Renovating SCPA Art Community

Adaptive Re-Use

Education in Over-the-Rhine: Future Scenarios for the School for Creative and Performing Arts. Students worked with students and faculty of the existing high school to vision two scenarios: Renovation of the existing building for continued school use and adaptive reuse of the existing school building for residential use. This public high school is scheduled to vacate their current OTR facility and the disposition of this school building is a source of great concern for the community. Students were able to show how the building could be adapted for residential use or alternatively, renovated for the expansion and retention of the existing high school program. The community will use the student work to negotiate an outcome with the school district. A highlight of this project was the collaboration with faculty and young students of the high school who worked in teams with the UC architecture and interior design students throughout the quarter at the Niehoff Studio.

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The trade school emerged as a response to the large number of high school graduates and drop-outs who loiter around the area, lacking the ability to be hired for full time work. After surveying other trade schools around the country and taking OTR’s inherent needs into consideration, the following majors were selected and included in the design: Construction/Building Trades, Plumbing, Electrical Engineering, Childcare Education, Culinary Arts, General Business, Entrepreneurial Business, Computer Programming, Electronic Media.

The Pendleton Marketplace and Trade School combines an educational facility for the community with profitable retail stores that also respond to neighborhood needs. The large space provided by the re-used building allows for both services to be offered together. The businesses are a mix of store types; one category is those that can be staffed by the trade school students as a cooperative education option. It is an affordable means to gain a practical education, and will include a career development department to help students find jobs and lead productive lives post-graduation.
The redevelopment of Main Street in the early 90's brought furniture showrooms, art galleries, coffee shops, and loft apartments to the area, as well as a night life complete with clubs and bars. Pendleton Arts Center, located at 1310 Pendleton Street, houses over 150 local artists. Many of these artists rent studio space within the building for work space. This facility is at full-capacity and has an extensive waiting list.

The SCPA building is located between these two locations. By creating artist space and showrooms within the SCPA building, this gap would be bridged, providing for a more comprehensive and extensive Final Friday event, as well as a more cohesive art community in Over-the-Rhine.

The showrooms on the first floor of the building help to expand the retail market by adding to those on Main Street. This would create a cluster of lighting, furniture, fixtures, hardware, and fabrics stores.

The artist spaces created for the building are all located on the second floor, each has access to natural light. They range in size, to provides the artists with freedom to arrange their space as they choose. An artist may choose to rent an entire studio and create work and display space, or he/she may choose to share the space with other artists and to design it to be a gallery.

The downtown housing stock of Cincinnati is currently growing. According to the Center City Residential Market Study, over the next several years 1,700 units are projected to be added to the Center City Market. The units in this building range in size from 1 bedroom apartments to 3 bedroom lofts. This design has provided for 60 parking spots contained within the building. The design also includes other popular amenities of public outdoor space, a fitness center, a club room, guest rooms, and city views.
This project proposes to keep the existing School for Creative and Performing Arts in its current location on 1310 Sycamore Street. SCPA will grow from a 4-12 school to a K-12 school and in order to fulfill its necessary expansion, 2 additions will be made to the school. The 3 buildings total 293,976 sq. ft. of usable space.

In the debate of keeping the SCPA in its current location or alternately relocating it to Washington Park, there are several reasons to maintain its location; SCPA is a prominent cultural landmark in Cincinnati. It symbolizes a long history of education and the arts, the building creates a safe zone within the surrounding neighborhood, and it is an aesthetically beautiful building.

The overall intention was to space the functions of the program in 3 nodes of activity that were spaced in such a way to create a campus environment. The campus is divided into 3 buildings:

- A new K-6 academics and arts building with a gymnasium, pool, and dance studios, and 3 levels of underground parking
- The existing SCPA building houses grades 7-12 academics and arts, the school cafeteria and the 350 person theatre remains in the center
- A new Theatre building with a 750 person theatre, theatre tech and production, 2 levels of underground parking and a 3rd floor sky walk connecting to the existing SCPA building.
The New SCPA

Design by
Cole & Russell Architects