

Pics: Douglas Fogelson



sonotheque chicago

Many elements make up a nightclub, from decor and drinks, to service and setting. In this list of defining factors, music comes pretty high up in terms of significance, however it is more than just an important part of the Sonotheque offer. Sound, both as an abstract idea and in real audio installation terms, is the driving force behind the new Chicago based venture from industry heavyweights Joe Bryl, Donnie Madia and Terry Alexander. Design credit goes to architect and designer Suhail, who was also behind Chicago dessert bar, Sugar.

He explains the the thinking behind the scheme at Sonotheque: "I wanted (the venue's) design to be dictated by music. I wanted sound to be the colour." Little variation in terms of colour has been used in the interior, and a palette of greys has been drawn on for the majority of the scheme, leaving the more lively shades to be brought in the form of the music.

Materials used in the venue have all been picked for their abil-

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ity to function on two levels, both as part of the interior design scheme and as sound enhancing devices. "Basically, I was using every acoustic component to make the overall architecture work", says the designer. Each element is therefore not only appealing in its appearance and texture but adds something to the quality of the audio environment, absorbing, diffusing or reflecting sound. With this dual purpose approach, it is no surprise that installers, Sound Investment Audio, turned to Funktion One to provide the majority of the speakers, with their reputation for top quality audio that is not only pleasing on the ear but on the eye too.

Daniel Agne of Sound Investment Audio gives us his thoughts on this unique project: "The installation of their system is unique in that the entire system is flown from the ceiling. At either end of the room we have flown in a linear configuration an AX-88, 218, INFRA & AX-88. It was a bit of a trick getting the system installed, but the results were sonically pleasing."

Although the club has been designed to not just

Sonotheque's minimalistic exterior ensures that only those in the know will venture inside

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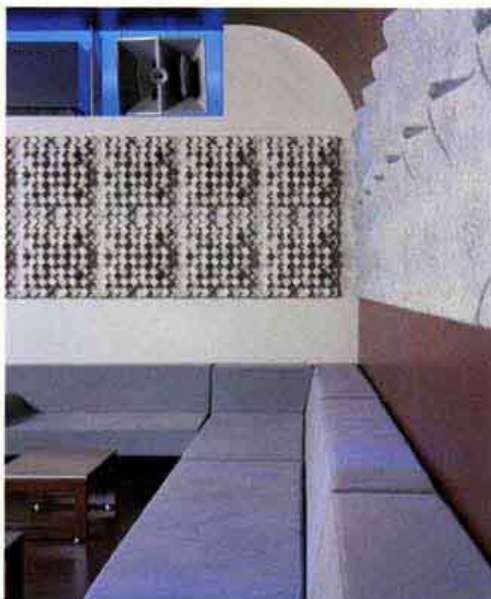


technical information

SOUND

4 x Funktion One AX88; 2 x Funktion One F218; 2 x Funktion One infra sub; 2 x Crest 9001 amp; 1 x MC2 T2000 amplifier; 1 x XTA DP226 digital processor; 1 x Rane MP & XP 2016 mixer; 3 x Technics 1200 mkII; 2 x Denon CDJ 1000

links: www.suhaildesign.com
www.soundinvestmentav.com




accommodate but to show off this sound system, this does not mean that customers' comfort has been overlooked. Seating is relaxed, with low slung couches and banquettes grouped around the perimeter of the room. These couches are upholstered using high density foam and suede which actively reflects high frequency sound.

Above the seating areas decorative yet functional panels have been installed to provide absorption for the sound. These are made from a special material called Snowcrash, a felt of sorts which draws in mid-range frequency noise and disperses it back out into the room.

Look up and aluminium ceiling tiles have been installed to not only create a clean and modern look, but also in order to diffuse sound, angled, as they are, at various heights. Underfoot the floor is formed from vinyl wood and plastic concrete tiles acts as reflectors.

The soundtrack which accompanies this music inspired interior is a varied one. Latin and up-beat tunes are mixed with jazz and hip-hop by a variety of top name DJs. Upcoming acts include The Rainer Truby Trio (members of Germany's A Forest Mighty Black on the Compost label) and Japan's Kyoto Jazz Massive.

The sleek, urban chic of the interior is translated into a minimal and colourless exterior that is in many ways faceless. The facade is covered in a grey aluminium skin, and with no signage, a strip of light grey panels that are set at various angles, provide the only point of interest. Suhail says of this understated approach to the frontage: "I wanted people to know that something is there. But only people who need to know will figure it out." A kind of exclusive attitude which seems fitting for such a uniquely created concept. 

F R A N Ç A I S

Comme son nom l'indique, le son, tant comme idée abstraite qu'en termes d'installation audio réelle, est la force motrice du nouvel établissement de danse de Chicago, Sonotheque.

L'architecte et concepteur Suhail déclare "Je voulais que la conception de Sonotheque soit dictée par la musique. Je voulais que ce soit le son qui constitue la couleur." Une palette de gris a donc été majoritairement utilisée, les nuances dynamiques étant fournies par la musique. Les matériaux qui ont servi ont tous été choisis pour leur capacité à fonctionner à deux niveaux, à la fois comme éléments d'architecture et de décoration intérieure, et comme éléments de renforcement du son. Chaque élément est attirant par son apparence et par sa texture mais ajoute en outre quelque chose à la qualité de l'environnement audio en absorbant, diffusant ou réfléchissant le son. En raison de cette double approche il n'est pas étonnant que ce soit Funktion One, avec sa réputation pour de belles enceintes à superbe son, qui ait été choisi pour l'installation.

D E U T S C H

Wie der Name schon verrät, ist der Sound - sowohl als abstraktes Konzept als auch als reale Audioinstallation - die treibende Kraft hinter dem neuen Chicagoer Dance-Club Sonotheque.

Architekt und Designer Suhail beschreibt dies so: "Ich wollte, dass das Design der Sonotheque von der Musik bestimmt wird. Der Sound sollte die Farbe sein." Aus diesem Grund wurden für die Farbgestaltung hauptsächlich verschiedene Grauschattierungen gewählt, für einen lebhafteren Touch sorgt die Musik. Die verwendeten Materialien wurden alle unter einem zweifachen Gesichtspunkt ausgewählt: danach, wie sie sich für das Innendesign eignen und wie gut sie zum Sound passten. Die einzelnen Elemente sind nicht nur in Aussehen und Struktur interessant, sondern tragen auch bestimmte Qualitäten zur Audioumgebung bei, indem sie den Sound absorbieren, streuen oder reflektieren. Es überrascht daher nicht, dass mit der Soundinstallation Funktion One beauftragt wurde, das für gut aussehende Lautsprecher mit erstklassigem Sound bekannt ist.

I T A L I A N O

Come suggerisce il nome, il suono - sia come concetto astratto che in termini di installazioni audio vere e proprie - è la forza trainante del nuovo dance club Sonotheque di Chicago.

Suhail, l'architetto e progettista del locale, afferma: "Volevo che il design di Sonotheque fosse dettato dalla musica. Volevo che il suono fosse il colore", dunque ha utilizzato una tavolozza di grigi in gran parte degli interni, lasciando che fosse la musica a dare le tonalità vivaci. Tutti i materiali usati nel locale sono stati scelti in base alla funzionalità su due livelli, ossia come parte dello schema del design degli interni, ma anche come elementi potenziatori del suono. Ciascuno di questi elementi è molto estetico ma contribuisce anche in qualche modo alla qualità dell'audio, assorbendo, diffondendo o riflettendo il suono. Grazie a questo duplice approccio non sorprende che dell'installazione audio si sia occupata Funktion One, un'azienda dall'invidiabile reputazione per diffusori di grande estetica e di altissima qualità sonora.

E S P A Ñ O L

Como sugiere su nombre, el sonido, como concepto abstracto y como instalación de audio real es la fuerza motora subyacente al nuevo club de baile de Chicago, el Sonotheque.

El arquitecto y diseñador Suhail lo explica así: "Quería que el diseño del Sonotheque estuviera marcado por la música. Quería que el sonido fuera el color", de ahí que se utilizara una paleta de grises en la mayor parte del diseño, dejando que fuera la música la que aportara tonos más vivos. Los materiales utilizados en el local fueron seleccionados por su capacidad para funcionar a dos niveles, bien como parte del proyecto de diseño interior o bien como dispositivos para mejorar el sonido. Cada elemento no sólo resulta atractivo en su aspecto y textura sino que también aporta algo a la calidad del entorno de audio, absorbiendo, difundiendo o reflejando el sonido. Con este doble enfoque de finalidad dual, no resulta sorprendente que Funktion One fuera seleccionado para hacerse cargo de la instalación de audio, por la reputación que le han dado sus hermosos altavoces capaces de producir un sonido de alta calidad.