Beaverton Performing ArtSpace

“The underlying image is a field of forces, a network of social relationships, mapped out many nodes, focal points and routes. The order is topographical as it heightens the pre-existing and partially hidden vectors in a place. These work at several scales and can be sensed in overlays of different geographical or historic traces. The idea is a new building should engage with these latent forces and bring them to a point of high tension while also encouraging interactions between people. There is a certain picture of ritual, procession, ascent, mingling, and interchange. If not the image, then the idea of a communal theatre is pervasive.

William J. R. Curtis

Mental Maps and Social Landscapes

The city of Beaverton is in the planning stage of realizing a state-of-the-art performing and visual arts center to support their burgeoning cultural art scene. This design studio will be the impetus for a creative and conceptual dialogue between students, the city of Beaverton, and industry experts that will initiate the visioning process for this new venue. Students will be charged with developing design proposals that will envision the conceptual, environmental, and architectural potential of the city’s first significant performing and visual arts facility, the Beaverton Performing ArtSpace.

Project History

The Portland area’s vibrant and diverse performing arts heritage is highlighted by numerous venues that play a vital role in defining the quality of urban life and stimulating economic development. Conversely, there is a lack of cultural venues outside the Portland area. Currently, not a single venue exists in the city of Beaverton that meets the quality of Portland’s performing arts venues.

The Beaverton Arts Foundation has been attempting to remedy this cultural deficiency and bring a performing and visual arts center to the Beaverton community and has engaged in several feasibility studies over the last six years. As the economy continues to improve, the prospect of a performing and visual arts venue has been gaining momentum towards becoming a reality. Potential sites have been narrowed down to the commercial heart Beaverton adjacent to Beaverton Creek and The Round as strategic and viable locations for the Beaverton Performing ArtSpace.
This studio will serve as a conceptual and creative think tank that will explore the architectural potential of a Performing ArtSpace within the suburban and evolving context of Beaverton. The studio will be divided into 3 distinct and mutually inclusive phases: Site Investigations, Urban Design Collaborations, and Architecture / Landscape Interventions.

**Site Investigations**

Two potential sites for the Beaverton Performing ArtSpace are being considered: the Westgate and Lombard sites located near the commercial heart of the City of Beaverton adjacent to The Round. These two sites exhibit multiple latent forces and vectors that permeate the surrounding urban fabric, offering a rich collage of elements that can inform both urban and architectural design strategies.

The City of Beaverton’s Central City Strategy outlines the environmental, urban and architectural potential of Beaverton and has identified this particular area as a vital and primary urban component for the future of the city. It has assigned multiple designations to this area, including:

- **Catalyst Site**: enhance the current commercial district by stimulating high quality redevelopment and increased urban density, including public parks, restaurants, hotels, housing, retail and cultural venues.
- **Gateway Site**: establish a vibrant urban center that creates interconnectedness between residential neighborhoods and the central commercial district via pedestrian routes, mass transit and convenient highway access.
- **Priority Pedestrian District**: create a pedestrian-oriented environment supports social, artistic and cultural interaction through an integrated network of civic plazas, parks, and the existing creek system.
- **EcoDistrict**: revitalize Beaverton Creek as an accessible public amenity, develop comprehensive storm water management strategies, celebrate on-site water use and water treatment, leverage water as an energy and irrigation source, and reintroduce native plants to re-establish habitat and increase biomass.

During Site Investigations students will immerse themselves in researching and mapping the historic, natural, cultural, commercial, housing, transit and pedestrian layers that define the attributes of Beaverton and the two
Urban Design Collaborations
Drawing from their findings during the Site Investigations phase, students will develop integrated urban design strategies with emphasis on a framework plan that weaves together landscape, commercial and housing development, sustainability, pedestrian linkages and mass transit. Students will explore the possibilities of rehabilitating the adjacent stretch of Beaverton Creek into a public and pedestrian oriented amenity, with physical and conceptual connections to their site. Students will create a vision for their site that connects the arts to the broader evolving urban fabric. The Beaverton Performing ArtSpace is envisioned as a catalyst for a vibrant urban environment and generator for development including: commercial, cultural and housing. Students will be encouraged to weave the many latent and potential forces that they uncover on their site, both local and regional, into an integrated master plan. This conceptual fabrication will set the foundation for the architectural and landscape interventions.

Architecture / Landscape Interventions
Each student will choose a site to develop their design for the Beaverton Performing ArtSpace. Primary programmatic components will include: versatile performing art space for theatre, dance, instrumental and choral performances, dynamic multi-form theatre, visual arts gallery, meeting and event center, arts education space, and integrated landscape / civic arts plaza. Students will be encouraged to take a holistic approach to the design of their architecture and landscape interventions, with emphasis on sustainability, spatial relationships, movement through space and materiality.

Students will explore the expressive and time-based qualities of creating civic architecture that redefines the conventional notion of suburban space and identity. Investigations will include the concept of spatial transformation and adaptability that support a dynamic and ever-changing environment between day and night. Student will be exposed to various forms of performance venues and technical design issues inherent with this specialized project type.

The Beaverton Performing ArtSpace will draw inspiration from the attributes of place and community values and aspire to create an architecture that is both appropriate and iconic, celebrating Beaverton’s unique identity. Students will engage members of the Beaverton Art Commission through visioning discussions and studio critiques, where they will get firsthand exposure to the city’s vision for the Beaverton Performing ArtSpace while having the opportunity to share their design ideas and concepts. Steve Pollock, a nationally renowned theatre designer with Auerbach Pollock Friedlander, will participate in the studio as a visiting critic and will conduct a lecture on the current state of theatre design as well as its future.

Instructor Biographies
James Kalvelage is a founding partner of Opsis Architecture, whose career has focused on architecture in the public realm with particular focus on the inter-relationship of landscape and architecture, eco-design, and cultural arts projects throughout the Western States. His work has been recognized with numerous awards of excellence and has served on design award juries, lectured at UO and PSU, and presented at national sustainable design conferences.

Joe Baldwin is an Associate Senior Designer at Opsis Architecture, where he has played a leading design role on several higher education facilities including the interior design of the UO Ford Alumni Center. He earned his Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Southern California and his Master of Architecture at the University of California Los Angeles. Before joining Opsis in 2005, he worked at the Los Angeles and Zurich based firm Angelil / Graham / Phenninger / Scholl Architecture, where he completed several award winning residential, cultural, and infrastructural projects including the Children’s Museum of Los Angeles and the Portland Aerial Tram. He has served as Adjunct Instructor alongside Sarah Graham at UC Berkley’s College of Environmental Design and as a Research and Teaching Assistant at UCLA’s School of Architecture and Urban Design.