

Second Annual
The Architectural Commission's of the United States Institute for Theater & Technology
“The Ideal Theatre” Design Competition
for Architectural and Theatre Students
2008

Theatres are the most complex buildings that we design and construct. They are three dimensional puzzles with complex building systems, complex theatre equipment, ridge functional requirements, special acoustical needs and strong architectural character. All of these conditions must merge within narrow parameters to create a successful performance venue. Too often the requirements and technological needs of creating theatre are lost in the building's design process. Either the architect is not aware of them or the users are not involved in the design process. Open communication between the theatre users and theatre designers is critical. The goal of this competition is to bring together future theatre professionals and theatre designers to develop an understanding of the complexity of issues needed to design the “Ideal Theatre”.

Introduction

The Architectural Commission of the United States Institute for Theatre & Technology (USITT) is presenting this Architectural Design Competition to promote the teaming of college and university students enrolled in professional architectural and theatre programs. The Architectural Commission will exhibit the entries and honor the winners at the 2008 United States Institute for Theatre & Technology Convention in Houston, Texas, March 19-22, 2008.

Competition Goal

The competition poses the design question, “What is the Ideal Theatre for teaching professional theatre”? This question is to be explored and answered by a “Team” composed of at least one theatre student currently enrolled in a college or university theatre program and one architectural student enrolled in an accredited architectural college or university program.

Each team member has a defined responsibility. The theatre students will act as the “Client” and the architectural students as the “Designer”. The “Client” is responsible to teach the “Designer” about the workings and artistry of Theatre! The “Client” will define the detail needs of the theater complex and provide at least one critique of the design produced by the “Designer.” It is desired that that the “Client” will remain an active member of the design process. The design solution **MUST** be the result of a “Conversation” between the “Client” and “Designer”. History proves the most successful theatre design solutions take into account all aspects and needs of theatre production, artist presentation and audience interaction.

Larger teams are encouraged. For example, the “Designer” team could be expanded to include students of engineering, acoustics and construction technology. The “Client” represent all areas of theatre study, including; actors, directors, lighting technology, stage crafts, costume design, makeup, stage managers, etc. In addition the front-of-house needs of the audience and the overall fit to site must be addressed. The “Client” should also define the type of live performance venue (opera, dance, drama, music, etc.) which fits their particular educational program.

The “Team” can enter as individuals or as part of a structured class. Team members can be at any level in their college or university careers. The students' experience and knowledge of their chosen area of study will be an asset in developing the team's solutions. Upper level and graduate students are encouraged to compete.

The Problem Statement

Your College has been given a gift of \$20 million to construct a new Center for the Performing Arts. The new Center must reflect your department's educational goals and the technological needs for your area of theatre specialty. The audience chamber can be between 400 to 600 seats. The intimacy of the live performance must be expressed and the layout is to be defined by your program's performance specialty. Additional front and back of house will be defined by the "Client" to meet the department needs. The Center will be a free standing building on your college campus. Your department has a strong presence in the community with the audience being made up of students, college staff, faculty and the community at large.

The Art Center Spaces

The program detail, areas, stage type and audience arrangement must be developed by the "Client" to reflect their department needs. The "Client" is to provide a written statement describing their College Theatre Department's educational goals and needs of the teaching program. This can be made up or patterned after a real program.

At minimum the following theatre spaces must be included

Performance support areas

- Stage Area: (for at least 10 performers and maximum of 40 performers)
- Stage set up area
- Material loading area
- Dressing Room: (for a minimum of 20 performers)
- At least 1 shop space for the production of stage sets, props, or costumes
- Green room area
- Control booths
- One rehearsal space

Front of house areas to include

- Lobby area for the chosen audience size
- Public Restrooms
- Box Office

Additional spaces should include

- One classroom for teaching theatre crafts. (This could be lighting, design, theory, stage craft, etc. "Client" must define use.)
- Facility Offices: (at least 3, "Client" to determine department needs)

Special Needs

Additional spaces WILL BE required to meet the "Client's" specially defined needs. These could be additional back stage areas such as: shop space, trap room, orchestra pit, student lounge, catwalks, material storage, private dressing rooms, storage areas, etc. Front of House areas could include: concession areas, donor rooms, gallery space, volunteer room, house manager stations and the like.

The relationship between actors and audience will be defined by the artistic goals of the "Client's" department. The stage type could be formal proscenium, modified thrust, flexible courtyard or even flexible Black Box. The "Client" must define the type of stage that matches their stated educational goals. The shape, type and size of the audience chamber will be defined by the stage relationship. A seating range between 400 and 600 allows for a variety of audience chamber configurations, single level, multi-level, balconies, fixed seating or flexible are all possible and can still maintain an intimacy between performers and audience.

Building codes, ADA requirements, life safety and constructability needs should be kept in mind by the “Designer.” However, this competition IS intended to be a theoretical design study.

It is estimated that the total area of the Theatre Center would be between 25,000 and 40,000 square feet, with a \$20 million budget and a construction cost of \$250 to \$350 per square foot. Keep in mind that 40% to 60% of the gross building area will be allocated to circulation, miscellaneous areas for mechanical equipment, structure and walls.

Competition Rules

1. The Design submission must be the results of a “Team” effort between currently enrolled college/university students of theatre and architecture.
2. “Team” is defined as at least two individuals; one student of architecture and one student of theatre. There is no limit to the number of members on a team.
3. A single theatre “Client” can be a “Client” to multiple “Designers.”
4. The design submission must include documentation of the theatre design AND of the design process between “Client” and “Designer”.

Competition Schedule

1. Competition documents are available beginning August 27, 2007. Email requests for information to: Studentcompetition@theatrearchitect.net Subject line: USITT Competition.
2. Questions on the competition are due by October 17, 2007. All questions must be submitted in writing to: Studentcompetition@theatrearchitect.net Subject line: USITT Competition.
3. Intent to enter the competition is due October 30, 2007. Send notice of intent via email to: Studentcompetition@theatrearchitect.net Subject line: USITT Competition.
4. All competition entries must be received by 5:00 p.m., CST. on January 16, 2008

Submissions to be sent to:

USITT Competition:
Scott F. Georgeson, AIA,
HGA Architects, 333 East Erie Street,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202
414.278.8200

5. The Professional Jury will make selection of the Finalists will occur in early February 2008.
6. Judging and selection of the Winning Team will occur at the Architectural Commission Session, Friday, March 21, 2008, between 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
7. All “Teams” will be notified of the Judges comments by email on April 1, 2008.

Submission Guidelines

1. The Design should be presented as a single display, minimum size 42" high x 60" wide. Display should be at least 2 panels but no more than 4 panels mounted on 1/8" foam core. Include diagram on panel arrangement.
2. Drawings must include at least one plan (scale 1/8" = 1'-0"), each room to be labeled. One longitudinal section (scale 1/8" = 1'-0") and one site plan (scale 1/20" = 1'-0") to locate the building in the campus context.
3. Additional drawings to represent the quality of design are needed. These could include interior perspectives, additional floor plans, building sections and diagrams to explain the design intent.
4. Drawings can be black and white or color.
5. Models can NOT be submitted, but photographs of models may be part of the presentation
6. The design goals and an artistic statement MUST be presented on the boards in a legible font of not less than 12 pt. Text should not exceed 300 words total on the boards. This does not include tiles, room labels, or drawing keys.
7. All text must be in English.
8. The name of the competitors' college or university or team members CAN NOT appear anywhere on the boards.
9. Each submission's board should have a "Team Name" titled on the boards. The "Team Name" is to be chosen by the competitors.
10. The Design Process is to be documented in an accompanying Brochure of 11"x 17" sheets, not more than 6 pages. The "Team" can use text, photos, drawings to show the meetings and "Client" - "Designer" relationship. The "Team Name" must be on each sheet.
11. The entry form should be enclosed in a plain sealed business envelope with "Team Name" clearly marked on it. Tape the envelope to the back of the boards.
12. A CD containing a .pdf file of the boards and process brochure must be submitted. The CD should have "Team Name" marked on it. These images must be of high quality for future Power Point presentations.
13. Entry Form will be sent to all registered competition "Teams".
14. There is NO ENTRY FEE!
15. The Architectural Commission of USITT reserves the right to use the submitted designs for publication and promotional use.

Awards

Three "Team" finalists will be selected to present their design and process to the USITT Architectural Commission in Houston, Texas, at the USITT Annual Convention, March 21, 2008.

A First Place Winner will be selected at the Architectural Commission Student Design Competition Session.

The 3 Finalists will each be awarded \$1000.00 (one thousand dollars) to assist in travel to Houston.

The First Place Team will be awarded an additional \$500.00 (five hundred dollars).

Merit Awards may be given at the discretion of the Professional Jury or Architectural Commission

All submissions will be displayed by the Architectural Commission at the 2008 USITT Convention.

Professional Jury

Architect, Joseph Valerio FAIA, Valerio Dewalt Train Associates
www.buildordie.com

Joseph M. Valerio, FAIA, a founding partner of Valerio Dewalt Train Associates, is recognized as a significant voice in contemporary American architecture. A tireless innovator with an enormous capacity for creation, his award winning work has been widely published in international periodicals and was the subject of a monograph published by Rizzoli in 1999. In 2002 he was appointed to the National Board of Peer Reviewers under the GSA design Excellence Program.

Acoustician, R. Lawrence Kirkegaard, FASA, Kirkegaard Acoustics
www.kirkegaard.com

R. Lawrence Kirkegaard, FASA, Has consulted on the design and renovation of the World's finest performing arts facilities for over 40 years. He has been a pioneer in the field of architectural acoustics helping redefine the relationship between architecture music, art and drama. His sensitivity to the complex relationships and program requirements of Concert halls, Opera Houses and multipurpose auditoria has been recognized in awards from the Acoustical Society of America, AIA, and USITT.

Theatre Consultant, Robert Shook, ASTC, SchulerShook Theatre Consultants
www.schulershook.com

Robert Shook, ASTC, enthusiastically brings to every project a wealth of experience in professional theatre, both in front of the curtain and behind it. He has been involved in the planning of auditoria and audience areas for hundreds of theatres around the world, and his depth of experience as a professional theatrical designer provides him with a keen understanding of backstage operations and technical systems. He promotes intimacy and flexibility in theatre design and is a strong proponent of the collaborative process in the development of successful performing arts facilities.

Do not contact the jury!

The entries will be judged on:

- Meeting the "Clients" program statement
- Understanding of the working of the Performing Arts
- The "Team's" design process
- Design Innovation

For Additional Information:

Email requests for competition brief to: Studentcompetition@theatrearchitect.net , Subject line: USITT Competition.

Website www.USITT.org, go to the Architectural Commission page

The Competition is brought to you by the generous support of:

WYZ Corporation

Competition managed by HGA Architects, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA,
Contact: Scott F Georgeson, AIA LEED AP, Competition Chairman, sgeorgeson@hga.com

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