

NEW PREVIEW THEATRE AND OFFICES FOR PARAMOUNT PICTURES



Paramount Pictures moved to a new headquarters building in the Chiswick Park development in West London at the end of 2007. The move followed the break-up of United International Pictures (UIP) and provides Paramount Pictures with its own facilities and a new identity for their UK and International film distribution business.

McFarlane Latter Architects were responsible for the impressive fit-out of the new offices. Part of their brief was to create a new Preview Theatre with state of the art facilities and a lounge and bar for hospitality functions. As specialist cinema architects, McFarlane Latter integrated the Preview Theatre into the new offices by removing the raised floor and suspended ceiling and designing an 'acoustic box' to multiplex cinema standards. This prevents the transmission of sound to adjoining office accommodation beside and below the Preview Theatre.

The detailed design and specification of the Screening and Projection Rooms was developed in conjunction with Sound Associates, who had serviced and upgraded equipment in the former UIP Preview Theatre in Hammer-smith.

The Screening Room accommodates 54 seats on six stepped rows to provide clear sight lines to the two projection screens, one white and the other silver to allow 3D presentations. The silver screen is static with a high gain white screen on a roller system controlled from an AMX wireless touch screen system. The dual screen solution required dual EQ sound settings using a QSC Basis system. The screen

is approximately 6.5m wide and 2.5m high and the frame has side masking to accommodate all film and video screen ratios. A high quality LCD video projector has been installed in the Screening Room, primarily for PowerPoint presentations. JBL speakers were specified for the screen and surrounds, integrated into the 'floating' acoustic wall panels. All of the key functions required within the Screening Room are controlled via an AMX wireless touch screen system. The AMX allows users to control the standard housekeeping items – lights, temperature, sound levels and so forth. In addition, the user can control much of the projection equipment remotely – selection of play out device (Blu-ray, PC, G5, satellite, digital projector etc), functions such as playback and pause, and there is a direct voice link to the projectionist. An audience reaction system has also been installed in the room.

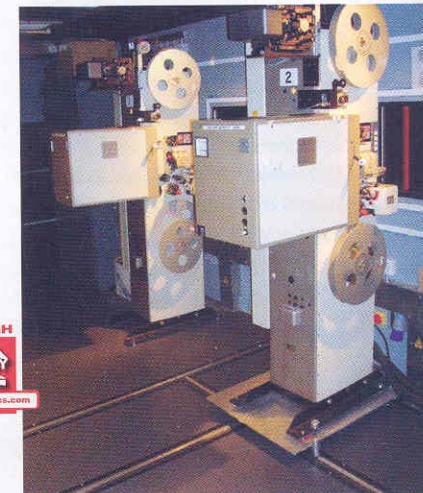
Sound Associates re-used existing sound and projection equipment where possible, including the 35mm projection equipment and the DTS and SDDS sound processors. In addition, many of the non-film play out devices were re-inserted into the new facility. The Kinoton 35mm projectors were fully refurbished before

they were installed into the new projection booth, and due to the space constraints in the room a track system was designed (see below). The track system allows the existing 35mm projector and the new NEC digital cinema projector to share the same porthole. A track system was also used for all of the sound racks to maximise the space for the operator.

The hospitality Lounge and Bar provides space for up to 80 people and provides a luxurious club atmosphere for Paramount Pictures to entertain clients and customers. Plasma screens and a dedicated sound system have been installed in the Lounge with an interface from the Projection Room equipment.

McFarlane Latter Architects and Sound Associates have created a unique Preview Theatre setting high standards for sound and projection in attractive and comfortable surroundings.

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Main photo credit Lance McNulty, others by Reuben Barnes, Projection Services and Technical Assistant at Paramount Pictures