



THE RENEWAL OF A CLASSIC

THE ROMEA THEATRE SHINES
BRIGHTLY

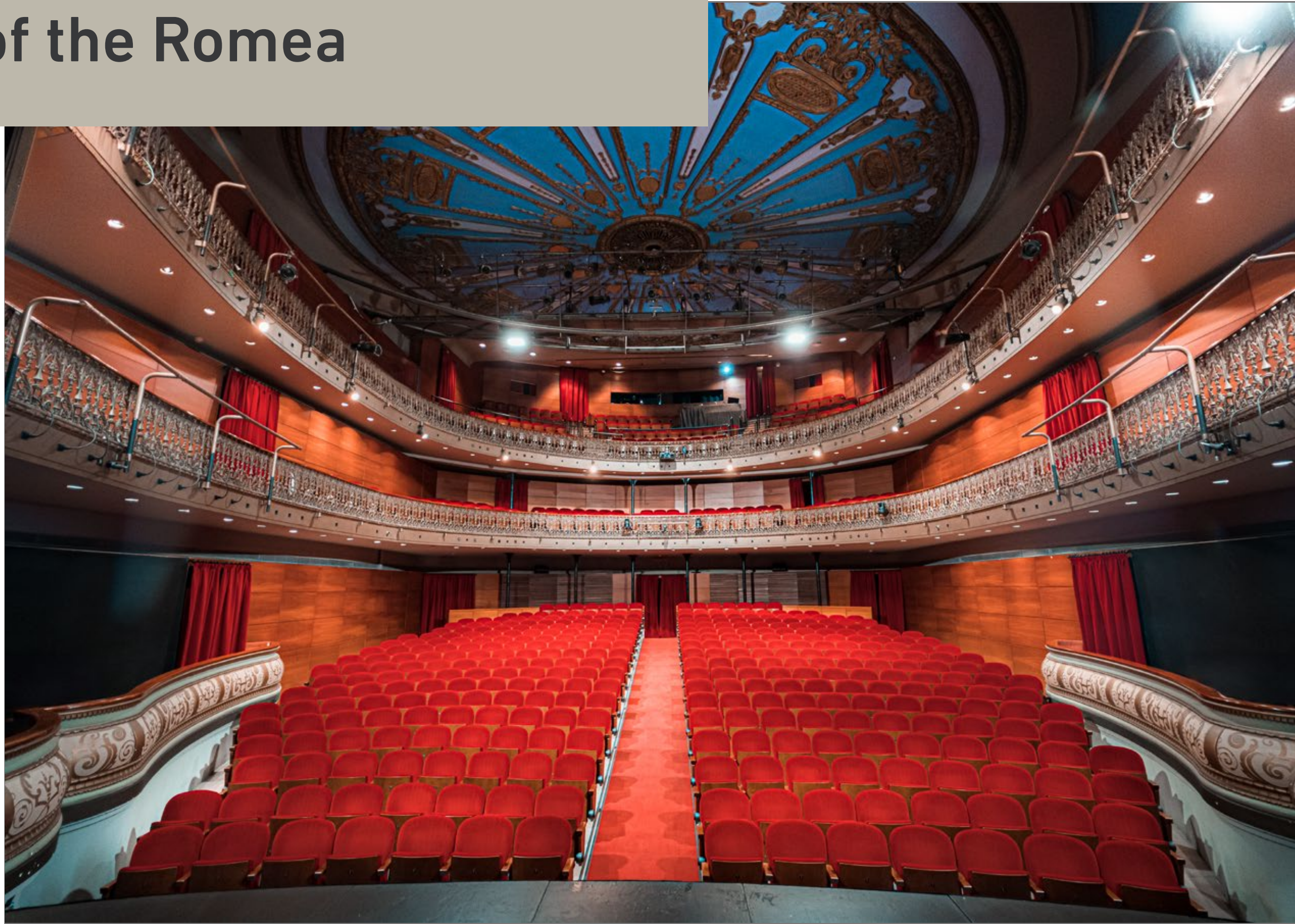
The new era of the Romea

Located in the heart of Barcelona's Raval district, Teatre Romea stands as one of the most iconic theatres in the Catalan scene. Built by an unknown architect on the site formerly occupied by the Casino d'Artesans and the society known as Tertúlia Progresista. Founded by Miquel Gasset i Bosch, it opened on November 18, 1863, catering to the petite bourgeoisie and the working classes. Initially used as a dance hall, its conversion to a theatre increased its capacity to about 600 people. In its early years, it was called Teatre de l'Hospital, due to its location on Hospital Street. Ten years later, it was renamed Teatre Romea in tribute to the popular Murcian actor Julián Romea Yanguas.

The theatre has undergone multiple renovations throughout its over 160-year history. The current appearance of the facade and auditorium is largely due to the 1913 refurbishment by an unknown author. The classical style facade features three horizontal sections and three vertical axes, highlighted by large arches and balconies flanked by columns. Moreover, a large glass marquee now welcomes spectators. Later, the 1964 refurbishment focused on the lobby and the ground floor, and the most significant recent update in the auditorium was in 1992, directed by architect Joan Rodón.

THE STALLS

Venturing inside the theatre and through the lobby, we arrive at the stalls, a vibrant space where theatre permeates every corner. Here, plays by prominent





Catalan literary and theatre figures such as Frederic Soler "Pitarra", Santiago Rusiñol, Àngel Guimerà, or Josep Maria de Sagarra have been performed. The seating arrangement is Italian style, inspired by the Farnese Theatre of Parma built in the 17th century. This Italian arrangement features the stage separated from the audience by a proscenium arch, adorned with floral motifs. The audience is distributed across the stalls and amphitheatres at various levels. The theatre's ceiling is striking, filled with detailed floral ornamentations, rosettes, and friezes, often enhanced with gilded and polychrome applications, reflecting the splendor of historic theatres like Romea. This theatre is exceptional: in 2001, Figueras participated in the redesign of its seating, introducing the Gaudí seat. Nearly 25 years later, these seats have been completely renewed with an improved replica of the

originals, giving the space a distinctive character. Moreover, the capacity has increased from 602 seats in 2001 to 625 in 2024, a modest change in number, but significant in terms of comfort and accessibility.

On this occasion, the theatre management chose to preserve the essence by conserving the seat design while updating the design and materials. The seat is upholstered in red velvet made from recycled material, moving away from the previous color scheme. Both the backrest and seat feature quilted stitching with vertical seams for a padded and comfortable look. The seat folds automatically via a mechanism operated by a double lateral hinge, which now includes a new safety return system. Both the seat and backrest are covered with beech wood, treated with flame-retardant varnish and finished in cherry color. The side panels



The Romea Theatre, before its recent renovation, was already equipped by Figueras in 2001.

are also made with the same finish, and except for the ends of each row, each armrest is shared by two seats. The seat is anchored to the floor through a central foot, which adjusts to the slope of the room. 54 of the seats in the stalls and 6 in the second amphitheater have been made easily removable to adapt to various configurations and needs.

COMPREHENSIVE RENOVATION PROJECT

The renovation of the Romea's stalls is also a paradigm shift in the projects developed by Figueras. Beyond the seats, Figueras was responsible for removing the existing seats, as well as designing and executing a waste management plan. Another task was the repair and leveling of the floor and the installation of its covering, along with the characteristic red carpet of the central aisle.

Additionally, a project for adjustable embedded floor LED signage was developed, not only improving visibility but also adding a contemporary touch to the classic environment of the theatre.

This theatre is not only a witness to the rich theatrical and architectural history of Barcelona but also a living space that continues to evolve to meet the needs of artists and the public. Managed for years by Grup Focus, with each refurbishment and update, Teatre Romea strengthens its commitment to preserving cultural heritage while adapting to entertainment industry technologies and trends. It is a brilliant example of how historical spaces can remain relevant and vibrant in the 21st century, maintaining their essence while modernizing to ensure an unforgettable experience for every spectator.

PROJECT DETAILS

Teatre Romea

Location: Barcelona, Spain

Capacity: 625

Product supplied: Gaudí seat

Year of development: 2023

Integral Project: Figueras Seating has also managed the removal of the old seats, the repair and renovation of the floor, and the installation of the central carpet

