



Custom arrangements can be created at the MGM Theater for special events, from traditional concerts to eSports gaming

The theater will be one of the central elements of the HKD26 billion integrated resort which MGM is set to open in the fourth quarter of 2017. MGM Resorts chairman and CEO Jim Murren made no attempt to hide his enthusiasm over the theater's innovative concept.

"I'm incredibly excited about this theater. I was just there two days ago with my friends and partners at Scéno Plus and the MGM Cotai team and I've never seen anything like it. And I have to say that I have been to just about every major theater in the world, including all of them here and I can say with great confidence that there is no theater like this," Murren said on Sunday in an interview with Macau Daily Times and Macao Daily.

"The magic of this theater is its organic, dynamic dimension, a combination of incredibly cutting edge technology with some of the most creative live performers in the world," he added.

MGM Resorts has extensive experience in developing entertainment facilities. In December, the company opened a USD1.4 billion resort casino at National Harbor in Maryland. That property has a 3,000-seat theater. When asked to compare it with the upcoming MGM Cotai Theater, Murren recognized the similarities, such as the cooperation with Scéno Plus, a performance arts and entertainment design firm. But there are also major differences.

"MGM is the largest entertainment company in the United States and we sold over eight million tickets last year alone to our theatrical events.

We have 13 theaters and our newest theater has been built outside of Washington D.C. We used Scéno Plus to help us with that theater and we are using them again here in Macau. The key differences between the two theaters are that we felt it was very important here to deliver something that no one has seen before. The theater at National Harbor is beautiful, it's technologically very advanced, but it's fairly traditional," Murren pointed out. The CEO describes the theater in Cotai as "the most dynamic theater in the world and the most flexible, designed not only to entertain but also to launch, whether it is a great brand, a cultural event or a standing show." Another difference is that the local theater will host three resident shows, whereas at National Harbor there are none.



The theater can be transformed into a nightclub

In a press release issued yesterday, MGM China disclosed details on the features of its Cotai Theater. One of the most impressive is the 900-square-metre 4K (or ultra HD) LED screen, which is the size of three tennis courts combined. The ultra-high-resolution live video system will be able to capture the audience's reaction and virtually reflect it as life size onto the LED wall, giving the public an impression of looking into a mirror. According to the information disclosed by MGM, "upon completion, the MGM Theater will be home to the world's largest indoor LED screen."

Over two years in the making, the theater can seat up to 2,000 people in more than 10 different configurations, which, according to Murren, allows it "to create almost instantly 10 different theaters within one environment."

Attention has been given to detail. The reconfigurable seating was developed by GALA Systems, a manufacturer of understage equipment, and the seats are designed and manufactured by Poltrona Frau, an Italian furniture maker which is also the seat maker for Ferrari cars.

Questioned about the investment made in the theater, Murren noted that the largest investment ever made by MGM Resorts in a theater was previously USD250 million. In Cotai, they will have spent even more, making it "the largest investment of time and money we have ever made in a theater."

The MGM Resorts CEO recalled how his vision for the theater started to unfold: "When our friends at Scéno Plus came to me and my team, we gave them a very audacious mission. We wanted to see what is possible in the world. They gave us dozens of ideas that would create the most innovative stage, the most innovative video experience, the most diverse in terms of seating configuration and we said we want it all. They were floored, they couldn't believe we would say that. They were hoping that we could pick two or three of these great advances and we said that is not good enough for Macau."

The theater will be home to three resident shows with two being launched first, "The Experience" and "Destiny." Tailored to Macau, "The Experience" will be a celebration of the city's history. "It will begin with Macau's ancient routes, symbolizing

the lotus flower and take the guests of the theater through a journey of Macau right to present day. It is also a celebration of the technology itself of the theater," said Murren. "Destiny" is an immersive theatrical production that is more interactive than a traditional theatrical performance. "We would liken it to a game show or an adventure video experience where the audience plays a very important role," he added.

Murren's plan is "to weave the resident shows into a one-of-a-kind special entertainment" which will be "very different, much more rich from an intellectual and creative content perspective."

"We have learned around the world that guests are earning for experiences and experimental opportunities. They are no longer simply interested in taking a picture next to a monument but experiencing something unique," he said.

The entire Cotai resort will create those experiences for visitors and locals alike and the theater will be an excellent way to demonstrate that," Murren concluded.