



Performing Arts Center
New Construction

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BARTON PHELPS & ASSOCIATES

Architects and Planners
Design Architect
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DESIGN TEAM

Harley Ellis Devereaux,
Executive Architect

Barton Phelps, FAIA,
Lead Designer

David Haggerty, AIA,
Barton Phelps & Associates
Project Architect

Tania Van Herle, AIA,
Project Manager

Peter Majewski, Project Architect
Matt Construction, Contractor

OWNER/CLIENT

The Thacher School, Ojai, CA
Michael Mulligan,
Head of School, 805/646-4377

Type of School and Grades
Served: High School
(Day and Boarding), 9-12
Capacity: 1,188 students

Size of Site: 400 acres

Area of Building:
12,919 square feet (Arts);
8,247 square feet (Commons)

Space per Student:
15 square feet (Arts);
24 square feet (Commons)

Cost per Student: \$9,596

Square Foot Cost: \$539

Cost of Construction:
\$11.4 million

Contract Date: July 2004

Completion Date: March 2006

Percent of Completion: 100%

COMBINED-LEVEL SCHOOLS

The Thacher School: Arts Building and Commons

Ojai, California

Harley Ellis Devereaux / Barton Phelps & Associates



NEW VIEW CORRIDOR BETWEEN ARTS BUILDING AND COMMONS

Set between a mountain range and coastal valley, the hillside campus of this 115-year-old boarding school houses a diverse academic community of 240 students, 40 faculty, and 140 horses.

The 450-seat auditorium in the arts building has mid-range acoustics for music, speech, drama, dance, and cinema. The cross aisle and lighting patterns allow the lower 300 seats to be used for daily assembly with the intimacy of a smaller room. Interiors are intentionally plain. As a teaching vehicle, stagecraft elements are exposed whenever possible. The building is approximately 16,000 square feet, with high-bay rehearsal rooms for music and dance located behind the stage, as well as a separately located control booth. The arts building takes advantage of the



MUSIC REHEARSAL ROOM

natural sloping landscape and integrates the dressing, storage rooms, and other audio/visual support spaces below grade in a lower level.

In addition to casually furnished spaces for student, faculty, alumni, and conference use, the commons provides lobby, reception, and rest room facilities for events in each building. Lower level music practice rooms are



ARTS BUILDING AND NEW VIEW TO WEST

conveniently close to the stage entrance and group rehearsal rooms across the court in the arts building. The multipurpose room can be used separately or opened to expand the café for dances, alumni dinners, and special events.

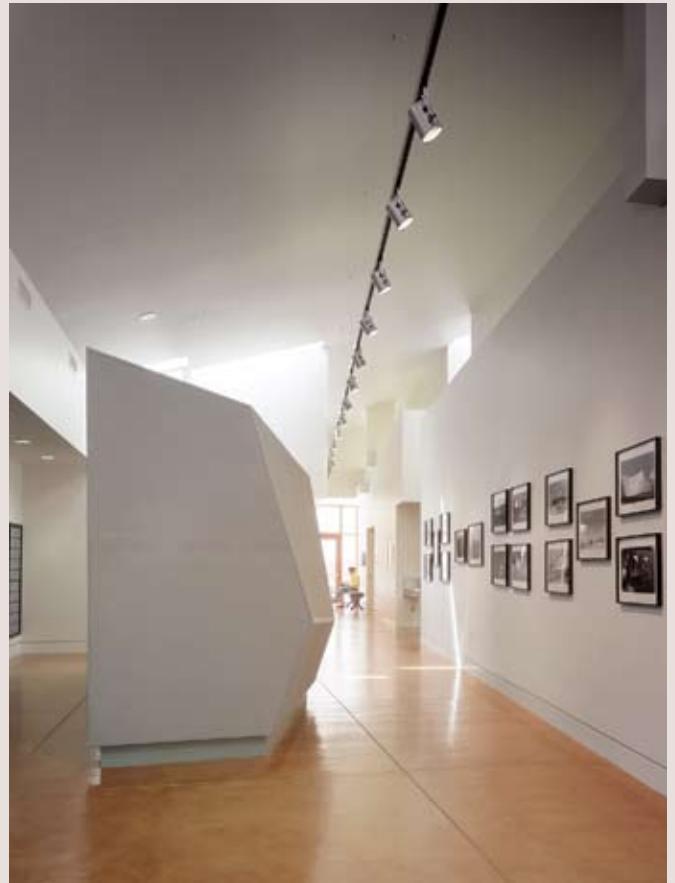
The operations of the two buildings overlap to avoid redundancy.

Circulation is concentrated in a sky-lit central corridor

PHOTOS: BENNY CHAN—FOTOWORKS



AUDITORIUM



GALLERY



CONFERENCE SPACE

that grows in height and volume as it approaches the arts building. Inspired by a Parisian shopping arcade, with café and school store display window,

the corridor doubles as a gallery displaying student work or traveling exhibitions. It is designed to be sociopetal space —providing congenial meeting

and gathering places that operate at different levels of formality to bring people together. Encouraging social interaction depends upon location,

sequence, and spatial character. The essential daily visit to the mail boxes located at the center of the gallery makes it a place where people naturally encounter each other.

Orientation, daylight penetration, roof overhangs and sun screens, foundation and structural design, natural ventilation and HVAC systems, and materials selections reflect a balance of concerns for construction cost and life-cycle performance. Lightweight metal siding replaces wood and stucco where possible. Metal roofing replaces the heavy ceramic tile of earlier buildings. At the commons, a 15-foot overhang shields the cantilevered west patio. In the auditorium, garage doors at the rear of the house open for natural ventilation and indoor/outdoor ambience. This also provides for extra theater seating from the back of a horse. ■