



PANASONIC BRINGS 'THE RING CYCLE' EPIC OPERA TO LIFE

KENNEDY CENTER CHOOSES PANASONIC PROJECTION
FOR LATEST PRODUCTION BY THE WASHINGTON
NATIONAL OPERA



The Kennedy Center, which opened its doors to the public in 1971 with President Kennedy's mandate that it "contribute to the human spirit," serves as a preeminent cultural centre in the heart of Washington DC.

The Washington National Opera (WNO), founded in 1956 and affiliated with The Kennedy Center since 2011, complements the Center's repertoire with opera, presenting a year-long season of approximately 6 works.

Of these operas, few have required the rigorous demands or carried the high expectations of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring Cycle), a four-part, 17-hour work composed in 1848.

The Ring Cycle commands a production worthy of its highly-revered, almost mythical status. For its first time ever, WNO put on the complete ring cycle - and did so three times over the course of three weeks in a single performance space.

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This rigorous schedule would require the entire stage to be re-set practically every night. Due to the number of set changes and the demand for an awe-inspiring experience, the team relied on projector-powered digital scenery to create an immersive world. Owing to a tight installation window, the projectors had to be small enough to quickly mount and they had to be easy to control, while delivering bright, powerful video.

WNO decided on six Panasonic PT-DZ13K 12,000 lm projectors mounted on the balcony rail in the front box, just three feet away from the audience.

The quietness of the PT-DZ13K, which ranges between 37 to 45 db depending on operating mode, ensured opera-goers enjoyed the performance without distraction. WNO also installed an additional six Panasonic PT-DZ21K 20,000 lm projectors mounted upstage on a flying platform.

Weighing just 53 lbs for its 12,000 lm output, the PT-DZ13K required a single stagehand to move and manipulate it. The ultra-compact PT-DZ21K weighs 90.4 lbs for its 20,000 lm output, requiring only 2 stagehands to move it.

Sean McNally, Projectionist & Video Systems Technician at The Kennedy Center said, "It saved a lot of time and hassle to be able to manipulate the projectors easily due to their light weight." He continued, "I think these Panasonic projectors are a good combination of size, resolution, and lumens. They don't take up a lot of space, they are very, very sharp, the color rendering is good, and they put out a lot of light for the size of the projector."

"The level of detail that we've gotten out the projectors has allowed us to really create an immersive world," McNally noted. With a 1920 x 1200 pixel resolution, the projectors created stunning visuals with crisp detail and accurate color reproduction.

DC Metro Theatre Arts' David Friscic called the design "a luminous marvel" and lauded the "naturally immersive and pulsating visual projections." (Friscic, 2016)

"Everybody at Panasonic has been fantastic about trying to work with us and help us make this project possible. They made sure that if we needed any technical help, they were available to help us," stated Glenn A. Turner, Head of Production Operations at the Kennedy Center.

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The WNO team used Panasonic's Multi Monitoring and Control software, which enables users to manage up to 2,048 Panasonic projectors and professional displays over a LAN network. WNO was able to control power, brightness, input switching, schedule image delivery, and more using this software.

The sold-out Ring Cycle was met with shouts and bravos from the audience and acclaim from critics, "I would certainly recommend Panasonic technology to anybody. Panasonic has done wonderful work for us," added Turner.

Paul Taylor, Technical Director at WNO concluded, "Our experience has taught us that you cannot go wrong with Panasonic. They are a true partner."

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