

# ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

## '62 Center for Theatre and Dance

Williamstown, Mass.

William Rawn Associates, Architects

### Performing arts find several new homes at Williams

What is it about western Massachusetts that attracts people with artistic sensibilities? The rolling hills of the Berkshires, to be sure, and maybe the excitement and energy generated by the region's concentration of colleges and universities. Perhaps it's also the architecture—buildings such as the new '62 Center for Theatre and Dance at Williams College. Designed by the Boston-based firm William Rawn Associates, this four-building complex, which includes the renovation of an existing theater, brings together the college's theater and dance departments for the first time. During summer months, the center also houses the renowned Williamstown Theatre Festival.



Photo © Robert Benson

Very much a part of the community, the '62 Center's primary lobby faces Main Street. Its narrow façade, glazed to reveal a wood-paneled interior, follows the pattern of narrow elevations established by other buildings on the Williams campus. And, in keeping with Williams' liberal arts tradition, campus pathways weave through the building exposing the inner workings of the theater and dance departments to students and visitors alike.

The '62 Center includes four performance venues. At 550 people, the MainStage Theatre is the largest space, yet its warm wood interior maintains an intimate feeling among audience members. The CenterStage Theatre, by contrast, serves as the workhorse for Williams' theater department. Although it can seat 200 people, this studio theater balances adaptability with an industrial aesthetic. Other elements include moveable balconies, a flexible lift, and a giant steel sliding door that opens directly onto the CenterStage lobby.

Enclosed by glass walls on three sides, a 3,300-square-foot dance studio features dramatic views of the Berkshires. On occasion, this rehearsal space performs double-duty as a special performance hall for small dance productions and music recitals. Finally, the architect rehabilitated an existing space, the Adams Memorial Theatre, and converted it into a 210-seat "thrust" theater": a literal theater-within-a-theater defined by a raised platform that juts into the audience.

#### Formal name of Project:

'62 Center for Theatre and Dance

#### Location:

Williamstown, Mass.

#### Gross square footage:

126,000 sq. ft.

#### Total project cost:

\$39.9 million

## the People

### Owner

Williams College

### Architect

William Rawn Associates, Architects Inc.  
101 Tremont St.  
Boston, MA 02108  
617-423-3470 tel.  
617-451-9205 fax  
[www.rawnarch.com](http://www.rawnarch.com)

*Principal for design (2000-2005):*  
William L. Rawn III, FAIA

*Project architect:*  
David Croteau, AIA

*Project manager:*  
Randy Wilmot, AIA

*Co-principal for design (2000-2001):*  
Alan Joslin, AIA

*Assistant project manager & job captain:*  
Rupinder Singh, AIA

*Interiors:*  
Bruce Danzer, AIA

*Project team:*  
Andrew Jonic, AIA; Jeanne Kuespert, AIA; Robert Wear; Ken Amano; Yu-Lin Chen; Paul Governor; Anne-Sophie Divenyi; Vivian Uang; Chris Dobosz; Robert Lavash; Elijah Porter; Chris Reynolds; Joe Hunt; Michael Schall; Eric Perez

### Architect of record

William Rawn Associates, Architects Inc.

### Interior designer

LAB [3.2] Architecture [www.lab32arch.com](http://www.lab32arch.com)

### Engineer(s)

*Structural:*  
LeMessurier Consultants Inc. [www.lemessurier.com](http://www.lemessurier.com)

*M/E/P:*  
TMP Consulting Engineers Inc. [www.tmpeng.com](http://www.tmpeng.com)

*Consulting civil engineer:*  
Guntlow & Associates [www.guntlowassociates.com](http://www.guntlowassociates.com)

### Consultant(s)

*Landscape:*  
The Halvorson Design Partnership

*Theater:*

Theatre Projects Consultants [www.tpcworld.com](http://www.tpcworld.com)

*Acoustical:*

Acoustic Dimensions [www.acousticdimensions.com](http://www.acousticdimensions.com)

*Lighting:*

Horton Lees Brogden Lighting Design [www.hlbighting.com](http://www.hlbighting.com)

*Code:*

Sullivan Code Group [www.rwsullivan.com](http://www.rwsullivan.com)

*Geotech:*

McPhail Associates [www.mcphailgeo.com](http://www.mcphailgeo.com)

*Specification:*

Spec-Edit

**General contractor**

Barr and Barr Inc. Builders [www.barrandbarr.com](http://www.barrandbarr.com)

*Client representative:*

Win Wassenar, project executive

Bruce Decoteau, project manager

**Photographer**

Robert Benson  
860-951-3004 tel.

**CAD system**

AutoCAD Architectural Desktop [www.autodesk.com](http://www.autodesk.com)