

## CURTAIN CALL



### Background

O'Donnell + Tuomey were selected as architects for the Lyric Theatre as the result of an international architectural competition in 2003. Since then the client brief for the new theatre has been developed and tested in relation to best current practice in contemporary building and the architectural design has been developed to embody the functional, cultural and social aspirations of the project. A planning application is currently being processed.

### Design in response to context

The Lyric stands among trees on sloping ground beside the River Lagan. Seen from the river, the new theatre is an object building in parkland, with a strongly defined skyline and distinctive volumetric form. On Ridgeway Street, the Lyric is designed to take advantage of the sloping site, to step down the hill, graduating in scale away from the neighbouring terrace houses. Built in 'Belfast' brick, the new building holds one corner of the continuous system of brick streets, the last

building on the grid marking the corner of Ridgeway Street and addressing the River Lagan.

### Design response to functional brief

The three major constituents of the brief are:

- Theatre
- Studio
- Rehearsal

These three elements are the fundamental components of the project. Their fixed dimensions and three dimensional volumes are determined by the requirements of the functional operation of a contemporary producing theatre.

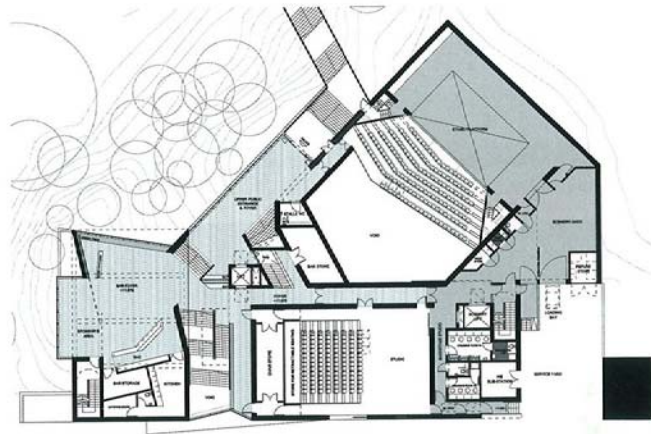
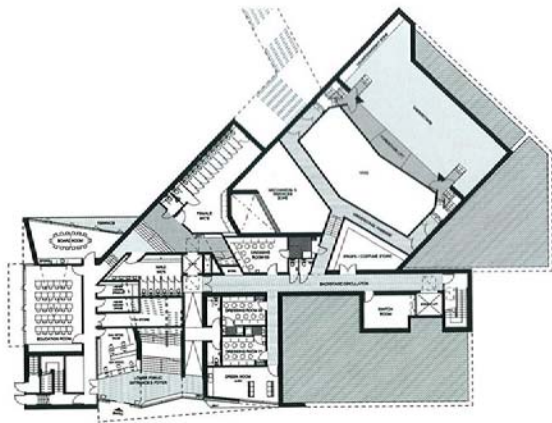
### Site Specific Design

The irregular outline of the boundaries of the site and the constraints of the sloping ground have given rise to a site specific design solution. The large auditorium with its backstage fly tower has been sited back from the street line ▶

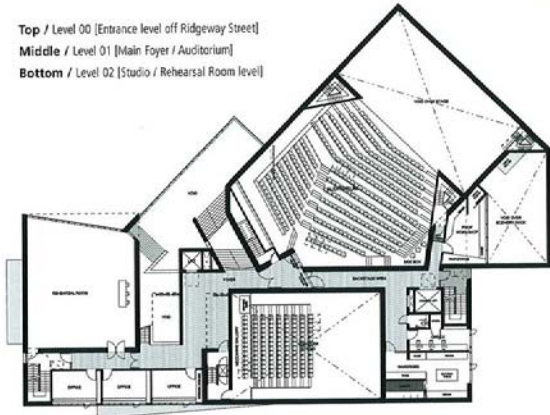


### THE TEAM

Client / Lyric Theatre  
 Architect / O'Donnell + Tuomey  
 Structural / Horgan Lynch  
 Services Engineer / IN2 Engineering  
 Project Manager / EC Harris LLP  
 Cost Consultant / Rider Levett Bucknall UK  
 Theatre Consultant / Theatreplan LLP  
 Acoustician / Sound Space Design  
 Fire Engineer / Arup Fire  
 TIA Consultant / RPS Consulting Engineers  
 CDM Co-ordinator / Ken Ewart & Associates



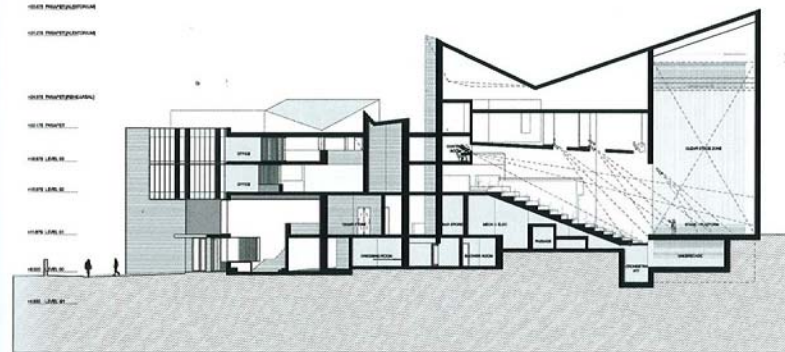
Top / Level 00 [Entrance level off Ridgeway Street]  
 Middle / Level 01 [Main Foyer / Auditorium]  
 Bottom / Level 02 [Studio / Rehearsal Room level]



► to minimise intrusion on the scale of the surrounding urban context. The studio has been sited along the street frontage with a picture window to provide visual communication between street and theatre activities. The rehearsal room has been raised above the foyer bar area with its window overlooking the river through the trees to provide concentrated focus for the rigorous process of actors

preparation for performance. Each of these three key spaces has been provided with individual roof forms to break down the scale of the building and to give individual expression to the constituent elements of the programme. ●

See Comment by Mark Carruthers on page 3.



Lyric Theatre Belfast  
 Section EE @ 1:200