

CASE STUDY

Palace Theatre:

Feeding the Arts



Catering Refurbishment in a Historic Theatre

Built in the 1920s, the Palace Theatre in Newark has operated both as a theatre and a picture house. With 600 seats across two levels, eight exclusive boxes, and dedicated spaces for wheelchair users, the Palace hosts more than 150 live productions each year, ranging from ballet and drama to children's shows and comedy, including its highly successful annual pantomime.

Completed in 2016, the extensive works to the Palace Theatre formed part of a wider scheme to bring together the Palace and the new National Civil War Centre, with a modern visitor gateway creating a £1.6 million tourism hub for the town.

As part of the works, a new café bar, Nineteen20, was opened, providing an additional food and drink offer within the refurbished venue for visitors.

The works, funded by Newark and Sherwood District Council, formed part of a wider programme to support local regeneration.

Construction firm RG Carter was appointed to deliver the scheme, with works phased over three periods to accommodate the theatre's performance schedule, including the annual pantomime.

An Unusual Space and a Challenging Installation

The Principal Contractor, RG Carter, contacted KCM Catering Equipment to design the new kitchen space. The project was slightly unusual as it was located beneath the auditorium seating; consequently, the kitchen had a slanted roof that, on one side, was little higher than the wall shelving. The kitchen was designed with this constraint in mind, allowing the Palace Theatre team to move and work in all areas without the roof height presenting an issue. This was particularly important in relation to the cookline ventilation and dishwash condensate canopies, along with the bespoke walk-in chiller constructed to mirror the sloping ceiling.

The location of the kitchen also proved challenging during installation. As with many buildings of its era, access was extremely limited, requiring careful planning and a larger-than-normal installation team to move equipment into the space without causing damage to the building.

Kitchen equipment was selected to meet the operational requirements of the Palace catering team and included items from local manufacturer Lincat, alongside Meiko, Rational, Precision Refrigeration and Celltherm. In addition, KCM installed an Ansul R-102 fire suppression system over the cookline to protect the Grade II listed building and its occupants.

Multi-Functional Areas Able to Serve High Volumes

Alongside the main kitchen, KCM Catering Equipment also designed and supplied the bar and foodservice counters that form the all-day café bar, Nineteen20.

Both areas were required to support normal daily use while also accommodating the rapid service of large numbers of customers during short interval breaks. Maintaining the overall aesthetics of the venue was a key consideration during equipment selection.

The bar was delivered using the IMC Bartender modular bar system, providing flexibility and durability for the venue. The foodservice counter incorporated equipment from Moffat, Merrychef and Instanta to meet the demands of high-volume service.



“The scheme at The Palace Theatre in Newark was a privilege to be involved in. The site is a very important one for the local community and the redevelopment alongside the new National Civil War Museum made it one of great significance.

The project raised some unusual difficulties in terms of shape and access, however with good planning and working with the principle contractor these were overcome. The new kitchen and bar café will serve The Palace and its guests for many years to come.

Alistair White, Director – KCM

About KCM

KCM are specialists in the design, installation and refurbishment of all types of foodservice and bar premises offering a complete set of building and shopfitting services alongside equipment to provide a true, in-house, one-stop solution.

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