Television Academy

SABAN MEDIA CENTER

5210 Lankershim Avenue, North Hollywood, CA 91601

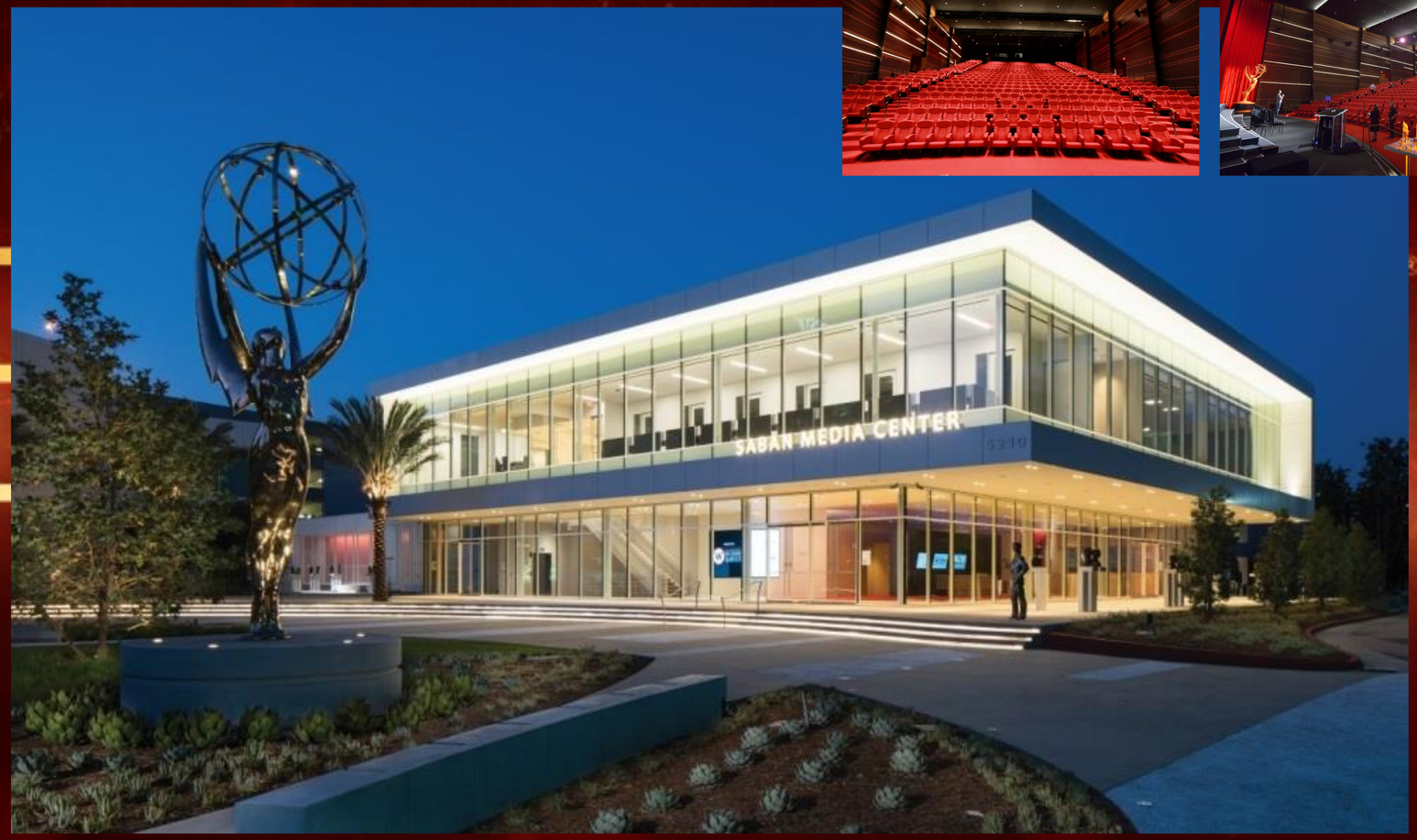
Initial artist's rendering

Project Information:

PROJECT TYPE: LANDMARK STRUCTURE

Owner/Developer: Television Academy of Arts & Sciences
Construction Manager: Honnold Construction Management
Architect: Gensler
Completion Date: June 2016
Structural Engineer: Risha Engineering Group, Inc.
General Contractor: MATT Construction
Construction Cost: $20,000,000 (estimated)

Right: The completed Wolf Theatre interior
Below: The completed entrance looking northeast



Project Description:

The original building on the site, the Leonard H. Goldenson Theatre, was less than 20 years old but did not provide an event space worthy of the Academy's reputation and prestige. Renderings of the replacement theatre initially released to the media featured a floating extension from the auditorium, with the second floor looming ominously over a completely glass-walled entrance, suitable for star-studded red carpet events. No columns are evident in this artistic vision, and the structure showcases great power and grace. This is the bold concept Risha Engineering and Gensler were tasked with bringing to life.

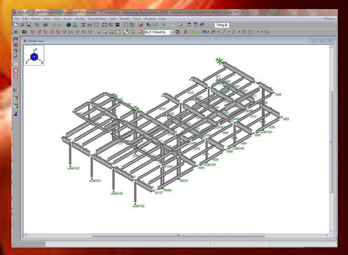
The Saban Media Center and the Wolf Theatre within are named for the project's biggest donors.

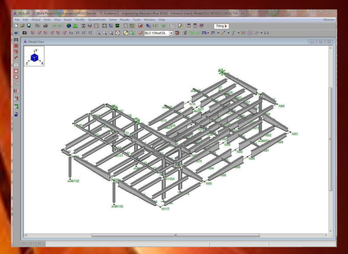
Design Development:

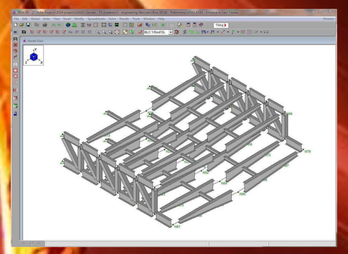
From the moment the design team was finalized, the challenges started. The major issues needing resolution included how to best incorporate the existing theatre's subterranean "bathtub" into the new theatre footprint, constructability conflicts with the adjacent parking garage pile foundations, and limiting the construction budget while maintaining the look and feel of a major landmark destination. Risha Engineering collaborated closely with MATT Construction and Gensler during this initial period to present a wide variety of schemes to the Academy's board for consideration. These schemes investigated the delicate balancing act between construction costs and architectural design in order to provide the Television Academy information needed to make tough decisions. After careful scrutiny, the team chose the final structural systems – steel framing with concrete filled metal decks and concrete shear walls, and conventional foundations.

The four walls of the auditorium serve as the primary lateral force resisting system for the ENTIRE structure with one short, stout concrete shear wall controlling torsion at the entrance. By careful positioning, this shear wall blends in as an impressive architectural feature, thus preserving the wide open spaces of the ground floor lobby and second floor conference room.

Coordination between structure and architecture was nowhere more critical than at the perimeter of the roof and second floor. This coordination allowed use of deep, long span members and yet provide a thin "picture frame" feel.







Entrance Schemes Investigated:

Option #1 (right top) – Columns at 30 feet maximum spacing at the entrance perimeter walls, with 12 feet cantilevers at level 2.

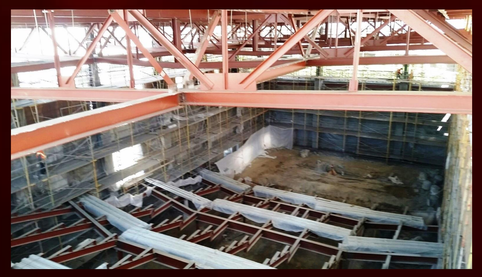
Option #2 (right center) – Two main columns at 80 feet spacing with TSGs spanning between large TSGs cantilevered over the columns.

Option #3 (right bottom) – Two deep steel trusses cantilevering 60 feet from the auditorium structure, supporting level 2 and the low roof – this option included no columns.

A steel moment frame, steel braced frame and concrete shear wall were investigated as secondary lateral systems to accommodate torsional considerations – a short concrete shear wall was selected.

Concrete placement at retaining wall footing. Note existing parking structure with below-grade foundations to avoid. One wall of the original theatre at the far end of this view served as construction shoring, allowing installation of the new structure without installing new shoring. The original below-grade pad elevation was preserved with the new theatre design.

Steel beam signed by project team being lifted into place



View of theatre structural steel. The fabricated steel trusses span the width of the auditorium and support a complex suspended, acoustically enhanced, ceiling structure and the usual speakers, lightbars, curtains, and other theatre hardware. Powered by 40 Dolby speakers, the sound is incredible. Truss diagonals were strategically omitted to permit passage of two massive HVAC ducts.

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