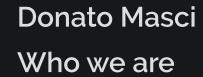
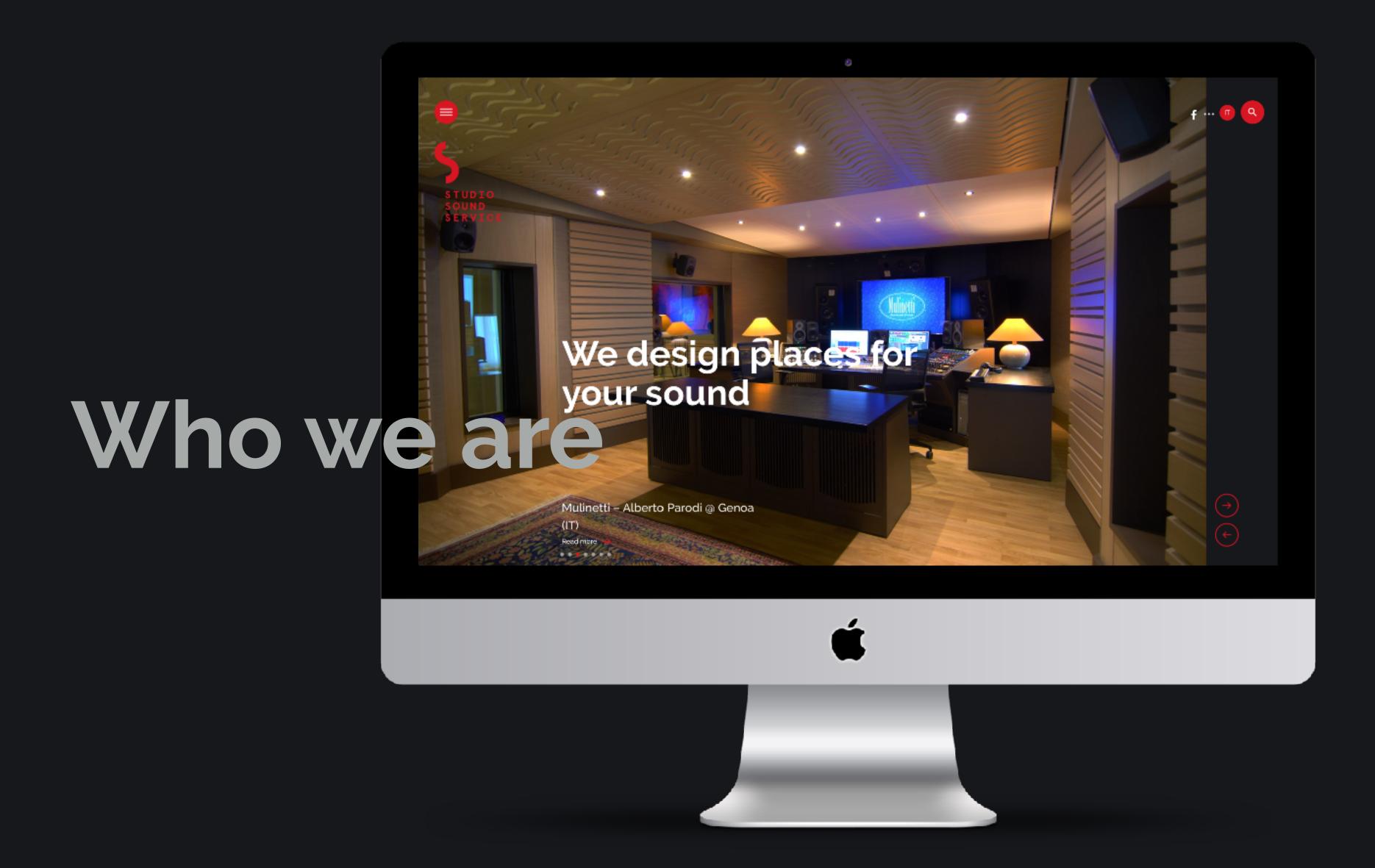


Small vs. Large Spaces: Two Acoustic Worlds in Contrast

The Studio Sound Service Experience









Studio Sound Service is a well-established design and consultancy company that specialises in every aspect of acoustics and sound systems.

Founded in 1983

SSS has built an enviable reputation for the production of world class performance and recording spaces, from personal studios to large scale film, broadcast and corporate facilities.

By combining aesthetic and technical skills with decades for experience SSS strives to make every project successful, both sonically and visually.



Donato Masci Physicist & Acoustic Designer - CEO



Cecilia Torracchi Acoustic & Civil Engineer - Partner



Giulia Bondielli Acoustic & Building Engineer – Partner



Elena Rossi Acoustic & Building – Architectural Engineer



Niccolò Pizzamano Architect & Acoustic Designer



Chantal Valdambrini Communication Manager

Donato Masci

Studio Sound Service – Short Portfolio

ADR, Post & Broadcast. Cinema Mixing studios. Gaming Studios.

- Iyuno (ex SDI Media) Acoustic Designers (more than 15 countries)
- Ćinecittà Studios (Postproduction Facility 2020 Renewal) @ Rome
- Dubbing Brothers (Italy, USA)
- 3Cycle postproduction Facility @ Rome
- FOX Dolby Atmos Studios @ Rome (IT), Münich (DE), London (UK)
- Netflix Facility @ Rome
- Disney Facility @ Warsaw (PO), Milan
- inHouse (Oscar winner Sorrentino) @ Roma

Music Studios (400+)

- Cicaleto Recording Francesco Ponticelli @ Arezzo
- Aemme Recording Studio Salvatore Addeo @ Lecco
- D:POT Recording Ărts @ Prato Fabrizio Simoncioni
- Mulinetti Studio @ Genova Alberto Parodi Resolution Award 2015 Best Audio Facility
- The Garage @ Civitella v.d.C. (AR) Resolution Award 2014 Best Audio Facility
- House of Glass @ Viareggio (LU) Gianni Bini Resolution Award 2013 Best Audio Facility
- SonicFab Studio @ Pioltello (MI)
- Waves Music @ Genova
- Marco Borsatti Studio @ Bologna
- Pop Fiction Janie Price @ Firenze
- Sugarmusic @ Milano
- Experimental Studios @ Torino

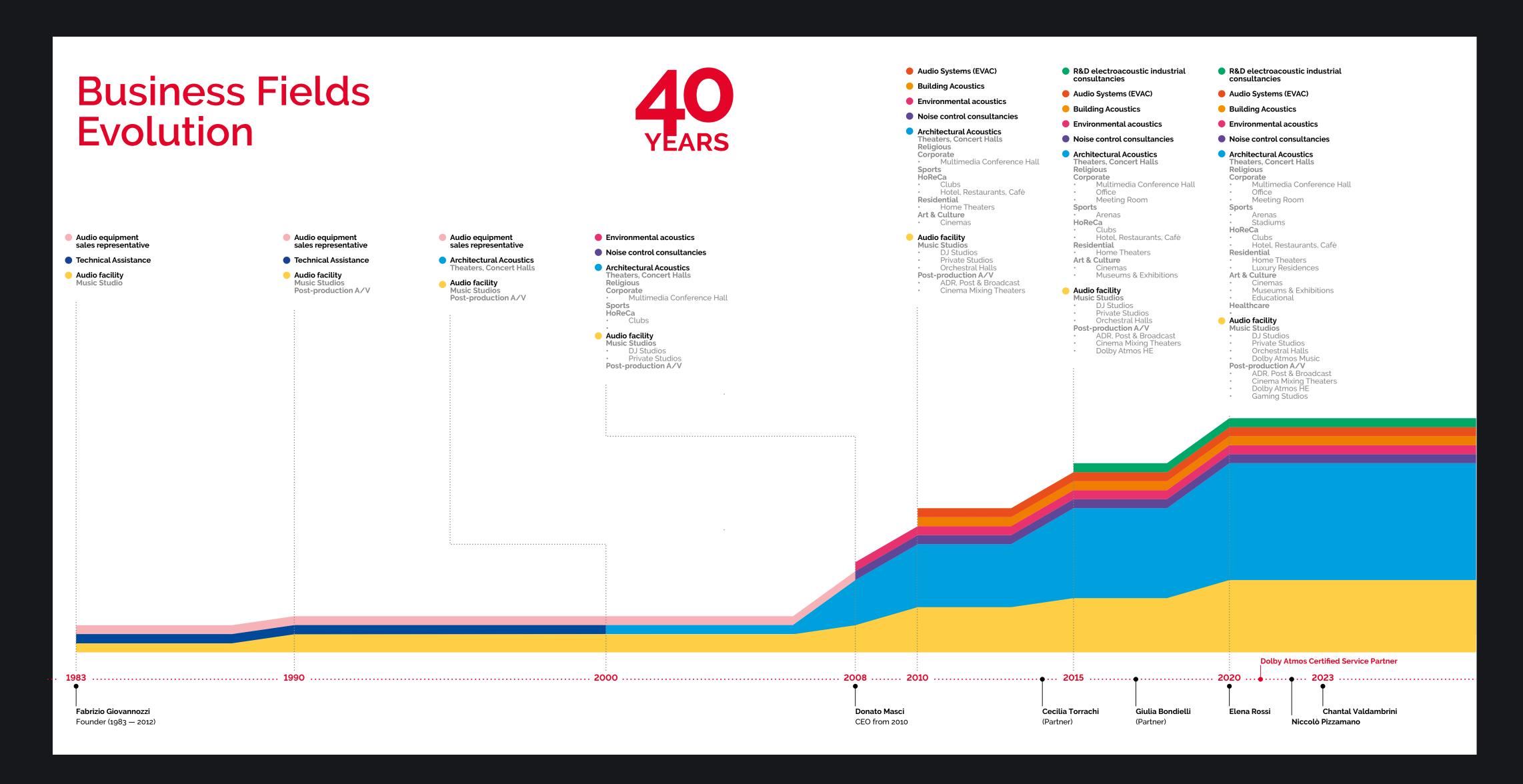
Dolby Atmos Music Studios: 50+ rooms Dolby Atmos Home Entertainment Studios: 80+ rooms Dolby Atmos Theatrical Studios: 10+ Theatres

Personal Studios:

 Andrea Bocelli, Asaf Avidan, Biagio Antonacci, Daniele Silvestri, Damian Lazarus, Diego Calvetti, Enrico Cremonesi (Fiorello), Enrico Melozzi, Fabio Rovazzi, Federica Vincenti (Michele Placido), Gabry Ponte, Giorgia Angiuli, Irko (Kanye West sound engineer), Luca Agnelli, Marco Masini, Marco Messina (99 Posse), Merk & Kremont, Nari&Milani, Paolo Sandrini, Petra Magoni, Piero Pelù, Pino Iodice, Renato Zero, Vinai.

- Barys Arena (ice hockey) @ Astana, Kazakhstan
- Chórus Life (arena e cittadella) @ Bergamo
- Stadio Tardini @ Parma
- Hospitals: Nuovo Ruggi @ Salerno, Cesena
- George Lucas Home Theater, Italy
- Cinema Barberini @ Roma
- Chiesa Santa Maria Nuova (Arch. M. Botta) @ Terranuova B. (AR)
- Duomo di Siena new audio system
- Prada Auditorium and Conference Room via Orobia @ Milano
- Presentation room Ferrari HQ @ Maranello (MO)
- Siemens HQ @ Milano
- Heineken HQ @ Milano
- Leonardo Elicotteri @ Milano
- Four Seasons Hotel @ Firenze
- Portrait Milano Ferragamo @ Milano
- Caffè dell'Oro Ferragamo @ Firenze
- EVAC Dubai Metro
- EVAC Bahrain and Islamabad airport (THALES)
- EVAC Scuola di Magistratura Castelpulci @ Scandicci Firenze
- Teatro del Popolo @ Castelfiorentino (FI)
- Teatro del Popolo @ Colle di Val d'Elsa
- Teatro il Ferruccio @ Empoli
- Teatro Marconi @ Pistoia
- Teatro Nazionale @ Firenze







Donato Masci Countries where we operate





Studio Sound Service is the only Italian Dolby CSP.

We can provide design, commissioning and consultancy services worldwide with Dolby's certified quality standards.



Certified service partner



MEMBER 2024 - 2024

Studio Sound Service Srl

Industry-Related Professional

CEDIA Members are smart home professionals providing comfort, control, connection, and entertainment for clients to experience the best moment in life in their homes.

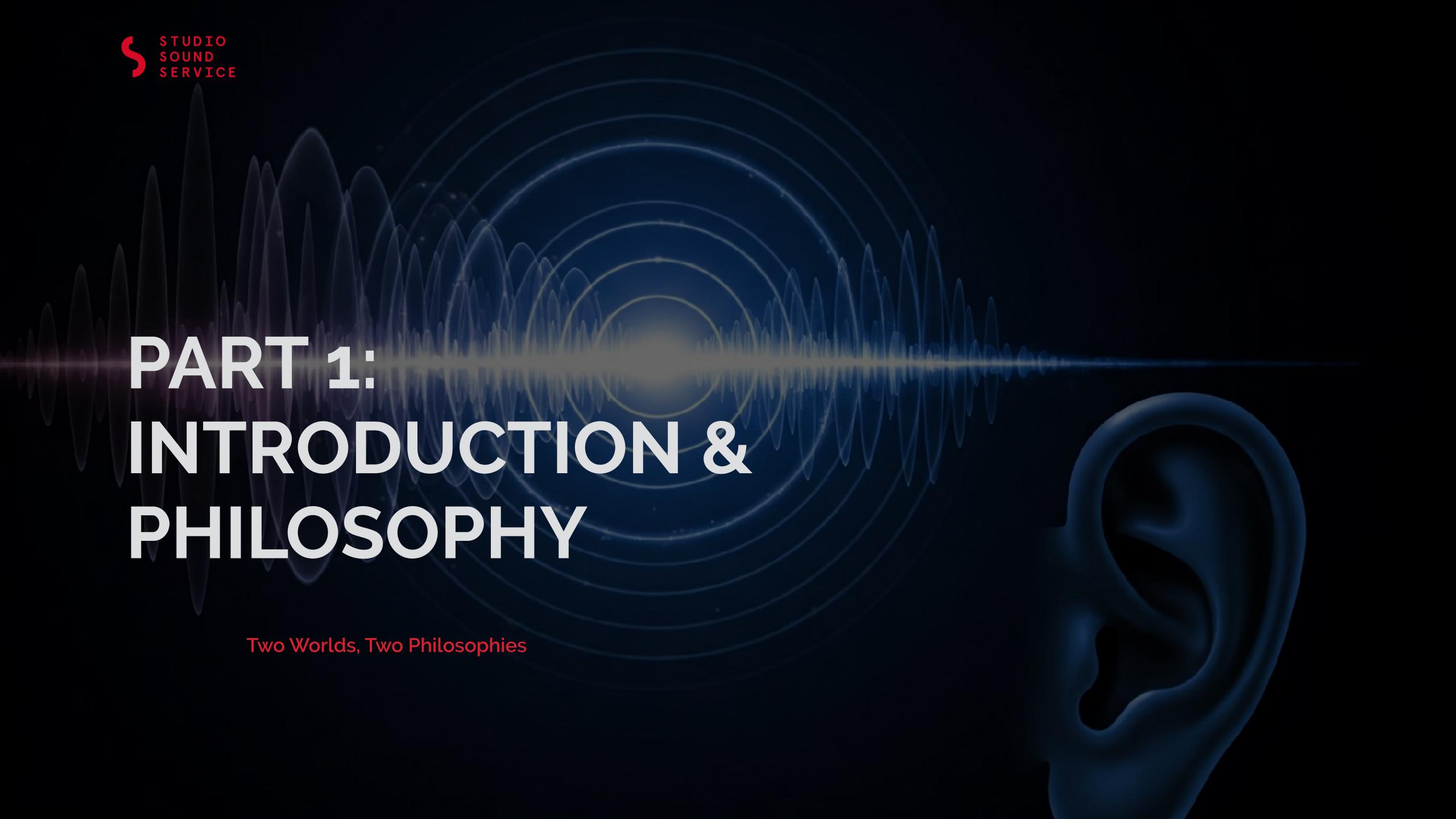
The Association for Smart home Professionals™

CEDIA Member Code of Conduct

Each member of CEDIA shall agree to adhere to the following:

- Provide to all persons truthful and accurate information with respect to the professional performance of duties.
- Maintain the highest standards of personal conduct to bring credit to the custom electronic and design industry.
- Promote and encourage the highest level of ethics within the profession.
- Responsibly uphold all laws and regulations relating to CEDIA policies and activities.
- Strive for excellence in all aspects of the industry.
- Use only legal and ethical means in all ndustry activities.
- 7.Protect the public against fraud and unfair practices.
- Use written contracts clearly stating all charges, services, products and other essential information.
- Demonstrate respect for every professional within the industry by consistently performing at or above the standards acceptable to the industry.

- Make a commitment to increase professional growth and knowledge by participating in technical and industry business training.
- Contribute knowledge to professional meetings and journals to raise the professionalism of the industry.
- Maintain the highest standards of safety
- When providing services or products, maintain in full force adequate or appropriate insurance.
- 14. Cooperate with professional colleagues, suppliers and employees to provide the highest quality service.
- Extend these same professional commitments to all persons supervised or employed.
- 16. Subscribe to CEDIA's Code of Ethics and abide by the CEDIA Bylaws.







Every Italian journalist writes "acustica perfetta" - they're always wrong





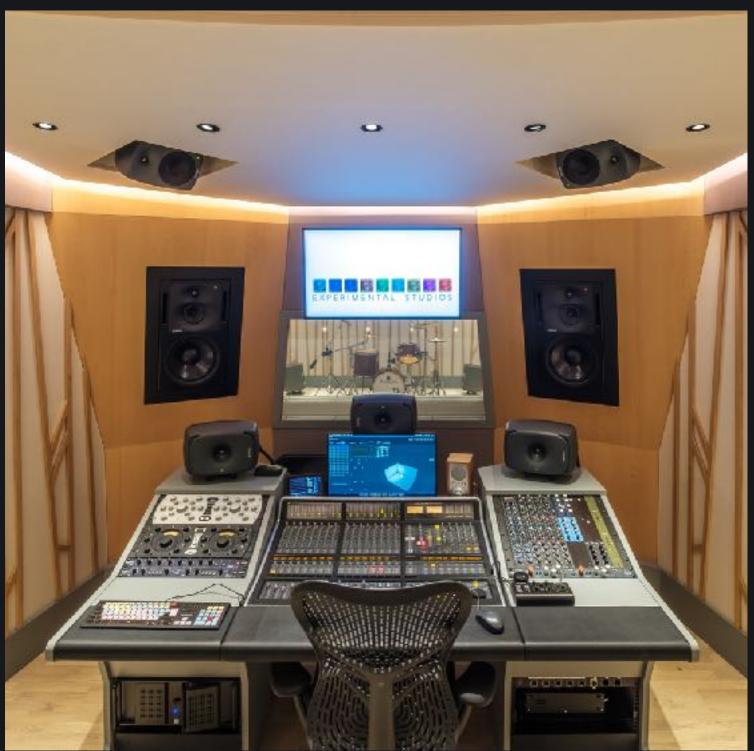
This single misconception reveals the fundamental misunderstanding of acoustic design.

Perfect acoustics doesn't exist - only appropriate acoustics for specific purposes.

The truth is far more nuanced: what works brilliantly in a recording studio would be disastrous in a concert hall, and vice versa.



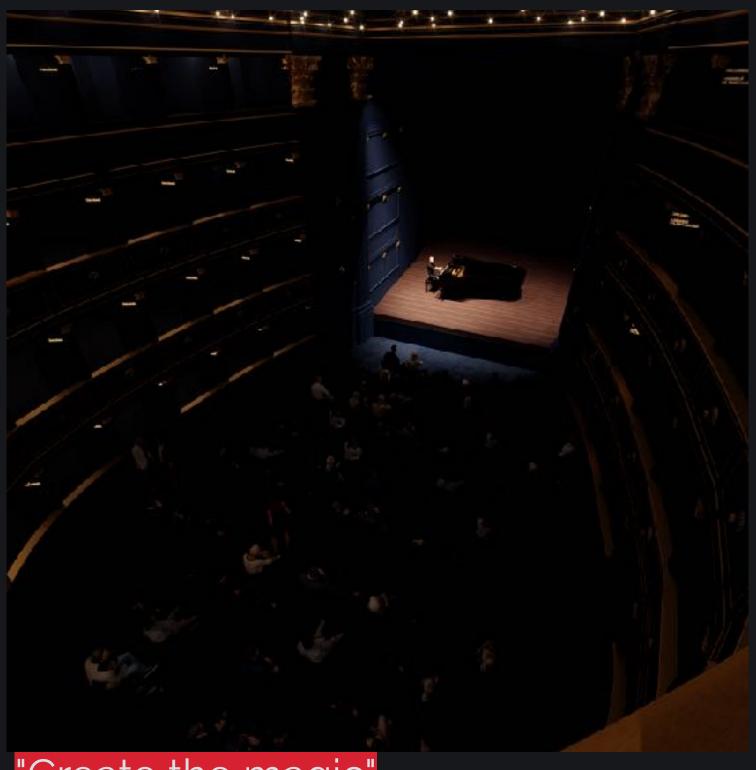
SMALL SPACES



"Reveal the truth"

- Reveal the truth
- The room disappears
- Microscope for sound
- Analytical precision
- Serve the content

LARGE SPACES



"Create the magic"

- Create the magic
- · The room performs
- Cathedral for emotion
- Experiential immersion
- Enhance the content



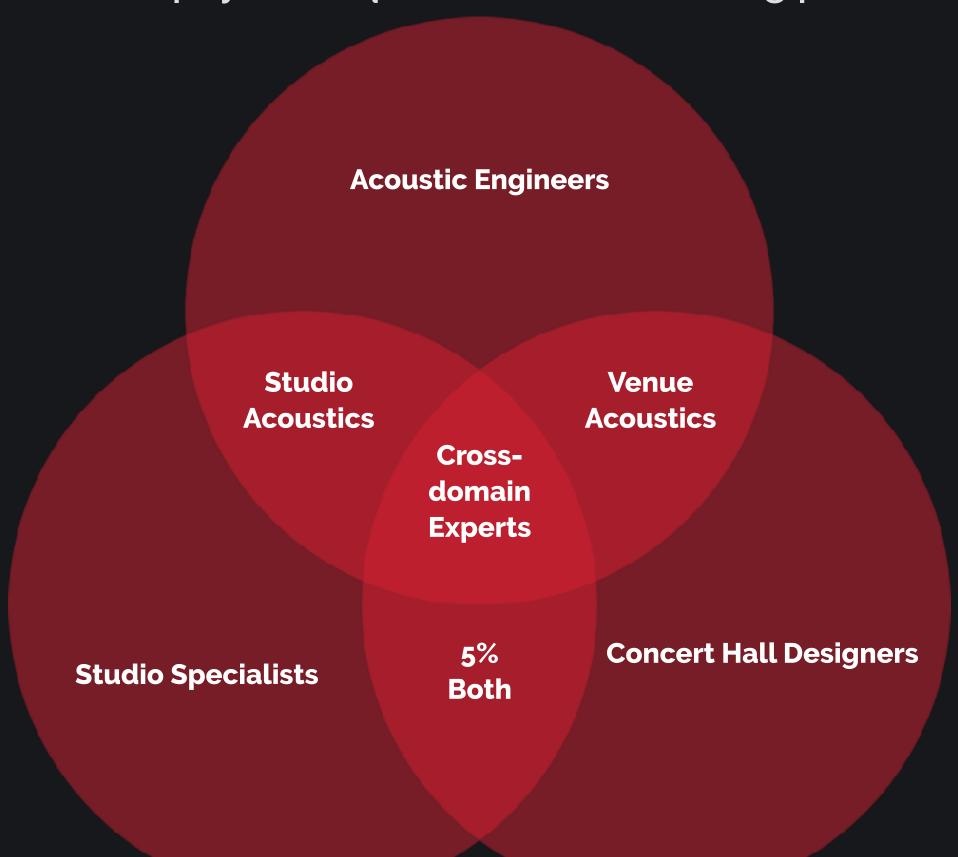
Same Consultant, Opposite Roles

Aspect	STUDIO DESIGNER	THEATRE CONSULTANT
Philosophy	"I am the architect"	"I serve the architecture"
Modus Operandi	Create from nothing	Adapt to existing
Control	100%	30%
Listening area	One perfect point	800 acceptable points
Geometry	Geometry serves acoustics	Acoustics serves geometry
Materials	Materials selected first	Materials negotiated last
Space	Private creative space	Public performance space



The 95% Who Never Cross Over

The modal/statistical divide at Schroeder frequency creates different physics. Different physics requires different thinking patterns.



"A hammer sees everything as a nail" studio designers see resonances to kill, concert hall designers see energy to preserve.

Our advantage: 400+ studios, 50+ large spaces. We've failed enough in both to understand the principles.

"Experience in both worlds reveals what connects and what divides them."



PART 2: PHYSICS & TECHNICAL PRINCIPLES

When Physics Dictates Design



Where Physics Changes, Philosophy Must Follow

Aspect	Small Room (100 m³)	Large Hall (10,000 m³)
Schroeder frequency fs	350 Hz	90 Hz
Below fs	Modal Behaviour	Few modes, not critical
Above f _S	Statistical begins	Fully Statistical
Mode Audibility	Individual modes audible	Modes blend into reverberation
Analysis Method	Wave-based analysis critical	Ray-tracing sufficient
	Standing waves dominate	Geometric acoustics valid

$$f_s = 2000 \times \sqrt{\frac{RT_{60}}{V}}$$

The transition point where design philosophy must completely flip.

Below Schroeder: Count modes. Above Schroeder: Statistics rule.



Bass: Enemy vs Treasure

STUDIOS

"Every mode is an enemy" (bass: 20+200 Hz)

- Problem: Modal resonances
- **Solution**: Membrane absorbers
- Target: <350ms decay @ 50Hz
- Risk: Boomy/muddy sound
- Treatment:
 60-100cm depth
 Membrane Absorbers
 Perforated Panels

CONCERT HALLS

"Bass is precious energy" (bass: 125÷250Hz)

- Problem: Seat dip effect
- **Solution**: Rigid construction
- Target: >1.5s warmth
- **Risk**: Thin/cold sound
- Treatment:??? None desired !!!

Key insight

"The seat dip effect eats 100-300Hz in halls we must preserve what remains or the hall sounds anaemic."



Diffusion Strategy - Placement and Purpose

STUDIOS

- First reflection points: Always treat (break specular reflections, prevent flutter echo)
- Rear wall: Always treat (break specular reflections, prevent flutter echo)
- Goal: Scatter direct sound
- Amount: 15-30% of surfaces
- Type: 1D or 2D diffusers

CONCERT HALLS

- Under balconies: add brilliance to shadows
- Rear wall: IF needed (prevent echo, keep energy)
- **Side walls**: specular reflection is better (preserve lateral energy)
- Goal: Enhance without destroying
- Amount: 5-10% of surfaces
- Type: Large-scale only

Critical insight

"Break specular reflections in studios, add brilliance to shadows in halls. Prevent flutter echo always, but preserve lateral energy in halls."



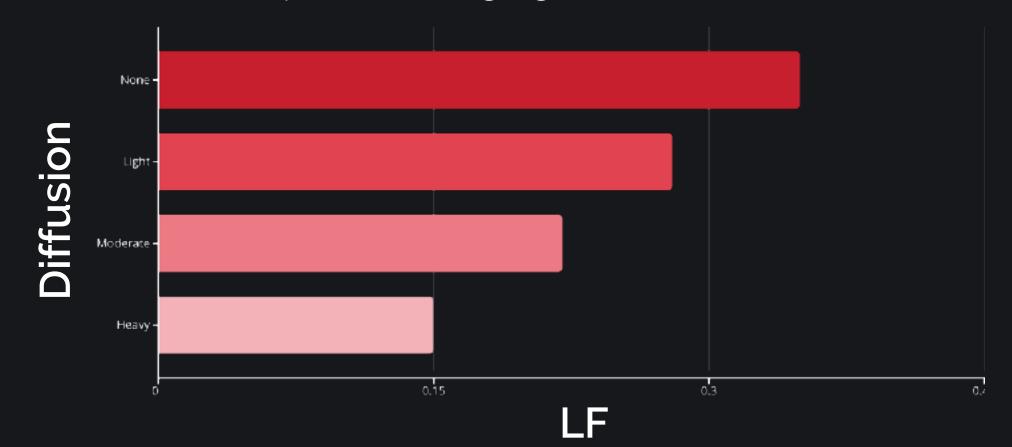
Why Side Walls Must Be Sacred in Halls

Key Revelation:

Diffusion on side walls destroys spaciousness in halls

STUDIOS

- Lateral energy = false stereo image: must eliminate
- Lateral Energy Fraction (LF) targets:
 <0.1 (mono compatibility)
- Interaural Cross-Correlation (IACC):
 <0.3 (precise imaging)



CONCERT HALLS

- Lateral energy = envelopment:
 must preserve
- Lateral Energy Fraction (LF) targets:
 <0.25 (spacious feeling)
- Interaural Cross-Correlation (IACC):
 <0.5 (envelopment)

Design impact: Side walls flat and reflective in halls, treated in studios

"Every diffuser on a side wall is stealing spaciousness from the audience"



Why Every Simulation Starts Wrong

SMALL SPACES

- Need impedance values
- Indirect impedance estimation
- 6-10 surfaces to calibrate
- FEM needs precision

LARGE SPACES

- Need absorption coefficients
- Historical materials = unknown
- 100+ surfaces to calibrate
- Ray-tracing needs statistics

Current reality: we guess, measure, adjust, repeat

Future need:

Systematic calibration approach



The Complete inversion

Aspect	Studios	Halls
Modes	Eliminate	Preserve
Diffusion	Strategic	Minimal
Lateral energy	Destroy	Preserve
Materials	Absorptive	Reflective
Panels Mounting	Decoupled (resonators)	Rigid





Small Rooms: The Luxury of Modal Control

THE SMALL ROOM ADVANTAGE

Below Schroeder Frequency (~350Hz):

- Individual modes are audible
- We can count them
- We can measure them
- We can kill them (one by one)

OUR WEAPON

- Wave-based simulation (FEM/BEM)
- (?) Precise impedance control
- Targeted treatment
- Mathematical certainty

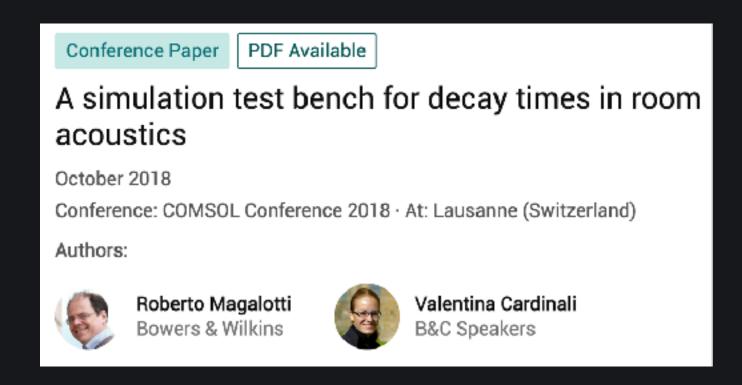
Result: ±5% accuracy

Critical insight:

"In small rooms, we are gods"



From Empty Box to Validated Model



- Inverse problem: From MT60 to impedance
- 4 modes = 4 unknown = 4 impedance
- Modal participation factors (ε)
- Process:
 Measure MT60 → Calculate ε → Assign Z
- Works for 6 surfaces, doesn't scale to 100
- Controlled materials
- No aging, no surprises

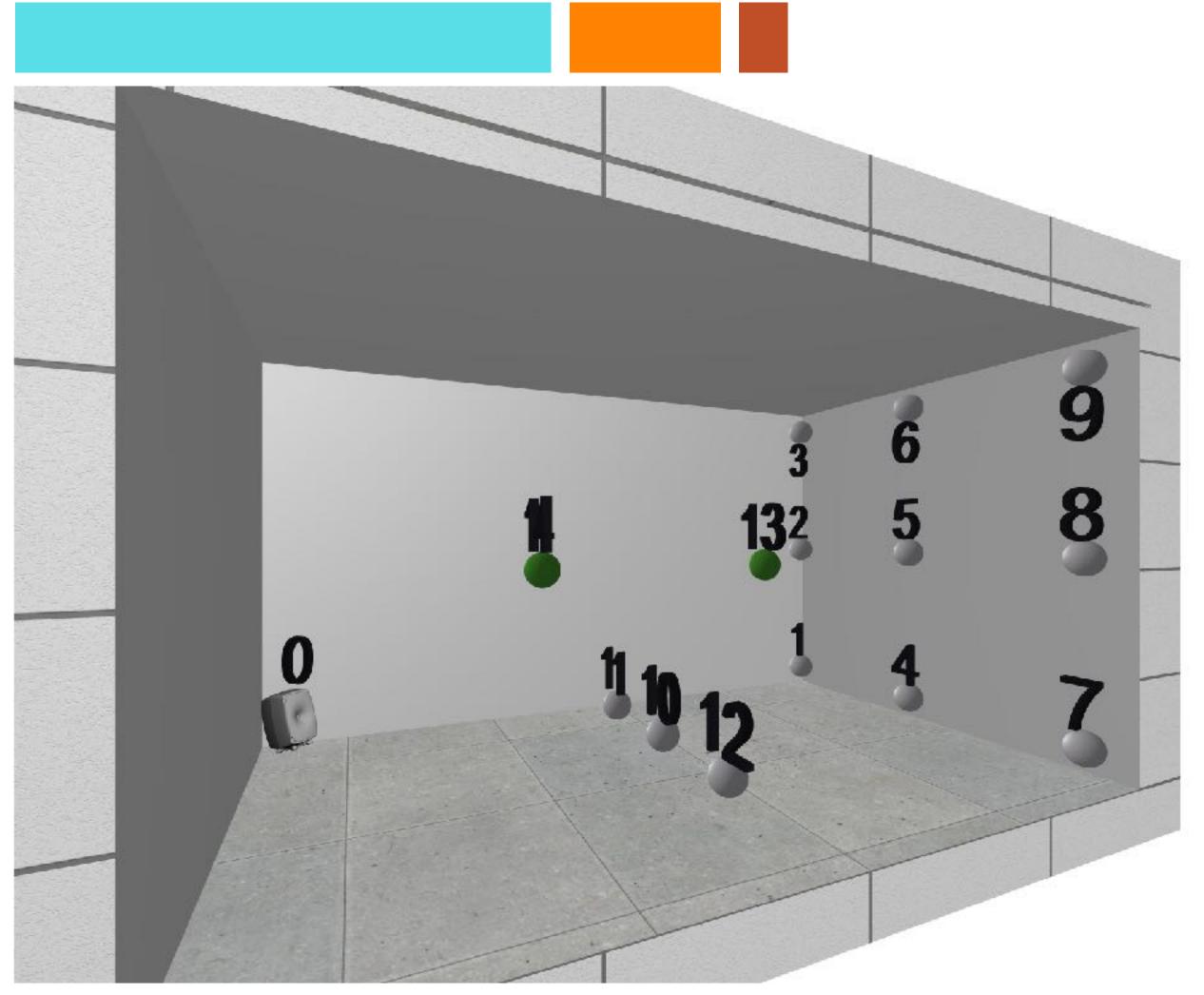
2025 ISE CEDIA Convention

We used the procedure from Roberto Magalotti and Valentina Cardinali's paper: "A simulation test bench for decay times in room acoustic"

to indirectly estimate the acoustic impedance of the walls with COMSOL®

and we calculated it using a Mathematica® tool

Measurements in the SSStudio



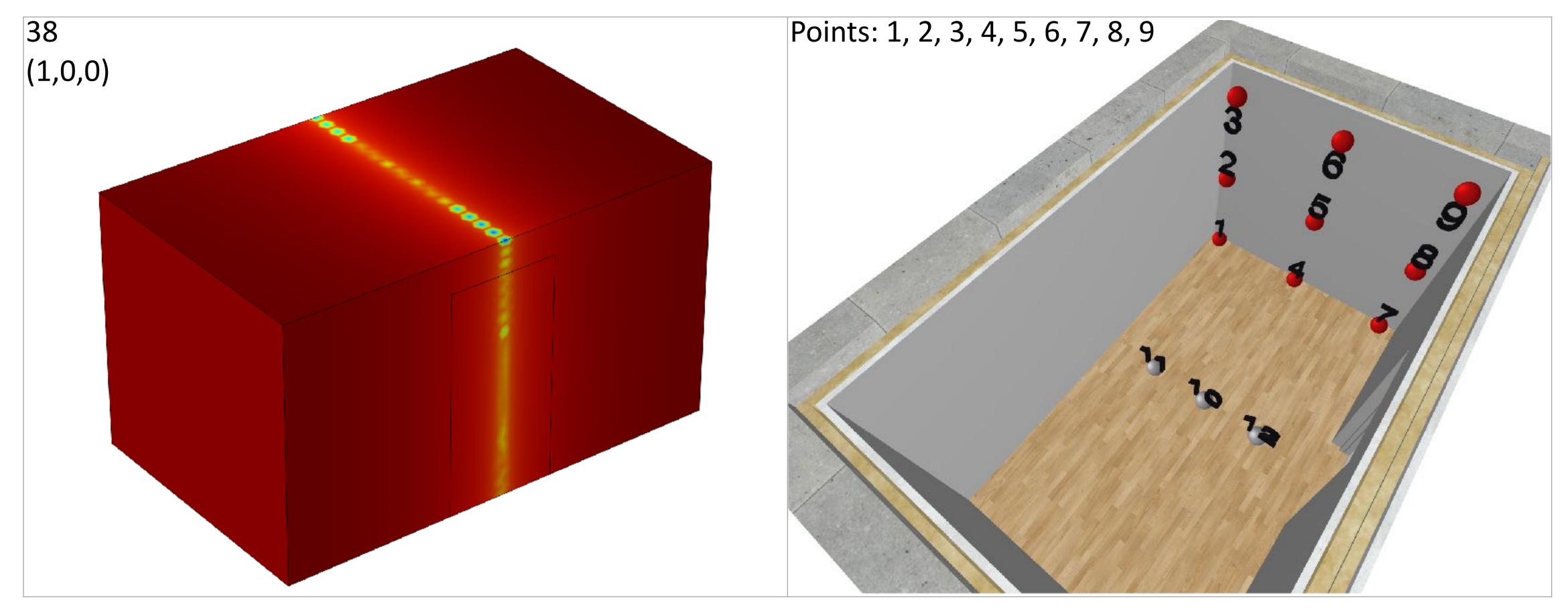
Points were selected

- 1. on the back wall (9 points)
 - 4 in the corner (1,3,9,7)
 - 1 in the middle (5)
 - 4 at the midpoints of the sides (2, 4, 6, 8)
- 2. at the middle of the room to distinguish the modal responses
 - 10
 - 11 and 12 at 1/4W
- 3. Points at 1/3 of the length as a control position (13, 14)





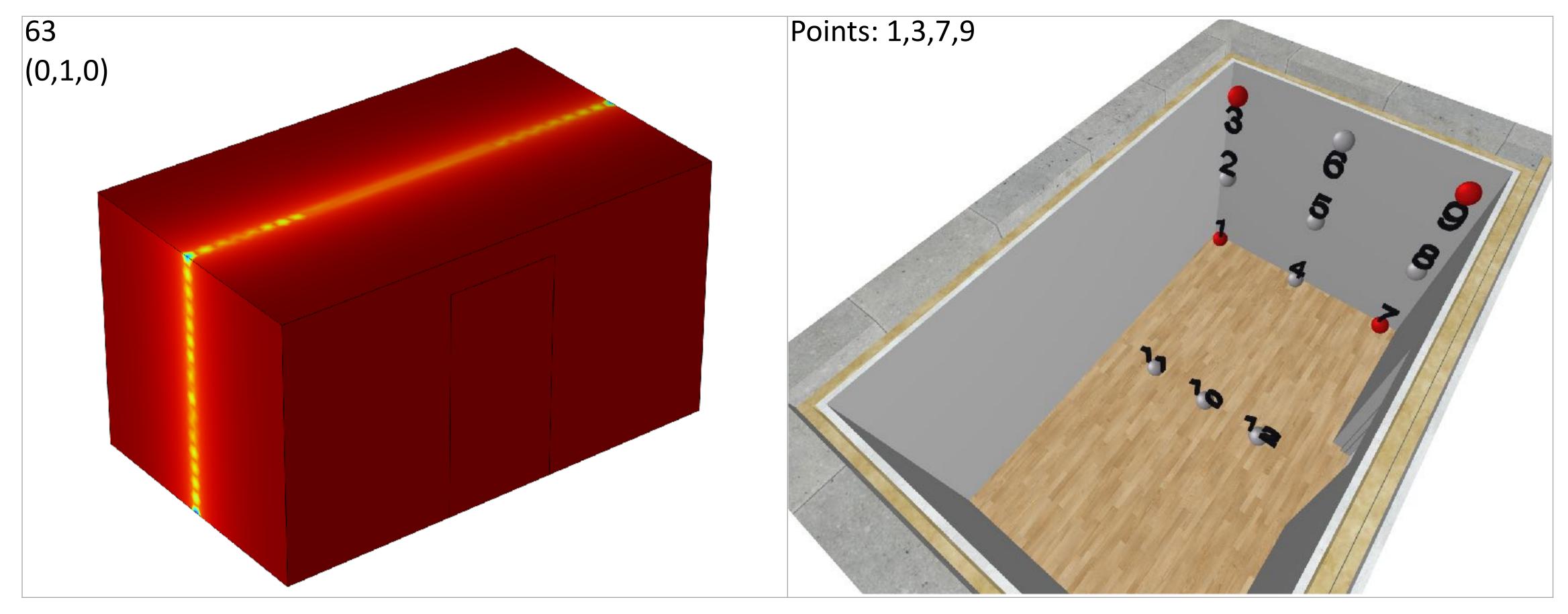








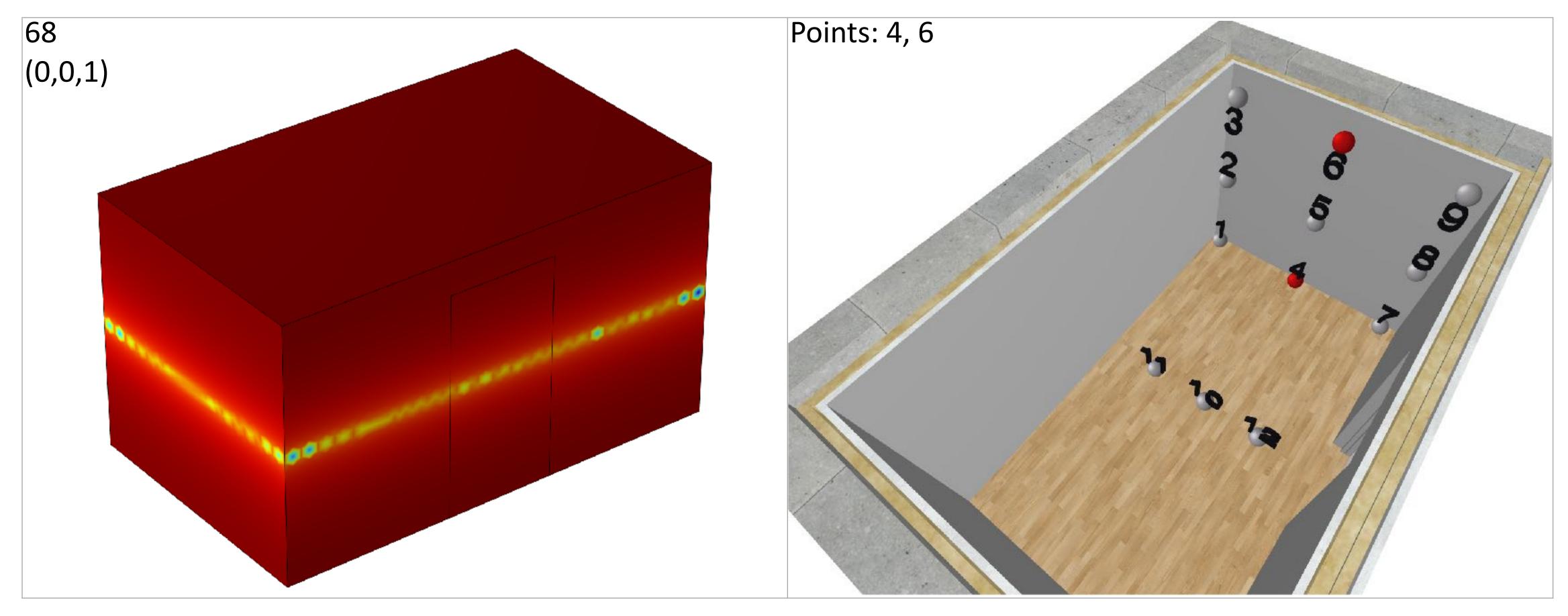








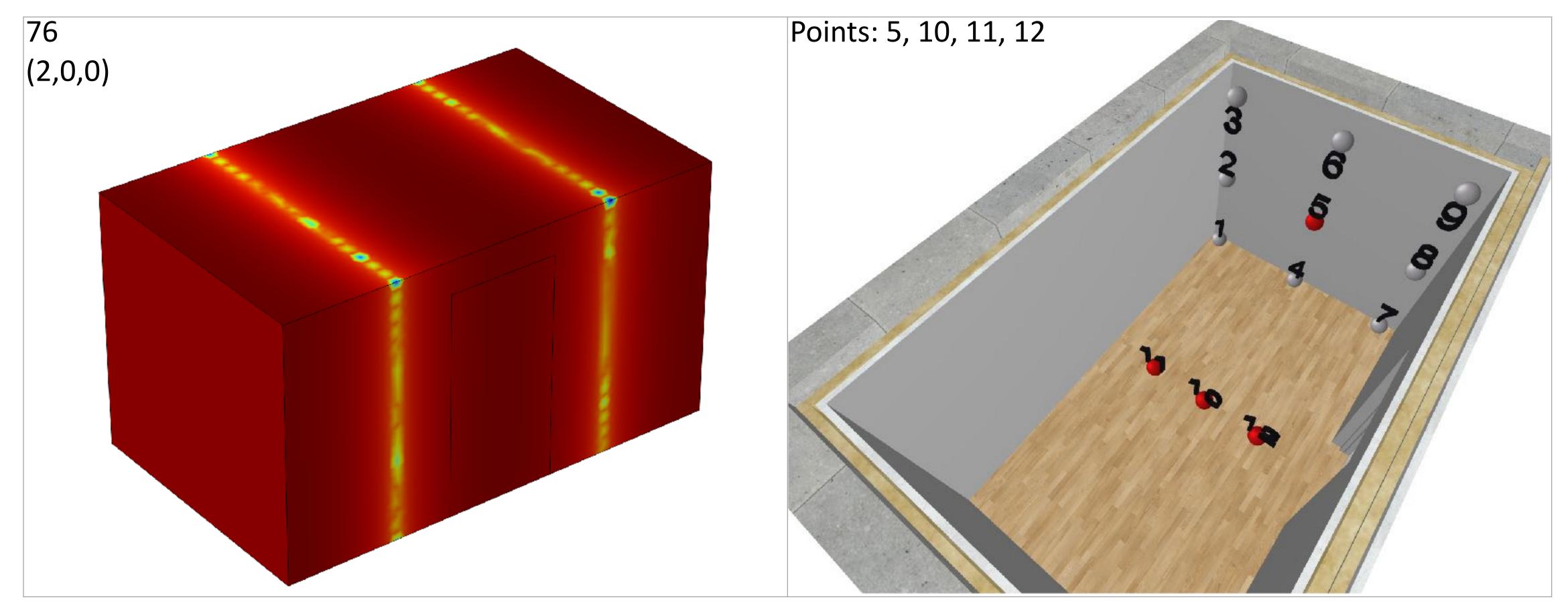










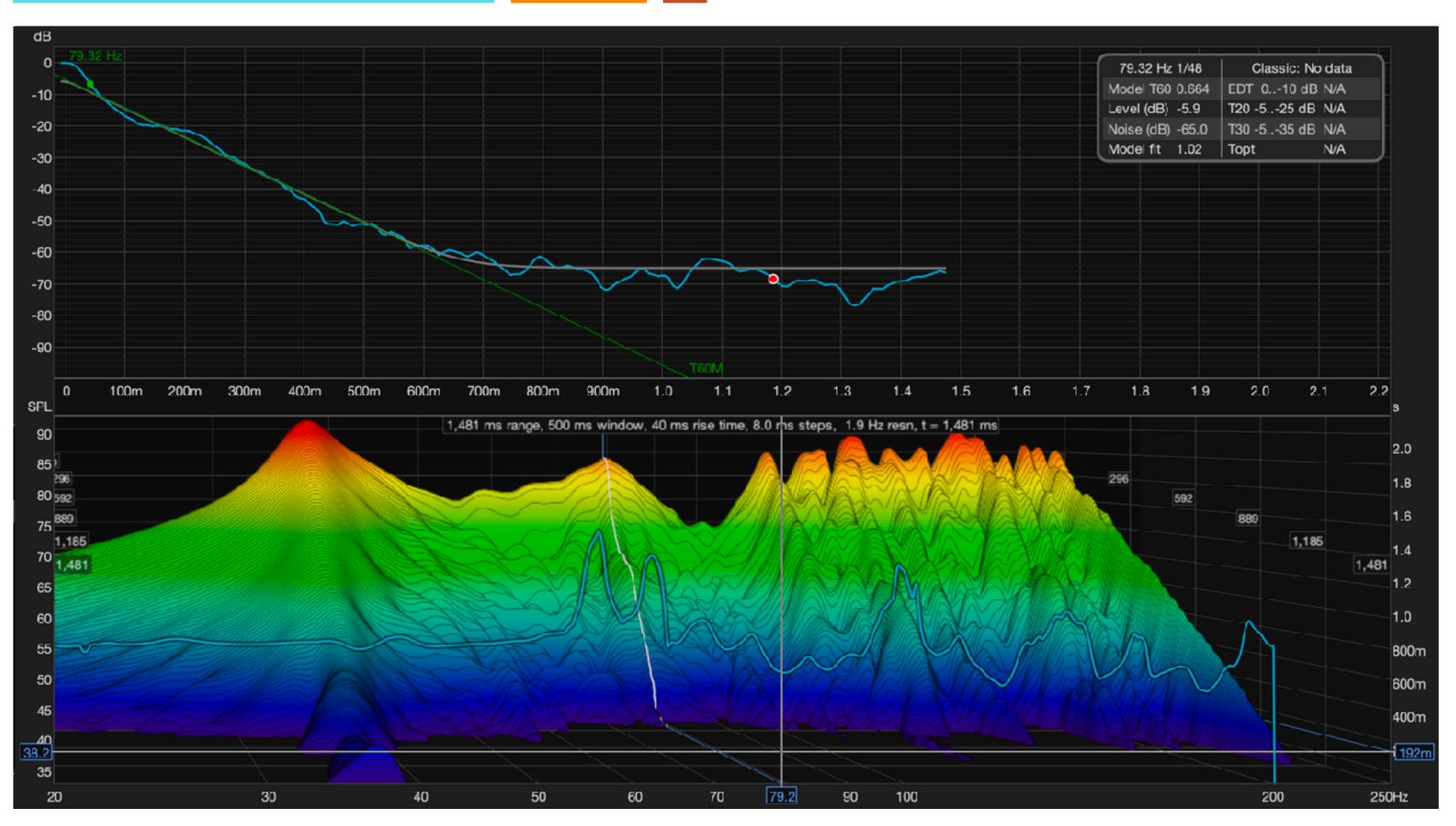








Post-processing - MT60 estimation



We estimated the MT60 for specific modes using measurements in different positions to isolate the modal decay response as much as possible.

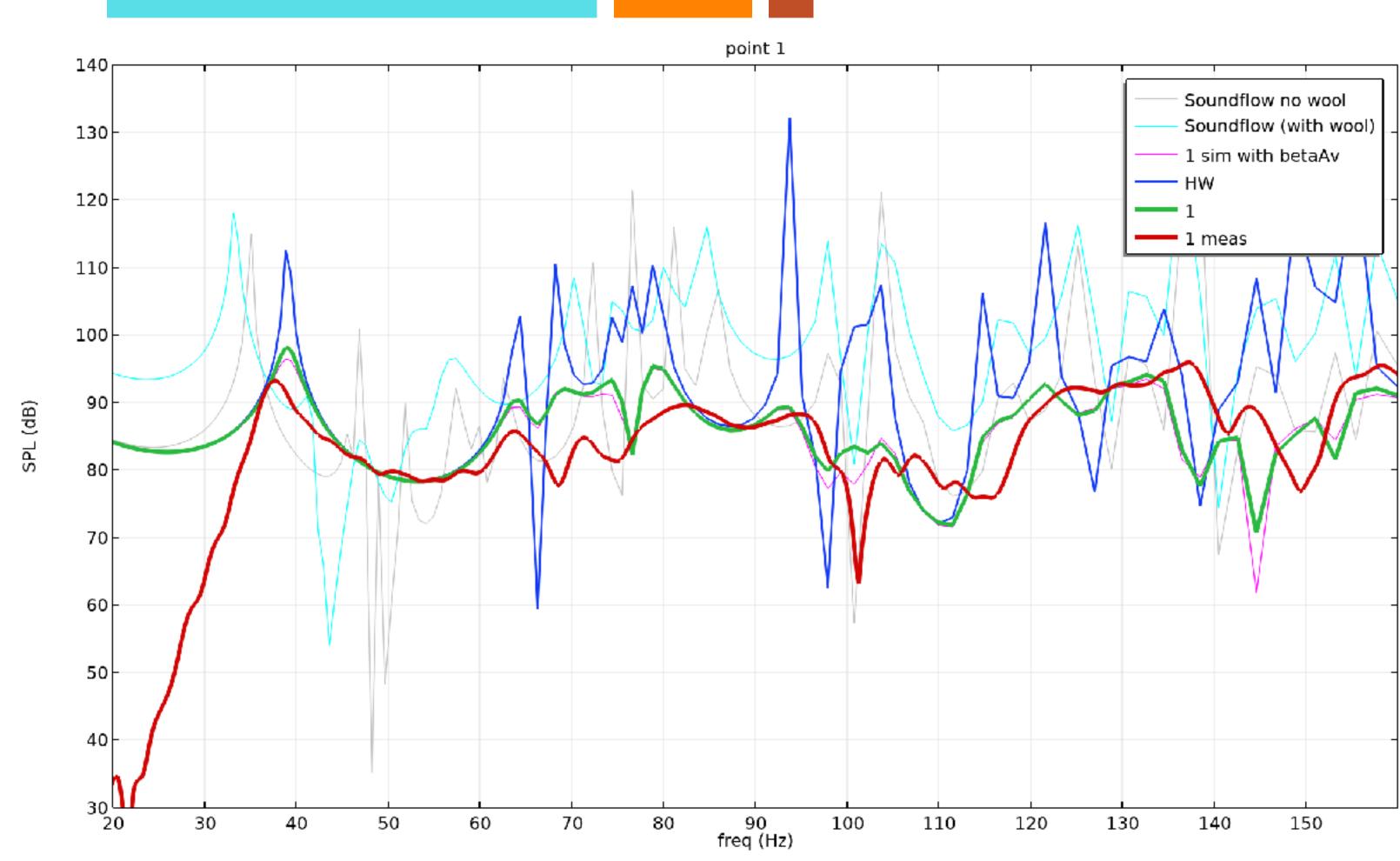
For this analysis, we used REW's decay estimation tools.







Modeling



We applied the calculated acoustic impedance to the model walls and compared the frequency response results between:

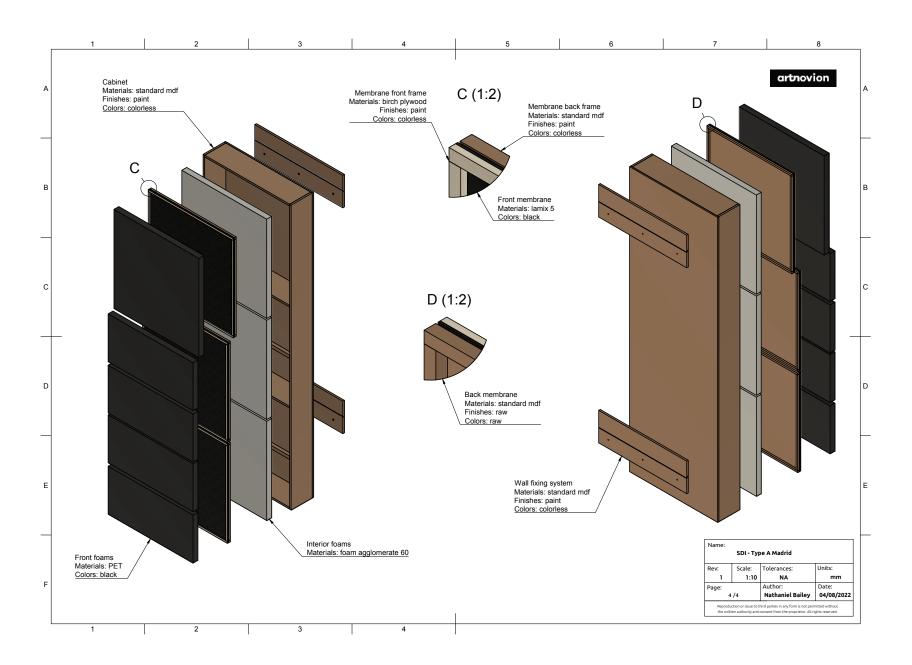
- simulations using the calculated impedance
- rigid walls
- measurements







Treatment

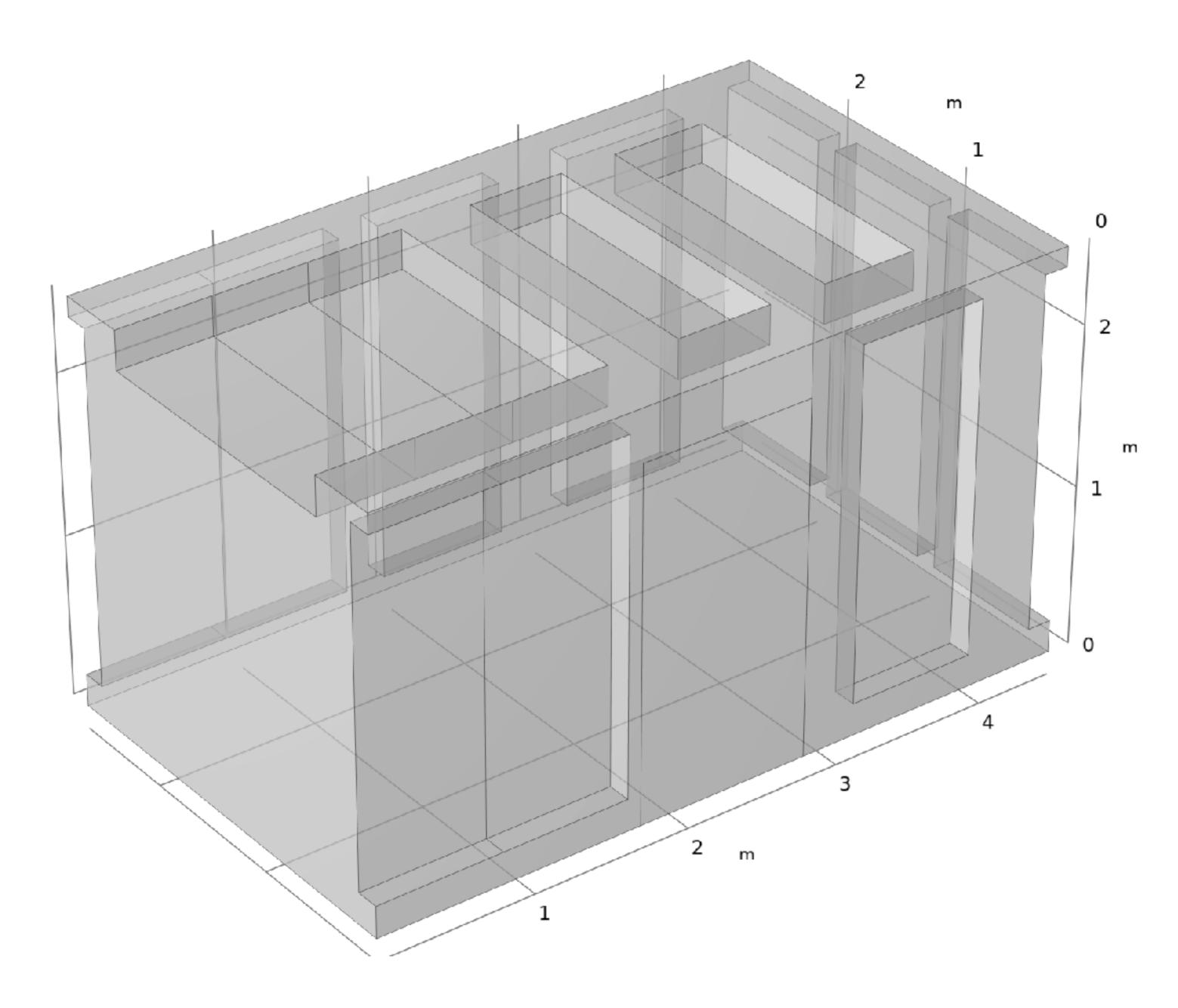


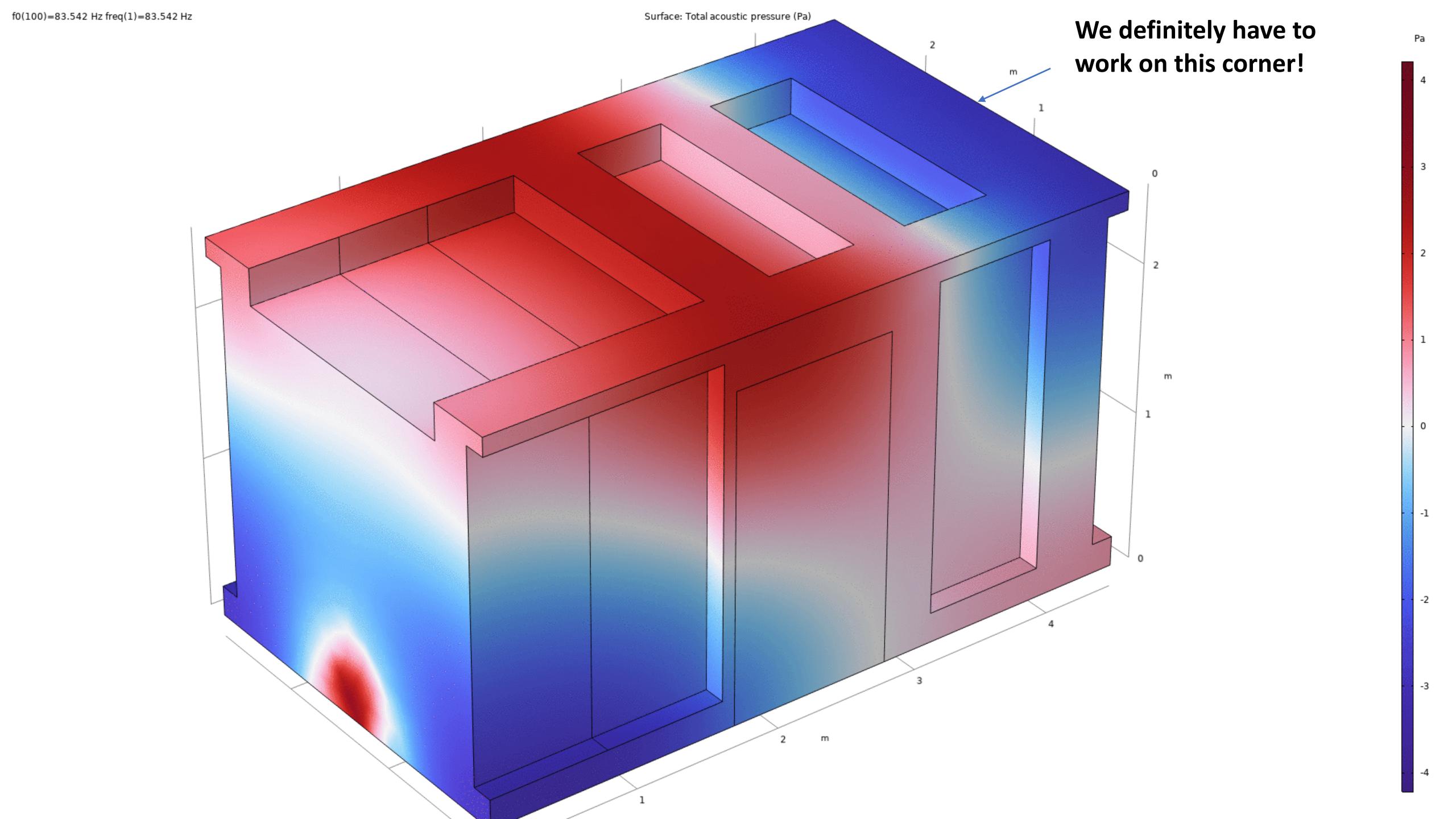
approximated constant impedance and absorption coefficient

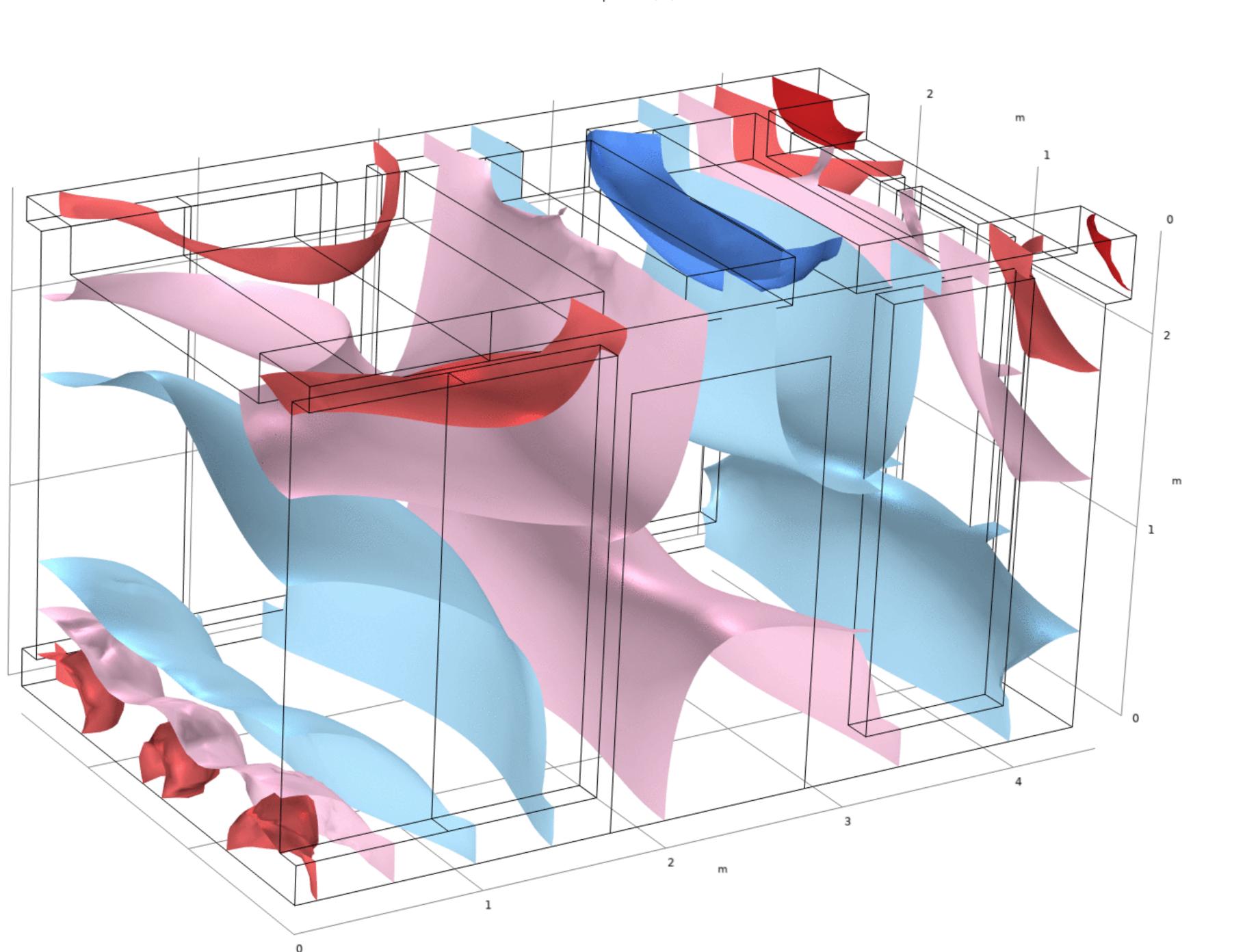












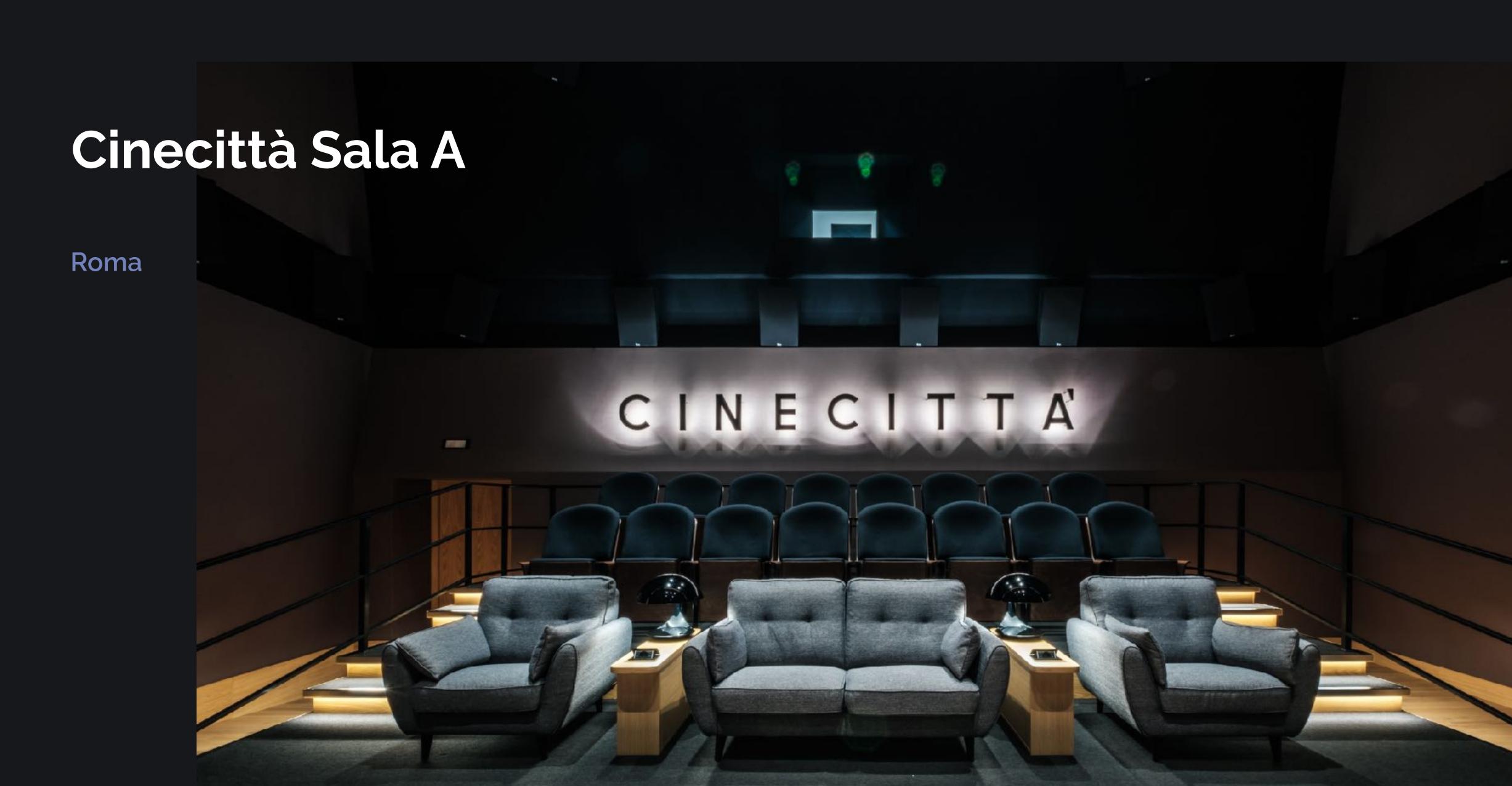




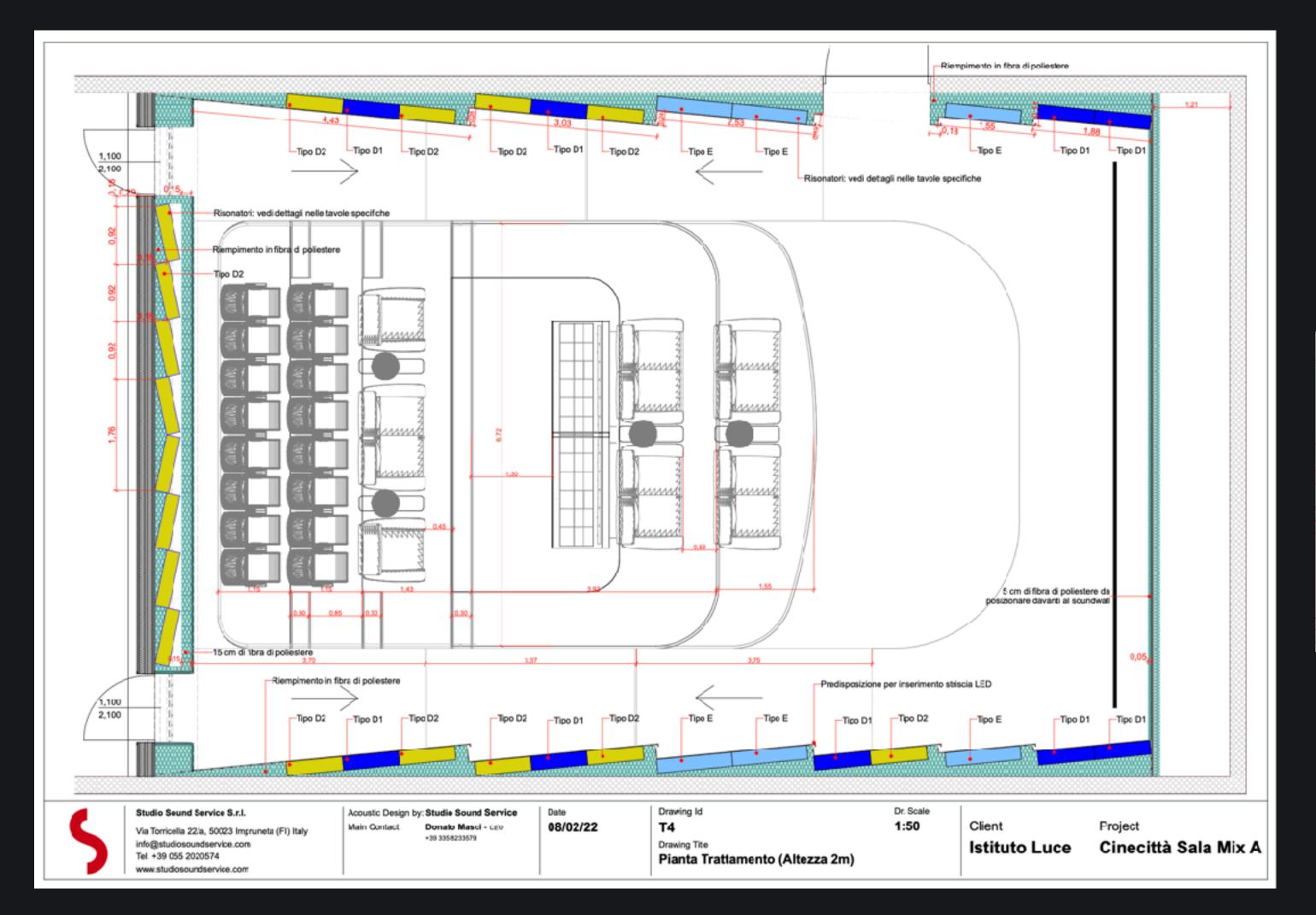








Donato Masci Acoustic treatment

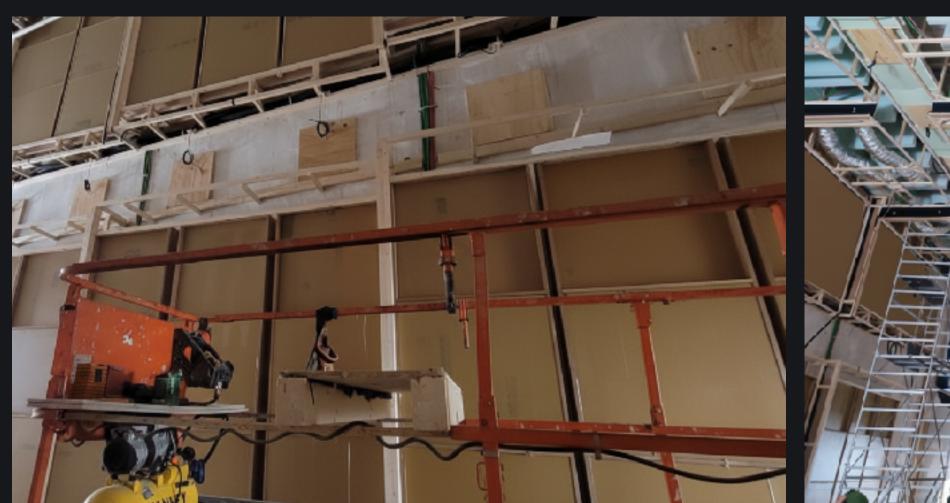






Low Frequency Absorption

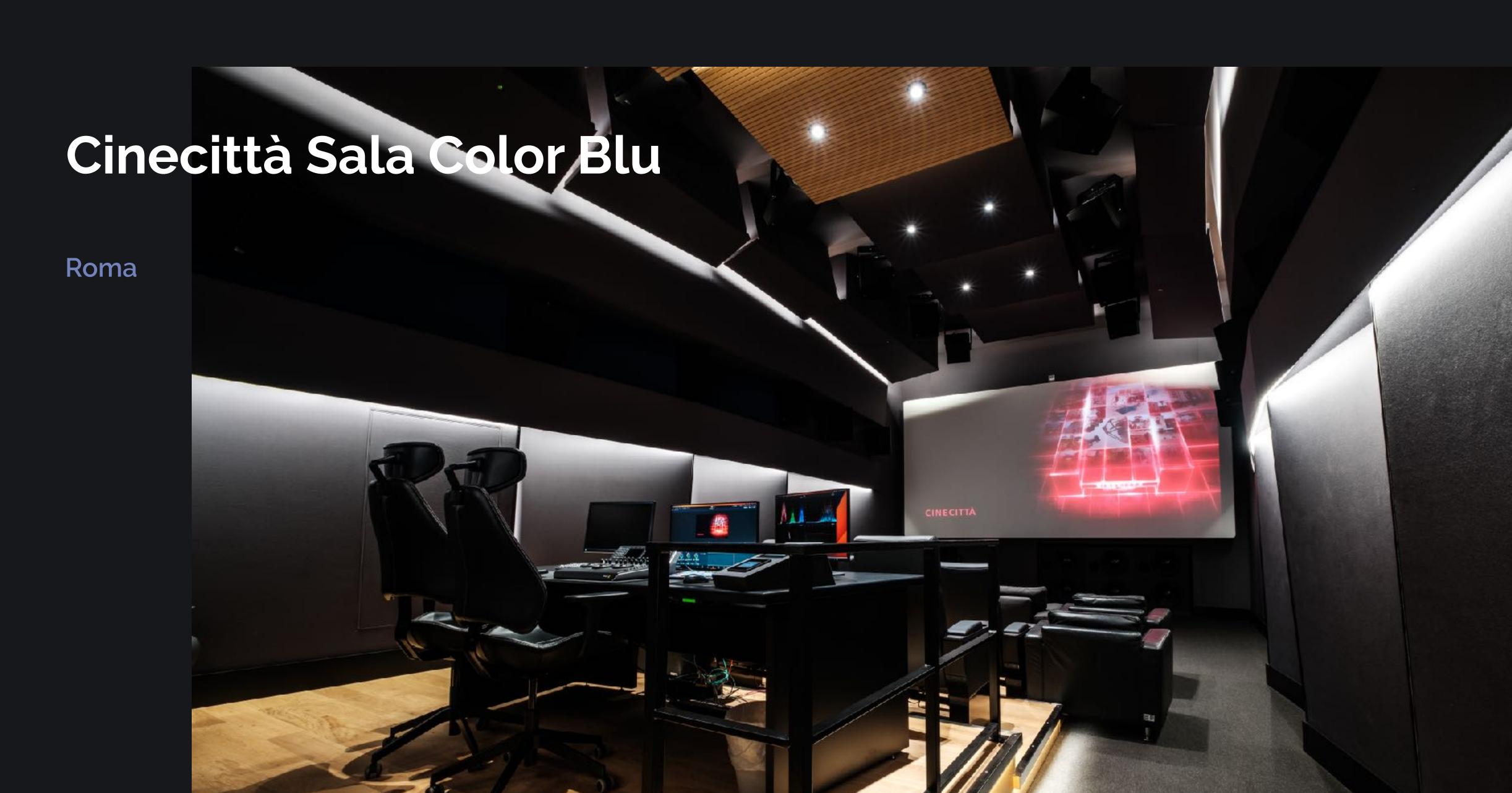






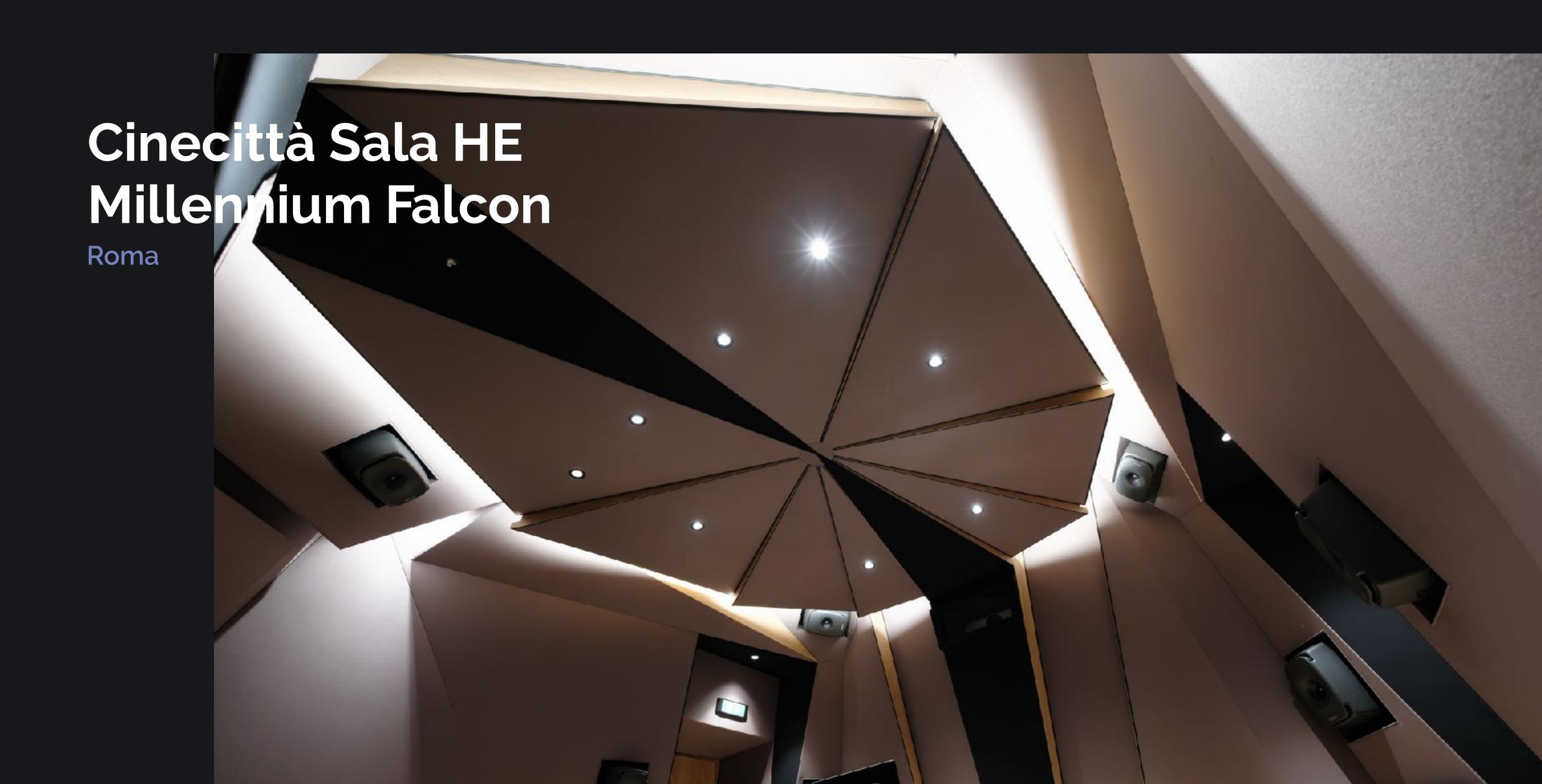


















Cinecittà Sala E

Roma







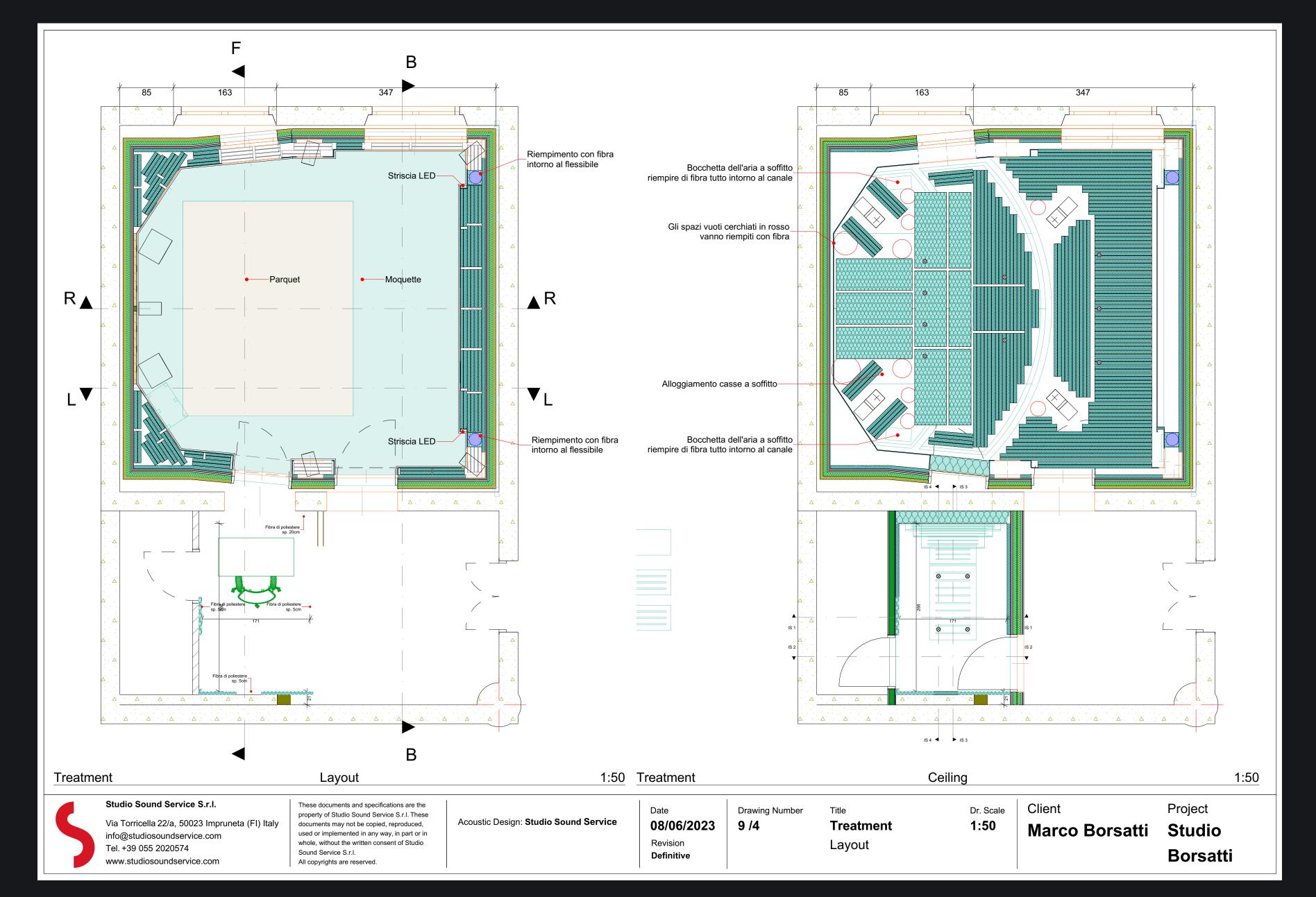




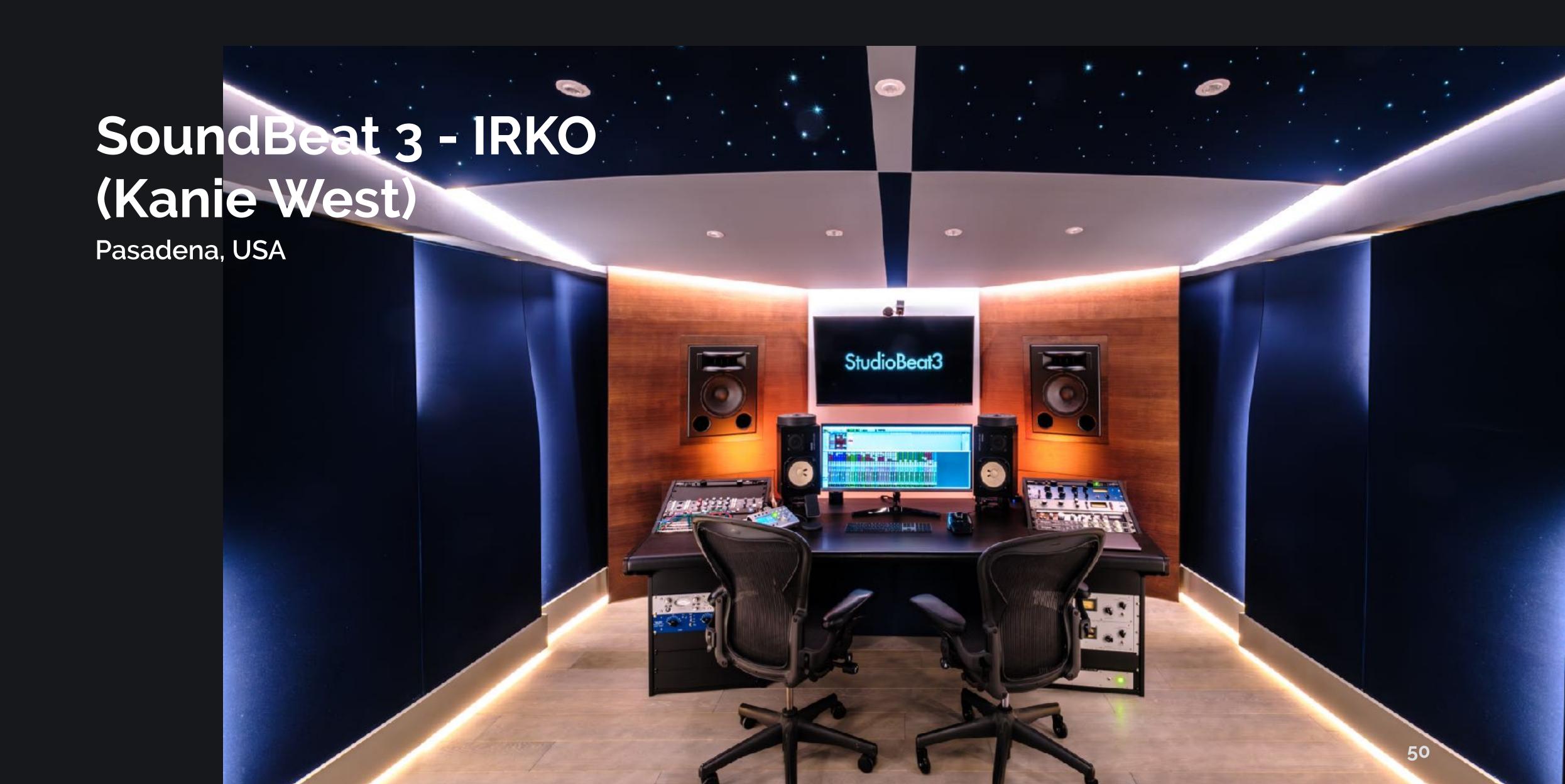




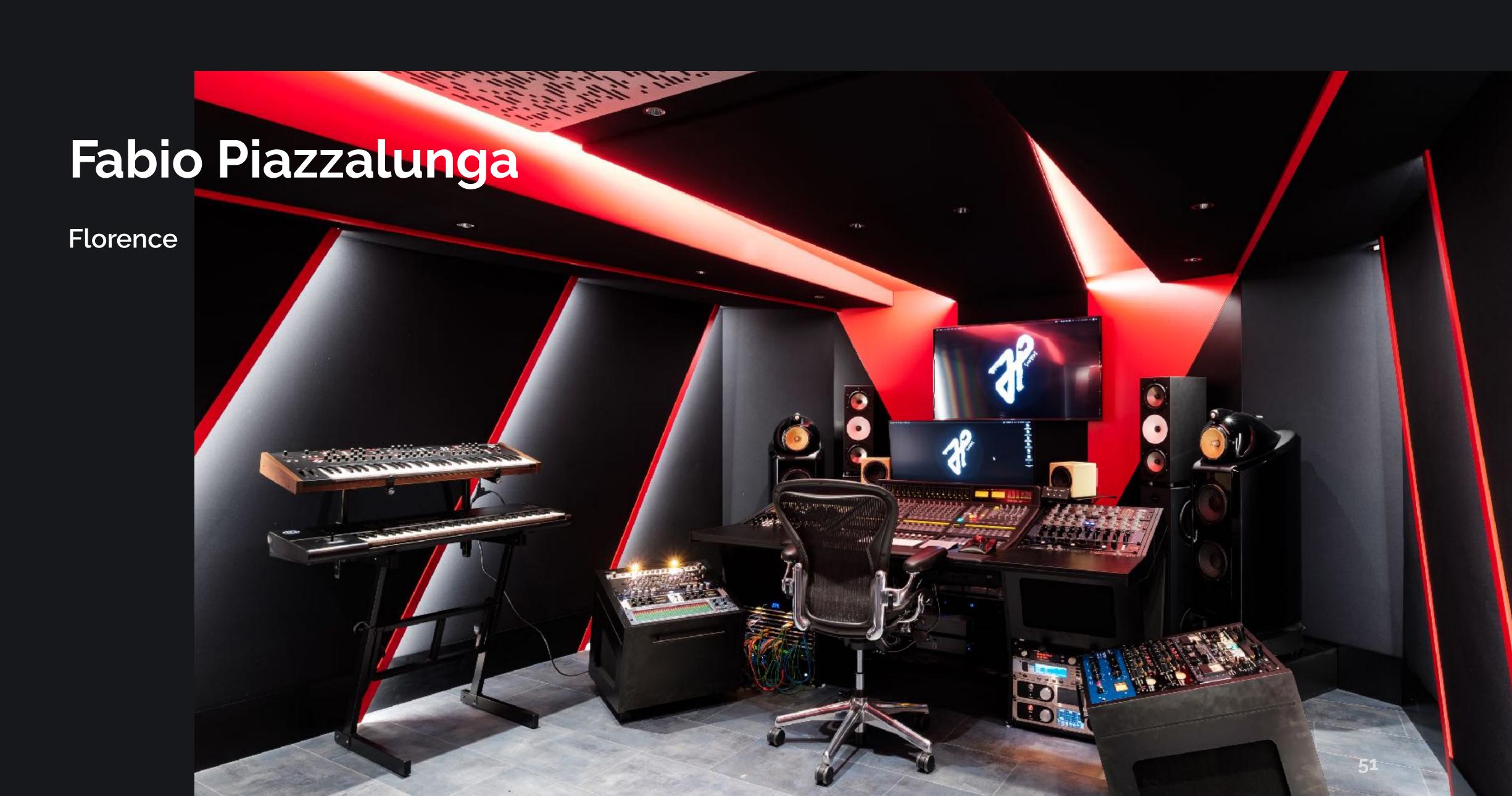




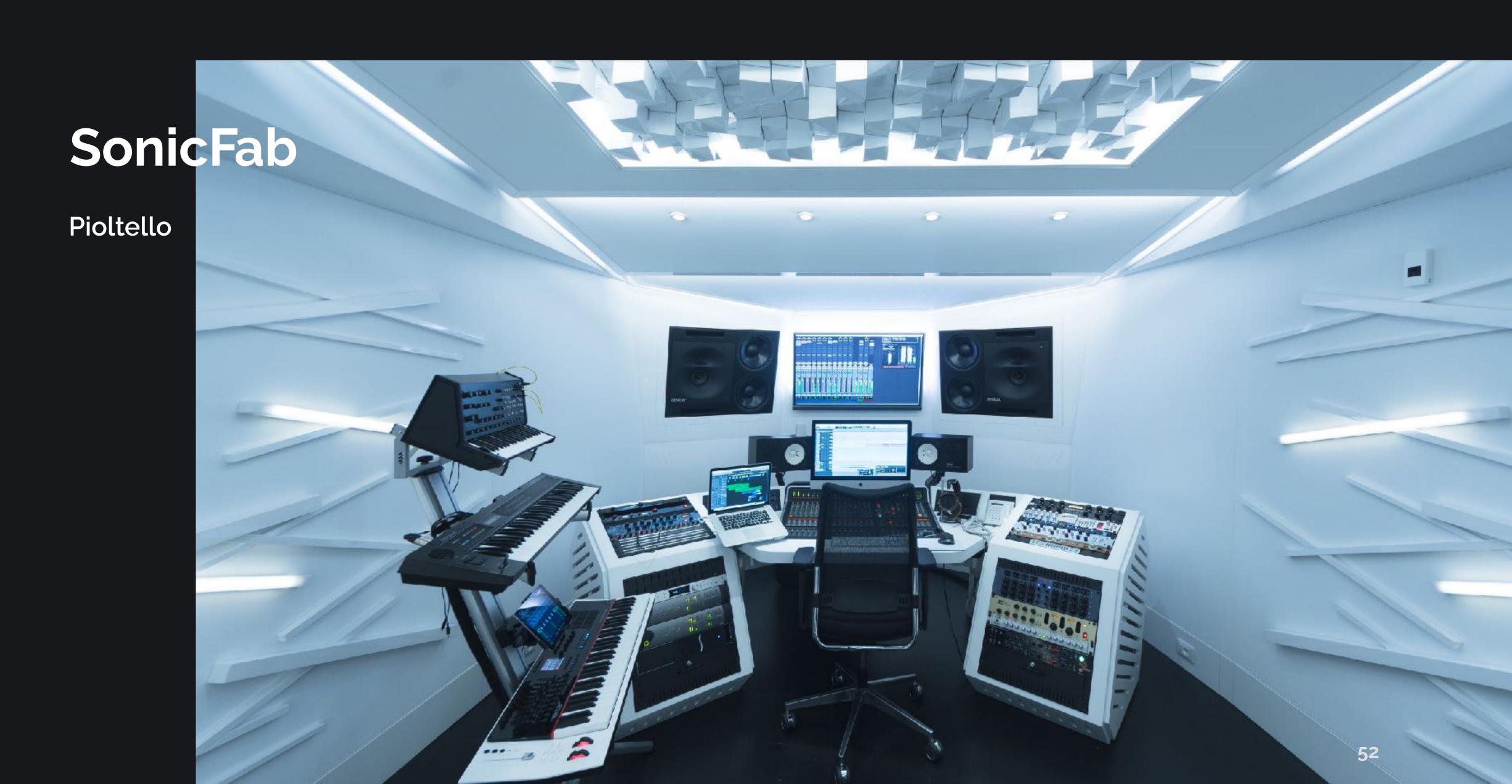








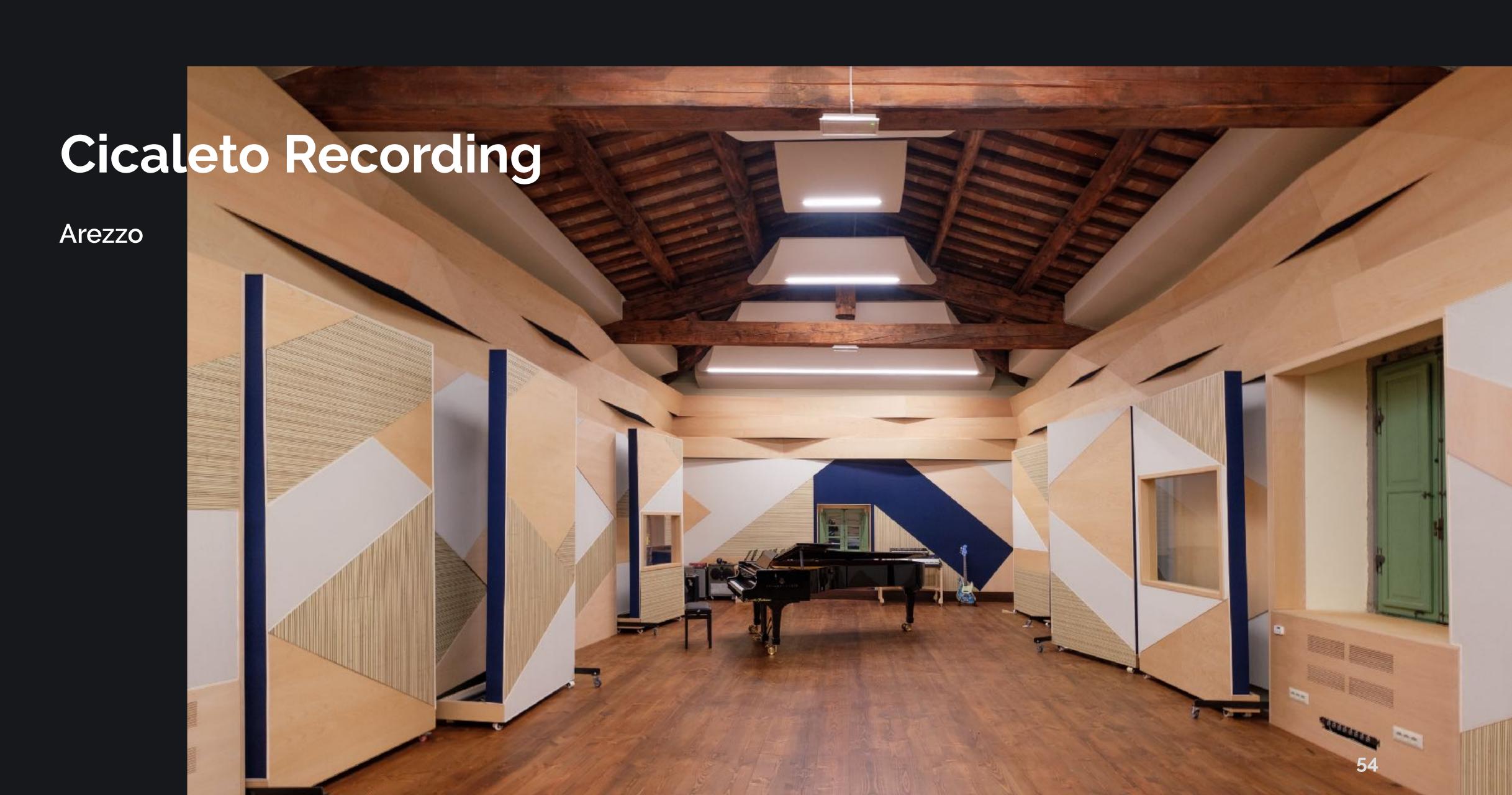












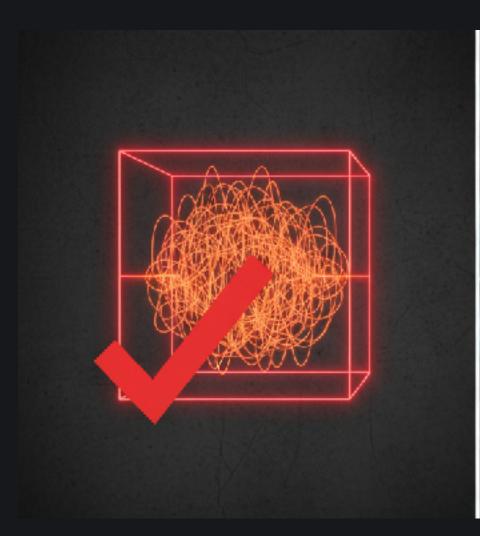




Why Large Spaces Break Our Methods

SMALL ROOMS

- 6 surfaces
- 4 modes matter
- Wave behavior
- We control materials





CURRENT SOLUTION

- 600+ surfaces
- 1000+ modes blur together
- Statistical behavior
- Materials control us

Critical insight:

"In large spaces, we negotiate with physics"





Large Room Calibration: Architectural vs Acoustic Surface

The Hidden Surface Problem

What We Draw:

- Simple column = 10m²
- Flat wall = 100m²
- Smooth dome = 500m²

2,000m²

Architectural

What Sound Sees:

- Fluted column + capital = 18m² (+80%)
- Wall + pilasters + moldings = 145m² (+45%)
- Coffered dome = 850m² (+70%)

3,200m²

Acoustic (+60%)

FUTURE:

Al pattern recognition?





When Theory Meets Centuries of History

THEORY (every book ever)

- Marble book value: α = 0.01
- Highly reflective

WHY

- Hidden surface problem
- 800 years of aging
- Micro-cracks everywhere
- Centuries of candle soot
- Humidity cycles
- Previous "restorations"

REALITY (Duomo di Siena)

Measured reality: α = 0.08-0.12
 10x more absorptive!

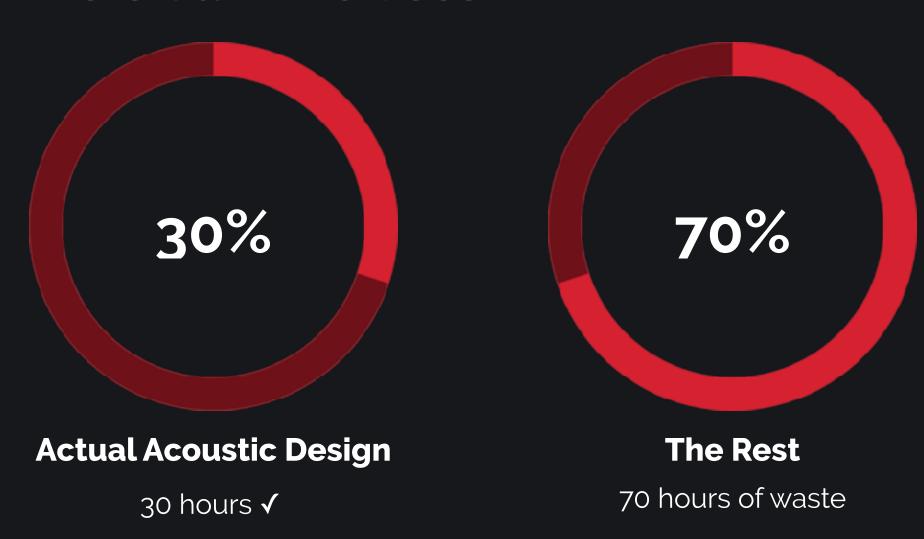
VISION:

Al-guided calibration from strategic measurements



The 70% We'd Rather Skip

Where Our Time Goes





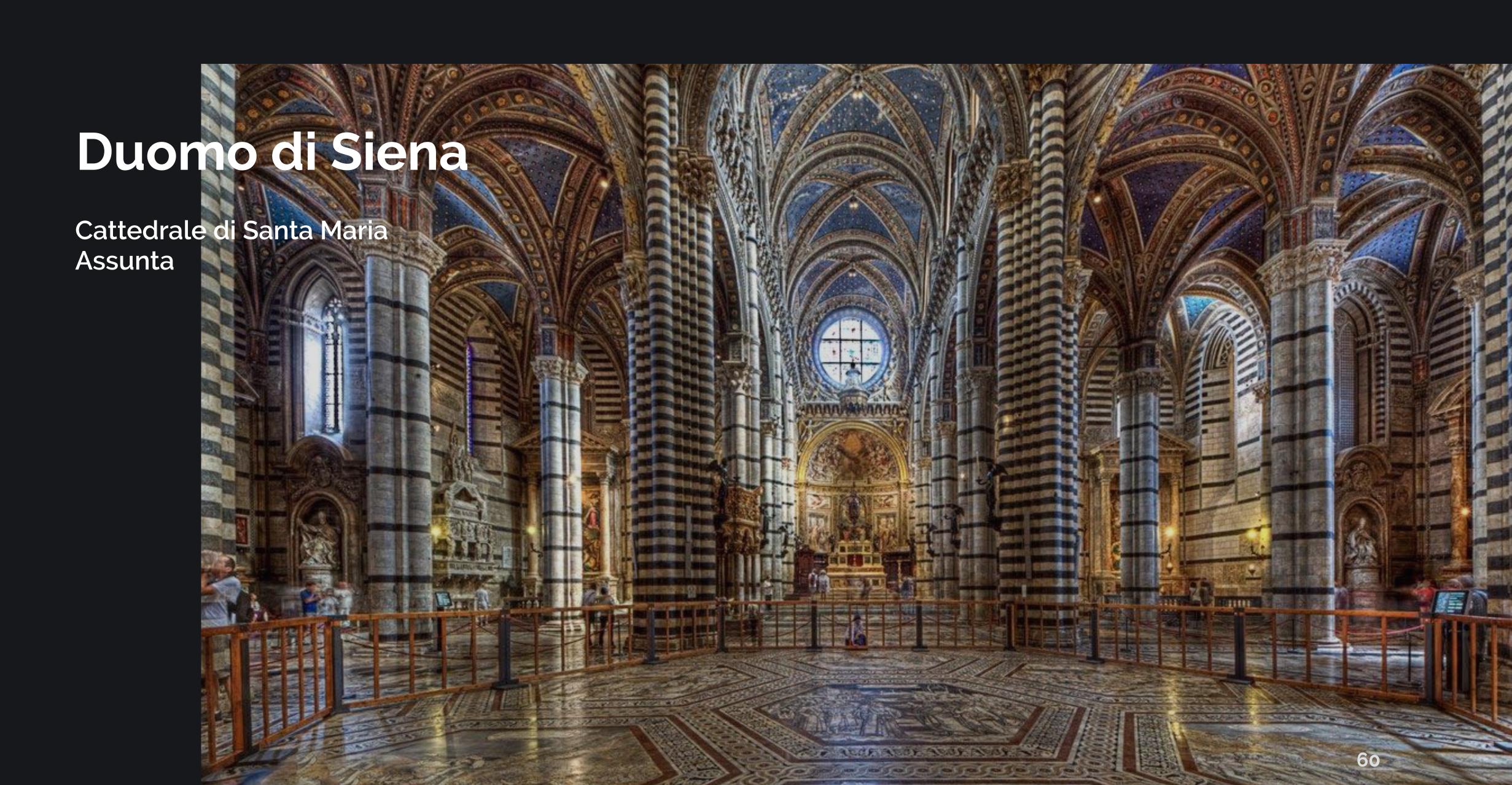
100-Hour Project Breakdown:

- Point cloud cleanup: 15 hours
- Geometry fixing: 10 hours
- Material calibration: 20 hours
- Stakeholder therapy: 15 hours
- Re-simulations: 10 hours

Fact

"We're acousticians who spend 70% of our time not doing acoustics"

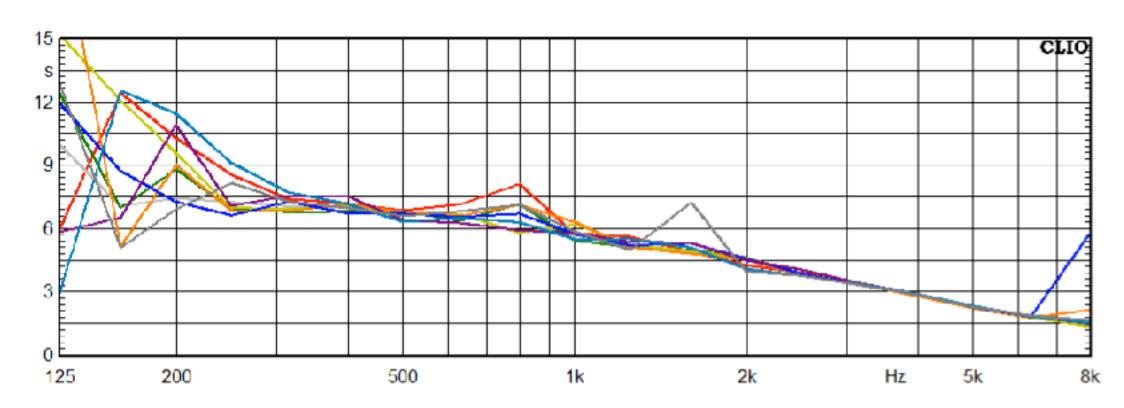






Acoustic Measurements - Pre-existing Conditions

Reverberation time (T20)



500-1000 Hz: > 6.5 seconds Low frequencies: > 12 seconds

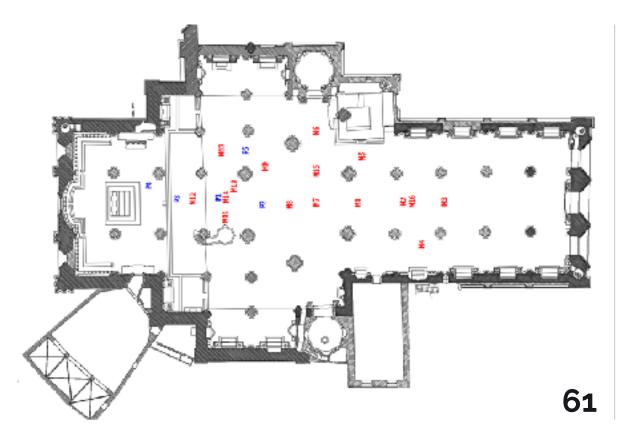
Main problems:

- Large volume
- Vaulted ceilings amplifying reflections
- Highly reflective surfaces

Speech Intelligibility (STI)

MISURA	STI (MALE)	STI (FEMALE)
1	0,46	0,48
2	0,48	0,49
3	0,29	0,3
4	0,24	0,25
5	0,26	0,28
MEDIA	0,346	0,36

Average: 0.35 Required for intelligibility: > 0.5





Simulation Calibration Process

CALIBRATION PROCESS:

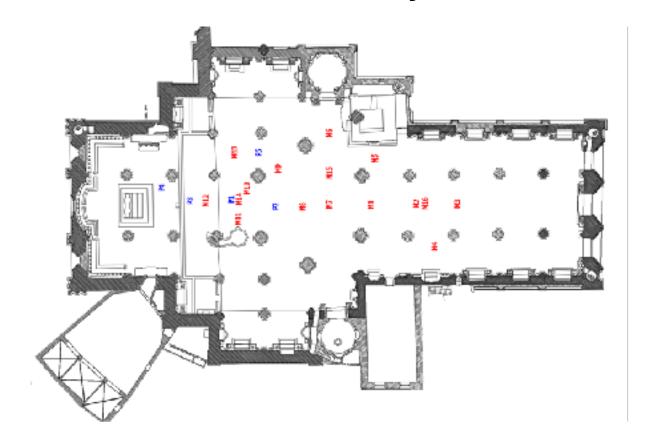
Initial simulation (book values): RT60 = 11s

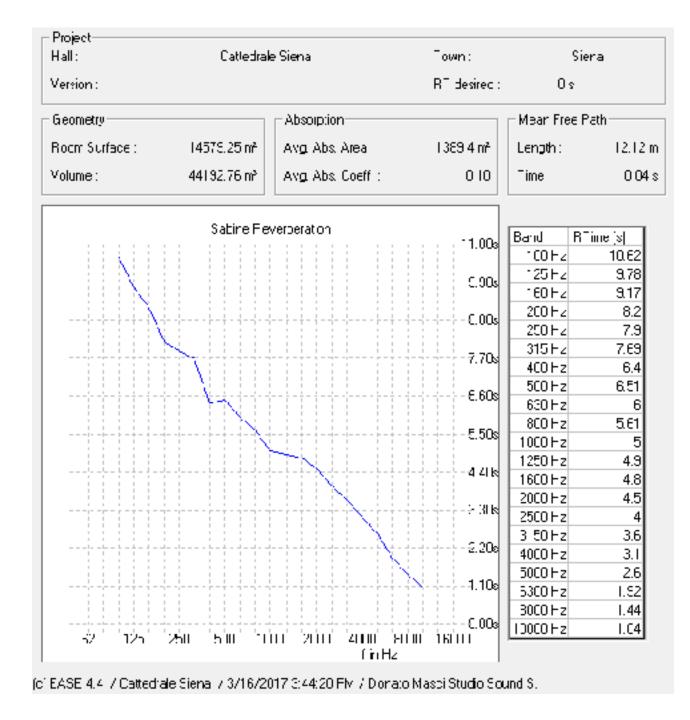
Measured reality: RT60 = 7.2s

Discrepancy: 52%

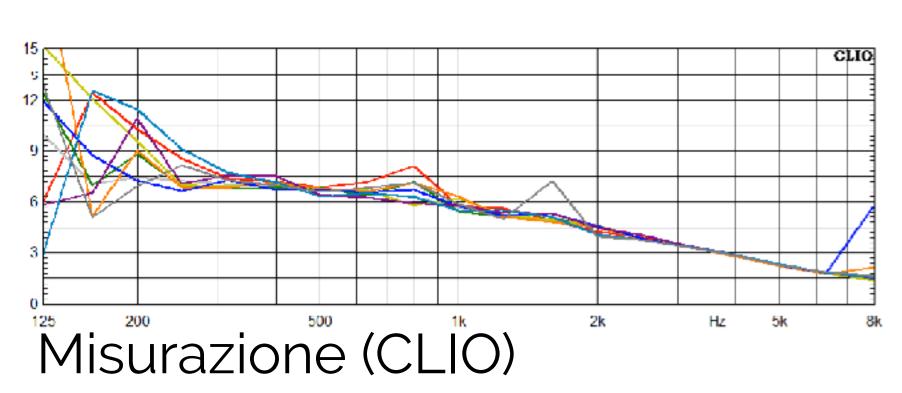
Iterative adjustment process:

- 200+ surface materials adjusted
- 3 weeks of calibration
- Final accuracy: ±2%





Simulazione (EASE)





Audio System Design

OBJECTIVES:

- Minimize number of speakers
- Ensure uniform sound pressure
- Focus energy on listening areas

SOLUTION:

- Narrow vertical dispersion speakers
- Beam-steering technology
- 14 strategically positioned units





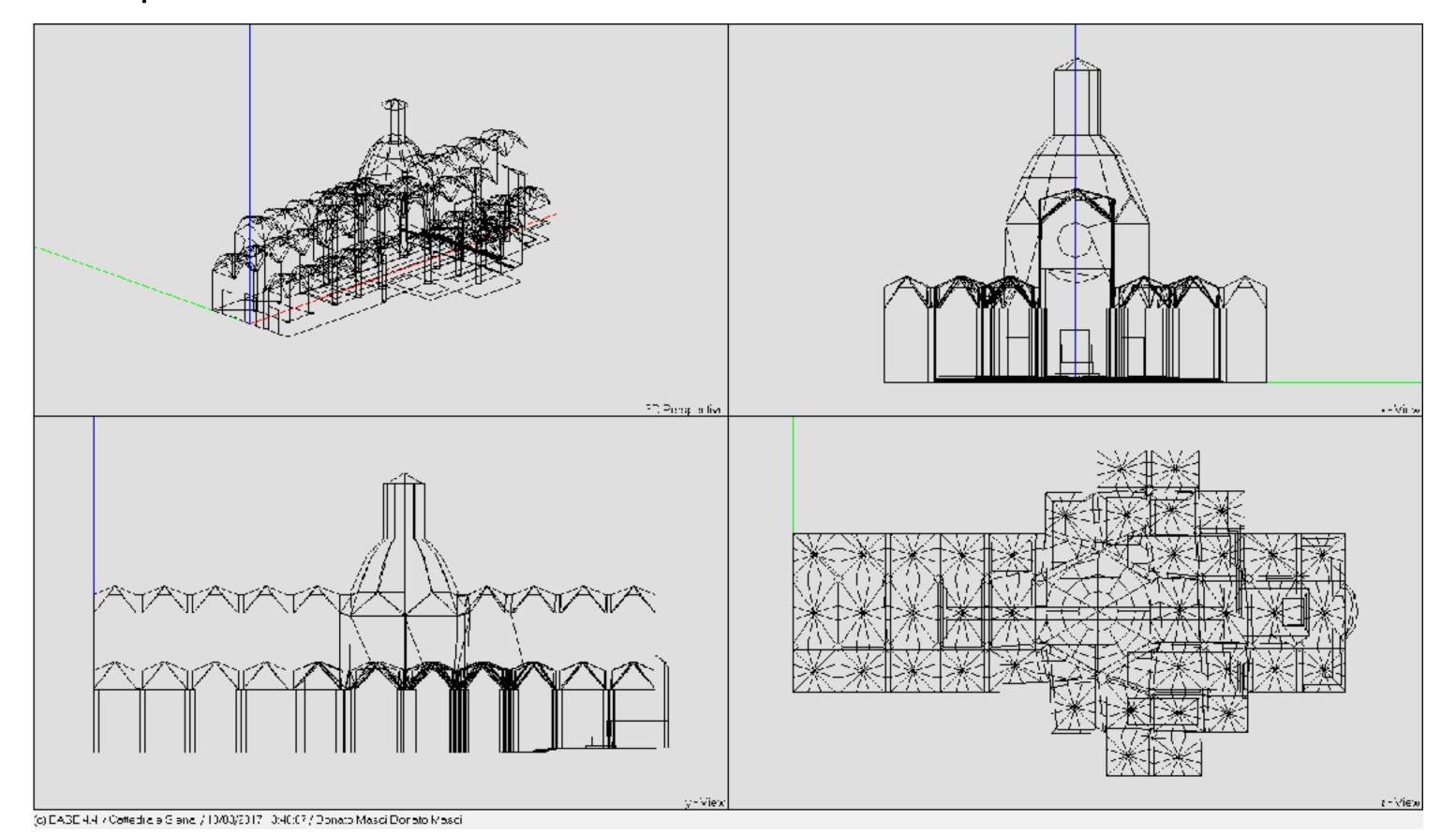
Speaker Position



Acoustic Modeling and Simulation

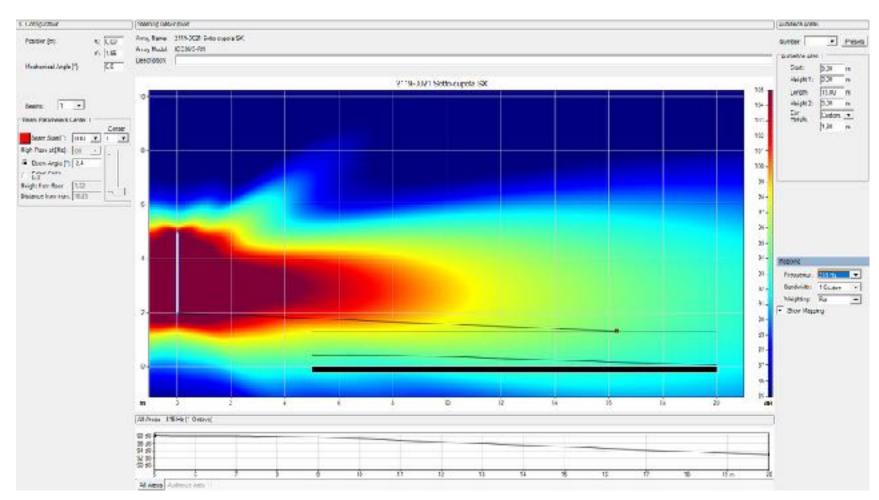
Building the Simplified Model:

Simplification is required to reduce computational load and prevent artifacts from excessive variables.

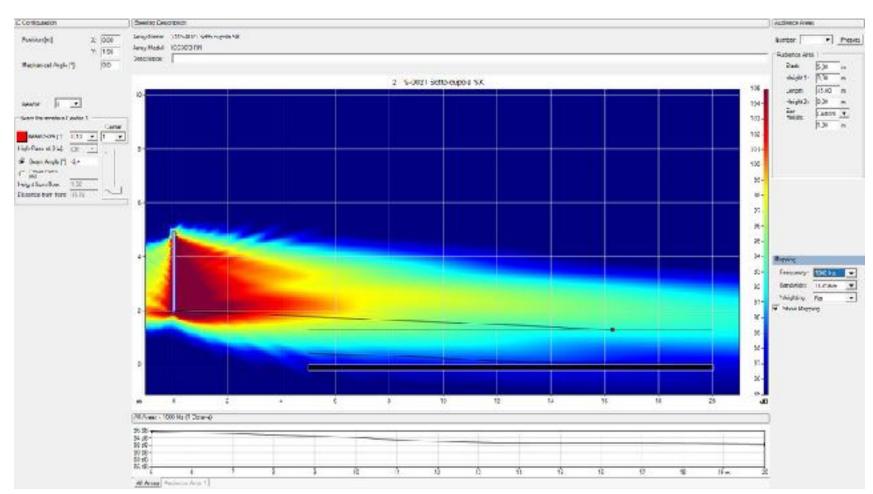


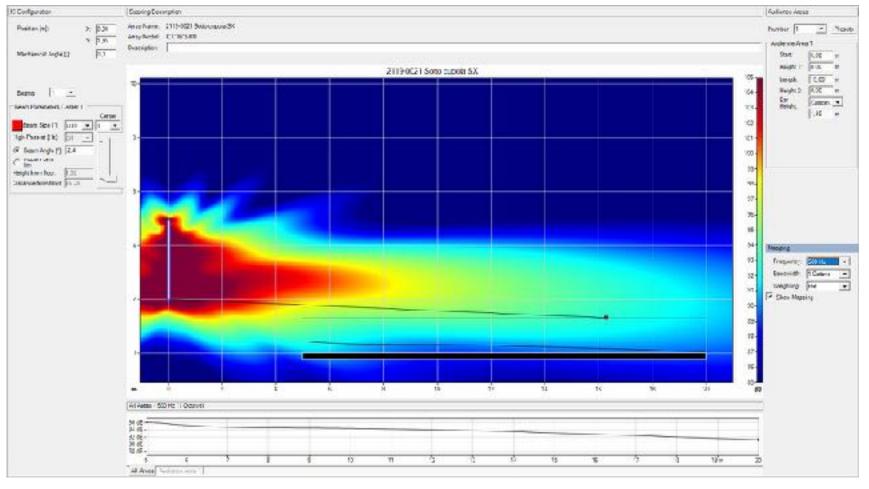


Directivity Optimisation, Under-dome line arrays:

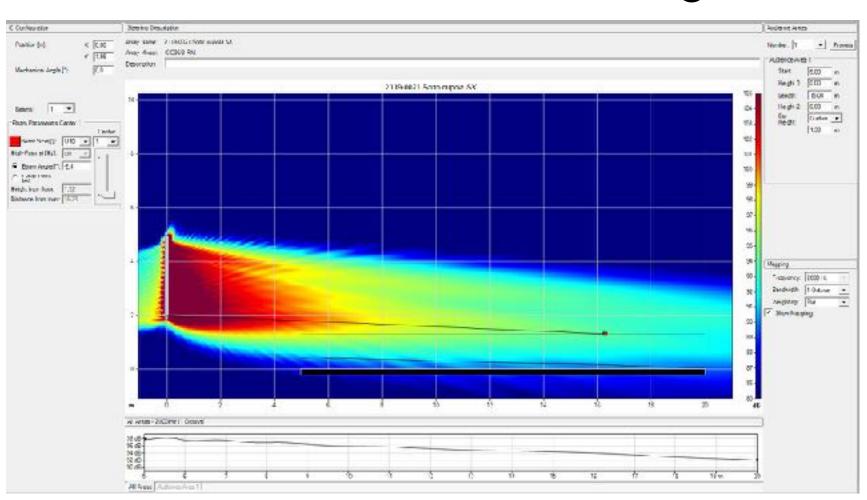


315 Hz

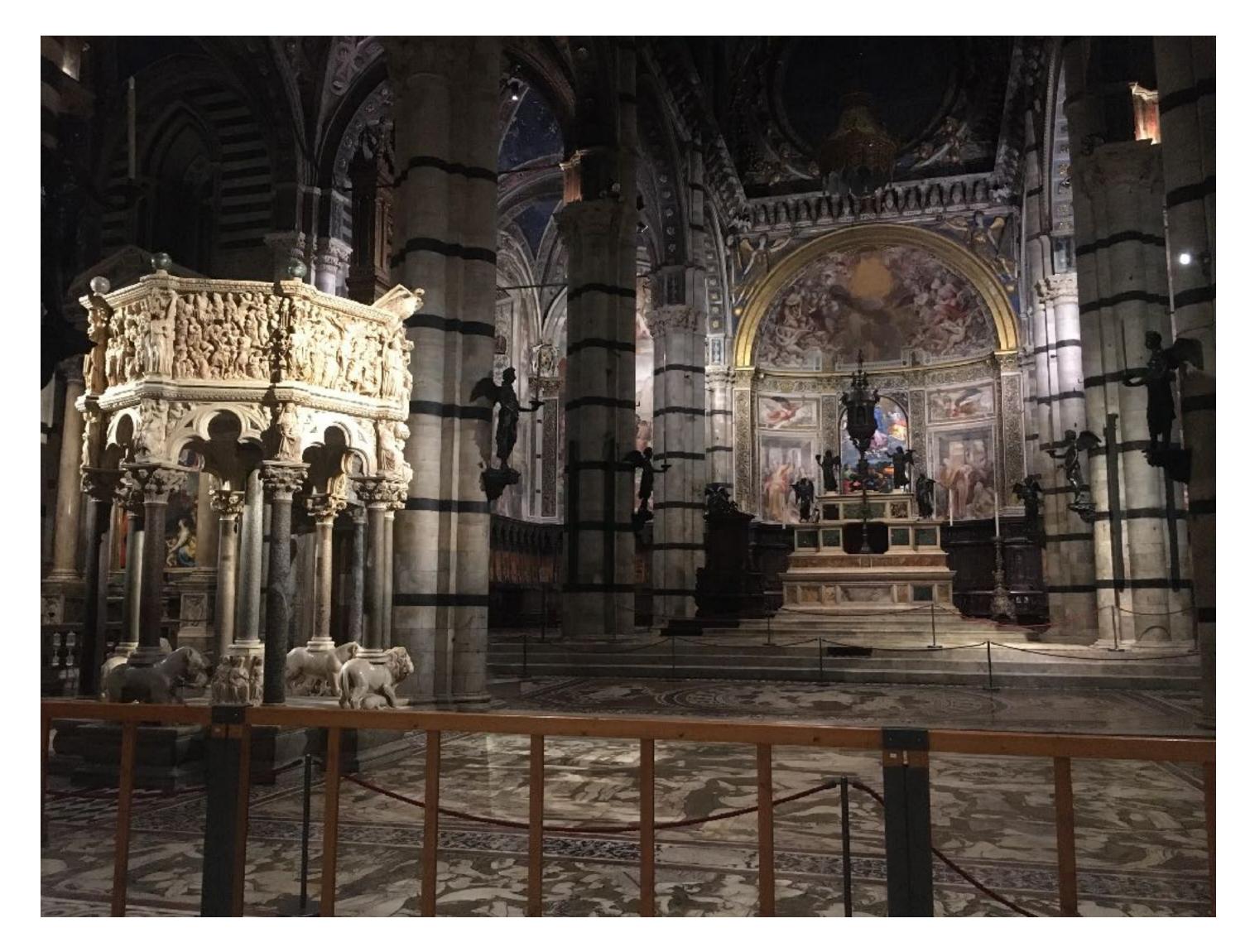


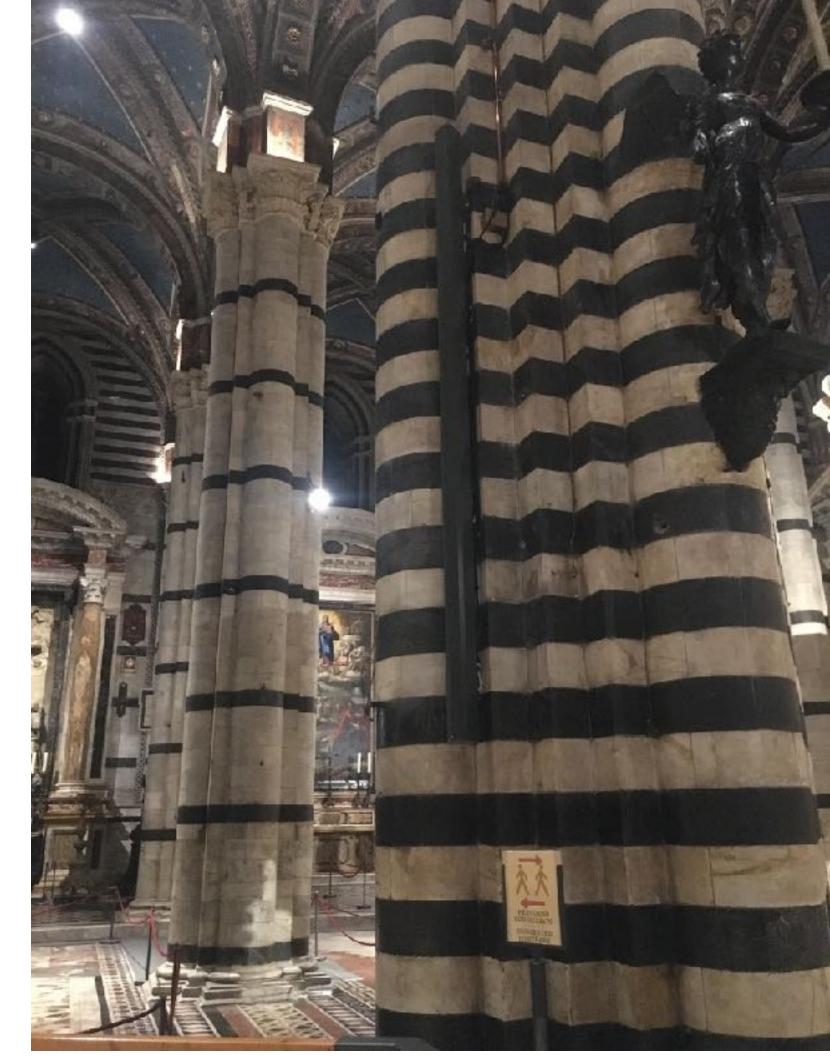


500 Hz











STI: SPEECH

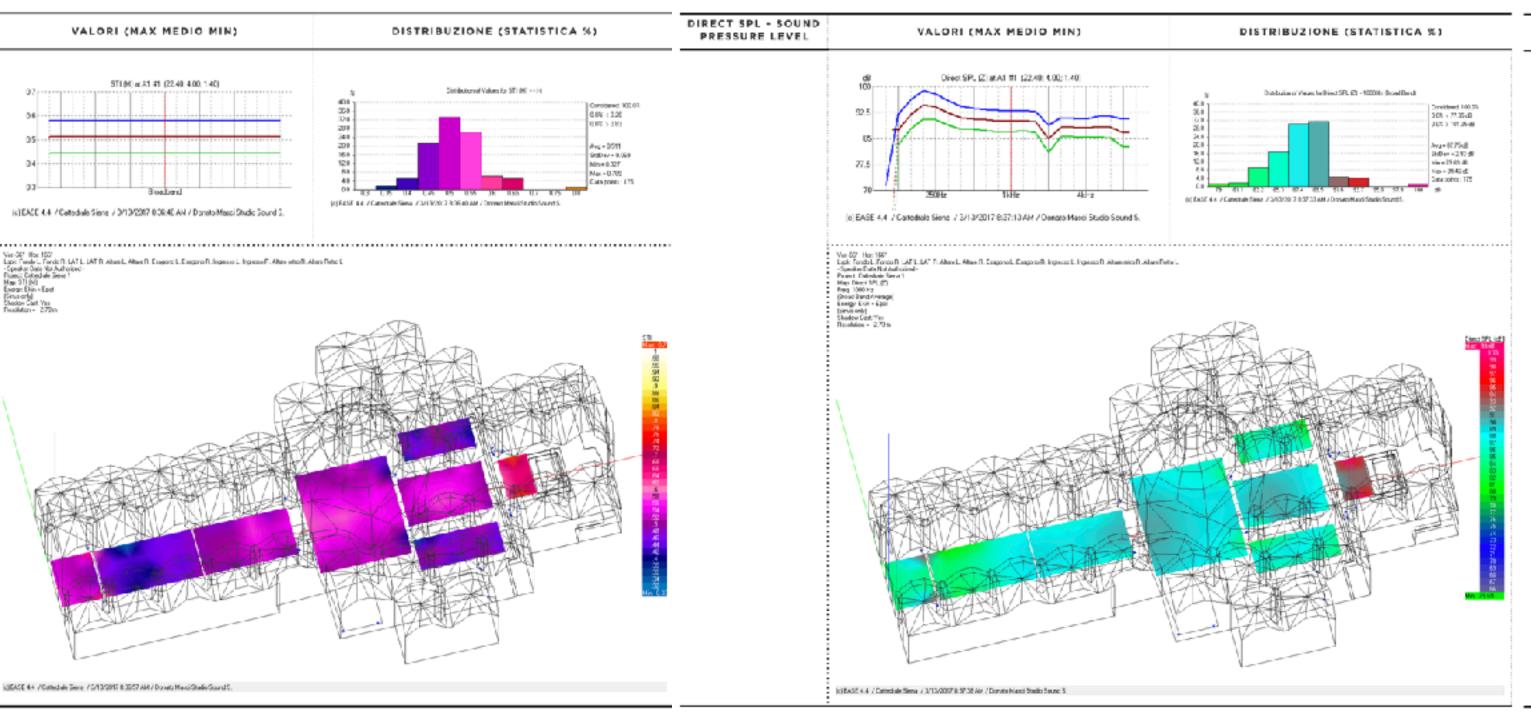
TRANSMISSION INDEX

Cecilia Torracchi Case Study

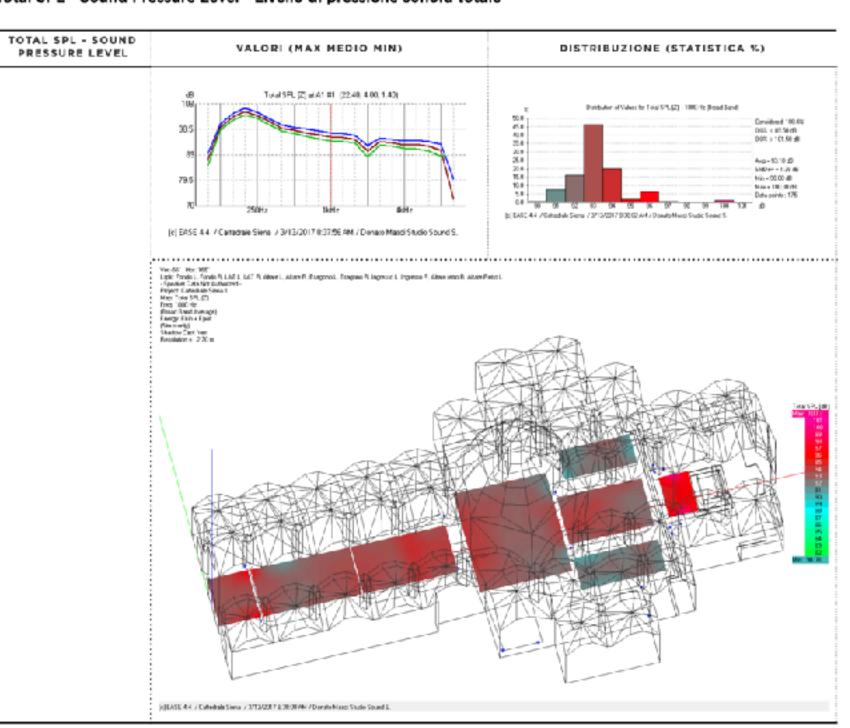
Simulation Results

STI - Speech transmission index - Indice di intelligibilità del parlato

Direct SPL - Sound Pressure Level - Livello di pressione sonora diretta

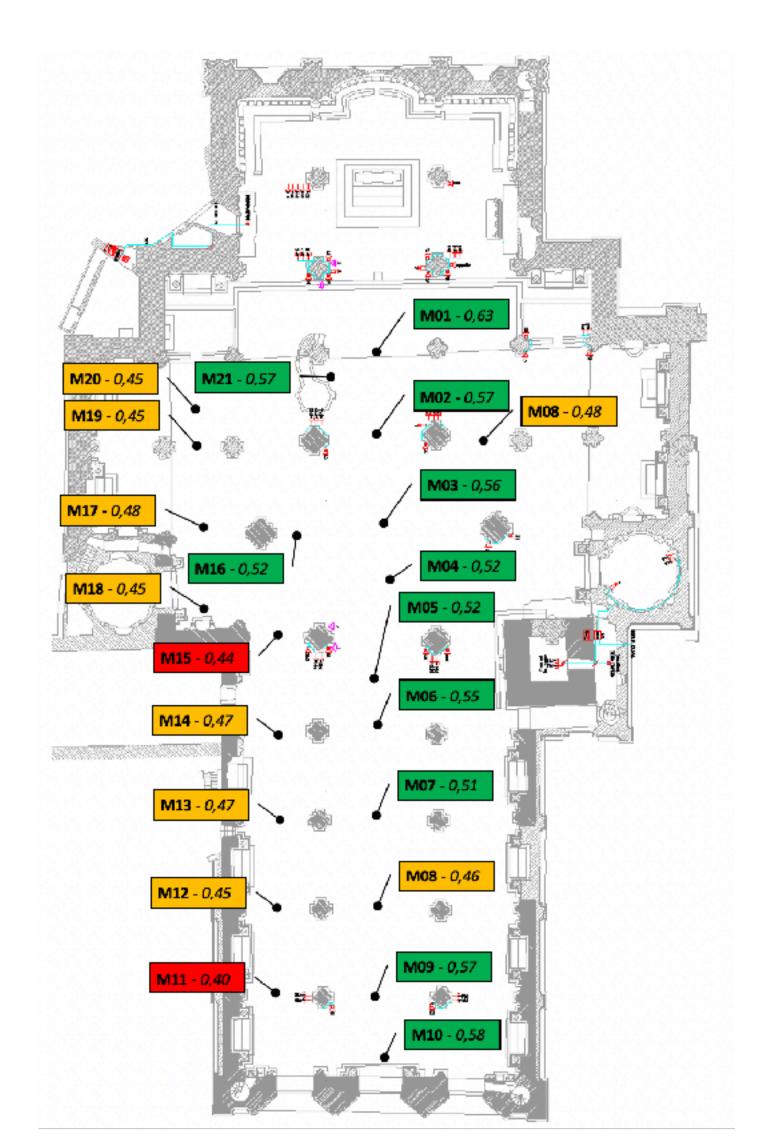


Total SPL - Sound Pressure Level - Livello di pressione sonora totale



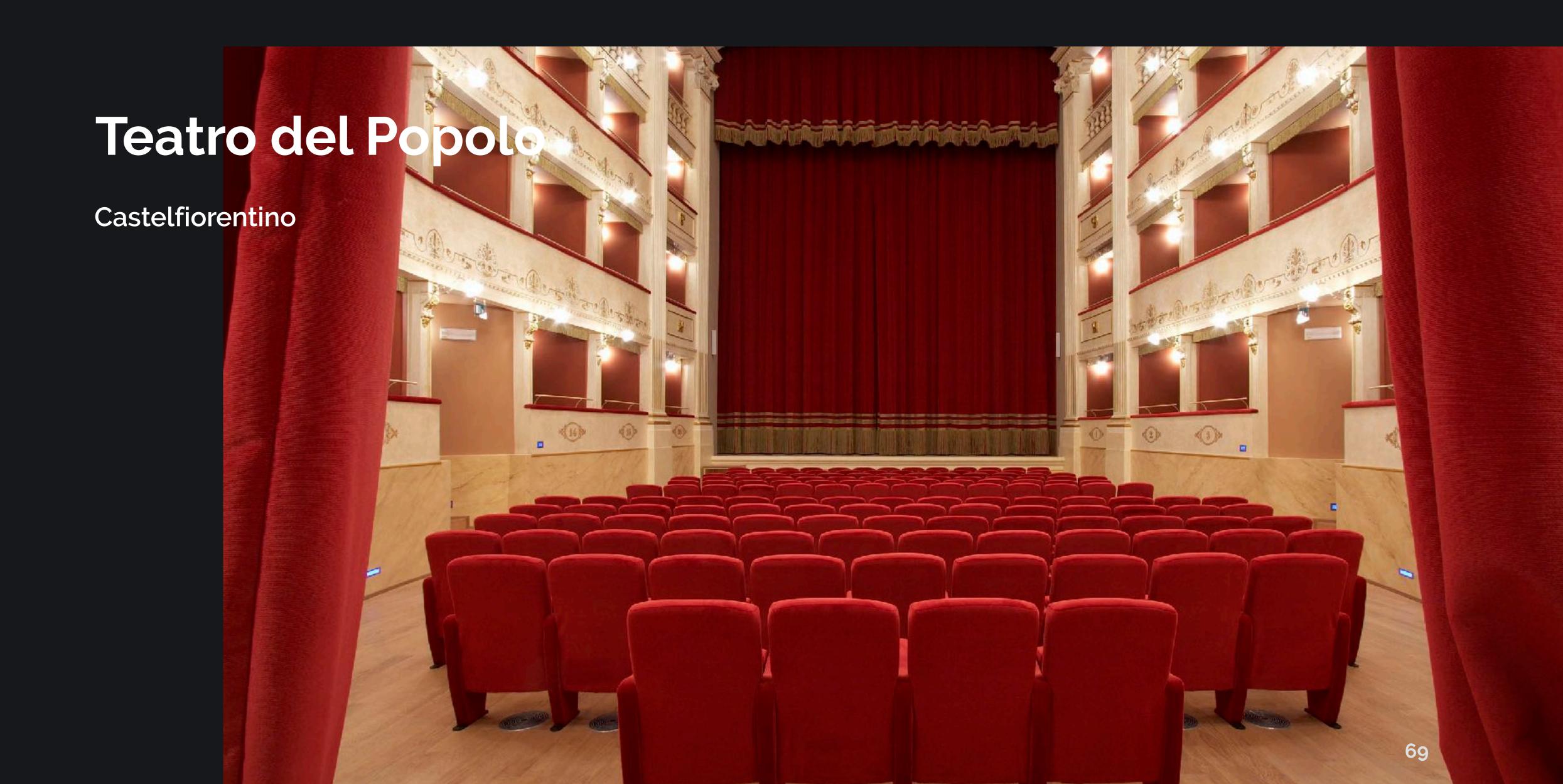


Acoustic measurement of the final condition



- The difference between speech intelligibility in the side aisles (which have no benches) and the central aisle is clear.
- Intelligibility is good in the central aisle (listening area).
- The directional audio system is efficient and optimized.





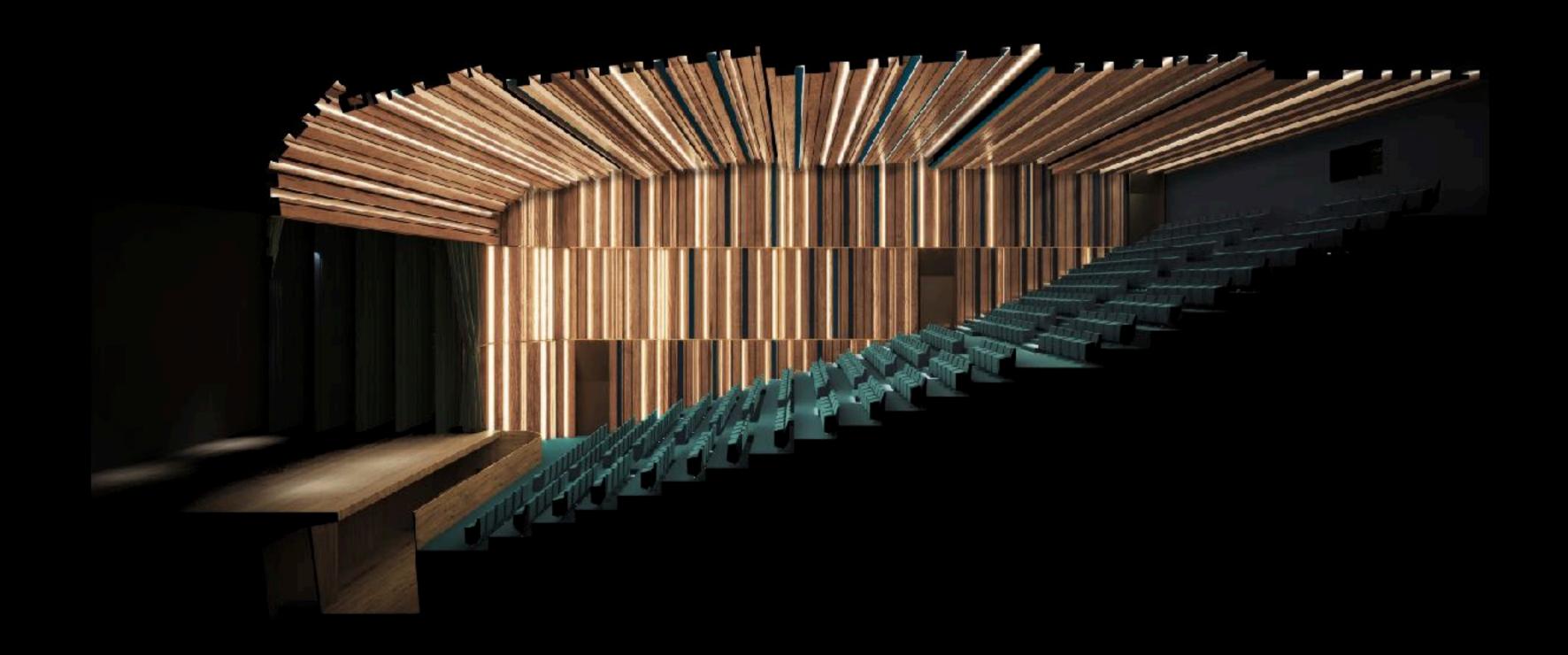






Teatro il Ferruccio

Empoli





Teatro il Ferruccio

Empoli







From Single Client to Political Negotiation

RECORDING STUDIO

Artist → **Engineer** → **Done**

"Make it sound good"

THEATER / HISTORIC VENUE

- Multiple stakeholders
- Complex negotiations
- Political dynamics

Decision time: 1 hour **Decision time:** 3 years (!!!)





What You Can't Touch (Everything)

THE RULES

- X NO drilling
- NO visible treatments
- X NO color changes
- X NO modern elements
- X NO permanent fixtures
- X NO touching frescoes

WHAT'S ALLOWED

- ✓ Reversible installations
- ✓ Transparent materials
- ✓ Hidden treatments

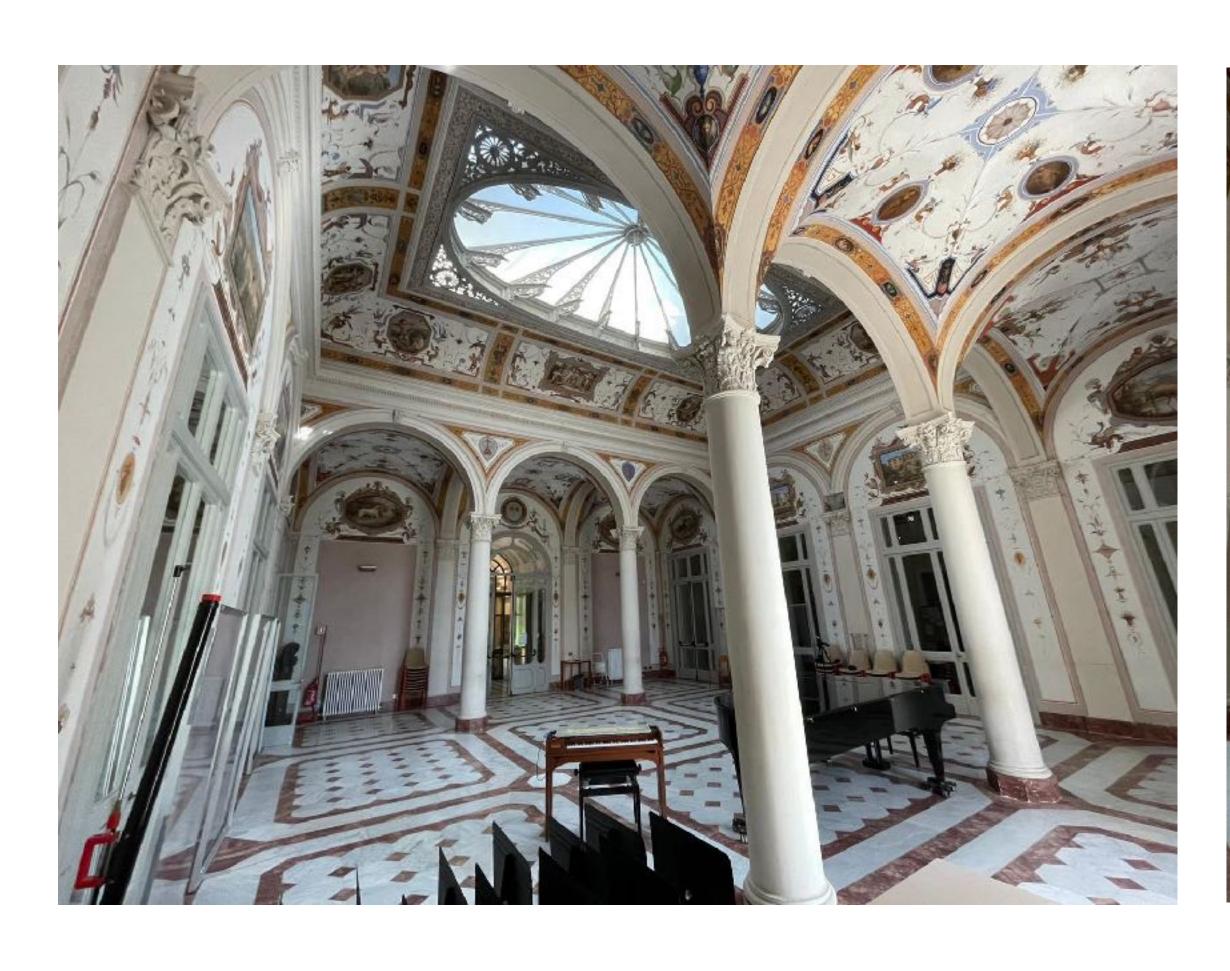


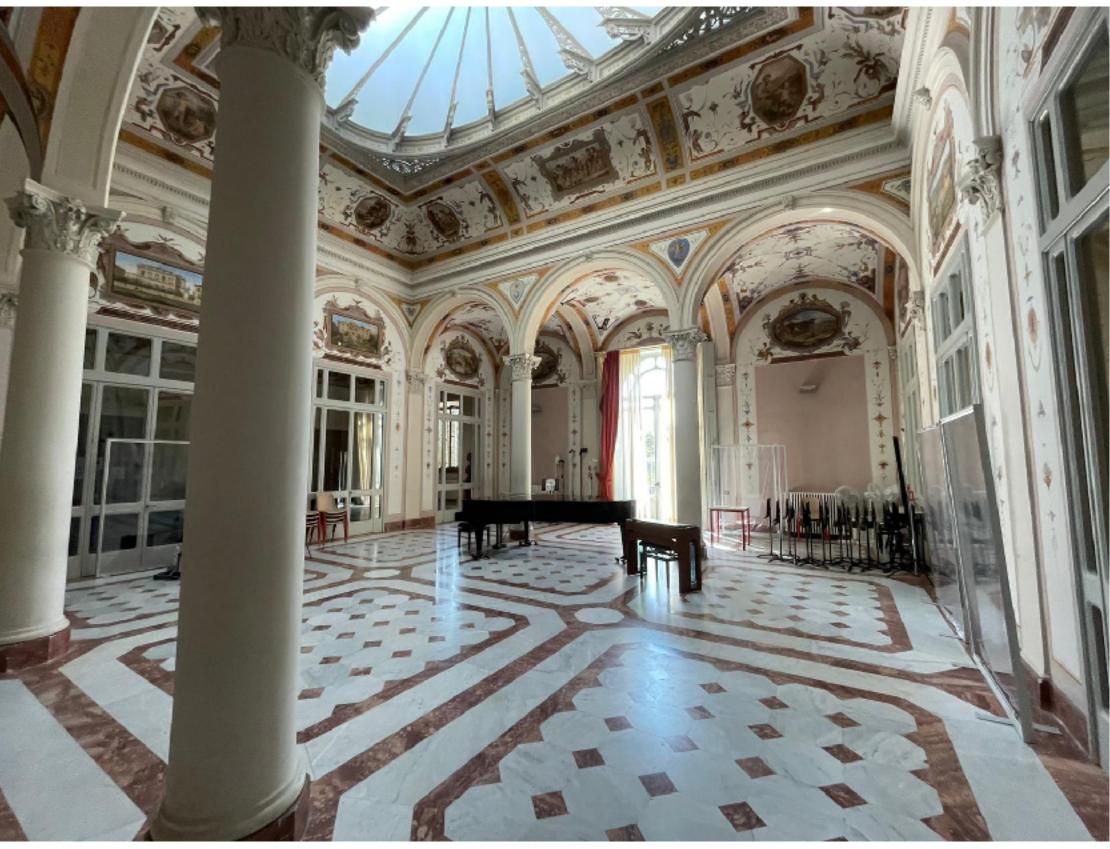






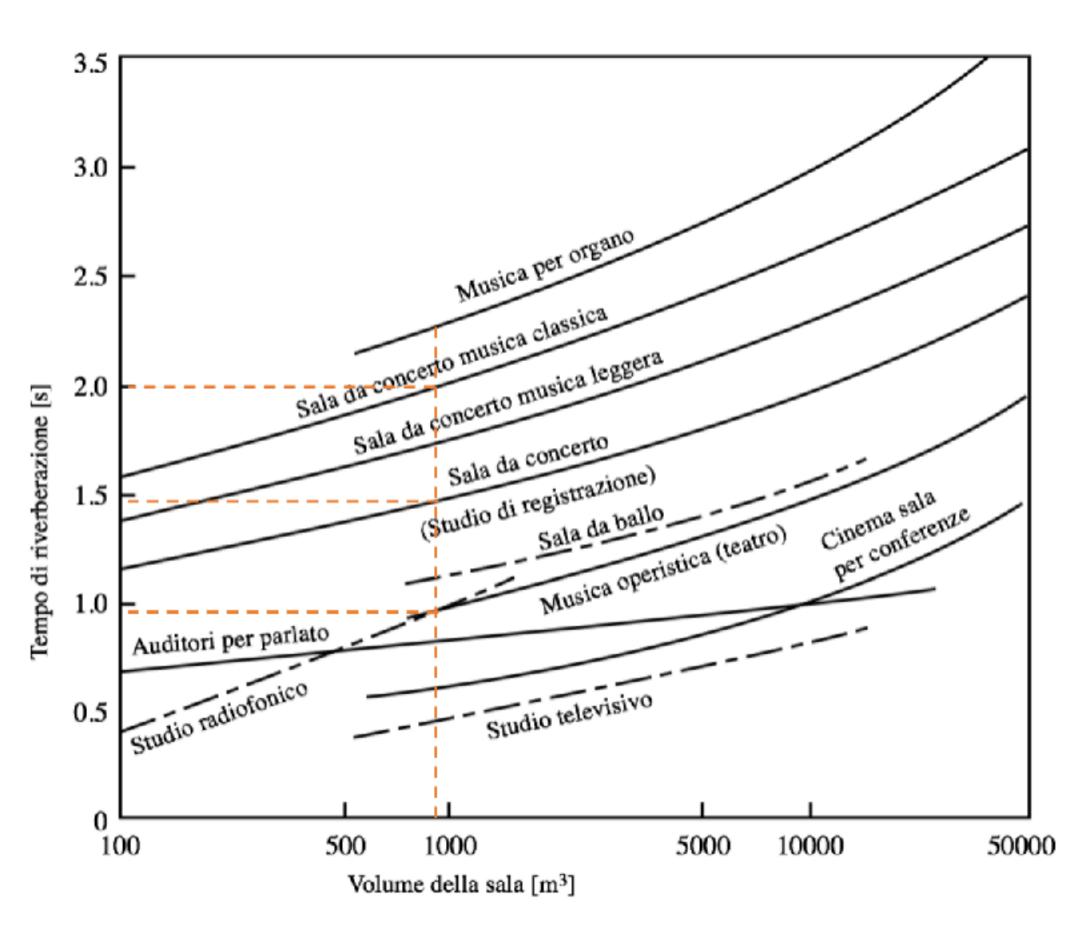
Ante Operam







Project Target Definition



Room Volume: 900 m³

Optimal RT: 1÷2 s (depends on the musical event)

Optimal tonal behavior of reverberation time, approximately 1.5 times longer at low frequencies than @500Hz

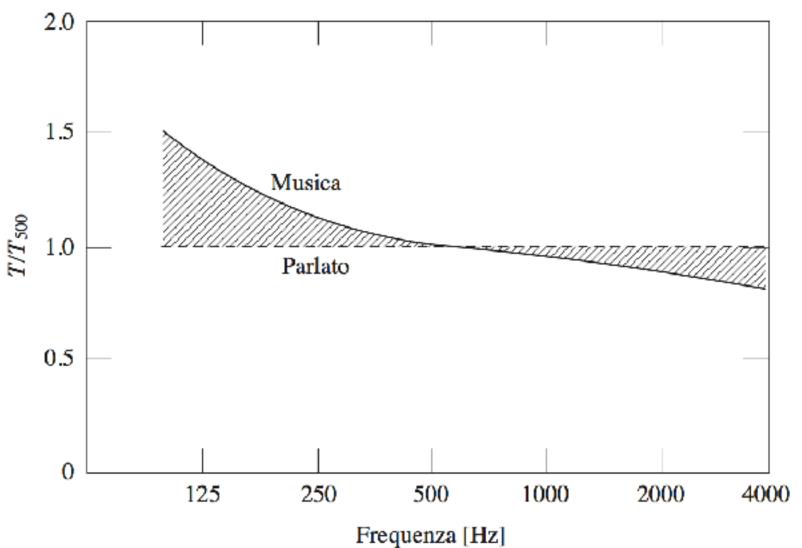
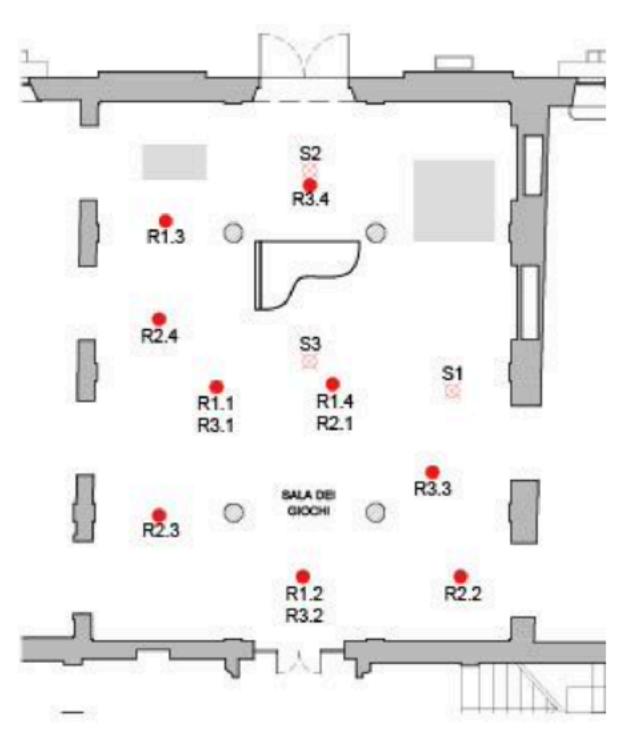


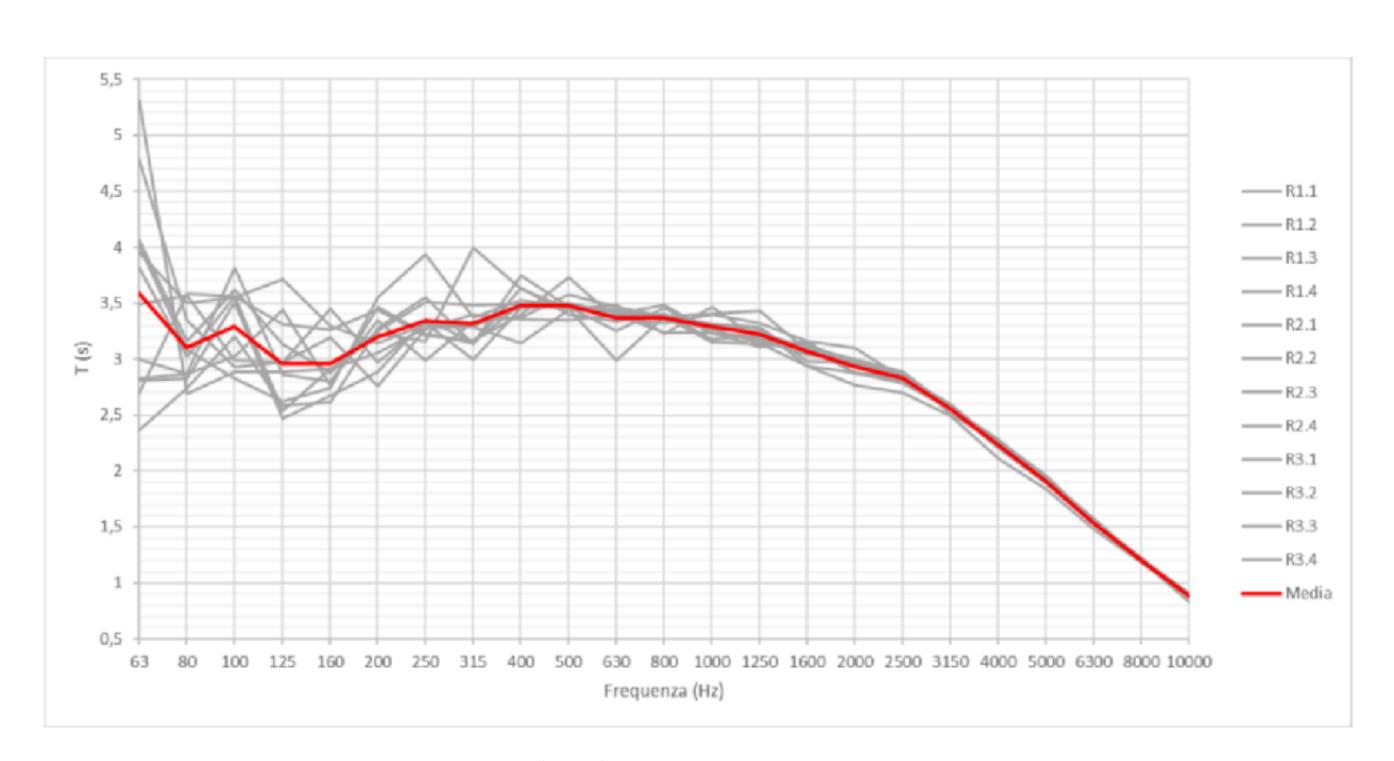
Figura 3 – Tempi di riverberazione di riferimento.



Measurement of pre-existing conditions



· Pianta della Sala dei Giochi: individuazione della posizione di sorgenti e ricevitori.



Reverberation times (T₃₀) measured in pre-existing conditions

Measured RT @ 500 - 1000 Hz : 3.4 s Optimal RT: 1÷2 s (depends on the musical event)

Even at low frequencies, the reverberation is very high and causes harmful emphasis during musical performances.

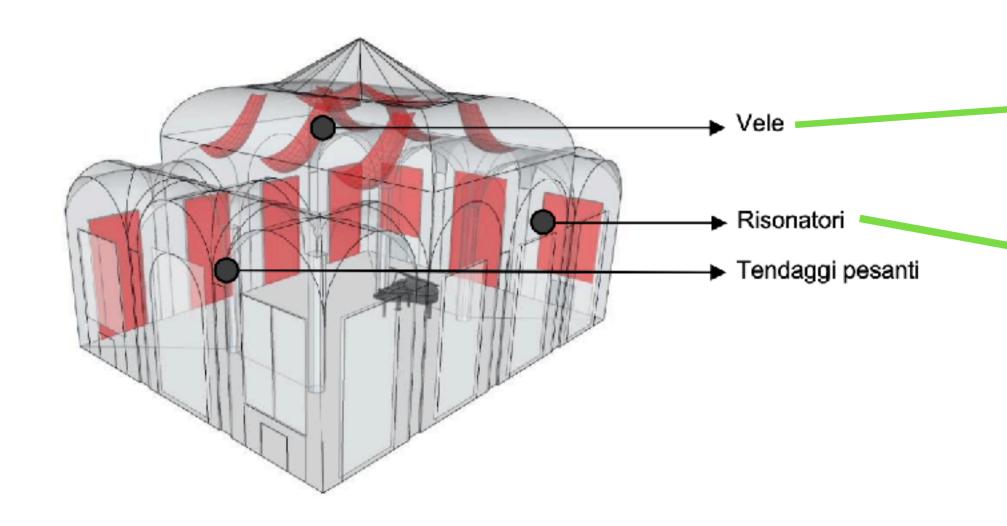


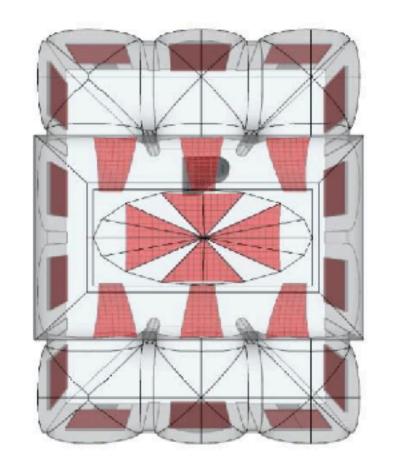


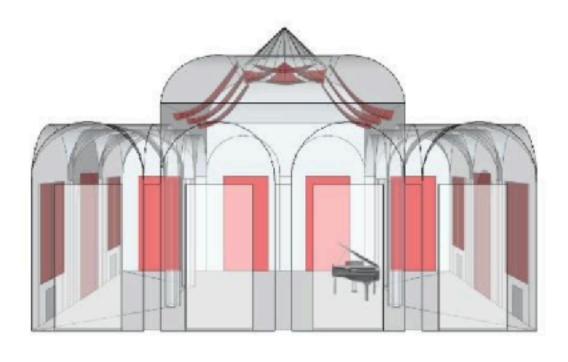


Donato Masci Case Study

Acoustic Treatment Design











Resonators

The correction of low frequencies is achieved using acoustic resonators tuned to specific frequencies.

The resonators are rectangular boxshaped elements that contain a resonating membrane and soundabsorbing material inside. The elements are covered with acoustically transparent fabric.

This type of solution allows for the absorption of a range of low frequencies through elements with reduced thickness.





Heavy Curtains

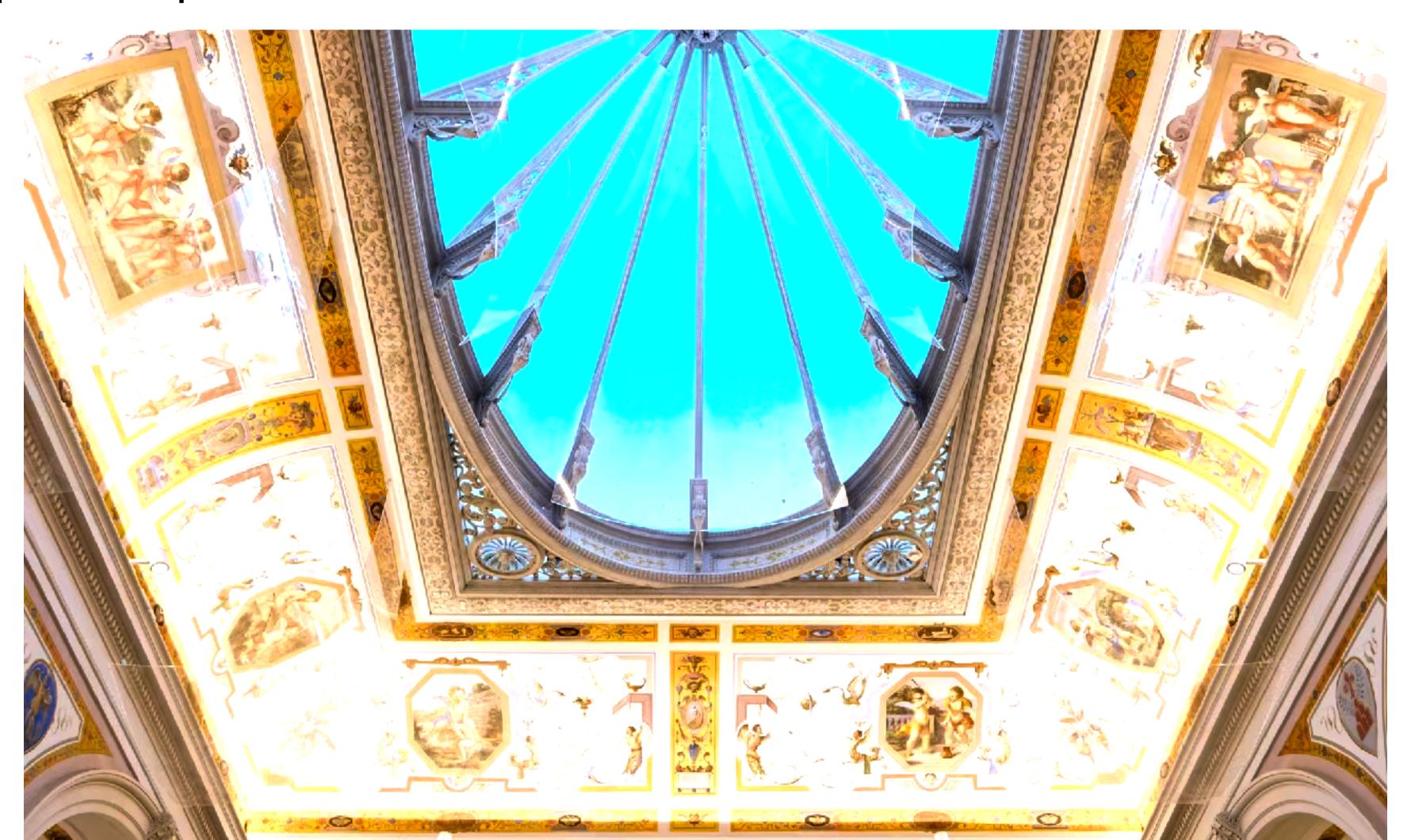
Heavy velvet curtains (fabric heavier than in pre-existing conditions) were installed in front of each opening to control the reflection caused by glass doors.

The use of curtains allows for variable acoustics: with open curtains, the room will be more reverberant, while with closed curtains, high frequencies will be more controlled.





Transparent canopies



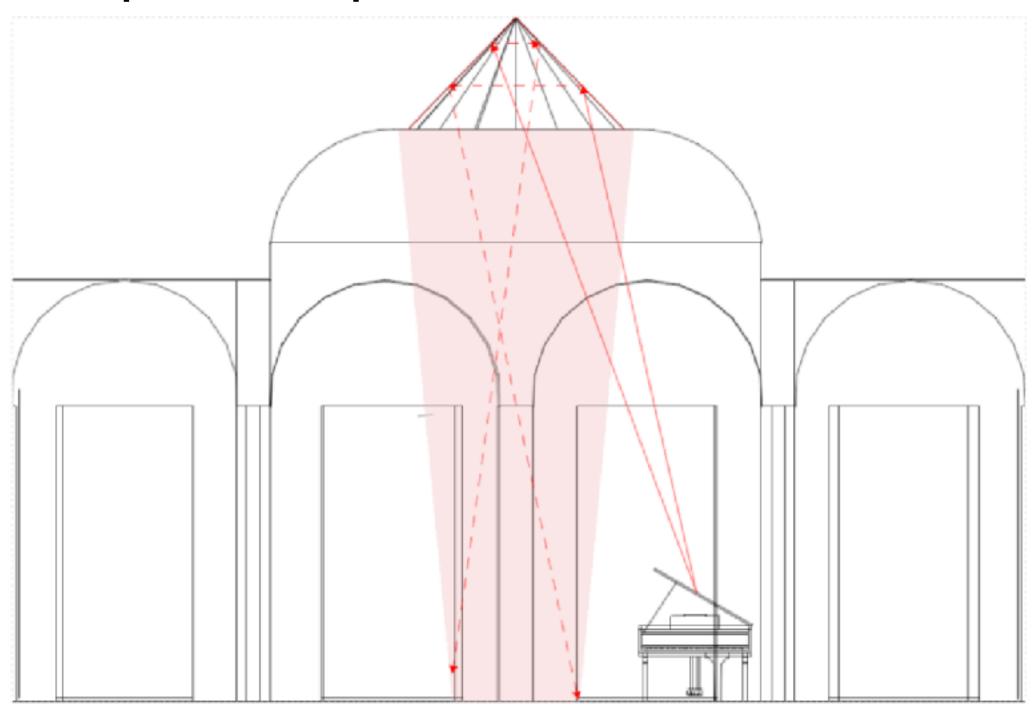


Transparent canopies

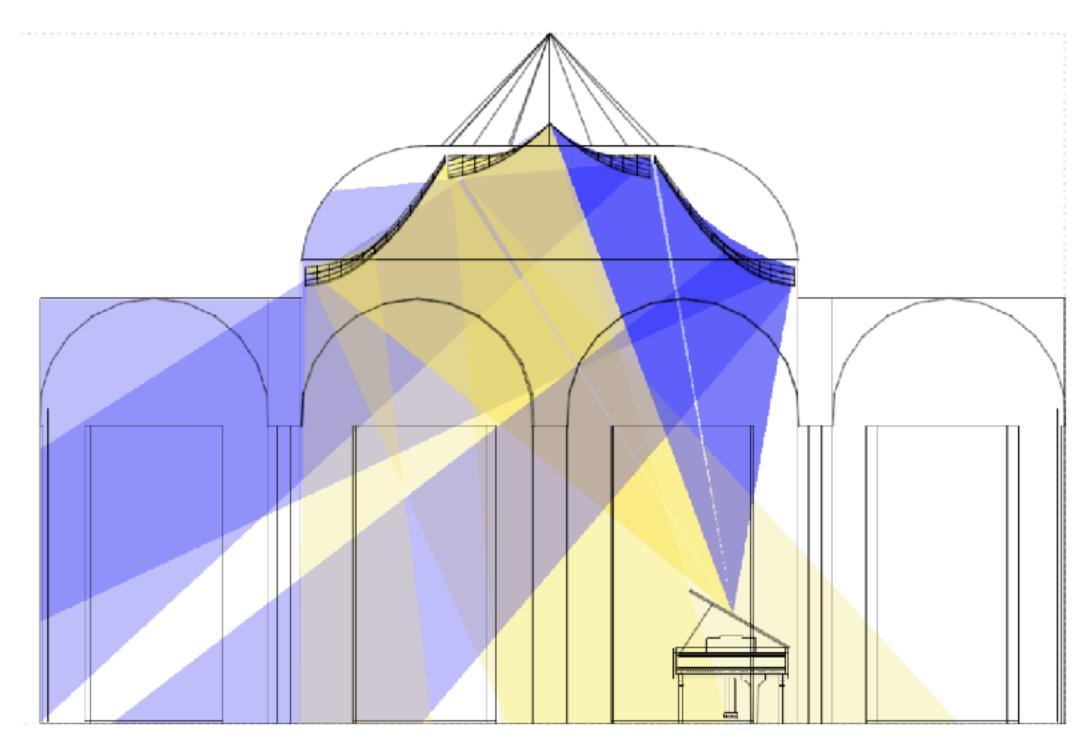




Transparent canopies



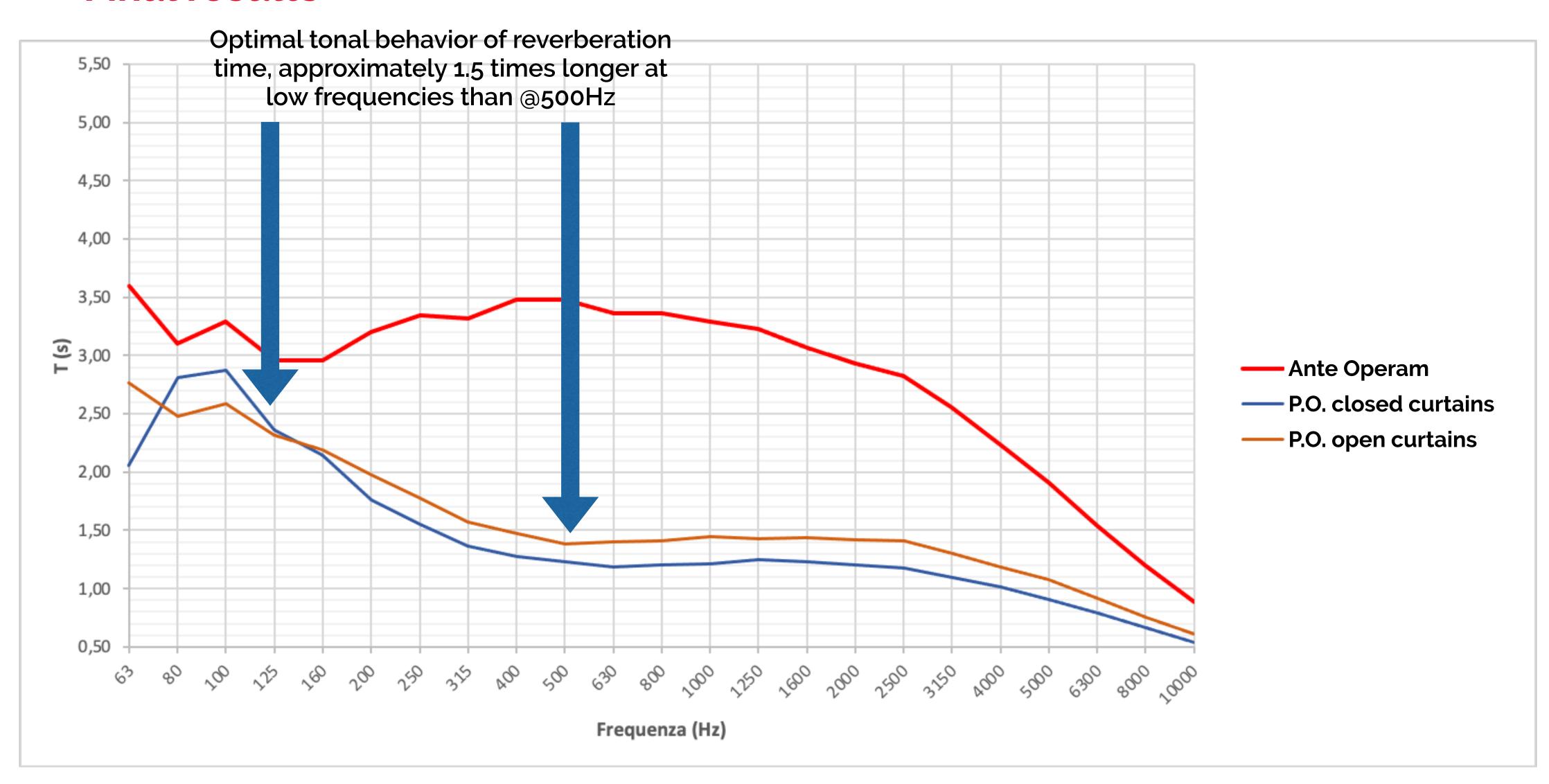
The concave roof caused significant sound focusing in the central part of the room



The convex canopies correct the focusing problem, transforming it into an opposite phenomenon of diffusion and distribution of sound. Listening becomes more uniform and enjoyable throughout the room.



Final results







What Machines Could Do Better

Al Opportunities



GEOMETRIC INTELLIGENCE

Point cloud → Acoustic model (1 hour)

"This is a column, not 10,000 points"



MATERIAL RECOGNITION

Photo → Absorption coefficient

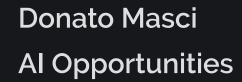
"This marble is 800 years old, α =0.10"



CALIBRATION AUTOMATION

Measurements → Adjusted model

"No more 3-week marathon"





Not Replacing Expertise, Enhancing It

The Future We're Building

SMALL SPACES

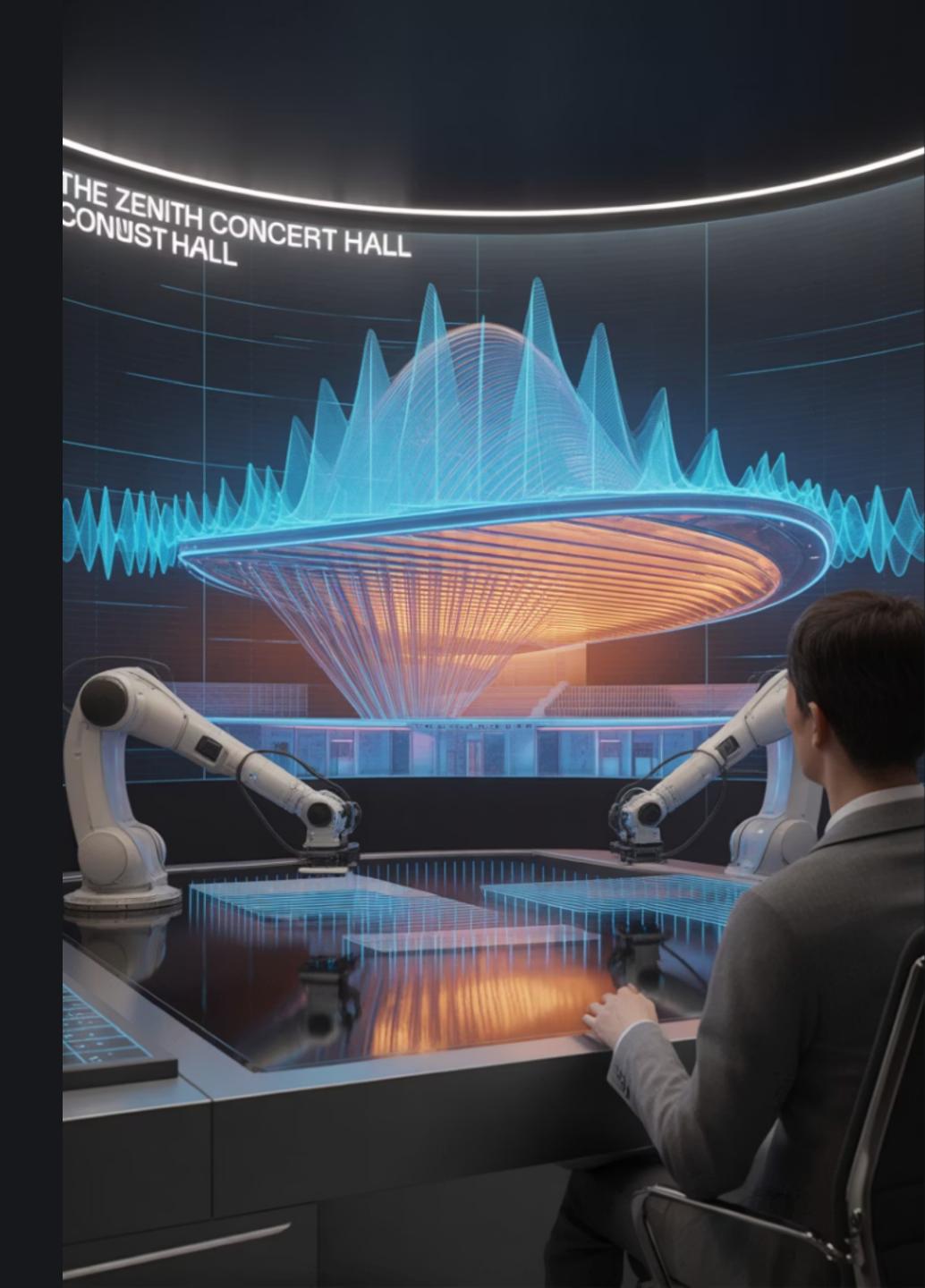
- Al helps with modes
- Faster impedance finding

LARGE SPACES

- AI helps with complexity
- Automatic calibration

COMMON FUTURE:

- · Less modeling time, more design time
- · Less guessing, more precision





Laboratory for Historical Indoor Acoustics

Studio Sound Service

Acoustic design & modeling

Conservatorio

Cherubini

Musical validation & testing

University of Florence DIDA

Laser scanning & analysis

Laboratorio di Innovazione UNIFI

Historical Analysis

Material dating & restoration

UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE (DIDA)

- Laser scanning & photogrammetry
- Historical construction analysis
- Material dating and composition
- Restoration protocols

CONSERVATORIO CHERUBINI

- Musical validation
- Period-appropriate repertoire matching
- Historical performance practice research

STUDIO SOUND SERVICE

- Acoustic design
- Modern requirements integration
- Technical implementation

Mission: "Acoustic archaeology meets living heritage"

Focus: "Making historical spaces work for modern use without destroying their acoustic signature"



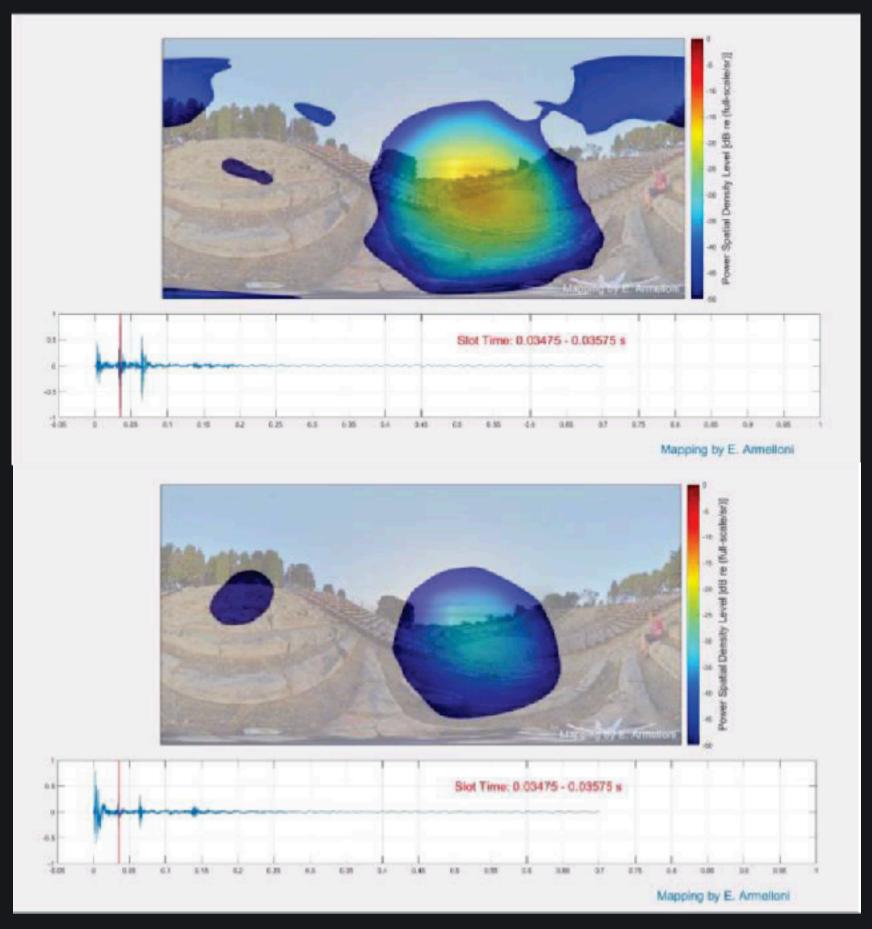
Making the Invisible Visible

Angelo Farina's Spatial Sound Visualization Revolution

AMBISONIC + 360° CAMERA

Interactive 3D model showing Real-time Sound Visualization:

- **Spatial Sound Mapping**: It allows for the mapping of sound pressure levels to specific points in space, using a color-coded representation.
- Time-Domain Analysis: Users can observe the origin and intensity of sound pressure at specific instants within an impulse response.
- Source Localization: The system visualizes the spatial origin of sound over time.
- Comprehensive Acoustic Insight: Offers a dynamic way to understand sound propagation in both spatial and temporal dimensions.





Beyond the Omnidirectional Dogma

Angelo Farina's MIMO Revolution

TRADITIONAL:

One Omnidirectional Source —> Mono Impulse Response

MIMO Innovation:

Directional source array —> Matrix of Responses

32 source patterns * 32 receiver channels = 1,024 transfer functions

Each combination represents a unique source-receiver relationship!

Real-world application:

"Now we can predict how a soprano turning her head changes the entire hall acoustics"

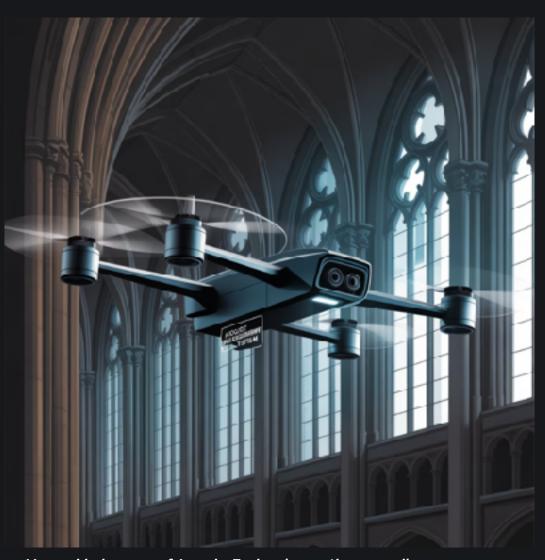
"A cello is omnidirectional at 100Hz but beams at 2kHz"





Acoustic Archaeology for the 21st Century

The 'Angelo Project' - Drone Acoustic Mapping



Named in honour of Angelo Farina (recently passed)

System "Flowrence" (Flow + Florence):

Hardware Stack:

- DJI Matrice 300 RTK (±2cm positioning)
- Zylia ZM-1 (3rd order ambisonic)
- Dodecahedron source (ESS sweep)
- 360° camera (visual correlation)

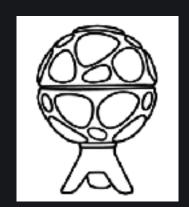
Data Richness

TRADITIONAL

Impulse response with omnidirectional microphone

DRONE

Full spatial impulse response per seat



Traditional Days
800 points, 2 operators

8

Drone Hours

800 points, 1 operator

100%

Efficiency Gain

Revolutionary improvement



Thankyou

40+ years of Acoustic Adventures Remember:

In studios we kill the room, in concert halls we let it sing. Both are right.

Presentation Download

www.studiosoundservice.com/en/education

Contacts

<u>info@studiosoundservice.com</u> <u>www.studiosoundservice.com</u>



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