

**Acoustical Design of Theaters for Drama  
Performance: 1985–2010**

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and Michelle C. Vigeant, Editors

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This book is an excellent compilation of the architectural and acoustical designs of 130 theaters from around the world. The book covers the work carried out in the 25 years during 1985 to 2010. The editors have done excellent work in putting together highly useful information about these theaters which represent a rich diversity ranging from formal proscenium theaters to flexible black-box performance spaces. The editors, in their preface, have nicely described the context for this work and have categorized the 130 theaters into 83 proscenium theaters, 15 thrust theaters, 15 black box and multi-form theaters and 17 alternative-form theaters.

Before presenting the details of the theaters, the book has a nicely written introductory essay contributed by three authors. In the first part, Robert Long describes the changes and trends in the theater design during 1985 to 2010. In the second part, Robert Campbell discusses on finding a balance between theater function, architecture and acoustics, and in the third part, Todd Hensley provides a theater consultant's view of working with architectural acoustics consultants. In another interesting and insightful essay "Acoustics on a Budget," Howard

Shalwitz, describes various aspects confronted in the design of the award-winning Woolly Mammoth Theater in Washington, DC. These essays provide a nice comprehensive description of the nature of work involved in the acoustics and architecture of theaters. These essays nicely complement the acoustical data and architectural drawings.

The book provides technical descriptions, photographs of the interior and exterior, drawings and the acoustical data such as reverberation times and/or background noise levels based on octave bands. The descriptions of theaters give information on acoustical consultant, architect, theater consultant, owner, room volume, seating capacity, cost and completion date. The photographs which are of excellent quality are a visual treat of the architecture and acoustics of the theaters. The book has very useful appendices such as an overview of acoustic design for drama theaters, glossary, location of theaters and consulting firms along with the theaters that they worked and references.

In summary, this book is a useful and an excellent addition to the field of architectural acoustics and particularly to the area of acoustical design of theaters.

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