

04 | PRECEDENTS

04 | PRECEDENT STUDIES

4.1 THE PERFORMANCE ACADEMY, NEWCASTLE COLLEGE

The Performance Academy displays the **use of added skeleton structures** that double as a lighting object as well as a projection screen and shows **how a structure can be added** to the façade of the building to give the building both **meaning and function**.

4.2 BARKING TOWN SQUARE:

An analysis of how the various disjointed spaces were **completed with use of public spaces**, new materials and place-making to define a usable social square **integrating old and new buildings giving a space identity**.

4.3 MUSEO DI CASTELVECCHIO

An analysis and **record of a heritage building** that was **restored and given new meaning** by the implementation of basic ideas that **made the spaces rich** and brought out its historical and cultural history.

4.4 YOUNG VIC THEATRE

The young Vic Theatre study shows a relevance to the type of intervention that is possible when incorporating three buildings to create a **single attractive, flexible theatre space** for the people. The building is studied with regards to the **simple changes made to make the space efficient** and it shows the **contrast between the new and the added elements that unite all the spaces**. The Young Vic is also an example on how a **black box theatre** operates with examples of **various theatre configurations**.

4.1 | THE PERFORMANCE ACADEMY, NEWCASTLE COLLEGE 2004

The Performance Academy displays the use of **added skeleton structures** that double as a lighting object as well as a projection screen and shows **how a structure can be added to the façade of the building** to give the building both meaning and function. This can be seen in comparison to my addition of the light box stairwell for Die Masker.

CITY: Newcastle (United Kingdom)
 ARCHITECT: RMJM Architectural Practice



Figure 4.1.1: Back facade referred to as the black box

Figure 4.1.2: White glowing façade referred to as "light box"

(http://www.e-architect.co.uk/newcastle/jpgs/newcastle_college_rmjm030408_1.jpg, cited 1 August 2008)

The building is designed to be the **hub for the students of music, performing arts and media**. It is a first of a series of satellite schools to the Rye Hill Campus and it creates a unique image. The idea behind the College is that it would be seen as a catalyst for further regeneration of the urban development in the surrounding area. It is seen as an iconic building.

The building character was devised by the design team as "a workshop, a robust, stimulating and vibrant place, facilitating experimentation and collaboration, as well as for intense creative energy" (Evan, 2005:21).

The building aesthetic follows that of the local Newcastle aesthetic of the Industrial style. The specific character of the building that **compares the arts with the façade** is detailed by means of a profiled metal box that contains a large-span space located towards the back of the building [fig. 4.1.1]. The front of the building is where the "light box" is situated [fig. 4.1.2], a glazed curtain wall structure containing short span spaces conducive to daylight.

The light box gives the impression that it is floating above the primary social space and entrance of the building. The entrance is a double volume recessed space with a clear pathway, which in turn attracts the visitor into the building [fig. 4.1.3].

The light box is composed of a 75m long exposed steel truss support system that supports the box that bridges over the entrance and creates a column of free space that has a very dramatic appeal. The exoskeleton trusses are clad in an active polycarbonate skin to create a giant media projection screen [fig. 4.1.4].

On the south-east end of the light box the cladding is set up for back projection for drive in or sit out movies [fig. 4.1.4]. **The entire exterior design functions as a metaphor for the arts: the idea of what is seen and what is concealed** (http://www.rmjm.com/index_flash.php, 1 Aug. 2008).



Figure 4.1.3: The Polycarbonate light box, (http://www.e-architect.co.uk/newcastle/jpgs/newcastle_college_rmjm030408_2.jpg, cited 1 August 2008)



Figure 4.1.4: The Light box is used for projections, (http://www.e-architect.co.uk/newcastle/rmjm_newcastle_college.htm, 1 August 2008)

4.2 | BARKING TOWN SQUARE

An analysis of how the various **disjointed spaces were completed with the use of public spaces**, new materials and **place-making** to define a usable social square **integrating old and new buildings giving a space identity.**

CITY: London (United Kingdom)

AUTHORS: muf architecture/art, Allford Hall Monaghan and Morris

PROJECT BEGUN: 2005

START OF WORK: 2007

END OF WORK: 2008



Figure 4.2.1: Aerial diagram of the New Barking Town Square.
Cited: 25 June 2008

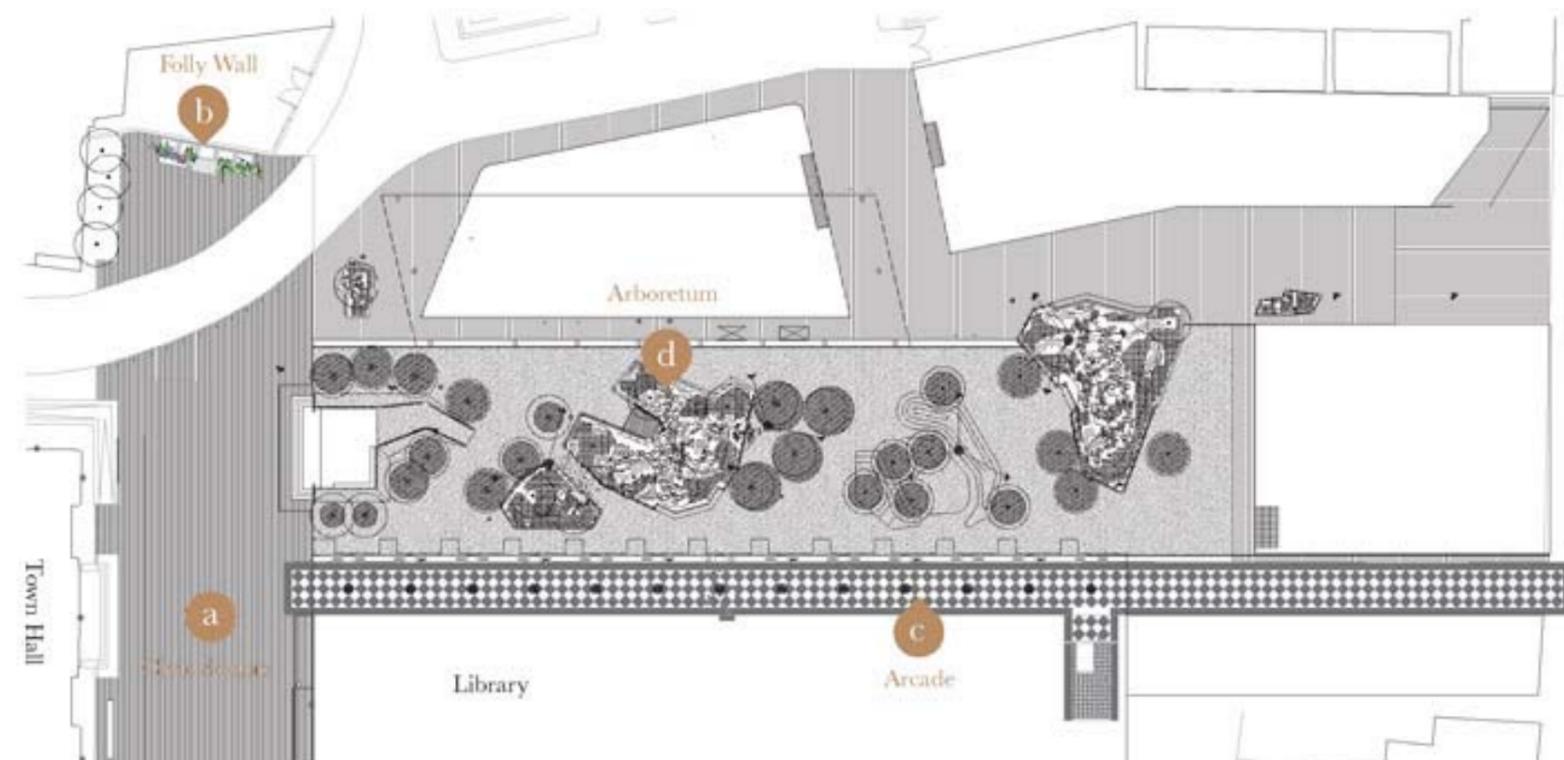


Figure 4.2.2: Aerial plan of the layout of Barking Town Square showing the Pink granite square (a), the end of the pathway with found objects (b), the new checkered arcade leading to the square in front of the Town Hall(c), and the new Secret Garden (d) Cited: 25 June 2008

Barking Town Square is the centre of the new Thames Gateway Development. The completed first phase consists of a large, hard landscape of pink granite slabs (a)[figure 4.2.2] that runs alongside the town hall, a bed of flowers, bricks, and found objects is located at one of its ends (b)[figure 4.2.2].

The second phase is a soft landscape of mounds, woodlands and benches (d) [figure 4.2.2] which will run between a row of flats, shops and the public library adjacent to the arcade (c) [figure 4.2.2].

The **landscape links these two disparate environments.** The architects intended to exploit this by filling one open space with a forest, extending the existing walkway to form an arcade creating a new pedestrian connection, and also marking off an area in front the town hall with a single mature Magnolia Tree.



Figure 4.2.3: Sketch of the arboretum with forty mature trees of sixteen different species that are lit up at night with colours that vary according to the time of year. Cited 1 August 2008

The square provides a new focal point for Barking Town Centre and combines an open public space of pink granite with new furniture including purple benches, bins and new signage [figure 4.2.4].



Figure 4.2.4: Pink Granite Slab Square adjoining old Town Hall and new buildings, creating a complete space. Cited 1 August 2008

The north façade of the AHMM's new building for the square is pulled back at the ground floor level creating an eight meter high arcade. Large scaled candelabra were introduced in the spirit of celebrating municipal provision. The flooring is geometrically tiled with terrazzo, and this marks the route towards the town hall that signifies the historical Edwardian Villas and their front paths [figure 4.2.6].



Figure 4.2.5: Town Hall Square which accommodates for events. Cited: 1 august 2008



Figure 4.2.6: Checkered arcade with golden chandeliers create new pathway into public square. Cited 25 June 2008

A secret garden [figure 4.2.3] has been designed with a seven meter high façade that has been constructed from reclaimed bricks and architectural salvage from surrounding old buildings. It has been developed by bricklayers from the Barking College, **incorporating a public art element into the design of the main square.**

The secret garden is a large-scale public art project commissioned by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and is an integral part of the town square. **Trees are positioned to accommodate the desired lines that run diagonally across the site.**

The square in front of the Town Hall is used for **various exhibitions, gatherings and performances where temporary structures and seating can be installed** to suite the event that will take place [figures 4.2.7, 8 & 9] (<http://www.cccb.org/en/>, 25 Jun. 2008).



Figure 4.2.7: Temporary stage structure with backdrop inserted for an event. Cited : 1 August 2008



Figure 4.2.8: Square used for event with the Town Hall as a backdrop. Cited 1 August 2008



Figure 4.2.9: Various activities such as festivals and carnivals take place in the square. Cited 1 august 2008

4.3 | MUSEO DI CASTEL VECCHIO

This building was studied with regards to its **treatment towards its heritage** and the way Scarpa dealt with the **new and the existing** as it is aged at over five hundred years old. The study was also done to look at the significance of the building and how **the truth of the spaces by the use of new materials and elements is revealed** to bring out the essence of the space without destroying the existing structures.

Architect: Carlo Scarpa
 Location: Verona

Attitude towards history:

Scarpa's approach toward the building:

- A) To clean the building of "bogus" decoration; and
 - B) Mount an exhibition according to the "latest ideas on museum design"
- (Murphy, 1990:98).

He went further than just cleaning the building up by attempting to clarify and expose **various layers of history using excavation and creative demolition.**

The aim was to differentiate the various constructions through time so that the **building becomes an exhibition itself**: on the growth and change of nature. Carlo Scarpa was not interested in restoring the existing, but rather in making history visible **through the co-existence of overlaying fragments of construction.**

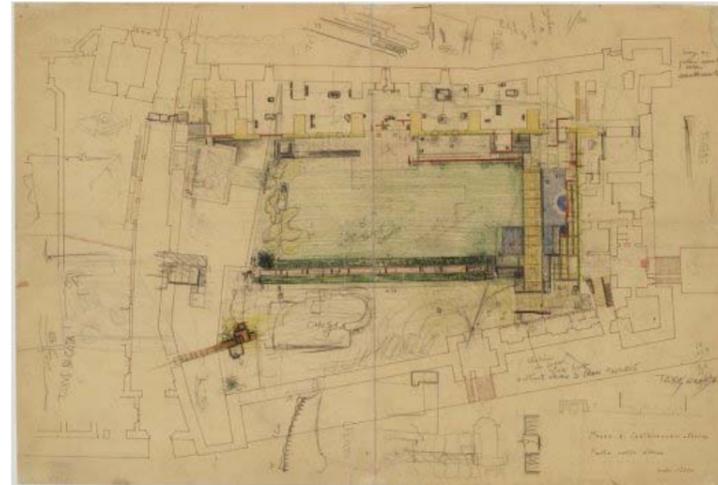


Figure 4.3.1 Drawn plan by Carlo Scarpa of the changes he wanted for the courtyard and building. Murphy 1990



Figure 4.3.2 Image of the Courtyard of Cangrande. Author: Murphy, 1990

Scarpa started the reconstruction by attending to the facades of the courtyard. They could not demolish the facades; therefore Scarpa used devices on the existing surfaces to break it up:

- A violently expressed demolition of the end bay;
- The removal of the entry point from the centre bay, which removed any symmetry from the courtyard;
- Placing a new screen of the museum, which moves independently of the building;
- Making the existing façade look thin and unsubstantial at the reveals; and
- Using active interpenetration of the outside and inside by elements such as the Sacello, entrance screen and paving.

Scarpa's best ideas were to find solutions on site which combine programmatic, historical and formal concerns in one act of creative demolition. The essence of the building shows **how the new and existing are juxtaposed.** For example, in the courtyard of Cangrande where the new concrete pedestal is constructed within the existing freer form space to support the sculpture of the Great Cangrande [fig.4.3.2]. The orthogonal elements are inserted into the old structure wherever possible, leaving a void between the two. These areas show where two eras connect [fig 4.3.3].

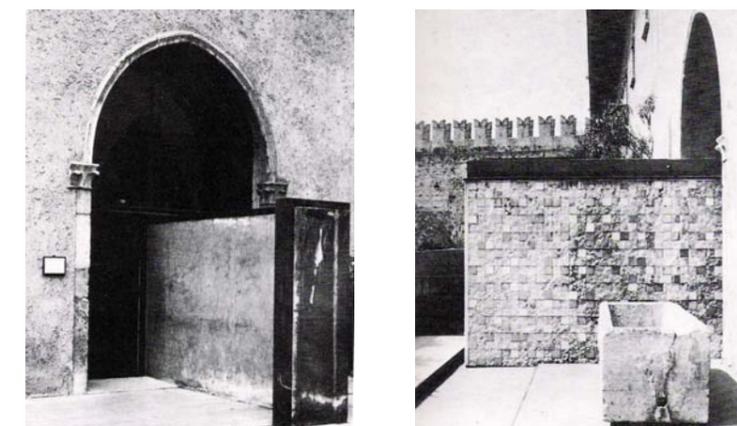


Figure 4.3.3: Sacello at entrance, new object vs. existing entrance. Author: Murphy, 1990

Scarpa believed that if there were any **original parts, they had to be preserved**. Any other intervention had to be designed and thought out in a new way. **Materials had to be used according to necessity and reasoning**. All of the insertions Scarpa made of the new into the existing consisted of the **orthogonal verses the freer forms** of the previous structures. He also used well-finished textures and precisely jointed materials placed adjacently to rougher, homogenous surfaces to **create tension**.

The idea of new **layering** over the walls was used. This shows a comparison between a man-made object, clear and precise, in comparison to the weathered natural object. Scarpa **lightly touches the existing** with a layer of **newer materials** that are **well suited for the function** to give the space meaning and appeal [fig. 4.3.4 & 4.3.5].

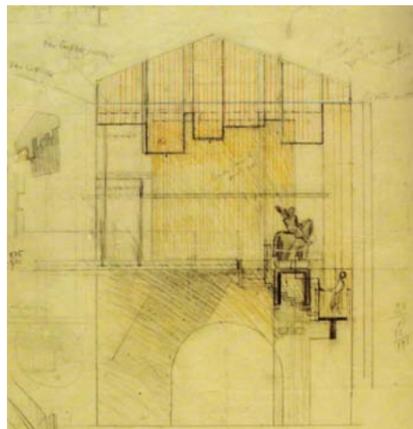


Figure 4.3.4: Drawings by Scarpa showing the layering of materials over the existing. Author: Murphy, 1990



Figure 4.3.5: Image of the timber screen applied over the existing structure. Author: Murphy 1990

Scarpa also used a **composition of planes** where the object's thinness is continually revealed [fig. 4.3.5]. Planes were used that can be deliberately detached from one another at the corners of the spaces. This can be seen where the sculpture plinths meet the ground in the exhibition galleries and where the new tiling

does not coincide with the wall. **Planes are detached** where the horizontal elements meet the vertical elements, **showing where the new meets the old**. At this junction there is a void between the two elements that conceals their real junction (Murphy, 1990:106).

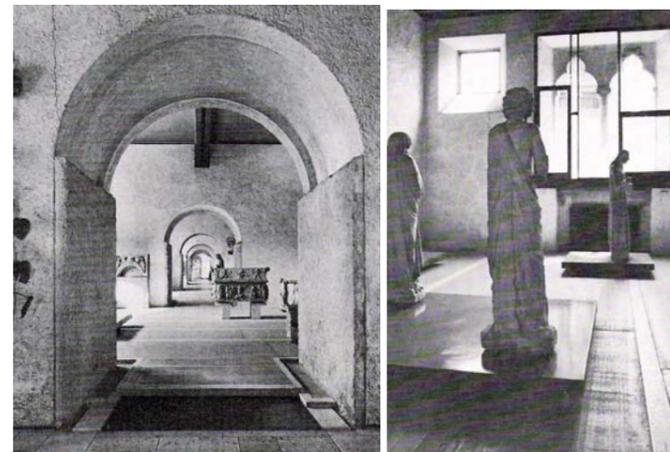


Figure 4.3.6: porticos in exhibition hall showing the new floor tiling and the planes, this creates with spaces between the vertical and horizontal elements.

Figure 4.3.7: Scarpa designed plinths for the sculptures to be placed on that lightly touch the existing and where one can see the thinness of the material. Author: Murphy, 1990

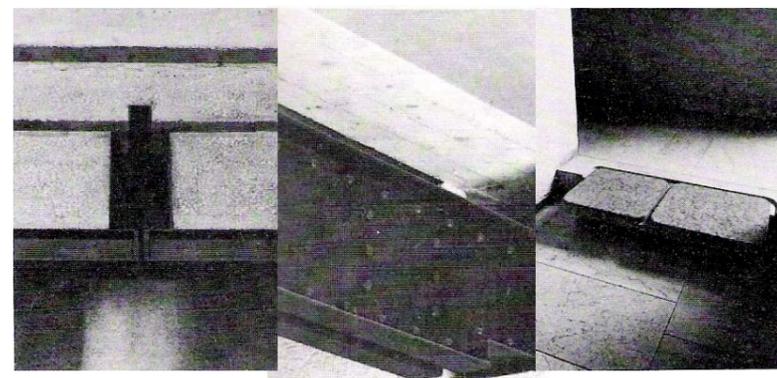


Figure 4.3.8: Images of detailed elements that show the truth of their materiality and how they are inserted into the existing fabric. Author: Murphy, 1990

In the design of the building the truth of the materials are also used intelligently. Scarpa shows this by means of incisions into elements [fig. 4.3.8].

The use of probing materials to reveal their inner realities beneath the surface was used, for example the use of Prun stone in the courtyard as paving. The underlying use of the stone is revealed by the arbitrarily places slabs of hewn stone set below their smoothly finished counterparts.



Figure 4.3.9: Statue of Cangrande in the courtyard. Cited 20 October 2008

Scarpa also creates tension between the materials by using **contrast in texture and colour** to convey the difference, and this can be seen in the Sacello which uses pink Prun stone which is less textured than that of the existing wall, and the separation between the wall and the ground and the existing building by using a darker frame of stone around the wall [fig.4.3.2] (Murphy, 1990:130).

Scarpa uses these principles to make a deliberate and expressive event. He enriches the space by using the interconnectedness between the materials, structure, elements, space and the special event in order to create a single unified space.

4.4 | YOUNG VIC THEATRE

The Young Vic Theatre study shows a relevance to the type of intervention that is possible when **incorporating three buildings to create a single attractive, flexible theatre space** for the people. The building is studied with regards to the simple changes made to make the space efficient and it shows the **contrast between the new and the added elements that unite all the spaces**. The Young Vic is also an example on **how a black box theatre operates** with examples of various theatre configurations.

ORIGINAL ARCHITECT: Bill Howell

REFURBISHMENTS: Haworth Tomkins

LOCATION: The Cut, London Borough of Lambeth.

PRODUCT: a space to produce plays for great audiences, new and in the future.

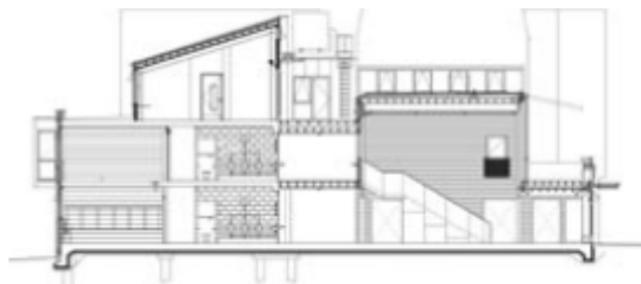


Figure 4.4.1: section through foyer and studios

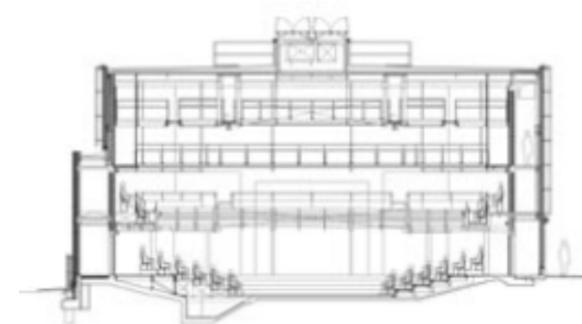


Figure 4.4.2: Section through theatre

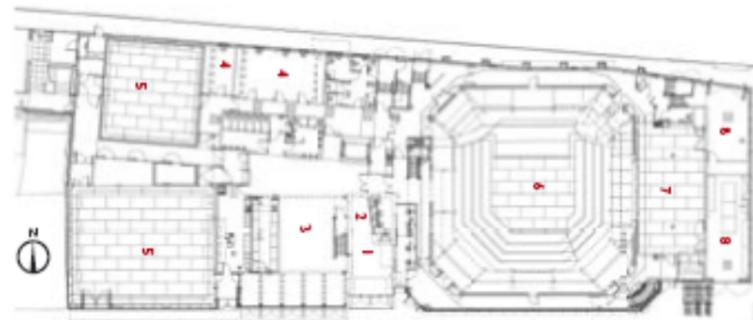


Figure 4.4.3: Ground floor plan

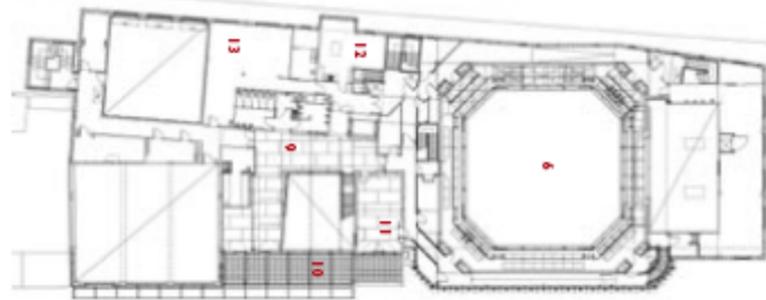


Figure 4.4.4: First floor plan

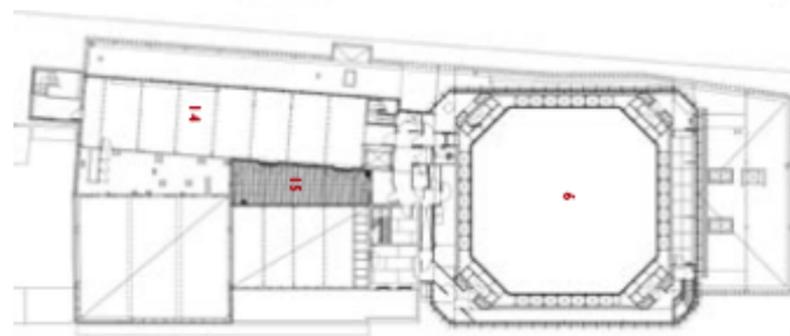


Figure 4.5.5: Second floor plan

1. Entrance
2. Tickets
3. Foyer/bar
4. Dressing rooms
5. Rehearsal studios
6. Auditorium
7. Workshop
8. Loading bay
9. Mezzanine
10. External terrace (public)
11. Event room
12. Green room
13. Wardrobe
14. Offices
15. External terrace (private)



Figure 4.4.6: Entrance for the theatre showing the 3 spaces joint at with the signage. Author: Philip Vile



Figure 4.4.7: Photograph showing front façade of eh Young Vic at evening time. Author: Richard Bryant

The Young Vic Theatre is a spin-off from the nearby Old Vic Theatres. The original theatre was designed by Bill Howell in 1970; he took into consideration the protection of the Old Butcher's shop that survived a bombing just after the war, which he incorporated into the design. The building was then refurbished in the 1990's by John Pawson. He did not see the theatre for what is was and wanted to redesign the theatre again (Rob, 2001:64). Then in 2003 Haworth Tomkins was appointed as architect for the refurbishment. He worked closely with the theatre's director, David Lan, to refurbish the building by 2006. Tomkins took the theatre's history into account in his design.

The **make-shift character of the building** became its defining attribute. Haworth Tomkins tried to **retain this informal atmosphere** in his design. The newest Vic Theatre still gives the impression of an **adhoc collection of existing elements that are held together through the innovation and use of new materials** that maintain the desired character.

The refurbishment was carried out because of the expanding artistic programme and the terminally decaying fabric. The idea behind the design was to remain true to the original ideals of the theatre, but also to **expand the artistic capabilities and to reframe the Young Vic for use by the next generation**. The new design was not to create a new alienating theatre but to **take the existing theatre and turn it into a more functional space**. In this way the character of the building is maintained and the building can retain its original identity (Rob, 2001:64).

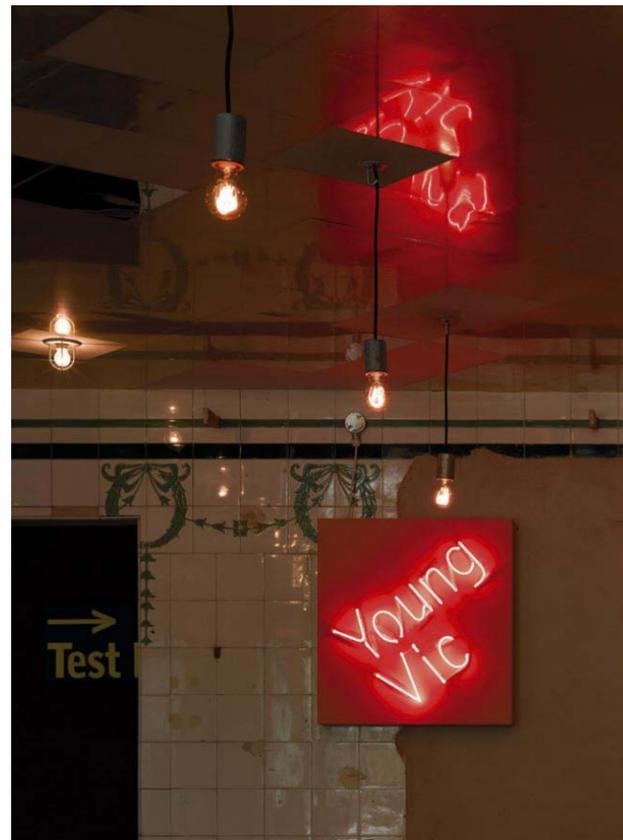


Figure 4.4.8: Interior view showing the combination of new and existing elements. Author Philip Vile

Facilities:

- The main house: auditorium with a thrust stage that seats about 500 people depending on the theatre configuration (stage);
- Two smaller theatres, namely:
 - The Maria: seats about 150 people; and
 - The Clare: seats about 70 people.

All three theatres have flexible seating configurations that can be changed to suit the production design. In all the theatres the seating is unreserved and the actors perform in close proximity to the audience.



Figure 4.4.9: The black box theatre configured in a Catwalk layout (The Young Vic Theatre). Author: Richard Bryant

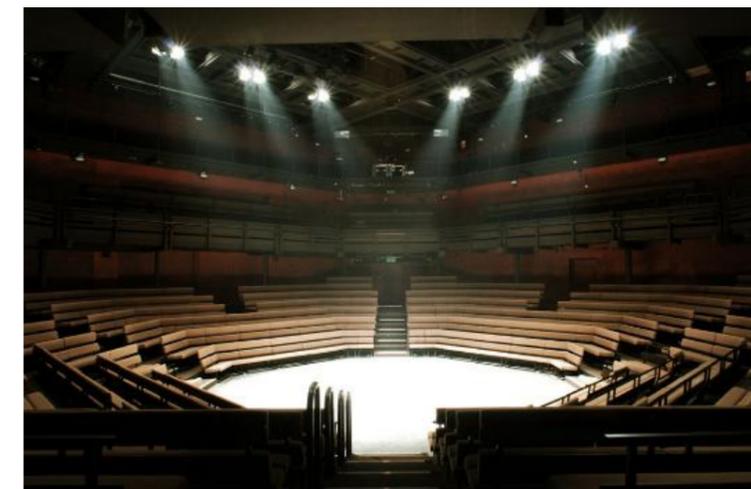


Figure 4.4.10: Black box theatre in Theatre in the Round configuration (The Young Vic Theatre). Author: Richard Brvant

The original auditorium was a great success, but circulation around the auditorium was limited. The theatre was also not of sufficient working height and, because of its rigid shape, the space was restrictive of the idea of transition into surreal.

The adapted auditorium retains much of the old fabric, but **adds a new layer of circulation and entrance, as well as raising the height with a new lighting grid**. The theatre also provides a moveable wall and a

demountable gallery into a large workshop so that a thrust stage can break the linearity of the space.

- The butchers' shop has been retained as the main entrance to the building and the box office; and
- The remainder of the 1970's structure has been rebuilt to house the foyers, dressing rooms, two studio theatres and work spaces.

These support spaces and smaller studios are housed in an enveloping concrete block work skin at the back of the site.

The new public foyer is expressed as an informal, lightweight timber and steel structure that covers the courtyard formed by the principal performance studio and the Butcher's shop. This creates lightness and a double volume in the foyer.



Figure 4.4.11: interior of foyer showing new and existing elements. Author Phili Vile



Figure 4.4.12: Interior of foyer with inserted timber, glass and steel structure. Author: Richard Bryant

There are many potential entrance points into the theatre but, entrances are purposefully made through the foyer. **The materials used on the interior are basic and the detailing is informal to suite the provisional low cost aesthetic. The public and private spaces are made to overlap so as to allow for many patterns of use** (Rob, 2001:65).

This creates a number of different possibilities for arrival, circulation and leave-taking. The membrane between the traditional front-of-house and back-of-house areas is as permeable as possible so that the sense of a working creative environment can be felt in the entire environment [fig. 4.4.13].



Figure 4.4.13: Membrane between service spaces and public spaces. Author Philip Vile

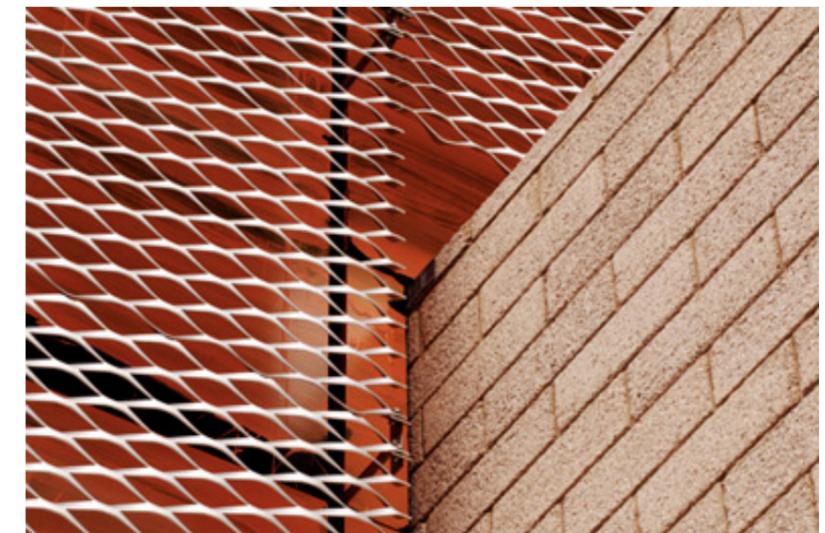


Figure 4.4.14: Daytime view of the exterior

Figure 4.4.15: Evening view of the exterior

Figure 4.4.16: Night time view of the theatre exterior

Figure 4.4.17: Photograph showing the detail of the cladding

The new signboard for the theatre is the cladding of the Auditorium. Hand painted cement-board panels faced by a steel mesh that **appears coppery during the day and is illuminated from the bottom at night** to give the Young Vic an industrial theatricality; this strongly differentiates the daytime at the theatre from the night.

The context of the Young Vic Theatre has changed from urban to high street, but this did not mean that the theatre has had to adopt a new identity; instead it responded appropriately by opening up the facades to the street and signage on the facades making it look more commercial, yet still keeping its personality. The street face has been respectfully treated by salvaging the old Butcher's, but also the tiling and use of signage on the existing auditorium façades that have been re-clad. The new large studio theatre is texturally related to the auditorium by the use of a similarly scaled "weave" of dark profiled brick (Rob, 2001:66).

The architects did not want to create an iconic singular monolith; instead it is a series of buildings.

The form and closeness of these elements work hard to produce an intensity of activity that extends the original theatres character past its boundary. **The Young Vic Theatre uses its symbolism to create a consistency and integrity with the users and the context.**



Figure 4.4.18: Exterior of theatre



Figure 4.4.19: interior view of entrance and foyer



Figure 4.4.20: interior view gallery above foyer