

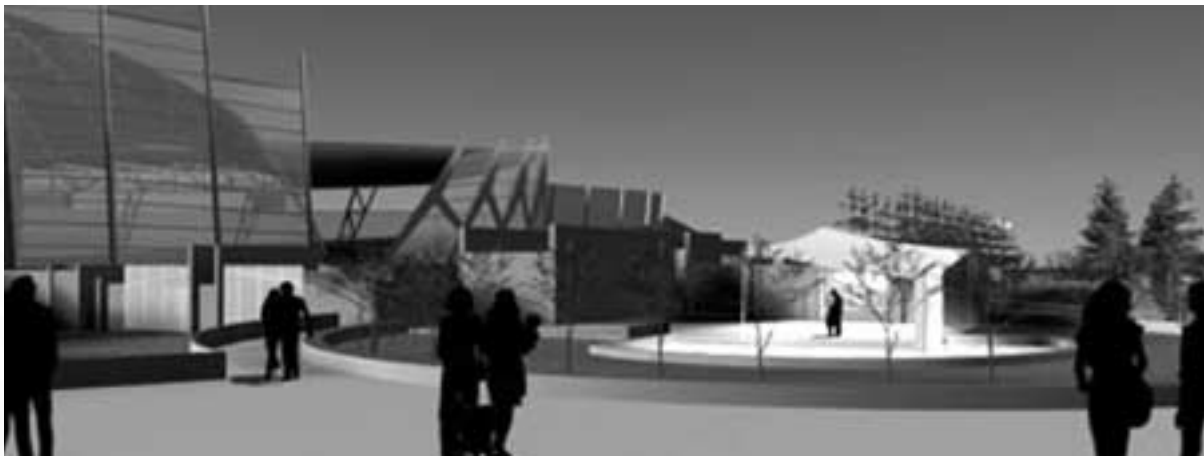
MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE

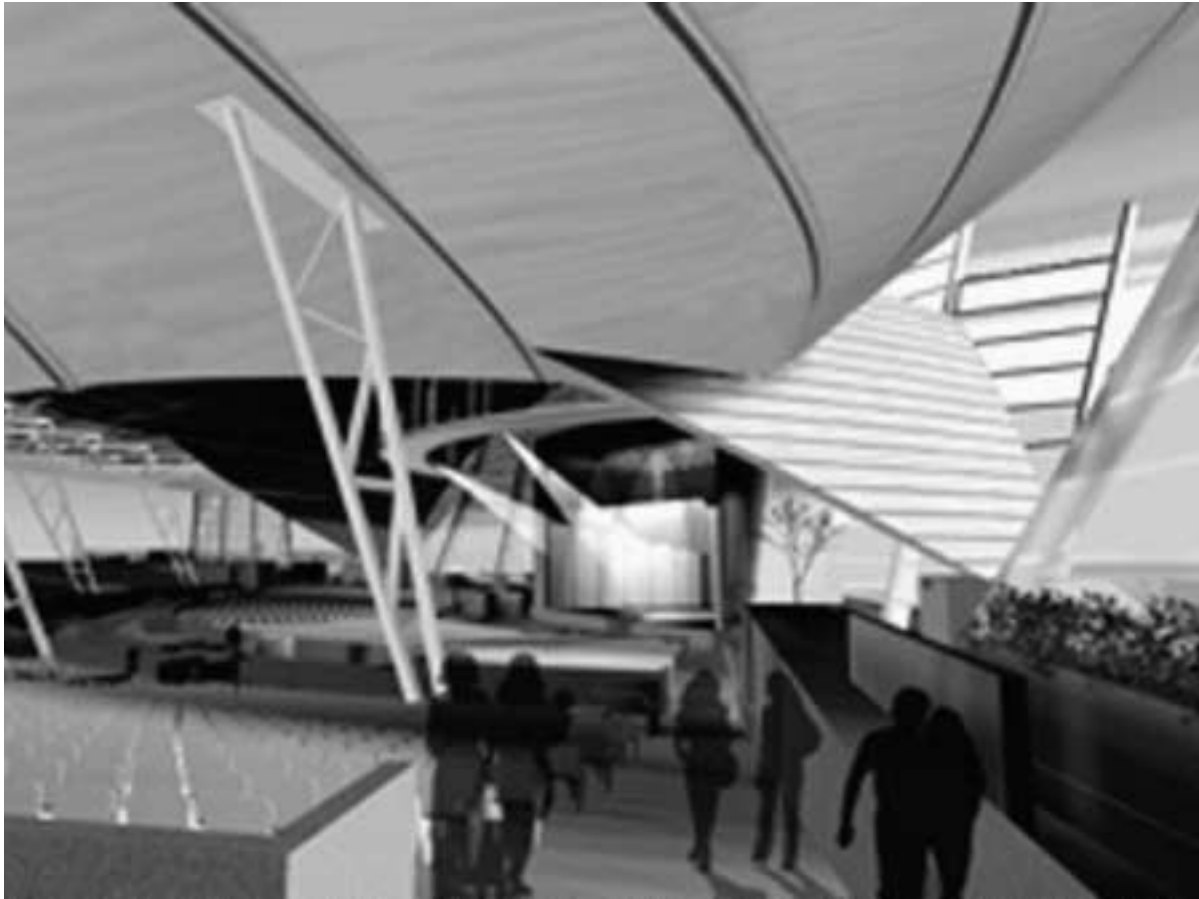
BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA
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The proposed outdoor amphitheater for the Minnesota Orchestra was to be sited on 130 acres of agrarian land northwest of downtown Minneapolis. The site program had to accommodate audiences of between three and nineteen thousand, provide parking and concessions, as well as public spaces for the community. The main focus of the design was to accomplish the program needs in the most aesthetic and ecologically sound manner possible. The design solution creates an embracing landscape for the amphitheatre that provides ecological parking alternatives and on-site stormwater treatment. The final design is a thoughtful blending of art, function and ecology.

The oval shape of the stage structure takes its cues from the surrounding landscape - a 50' high graded oval berm - designed to provide a feeling of balance for the site. The surrounding open space was to be planted as a native prairie to help minimize long-term maintenance costs. The open space also included a public sculpture garden and park. One of the most influential ideas for the proposed design was the site location amidst an agrarian landscape. The strong linear geometric planting patterns of agriculture informed the on-grade features, such as water features, parking areas, walks and allees. The emerging berm form of the amphitheater was designed to intentionally contrast with the powerful linear nature of the site.

Parking was a critical issue for the amphitheatre. Paved parking was created to accommodate approximately 3,000 cars. To accommodate numbers over and above 3,000, large, flat expanses of low meadow grasses were proposed to surround the paved parking. When not in use as parking lots, the open meadows also doubled as community athletic fields. This allowed the impervious surface to be concentrated





and centralized. The impervious surfaces were designed to drain towards the pervious meadow, which would help cleanse the runoff as it moved to its final location within a chain of linear water gardens. This design solution allowed stormwater captured from the parking areas to be collected and treated on-site.

The chain of water gardens that enclosed the site were designed to be a combination of riparian and wetland environments. These gardens would allow for the cleansing and treatment of all stormwater collected on the site. A water feature was also designed to surround the main amphitheater, helping to control unwanted access to the concert space.

The pedestrian entry alley was to be lined with a double row of deciduous shade trees on either side, providing a canopy over each sidewalk and giving it a strong focal presence that would help to direct visitors to the amphitheater entrance.

