



Soho House Electric Cinema Shoreditch

From idea to reality in three weeks

Behind one of the UK's most luxurious and advanced movie locations is a fascinating story. How the vision of an entrepreneur created a project that went from concept to realisation in three weeks.

It was two weeks into the re-development project for the Soho House in Shoreditch when Simon Munday, their Infrastructure Specialist, got a call from Nick Jones, the owner, about an earlier idea they had about using a small space for a luxury cinema.

“Let's just do it” was the message. The concept was exciting... an oval but shallow space to make a unique environment, plush leather armchairs, footstools, cashmere blankets, great deli-bar, and the best sound and vision available. It was hailing back to the glorious past of cinema. But to achieve it at all involved ripping out everything including an old projection room, to open up the space, selecting and installing new projection systems, sound systems, controls, wiring and more. And to make it happen in the three weeks before the deadline of opening day was going to be a titanic effort.

Calls were made to partners who knew Soho House style and standards and who could be relied on to make it happen. Graham Lodge, the Managing Director of Sound Associates, was the first call. He immediately sensed that the normal and serene process of designing, planning and installing a new cinema was not going to work in this urgent situation.

“We had to design, build and install on the hoof”, he explained. “We were lucky in that we know Soho House well and that they trusted us to get the right result for the best value. There was no time for the regular processes so everything was geared to feel and experience. A conventional approach was not going to get near the timetable.”

The team rolled up their sleeves and progressed with unbelievable speed, but no compromises were made. When the opening night arrived, a showing of the Blair Witch Project on Halloween, the wow factor was there and the audience was overcome with the quality, comfort and glamour of the experience.

Fact file:

Founded: in 1995.

Key activities: Private members' club for those in film, media and creative industries.

Expanded to include Houses across Europe and North America, as well as restaurants, cinemas, spas and hotels.



Entrance to Electric Cinema in Shoreditch



Electric Cinema sign in foyer



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Simon was rightly proud of the achievement. He told the Sound Associates team, “With an almost impossible deadline you made it happen, your team showed initiative and professionalism throughout the installation in such a manner it should make you feel proud. We have achieved something special and your part in this has been invaluable.”

This project went live on 31st October 2014 but it was not a fright night. The challenge had been scary but the result was perfect.

Technical Specifications:

The project called for the de-installation and removal of an old 35mm projector, replaced by a full digital projection system. The old projection room was removed to open up the space and a small pod was built into the ceiling, with a bespoke tray system to allow the projector to slide out for maintenance work.

The projector itself is a Barco DP2K-10S, because it was the only model that fits into the pod. Due to the high demand for Event Cinema, a Datasat AP20 sound processor was chosen. The installation also features a Wyrestorm audio-visual distribution system working over a Cat 6 network infrastructure. This provides the ability to operate the Event Cinema from two different locations, the Manager’s office and the Event Room, which has a view of the auditorium. Using live monitors, the system allows preview of any source from either of the two control locations, so that the feed can be viewed prior to routing it to the projector for public consumption.

“We have used Sound Associates in every cinema project and they understand our needs and values. They have become our trusted experts and they feel the responsibility to get it right for us. There’s a mutual respect which makes projects like the Electric Cinema Shoreditch happen.”

Simon Munday, Infrastructure Specialist, Soho House



Screen and luxury seating



Projector housing unit mounted into the ceiling