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Anolis for Hordern Pavilion

The Hordern Pavilion, often referred to as "The Hordern", is one of Sydney's most iconic and historically significant landmark venues. Originally opened in 1924, it now regularly hosts live performances, dance parties, sports tournaments, trade shows, conferences, and a variety of other events.

Recently, the venue unveiled a new house lighting scheme featuring 46 Anolis Ambiane RGBW XPs, specified and installed by SimpleMotion Lighting (SML), a specialist in venue infrastructure lighting.

With a portfolio that includes high-profile venues such as the Sydney Opera House and numerous other theatres, concert halls, and recital spaces, SML was approached by The Hordern's operators, Playbill Venues, to reimagine the lighting of the venue. The aim was to replace the outdated halogen lighting system with a more modern, energy-efficient solution that would accommodate the diverse events that take place at the venue.

SML worked in partnership with Jands, Anolis' Australian distributor, with additional support from Eddie Galak, Business Development Manager of Architectural Lighting. The project was led by Jono Boer of SML, alongside Scott Hart. Together, they designed and implemented a lighting scheme centred around the Anolis Ambiane fixtures.

The Ambiane RGBW XP fixtures were selected for their high output, fitted with 60-degree lenses to ensure excellent light distribution, smooth dimming, and even coverage across the space. Additionally, they were chosen for the richness and quality of their colours, which allow the venue to be bathed in vibrant hues when desired, beyond simple white lighting.

SML had to stay within a defined budget and consider the venue's flexible seating configurations. The Hordern Pavilion can accommodate various setups, including all-standing formats for concerts and dance events.

The venue has a rich history, having hosted performances by legendary artists such as Frank Sinatra, Coldplay, Florence + the Machine, Justin Timberlake, Nirvana, Lorde, Queen, and The Jackson Five. Additionally, many of Australia's most popular bands have performed there during their rise to fame.

The lighting design includes 20 Ambiance fixtures rigged in the domed roof, four fixtures on each side of the room above the exits (for a total of 16), and an additional six fixtures covering the arches above the exits. Some of the lights are positioned where the previous lighting was located, while others are in new locations to align with the drape lines used to partition sections of the hall.

Custom plates and mounting brackets were fabricated to secure the fixtures to the ceiling and walls, with power supplies mounted on ceiling beam clamps. This task was completed with the help of rigging company Pollards.

The Anolis fixtures are controlled via DMX and a Paradigm architectural controller, which also enables zone control. Touchscreen remotes allow for easy access and operation. While the primary use of the lighting system is for smooth and even white washes, the venue can be instantly transformed with full-colour lighting, adding atmosphere and a new dimension to events.

Jason Oxenham, from The Hordern team, commented that the new lighting scheme offers the ability to create a tailored atmosphere for high-profile events such as the ARIA Awards. Additionally, the new system reduces energy consumption, contributing to the sustainability and lower carbon footprint of events held at the venue.

Though SML had not previously worked with Anolis, they had used other products from Robe (Anolis' parent company) on several occasions and found them to be "very reliable, easy to install, and program," according to Scott Hart. This positive experience made them open to using Anolis for The Hordern project.

Following the success of this installation, Anolis products have since been specified and installed at several other SML client venues.

About The Hordern

The 5,500-capacity Hordern Pavilion is located in Moore Park, on the grounds of the old Sydney Showground. It was originally built for the Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales to accommodate the increasing demand for exhibition space at their Royal Easter Show. During World War II, the venue served as a bulk store for the Army. Since then, it has evolved into one of Australia's most iconic forums for live music and performance.

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