"

Amanda West, Director of Production at AT&T PAC, said, "I would say we have a lot more flexibility now. One rig with this variety of instruments can get us through a variety of styles of shows without rehangs or making modifications in between. The VL800s for one example in a backlight system where we used to have conventional pars opens up color changing and moving heads options we never had before. Lee Terry is designing quite the spectacle for productions and for me, the color and intensity is the most dramatic difference. It looks like a different stage when everything's on. For AT&T PAC it means we will have reliable equipment that meets our artists expectations for years to come." ■

PRODUCTS FEATURED:

VL2600 PROFILE
VL800 EVENTWASH
VL5 LED WASH
LEKO LED PROFILE, FC

LIGHTING DESIGN: LEE TERRY, HEAD ELECTRICIAN
AND LIGHTING DESIGNER, DALLAS AT&T PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER

PHOTO CREDITS: © SIGNIFY AND DANIEL DRIENSKY

CONSULTANTS: MANDY STOCKHAUSEN, BELL & MCCOY
AND AMANDA WEST, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION,
DALLAS AT&T PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

LIGHTING APPLICATION: THEATRE