

## HAEV - The Herb Alpert Educational Village - Opens at New Roads School in Santa Monica, CA

By Motoo Komoda

New Roads School is an independent K-12 school located on four campuses in Santa Monica, California. Founded in 1995, the school prides itself on having a diverse student population. A majority of its students receive financial aid and over 50% of the student community consists of people of color, making it a unique alternative to public school education for many of its students.

The recent opening of the Herb Alpert Educational Village (HAEV) on the Santa Monica campus of New Roads School gives the school, its New Visions Foundation and other local educational and arts non-profits a wonderful new facility for their performing arts activities. John Berry Architects designed the building and Nagata Acoustics served as the project's acoustical consultant, providing room acoustical design, sound isolation and noise mitigation design and construction administration services focused primarily on the new hall. The HAEV project was built with a total budget of \$24 million.

Musician Herb Alpert donated a large portion of the funds for this project. Mr. Alpert, who is famous as a trumpet player and music producer, is also well known as a passionate philanthropist of arts and educational causes. In Japan, his recording of "Bittersweet Samba" is an easily recognized tune across multiple generations because it has been used as the theme song of a popular late night radio program.



Figure 1: Hall interior seen from the mezzanine



Figure 2: Hall interior seen from first floor audience seating at stage left

In addition to having a 344-seat multipurpose hall and related support rooms, the HAEV building has a conference space, library and a 200 sq. m. (2,000 sq. ft) community center equipped with a professional catering kitchen. The multipurpose hall, named the Ann and Jerry Moss Theater, has a mezzanine level and both a proscenium opening and a thrust stage. The audience seating area has a generous width for the theater's size and comparatively short

depth, so that all seats-including those on the mezzanine-offer excellent sight lines to the stage.

From the outset, we designed this theater-style hall with functionality that enables it to be used for classical music performances as well as for drama performances. Our room acoustical design fully accommodates classical music concert performances as large as chamber music configurations. We accomplished this by installing a large, vertically sliding door at the proscenium opening. When the door is descended, the thrust portion of the stage and audience seating become a compact and unified space appropriate for classical music performances.

We maximized the height of the hall's ceiling, obtaining a distance of 11 m. (36 ft) from the stage floor. In addition, to promote sound diffusion of high octaves, we specified several elements that create fine variations along the surfaces of the audience seating area's side walls.

Below the acoustically important hard surface of the ceiling, we suspended an acoustically transparent grid where stage technicians can walk with ease and we placed batons with sound absorbing curtains. The amount of suspended curtain material can be readily adjusted to suit the needs of different performances. This easy-to-use mechanism provides excellent flexibility for adjusting the liveliness of the hall.

On March 24, 2013, Herb Alpert performed the Opening Gala in the Ann and Jerry Moss Theater. All of the project's sponsors and participants, as well as other patrons, enjoyed the wonderful music and festive occasion. With the end of the school year approaching, the hall remains mostly quiet at present, but I expect it to quickly become a favorite venue for many educational uses and a beloved stage for local performing arts events. HAEV's location is just a few minutes' drive from Nagata Acoustics' Los Angeles office and I look forward to watching this new hall become an important part of the Santa Monica performing arts scene.

New Roads School has a [web page about the Ann and Jerry Moss Theater](#) with links to a seating chart and facility use charges.

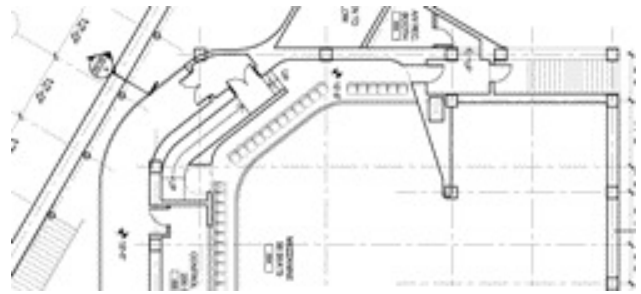


Figure 3: Hall mezzanine seating area plan view

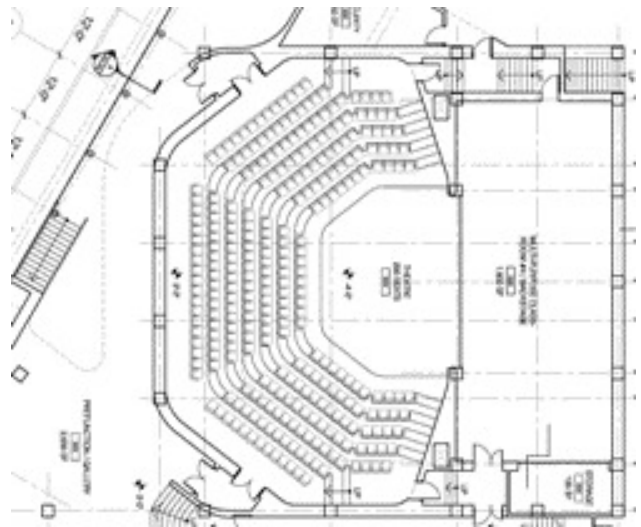


Figure 4: Hall first floor seating area plan view

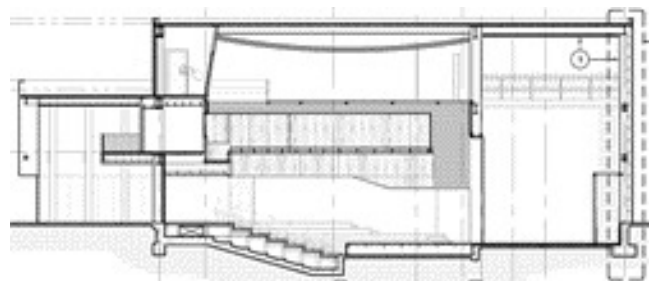


Figure 5: Hall longitudinal-sectional view