

ADMIRALSPALAST, BERLIN

Located in the heart of Berlin, the Admiralspalast is a building with more than 100 years of history. Opened in 1910 as one of the city's first major entertainment palaces, it evolved from an ice-skating variety venue into an operetta stage, later becoming the "Haus der Presse" and eventually a political cabaret theatre. Since reopening in 2006, the Admiralspalast has continued its cultural legacy.

Since 2019, pde has played a key role in the redesign and revitalisation of this historic building, providing M&E Planning as well as fire protection services in collaboration with Graft Architects.



Client	Augustus Management & Architecture GmbH	Service Areas	M&E Planning, Fire Protection Services
Location	Berlin	Work Stages	M&E Planning Work Stages 2–8; Fire Protection Services Work Stages 1–9
pde period of service	2019 - 2023	Dimensions	Existing building: 4,600 m ² GFA New built 5,000 m ² GFA

M&E PLANNING MEETS THEATRE

The project comprised the complete redesign and revitalisation of the building services systems. The scope included office spaces with an adjoining theatre, neighbouring building sections, and an "Escape Room" for staff and visitors.

Key challenges included the detailed survey of the existing structure and the execution of refurbishment and conversion works during ongoing event operations. At the same time, the structural conditions of the historic building influenced every stage of planning and construction.

OUR M&E SERVICES

- Integrated design of all MEP disciplines (mechanical, electrical and building management systems) across Work Stages 2–8
- Forward-looking planning using point cloud surveys and BIM modelling
- Value engineering to improve efficiency and sustainability
- Reorganisation of the central technical infrastructure as part of structural modifications
- Close collaboration with our in-house fire protection department and external specialist consultants
- Integration of modern building services while respecting heritage conservation and structural requirements



KEY CHALLENGES

- Conversion of central supply systems: Following the demolition of an adjacent building, district heating, emergency power, ventilation and fire suppression systems had to be reorganised within the existing structure — without interrupting operations
- Restricted space and limited load-bearing capacity: The historic building required lightweight construction methods and highly-precise planning
- Construction during ongoing operations: Complex technical systems such as smoke extraction and backup power systems were implemented while events continued to take place
- Mixed-use requirements: Theatre, office and escape room areas each demanded different solutions for climate control, acoustics and building management systems



FIRE PROTECTION IN A HISTORIC BUILDING

The historic fabric of the building also posed particular challenges in terms of fire protection. The objective was to sensitively integrate modern safety standards into the listed structure.

Elements such as fire water supply points, smoke detectors and sprinkler systems were carefully incorporated into the existing architecture. At the same time, the building's mixed use — theatre, offices and escape room — required differentiated solutions for escape routes, smoke extraction and fire loads.

Additional challenges arose from the inner-city location, with limited space for technical installations and restricted access for the fire brigade. As a result, implementation was carried out in phases while maintaining uninterrupted event operations.



OUR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

- Preparation of approval-ready fire safety concepts for both existing and new-build areas
- Integrated planning in close coordination with all specialist disciplines
- Support throughout all work stages (1–9) through to completion



CONCLUSION

The revitalisation of the Admiralspalast demonstrates how complex refurbishment projects in existing buildings can be successfully realised. Through integrated planning, technical expertise and a deep understanding of historic structures, a solution was created that combines modern functionality with cultural heritage — at the highest technical standard.