

Program Summary:

New arts and performance spaces, library, and educational facilities in St. Bernard Parish

Program Statement:

Following catastrophic losses from Hurricane Katrina, the St. Bernard Parish School Board has undertaken a bold rebuilding program that includes this cultural arts center adjacent to a new ninth grade school building and an existing high school. A palette of durable materials, including brick, stucco, concrete, and stainless steel, signals permanence. Sail-like fabric panels shade the entry path and soften the concrete colonnade. The heart of the cultural arts center is a 420-seat theatre with fly loft, orchestra pit, and support spaces for costumes and scene making. This main volume, clad in custom-designed matte stainless steel panels that accommodate its curving walls, rises high above the surrounding construction and neighboring buildings. The remaining lower spaces take the form of a torqued bar that cradles the main theatre and defines interior and exterior gathering spaces. Contained within this bar are a more intimate 120-seat theatre, classrooms for music and dance instruction, practice rooms, community meeting spaces, and libraries for the school and the public. Extensive glass curtain walls enliven the libraries and the two-story lobby, and achieve transparency with the community. A coffee shop with indoor and outdoor seating areas is a further community draw and can offer concessions to theatre-goers. The cultural arts center has renewed the aspirations of an already thriving performing arts program at the school and affirms the community's identity and perseverance.

A-115.01

Building Area: (sf)
88,390 sf

Cost per Square Foot:
\$310

Construction Cost
\$29.8 million

Date of Completion:
March 2011

A-115.02

Southeast View

View from the southeast. The shed-roofed school library volume, with curtain wall glazing on two sides, rests atop the public library. The slope set by this element continues beyond at the entry terrace.



A-115.03

Entry

The building's deep entry terrace serves as a sheltered gathering space before and after performances and events. A generous overhang over wide steps offers an entry appropriate to the scale of this civic building. A gently curving ramp wraps up a brightly colored stucco wall on the side of the main theatre volume to meet the steps. The doors are framed within a simple concrete element to transition between terrace and lobby.





A-115.04

Main Theatre Volume

The main theatre volume, clad in custom stainless steel panels which accommodate its distinctive curves, rises high above the surrounding construction as a landmark.

Sail-like fabric panels shade the entry path and soften the concrete colonnade.

A-115.05

View from the Northwest

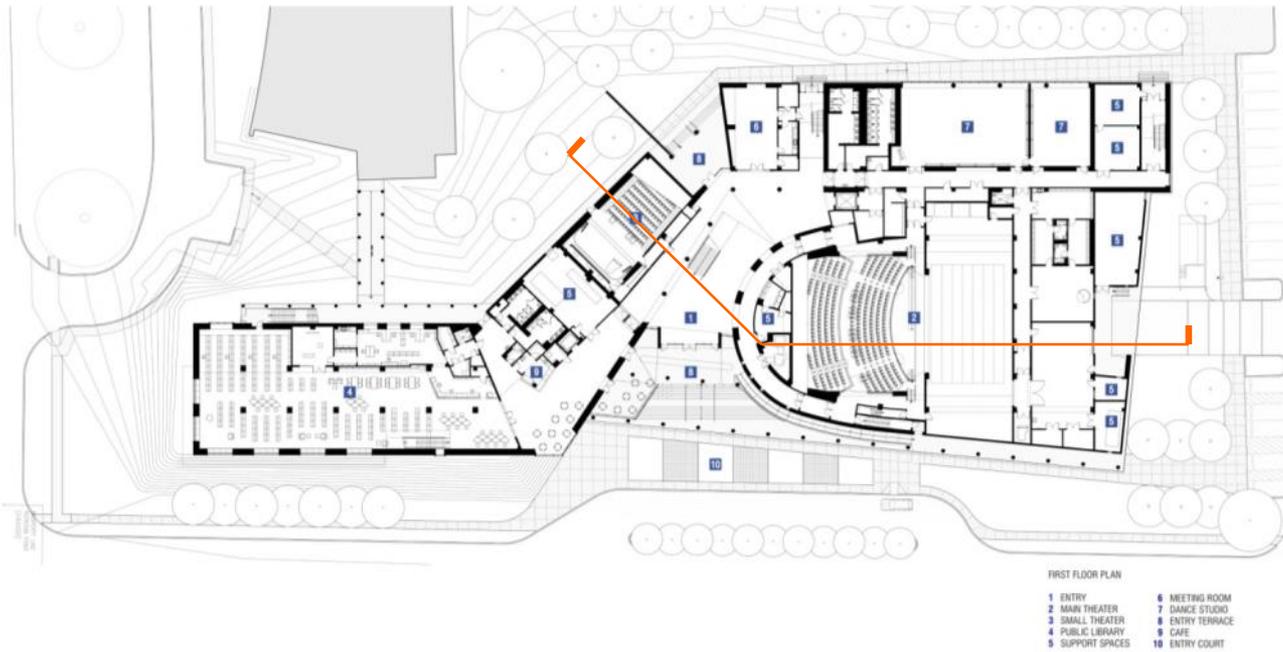
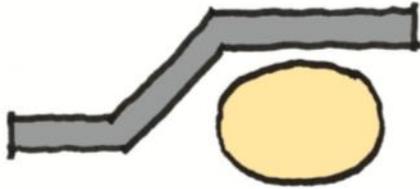
The custom stainless steel panels on the main theatre volume reappear on another volume at the rear of the building, where they clad the music rooms and support spaces. Below are dance studios, which receive light through a long band of west-facing windows.



A-115.06

Building Plan

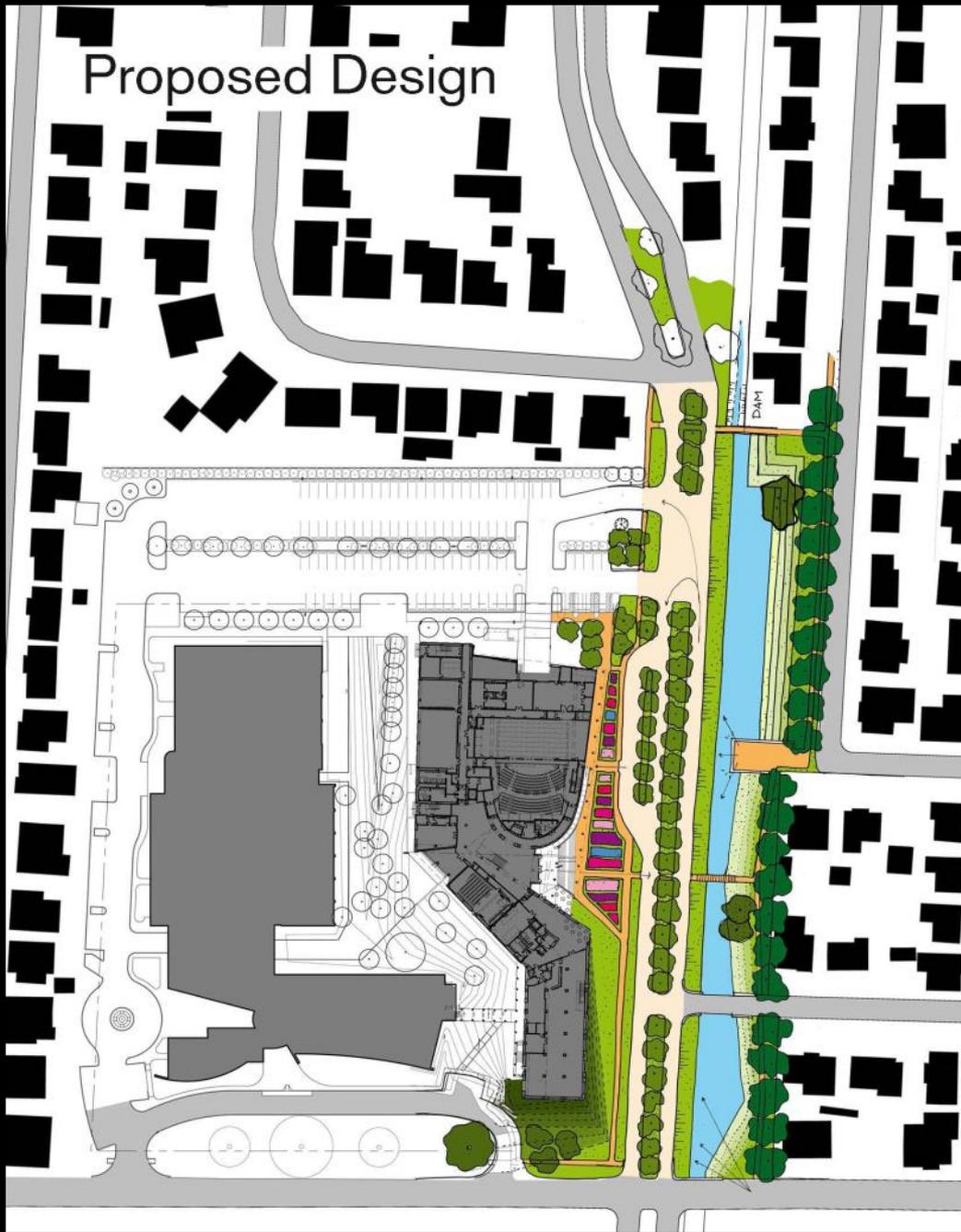
“Snake and egg” plan diagram



First Floor Plan

The main theatre is a curved volume at the heart of the building. The remaining lower spaces take the form of a torqued bar that cradles the main theatre and defines interior and exterior gathering spaces.

Proposed Design



A-115.07

Landscape Design

Phase 2 involves a landscape plan that can incorporate neighborhood and site stormwater storage into the building's entry sequence.

A dam control structure allows water to continuously flow into the storage basin. In the case of a heavy rainfall, grass terraces provide additional water storage.

A-115.08

Vision with Canal Park

A simple dam control structure can regulate the water during dry and wet periods into a basin that functions as a public recreational space for the building's users and the neighborhood beyond.



A-115.09

Entry

The open staircase in the main lobby is a gathering space for students. The brightly-colored curving stucco wall of the theatre volume continues inside the lobby.



A-115.10

Main Theatre

In the main theatre, projection of sound from the stage is enhanced by a convex plaster acoustical reflector. Users can further modulate the acoustics of the space through adjustment of absorbent side and rear curtains, which can be drawn into pockets for a more resonant room. The stage, as well as two dance instruction rooms, feature resilient subflooring with coverings specialized for either ballet or tap.



A-115.11

Theatre Space

A smaller, 120-seat theatre hosts cinema, recitals, lectures, and small performance.

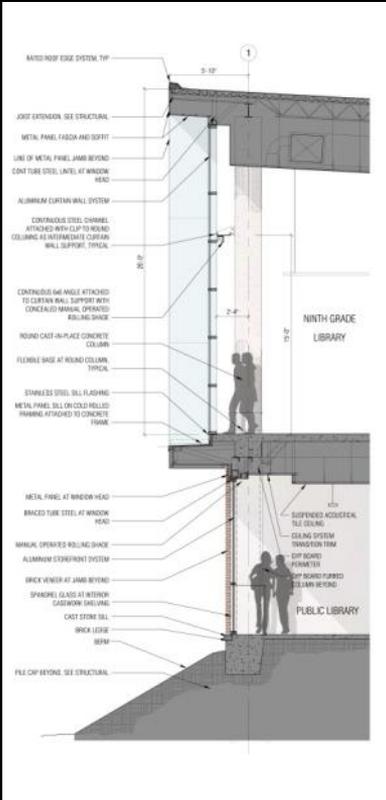
Daylight streams in through a long clerestory window during lectures but can be limited during performances or video projection by means of motorized shades.



A-115.12

Library Wing

The school library features high ceilings, bright surfaces, and curtain wall glazing on two faces for ample natural light, and is stacked on top of the public library.



A-115.13

Screen Detail

Metal grating panels are arranged in a shifted grid, yielding a play of light and shadow on the brick wall beyond.



South and West Façade

At left, the new pedestrian footbridge connects the existing adjacent school.

At right, center view of the west and south facades. The existing adjacent school is at left, connected by the new footbridge.



Project Name:
St. Bernard Parish School Board Cultural
Arts and Community Center

Project Location:
Chalmette, Louisiana

Owner/Client:
St. Bernard Parish School Board

Architect(s) of Record:
Waggonner & Ball Architects
2200 Prytania Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Project Team:
David Waggonner
Mac Ball
Brian Swanner
Charles Sterkx
Dennis Horchoff
Sarah Weinkauf
John Kleinschmidt

Landscape Architect:
Bosch-Slabbers, Landscape + Urban Design

Consultants:
Shrenk and Peterson Consulting Engineers
GVA Engineering, LLC
Theater Consultants Collaborative
Creative Acoustics

General Contractor:
MAPP Construction

Photographer(s):

Tim Hursley (Slides 2, 3, 5, 12, 13)
Alise O'Brien (Slides 9, 10, 11)

A-115.x

Credit Slide