

# PARIS BY NIGHT



EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

A quick stop in Paris in early January saw mondo\*dr visit a trio of installations and the headquarters of manufacturer, NEXO - more of the latter in the next issue. In its home country, the audio specialist has been a top player in the market for many years, evidenced as much in these projects, which offer diversity, longevity and creativity in three very different environments.



## RASPOUTINE



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Located with the Golden Triangle of Paris, just a stone's throw away from the French capital's Champs-Élysées lies Raspoutine. A nightclub owned and operated by one of the country's most famous nightlife entrepreneurs, Laurent de Gourcuff. With as many as 30 venues around the city, it's possible that every Parisian and tourist alike has stepped foot in one of his establishments, whether they're aware of it or not. Raspoutine - which also has outlets in Rome, Marrakech and Monaco - takes its name

from famous mystic pilgrim, Grigori Rasputin, and is influenced by Russian cabaret and Baroque décor, using a rich red and gold colour palette and velvet furnishings - a VIP club indeed. Despite first being installed just over six years ago in 2012, the audio set-up at Raspoutine remains top-notch, thanks in part to it being the first numeric - digital as we more commonly refer to it nowadays - installation in Paris. Local AV company, Nanolink was invited to set up a test PA at the venue, to display its audio





## MANKO



PARIS, FRANCE  
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From the exterior of Manko, you would not expect to find the three-pronged venue that is housed inside the former Drouot Auction House. A humble entrance next to the grander presence of the theatre next door, Manko begins down a staircase from street level where guests are greeted first by the restaurant, followed quickly by the opulent bar area - fusing together wood, metal and glass for its interiors - and finishing up in the cabaret performance space.

Similar to Raspoutine, Manko is located within the Golden Triangle of Paris and is named in honour of the legendary Inca Manco Capac, son of the Sun God, founder of the Inca people. The three spaces have been delivered by MOMA Group, but more specifically by three enthusiasts who share a combined passion. Gastón Acurio, a Michelin star Peruvian chef, Benjamin Patou, founder of MOMA Group, and Canadian artist Garou who dreamed of creating a cabaret, as spectacular as burlesque and as edgy as extravagant.

When it came to the latter, the trio admitted they didn't quite know what they needed in terms of an audiovisual set-up. Having built a good reputation in Paris, MOMA Group made contact with Nanolink, and requested Jean Michel and Emmanuel to design a suitable system. Emmanuel said: "They owners didn't re-

ally know what they needed for the space, so they left that with us. We designed the system using 3D modelling, we looked at how we would mount and fix the system with the room, and we did the scenography too."

The PA at Manko needed to be flexible for different types of show performances and the space turns into a nightclub following the stage show too. "For a lot of the musical shows that perform on stage, it's all about the timecode," continued Emmanuel. "We needed some presets for disco too, and we also set up the audio network because sometimes the owners want to do some improvisations - different music in the bar and the restaurant and sometimes we have to dilute the sound from the cabaret away from the other areas."

A NEXO PS15 system was specified for the space, a single cabinet flown either side of the stage with a NEXO PS10 flown

adjacent to each and a NEXO LS600 subwoofer groundstacked below. Two further PS10s are used as fills to cover the audience area towards the back of the room. The PS15s offered the full flexibility this venue needed.

"The system is designed to offer complete even coverage across the venue," continued Emmanuel. "Sometimes they rent the place out - and this is where the stagebox comes into play, it will take any kind of input card you want - analogue, digital, AES and so on - and you can then plug this into a mixer. If, for example a live band comes in, you can move the stagebox to the stage, connect the mixer and then it's on the audio network." Flexibility and diversity was key at Manko and with the expertise of Nanolink, the partners can now fulfil their expertise in the cooking, hosting and performing. ➔

### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

#### SOUND

2 x NEXO PS15 loudspeaker; 2 x NEXO LS18 subwoofer; 6 x NEXO PS10 loudspeaker; 2 x NEXO LS600 subwoofer; 2 x NEXO NXAMP 4x4 amplifier; 1 x NEXO NXAMP4x1 amplifier; 1 x Auvitrans Audiotoolbox; 1 x Yamaha MTX5 processor

[manko-paris.com](http://manko-paris.com)



# BAL BLOMET



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Six years in the making, the modern Bal Blomet has a decadent history dating back to the roaring twenties. Following the path of La Ruche's artistic adventure, the Bal Blomet nightclub acquired great renown in the 1920s, especially among members of the Paris Bohème and Tout-Paris. In 1924, politician Jean Rézard occupied the residence at 33 rue Blomet for campaign meetings, but soon realising he was a better musician than politician, he began to use the space for cabaret style performances instead.

Over the years, the venue has welcomed guests and artists from all walks of life and Bal Blomet became a household name in Paris. Unfortunately, during WWII the Nazis took over and the venue never returned to its former glory. Operating as a simplistic café post war until 1989, and then a jazz club until 2006, it looked like the doors were firmly closed on this historic music venue.

Enter Guillaume Cornut - a local Parisian, who lives just minutes away from 33 rue Blomet - who just happened to be walking past one day, took an interest in the venue and enquired about purchasing the lease for the building. Knowing the history, Guillaume wanted to recreate the hey days but add a modern twist. He acquired the rights to the building in 2012 and the renovations took a staggering six years to complete, but it's clear to see that Guillaume feels it's worth every single hour he's spent developing it.

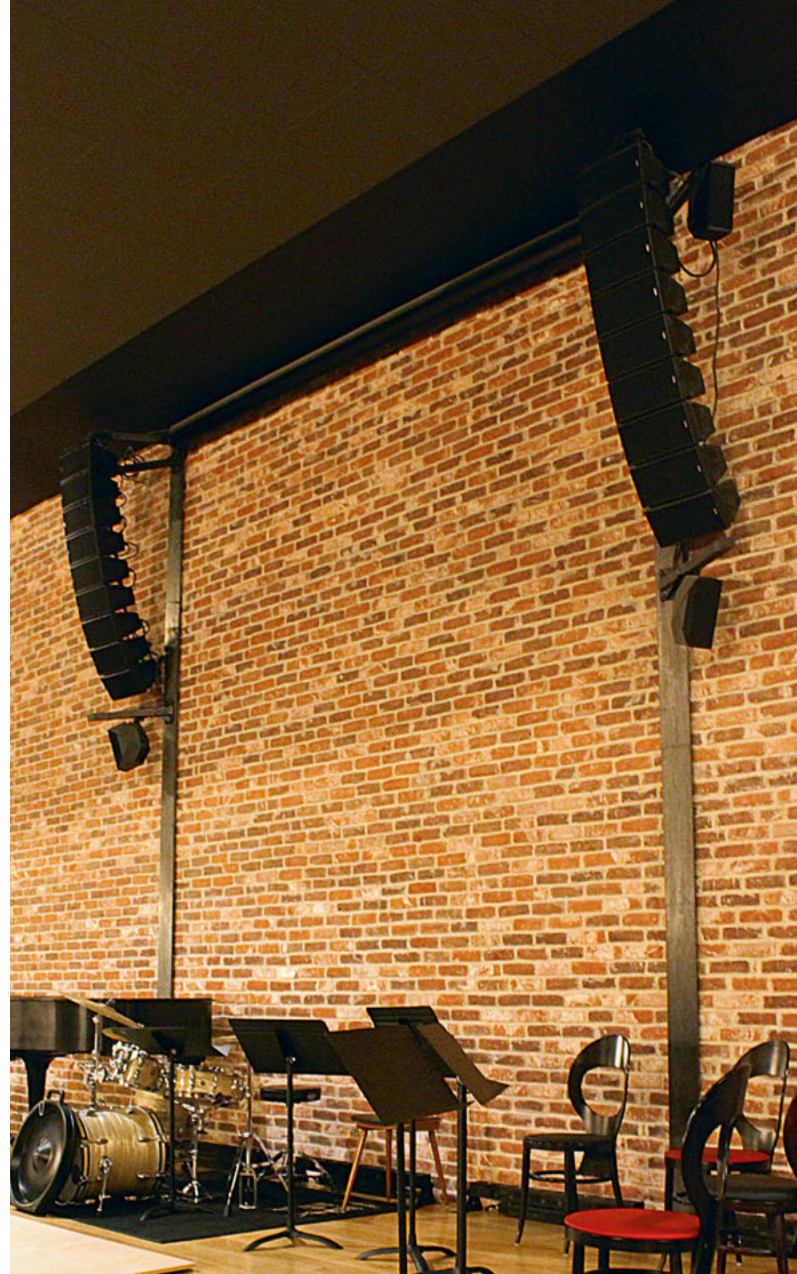
He began: "The idea was to completely reinvent the space as there were no photos of how the venue looked back in the 1920's. I had spent some time in New York, London and also in Asia and I saw how music was presented in other countries. I took what I liked from what I

experienced and tried to incorporate that into my own venue.


"In Greenwich Village, New York, a club called Poisson Rouge opened about 10 years ago and every night the performance changes. One night it will be a classical concert, then a conference, then a rock or a jazz concert. Here's it's the same idea, it's very open, which attracts different audiences. At the beginning it was very much a neighbourhood venue but now people come from all over the world. A group from Hong Kong came not so long ago just to see one performance."

The building work at Bal Blomet took three of the six years and Guillaume's idea was to dig 10-metres below ground to create the ultimate performance space. The main room is six-metres high and is an elongated shape - long but not wide - meaning the entire audience of 250 seats are all very close to the stage, making for intimate gigs. The artist quarters occupy the three-metres below. Guillaume continued: "I had two architects working on this project and one had seen the work of Jean Michel. There were a few proposals but this looked the most pragmatic. Jean Michel explained a lot about the technical elements and helped me to understand it." "The main difficulty for this project was we couldn't fix the cabinets at the front of the stage. It is unusual to hang at the back of the stage but it was really our only choice. We chose NEXO's GEO M6 line array so that we wouldn't get any feedback, as obviously the musicians would be in front," Emmanuel explained.

Jean Jacques added: "There are few line array cabinets that would work in this application but with NEXO, the bottom three and top three cabinets are mid-high boxes and, the three in the middle are



M6B bass modules. When combined in this way they act like one box so that's why it's the perfect product for this project." The two line arrays are hung either side of the stage, but as mentioned, unusually at the rear of the stage, not the front. Adjacent to the arrays are a single NEXO ID24I to cover the mezzanine balcony, which are supplemented by two NEXO ID S110 subwoofers. The cabinets really suit the aesthetics of the room, although on full display, they almost look like part of the architecture in the exposed brickwork environment. Three of NEXO's NXAMP4x1 amplified controllers are in place at Bal Blomet, although Emmanuel advised that the aim of the venue is for the sound to be as natural as possible, so they try to limit amplification where possible. A Yamaha MTX5D processor is also installed for occasions when it's needed.

After meeting Guillaume, it is impossible not to see that the resurrection of Bal Blomet has given him a true sense of accomplishment. Although it might not have been the lifelong dream he envisaged for himself, putting six years of your life into a project and now seeing it run as a successful business, is an amazing achievement. His attention to detail, his commitment to diversity and his sheer determination have paid off to spectacular effect at Bal Blomet. 

• Above  
The M6  
arrays are  
hung un-  
usually at  
the back of  
the stage.

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

### SOUND

14 x NEXO M6 line array cabinet; 2 x NEXO ID24 loudspeaker; 2 x NEXO ID S110I subwoofer; 3 x NEXO NXAMP 4x1 amplified controller; 1 x Yamaha MTX5D processor

[www.balblomet.fr](http://www.balblomet.fr)