

Acentech

Acentech Receives IFMA Boston Award of Excellence for Acoustic Design of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Unprecedented Best Practice award given for innovative use of technology in building design

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – June 6, 2011 – [Acentech](#) Inc., a nationally recognized multi-disciplinary acoustics, audiovisual systems design, and vibration consulting firm, is proud to announce that its auralization work on the new Art of the Americas Wing of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA) was honored with a 2011 Best Practice Award of Excellence for Innovative Use of Technology in Building Design by the Boston chapter of the International Facility Management Association (IFMA), a non-profit association dedicated to serving the facility management profession.

An “auralization” is an aural rendering of a space that relies on computer modeling software to simulate the propagation of sound within an enclosed space. A sample of auralizations from the project can be found on Acentech’s web site at <http://acentech.com/projects/museums-mfa-shapiro-family-courtyard.html>.

In an unprecedented move in response to Acentech’s submission, IFMA Boston established this year an additional award in the medium project category (50,000 – 150,000 SF) entitled “Innovative Use of Technology in Building Design.” The IFMA Boston Best Practice Award recognizes Acentech’s use of auralization technology in the acoustic and audiovisual systems design for the new 121,307 square foot Art of the Americas Wing and 12,184 square foot Ruth and Carl J. Shapiro Family Courtyard at the MFA.

Working with internationally renowned London-based architects Foster + Partners and architect of record, Boston-based CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc., Acentech consulted on architectural acoustics, audiovisual systems design, and mechanical system noise and vibration control for the additions to the museum. To ensure that the acoustics of such a large and reverberant space would be suitable for events and presentations, Acentech created auralizations to demonstrate the acoustical characteristics of the courtyard. Using computer modeling and signal processing techniques, Acentech’s acoustical consultants transformed architectural drawings into an aural rendering of the space (an “auralization”) that allowed the design team and the MFA to hear the acoustics of the courtyard before it was even built. In the acoustical model, Acentech placed sounds that typified the kind of events that MFA would host,

such as musical performances of various sizes and volumes, and party noises ranging from a small cocktail gathering to a large formal dinner.

This rich library of sounds was used to auralize or model the courtyard for the ears, thereby allowing the MFA and the design team to make confident and informed design decisions regarding the acoustics of its space. To accomplish the MFA's functional and aesthetic goals for the courtyard, Acentech recommended that acoustical treatments be incorporated into the design to accommodate these future events.

Acentech worked with the design team to include acoustical treatments that were sympathetic to the design intent and respectful of the architectural design of the courtyard. A translucent two-layer material was chosen for suspension from two-thirds of the ceiling to provide acoustical absorption as well as thermal control of heat gain from the glass ceiling. A series of custom designed, light-diffusing and sound-absorbing V-shaped louvers were also installed in the new wing.

Given at a recent event on May 26th, the IFMA Boston Awards of Excellence recognize the finest advancements and contributions in facility management. The award honors the design/client teams whose facility management project has had a substantial, positive effect on the success of their organization, demonstrated innovation and impact on business objectives, and achieved "above and beyond" the normal scope of job responsibilities.

John Moriarty & Associates of Boston served as general contractor and construction manager for the project, and Office Environments of New England provided audiovisual equipment.

About Acentech

Acentech Inc. is a multi-disciplinary acoustics, audiovisual systems design, and vibration consulting firm providing a wide range of services to a diverse group of clients. With offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Trevese, Pennsylvania; and Westlake Village, California, the company's professional staff of more than 50 consultants has broad and deep expertise in acoustics and audiovisual systems design consulting. Having celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2008, Acentech is one of the oldest and largest organizations of its type: an unequalled resource to engineers, architects, and designers worldwide. For more information, please visit www.acentech.com.

#