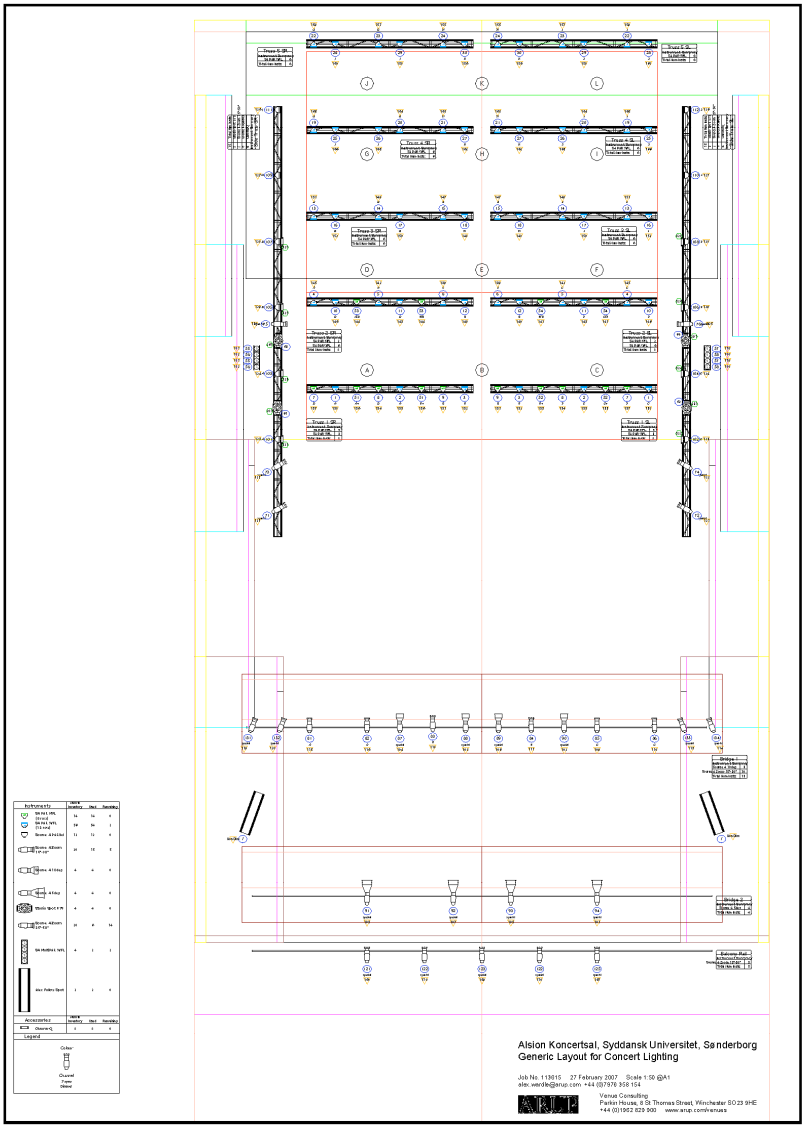
VectorWorks Spotlight Case Study: Alsion Concert Hall
Alex Wardle - Lighting Designer

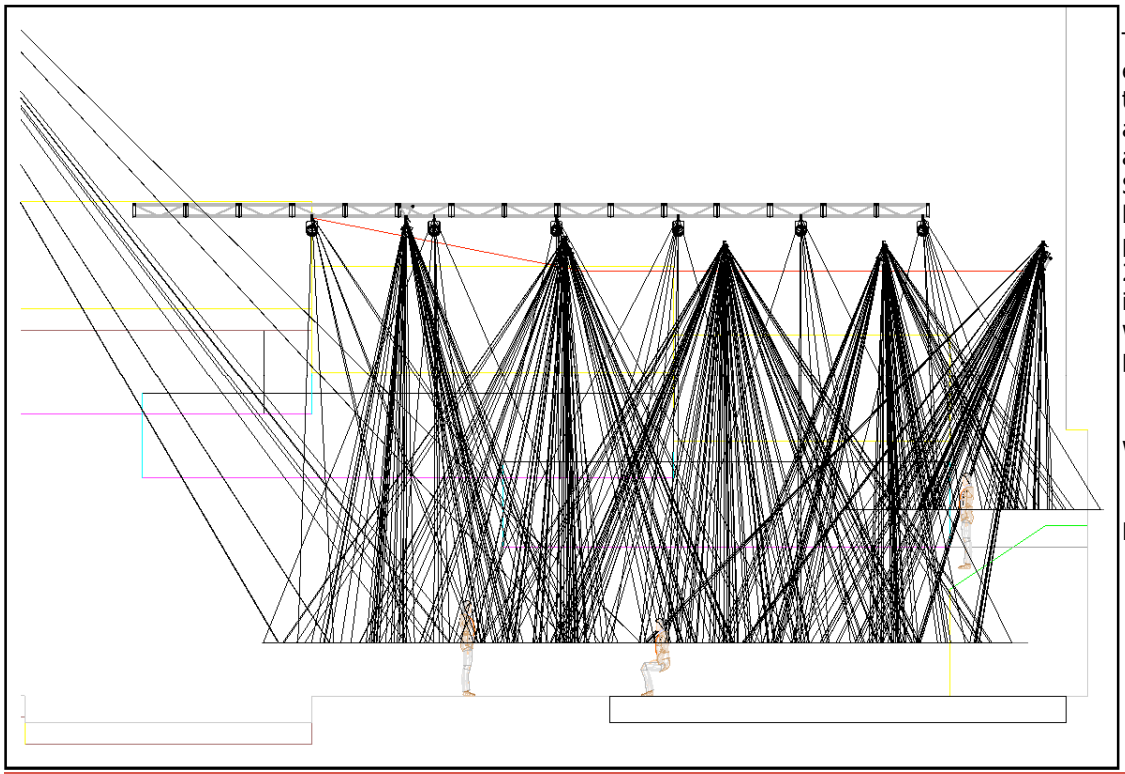
I started using Vectorworks Spotlight about three years ago, working on touring theatre productions. I first used Spotlight on Kneehigh Theatre's "The Wooden Frock", which opened at West Yorkshire Playhouse and then toured middle-scale theatres around the UK. I found that it took me no longer to teach myself the software (just from reading the manual) and produce the drawings compared to the time it would have taken to produce all of the drawings by hand.

Generally I now draw in 3D as a matter of course. This means that the thought process of "shall I bother to draw a section" no longer happens. If you want to see what it looks like in section, change the view.

I have just returned from Denmark, commissioning the new Alsion concert hall in Sønderborg. This was as part of my part-time job with Arup Venue Consulting. We needed to rig and focus around 70 ETC Source Four Pars above the concert platform, to provide a uniform 750 lux on the orchestra's music stands.

I imported the 3D dxf model that my colleague Matt Wilkinson at Arup Acoustics had built to simulate the acoustics. The truss tool made it very fast to draw the lighting positions. Using the "duplicate array" function, I quickly laid out a rig of Source Four Pars at the correct height, created several focus points, checked the beam overlap and inserted a photometric grid to demonstrate that the rig would achieve the specification.





The hall currently employs just one technician, whose area of expertise is audio. The same Spotlight file then became the basis for providing him with a 2D lighting plan and instrument schedule, which doubled as a patch sheet.

www.arup.com/venues

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