

GENELEC®

# CASE STUDY

**From confined to refined, Genelec transforms Kakola**

THE FORMER FINNISH PRISON OFFERS A UNIQUE AND HISTORIC OVERNIGHT STAY





## GENELEC DELIVERS A RAW EXPERIENCE BEHIND BARS IN FORMER PRISON-TURNED-HOTEL

If you've ever had a hankering to find yourself behind bars without actually having to commit a crime, then now's your chance: the notorious [Kakola](#) prison in the medieval city of Turku on Finland's southwestern coast has been converted into an upmarket boutique hotel complete with sophisticated conference, banqueting and restaurant facilities, and a [Genelec](#) sound system. Whilst the food and bedding are

much improved upon its former prison days, much of the original architecture has been preserved, and there is no shortage of chains and handcuffs dotted around to remind guests of where they really are...

The majority of the 148 rooms are very well appointed, but if you really, really want to sleep behind bars, a number of (barely) converted cells offer a more rudimentary experience with

” THE INDUSTRIAL LOOK FITS PERFECTLY INTO THE ‘PRISON’ AMBIENCE AND THE SOUND QUALITY IS EXCEPTIONAL.

a bunk bed, water point and toilet. Shower facilities are shared with other cell residents. Your status as a cell resident entitles you to ‘special treatment’ but we didn’t dare ask what that was. Family rooms are also equipped with bunk beds behind bars that are perfect for the kids. Now, there’s a concept that might catch on!

Rooms aside, Hotel Kokola also offers extensive conference and banqueting facilities in a unique setting. The company turned to specialist AV integrator, [Hifistudio Esitystekniikka](#) to design and install a comprehensive sound system across all of the public areas of the hotel. Hifistudio, who are a Genelec partner, have offices in six major cities across Finland and specialise in the hospitality, retail, corporate and education markets as well as hi-fi and home theatre.

“The client wanted a high quality audio system capable of handling low level, high quality background music for the restaurant areas as well as crystal clear vocal reinforcement for conferencing purposes. The system also had to be capable of handling ‘easy’ live music when required,” explains Antti Vuorilahti, co-owner of Hifistudio. “It was also important for them to use domestic suppliers where possible in an effort to support the economy, reduce their carbon footprint and work against climate change, so the decision to use Genelec was a very easy one.”

Vuorilahti specified 24 compact Genelec [4020](#) and two powerful [4040](#) loudspeakers in [RAW](#) aluminium finish across three separate zones: the reception area; restaurant Ruben, located in the former prison canteen; and a versatile space known as the Pavilion which can be rented separately or combined with

” GENELEC WAS AN OBVIOUS CHOICE BECAUSE OF RELIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND FINNISH HERITAGE.

other restaurant facilities for larger events. It can also be used as a workspace and even divided into smaller units with the help of light wall structures.

“The RAW finish is ideal for Kakola,” emphasises Vuorilahti. “The industrial look fits perfectly into the ‘prison’ ambience and from a sustainability point of view, it ticks all the boxes as it requires no painting and less finishing material. Like most Genelec loudspeakers, the enclosure is made from recycled aluminium, and of course the sound quality is exceptional.” Another important point was the choice of active loudspeakers which reduces cabling and removes the need for external amplifier racks, making installation faster, easier and more discreet.

[Symetrix Prism](#) 8x8 digital signal processors provide effortless control over a [Dante](#) network

for each of the zones. “Symetrix supplies high quality products that marry well with a Genelec solution,” says Vuorilahti. “They are easy to configure and – something that was high on the hotel team’s agenda – very easy to use. [Symetrix touch panels](#) in each zone allow hotel staff to select and control the sound sources in every area and even mix them if necessary. It’s all very neat, tidy and straightforward and delivers excellent results.”

[Kakolanruusu](#), a restaurant that is also housed in the former prison building but under separate ownership from the hotel, has likewise been supplied with a Genelec [4000 Series](#) audio solution, also designed and installed by Hifistudio.

Vuorilahti selected 14 mid-sized Genelec [4030](#) loudspeakers in white to deliver ambient background music with the ability to adapt to



larger events when required. “Kakolanruusu caters for groups of various sizes as well as for private diners,” explains Vuorilahti. “Their spaces are fully equipped with screens and video projectors, so it was crucial that they had a high quality PA system to match. Genelec was an obvious choice for all the same reasons of reliability, sustainability and Finnish heritage. Like Hotel Kakola, we’ve provided a Symetrix Prism DSP (12 x 12) and touchscreen that offers the same easy-to-configure, easy-to-operate control for an efficient system that looks as good as it sounds.

“From an integrator’s point of view, we have complete faith in Genelec as a company as well as in their products,” he continues. “Their service is excellent at every level, both pre- and post-sales, technical or whatever it is you need – there is always someone ready to help – and of course the products themselves are excellent. It’s rare that we have a problem

with a Genelec installation, but if we do, it’s never a problem for long.

“Both of these projects – Hotel Kakola and Kakolanruusu – have been thoroughly enjoyable, even if we were faced with certain time constraints. We’re proud to have assisted with the transformation of a former prison into what it is today, and preserved a bit of Finnish history using Finnish products.”



## THE KIT

Hotel Kakola:

- 24 x 4020C
- 6 x 4040A

Kakolanruusu:

- 14 x 4030C