

Lawo mc²36 for Jazzclub Karlsruhe



Picture: Florian Gundert

Since its founding in the 1960s, Jazzclub Karlsruhe has become a cornerstone of Germany's cultural scene. With legendary performances by artists such as Albert Mangelsdorff and Dexter Gordon, the club has secured a lasting place in the jazz world and continues to serve as a vital platform for the genre in all its diversity. The journey to this point was not without challenges: after years of searching and several temporary venues, the club finally found a permanent home in the heart of Karlsruhe. In its new location, the club now leverages cutting-edge technology to deliver exceptional sound quality and an unforgettable auditory experience.

The club's latest technical upgrade features a 16-fader Lawo mc²36 audio mixing console and microphones from Schoeps – two brands renowned for their pioneering contributions to audio technology. Together, they bring the club's sonic vision to life. Niklas König, chairman of the Jazzclub and artistic director of the local band Soulcafé, explains the decision:

"The Jazzclub stands for quality and tradition. When we host artists, we aim to provide not only an outstanding stage but also the best possible sound experience for our audience. The Lawo mc²36 offers the ideal combination of compact design and powerful performance – crucial for our limited technical space. Its slim profile

integrates seamlessly into the venue without compromising audio quality."

The Lawo mc²36, equipped with A__UHD Core technology, delivers high performance in a compact format. It features 384 processing channels at 48/96 kHz, supports up to 864 I/O channels, and includes local I/Os, native RAVENNA/AES67 IP connectivity, and point-to-point stage box integration. The built-in Waves SuperRack plug-in integration enables detailed sound processing.

"At Soulcafé concerts, we often use up to 32 channels from the stage, mixing them for PA and monitor paths, along with dedicated playout and multitrack recording paths. The mc²36 handles this effortlessly. We can use up to 16 aux and 16 playout paths while recording each source discretely," König explains. "This setup equips us perfectly for PA, in-ear monitoring, and high-quality recordings."

The mc²36's intuitive user interface ensures efficient control of the sound parameters and a smooth workflow. "Its design allows even freelance technicians to quickly get up to speed," König emphasizes. "This is essential for us, as we frequently work with different engineers but still aim to maintain a consistently high standard. The touchscreen interface and clearly structured workflow enable fast familiarization and reliable operation during live performances."

Another key element of the club's sound is its use of Schoeps microphones, internationally acclaimed for their outstanding audio fidelity. "Our microphones authentically and precisely capture the natural sound of instruments," says Florian Gundert, Marketing Manager at Schoeps. "Their transparent off-axis response gives sound engineers maximum flexibility in the mix – an advantage for both intimate acoustic setups and louder, more crowded stages."

At Jazzclub Karlsruhe, microphones from the modular Colette series are used, typically paired with the CMC 1 miniature amplifier and the MK 4 cardioid capsule. Depending on production needs, they are positioned as drum overheads, on the grand piano, or in front of wind instruments. In combination with the Lawo mc²36, the Schoeps microphones reveal their full sonic potential – benefiting both performers and audiences.

"The subtle nuances our microphones capture are preserved throughout the high-quality signal chain," Gundert notes. "This ensures exceptional clarity and dynamic range in both PA sound and recordings." This precision also enhances in-ear monitoring. "The clarity of the in-ear mix is remarkable," König adds. "It allows our musicians to focus entirely on their performance, thanks to a perfectly balanced sound image in their ears."

Even at higher volumes, the seamlessly integrated PA system delivers crystal-clear sound. Still, the club often opts for subtle miking techniques. "With a jazz trio, for instance, we lightly mic the instruments to complement the natural room acoustics and optimize the sound balance for the audience – without altering the direct sound character or introducing noticeable amplification," König explains.

The integration of Lawo and Schoeps technologies demonstrates how Jazzclub Karlsruhe harmonizes tradition with innovation to deliver the ultimate musical experience. The high-resolution audio setup supports the club's cultural mission: to highlight the authenticity and emotional depth of jazz. "Our guests come here to experience music in its purest acoustic form," König concludes. "With finely tuned room acoustics and premium signal processing, we ensure that every artistic detail and dynamic nuance reaches the audience with clarity and balance."

With the Lawo mc²36 mixing console and Schoeps microphones, Jazzclub Karlsruhe is setting new standards - while staying true to its legacy of offering a distinctive and unique musical experience for both artists and audiences.

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