



Figure 111. Stage door of the Pretoria State Theatre's Opera stage (Author,2010).

06. PRECEDENT STUDIES

6.1 TEMPORARY THEATRES

6.1.1 Pop-Up Theatre

Hessisches Staatstheater
 Darmstadt., Germany
 Convertible City
 2005

While the original theatre designed in 1972 by Rudolf Prange was being reconstructed, the **parking lot** beneath it was used as a **temporary performing space**. The new structure was inserted where the driveway divides into multiple lanes in front of the entrance of the parking lot.

The space accommodates all of the functions needed to run a studio theatre and includes a canteen, storage rooms and access to the new two-storey high foyer of the main building above.

“Very interesting is the **renewed atmosphere** that is created by the **temporary transformation**. Both friendly and inspiring.” (De Boer, 2009).

This Precedent illustrates that a temporary insertion can enable a building to stay in use while it is being renovated.



Figure 112. Exterior view of the Pop-Up Theatre (De Boer, 2009).

6.1.2 Puppet Theatre

Carpenter Centre for the Visual Arts
 Harvard University, Massachusetts
 Pierre Huyghe & Michael Meredith
 2004

The only major **Le Corbusier-designed building** in North America is The Carpenter Centre for the Visual Arts at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A **temporary puppet theatre** was constructed within its sunken courtyard in **celebration** of its 40th anniversary.

With the help of computer technology and students, conceptual artist Pierre Huyghe and Harvard assistant professor of architecture, Michael Meredith, **collaborated** on the structure. 2,000 bolts were used to form a rigid frame that held together 500 white polycarbonate panels covered in real moss. “Metaphorical identities included an egg, a seed, a tumour, an alien spacecraft, and Le Corbusier’s brain.” (Bellostes, 2008).



This precedent illustrates how a temporary insertion can be used to celebrate a permanent building.

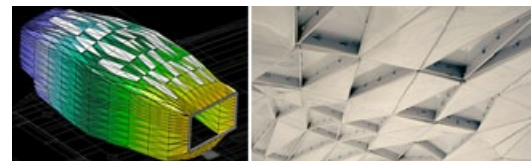


Figure 113. Interior view of the Puppet Theatre (Bellostes, 2008).

6.1.3 Almeida at Gainsborough Studios

The Almeida Theatre
Shoreditch, London
Haworth Tompkins
2000

Materials:

- Turf
- Painted steel
- Reclaimed timber
- Painted scaffold tube
- Recycled theatre seats

Value: £750,000

During renovations The Almeida employed a series of **temporary venues** and staged **once-off shows** to maintain its presence. The coal-fired power station, a huge **19th century industrial structure** that was used to support the Metropolitan railway, was converted into film studios in 1919. By 1999 partial demolition and **conversion to apartments** were scheduled for the now derelict building.

At the time, The Almeida Theatre was looking for a temporary venue for the staging of Richard II and Coriolanus; two large-scale productions. The theatre negotiated a **one-year-lease** from the developer and Haworth Tompkins did the conversions for as low-cost as possible.

The original volume, of over 25m high, was restored by demolishing an intermediate floor (Figure 114).

The remainder of the building was treated as **'found' material** and contained the foyers and bars. Original openings were retained for scenic effect. **Scaffold staircases, ramps and simple cut openings** were inserted to **comply with the complex fire escape and circulation requirements** for an audience of 900.

A simple scaffold seating system created a large courtyard auditorium on three levels (Figure 116) and **basic soundproofing was installed**. After playing to full houses throughout the summer of 2000, the venue closed at the end of the season and has now been **demolished, as planned** (Tompkins, 2010).

This precedent demonstrates how an old building can be temporarily adapted into a theatre that complies with safety requirements.



Figure 114. Adaptation of Gainsborough studios (Tompkins, 2010).



Figure 115. Interior views of The Almeida Theatre (Tompkins, 2010).

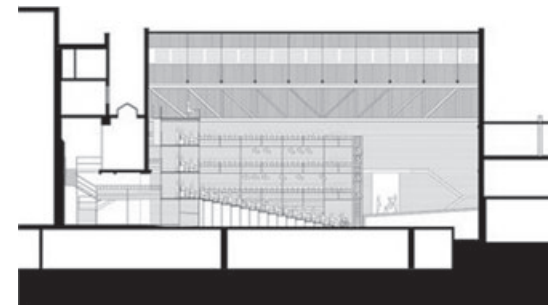


Figure 116. Section through The Almeida Theatre. (Tompkins, 2010).

6.1.4 Ten-day Theatre

Institute for Contemporary Arts (PICA)
 TBA (time based art) festival, Portland,
 Oregon
 BOORA Architects
 2004

Materials:

- Pegboard
- Scaffold structure
- Visqueen
- Plastic buckets
- MDF board
- Recycled carpet tiles

Value: \$10 000

Eight **volunteer architects** turned a **vacant warehouse** into a **ten-day temporary theatre** for the TBA (Time Based Art) **festival** (Figure 123), Portland Institute of Contemporary Art's annual 10-day international arts festival (Figure 119). The **budget was small** and **materials** had to be undamaged and **re-usable** afterwards.

"It's always fun when a team of architects gets the opportunity to roll up their sleeves and engage in making something directly, not having products be confined to paper and scale models." (Architecture Week, 2005)

The **structural grid** of the building **informed** the diagram of the theatre (Figure 117). One of the structural bays provided sufficient clear space for the stage.

Around this stage, seating was positioned in the bays of the grid (Figure 124). Existing offices lining one wall were used as back-of-house support spaces. The positioning of the theatre in the warehouse reserved a large area of remaining space for the cabaret, bar and café (Figure 121).

A **scaffold** "media wall" differentiates the theatre volume from the surrounding volume of the warehouse. It partially bisects the warehouse, creating the **envelope** that **encloses** the theatre. The media wall's interior and exterior are clad in pegboard and visqueen and illuminated from within, creating a glowing volume of light contained within a gritty industrial shell (Figure 118).

Pegboard, suspended from a swinging crane, creates a hanging entry marquee. A portal in the media wall with a projecting canopy forms the entrance. **Technical equipment**, transformers and cabling are **concealed** within the media wall. An elevated control room serves both the theatre and the cabaret stage. Benches, on a raked scaffold substructure was assembled from five gallon plastic buckets, MDF board and recycled carpet tiles (Figure 120 & 122) (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).



Figure 117. Internal illumination contrasting the gritty industrial shell (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).



Figure 118. The found space before and after. No sign of the theatre's presence remained (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).

This precedent illustrates how a vacant space can be temporarily activated to create a performance venue during a festival and then be returned completely to its former state leaving only the memory behind.



Figure 119. Eight volunteers assembling the media wall (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).



Figure 120. Four steel columns of the industrial warehouse framed the temporary stage (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).

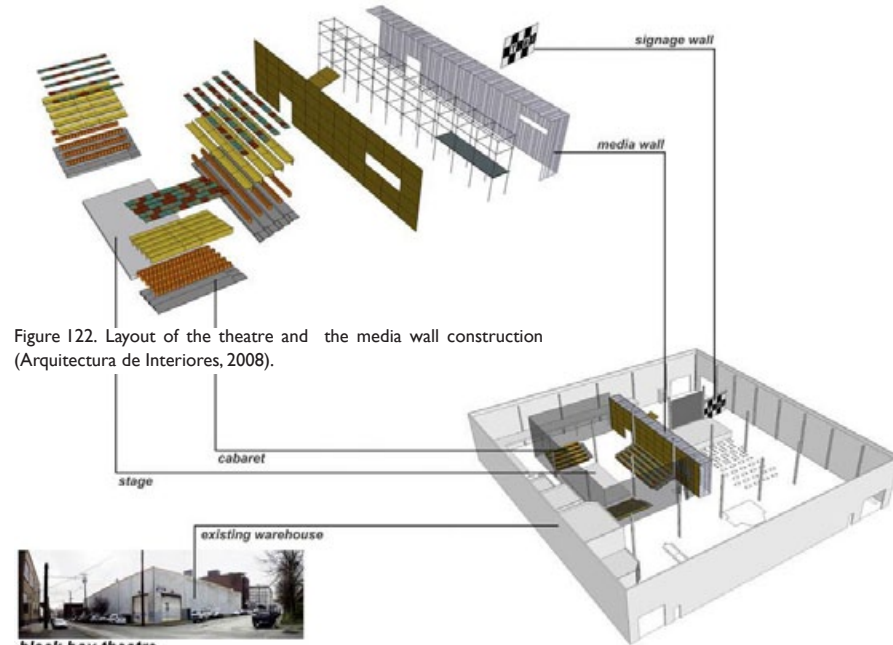


Figure 122. Layout of the theatre and the media wall construction (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).



Figure 121. The visqueen cladding of the “media wall” reveals the skeletal scaffold structure (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008).



Figure 123. TBA (Time Based Art) festival poster



Figure 124. Plastic buckets, medium-density fiberboard and borrowed carpet tiles create bench seating with a raked backrest (Arquitectura de Interiores, 2008)

6.2 TYPICAL THEATRES

6.2.1 Lier Theatre - UP Campus

Description

Simple orange face-brick building, corrugated steel roof and exposed wooden trusses 3.5m above the finished floor level. Medium sized, black box theatre for intimate productions.

Exterior & entrance



Figure 125. Exterior gathering space & entrance of the Lier (Author, 2010).

Trees, planters and concrete benches along pathways separate the building from the parking area and create an outdoor waiting area.

Foyer

Service counter, sink, bar fringe, freezer, kettle and cupboards. Ablution facilities; one male and one female wc. A black pin-up board. Recessed, ceiling down lighters.



Figure 126. Foyer of the Lier (Author, 2010).

Seating capacity 80

Audience

Entrance from the side. One door between the stage and the raked seating. Stackable upholstered chairs staggered on 6 levels of rostra.

Stage

Proscenium stage on ground level, 8.4m wide and 7m deep play area. The stage is on ground level.



Figure 127. Views of the audience, control box & stage (Author, 2010).

Floor surface of boards nailed together. Boards can be painted and re-painted. No fly tower; scenery is supported by the floor surface or hung from the trusses. A backstage double door provides access for scenery.



Figure 128. Views of the rehearsal space & change room (Author, 2010).

Backstage

A long narrow rehearsal space called 'The Bok'; perpendicularly attached to the main theatre building with backstage access to the dressing room. One dressing room with lit mirrors and worktops divided into two areas by a curtain. Separate male and female ablution facilities with one wc, wash hand-basin and shower each. Backstage access to the stage via a passage, lit with blue lights that won't spill onto the stage.



Figure 129. Views of the change room & backstage passage to stage (Author, 2010). ment in the control box (Author, 2010).

Technical aspects

A 3x1.5m control box on the highest rostra behind the audience is used to operate the sound system, lighting and special effects. The control desk houses the necessary electronic equipment; a computer to programme lighting sequences, a CD player and communication devices. Luminaries for effect and functional lighting are hung from the exposed wooden roof trusses.

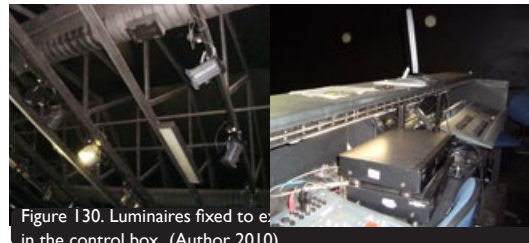


Figure 130. Luminaires fixed to exposed wooden roof trusses in the control box (Author, 2010).

6.2.2 Masker Theatre - UP Campus

Description

Converted from an old school hall, the Masker dates back to the 1970's. The building consists of a concrete frame with orange-brick infill and a corrugated steel, pitched roof with a three-storey high apex. Steel-framed windows were painted black to create the necessary level of darkness inside.

Exterior & entrance

Brick paving, walkways, some trees, planters and concrete seating, separate the entrance from the parking and create a gathering space. Although notice boards are placed along the walkways, posters are stuck onto the theatre door and front facade (Figure 133).

Foyer

Separated from the theatre auditorium by a purple velvet curtain which also functions as an acoustic absorber behind the audience. A simple service counter is located close to the entrance door. Ablution facilities can be accessed from the foyer (Figure 131).



Figure 131. Exterior gathering space & entrance of the Masker (Author, 2010).

Seating capacity: 117

Audience

Loose chairs are placed on a series of raked rostra that can be altered to allow different seating arrangements. Additional seating is provided on a mezzanine level above the foyer.

Stage

A typical 9m x 7m wooden school hall proscenium stage raised 800mm above the ground floor level. Dark fabric curtain wings.



Figure 132. Foyer of the Masker (Author, 2010).

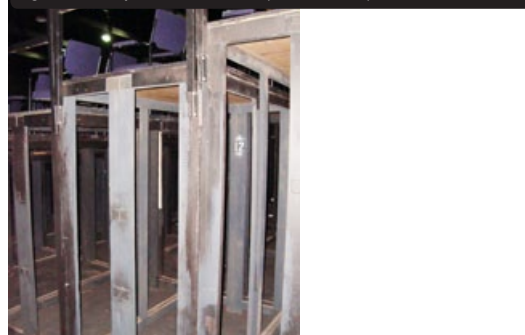


Figure 133. Raked audience seating (Author, 2010).

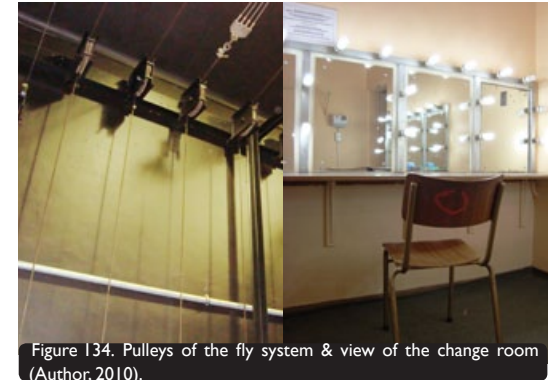


Figure 134. Pulleys of the fly system & view of the change room (Author, 2010).

Backstage

Four change rooms with lit dressing tables; wc's, basins and showers located behind the stage with backstage access to the stage.

Technical aspects

6m above the ground level are six parallel rigs onto which luminaries are fixed. The control desk is situated towards the front on the mezzanine level,.

6.3 ADAPTIVE RE USE THEATRE

6.3.1 Market Theatre - Johannesburg

Description

In 1976 Johannesburg's Indian Fruit Market was converted into the Market Theatre; internationally renowned as South Africa's "Theatre of the Struggle". In a post-apartheid South Africa the theatre aims to encourage new dramatic writing. The complex spans 36 meters and the roof of this vast Edwardian market hall is 200m in length. Metal trusses and other components were manufactured in Glasgow in 1922, shipped to South Africa and assembled here.

Exterior & entrance

The main entrance to the Market Theatre complex is the grand Edwardian facade in Wolhuter Street, which has three arched windows, flanked by twin domed towers (Figure 135).

Rental

The theatre and other spaces are available for rent and can be used for exhibitions, conferences and launches.



Figure 135. Exterior gathering space & entrance of the Market Theatre (Author, 2010).

Foyer

The entrance hallway is defined by a series of arches and concrete columns, a row of pendant luminaries and banners (Figure 136 & 137). The ticket office is situated to the right of the entrance. Niche-like rooms branch out of the hallway creating seating and gathering spaces. A flight of stairs leads up to a second foyer with a small bar.

Audience

The temporary, *ad-hoc* character, usually restricted to the stage, is brought into the auditorium space through the nature of the conversion. Existing services are exposed; brick walls are left bare and some of the vendors' signs still hang from the gallery. Loose rows of upholstered auditorium chairs or benches are packed onto raked rostra.

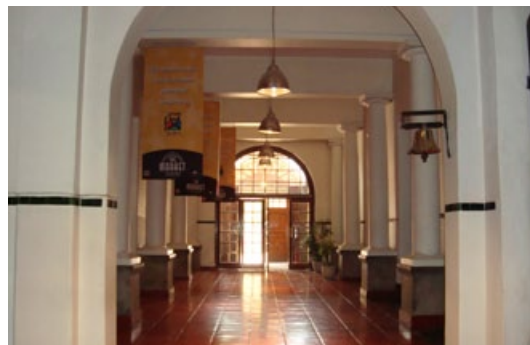


Figure 136. Foyer of the Market Theatre (Author, 2010).

Stage

The Market Theatre consists of three theatres; the Main Theatre, the Barney Simon Theatre and the Laager Theatre. All three are open stages with seating on three sides. The stage floor of the Laager Theatre is on the ground level; the stage of the Barney Simon Theatre is raised one step and the circular stage of the Main Theatre is raised about 900mm from the ground level (see next page).

Technical aspects

Control desks and technical equipment were handled in a makeshift fashion and traditional theatre conventions adapted to overcome the limitations presented by the existing spaces. For example, the placement of the control desk to the side in the Laager Theatre (see next page).



Figure 137. Banners in the foyer, advertising the shows (Author, 2010).

Laager Theatre

Seating capacity: 100-120
Rental: R8 500 (+ 5% of door income)



Figure 138. Interior view of the Laager Theatre showing stage & seating (Author, 2010).

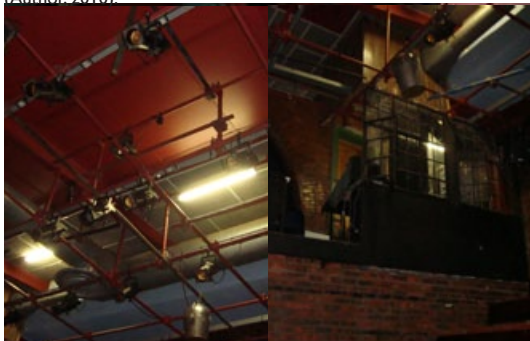


Figure 141. Scaffold lighting system & control box of the Laager Theatre (Author, 2010).

Barney Simon Theatre

Seating capacity: 100-120
Rental: R8 500 (+ 5% of door income)
• Laager Theatre:



Figure 139. Interior view of the Barney Simon Theatre showing stage & seating (Author, 2010).



Figure 142. Control box of the Main Theatre (Author, 2010).

Main Theatre

Seating capacity: 387
Rental per week: R25 000 (+ 5% of door income)



Figure 140. Interior view of the Main Theatre showing stage & seating (Author, 2010).



Figure 143. Lighting system in the Main Theatre fixed to the existing roof structure (Author, 2010).