

The Reykjavik Art Museum, Iceland



Discreet surveillance of the Icelandic masterpieces

The Reykjavik Art Museum is very proud of its large collection of irreplaceable art works and wishes to protect them in the best possible way. In 2009, the Museum decided to carry out a complete assessment of all security measures in order to optimise security in its exhibition spaces. The decision to install a new surveillance system was one of the top priorities.

“Our security system had not been updated since the opening in 1973 and was now very old. We had a 380 TV line analogue system which was actually sufficient to see what was happening at the museum on a day-to-day basis. But it was a big problem to retrieve images from the system if you wanted to identify a person because you needed a good, old floppy disc to do this,” explains Hafthor Yngvason who is director of the Reykjavik Art Museum.

Top-of-the-line system

The museum needed a good, basic surveillance system that was able to track all visitor movements – both inside the museum as well as the area surrounding it. But the museum’s interior design issues demanded some additional consideration, and the fact that two of the three

museum buildings are classified as protected buildings by The National Architectural Heritage Board was also a challenge in the selection of a new surveillance system.

“The museum could have decided just to update the existing solution, but they wanted to go all the way and get a top-of-the-line system that could meet all the specific requirements that had been detected during the preliminary security assessment. When I showed them the Mobotix solutions, they were very impressed with the usability and scalability of the Mobotix system,” recalls [title] Hafliði Jónsson from [Securitas].

“The key thing for us was to find a camera that would blend in with the existing interior of the protected buildings. We wanted a very discreet camera with a high resolution that could monitor every corner of the museum in order to protect even the smallest of our works of art,” clarifies Hafthor Yngvason.

The MOBOTIX Q24 surveillance camera was able to meet these requirements with its combination of award-winning design and unique hemispheric technology. The light fixtures in the museum create a visual spectacle in the ceiling that was

not to be disrupted by the installation of cameras.

“We were not allowed to attach the cameras to anything other than the concrete in the roof. So we made these poles with a platform underneath that we painted to match the surroundings and with them we were able to install the cameras very discreetly and not interfere with the architecture,” explains Hafliði Jónsson.

No blind spots

With the old surveillance solution it was not possible to cover the whole exhibition space and many blind spots were detected, but with the new MOBOTIX solution the two buildings are monitored in every corner with just 13 MOBOTIX Q24 cameras and one D24 at the entrance. The main exhibition space in one of the museums is curved in a U-shape, but it was possible to put up the Q24 cameras in the centre of the hall and monitor the whole area without blind spots thanks to the hemispheric technology.

“The exhibition spaces can be divided by temporary walls for different exhibitions which makes it very difficult for the security staff to keep an eye on everything that is going on in all spaces at the same time. With the new solution, they now



Discreet surveillance with MOBOTIX Q24

trust their colleagues in the surveillance room to have a perfect overview of all exhibitions and to keep them informed by radio if they need to change location. The security staff tell me that they feel more in control with the MOBOTIX system,” says Hafthor Yngvason.

A long, continuous process

The MOBOTIX solution at the museum is a stand-alone system, but there are many options available if the museum wishes to expand the system. The plan is continuously to follow developments in the security business and update the system when necessary in the future.

“The project of optimising our security functions has been a long process. The new digital solution from MOBOTIX has been an eye-opener for us and we are very satisfied with the system so far. It is a good feeling to feel sure that every wall space, every painting and every sculpture in the museum are now protected in the best possible way,” concludes Hafthor Yngvason.

About the museum

The Reykjavík Art Museum (RAM) was founded in 1973 and is today the largest visual art institution in Iceland. The museum is situated in three different locations in the city: the Kjarvalsstadir

exhibition hall devoted mainly to paintings and sculpture by well-established artists; Hafnarhus, located in downtown Reykjavik which serves as the museums institute of contemporary art, and the Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum which is dedicated to the work of Icelandic sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.

In its 3,000 sq. metres of exhibition space, RAM presents over 20 exhibitions annually, varying from large-scale, themed exhibitions to installations by international artists and projects by emerging Icelandic artists.

Retailer information: