

Installed

AUDIO

- Yamaha IF2112/64(W) loudspeakers
- Yamaha IS1215(W) subwoofer
- Allen & Heath iDR4 signal processor
- Allen & Heath Xone:92 DJ mixer
- Technics SL1210 Mk2 turntables
- Pioneer CDJ-800 Mk2 CD players
- Yamaha PC9501N power amplifiers
- Yamaha XP5000 power amplifiers

LIGHTING

- SGM Pilot 7000 control desk
- Robe Clubspot 150 moving heads
- DTS 1,500W stroboscope

Thank the DJ

A resident DJ with a clear vision for change has kick-started the refurbishment of this long-established Genoa night venue, which mixes vibrant colours with technical innovations. **Dan Goldstein** reports on a new reference for the genre

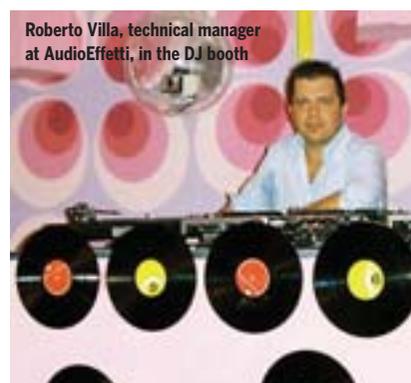
Step into the basement of Genoa's Fellini nightclub and you could be forgiven for thinking you'd just stumbled on to the set of an Austin Powers movie. Shocking pink and burnt orange are the predominant colours; the seating is a mixture of sculpted plastic and buttoned PVC, while mirror balls sway gently in the breeze of the air-conditioning system.

Fellini makes no apology for this unashamed attempt at recapturing the glory days of early 1970s chic. One of Genoa's longest-established entertainment venues, it decided to reinvent its basement nightclub earlier this year at the instigation of its resident DJ, Joe T Vannelli. "This is more than a simple refurbishment," explains Roberto Villa, technical manager at local lighting, sound and video company AudioEffetti, which acted as both system design and installation company for the project. "The interior design is new but, more than that, the actual programme and activities of the space have also been changed."

To the outsider, the Fellini's layout seems somewhat conservative. A ground-floor piano bar welcomes visitors from an unpromising shopping-centre entrance, while downstairs from this is a restaurant that doubles as a cabaret club. So it's a case of the further down you go, the louder the music and the brighter the lights. This is a common arrangement in Italy, but a relative rarity in Genoa. "There are a lot of venues in this area, but many of them are temporary nightclubs on the Ligurian coast which are only open in the summer," Villa says. "The venues within Genoa itself are quite different, and Fellini is certainly one of the biggest and most prestigious."

Higher SPLs needed

Prestige or no prestige, the venue's management was persuaded by Vannelli's argument that its late-night offering needed a rethink. "From a technical point of view," says Villa, "there was a need for higher sound pressure levels, as well as a well-amplified microphone setup, with the minimum of



distortion. Full live bands don't play here, but they have rappers, saxophone players, percussionists and so on. So we had to satisfy a mixture of standard nightclub and live sound requirements."

From the DJ booth, where most of the equipment was specified by Vannelli himself, the structural pillars that are an inevitable feature of basement locations frame a small but inviting dancefloor. At the back is the room's main cocktail bar, and to the left and right of this are two lounge areas – the first one has its own smaller rum-themed bar.

A quartet of Yamaha IF2112/64 (W) loudspeakers have been hung from ceiling-

mounted trussing and they fire down on to the dancefloor, where their output is supplemented by a Yamaha IS1215 (W) subwoofer, which is concealed behind one of the pillars. (It seems they do have their uses, beyond stopping the roof from caving in.) The former trapezoidal enclosures have 12in woofers and 3in HF compression drivers with

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1.4in exits, and offer a 60° x 40° dispersion pattern. Their horns can be rotated through 90°, hence their ability to be used vertically or, as here, horizontally. The sub features twin 15in drivers.

Powering the mid-high boxes are a pair of Yamaha PC9501N amplifiers working into 4ohm, while an XP5000 amp drives the sub. "The PC series has a very high tolerance of variations in power, load and so on," says Nicola Zucchini, sales engineer for the Commercial Audio Division of Yamaha Musica Italia. "That makes it good for club applications where high SPLs need to be delivered reliably."

Essential future upgrades

Villa's work here is far from over. Budgetary restrictions have meant that elements of the room's legacy Bose speaker system have been retained, firing out from the dancefloor into the lounge areas. It's a similar story with the lighting, where AudioEffetti has supplied a quartet of Robe Clubspot 150 moving heads under the control of a new SGM Pilot 7000 desk, but would ideally have treated the whole room to a new lighting design.

The installer is confident, though, that these upgrades will take place sooner rather than later, and that – in time – Fellini's remaining two levels will benefit from a similar overhaul. "They've never had SPLs this high down here before," says Villa. "And the interesting thing is that spill is not an issue. In fact, it's a good thing that people who are drinking or dining in one of the upper levels can hear what's going on down here. It means they are attracted downstairs as the evening goes on, so it works well for the venue."

More broadly, Villa sees Fellini as a reference site that could also act as the catalyst for change at other entertainment venues in Genoa, where much of his company's work is currently in the retail sector or related to the city's burgeoning cruise-ship industry. "This is an important installation because Joe T Vannelli is an opinion former – people listen to what he's playing, what he's saying and what he's doing. He's happy with the system – it's become the reference for him – and where he leads, others will follow." **IE**

- www.audioeffetti.it
- www.teatrofellini.it
- www.yamahacommercialaudio.com