

Arch 464
ECS
Spring 2017

Name _____

Quiz #4

"MPLS by KPMB"

Read and look at everything before you write!



Illustrations and text from Architectural Record 04:17.

For this problem you are an acoustics critic for the *Minneapolis StarTribune*.

Your mission is to report on the three performance venues—formal, informal, and outdoors—of the newly renewed Orchestra Hall.

Orchestra Hall Renewal

KPMB Architects

Any performing-arts organization exists to serve the magic that happens in the hall. But what happens in the lobby can be just as important—to the experience of patrons and to the bottom line. The Minnesota Orchestra proved this with the recent renewal of its Orchestra Hall. This \$52 million project saw KPMB Architects turn cramped, dated lobbies into civic spaces that have doubled the orchestra's event revenues and created valuable community outreach.

The project was born from the organization's sense that its facility, designed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer and opened in 1974, was turning off potential patrons. "They knew they had to reposition themselves within the city," explains KPMB associate Chris Couse. An aging audience was "fanatically committed" to the orchestra, "but there was no uptake from younger generations." (This became a particularly acute problem during a 16-month labor dispute with the musicians from late 2012 to 2014, during the renovation.)

Accordingly, the architects left the acclaimed performance hall largely intact—discreetly upgrading the lighting, seats, and technology—but pushed for the lobby to take on a public spirit. "We said, We're going to reconnect this to the city, widen the sidewalks, and make people feel it is an amenity they could share in," says principal Marianne McKenna.

The old lobby structure extended from the north and east sides of the rectangular hall toward a multileveled public square called Peavey Plaza. KPMB retained this basic configuration and kept much of the lobby volume's steel structure and its recently updated mechanical systems. But the old walls, plastered with promotional images of the orchestra, came down. New additions pushed farther out toward the park and street with facades of pale blue glass curtain wall and Silver Shadow limestone from Alabama. The materials offer a gentle contrast with the orange-brick walls of the theater volume behind, whereas the new lobby differs radically from the old. The 1970s scheme divided attendees onto a series of terraces, limiting capacity and circulation. The new design more than doubles the lobby size, up from about 16,000 square feet to around 30,000, partly by eliminating terraces between floors and their accompanying stairs. This helped the building become fully accessible and ADA-compliant.

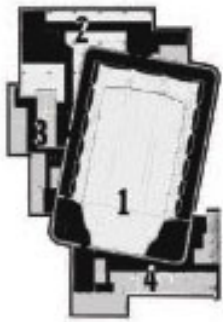
The architects extended the program by proposing an entirely new space: the Target Atrium, an informal performance hall that holds 200 people and connects to an adjacent patio. Orchestra CEO Kevin Smith calls the changes transformative. "The new lobby and the Target Atrium have expanded the experience of coming to the hall. Now when people arrive," he says, "they will see and hear different kinds of work around them"—performances by chamber groups, jazz groups, or by one of about 30 community organizations that have partnered with the orchestra.

This has had a powerful effect, Smith says, on the orchestra's relationship with the city: "Not only do we have an environment that's more inviting to the public, but the number of rental events has increased." The hall hosted 90 private events in 2015–16, up from 38 the year before the renovation. The lobby and improved server facilities have more than doubled food and beverage revenues to about \$1.3 million in 2015–16; and subscriptions, donations, and ticket sales are up significantly. The lesson, McKenna says, is simple: "You have to take care of the patrons first."

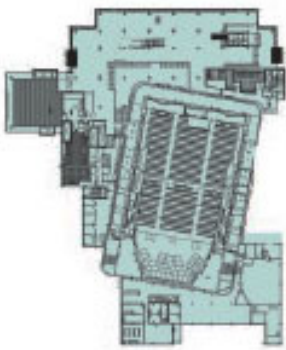
—Alex Bozikovic, AR, April 1, 2017



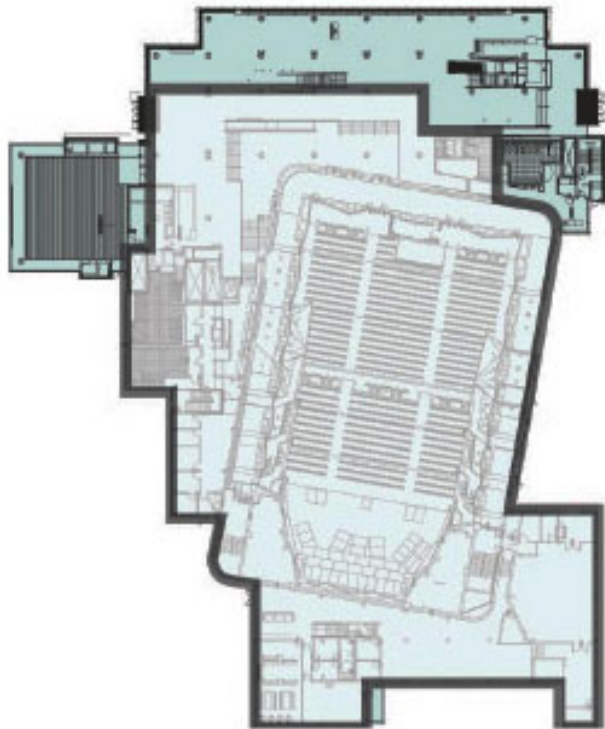
Map: Openstreetmap.org



original building footprint



new building footprint



footprint comparison

Analysis

1a. What is the acoustic goal for the symphony orchestra performance hall?

5 points



1b. Give two thorough acoustical explanations why you believe the orchestra hall (pictured above) was beloved by the old guard and why the architects chose not to alter the space.

1

2

3. The Target Atrium pictured below is intended for informal performances by chamber music groups, jazz groups, and others. Comment on the acoustic properties of this space. Give three reasons you believe will spell success or failure.

3 points



Target Atrium inside looking to the NW and outside looking from the NW.

1

2

3

Advice

4. The Orchestra is planning on holding summer outdoor events in the adjacent Peavey Plaza (below). Give them two sound (pun!) pieces of advice and/or warnings for outdoor performance.

2 points



Google Earth Streetview

1

2