

Prairie Recital Hall Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Ongoing Threshold Acoustics commission

The College Community School District music programs required a venue larger and more conducive to band and choral performance than their current 400-seat theater. The new venue will seat 1,000 in a space designed primarily for music but with theatrical capability as well. Moving elements at the platform will allow the stage enclosure to open into the stage volume, and variable absorption will tailor the room's acoustic response to speech, theater, jazz, symphonic bands of up to 140 musicians, and choral events for all grades in the K-12 system.

The audio system emphasizes clarity and imaging. Left-center-right loudspeaker clusters work together with a line array of small speakers concealed in the stage edge and allow aural images to move along with the performers. The loudspeakers are concealed to eliminate visual cues, further strengthening the impression that sound is coming from the performers, not the loudspeakers.

Though it must accommodate bands of up to 140 players for audiences of up to a thousand, the hall must also be responsive to small ensembles and intimate to audiences of only a few hundred. Cross aisles divide both the main floor and balcony into smaller zones, and the balcony front is only 50 feet from the stage, so an audience of only 400 will fill the "small hall" defined by the balcony front and side arms. To control loudness for the largest bands, the stage enclosure can be vented to the flytower.

Client: College Community School District
Architect: OPN Architects
Theatre Consultant: Schuler Shook
Acoustics Consultant: Threshold Acoustics

