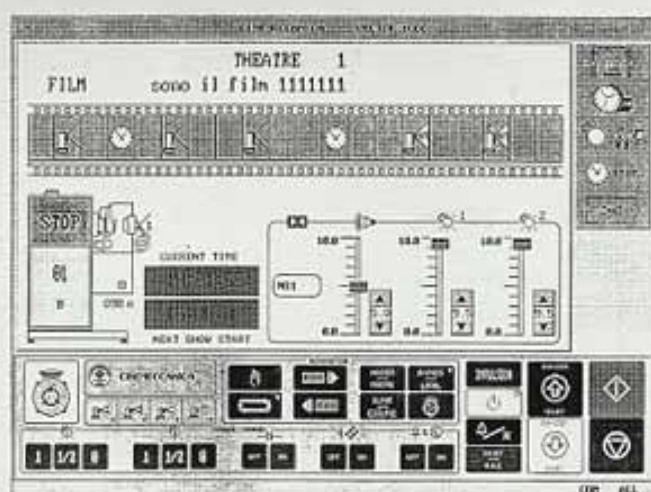


schema del dettaglio giornaliero



schema del dettaglio di una sala (comandi di ciascuna sala)

MULTISALA, MULTIPLEX, MULTISCREEN, MEGAPLEX: TO EACH HIS OWN "ELECTRONIC BRAIN"

By Pino Chiodo

On the great transformation taking place in the world of cinema much has been said and written. "From the Cinema Paradiso to the multiplex." The age of the peripheric leap is over. These and other slogans have occasionally appeared in newspaper headlines and specialized periodicals. The "cinema craze", which took off between 1996 and 1997, has given a new lease of life to the sector with the recovery of old, disused structures and the birth of new, better equipped multi-screen complexes with high level technology added.

The figures, moreover, speak for themselves: in Italy alone there are 14 complexes with a maximum of 10 and a minimum of 5 screens, not to mention the smaller multisalas, those with 2 to 4 screens. It is in this climate that Cinemeccanica S.p.A., world leader in projection systems and machines, has anticipated the times by planning and realizing an advanced high-tech system capable of rendering 2intelligent2 those complexes offering several screens.

Vector 1000 is a digital central control unit which allows the simultaneous control of sound projection in each auditorium, staggered screen showings, intervals, the switching on and off of lighting systems, pre-set starts for the first and second half of each film or special screenings, an alarm activated in case of the malfunctioning of any apparatus, with the option of providing a "teledrin" hook-up. In practice, every operator can be provided with a portable

device (teledrin) which can emit an acoustic alarm signal alerting him of any malfunction, no matter where he is within the building. The device also displays the number of the projector malfunctioning.

But the "intelligence" of Vector 1000 knows no limits: in addition to the main functions already mentioned, the system is also capable of recording messages and being utilized as a public address system, whether throughout the structure as a whole, in selected auditoria, or lobby areas, to announce the start of each screening or to guide the public towards the exits after the showings. Particularly useful is its memory, which will carefully make note of any type of breakdown or technical hiccup, together with details and a record of the intervention required, sala by sala. As so for the auxiliary device for the automatized stop and start of exit curtains, the opening and closing of screen curtains, regulated air conditioning to reduce the possibility of background noise due to air distribution during the screening.

But how does one use Vector 1000? Simple, is the reply.

The entire installation is regulated by a personal computer which supervises the input and output of all information pertaining to the system. The main function of the PC is to prepare the various programs necessary for the smooth functioning of the machinery, for the start-up and monitoring of each projector while it is in function.

The programs, such as end-user, alarm records, maintenance details and voice messages are stored on hard disk.

The PLC contains information on the daily programming and times of screenings.

A second computer hook-up automatically displays to the public all films on show, film start times and whether the first half or

second half is running.

The machine is equipped with a voice-card which, thanks to an external receiver, can handle the recording and playback of 44 different messages for announcements.

Efficiency, quality, rapid response to technical problems and malfunctions, optimization of resources and cost effective. These are just some of the many advantages of Vector 1000, which enables just two operators to control and run multisalas with up to 30 screens, equipped with a single, automatized projector and system with horizontal platters.

For configurations of more than 30 screens, though currently a remote possibility for Italy, two or more systems running side by side are necessary.

In little over two years the Vector 1000 system has been adopted in almost 70 multisalas worldwide, with a total of around 600 screens. ■