

The Public, the Concert Hall and the Theater

by William Rawn, FAIA

Based on a lecture given at the National Building Museum, Washington D.C.
on January 16, 2002





Music Center at Strathmore

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One cannot address the issue of performance space without drawing upon the wisdom of Shakespeare, whose plays have inspired and graced the stages of the most splendid — and the most makeshift — performance spaces throughout the world:

As in a theater, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious.

—From Act 5 of Richard II

There is one actor whose role need never be tedious, who does not need to speak in order to move his audience: that is the space itself. The architect is always aware that “after the well-graced actor leaves the stage,” and the house lights begin to rise, the eyes of men and women come to rest on their architectural surroundings.

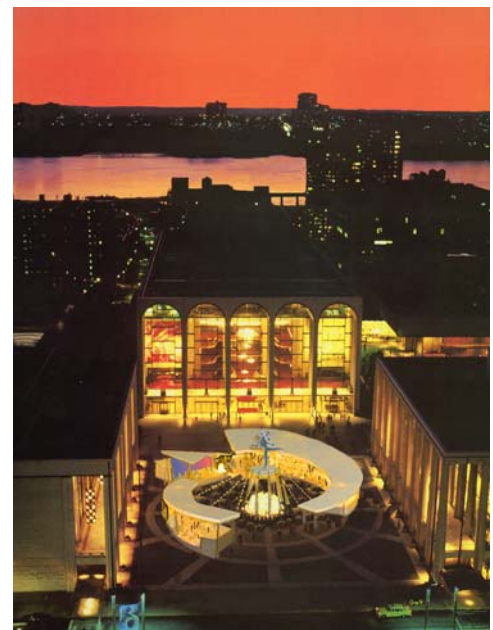
This is indeed a humbling reality for the architect.

Integral to the architectural surround is the sense of community, formed between the audience and performers or between audience member and audience member — all are brought together by a shared love for music and the stage. It is the architect’s job to create a space that will enhance this experience to its fullest. For over 20 years, we have focused on projects in the public realm: creating, strengthening, and celebrating the sense of community in our culture. At a deeper level, I would like to think our practice has been simultaneously celebrating issues of democracy, meritocracy, opportunity and accessibility. I see our work as the search for a rigorous and sensitive design with the goal of making concert halls and theaters as accessible and democratic as any other buildings in our culture without sacrificing any element of excellence.

In their response to issues of the public realm and issues of democracy and accessibility, however, concert halls and theaters are particularly difficult buildings in our culture.



The Music Center at Strathmore



The Main Plaza at Lincoln Center (proposed)

America's response to the arts is exceedingly complicated. The pursuit of excellence is a strong American value. The avoidance of elitism is an equally strong value. As everyone strives for excellence in his or her own way, America is wary of those who consider themselves to have surpassed all others; one wishes for excellence without arrogance. The cultural battles over the National Endowment of the Arts serves as a reminder of how difficult it is to find the balance between excellence and American populism. Our effort on all our architectural projects is to try to find that appropriate balance. These issues are heightened when public financial support is required. At the dawn of this new

and siting of the building is a major component. The nature of the performance space is important; its lobby and entrance is important, too. The imagery of the building is critical.

TO DESIGN THE CONCERT HALL AND THEATER IN AMERICA

Given the special character of live performance, to design a concert hall or theater in America is to confront five important design dilemmas: the dynamic connections between the performance space and the outside world, intimacy



The Music Center at Strathmore



Seiji Ozawa Hall



Seiji Ozawa Hall

century, the technical complexities of concert halls and theaters mean that their costs are considerable. As a result, most of them require significant public funding. Lincoln Center has long been in negotiations with New York City and State to fund its renovations. Kimmel Center, newly opened in Philadelphia, had substantial city and state support for its construction. Strathmore Hall, our performing arts building in Bethesda, MD, will be funded 50% by the State of Maryland and 50% by Montgomery County, making it totally publicly-supported. With such a financial stake, the public rightfully demands that the building provide a direct response to issues of the public realm, to issues of democracy and accessibility.

How do these values of the public realm play themselves out in a performance facility? The location

of the performance space, acoustics, size of the performance building, and the design of the lobby.

- **The dynamic connections between a performance space and the outside world.**

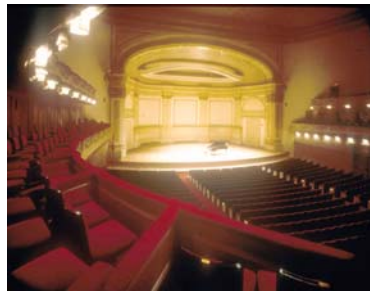
Theaters seek to be places of imagination and suspended disbelief. Concert halls are seen as places of contemplation and repose. Both are considered by many Americans as spaces where one can withdraw from the hurly-burly of the real world. Yet when you talk with a contemporary theater director, writer, or composer, they often want as direct an encounter and relationship with that real world as possible. This dilemma need not remain unresolved. Theaters and concert halls can be both a part of the real world as well as being a welcome respite from it.

- **Intimacy of the performance space.** There are two fundamental relationships at work in concert halls and theaters: the dynamic between audience and performer, and the dynamic between audience member and audience member. For the first relationship, one must design the Hall to get people as close to the stage as possible. In a Concert Hall, one has the opportunity to surround the stage with audience, in balconies or other configurations. The sense of audience members being close, and sometimes at the same level as the stage, forges a close connection with performer. The second relationship (audience member to

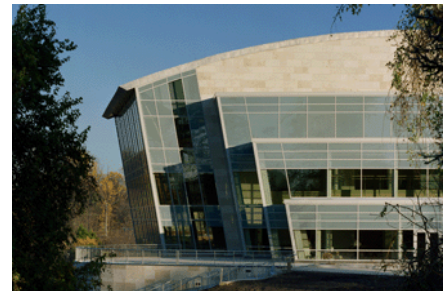
the stage is a fundamental challenge — one that has been addressed in different ways over the past 100 years. The acoustic imperatives of concert halls in late 19th century Europe, in Leipzig and later Vienna, led to the development of the “shoebox” form. This design has provided halls with superb acoustics. In the early-1900’s, both the Boston Symphony Hall and New York City’s Carnegie Hall were built, albeit with two distinctly different shapes. Symphony Hall, designed by Charles McKim and the great Harvard physicist Walter Sabine, re-created the classic shoebox form. On the contrary, Carnegie Hall was a fan-shaped hall that allowed more of



Boston Symphony Hall



Carnegie Hall



The Music Center at Strathmore

audience member) is equally important. Part of the special quality of live performance is sharing that experience with other people. The design of the halls should allow you to see your fellow audience, see their faces, or as Theatre Projects Consultants observes, “see the whites of their eyes,” and not merely the back of their heads. In this way, a dynamic tension is created with fellow audience members that can be palpable and a powerfully positive experience.

the audience to get closer to the stage. While Carnegie Hall has good acoustics, unfortunately many of the later fan-shaped halls suffered from very poor acoustics. Interestingly, the choice of shape of the hall (box vs. fan) reflects not only acoustics but intimacy between audience members (“seeing the whites of their eyes”): the shoebox form with its side balconies and side loges at orchestra level often creates a stronger human connection than a fan shaped hall.

- **Acoustics.** The concert hall — and to a different extent the theater — have acoustic requirements that obviously cannot be ignored. For the Concert Hall, balancing superior acoustics with the American pragmatic desire for the audience to be as close as possible to

- **Size of a performance building.** Concert halls and theaters have become very large. Theaters often have fly towers that are 80-foot high; concert halls usually need 65- to 70-foot high roofs to ensure sufficient acoustic volume. Back of the house spaces have expanded to

accommodate increasingly complex technologies. Many such buildings are now including educational spaces (classrooms) and numerous rehearsal spaces. These trends raise the direct architectural challenge of how to fit this amount of volume on a site, and how to organize such a large building mass. One can either accept and celebrate the large size in a singular form, or break it up into separate pieces creating a “village” of smaller forms.

- **Design of the lobby.** When confined by limited resources, it is increasingly difficult to

foreboding from a distance. Viewed from the inside in daytime, the glass can frame wonderful views of the landscape or city, while at nighttime the glass can form a gloomy black wall. Being thoughtful about these inside/outside, daytime/nighttime issues can engage the public realm and welcome a broader public to a cultural building.

EUROPEAN PRECEDENTS

In the 18th century, concerts began to be performed in the private rooms of the grand houses of the very wealthy. Even today, Concert Halls



North Lobby at the Music Center at Strathmore



'62 Center for Theatre and Dance at Williams College (under construction)



Babson College Theater and Campus Center

afford building lobbies that remain unused all day except during a performance. The architect is increasingly required to design a lobby that can have other uses at other times of the day. The design of a lobby has a major impact on the quality of “community” generated by a facility. The use of glass is also an issue. Today a lobby can have a transparency to emphasize its public, open and accessible qualities, or it can be left more enclosed like traditional lobbies of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Our general work has explored ways of celebrating transparency and openness through the careful use of glass: viewed from the outside at night, a glass wall to a lobby appears brightly lit, exciting, and full of life, while during the day, unless carefully designed, the glass can look black and

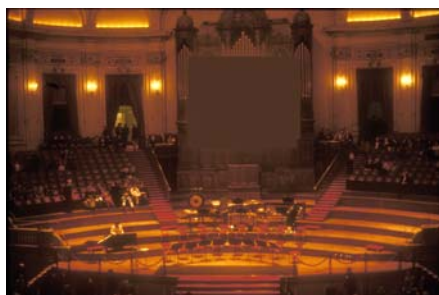
reflect that history. In the mid-19th century, some very large concert halls were built; some like the Crystal Palace had great musical extravaganzas. Of course, churches had also always been more public venues for music. Classical music has also had a historic connection to outdoor settings, often being played outdoors in the gardens of the rich. Theater, on the other hand, evolved from a totally different set of cultural experiences. It is from the street, definitely and defiantly “of” the city: put up four poles and a canvas awning and one can perform. As such, theater became confrontational, often revolutionary. While music had both a private and public (spiritual) roots, theater came from a very public venue. Today we have these two performing art forms, developed from two different cultural traditions.

To understand the evolution of the Concert Hall, in 1989, following our selection by the Boston Symphony Orchestra to design a new Concert Hall at Tanglewood, I went to Europe to look at fourteen concert halls, to understand their spatial and organizational qualities. Larry Kirkegaard, our acoustician and a natural-born teacher, met me on successive weekends in Amsterdam and Vienna. He showed me specifically what made the shoebox shaped halls acoustically so extraordinary. I drew, documented, and measured these halls. More important I “soaked in” the architectural qualities of these halls. The spatial and human qualities were the focus of my study. Following are some

a quality about European venue design that began to fascinate me.

At the **Grosser Tonhalle** in Zurich, a rather grand space with a classic shoebox shape, a smaller number of people inhabit the balconies overlooking the sides and rear of the stage. **The Stadt-Casino in Basel**, a very undecorated hall, in a very Calvinist city, feels particularly intimate given its size (1,448 seats).

The **Schauspielhaus in Berlin**, in a Karl Friedrich Schinkel-designed theater building that had been bombed in World War II, was transformed in



Concertgebouw, Amsterdam



Vredenburg Music Center, Utrecht



Berlin's Philharmonie Hall

highlights from that trip, in the order that I experienced them:

At the **Concertgebouw in Amsterdam**, a shoebox hall in a surprisingly squarish-shaped room, the audience seating literally steps down a dozen rows directly onto the stage behind the orchestra. Audience and performer are inextricably connected.

At the **Vredenburg Music Center in Utrecht, Netherlands**, Herman Hertzberger, a noted contemporary architect, designed the concert hall along the main street of the city literally within a shopping mall. He wanted the hall to feel as closely connected to the city as possible. Consistent with this philosophy, the audience surrounds the stage,

1983 by the East Germans into a very fine concert hall acoustically. Bernstein first conducted there on Christmas Day, 1989, after the Berlin Wall came down, and found it to be one of the finest European halls. Henry Kraut in Bernstein's office immediately called to urge me to visit the Hall.

Hans Scharoun's **Philharmonie in West Berlin** immediately has a very public quality, both in the design of the hall and in the lobby with its cascading stairs stepping down from many directions. Though not a traditional shoebox-shaped hall, by most accounts it has excellent acoustics and the audience completely surrounds the stage. Nearly 30% of the audience actually sits “behind” the orchestra. Here Scharoun's big side walls act almost like the side walls of a shoebox-shaped hall.

(He likened these to the hillside vineyard walls of Italy.)

Aldeburgh is a primeval fishing town north of London on the North Sea. Home of Benjamin Britten's festival, **Maltings Concert Hall** has been placed in a renovated beer production building. In addition to its modest industrial ancestry, the theater has an informal, accessible warmth due to the exposed brick walls. The elegant contemporary architectural detailing gives it sophistication. It fits very well into its fishing town setting.



Maltings Concert Hall

Often cited as the greatest concert hall, the **Musikvereinssaal in Vienna**, with 1,680 seats, is a tall and very narrow space. The strong shoebox shape and the very high ceilings are notable. The loge boxes in the orchestra level provide an additional embracing element not found in any other halls I visited: you see the “whites of their eyes” at the main level of the Hall. In addition, the audience in the loge boxes is at the same height as the musicians on the stage, further strengthening a connection of performer and audience. I sat in a loge box during my first concert there; it was an absolutely memorable experience. Notable, too, is the natural light in the Hall. The conventional wisdom that concert halls cannot have natural light was debunked here. One of course never forgets the caryatids which appear to be the columns that are holding up the

side balconies. The half-columns holding up the balconies at Ozawa Hall is a nod to the settled quality created by this “exposed structure” for the balconies.

Returning to the United States, one must pay homage to **Symphony Hall in Boston**, by most accounts the hall with the greatest acoustics in this country. It is a shoebox-shaped hall but the audience in the side balconies does not come anywhere near the stage like these other European halls. In fact, the stage is set behind a proscenium opening. There are 2,625 seats. It is extraordinary that Charles McKim, the architect, and Walter Sabine, the



Musikvereinssaal, Vienna



Musikvereinssaal

Harvard physicist/acoustician, could achieve such great acoustics in such a large space. This is an example, if there ever is one, of an admirably close collaboration of architect and acoustician.

SEIJI OZAWA HALL AT TANGLEWOOD

Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was the first concert hall we had ever designed. I was captivated with the Boston Symphony Hall, where the two side wall balconies are filled with people. From an orchestra level seat you can literally see the whites of the eyes of people to the left and the right of you. One is always conscious of the shared experience in the room. We carried that a step further in Ozawa Hall.

In our design of Ozawa Hall we considered essential questions of democracy and accessibility as well as the acoustics. Tanglewood is an extraordinary site in the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts. When we built this, we knew on a weekday that a family in a Winnebago from the middle of Kansas or a CEO of a Fortune 500 company could arrive and walk around the grounds for free, hear master classes being taught by some of the world's greatest musicians, and go to concerts and sit on the lawn for very little money. Tanglewood also houses a major music school educating young adults and young professionals. The educational component

setting where the tallest building was just less than 35 feet. Our idea was to make the roof curve, to create a basilica-shaped building with the "side aisles", or lobbies, stepping down to the ground. We have a barn door that opens up to lawn seating. That barn door is often closed for more intimate performances and for commercial recordings. Everywhere in the building we tried to emphasize the democratic qualities of the space: everyone is welcome, everyone can see in. The interior space was meant to emulate the ideas and values of a New England meetinghouse. Others have seen diverse references in it, but philosophically we were trying to capture that fundamental New England simplicity



Seiji Ozawa Hall



Seiji Ozawa Hall



Seiji Ozawa Hall

of the Music Center at Strathmore will follow this same tradition.

Matching the acoustics of the great halls of Vienna, Amsterdam, and Boston was an exciting challenge. The acoustical requirements for the hall were critical, particularly for the students, who had to be able to hear themselves and their colleagues as clearly and vividly as possible. We were thrilled when Leo Beranek named Ozawa Hall as the 13th best concert hall in the world in terms of acoustics, among the top 4 halls constructed in the United States, and among the top 4 halls in the world built in the past 50 years.

For the building's exterior form, we chose a roof form that emulated the soft hills of Stockbridge Bowl. We had to make a 65-foot high roof fit into a

in an inventive way. And what is more democratic than a New England meeting house? There is a sense that the audience and the performers are all in a room together, a single room for music, everyone coming together for an evening of music. It is not about us and them; not about audience and performer; it is about everyone together. Another issue at Ozawa Hall was the openness and transparency of the building. We were successful: from every seat in the hall you can see green trees or lawn. Even the custom-fabricated teak chairs show that one can bring rigor to a design that is accessible to a wide range of people.

I hope this sense of openness captures the goals of democracy and accessibility. In the end it is really wonderful to see classes being taught and

students leaning over the balcony, watching a new conductor. That is what the building is all about.

Note: Seiji Ozawa Hall received an AIA National Honor Award for Architecture in 1995, an AIA National Honor Award for Interior Design in 2000, and was listed as the 13th best concert hall in the world by Leo Beranek in Concert Halls and Opera Houses.

THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE

Rockville Pike is a major commercial boulevard, framed for many miles by retail and commercial office spaces. It is also the front door to **The Music Center at Strathmore**, the second home of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and a major public educational facility for all of Montgomery County (950,000 people). At this one point on the Pike, instead of parking lots and strip malls, you see a rolling hillside, a wonderful landscape, and an iconic manor house sitting high on a hill overlooking the Pike. Over the hill, away from the Pike, is a bucolic site that has presented an intriguing opportunity, an opportunity

augmented by a set of extraordinary public political decisions.

The Music Center at Strathmore celebrates its important cultural and civic role both by its building form and by its memorable connection to an extraordinary park-like setting. The undulating roof form of the building responds to the rolling hills of the site. Bold glass walls link the main Concert Hall Lobby to this landscape. The glass Promenade leading to the Concert Hall with its café opens to special views of the green lawns at numerous locations.

Working with acoustician Larry Kirkegaard and theater consultant Theatre Projects Consultants, we designed the building to celebrate music spaces first and foremost. The **Concert Hall's** curved roof form identifies this music space with its high ceiling in the rear sloping down to the lower ceiling above the stage. The Education Wing with its large rehearsal spaces is also identified by another curved roof form. The overall undulating roof then connects these two separated forms. Large glass walls highlight the many nighttime activities of the building in brilliant light. The building's



The Music Center at Strathmore

stone façade accentuates the civic importance of the building for the County while its warm color emphasizes its connection to the landscape.

Highlights include:

1. The sheer and taut quality of the stone walls establishes a clear and primary rectilinear order for the building. The curved roof reinforces the tautness of these forms.
2. The singular exception to purity of this organization of straight wall and

indeed creating a “**Community of Music.**” Here again the audience can see the whites of the eyes of the people around, as the seating curves around the walls all the way to behind the stage. This area behind the stage is public seating except during a choral performance. Within the hall, you can see all the curvilinear nature of the space. However, this facility is still a shoebox shaped hall, as all the undulating material is acoustically transparent. The sound passes through the bronze mesh and wood grills and is reflected back out into the Hall. It comes back out in a way that is analogous to the Boston Symphony Hall or Seiji Ozawa Hall. There are two important points about the Hall’s interior:



Exterior View of the Music Center at Strathmore



The Music Center at Strathmore

undulating roof is the curving form of the Promenade and Entry, which responds to the steep topography of the site.

3. Careful use of clear and fritted glass allows the large expanses of glass to become a dynamic design element, both for daytime and nighttime conditions and for views from outside and from inside.

The interior of the Hall has one primary architectural design goal: to create a memorable spatial intimacy between audience and performer,

1. The Hall, as a “Room for Music,” is marked by several design features: Very tall and sheer side walls accentuate the spatial tautness of the Concert Hall. These parallel side walls dominate the space and accentuate the acoustic energy of the room.
2. A constant visual tonality is created by the close color connections between the red birch wood walls, red birch floors and the bronze mesh that dominate the Hall. This tonality creates a strong sense of “vessel” for the room.

The **Education Wing** has its own soaring curved roof and its prominent position on the street frontage on Tuckerman Road, a location which says to the world, "this is a very important part of the building." Borrowing from major education/concert venues like Tanglewood, (Boston Symphony) and Ravinia (Chicago Symphony), the intense activities of the Educational Wing can help to influence the quality of performance in the Hall and help to generate the sense of broad community involvement that is so important to this building. With four expansive and dramatic rehearsal spaces, (two have 40-foot high ceilings) and a host of other practice spaces connecting easily to the Concert Hall, the

of Baltimore Symphony saw how Baltimore and Montgomery County could join forces with the state of Maryland to make this building possible. Chuck Lyons guided these forces at Strathmore with his colleagues Alan Mowbray, David Phillips and the late Mario Loiederman. Grimm + Parker Architects has assisted our office, as Associate Architects, throughout the project.

RELATED PROJECTS

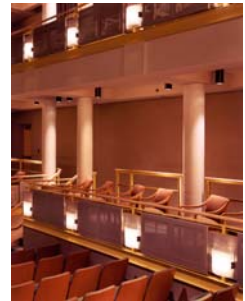
Over the past ten years, our office has designed a number of Music and Theater spaces which have influenced (and have been influenced by) the



'62 Center for Theatre and Dance at Williams College
(under construction)



Sorenson Theater at Babson College



Education Wing is given a prominence that is fundamental to its role as an educational focus for all the citizens of Montgomery County.

Eliot Pfanstiehl is the visionary and impresario of Strathmore who had the wisdom to bring an educational center into the project; he foresaw the interaction between the excellence of the Hall and the accessibility of the educational program to school children of Montgomery County. Douglas Duncan, the County Executive, has long been committed to this project, insisting on the proper balance of populism (the educational vision) and excellence (quality of design, quality of materials). He has witnessed so many counties falling head over heels to build football stadiums; he understood the importance of building a premier cultural facility. John Gidwitz and Buddy Zamoiski

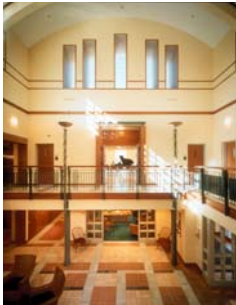
design of Strathmore Hall. Most are indoor; a few are outdoor. All deal directly with issues of the public realm, issues of democracy and accessibility.

The new **'62 Center for Theater and Dance at Williams College** will serve the College community and the Williamstown Theater Festival and will include four major venues: a 550-seat main Stage, a 250-seat Flexible Thrust Stage Theater, a 200-seat highly flexible Studio Theater, and a very large Dance Rehearsal space. Strategically sited along a major student pedestrian way, the Center incorporates an existing student pathway between a popular dining facility and the rest of campus, providing a pathway which allows for student interaction with the performing arts on a daily basis. Student lounges on multiple levels have been located to promote interaction, team

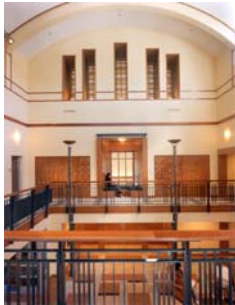
building and spirit within the performing arts community. *(Opening in 2005)*

The Sorenson Theater brings performance into a broader public realm at **Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts**. As part of a student center, the Theater itself is an exceedingly intimate space for 450 people and is part of the daily life of the campus, just as central as the post office, the dining facilities, and the campus bookstore. Designed with wraparound balconies and side loge box seating, the Theater captures and maximizes the immediacy of live performance and the connection between audience member and

room. Instead what we want to encourage and celebrate is their work in ensemble, whether it's with two students or four other students, or a whole orchestra of 65 or 70 students." We placed the orchestra space in the front of the building and made the lobby into active space, central to the broader life of the buildings and the campus to celebrate ensemble and to affirm Kendra's special understanding of the connection between music and architecture. *(Opened in 1995; 1995 Honor Award, New York Chapter, AIA)*



Music Building at Phillips Exeter Academy



Amphitheatre, Cary, N.C.



audience member. *(Opened in 1997; 2000 Honor Award in New Architecture, United States Institute for Theatre Technology)*

The Forrestal-Bowld Music Building at Phillips Exeter Academy, a remarkable preparatory school in New Hampshire, is located on the major quad directly across from Louis Kahn's famous library. To fit the building into the life of the campus was challenging. In one of my most poignant moments with a client, Kendra O'Donnell, the principal, said to me when we considered celebrating the student in his or her own practice room, (much like Kahn did with his carrels at the library) "Look Bill, these fourteen- year olds are wonderfully accomplished musicians. We do not need to celebrate their accomplishments in the practice

The Koka Booth Amphitheatre at Regency Park in Cary, North Carolina, serves a thriving suburb of Raleigh that has grown from 5,000 people to 85,000 people in 15 years. A city of newcomers, it is beginning to create its own special civic life. The Pavilion, one of the summer homes for the North Carolina Symphony was designed to be both an important civic and cultural space for Cary. Located on a lake, designed for orchestra, dance and theater, the Pavilion joins with an arc-shaped building to create a large space able to hold 10,000 people. For example, it is the town's gathering space on the Fourth of July. The glass-roofed Pavilion is unlike most outdoor facilities, whose solid canopies create dark spaces during the day and, as I like to say, "gather leaves and old coffee cups." Our glass roof positively glows at night; and in the daytime is filled with light.

(Opened in 2001; 2001 Honor Award in Architecture, New England Chapter, AIA)

Boardinghouse Park in Lowell, Massachusetts is similar in its civic goal. It is a feasible performance space located on a canal in the middle of an historic mill town. Built for the national Park Service, this performance pavilion was also designed to be a marketplace and a garden pavilion that could be used in many ways throughout the work week. We were very proud that Paul Tsongas, who grew up in Lowell, chose this place to first announce his candidacy for President in 1992: the idea of a performing arts venue playing

In Sonoma County, California, adjacent to the Sonoma State University campus near Santa Rosa, the **Sonoma County Concert Hall** will be a year-round 1,400-seat concert hall and will serve as the home for the Santa Rosa Symphony as well as the University's Music Department. A year-round facility, the rear doors open to a 3,000-10,000 seat lawn audience area. Enclosed, used year-round it reflects the California connection of inside to outside with glass walls dominating its eastern side (with views to the rural landscape of the Sonoma hills) and uses the four-sided entry courtyard as the central gathering space for the large complex.



Performance Structure at Lincoln Center Main Plaza (proposed)



Sonoma County Concert Hall



Community Performing Arts Center at Seaside (proposed)

an important civic role is what we care so much about.

The Performance Structure at the main plaza at Lincoln Center allows the fountain plaza to convert to performance space during the summer. We designed the necessary theater facilities, including stage, canopy, seats, ticket booth, and cafe/bar, to be movable, flexible, demountable, and transportable. The Plaza makes important civic connections to the City and to the constituent parts of Lincoln Center, giving focus to outdoor festivities within an urban space. Opening to the Broadway and Columbus Avenue entrance, the orientation of the Plaza stage invites visitors from the City into Plaza activities and addresses the largest audience area available within the confines of the Plaza.

The Community Performing Arts Center at Seaside, a large outdoor performance venue in the renowned "New Urbanist" Town of Seaside, Florida, will comprise a 300-seat studio theater which opens onto a performance porch for large outdoor concerts on "The Lyceum's" central lawn. "The Performance Porch" provides a first-rate stage for music, theater, lyric opera and film, and includes the construction of adjacent two-story arcades. The design of the Performing Arts Center reflects the spirit of democracy engrained in the original Town of Seaside by providing it with several courtyards and numerous educational and public buildings along both sides of the Lawn, including offices, classrooms, and housing for performers. When constructed, the project will

complete the central lawn of the town's arts and educational precinct.

This conceptual design for a new **Arts Precinct at the University of Virginia** creates a civic space analogous to but different from Jefferson's Lawn with five arts buildings open to a major hillside green. These buildings include a 1,500-seat Performing Arts Center, a new Music Building with a 300-seat Recital Hall, a 300-seat Thrust Stage Theater, and a new Arts Library. The Hall will define a major entry to UVA's main grounds, while the Music Building will anchor a corner of a New Arts Precinct on Carr's Hill. The Arts Library

a Dance Rehearsal Room, a Theater Rehearsal Room, three Sectional Breakout Rooms, and ancillary "back of house" spaces.

* * *

In addressing issues of democracy and accessibility, these concert halls and theaters share a focus on the public realm. Whether at Ozawa Hall, where rigorous design was matched by an attention to the intimacy and informality of Tanglewood's setting, or Williams College, whose architecture encourages student interaction with the arts on a daily basis, the goal is the same: to create and celebrate the sense of community in our culture. The Music



Boardinghouse Park, Lowell



UVA Arts Precinct Master Plan



Music and Theater Arts Teaching Laboratory at MIT (proposed)

will serve as an intellectual centerpiece to the Arts Precinct, housing stack spaces, individual and group reading spaces, and library staff work areas.

The **Music and Theater Arts Teaching Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology** will contain three main teaching spaces which will strengthen the collaboration between the Music Department and the Theater Arts Department: a Choral Rehearsal Room, a Black Box Theater, and an Instrumental Rehearsal Room. Located prominently on Massachusetts Avenue, the buildings are designed at an urban scale that interacts with the city. Large, transparent walls and luminous windows bring creative energy to the street, and celebrate the teaching spaces as places of human gathering. The building will also contain

Center at Strathmore reinforces this notion through its memorable spatial intimacy between audience and performer. Our goal, from a cultural and civic standpoint, is a hall capable of conveying every subtle nuance of performance expression while feeling accessible and open to all. This should indeed be the central goal of any Concert Hall or Theater.

