

In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres, Belgium

Immersing visitors into the story of the Great War –
to ensure they never forget

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Piet Chielens,
Coordinator at the IFFM



All photos courtesy of Dish Design

Barco solution

- 1 x F35 WQXGA projector
- 2 x F32 projector
- 9 x F22 projector

Key benefits

- High image quality
- Reliability
- Wide range, to meet diverse needs
- Excellent aftersales support

The *In Flanders Fields Museum* in Ypres, Belgium, is a place where you feel, hear and understand the horrors of the First World War. Hundreds of thousands of people from around the world visit the museum every year to learn about the terrible years of battle in the Ypres region and hear how 'ordinary people' experienced the war.

When revamping the museum in 2012, the curators resolutely chose a narrative approach and interactive technology to enhance the visitor experience. Barco helped them achieve their goal: one Barco F35 and nine Barco F22 projectors help tell the story of the war that led to unprecedented destruction and loss of lives in the region of Ypres.

BARCO

Visibly yours



The In Flanders Fields Museum (IFFM) is located in the impressive Cloth Hall in Ypres, an important symbol of wartime hardship and later recovery. Originally established in the seventies, it was fully renovated in 2012 in preparation for the centenary of the Great World War. The IFFM team decided to tell the war story both through people and through today's war landscape, which is the last tangible witness of the war history. "We really wanted to create an intense experience and immerse our visitors in the grim daily realities of the Great War," says Piet Chielens, Coordinator at the IFFM. "Projection was, we thought, the best way to achieve that aim." The approach is clearly bearing fruit: massive crowds have been visiting the IFFM ever since its renovation.

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Museum system integrator Ocular won the tender for the audiovisual equipment. "As regards the projection specs, image quality but also reliability were key for the customer. After all, the museum is open ten hours a day and can't afford any downtime," says Nicolas Vanden Avenne, Ocular's Managing Director. "In addition, the projector had to be durable and future-proof, thus ensuring the best performance for many years on end." Ocular found the best projection solution in projectiondesign – now part of the Barco group. "Every projection in this museum is a technical challenge; there is not one projection on a flat surface," Vanden Avenne continued. "So we really needed a visualization partner who could help us engineer the complex projections. Moreover, the portfolio had to include a wide range of high-performance projectors to meet different projection needs."

Pushing the projection boundaries

Ocular took an integrated approach to the audiovisual set-up, pushing the boundaries of how projection can be used to engage, inform and tell a story. In the Belle Epoque exhibit, which narrates the years just before the war, two F32 projectors are used to project footage onto a curved structure that looks like a forest of wood panels. The First Battle exhibit features an F35 WQXGA projector that displays images from the ceiling onto a 3D scale model/map of the battlefields. In the Ypres Salient expo, visitors can watch the progress of the war as if they were travelling in a balloon high in the sky – an experience made possible by three F22s that project onto a 170-degree curved screen. The Third battle exhibit also features a curved screen onto which four F22 projectors provide symbolic visuals while nurses, doctors, soldiers and priests tell about this dreadful battle.

Projecting the Name List

On 6 August 2014, the IFFM launched a new project: until 11 November 2018, the names of the 600,000 people who died in the Great War are projected daily onto a wall. Ocular installed two extra F22 projectors to enable that projection. "People are really thrilled with the museum experience and that is largely due to the techniques we've chosen to present it," Chielens concluded.