



The 1,065 seater Calvin College
Fine Arts Center Auditorium

Taming the National Club

Toronto's National Club had a major acoustic problem in its 200-seat dining room – solved with a new Iconyx system from Renkus-Heinz

Hidden in plain view among the towering skyscrapers of Toronto's downtown financial district, The National Club is one of the city's most prestigious landmarks. The non-political members-only organization serves as private retreat for its clientele, including many of Canada's current and future leaders.

Since its founding in 1874, The National Club has hosted a who's who of Canadian VIPs and foreign dignitaries. Today it serves as an esteemed venue for private meetings and dinners, weddings, presentations and club-hosted events.

The brick-and-plaster building has endured several renovations since being constructed in 1906. Most recently, the club's Board of Directors voted to replace the Main Dining Room's existing audio system, with an eye toward better addressing the club's requirements for high voice intelligibility and improved sound distribution.

The two-storey, 1,950 square foot Main Dining Room comfortably seats 200 people, with antique chandeliers hanging from its impressive 19-foot ceiling. A balcony is located to one side of the room, creating two alcoves directly below it.

According to Brock McGinnis of Westbury National Show Systems, Ltd., who designed and installed the new audio system, the building's historic nature and 14" thick brick-and-plaster walls presented some specific challenges during the installation.

"The room is a very reverberant two-storey space, and the dinner guests create a great deal of noise," McGinnis explains. "It's a bit like having dinner in the middle of a cathedral. The walls and ceiling are very hard surfaces, so in addition to the reverb problem we weren't able to run any cable through the walls."



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McGinnis opted for an Iconyx digitally steerable array loudspeaker system by Renkus-Heinz. A pair of IC8-R columns are mounted on either side of the room's motorized video screen. The high performance system provides superior sound pattern distribution technology combined with outstanding musicality and voice intelligibility.

"Renkus-Heinz was our first choice for The National Club," says McGinnis. "We've used Iconyx loudspeakers on many other projects and find them to be extremely effective at steering the sound precisely where it's needed, and away from areas where it isn't. The quality of sound we get is excellent, even with all the hard surfaces in the room."

Preserving the character and appearance of the club's architecture was also paramount. The Iconyx loudspeakers fit very discreetly into the wall, rendering them barely visible.

"The National Club is so pleased with the Iconyx system's sound quality and distribution technology that they want to install more Iconyx loudspeakers in other parts of the building," McGinnis reports. 

