

ENR Southwest

ENR Southwest's 2019 Best Projects

Award of Merit: Higher Education/Research: University Arts Building



University Arts Building

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University Arts Building

Reno, Nev.

Award of Merit

Owner/Developer: University of Nevada, Reno

Lead Design Firm: DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky

General Contractor: Q&D Construction

In its new arts building, the University of Nevada wanted an advanced performance and educational space for music but also a showcase for design and a place to connect with the community. The 42,500-sq-ft, three-story facility houses a 287-seat recital hall, a fabrication lab, electroacoustic composition lab, soundproof rehearsal spaces, practice rooms, faculty office spaces and a recording studio. The building hosts concerts, performances, special exhibits and a rotating display of more than 5,000 works of art, all of it accessible to the public. Finished in March, the building can accommodate deliveries of equipment, art installations and large instruments, including a grand piano, through its loading dock and an oversized freight elevator.

The design focused on sustainable strategies tailored to Reno's cold desert climate and energy-efficient systems equivalent to LEED NC Silver certification. Green components include minimum-energy code insulation values that exceed 20%, energy-efficient air distribution, LED lighting systems, a 35% reduction in water use, xeriscaping, a roof system that reduces the heat island effect by 50%, recycled wood sources, low-emitting materials and individual thermal comfort.

With its floor-to-ceiling wood paneling and wave-like curves, the building reminds visitors of a softly burnished wooden instrument. The recital hall employs acoustic diffuser wood and seating arrangements that let the audience experience the full measure of sound.

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