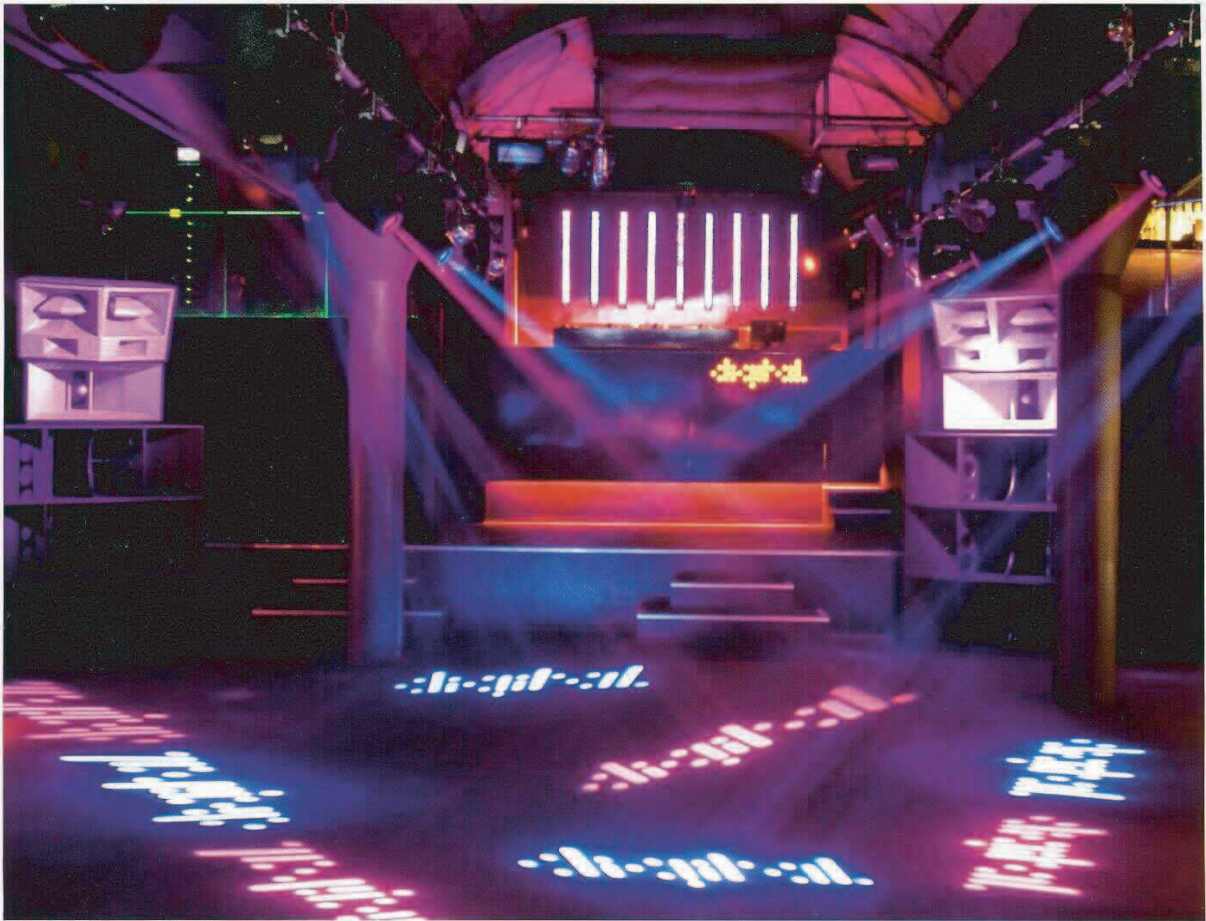


DIGITAL

BRIGHTON



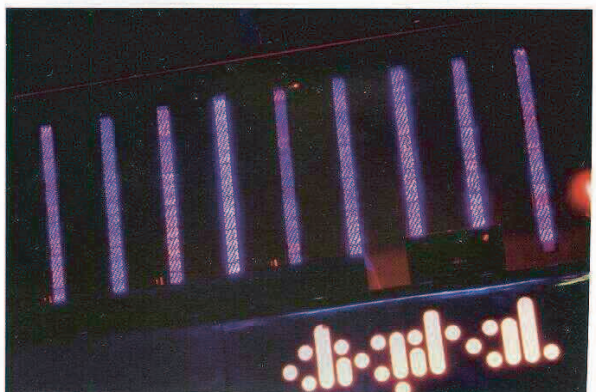
Some clubs stand way out above the competition. Launched in July 2005, Tokyo Industries' Digital in Newcastle, UK, was a rare case in point. A lesson in contemporary clubbing, it featured killer live and DJ line ups, devastatingly deployed audio technology, style bar service standards and sophisticated-yet-functional interior design - adding up to a truly cutting edge club with its music, aesthetic and customer service perfectly and powerfully aligned.

In September of this year, Tokyo Industries made good on their promise of roll out when a long awaited second Digital venture opened in Brighton, on the site of the former Zap club, under the arches on the sea front,

Did it live up to the benchmark set by its northern predecessor? Four weeks after launch the answer is a resounding yes, The trademark ingredients are all in place, the space lends itself perfectly to Digital's own brand club experience, and the crowds are already converted, This sweaty, sexy, underground club is a welcome shot in the arm for the South coast city, in recent years better known for bar culture than bleeps and beats.

More than one Digital was of course always on this ambitious operator's agenda,

"Newcastle works very well and it's achieved some great accolades," Tokyo Industries director Aaron Mellor says. "But we knew if we wanted to move onto the international horizon then we needed something more London-centric. We ruled out moving into London itself because it would have meant an immediate clash with established clubs like Fabric or The End. Brighton really is London by the sea, plus our events director ►



Success lies in the details: Funktion-One, James Thomas and Martin Pro were all elements that make Digital a high-quality club experience

► spent 10 years living in Brighton so has great local knowledge" Making the move even sweeter was Tokyo's acquisition of the ideal site; six freehold arches underneath Kings Road right on the sea front that would be perfect for Digital takeover - although they required significant structural adjustments before the transformation could be complete.

The intervention - which involved the painstaking peeling back and repositioning of Victorian archway brickwork supporting the four-lane road above the club - was costly requiring £50k worth of structural work to shore up the 180 tonne potential load just 800mm above the club.

But Tokyo Industries are not ones for compromising the quality of their clubs and, says Mellor "we had to do it to accommodate the sound system and stage area" - essential elements of a brand designed as a blank canvas for heavily music-orientated nights. Not that this blank canvas lacks character. In fact it oozes it, even down to the custom cocktail list, devised by bars manager Andy Emans and featuring delights like the Ron Burgandy - its key ingredient a healthy dose of tongue-in-cheek. Designed as a replica of Newcastle, the club features the signature mirrored back bars and the same chrome balustrading. But smaller (at 500 capacity), and with radically different architecture, its warren-like quality is entirely its own.

"The idea was to create a space with all the genetic DNA of the original Digital but in an architectural form of the local host building," explains Mellor. "Too many brand roll outs use a cookie-cutter replicated formula that loses the local identity. We wanted to reproduce the DNA of Digital but retain an individual design statement."

And then there's the technology. Intelligently engineered and aesthetically aggressive, Funktion One is the starting point and the foundation of the audio installation, "The perception of the speakers and their capacity means that they create a feeling of huge potential - which adds a dimension to the club experience," says Paul Adamson of installation partners The Audio Group, Newcastle's Funktion One sound system was famously bought on eBay from Miami and flown back for reconditioning before deployment, Brighton's came via a more conventional route: direct from FI's Surrey premises, but was again commissioned personally by Tony Andrews and, if anything, is even more explosive than before.

"When we did Newcastle we were the first to install four Dancestacks in the UK," says Mellor of the groundbreaking install. "This time the bass has been turned right up: we're the first UK club to install the new double 21" subs. We've gone for six, and they really deliver; looking and sounding like a sonic assault weapon." The two Dancestacks loom large, left and right of the stage.

The stacks are powered by an arsenal of MC2 Audio E45 and E25 amplifiers with signal processing via FI's XTA solution. This combination of brands is mirrored through all three peripheral areas - with a sound system in the toilets that would put many main rooms to shame.

As you'd expect from a venue designed, built and run "by DJs for DJs", the DJ Booth is epic: four Pioneer CDJ-1000 MK3, four Technics SL1210 turntables, a Pioneer EFX-1000 and DJM-800 mixer, all housed in Digital branded control console. With opening talent including Fatboy Slim vs Armand Van Helden, Ian Brown, Maximo Park and Grace Jones, all live and in front of an intimate 500 capacity crowd, Digital has already delivered the best quality ►

