



Barco Escape®

... it's everywhere around you!

Friday 10th October saw the European premiere of a new cinema experience which Barco hope will provide a new cinemagoing experience for the audience.

The Barco Escape system was first announced at CinemaCon in Las Vegas earlier in 2014. Its European premiere took place at the Kinepolis cinema in Antwerp and saw a partnership between Barco, Kinepolis and 20th Century Fox.

Peter Knight FBKS was invited to the European premiere of the Barco Escape presentation of 'Maze Runner'.



What is Barco Escape?

The concept behind Barco Escape technology sounds simple, yet is ground-breaking: by combining three digital cinema projectors with three screens, one at the front and two angled screens on either side of it, Barco Escape creates an amazing panoramic presentation that immerses the audience into the movie. 'The Maze Runner' by 20th Century Fox is the very first film specially prepped for this theatre configuration. The decision

to provide Barco Escape footage for this movie is perfect: thanks to the new format, the audience feels pulled into the maze at key moments of the film, just like the boys in the story. 'The Maze Runner' debuted in September at five US Escape theaters. The Kinepolis flagship cinemas of Antwerp and Brussels will be the first in Europe to feature Barco Escape equipment.

How does it work?

Much of the content which appears on the

additional screens is made possible thanks to the same technologies as are used for on-screen gaming.

The new, ultra-wide Barco Escape movie format is just one of Barco's many recent innovations to help exhibitors advance cinema and, consequently, attract new audiences. In its constant search for ways to reinforce its frontrunner reputation in the cinema industry, the Kinepolis Group has always strongly supported Barco's vision and been





amongst the first to adopt new Barco technologies – from 3D digital cinema (2007) and 4K technology (2011) through to Barco’s 60,000 lumen, laser-illuminated projectors earlier this year. The decision to install the DP4K-60L laser projector at four Kinopolis cinemas was the first in a series of joint

Barco-Kinopolis initiatives that were laid down in a partnership agreement between Barco and Kinopolis. The installation of Barco Escape marks a next step in the cooperation between the two cinema aficionados. In the future, Kinopolis theaters will also feature Barco’s interactive content-leveraging technologies.

Looking to the future

‘The Maze Runner’ premiered in Barco Escape at Kinopolis Antwerp during a dedicated press screening, and at Kinopolis Brussels on 15 October. Barco has also announced its plans to bring the live performance of Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga that took place in Brussels, on 22 September last, to Barco Escape theaters in early 2015.

Conclusions

Maze Runner was definitely only a taster of the Barco Escape system and what can



be resolved.

I know from my discussions with the Barco engineers that several of these are being looked at now, including:

- using proper DCP projectors rather than HD digital projectors so that there is proper colour matching between screens
- managing light bouncing from the three screens, especially when two of the screens aren’t in use
- masking off the bottom of the centre screen, as the outside screens are smaller.

Barco Escape could be seen as a digital version of Cinerama and has many of the initial issues which Cinerama suffered from. However, just as when I first heard Dolby Atmos and I wasn’t totally impressed because the creators hadn’t got used to the tools, the same feels to me to be the case with Escape.

be expected from the concept in the future. Like a number of other pieces of technology, I am waiting for the next couple of iterations of the system; it is good but it is still very early days and there are a number of little things which need to

As you can see from the pictures, some work more effectively than others and it still needs time for the producers to work out what they can and can’t do with the new toy - for the showing in Antwerp there was only ten minutes of extra material (i.e material using all the three Escape screens) which means that there was a lot of distraction when the pictures on the side screens were appearing and disappearing all the time.

But these are minor things and as with Dolby Atmos, I believe that Barco Escape will enable a truly immersive experience to be created in our cinemas.

An exciting journey

I’m excited, it is very definitely the beginning of an exciting journey which will be built upon and developed. I also think that it is fantastic that there are companies such as Barco who are working hard to try and provide the cinema audience with a reason to go to the cinema rather than just watching the films at home, which has to be a good thing.

Stay tuned as there is going to be a lot more to look at.

Peter J Knight