

Kalamazoo Academy of Dance

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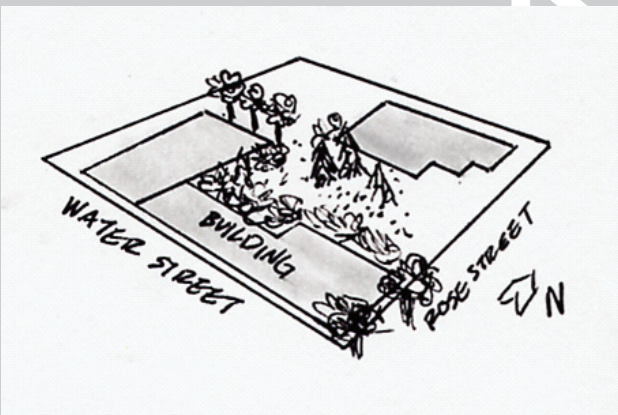
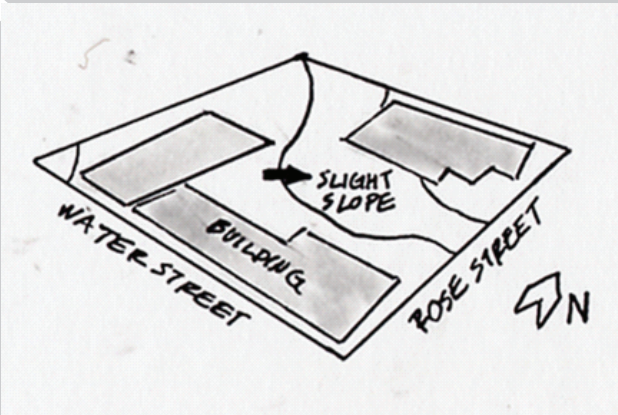
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245 NORTH ROSE

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49006

Intro



The art of Ballet developed in 16th Century Italy as a court spectacle for nobility. It has been shaped and adapted by France, Russia, and America into what the world continues to embrace as a classical study today.

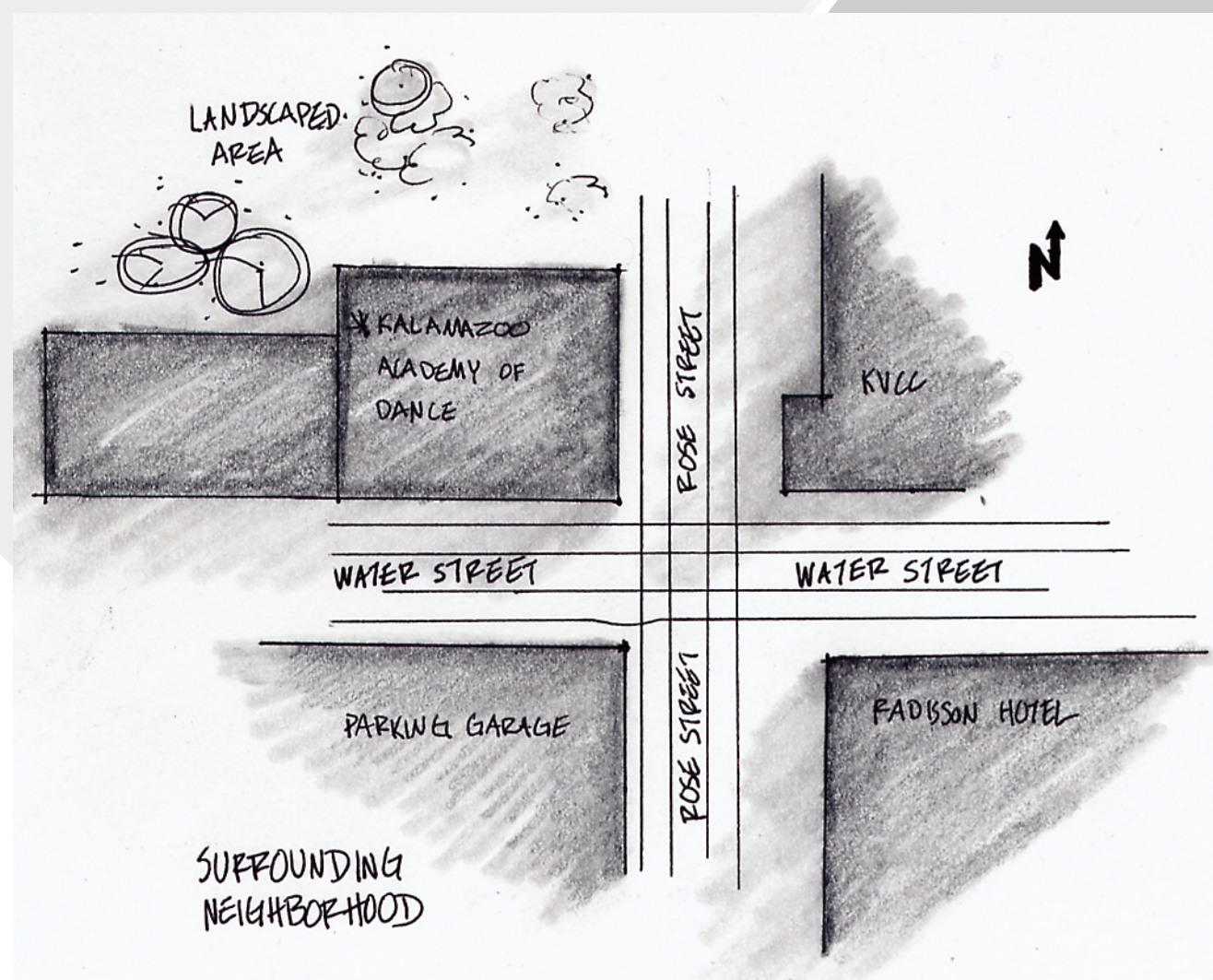
It is practiced by paid professionals on a local, state, national, and even international level. Roughly 20 professional dance companies are currently running in the US and Canada. Several colleges and universities offer dance curriculum and local based programs are a commonality in even some of the smallest cities across the country.

The Kalamazoo area hosts just over a dozen private lesson instructors and city-run dance studios in addition to the university offering dance as a major. A few performance arenas and retail venues are also scattered throughout the city which already embraces art and culture throughout.

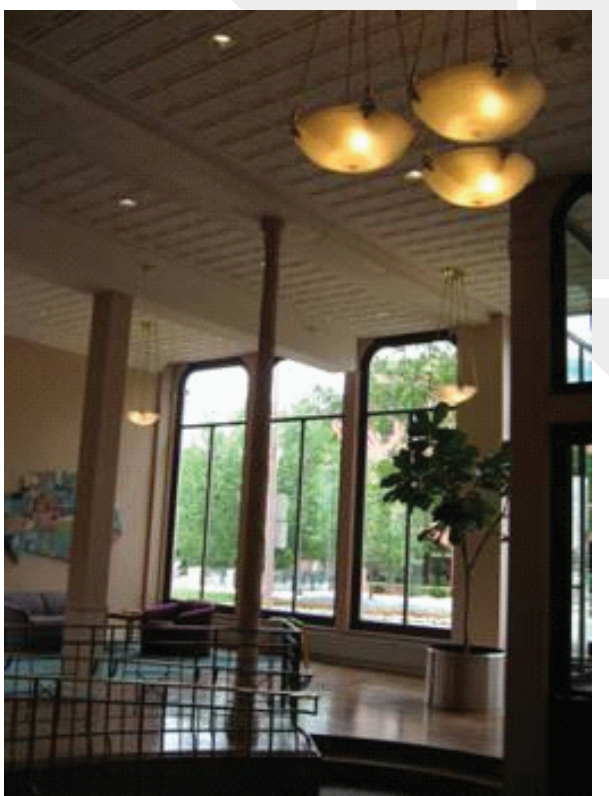
I believe that dance classes, teachers, supplies, and performance theatres should be offered in one place. These features, in addition to favorable conditions for learning and teaching, would lend more focus to the instruction, performance, and enjoyment of dance.

I propose to house one cohesive and prestigious educational performing dance center in the Lawrence and Chapin Iron Foundry building in downtown Kalamazoo.

With this location, the city will be able to spotlight a ballet academy at its heart, produce artistic talent, and attract audiences and pupils alike. The academy will also help boost the economy, build upon cultural exposure of its inhabitants, and most importantly; provide dance students with the appropriate facilities to compete for professional companies.



Concept



The heart and soul of this project is to integrate the existing context of the building with a new and striking, yet appropriate, interior for the dance academy. This entails using the repetition of elements and rhythmic characteristics that currently make up the envelope of the building and enforcing them on the interior. The use of shapes, forms, lines, colors, and textures should harmonize with one another, yet provide enough interest to stimulate the patrons of the building.

The proposed layout begins to use this theme of repetition and rhythm with its location of corridors and rooms from one floor to the next. The similarly stacked floorplans will help with way-finding for both the student or staff member and interested public.

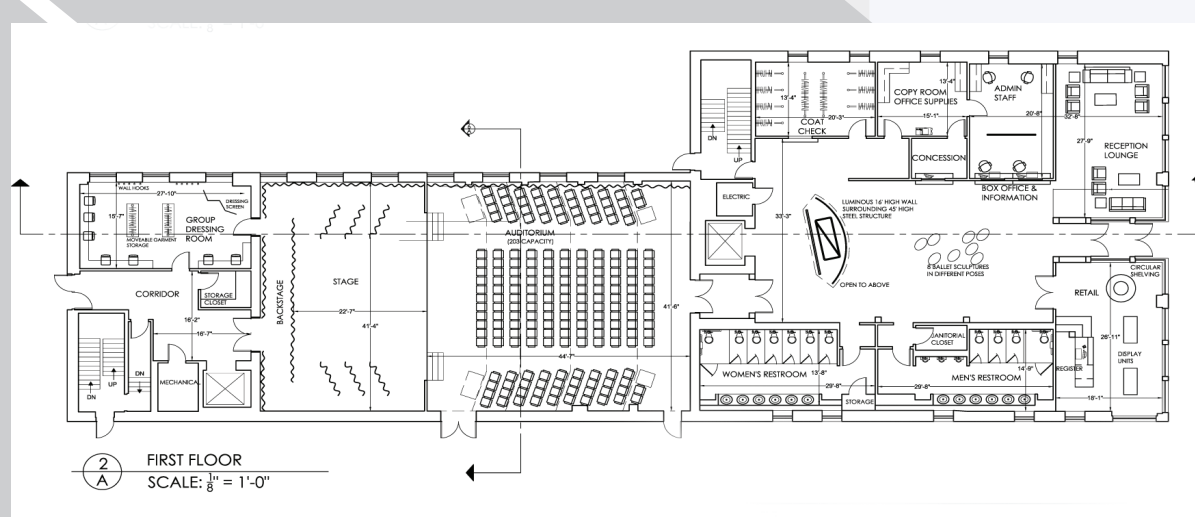
Public and private circulation is maintained by reserving most of the first floor and rooms adjacent to the entrance as public with the rest of the building serving building staff and students. The latter will also have private entrances to their disposal as well.

In addition to the repeating and rhythmic elements of the interior structure, each floor should enforce that rhetoric down to finishes, fixtures, and furnishings that will carry throughout all spaces. This will be done strategically though, with slight variation, to ensure that the space will not become too redundant in appearance.

The main lobby and reception area of the building will be the areas of focus for detailed design. These spaces are ultimately responsible for pulling people in and peeking their curiosity about the building itself as well as the activity that is happening within.

Ultimately, the Kalamazoo Academy of Dance should embrace its aged exterior while fitting classic but steadily growing and changing art of dance within.

If I dedicate one building of Kalamazoo to be a disciplined dance academy, then it will significantly advance ballet as an art form, enrich the cultural life of the community, and create a heightened sense of excitement and reward for those who join.



Goals

Goals of the project are to provide a space in which a community of dancers can develop and to make it as durable, beautiful, and conducive to the performance and practice of dance as possible. All materials and finishes for walls, floors, ceilings, etc., will be properly investigated and applied in order to challenge the status quo of current facilities in Kalamazoo that lack in one area or another. The building will also be able to accommodate and organize crowds in a seamless public versus private manner and make patrons feel safe at all times through the layout of floors and security measures.

Objectives

Certain objectives of the project are to include a retail space, student and staff lounges, meeting room, formal auditorium and stage, rehearsal space, green room, private and group dressing rooms, a weight room, and locker rooms in order to once again challenge the status quo and offer everything under one roof. Sound and imaging technology will be integrated into performance and rehearsal halls in order to enhance the theatre experience as much as possible. Studios will more than satisfy the dancers' needs in floor construction, wall finish, and lighting requirements. Public spaces will promote the prestige of dance and the building as a whole will be equipped to house all activities and suit them to the best of its capabilities.

Needs

Provide a close-knit community for those involved in dance. Introduce state-of-the-art technology to generate successful instruction, learning, and performance.

Offer a building and interior that stimulates budding dancers to strive for excellence and be proud of the art they are pursuing.

Provide preferred finish solutions that are durable and specific for the sport of dance.

Promote the elegance and prestige of dancing through interior surfaces as well as exterior appearance and landscape.

Accommodate and organize crowds in a seamless public versus private manner.

Instill a sense of ownership and adaptability for the staff and students within these private areas.

Offer an efficient environment for instructors and other staff to create original, quality ideas and get tasks completed in an orderly fashion.

Supply a small dance-accessories shop that conveniently accommodates patrons.

Provide a safe environment where dancers and teachers will feel at ease using the facility at all times of day.

Maintain historic appeal on the exterior and successfully integrate it into interior spaces.

Encourage efficient and responsible use of resources and energy.

Include sufficient and strategically placed storage areas.

Impact

Several form generators were involved when researching and planning for the dance academy design. The historical appeal of the building is to be maintained and the interior will carefully blend contemporary elements with the reigmented brick exterior in mind.

The location of the building itself is perfectly situated in the downtown area that boasts of two museums, a community college, and other culturally appealing venues. It will not be an intruder to the art scene, but rather a strong supporter of the cause. Ballet and dance are already present in the community and by providing a building that can house all the needs of the profession, the city, dancers, and economy of the city and surrounding area will surely prosper.

The neighborhood surrounding the building also offers convenient parking at an adjacent structure. Students, staff, and theatre patrons will be able to take advantage of this garage and the academy may also further advertise its presence in the city on the interior walls.



Reception



Entrance



Entrance