

3-2003

Howard Performing Arts Center Built with Great Harmony

Katie Shaw
Andrews University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Shaw, Katie, "Howard Performing Arts Center Built with Great Harmony" (2003). *Lake Union Herald*. 740.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/740>

This News is brought to you for free and open access by the Lake Union Herald at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lake Union Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.

Howard Performing Arts Center Built with Great Harmony

If you've ever been to the symphony, you likely have heard the musicians tuning their instruments. The less-than-melodic notes must be played to yield the exquisite sounds that follow. But it's one thing to tune an oboe. It's another when you've been given the task that Joseph Myers of Kirkegaard and Associates in Chicago has undertaken.

Myers has been given the job of tuning the new Howard Performing Arts Center on the campus of Andrews University. Not just an instrument—an entire building. Working closely with the architectural firm HarleyEllis of Southfield, Mich., Myers was able to design the room acoustics, noise isolation, noise control, and audio design.

Ayres Morison, project designer with HarleyEllis, crafted the building in such a way as to make it virtually sound-proof. The outer pre-cast layer of concrete, the inner masonry, and a gap in between the two filled with grout, create an almost three-foot-thick wall, and the ceiling is eight inches deep. "You couldn't hear an airplane fly over the building," said Morison.

The shoe-box dimensions of the main performance hall lend themselves nicely to a rich acoustical sound. "It will be a traditional concert hall," said Myers. "No



Construction on the Howard Performing Arts Center continues in spite of cold weather and snow.

amplification system will be needed, even for soloists." The attention to detail that Myers has painstakingly worked on for about a year will afford the concert-goer the most satisfying musical experience possible.

From filling the masonry with a clear coating to plug the porous holes that could trap sound, to a complex curtain system that will be adjustable for minimum or maximum absorption for different musical sounds, the hall, in concept, will be perfectly tuned. "We can't be sure until everything is done and installed," said Myers.

The Howard Performing Arts Center, which is scheduled to open in October 2003, is already crawling with talented performers. Masons, electricians, builders, plumbers, and steel specialists are all creating the 32,000-square-foot structure with great harmony.

"It is truly unbelievable to see the skill and sheer number of workers dedicated to the successful structuring of this building," commented Mike Hohnstein, site foreman with Fiskars, Inc. "On some days there are over 50 workers on site."

With the windows 90% installed, the lobby and terrace cement poured, and the walls framed, the construction "to-do list" keeps getting smaller with every passing day. "This is quite an exciting process to watch," said Dave Wilber, Andrews University plant administrator. "Even with my daily visits to the building, I notice that things are moving along quickly."

Andrews University is looking forward to serving the community with the use of the Howard Performing Arts Center. For a detailed view of the construction progress via a webcam and information about sponsorship opportunities, visit www.andrews.edu/HPAC.

Katie Shaw and Tonya Snyder,
University Relations news writers



Glass was installed Jan. 9, 2003, in the Howard Performing Arts Center.