

Synchron Stage Vienna: world-class sound with Sennheiser and Neumann

Wedemark/Vienna, 9 September 2016 – Synchron Stage Vienna (www.synchronstage.com) thrills with its world-class recording environment and exceptionally large range of microphones, highlighting the recording studio's claim to be a premium facility. The large-membrane microphones on offer include the Neumann M 150 Tube, M 149 Tube and TLM 170 R, while the extensive small-diaphragm range features various models from Sennheiser's pioneering MKH series. Dynamic microphones from the audio specialists are also regularly used in Vienna – the fact that timeless sound icons ranging from the Neumann U 87 Ai to the KM 184 are also available seems like a given in such an inspiring environment. Multi-channel sound of the highest quality is provided in Synchron Stage Vienna by nine active Neumann KH 310 A studio monitors with matching subwoofers.

In the western part of Vienna, no expense was spared and an impressive combination of scoring stage and recording studio was created when Synchron Stage Vienna was established in a listed building on the grounds of the former "Film City Vienna". A comparison with Los Angeles, London or Berlin is not inappropriate: In particular, the fully decoupled large recording environment (Stage A), with an area of 540 square metres and a height of between 10.5 and 12 metres, is acknowledged by experts as being one of the best-sounding recording environments in the world. There is space here for up to 130 orchestra musicians during large productions, and a reverberation time of 1.8 seconds (RT60 in an empty hall) provides excellent recording conditions.



In keeping with the high standards and the exceptionally good acoustics, only choice microphones are used - Vienna Synchron Stage has a vast array of real gems, which have been selected with considerable expertise from the Sennheiser and Neumann product ranges. "Our selection of microphones is generally very modern," explains Bernd Mazagg, Technical Director and Chief Audio Engineer at Synchron Stage Vienna. "In addition to the provision of good sound, an important criterion for all

new acquisitions is reliability: If you have 80 musicians in the recording studio and are subject to time and cost pressures, you must be able to rely on the microphones."

Synchron Stage Vienna has three Neumann M 150 Tubes, which impressively reproduce the powerful orchestral sound in a Decca Tree configuration. Two Neumann M 149 Tubes are also equipped with tubes, and these provide nine directional response patterns and a seven-level subsonic filter. The dual membrane microphones are generally used on double basses at Synchron Stage Vienna. "If there are a lot of instruments, the cardioid has proven itself as a directional response pattern that minimizes disturbing crosstalk," explains Bernd Mazagg.



The studio equipment includes three Neumann KM 133 A microphones: "If someone wants to use a very modern Decca Tree, these condenser microphones are the tools of choice," says Mazagg. "Personally, I like using the KM 133 A as a surround microphone in a setup in which there are three M 150 Tubes facing forwards and two KM 133 A microphones facing backwards. I think the KM 133 A has very good impulse response in this case – it makes the rear channels sound a bit more fresh and open." The standard equipment at Synchron Stage Vienna also includes eight Neumann KM 140 (KM 100 plus AK 40) and eight Neumann KM 184 pressure gradient microphones. "We are very happy with our analogue microphones from Sennheiser and Neumann," says Mazagg.



Six Neumann TLM 170 R large-diaphragm microphones are available at Synchron Stage Vienna and are used, among other things, for recording horns. There are eight classic Neumann U 87 Ai microphones, and these are amusingly referred to by Bernd Mazagg with the words "You just put them there and there is no further discussion". While most commonly used for cellos, trombones and tubas, as an all-rounder, the studio standard U 87 Ai is also very popular in other contexts.

"Microphones from the Sennheiser MKH 8000 series are my favourites among the small-membrane microphones – I find them very impressive," says Bernd Mazagg about the capsules that are characterized by an extended frequency response of up to 50 kHz. "The small capsules sound particularly good with the strings. I primarily use the MKH 8040 with a cardioid pattern, and we have six of them. Depending on the context, the wide cardioid provided by the MKH 8090 is also impressive, and we also have six of them."

The microphone pool at Synchron Stage Vienna also includes dynamic microphones from the Sennheiser product range, with five MD 441-U, five e 906 and three MD 421-II. These proven models are used primarily in the 80-square metre Stage B, in which rock and pop productions can be realized completely independently of Stage A. "With these microphones, every user knows exactly what to expect," states Bernd Mazagg. These dynamic microphones are also used in orchestral productions, depending on the particular taste of the producer - especially if jazzy sounds or a big band sound are required. The MD 441 models are then used to record the wind section, while the e 906 microphones perform very well on percussion instruments such as congas or bongos.

For monitoring purposes, the 115-square metre Control Room A at Synchron Stage Vienna has nine Neumann KH 310 A active speakers with MMD waveguides and two KH 810 subwoofers. The compact studio monitors are used as an alternative to large speakers embedded in the walls and also serve as a monitoring solution for multi-channel projects, supporting both "traditional" surround applications in 5.1 format and also 9.1 setups. For Bernd Mazagg, the microphones of choice in the latter context are nine Sennheiser MKH 800. Mazagg also experiments with microphone setups in which the five microphones on the lower level are supplemented by four microphones of a different type on the upper level. "We have an environment that sounds fantastic and in which one can concentrate on selecting the microphones that sound best without having to make up for any acoustic shortcomings of the premises," says the Chief Audio Engineer. If a drummer or bass player requires headphones, a Sennheiser HD 26 PRO is used to output the click track,



which is an obligatory feature in a scoring stage. Conductors make use of a Sennheiser HD 380 PRO.

Synchron Stage Vienna is a reality that has arisen from the vision of cellist / film



music composer / director Herbert "Herb" Tucmandl, in his capacity as Managing Director of Vienna Symphonic Library GmbH. Around ten million euros was invested in converting the listed "Synchronhalle" (Hall 6) of the former ORF Rosenhügel Studios, built in the 1940s, into a world-class recording

studio. Symphonic recordings and film music are produced, as are high-quality samples of virtual instruments for the Vienna Symphonic Library, which are appreciated by audio experts around the world.

Image captions

Image 1: A recording environment (Stage A) that is acknowledged by experts as being one of the best-sounding recording environments in the world. © Christian Steinbrenner

Image 2: Synchron Stage Vienna uses three Neumann M 150 Tubes in a Decca Tree configuration © Christian Steinbrenner

Image 3: The repertoire also includes eight classic Neumann U 87 Ai © Christian Steinbrenner

Image 4: There are nine Neumann KH 310 A studio monitors in the 115 square metre Control Room A at Synchron Stage Vienna © Christian Steinbrenner

Image 5: Symphonic recordings and film music are produced here, as are high-quality samples for the Vienna Symphonic Library © Christian Steinbrenner

About Sennheiser

Audio specialist Sennheiser based in Wedemark near Hanover is one the world's leading producers of headphones, microphones and wireless transmission



technology with its own plants in Germany, Ireland and the US. Sennheiser operates in more than 50 countries. Together with 19 subsidiaries and long-standing trading partners, the company sells innovative products and future-oriented audio solutions which are optimally tailored to customers' needs. This enthusiasm for audio technology is shared by some 2,750 employees worldwide who work for the family-run company, which was established in 1945. Daniel Sennheiser and Dr. Andreas Sennheiser took the helm in 2013 and are the third generation to manage the company. In 2015, the Sennheiser Group's turnover totaled €682 million. www.sennheiser.com

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