Practice Makes Perfect
Architecture for the Performing Arts
Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture
Hal H. Hayes, AIA, Studio Professor, 48|413|513, Spring 2014
Advanced Synthesis / Comprehensive Design Studio
Theater design embodies the study of occupancy and human needs in fundamental ways. The continuing evolution of the building typology from its roots in early Greek tragedy through Elizabethan drama to modern interpretive and alternative performance is driven by the changing character, needs and desires of the diverse groups of occupants, cultural evolution and technological developments. The modern theater is among the most flexible and innovative building typology of contemporary architectural theory, design & practice.

Activity results from the movement of occupants through space and the occupants’ experience of changes occurring in the spaces they inhabit. By studying, understanding and interpreting those changes, student architects will learn to conceive and shape spaces to meaningfully and effectively serve, support and transform the occupants’ experience.

Site & Program are to be determined, but will be based on a real current project for a theater in an urban center.

CMU’s Theater Architecture Program, an inter-disciplinary collaboration of the Schools of Architecture and Drama, is an intensive semester comprised of a coordinated design studio in Architecture, a theater design seminar in Drama and Architecture, live performance attendance, venue research, tours and analysis, and meetings with professionals involved in the design, construction, operation and production of theaters. Student-conducted original and secondary research into the history and development of theater building typology, contemporary best practices and future trends of theater architecture forms a foundation for the programming, planning and design of a theater building based on a real project and includes the active participation of the theater’s artistic and administrative leadership, the professional design team engaged in the project, public officials and potential users of the proposed facility.

Co-Requisite. 48:408, Theater Design for Architecture & Drama. It is a 6-unit first-half mini, on Tuesday & Thursday from 1:30-2:50pm including School of Drama students.
**Assignment 1; 1/3 Sketch Problem**

### Schedule
- **M 1/13** Assigned
- **T 1/14** Review Part 1 in 48:408
- **W 1/15** Submit Part 2 & Studio Pinup Review

### Assignment
**Program**
250-seat theater for live performance

**Structure**
- 3 x 3, 9-square grid, 30’ x 40’ bays
- Height: 1 bay @ 90’, 3 bays @ 60’, remainder @ 30’

**Scale**
1/16” = 1’

### Products
- Part 1; prepare three plan alternatives showing all major program areas to review in co-requisite class tomorrow.
- Part 2; develop the best one in plan, section and front elevation for review in studio on Wednesday

### Learning Goals
This introductory assignment is intended to both evaluate and expand each student’s abilities and skills in several areas that will be key to your efforts throughout the Occupancy studio;

- Demonstrate your level of understanding of the building type with a generic site, eliminating all but the most basic spatial constraints.
- Ability to extrapolate a simple but complete building program and pre-concept alternatives from a minimum amount of information on the function.
- Understanding of additional information from expert reviewers, and
- Respond by quickly evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of those alternatives and selecting a preferred direction.
ASSIGNMENT 2; SITE ANALYSIS & SITE MODEL

LEARNING GOALS
This assignment is to study the site in detail and develop a deep understanding of it, both physically and socially. You will perform the study in teams, however you are each individually responsible for mastering the whole body of material.

SCHEDULE
W 1/15 Assigned
F 1/17 Review; Models Scope & Analysis Outline
W 1/22 Preliminary Pinup Review
F 1/24 Submit Site Analysis Final Draft & Digital Model
M 1/27 Submit Physical Site Models
W 3/19 Submit Site Analysis w/ Field Trip Addenda

PROJECT MANAGER
Peter Salim

METHODOLOGY & PRODUCTS
• Digital Model. Five-block radius minimum with Civic Center buildings modeled in detail.
• Physical Models. Determine materials, scale and scope of area covered, for two site models;
  o Context, showing adjacent blocks & buildings at small scale
  o Site, showing site and Davies Hall exterior & interior
• Site Analysis. Analyze the physical and virtual site, including Architectural Context, Environment, Culture, History, Economics, etc. and document your findings. The final product is to be incorporated into a template that will be used for the remaining assignments and a final studio report that will be published and distributed to our patron & client.
ASSIGNMENT 3; PRECEDENTS

LEARNING GOALS
One of the most effective ways to understand a building type is to research other similar buildings. Even experienced specialists must constantly keep abreast of new developments in the field and their competitors’ successes, innovations and failures. Theaters are a well-established typology and there are many similar precedents.

METHODOLOGY
Concept Analysis of your precedent. Produce base drawings of the typical cross section, lobby & stage level(s) with consistent graphics & common scale to fit on tabloid-size paper. Diagram sketches to document your understanding of the design concept.

Functional & Systems Analysis of your precedent. Diagram/sketch overlay the key planning, programming, and functional issues using the base drawings produced in task 2 for the following areas:
- Front-of-House
- Back-of-House
- Audience Chamber
- Stagehouse

SCHEDULE
1/24 Fri Assignment Issued
1/27 Mon Submit Base Drawings & Concept Analysis
1/29 Wed Submit & Pinup Review

VENUES
- Jazz at Lincoln Center (Rose Hall & Allen Room), NYC
- San Francisco Jazz
- Disney Concert Hall, LA
- Wyly Theater, Dallas
- Garsington Opera, UK
- Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, NYC
- New World Symphony, Miami Beach
- Segerstrom Performing Arts Center, Orange County CA
- Casa de Musica, Porto
- Sage Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, UK
- Kansas City Performing Arts Center, KC

PRODUCTS & MEDIA
Base Drawings; plans & sections and/or axons at common graphic quality & scale to fit on 11x17 format sheets
Analysis Diagrams; hand sketches and diagrams, digital diagram, overlays & supplemental sketches.

PROJECT MANAGER Jillian Sabella
Assignment 4: Subjective Site/Context Appraisal Sketch Problem

Learning Goals
This assignment is intended to help you achieve four key goals that are essential to the foundation of your individual concept design;

- Evaluate and interpret the objective research information from the group site analysis
- Understand the macro-scale issues of the physical context and the virtual performance community that are relevant to the project’s concept, and
- Make and test preliminary concepts of your individual approach to the design of the project and site.
- Quickly, simply and clearly document your thoughts in a graphically compelling way.

Schedule
F 1/31 Assigned
M 2/3 Submit & Review

Methodology
Produce three separate drawings to demonstrate your understanding of the site and preliminary intentions;

1. Opportunities
2. Constraints
3. Subjective Response/Proactive Intent

Products & Media
Three pages at 11x17, freehand drawing only.
ASSIGNMENT 5; CONCEPT/PARTI ALTERNATIVES

LEARNING GOALS
Building on your growing, but still rudimentary, understanding of the objective “rational” issues of the site and program, this assignment is intended to allow you to begin a more subjective “intuitive” response to the project design. Key goals are

• Develop an appreciation for the minimum building mass and form resulting from the basic program spaces
• Begin understanding and responding to program/site/context relationships.
• Test alternative intuitive approaches to the project.

SCHEDULE
M 2/3 Assigned
W 2/5 Desk Crits
F 2/7 Peer Review
M 2/10 Submission & Pinup Review

PRODUCTS/MEDIA
• Conceptual sketches & diagrams (freehand)
• Conceptual model to be photographed in site model
• No digital representation permitted

PROJECT MANAGER
Rohan Rathod

METHODOLOGY
Part One; prepare three conceptual alternatives in analog sketch and model with desk crits on Wednesday
Peer Review; pin-up progress review in studio on Friday.
Part Two; evolve each alternative further and develop in more detail with a second iteration for review in studio on Monday.
Part Three; document all individual alternatives in a matrix demonstrating the range of potential conceptual directions for inclusion in the programming & planning manual
ASSIGNMENT 6; MUSIC STUDIO/STRUCTURE SKETCH PROBLEM

LEARNING GOALS
Three key inter-related design drivers of a theater are the sightlines, acoustics and the structure of a performance chamber. Supplementing your growing understanding of the site and program spatial requirements, this exercise is intended to help you develop a deeper appreciation for the structural requirements, volumetric properties and the audience/occupant needs of the new SFO Music Studio, the space that is the heart of this design problem.

METHODOLOGY
Study the performance chamber in section and 3D representation (model or perspective). Propose and diagram six performance/audience configurations (proscenium, end stage, thrust, arena, alley, and vineyard) and two structural alternatives. Analyze sight lines, acoustics, and volumetric properties of the performance chamber, its structure and materials.

PROJECT MANAGER
Matt Adler

SCHEDULE
M 2/10 Assigned
W 2/12 Submission & Pinup

PRODUCTS/MEDIA
- 3D sketches (perspective or axon) or longitudinal & transverse sections of the performance chamber showing alternative structural systems with overlays of end stage, thrust & arena performance configurations
- Diagrams of two long-span roof structure alternatives of the chamber, one steel and one another material
- Plan with overlays of all configurations
- Diagrams of strategy for performance/configuration transformations
- Scale drawings @ 1/16”=1’ scale or larger
- Freehand drawings only; no digital media
ASSIGNMENT 7: FRONT-OF-HOUSE/PLAZA OCCUPANCY SKETCH PROBLEM

LEARNING GOALS
The public entry sequence from the point of arrival and the procession through the public spaces of the plaza and theater to the seat is the most important occupancy experience of the audience. This exercise is intended to help you develop the conceptual solutions that you’ve been working on in the plaza and front-of-house areas, and refine your design approach to the main public spaces and audience support functions.

METHODOLOGY
Study the Grove Street Plaza, Lobby Atrium and audience circulation, analyzing occupant flow, ticket control, amenities & services, volumetric properties of the spaces, structure and materials. Consider continuity of the Audience experience from the Plaza through the Lobby and into the Performance Chamber.

SCHEDULE
F 2/21 Assigned
W 2/26 Submission & Pinup

PRODUCTS/MEDIA
Sections & Plans @ 1/8”=1’ scale (freehand or hardline)
- North-South Longitudinal section through the Front-of-House areas through the Performance Chamber from the Opera House to Zellerbach Hall.
- East-West Transverse sections (two) through the Lobby Atrium including Franklin & Van Ness areas, and the south Plaza showing the Symphony block in elevation.
- Plans of Plaza & Lobby Atrium Levels
- 3D representation of the major spaces and vertical circulation elements (model or perspective drawing, accurate freehand construction or digital)
- Diagram audience & staff flows as overlays on the above drawings.

PROJECT MANAGER
Abigail Mitchell
**Practice Makes Perfect**

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**Assignment 8; Occupants' Narratives**

**Learning Goals**
This assignment is intended to help you identify the diverse occupants of theaters and gain a deeper understanding of their needs, desires and motivations that will help form the basis of your individual design concept.

**Schedule**
- **F 2/21**: Assigned
- **F-Su 2/21-23**: Field Observations
- **F 2/28**: Submission & Pinup Review

**Project Manager**
Amir Jahanbin

**Methodology**
Research and document the behavior of typical individuals and groups of occupants as follows. The prototypical occupants from all groups will be identified as the users of your individual project design for the semester.

- **Observation**: go to several different theaters on campus and elsewhere in Pittsburgh that have performances currently running. Observe these venue’s users at various times, at least including early in the day, the hour before curtain time, at intermission and at the end of the performance. Be sure to observe activity in all areas of the building that you have access to, including backstage loading areas. Document these observations with photographs, notes, sketches, etc. Each team should observe all occupant types at different venues.
- **Identification**: from your observations develop an exhaustive, comprehensive list of different users. Identify their unique characteristics, behavior patterns and basic needs. Among other media a spreadsheet will be particularly useful.
- **Categorization**: group the comprehensive list of users into cohesive categories, as many as you think are appropriate to identify the distinct patterns of use, need and desire of the entire range of potential occupants.
- **Narration**: for each of the major categories of occupants, develop several different representatives of that group that embody distinct behavior patterns and needs. Create a narration of these behaviors and needs in the voice of the occupant, and create a broader story that expresses the separate, shared and combined interactions of the various narrators.

**Products/Media**
Use a diverse range of media to express the occupants’ identities as effectively and concisely as possible. Consider oral (recorded), prose, film/video, analog and digital formats.
ASSIGNMENT 9; 1/1 SKETCH PROBLEM “TEST-FIT”

LEARNING GOALS
Building on your preliminary Concept/Parti alternatives of Assignment 5, this assignment is intended to help you visualize and evaluate your subjective “intuitive” ideas with an objective “rational” feedback loop. Key goals are to

- Interpret and develop subjective formal concepts of mass/site/context relationships in an objective manner.
- Test alternative intuitive approaches to the objective project constraints.
- Understanding of additional insight from peer reviewers

METHODOLOGY
Develop your Concept/Parti alternative(s) in plan, section and model showing major program areas only.

SCHEDULE
W 2/26  Assigned
F 2/28  Desk Crits
M 3/3  Submission & Pin-up Review

PRODUCTS/MEDIA
- Scale plans & sections (freehand or hardline)
- Massing models to be photographed in site model
- Digital and analog representation permitted
- Scale – 1/16” = 1’ (Model) & 1/32” = 1’ (plans & sections)
ASSIGNMENT 10; CONCEPT SCHEMATIC DESIGN

LEARNING GOALS
The next five weeks will be fully devoted to conceptual resolution of your individual project design to the schematic design level, with the studio mid-term review in the middle of this period.

SCHEDULE
M 2/24    Assigned & Concept Pin-up Review
W 2/26    Individual Desk Crits
F 2/28    Pin-up Review (in pairs)
M 3/3     Desk Crits
W 3/5     12:30-1:30pm Setup & Pinup in Loge
           1:30-4:30pm Midterm Review
M 3/17    Desk Crits
W 3/19    Pin-up Review
M 3/24    Desk Crits
W 3/26    Pin-up Review
M 3/31    Desk Crits
W 4/2     Submission & Pin-up Review

METHODOLOGY
Building on the concept, site, occupant and feasibility studies that you have already completed, and based on the program study of the Theater Design co-requisite (48:408), conceive, develop and present your individual design of the project.

PROJECT MANAGER Amir Jahanbin

PRODUCTS/MEDIA
Your midterm presentation should include the following

New Work
- Plans at 1"=32'; All levels indicating program by color
- Plans at 1"=16';
  - Site/ground level (include plaza) & Stage Level.
  - Diagrams of four performance configurations; Thrust, Proscenium/End Stage, Arena, Alley
- Plan at 1"=8'; Auditorium showing furniture and equipment.
- Section at 1"=8'; through the auditorium & stagehouse
- Section(s) at 1"=16'; additional cuts as required to clearly illustrate your concept.
- Model at 1"=16'
  - Perspective of main Lobby

Incorporate Previous Product
- Occupants must be identified on all plans and sections as previously defined in Assignment 4.

Included Previous Product
- All concept/parti diagrams and key generative work.
- All study models that you have already produced.
- All precedents you have studied or been influenced by.
Assignment 11; Frozen Music – Rhythmic Interpretations

Learning Goals
Goethe famously said “I call architecture frozen music.” Many philosophers, musicians and architects have studied and explored the relationship of music to architecture in terms of its rhythm, harmony, repetition and variation. This exercise is intended to help you discover, understand and refine the inherent structure, rhythm and harmonies of the project site and program, and to use them as an integral part of your design process.

Methodology
Select a metaphorical piece of music that has been performed and recorded by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra that you can access the score to. Listen to it, and analyze the rhythms and harmonies in the actual music and the musical score. Overlay and coordinate the rhythm to your design concept, adjusting each back and forth to find a harmony.

Products/Media
In any media of your choosing, 2D, 3D, analog or digital, document the following;
- Part One; Document your analysis of the piece. Consider how its structure expresses and emphasizes the meaning.
- Part Two; Transpose the structure of the piece onto your design, and graphically depict an existing or proposed underlying structure in your concept.
**ASSIGNMENT 12: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

**LEARNING GOALS**
The remaining five weeks of the term will be fully devoted to design development and representation, culminating in the studio final review.

**Methodology**
Building on your concept, structure and occupant studies and the program study of the Theater Design co-requisite (48:408), fully develop and present your individual design of the project. We will return to site scale models and parti update to focus and finalize conceptual design and massing, and then methodically increase scale and detail to focus on the occupants.

**Tasks**
There are a series of intermediate tasks and deliverables designed to ensure that you are developing your design holistically and thoroughly, leading to a complete, cogent and successful completion of the semester project. Preliminary tasks, listed above, may either be a draft that is replaced by a final product or a base that is modified and updated for the final. A completely consistent project presentation is very desirable, but not an absolute requirement if preliminary products have very little variance from the final design condition.

**SCHEDULE**

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<td>Desk Crits (1/64 site model, parti update &amp; area take-off)</td>
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<td>Desk Crits (occupants’ narrative, 1/16 building model, diagrams)</td>
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<td>Final Desk Crits</td>
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<td>S 5/3</td>
<td>Final Review, 1-5pm</td>
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**Final Review Presentation Deliverables**

**Site Scale – 1/64" = 1'-0" (site, context & program)**  
Show context, site relationships, large scale program organization
- **Site Plan** - Show an area at least including the Franklin Street corridor and City Hall
- **Site Model** to fit in site base model
- **Program Plans** – all levels indicating program by color

**Building Scale – 1/16" = 1'-0" (building, flow, sequence)**  
Show people, structure, wall thickness, doors/windows, furniture, ceiling changes dashed, etc.

**Plans & Sections**
- **Plans** of all floor levels & roof except Music Studio & Entry levels. Ground level or Piano Nobile to include Grove Street Plaza in its entirety
- **Longitudinal north/south sections;**
  1. On-center axis through Music Studio & Grove Plaza
  2. Parallel to #1 & outside Music Studio
- **Transverse east/west sections;**
  1. On-center axis through Music Studio & Franklin
  2. Parallel to #1 through Lobby Atrium

**Elevations**
- **North** (including Davies Hall)
- **West** (including Zellerbach Hall)

**Theater Scale – 1/8" = 1'-0" (occupants, detail)**  
Show the Performance Chamber in detail with people, materials, structure, wall thickness, doors/windows, furniture, ceiling changes dashed, etc.

**Plans**
- **Music Studio Level**
- **Main Entry Level**

**Detail Scale – 1/8" = 1'-0" (occupants, detail)**  
Show structure, enclosure, systems details, etc.
- **Section Model** – half of the building cut through the central axis of the performance chamber.
- **Wall Section** – materials, assembly, structure, etc.

**Diagrams & Narrative (concept, tectonics)**
- **Concept** – parti, massing, evolution/iteration, etc.
- **Structure** – areas of different structure types, isolation, etc.
- **Systems** – ventilation, thermal, power, passive solar, etc.
- **Occupancy** – zones and flow
- **Occupants’ Narratives** – illustrate & caption the drawings with the experience of each prototypical occupant.

**Renderings (occupants’ experience)**  
Clearly illustrate structure, materials, people, furniture plaza, context, etc.

**Exterior Site/Plaza Renderings**
- **Bird’s eye from Northeast** showing building and Grove St. Plaza
- **Eye-level from Northwest** showing building and Grove St. Plaza
- **Main Entry** detail showing marquee, signage, box office, etc.

**Front-of-House Interior Renderings**
- **Lobby Atrium** showing restaurants, cafés, bars, etc.
- **Gala Dinner Space** showing tables, chairs, people, speaker, etc.

**Music Studio Interior Renderings**
- **Thrust** towards stage, off axis
- **End Stage** towards Audience, on axis

**Back-of-House Interior Renderings**
- **Musicians’ Lounge**
- **Backstage Area** showing load-in path, elephant doors, etc.
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48:413-/513-A Critical Practice Studio, Spring 2014
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BIBLIOGRAPHY
Theatres and concert halls
by Schmolke, Birgit.
by 3938666943
Location: Hunt Library - OVRSZQ-4 (Oversized material Hunt 4th floor)
Call Number: NA6821 .S36 2011

Geometry & Atmosphere: Theatre Buildings from Vision to Reality
by 0754674045
Location: Hunt Library - STACKS-4 (Stacks 4th Floor)
Call Number: NA6821 .S54 2011

Performance architecture + design
by 3037680423
Location: Hunt Library - STACKS-4 (Stacks 4th Floor)
Call Number: NA6821 .U44 2010

Theatre buildings: a design guide
by 0415548942
Location: Hunt Library - OVRSZQ-4 (Oversized material Hunt 4th floor)
Call Number: NA6821 .T447 2010

REFERENCES
ARTICLE DATABASES
Databases that CMU Libraries subscribe to;
http://search.library.cmu.edu/databases/

New York Times (1851- current minus 3 years)
http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes?accountid=990

Wall Street Journal (1890- current minus 17 years)
http://search.proquest.com/hnpwallstreetjournal?accountid=9902

CMU Libraries home page “Everything” search (in the upper right hand corner) does a good job of searching newspapers among other things.
http://search.library.cmu.edu/

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AND WEB SITES
Architectural Record, Building Types Study; Performing Arts
http://archrecord.construction.com/projects/building_types_study/
TypeIndex.aspx?bts=PA

Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals

IIPA: International Index to the Performing Arts
http://search.proquest.com/iipa?accountid=9902

International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance
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San Francisco Symphony Center
http://www.sfsymphony.org/
- Louise B. Davies Symphony Hall
  http://www.sfwmpac.org/rehearsalhall/rh_index.html
- Zellerbach Rehearsal Hall
  http://www.sfwmpac.org/symphonyhall/sh_index.html

San Francisco Jazz
https://www.sfjazz.org/

BAM; Brooklyn Academy of Music
http://www.bam.org/
- Fishman Space, http://www.bam.org/visit/fishman-space

JALC; Jazz at Lincoln Center
http://www.jalc.org/about/index09.html
- The Allen Room,
  http://www.jalc.org/venues/allen/index09.html
- Dizzy’s Club Coca Cola, http://jalc.org/dizzys
Studio, School & University Policies

Grading
Studio grading is based on several factors;

- **Performance/Product**
  Your performance in the studio and the products that you submit and present are the most important factor in my evaluation of your work. There are 10 assignments during the semester that I will grade individually; each contributes to the quantitative component of your semester grade as follows;
  1. 1/3 Sketch Problem – 2.5%
  2. Site Analysis & Model – 5%
  3. Subjective Site/Context Appraisal – 2.5%
  4. Occupants’ Narratives – 5%
  5. Concept/Parti Alternatives – 5%
  6. 1/1 Sketch Problem – 5%
  7. SF Symphony Interpretations – 5%
  8. Auditorium/Structure Sketch Problem – 10%
  9. Individual Project Design – 50%
  10. Final Presentation – 10%

- **Learning**
  What you learn in the studio is usually but not always readily apparent in your work; also different students have varying skills and talents. How much you learn and improve in this studio given your individual abilities and experience will also be a factor in your semester grade.

- **Participation/Attendance**
  Participation is essential to your learning and performance, and you must attend studio to be able to participate in lectures, discussions and reviews. Our studio has a somewhat more flexible schedule than others you’ve had, and this should facilitate your participation. Attendance in all studio review, lecture and presentations is required; unexcused absence will reduce assignment grade by one level.

Late Submissions/Missed Presentations
Late submissions without prior consultation and agreement will result in a reduction of one grade level per day.

University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism
This course adheres stringently to Carnegie Mellon’s University policy on cheating and plagiarism. In both your academic and professional life as an architect it is critical that you acknowledge the contributions of others, and that you properly credit all sources that contribute to your work.