

projects



doris duke performance center

Client: Dance Theatre Workshop (DTW)

Location: New York, NY

Project Type: New Construction

Seat Count: 192 (Bessie Schönberg Theatre)

Opening: 2002

Cost: \$11.5 Million

Architect: Rawlings Architects

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AD Scope: Acoustics | Sound Isolation | Noise Control

The Doris Duke Performance Center includes a 192-seat theatre with lobby and box office, along with dance studios, DTW offices, a rooftop garden, retail space and a café. The new theater space, called The Bessie in honor of the modern-dance master-teacher Bessie Schönberg, has a large stage, extensive wing space, twice as many seats as the old theatre and a heated stage floor. Rehearsals on the 3rd floor are watched by passers-by through floor-to-ceiling windows—a popular innovation in dance buildings.

The room acoustics support both live and recorded music. The building mechanical and electrical systems and the air distribution system serving the theater are especially quiet, to enhance the dramatic effect of quiet moments in performance. Sound isolation between spaces was also a prime requirement, since the building is stacked with offices and mechanical rooms above the theatre, and dance rehearsal studios sandwiched between offices and residences.