

(Right) Gaudi Dancers galvanise into action.

(Below) Strand Consoles and Gaudi Lighting crew Sasha Pabrmann, Gaspa Savic (seated) and Horst Wipper.



# German Successes

**B**abelsberg Film Studios near Berlin and the Euro Music Hall in Aldorf have both been completely equipped by Strand Lighting.

The Euro Music Hall, formerly the Alsdorf Stadthalle, has been equipped with the most up-to-date production equipment since being completely rebuilt as the venue for the musical "Gaudi". The famous buildings designed by the architect Gaudi are artistically enhanced with 6 Pani projectors which project, not only on the stage, but also on the side walls.

As for the lighting equipment: the facility is generously equipped with Strand Lighting technology and includes several innovations planned by Horst Wipper, head of the lighting division, together with lighting designer Wieland Müller-Haslinger from Munich. One of the special features is

that the control data for the lighting setup is sent via EtherNet.

This data distribution has many advantages which make this type of lighting control safer, more efficient, and easier to handle. Horst Wipper quoted a few examples of this, "During the performance we only require one console operator. However, for safety reasons there is always an emergency console in the control cabin - a precautionary measure we adhere to. For us, the next step is to only have one console standing here, with the backup provided by a PC. Although a PC doesn't have the DMX outputs and midi ports we need, a PC can load network cards and software and be used to create an online PC connection. This can be done extremely easily if one uses an EtherNet system. The new Networker 1.4 software installed here, can do all of this already

and made it possible for us to change over to one console operation. A network is needed because the dimmer signals are transmitted via EtherNet and must be reconverted into DMX for the equipment which cannot currently be networked. In principle, this also means that one could operate a show with a notebook and a network card via an SN 100 interface. If you take this a stage further, you could even do this remotely via ISDN".

The network in the "Gaudi" Musical Theatre is designed so that the lighting equipment such as lighting console, dimmers and spotlights can be connected to a PC network. The 530 control console uses the "Networker" software from Strand to send a DMX signal to the SN100 interface, from where it is converted into the EtherNet protocol, distributed via a simple

coaxial cable, and reconverted into DMX near the user by another SN 100. A vital factor in this process is keeping the DMX connections as short as possible, because this protocol is the bottleneck which limits the speeds and volumes of data which can be transmitted.

In addition to other spotlights and dimmers, Strand Lighting also supplied the Hyperbeam multi-function spotlights for "Gaudi". The Hyperbeam has nine fixed, plus four rotating gobos, a variable stroboscope function, as well as a motorised focus, iris, and dimmer. In addition, there is also a multiple prism and a frost filter. A very important feature - particularly for theatre applications - is the fact that the fan speed can be remotely controlled. This allows the background noise from the mirror scanners to be reduced during quiet passages in the performance. ●



Four new studios have been commissioned in the Babelsberg TV Centre near Berlin, operated by a company managed by Bernhard Nowak. The company shareholders are Studio Hamburg, Studio Babelsberg, and Ostdeutscher Rundfunk Brandenburg. The four air conditioned studios are almost identical in size (742/723/730/735 sq.m), and with their ceiling height of 12.6 m, are

perfectly suited for shows, soap operas and television plays. Studios 1 and 2 are already running and are used for the soap "Gute Zeiten, schlechte Zeiten" (Good Times, Bad Times).

A major studio with a total area of 1500 sq.meters can be created by joining two single studios together.

The complete studio lighting installation including luminaires, suspension, dimming and control was supplied by Strand Lighting as was a similarly designed complex for the Magic Media Company in Hürth on the outskirts of Cologne. Each studio is installed with 82 self climbing hoists with programmable control. 108 channels of 6kW and 252 channels of 3kW EC90 SV digital dimmers and a Strand 530 control console along with a comprehensive variety of spotlights including

Polaris 1kW fresnels, Castor 2kW fresnels and Arturo Softlights.

To speed up operation with a minimum number of staff, the picture and lighting direction are concentrated in one room. There are also peripheral lighting mixers in the studio.

The 530 control console used in the studio complex are the latest Pentium processor models, they are custom loaded with various packages of Strand software titles. The basic software is Genius Plus with up to 1500 channels and 500 attributes. The 530 gives the operator 24 submasters and 6 supermasters (submasters with a special master function). Other control units include a trackerball and four encoders. The basic software is supplemented by the Kaleidoscope effects program. This provides various lighting effects, effects control, and an enhanced colour change control.

With the help of a third piece of software, Communiqué-Plus, it is also possible to control additional light mixing consoles, computers, midi-sequencers and switchpacks. Furthermore, this software also allows additional macro functions to be programmed. Another feature is remote control via ASCII data. ●

"The Babelsberg deadline for completion was extremely tight. We only had a few weeks to spare between receiving the order at the beginning of July to completion on 16 October 1995. All the other contractors involved in the building work also had extremely tight deadlines. It is worth noting that the foundation stone for the whole building was laid in February."

**Bernhard Berger, Project Leader,  
Strand Lighting.**