

Design Inspiration

Elliott N. Duchon Concert Hall, at Jurupa Valley Rubidoux High School by





Planning Process

Jurupa Unified School District (JUSD) wanted to build a performing arts facility for Rubidoux High School (RHS), a school in an under-resourced community which lacked a performance venue for its thriving arts & music program. Working with school stakeholders, the architectural team produced a master plan and analyzed three potential sites on RHS's dense campus.

Close collaboration with students, teachers, and administration revealed that band, orchestra, and choir had far more student participation than theater, yet lacked the appropriate infrastructure and support spaces. RHS's chamber choir had performed in major cities across the U.S. and in Paris, France, receiving multiple accolades, yet RHS's music ensembles only had a gym or neighboring facilities to practice in. With long-time support and enthusiasm from the district's former Superintendent, Elliott N. Duchon, the music program was popular with students and central to school culture.

The team collectively decided that a state-of-the-art, professional-standard concert hall would help support the aspirations and talents of RHS's students better than a standard multi-use high school performing arts facility.

The design team, school stakeholders, and theatrical & acoustics consultants toured community college and university concert halls to find sophisticated, but budget-friendly models adaptable for high school level. The design team also performed special visioning exercises with music students, resulting in alma-mater themed design that prominently welcomes visitors through the main lobby.

Awards



Coalition for Adequate School Housing (C.A.S.H.), 2024
Leroy F. Greene Design & Planning Award of Honor.




2024 CMACN/AIACA Concrete Masonry Design Awards,
Honor Award for Education Design.

Why Choose Masonry?

The architectural composition embodies the design philosophy of Space through Rhythm, with bold stripes of fluted CMU and vibrant window frames creating a rhythmic pattern akin to musical notes. This motif extends to colored concrete stripes in the hardscape, enhancing the beauty of the CMU material. Inside, the CMU's texture contrasts with transparent glass, separated by a metal-clad overhang.

The intentional visibility of the striped CMU ensures a seamless visual connection from all angles, accentuating the musical staff motif through strategic stacking and strong control joint lines.

Additionally, protruding fluted CMU adds depth and movement to the facade, showcasing the dynamic function of the facility.



Jet Black Precision
Fluted(8x8x16)
Orco Block - CMU

Sterling Black Cinder
Burnished (8x8x16)
Orco Block - CMU

The attractiveness and versatility of CMU shaped our decision, improving both appearance and practicality. Its cost-effectiveness and natural acoustics, achieved through paneling, reinforce its energy efficiency and durability, confirming our choice.

This decision seamlessly integrates form, function, and sustainability, enhancing the design's integrity and influence. The building's look uses CMU's inherent patterns and texture to depict movement, music, and the dynamic essence of the concert hall.

Beyond serving as a venue for school performances, the Elliott N. Duchon Concert Hall serves as a cultural hub for the broader community, fostering collaboration between students and professional musicians.

By providing access to high-quality facilities and fostering partnerships with local arts organizations, the hall enriches educational experiences and promotes a sense of belonging within the musical community.



Design

The project is the embodiment of musical rhythm and movement. On the exterior, patterned courtyard paving and succession of staggered vertical windows and panels express the lyrical movement of music. A rhythm of porosity and transparency is implemented as you navigate the facility, achieved through varying glazing strategies ranging in transparency, translucency, color, and composition. The Concert Hall was designed to heighten visibility and connections throughout while also prioritizing indoor-outdoor connections.

The lobby's floor-to-ceiling glass illuminates the entry forecourt and welcomes visitors. Vertical windows bring daylight and unexpected views into the 339-seat performance hall. The concert hall features equipment and systems highly adaptable for band, orchestra, and choir. Acoustic panels are customized for the specific sound needs of each group, and motorized panels at the windows adjust both sound and lighting per the unique needs of each performance. An integrated "acoustic shelf," or soffit, along the hall's edge utilizes motorized curtains and provides superior acoustic performance.



High Performance

The Concert Hall utilizes passive sustainable design strategies such as optimal building orientation, daylighting, and efficient mechanical systems. A low soffit conditions the occupiable level of the space, helping to cool and heat the building more efficiently, thereby minimizing cost.

Operable window shades and orientation of glass, along with concrete masonry units on the exterior, minimize heat gain. Throughout the building's site, the landscape palette is drought tolerant.



Learning Environment

The new Elliott N. Duchon Concert Hall at RHS gives students a professional-grade performance space that enables them to “achieve the highest levels of musical artistry,” in line with the stated mission of the RHS music department. It serves as an example of JUSD’s “Vision for the Future” goal of equity and inclusion by providing a state-of-the-art facility to an underserved student population and community.

A one-of-a-kind building not typically seen at the high school level, its advanced acoustics, multi-use flexibility, and thoughtful design directly support the unique talents and interests of RHS students.



#MasonryMatters



Credits

Project:
Rubidoux High School
Concert Hall, Jurupa Valley,
California, JUSD.

Architect:
Architecture For Education –
A4E

Engineer:
Englekirk Structural
Engineers.

Landscape Architect:
KFA Land Images.

Block Producer:
Orco Block & Hardscape.