

# In Control Of The Planets

## Egyptian Planetarium Installs Futuristic System

by Christopher Buttner

Overlooking the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the \$167 million Bibliotheca Alexandrina, built in homage to the Ancient Library which made this city famous in 288 B.C., neighbors the University of Alexandria Faculty of Arts campus in Shatby. The project began in 1990 with the selection of its architect, Snøhetta of Oslo, Norway. Construction began in 1995, and the library officially opened in April 2002.

Spitz of Chadds Ford, PA, a leader in the design and construction of planetariums, designed and installed the Bibliotheca Alexandrina planetarium video system. The 46-foot diameter theater houses an ElectricSky Video Panorama, a Spitz System 1024 star projector, three Christie CRT 9500DM projectors—which create a 60-degree-high by 200-degree-wide video

panorama—18 Kodak Ektapro 7020 slide projectors, driven by Spitz's ATM4 automation system, as well as a MegaSystems large-format film projection system.

ElectricSky utilizes Spitz's ImmersaVision full-dome or wide-format video and multi-dimensional sound to immerse the viewer in scenes and stories. ElectricSky theaters are designed to accommodate special events such as live performances, interactive multimedia lectures, cor-

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porate galas, laser shows, video game championships, terrestrial and planetary telepresence events and videoconferencing.

The planetarium's audio system was designed and installed by MegaSystems of Wayne, PA, in conjunction with Mark Jarvis, director of system engineering at Spitz. MegaSystems, with a St. Augustine, FL-based technologies office, is a full-service provider of productions and services for the large-format film industry, including traditional theaters, domes and theme parks.

Darrin Bruce, field engineer for Spitz, and Rick Hamilton, MegaSystems' theater engineer, installed the video, multimedia and audio systems over four weeks, on two separate trips to Alexandria, Egypt. The audio system is completely controlled by a Peavey MediaMatrix MiniFrame 208 NT system, with four BoB MM8840s, and is interfaced with Spitz's ATM4 timeline-based theater automation system. The ATM4 utilizes a high-speed Pentium PC running Windows or Windows NT for show scripting and device control. It allows a mix of independent projection systems to perform in concert, as well as complete and precise synchronization of

## equipment list

ADC 48 Point Patchbays  
AKG-RC1000 Hardwired Mics  
Audio-Technica ATW1127 831 128 Wireless Mic  
Fostex D-108 Digital Hard Drive  
Mackie 1604 VLZ Pro 16 in 4 out Mixer  
Peavey Mediamatrix MiniFrame 208 NT  
Peavey CAS 3118 Subwoofers  
Peavey CAS 5115 Speakers  
Pioneer CAC-V180M Multi-Disc CD player  
QSC DCA-1622 Amplifiers  
Tascam D-88 DAT Deck  
Tascam 102 Mk II Cassette Deck  
Ultra Stereo Labs Model UPC-1 95Khz Emitter  
Ultra Stereo Labs Model UPC-1 250 Khz Emitter 7  
Yamaha DSP- E8005.1 Decoder



▲ Overlooking the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the \$167 million renovation of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina began in 1990 with the selection of its architect, Snøhetta of Oslo, Norway. Construction began in 1995, and the library officially opened in April 2002.



▲ Spitz of Chadds Ford, PA designed and installed the Bibliotheca Alexandrina planetarium (pictured in the lower right corner) video system, and the planetarium's audio system was designed and installed by MegaSystems of Wayne, PA.



▲ The Planetarium's surround sound system consists of two Peavey Cinema Acoustics CAS 3118 subwoofers and six Peavey Cinema Acoustic CAS 5115 loudspeakers, driven by seven QSC Audio DCA-1622 power amplifiers.



▲ (L-R) Rick Hamilton, MegaSystems' theater engineer; Mohamed Ahmed, Bibliotheca Planetarium technician; and Darrin Bruce, field engineer for Spitz.

emitter handles the second language.

A Mackie 1604 VLZ Pro routes four AKG-RC1000 hardwired mics and one Audio-Technica ATW1127 831 128 wireless mic, as well as various audio components, for when the Planetarium is used for impromptu classes that do not have to rely on a heavily pre-programmed ATM4-driven presentation.

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