

News Release

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ELECTRO-VOICE® and AVI SYSTEMS, Inc., SOUND OUT A NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR A LINCOLN, NE, LANDMARK

LINCOLN, NE (September 2002): The historic Stuart Theatre in downtown Lincoln, NE was built in 1929. The Rococo Theatre was born at the very same location in June 2001. This remarkable theatre saw some precarious periods in between these significant dates. In the early 1970s, entrepreneurs felt that the Stuart would be more profitable as a movie theatre than as an exquisite remnant of the Roaring Twenties. The dull drywall and gaudy carpeting of a cinema masked the intricate grandeur of its Italianate interior architecture for the next couple of decades. The ceilings were lowered and the stage was walled up. As the cinema gradually failed to capture the imagination of local residents, the building changed hands again, its upper floors being separated into apartments. For many years local authorities deemed the theatre too expensive a repair project to undertake. It seemed its marble floors, ornate balconies and terracotta walls wouldn't see the light of day again.

Then, in July 2000, one Doug Deeter purchased the theatre and began an uncompromising and intensive restoration program. The room now looks much like it did in its heyday, replete with lofty ceilings and eccentric cross-pollinations of Italian and Moorish design elements. In a stylish nod to another bygone era, the designers installed Las Vegas-style booths on the main floor. Food and beverages are served to guests' tables as the entertainment takes place. The Rococo has brought new life to the cultural heart of Lincoln, whilst keeping the city's heritage intact. Electro-Voice® and AVI Systems, inc., played a significant part in completing this noble restoration program, and in bringing back the live entertainment enthusiasts absent from the theatre for so long.

The Omaha, NE, branch of national audiovisual installation experts AVI Systems, Inc., was contracted to undertake the challenge of installing an AV system at the Rococo. AVI and Electro-Voice have been working together for many years now. Bill Hartness, AVI's Assistant Regional Manger, conveyed the mutual respect that would make this project another successful installation for AVI: "AVI Systems is a full service audio visual integration company. We service the entire nation. We've been in business for 27 years. We've represented and sold Electro-Voice products for years. Electro-Voice, of course, is one of our premier product lines, the one that we use whenever the job requires high quality audio."

Hartness recalled the project, in which the client's requirements were unusually diverse but particularly precise: "Installation started in August of 2001 and finished up in December of 2001. This facility is a refurbished old movie house. In doing so they had a multi-functional

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view of this facility, that on certain nights it would be a cinema café, very much like a Las Vegas showroom, with full food and beverage service. They seat up to around 1100 people. There are three levels: main floor, mezzanine and balcony. We installed a sound system and a video system that could do anything from sporting events such as satellite, baseball and football, to Friday nights where people could come in and watch movies. We basically had fifty speaker placements so that we could do live performance, front-of-house type playback, all the way to full surround cinema audio”

EV's SL12-2V surround loudspeakers, designed specifically for cinema applications, played an important part in the installation at the Rococo, as did the Xi fixed install and Xw high performance floor monitor lines. This specialized, versatile loudspeaker installation consists of six Xi-1183 long-throw cabinets, eight Xi-1191 subs, eight Xi-1152 side fills, six Xi-1082 under-balcony fills, four Xw12 high performance floor monitors, two Xw15 high performance floor monitors, and sixteen SL12-2V surrounds. The THX® compatible and Digital Dynamics Capable™ SL is an aesthetically discrete high-output, two-way surround loudspeaker. It features a 15 degree slanted cabinet and suspension and safety options. Hartness noted that the SL's smooth, wide frequency response provides a sonic middle ground in AVI's installation that can be finely adjusted, according to the event, in conjunction with the more powerful Xi line. The SL12-2V has a frequency range of 70 Hz–20 kHz, the SL10-2V a range of 60 Hz–20 kHz.

Hartness uses Soundweb® units to coordinate the changing day-to-day loudspeaker requirements at the Rococo: two 9088i DSP units and one 9008i output expander. Hartness has had no complaints with the loudspeakers adaptability so far: “The response has been very good. We've had very, very few problems. I think we had one driver go out of the whole system within the first year. Basically, this system wasn't built to handle every live performance, but we had to stay within a certain budget and put in a generalized system that would handle everything from a corporate meeting to cinema surround sound, to sporting events, to a live performance venue. We had a very broad spectrum of specifications to meet.” Though the style of entertainment changes the house sound requirements every night, the sound quality is always consistent and reliable.

The performance schedule at the Rococo reflects the sonic challenges AVI's EV installation must accommodate. A diverse array of contemporary entertainment styles and formats, along with the more traditional musical productions for which the old Stewart theatre was originally designed, are represented on their calendar. Since opening, the Rococo has hosted Blues Traveler, KC and the Sunshine Band, Ryan Adams, and many more national acts. Major Fall events include Robert Cray (9/13), and the Midwest premiere of Jekyll and Hyde, the Musical (10/27). The EV system will also project the sounds of a plethora of comedians, jazz ensembles, indie & cult movies and college football games.

The new Rococo (rococotheatre.com) has rejuvenated all of its ancestor's antique architectural magnificence, yet is outfitted with the state of the art technologies we expect in modern entertainment. Essential among the latter are the house's installed-to-measure EV loudspeakers. Bill Hartness feels that AVI and EV have delivered their end of a “best of both worlds” directive, where AVI employed state-of-the-art EV loudspeaker technology to great effect in this grand old theatre.

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