ACADEMY OF THE ARTS
INDIANAPOLIS ACADEMY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

AN ARCHITECTURAL STUDY OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ARTS

ANNA MARIE FISH

MAY 1993
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

ANNA MARIE FISH
BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE DEGREE
THESIS DESIGN

INDIANAPOLIS SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS
AN ARCHITECTURAL STUDY OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ARTS

THESIS COMMITTEE:

SONNY PALMER

CARLOS CASUSCELLI

c COPYRIGHT ANNA MARIE FISH 1993
The love and views I hold for the art of music and dance are only a wonderful piece of what encompassed me as a child. I owe who I am and what I stand for in my thesis to my biggest supporter, closest friend and most caring mother, Donna Marie Fish. May her physically painful lifetime be forgotten as she dances with the angels in heaven.
CONTENTS:

TITLE PAGE 1
CREDITS 2
DEDICATION 3
CONTENTS 4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 5
INTRODUCTION 6
THESIS PREMISE 7
PHYSICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT 8
SITE DESIGN 9
DESIGN 10
GROUND LEVEL PLAN 10
LOWER LEVEL PLAN 11
ARTISTIC ELEMENTS 12
ELEVATION 12
MODEL PHOTOGRAPHS 15 - 15
INTERACTION 16
SECTION THRU PRACTICE ROOMS 16
CIRCULATION & VISIBILITY 17
SECTION THRU ORFF ROOM 18
SECTION THRU STAGE AREA 19
REFLECTION 20
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I would like to thank the following for their professional input, help and training:

Andrea Wilson - Butler Univ. Dance Major
Judy Wilson - Orff Instructor
Kay Knight - Ball State Dance Department
Kathryn Huelster - Pianist
Colette Kaufman (deceased) - Dance Instr.
Michelle Jarvis - Butler Dance Instr.
Sonny Palmer - BSU Architecture Prof
Carlos Casuscelli - BSU Architecture Prof.
INTRODUCTION:

Music, dance, and the visual arts are physically different expressions of the same fundamental basics such as rhythm, repetition, phrasing, movement, line, dynamics etc. For example, the Musician composes or performs a piece surrounding a specific emotion or story line which is expressed through the combination of elements such as dynamics, key, phrasing, and tempo. In successful compositions this emotion or story line is felt so strongly by the listener that even to an untrained ear, movement and physical forms begin to dance around inside his head which begin the creation of simple choreography and visual compositions. These events are circular for it could also be movement or a visual image which prompts the musical composition.

A simple yet famous example of the collaboration of the arts to create one artistic masterpiece would be the 1876 Russian ballet and composition, Swan Lake. The composer, Chaikovsky, and the choreographers, Petipa and Ivanov, broke new grounds in their interpretation of the movement of the graceful swan. By studying the swan’s movement, they realized that the swan would never hold its head in the angles which classical ballet training at that time demanded. They worked together with the musical phrasing and came up with the elongated parallel line of the dancer’s arm and neck, which has mesmerized audiences for ages. Chaikovsky, in studying the movement of the swan, picked up on the elegant creatures presence and grace and created one of the most grandiose musical compositions in ballet history. For over one hundred years now, set designers have been inspired by the physical and spiritual emotion these creators put into their masterpiece and have both traditionally and abstractly designed sets which have pulled audiences into a mystical world where man and swan are both tormented by good and evil.

How were Chaikovsky, Petipa, and Ivanov able to create such a dynamic masterpiece? I believe it was through their immense understanding of one another’s art forms. I believe that the young artist’s success in his discipline is centered around this same principle. How can a young dancer express the emotion of the music unless he or she understands musical syncopation, rhythm, and phrasing? My thesis and design of the Indianapolis based School of Performing Arts, involves an architectural study of the artistic collaboration starting at childhood and developing through adolescence. It also attempts to acknowledge and address the delicate internal growth and struggle which accompanies the childhood of any gifted child.

This thesis evolved through my own personal observations as a child who spent her childhood studying the classical arts and has found how closely related architecture is to the elements of dance, music and, of course, the visual arts.
Throughout my thesis design of the Indianapolis, Indiana based Academy of Performing Arts, I asked the question: how can architecture aid in the collaboration of the various artistic disciplines so that young artists develop into well rounded professionals, and how can the architecture of a building aid in creating a public interest in the development of young artists in the Indianapolis area. In my introduction I explained my beliefs in the importance of the interaction between the various art forms so that each subject part in a production or composition obtains its fullest potential. I feel just as strongly about the interaction of the public. I believe the public should be given a chance to express its support for the young artists in Indianapolis, but most importantly I believe the community should be artistically educated. A strong artistic background strengthens the community as a whole.

My design evolves around a program for an artistic academy in which there are two intertwined programs participating. The first program is that which students the age of ten and above train after school hours, weekends and during summer long workshops in the various disciplines of instrumental music, vocal, dance, and visual arts. These students would participate in not only individual private lessons, but also in frequent master classes in which they learn from one another's input. In a master classes, students would be asked to perform a piece in front of an audience of their piers and then receive a critic from both the appointed teacher and observing students. The premise behind this is not only for the dance students to participate in a ballet master class but also the music and art students. These are the hands on opportunities for the students to learn about the other related disciplines.

The second program involves the bussing in of young pre-school and grade school children to participate in an Orff Program which would be taught by a collaboration of the older performing art students. The Orff method of teaching is one in which the fundamental technics are taught at a children's level through the combination of dance, music, voice, and visual arts. In an Orff class, the "C" scale would be taught by first teaching the students to sing the phrase, "The leaf is falling to the ground" to the notes declining down the "C" scale. The students would then choreograph a dance in which they dance around like a leaf falling from a tree. Once this was mastered, they would be given Orff instruments, such as the recorder, and would learn how to play the "C" scale. This would be topped off with an artistic project in which they design leaf costumes or sets for small productions. The possibilities for creativity and student involvement is endless in this type of teaching method and its success has been proven in the fact that it is still the most popular and successful method of teaching music to young children today.

For the general public, the Academy of performing arts is first located along the quickly populating Canal of downtown Indianapolis. This area is busiest during lunch time hours, after work hours and on weekends. Therefore, the general public would participate by frequenting the Academy's cafe which would be open and serving food for the health conscience citizen during breakfast, lunch and dinner hours. The Academy also is the home of a new 1000 capacity theater in which Academy performances are open to the public and guest artists perform on a regular basis.
PHYSICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT:

I have chosen the site of the Academy of Performing Arts to be in Indianapolis due to the fact that there are no high quality professional performing art schools in the Indianapolis area at this time. Gifted dance students are sent away at age ten to New York or Chicago to participate in their established academies. Gifted music students must be satisfied with secluded private lessons and unorganized school band practices, while the art department in most Indianapolis schools is too small to even mention. Indianapolis is a growing city which now prides itself in being a leading amateur sports capital. In order to keep growing as a cultural city, Indianapolis needs to considerate its efforts toward the artistic training of its young so that they may stay in Indianapolis and give their talents back to the city from which they came.

The specific site for the Academy is on the downtown block bordered by Senate Ave., New York St., Vermont St., and the newly developed canal. The downtown area was chosen due to the fact that the children who would benefit the most from the Orff program would be the inner city children. This location is conveniently centered within the existing art community which consists of such organizations as the Indianapolis Symphony, the Indianapolis Ballet, the Indianapolis Opera, the Art Guild, and the Children's Choir. This is important due to the fact that these professionals would be asked to guest teach or perform with the students and eventually help the students make connections with other professionals around the country or world.

The second advantage of the downtown location is that the cafe, which is an important element for raising funds for the school, has the advantage of being in the center of lunchtime and after work walks and traffic along the canal. This is an element which is now missing from the Canal Development. The placing of a cafe along the canal walk would draw more pedestrian traffic into and around the school property forcing the public to interact with the performing art students.

Finally, the need for a new theater in the downtown area has been under discussion since the beginning of 1993 by the Governor and his staff, and the development of the Academy and its small theater would be a partial solution to this problem.
The overall form of the Performing Arts School comes from both the dissection of the patterns of dance and the expression of elements such as repetition, rhythm and tension which are elements found in all of the art forms. In dance, patterns or lines are either front and back, side to side, or diagonal. The diagonal being the strongest of the lines because it portrays never ending motion. When a dancer poses with his or her arms in the diagonal position the line extends beyond his arms out into space expressing to the audience a continuous line. Therefore, overall form of the building is derived from the collaboration of two diagonal lines being intersected by horizontal corridors. The function of the diagonal wings is to house the artistic programs. These would include spaces for music practices, dance classes, student conferences, students' master classes, student crit sessions, Orff classes, set construction, costume design, and teacher practice rooms/offices. The horizontal corridors contain the life support for the building which would include the administration, the utilities, and the HVAC systems.
the pulling of circular
out of the earth, and the
glass skylight system pulling
the paneled horizontal

rhythm is expressed in the
tones, and in the pattern
partitions in the diagonal
partitions separate the
the entryways for the
son walks down the
subconsciously pick up on
2-3, 1-2-3 or 1-2-3-4,
INTERACTION:

Throughout my design process I was concerned with the idea of an interactive building, yet I needed to make sure this interaction did not hinder the activities which need to take place. The spaces which best describe this interaction would be the practice spaces and studios. In the studio wing of the building rooms are positioned so that musicians may peer down into the dance studio during breaks from practicing. At the same time, small windows pierce through from above so that the public may eat their lunch purchased in the cafe and watch the practices in process. These windows are placed so that direct sunlight does not put glare in the faces of those students practicing. Various decorative screens are placed in the studios to also help in the prevention of glare.

For the direct student collaborations, I have placed an open plan master class room in direct relationship to the public cafe. The areas can either be closed off for seclusion from the public or it can be opened up for large public master classes or banquets following the classes or performances. In the set and costume rooms there are open plans with viewing windows from the central gathering place or green room. This green room area is centered for uses such as artistic critics, Orff class activities, student lounging, etc. It is located in the core of the student activity and would be used as the main student commons area. This area is not opened to the public. The relationship between the stage area and the main building is through the lower level backstage area. Facilities which boarder the backstage green room/student commons are those which are needed in a production. Those include the set room, costume room, locker rooms and dressing rooms. The public sector of the theater is separated from the main building do to the fact that during performances the building would not be open to the public. There is a lobby space and banquet room which would take care of any public needs during a performance.
CIRCULATION & VISIBILITY:

The circulation throughout the building is dealt with in various ways. First, I began by studying the lines and floor patterns expressed in the art of dance. I observed that in dance classes the rectangular rooms which dance studios usually take the shape of stifled or interrupt the line of the dancer. In dance, various combinations are performed in either front and back patterns, side to side patterns, circular patterns, or diagonal patterns, all of which generally demand extension of the line which is obtained by the dancer in many technical ways, one being the traveling across the floor in a diagonal pattern. As a dancer, I have experienced the problem of being given a choreographed combination across the dance studio in a diagonal and by the end of the combination I have crashed into the wall because the studio is too small. As a solution to this problem I have pulled the mirrors away from the walls and placed them as free standing planes in the studio. By doing so I have freed up the corners of the room so that dance combinations may extend beyond the space.

This separation of the mirrors away from the walls also helps solve another problem; which is intermittent combination circulation. Usually in a dance class students break up into two or more groups for the rehearsal of each combination. To keep the class moving most teachers will ask the accompanist to continue playing the music while the first group finishes and the second group immediately runs up behind them and begins the combination with out loosing a count. This procedure is effective in that it speeds up class but the problem arises in students running into one another. With the mirror plains separated from the walls there are exterior circulation paths which occur and students are able to finish the combinations and walk around the sides without disturbing the class.

As I have already mentioned the musicians rehearsal studios have openings into the dance studio for observation. This occurs by dropping the upper level down into the lower level as bulkheads. The bulkheads define the spaces in the dance studios which are used for warm up, baggage storage and the accompanists space. This bulkhead also acts as the plan in which a tarp is hung for in studio press shoots.

Finally, the dance areas contain a weight room and physical training room which are separated from the studios with large sliding doors which can be slid open for an open plan effect. This allows equipment demonstrations, or physical therapy discussions to be opened up to the dance classes.

The same care is taken in the design of the musicians rehearsal studios. Practice spaces need to be secluded both acoustically and visually so that there is minimum disturbance. Yet, the absence of nature light or a sense of place can be very depressing during a long practice or private lesson. Since I feel that interaction between all the arts is important I feel that musical practices should not be a mystery to the other studies. But I also feel that a person staring you in the face while you try to perfect the running scales of a Chopin Etude would be very annoying. Therefore, I have extended the ceiling of the practice rooms to fifteen feet and placed the public observation windows up above the musicians line of vision. I have also placed decorative screens in various positions in the differing studios to help reflect direct light from the eyes of the practicing artists. There are also observation windows which look down into the dance studios and are placed six inches from the floor so that a student would have to sit down on the floor to peer into the dance studios, otherwise the student might be distracted by the movement of the dancers underneath if the windows were within eye level during practicing.
The set room is found in the lower level and is elongated in plan so that sets may be hung up on the far wall and reeled up the wall as they are worked on. The opposite wall is again punctured with observation windows so that students may watch their friends discussing the design of a set. The set room is found next to the Orff area in which I have designed an area designated for the art classes. This area has a large opening in which the younger students may look into the set room while working on their own projects.

The costume room is also opened up to the commons area with observation windows and contains a wooden floor and mirror for the experimentation of costume designs on live models.

The Orff room takes on a circular form in plan. I have already mentioned that an Orff program includes the studying of music through dance, art, voice, and the playing on instruments. These activities often take place in groups of ten to fifteen children. Creativity is a large part of the program and the children are often asked to break off into small groups to discuss their individual creative projects. Therefore, I have sectioned off individual spaces for discussions with repetitive gypsum board partitions forming a circular second wall. The art area is separated by a mirror plane like those found in the dance studios. The central area of the room is the performance area. This configuration works well in that group activities usually take place in a circle of children facing inward. In this area the upper level corridor's footprint is pushed down as a bulkhead into the Orff room letting people know subconsciously where they stand in relation to the rest of the building. This time there are no observation windows looking down into the room since the attention of young children can be distracted so easily. Instead, invited guests could observe from the stair platforms which winds its way down into the room behind repetitive gypsum wall planes.
ON THRU PUBLIC SPACES
REFLECTION:

Throughout my design process I was concerned with the interaction, collaboration, and holistic development of the young performer. The architecture of the building was therefore directed toward the functions which it was to house. These being artistic rehearsals, classes, and performances. I believe that the plan of the building aids in the collaboration of students and that elements such as the observation windows, cafe, and theaters aid in the interaction of the public. I enjoyed this project because it was a very personal dissection and analysis of what would help in the development of young artists. I hope that in the future I will be able aid in the development of the Indianapolis art community.