

GENELEC®

CASE STUDY

Genelec supports Sámi culture and heritage at Siida museum

NEW EXHIBITION USES LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO IMMERSE VISITORS IN INDIGENOUS LIFESTYLE





GENELEC'S RENOWNED INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER, HARRI KOSKINEN, IS THE PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT FOR SIIDA'S NEW EXHIBITION



The Sámi Museum and Nature Centre – [Siida](#) – is one of Northern Lapland's most popular destinations. Dedicated to the culture of the Sámi people, who are indigenous to the Lapland region, Siida was first established as an outdoor museum in the 1960s. Visitors had to wait another 30 years before a formal museum building – designed by famed

Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa – was inaugurated in 1998. A further two decades on, the time had come to expand and renovate to accommodate increased visitor numbers and to bring the establishment into line with modern standards. As part of the renovation process, Oulu-based technical systems specialists [Caverion Suomi Oy](#), supplied and installed a comprehensive [Genelec Smart IP](#) loudspeaker solution on a [Dante](#) AoIP

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backbone. Sound designer Aki Päivärinne from [Oioi Collective](#) – experts in interactive experience design – was responsible for the sound design for the new exhibits.

The Sámi people – whose region extends across large northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Murmansk Oblast in Russia – live in harmony with the lands they inhabit. Their traditional livelihoods include coastal fishing, fur trapping, sheep herding, and of course, semi-nomadic reindeer herding. The newly renovated museum houses an all-new exhibition where culture fuses with nature, using the latest in museum technology to showcase and celebrate Sámi heritage. Interestingly, the principal architect of the new exhibition – named ‘These lands are our children’ from the Inari Sámi poem by Matti Morottaja – is none other than Harri Koskinen, the renowned industrial designer who has collaborated closely with Genelec for many years.

“My brief was to recreate a soundscape reflecting the multifaceted sounds of nature in Lapland, and design a technical solution for it,” explains Päivärinne. “I knew that the open museum hall environment would be an interesting acoustic and thematic challenge since all of the seasons are presented in the very same room.” Indeed, Sámi culture celebrates not four but eight distinct seasons which dictate the rhythm of life for Sámi people; in addition to spring, summer, autumn and winter, there is also spring-summer, autumn-summer, autumn-winter and spring-winter.

“I wanted to create a soundscape that would render a natural and authentic backdrop for the exhibition rather than overpowering the cultural heritage of the Sámi people,” he continues. “In a way I created the backdrop which puts their culture into context. Considering that the Sámi still live in close connection with nature, an interplay between nature and culture seemed like an appropriate starting point.”



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Part of the Siida sound design was created by Pekka Aikio, who is Sámi himself and extremely active in defending Sámi rights and heritage. Aikio was responsible for the sounds specifically related to the Sámi people's culture, which Päivärinne then integrated into the overall soundscape.

When it came to implementing the sound design, Päivärinne was categoric: “I knew I would use Genelec loudspeakers because in terms of sound quality, detail and transparency, nothing rivals them. It's also a Finnish brand – and in a museum that is celebrating indigenous culture in an exhibition designed by Harri Koskinen, it would be sacrilegious to use anything else! It was also a foregone conclusion that we would be using Smart IP technology because the newly renovated technical infrastructure of Siida is based entirely on Ethernet cabling – making it very easy for us to plug into the same network.”

Päivärinne explains that he designed the system in circular formations for both

exhibition spaces. “I wanted to create the feeling that the visitor is surrounded by nature and culture. In the main exhibition there are two concentric circles; the inner circle is dedicated to the audio visual installation that depicts Sámi culture with its accompanying soundtrack. The outer circle portrays the eight seasons of the Sámi homeland.

“Since the space was acoustically challenging, I decided to shift the focus from one season to another in a revolving fashion – a bit like a lighthouse, except with audio – rather than playing them all at the same time, encouraging visitors to move through the seasons sequentially. There are even some areas of the exhibition where audio is delivered through directional loudspeakers or headphones, to avoid the cacophony of overlapping music layers in the space.”

Lauri Riihiho led the team from Caverion responsible for the Dante network and loudspeaker installation throughout the building. He was impressed by the ease and speed of



installation of the Smart IP loudspeakers. “This was our first experience with Genelec – and Smart IP in particular – and frankly, it was a piece of cake,” he observed. “Our brief was to install the loudspeakers and configure the network switches for Dante. We installed a total of 30 x [4430s](#) plus a pair of [8010s](#) for one of the Sámi cultural displays and a [7040](#) subwoofer used to play out Sámi shamanic drum sounds. We used Genelec’s [Smart IP Manager](#) software to configure the loudspeakers, which was very straightforward and saved us a lot of time. We configured the switches, and everything worked perfectly. We used a Picturall Mark II media server equipped with a 32 x 32 Dante card as our main hub to run all of the museum’s media content. We connected the loudspeakers to the Dante outputs of the media server and that was it – our job was done.

“Smart IP is impressive technology,” continues Riihiaho. “You only need one CAT cable to connect the speaker to the network. You don’t even need to worry about power outlets as that same cable delivers power via PoE along with the audio and control signals. Consequently, a Genelec Smart IP solution is actually a cost-effective option compared to a traditional

analogue audio system, as you save money on cabling as well as installation time.”

Staff at Siida are thrilled with the new exhibition in the renovated and expanded space. “It’s gratifying to see that Sámi culture remains important enough that visitor numbers continue to increase. Consequently, the time had come to modernise and expand,” says sales and marketing manager, Minna Muurahainen. “We have increased the area of the building by 50% which enables us to do justice to the richness and diversity of Sámi culture and its intimate connection with the natural environment. As such, it was important to us that, where possible, we used brands whose values mirror our own, especially on issues like sustainability. Genelec clearly meets those requirements. We’re delighted with the new exhibition which uses the very latest technology to educate and immerse our visitors into the Sámi environment, which is today under threat and deserves a voice. We see ourselves as an essential part of the mission to preserve Sámi heritage, and the deployment of modern – and sustainable – AV technology to help tell the story is a key part of that mission.”



THE KIT

- 30 x 4430A
- 2 x 8010A
- 1 x 7040A
- 1 x Smart IP Manager Software

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