

Project in the spotlight: renewing the rigging system at the Ancienne Belgique

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TTAS theatre construction has been part of the Ingenium Group for over two years now. So it's high time to turn the spotlight onto an exciting project: renewing the rigging system at the Ancienne Belgique concert hall in Brussels.

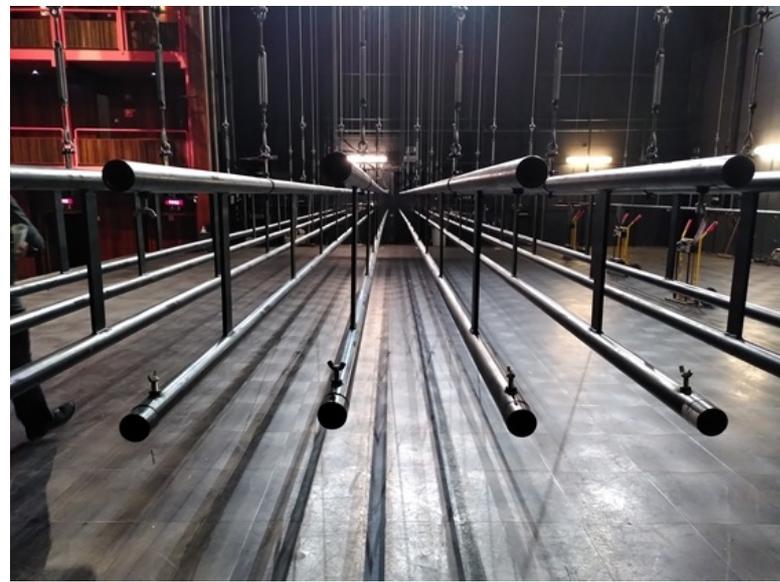
Most theatres do everything they can to make their technical theatre installations as invisible as possible to the public. In most cases they are painted black. However, Ancienne Belgique prefers to make them highly visible in bright colours: RAL3003 (ruby red) and RAL3017 (pale red) to be precise.



Various loads can be hung on a rig above the stage or also in the auditorium: backdrops, sets, lighting, screens, audio installations and more. In the AB, these loads used to be hoisted manually with the help of counterweights. The necessary ropes, wheels and cables make battens (pipes) with the accompanying loads move up and down. That this is physically hard work will probably surprise no one.

For this reason, manually-operated rigs are increasingly being converted to electrical rigging installations, with or without computer control. In the case of the AB, this is a computer-controlled rigging system where various parameters – speed, lifting height, maximum load, automatic movements, etc. – can be preset. For this, each 'rope' is replaced by an electric motor with usually about 10 kW per motor. In the AB this adds up to 34 hoists that can lift 500 kg each, but this differs from project to project and must always be custom designed.

We are responsible for designing the installation: proposing the location of the motors, determining the type of machine, defining the type of control system in accordance with the applicable standards, determining minimum quality requirements, close consultation with the stability engineer (in this case Fraeye Stability) to arrive at a feasible solution, and monitoring the installation stage.



Over the past 2 years we have converted several similar manual rigging systems. Cultural Centre Strombeek and the municipal theatre in Sint-Niklaas are two examples. At the KVS in Brussels, we have replaced an outdated computer control system for the rigging with a brand-new control system in order to continue to meet the applicable standards. In addition to rigging systems there are of course various other theatre-technical installations, all of which we can design in detail.

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