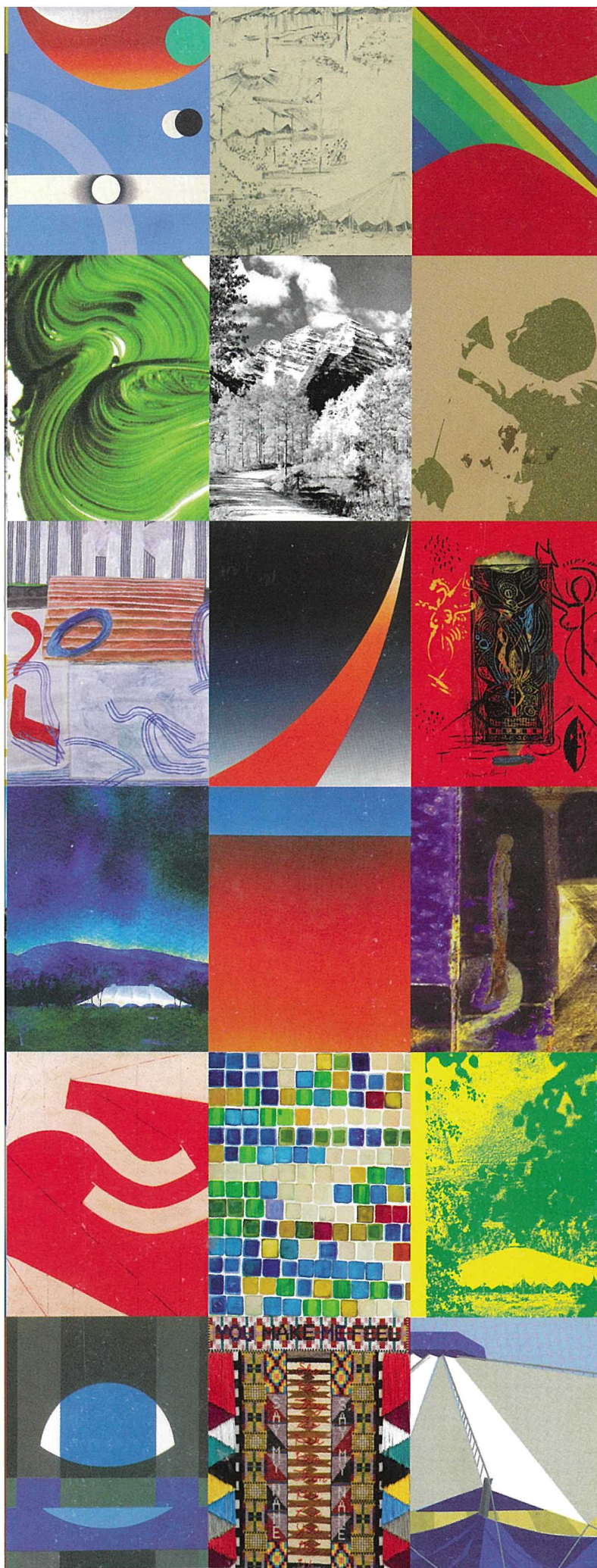
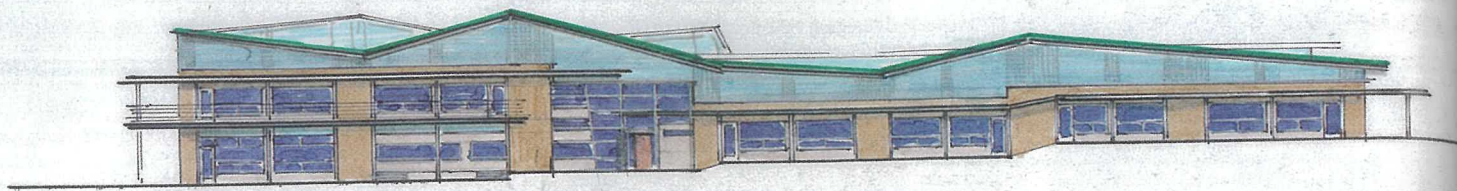




**ASPEN MUSIC
FESTIVAL
AND SCHOOL**
75th Anniversary





Places To Inspire:

The Significance of Architecture and the Aspen Music Festival and School

BY SARAH BROUGHTON, FAIA



There is poetry in architecture, and place-making is important. Goethe commented that architecture is frozen music. Designed to frame, expose, reveal, and inspire, the Aspen Music Festival and School buildings embody these principles. Complex and edited, they engage all who participate in a universal, human experience.

Beginning in a meadow in 1949, a temporary tent, designed by Eero Saarinen with a white top and orange skirt, provided a daylit venue where both the musicians and the audience engaged with the music and with Aspen, elements and all. Subsequent tents, including a tent by Herbert Bayer and Fritz Benedict in 1965, with a white top and “Bayer Blue” skirt, continued this tradition. The current tent by Harry Teague Architects stands to this day.

While the signature tent has evolved, other structures have emerged to support the AMFS, each carefully designed to further integrate students and faculty with Aspen—and Aspen with the music. While no change has come easily or without debate, perse-

verance has brought particular places that are exceptionally grounded.

Harris Concert Hall (below right), designed by Harry Teague Architects and opened in 1993, provided a much-needed sound-isolated practice and concert venue. An unassuming 45-foot-tall double hull building was submerged into the ground at just the right elevation to fit into the adjacent residential neighborhood, providing an access tunnel between it and the Tent to transport pianos while maintaining their tuning. Concepted as a buried instrument, the interior of the concert hall is clad in cherry and maple wood, with intentional asymmetry and lensed ceiling tiles to achieve a pinnacle of sound for both the musicians and the audience.

The **Matthew and Carolyn Bucksbaum Campus** (above), also designed by Harry Teague Architects and completed in 2016, is a collection of twenty-two buildings including eighty-four practice rooms and three bridges. The Campus has two programs, a music school in summer and a school, Aspen Country Day, in winter. The assemblage of buildings nurture interaction with the pond and lawns, combined with focused, private spaces built into the hillside. The architecture takes its cues from the surrounding geological formations with irregular diagonal-shaped facades integrating tinted glass that provides daylighting to the interiors. Emulating the water, landforms, and sky, the

poetic buildings so fully capture the musicians’ attention and experience that they feel together, grounded, and included.

The **Michael Klein Music Tent** (below left) continues to enliven musicians and audiences. Constructed of wood with glass in the center to reflect sound, the Teflon-coated fiberglass roof is actually one-third solid. The convex ceiling canvases disperse sound and echo sails billowing in the wind. The rare quality of light allows a singular visual connection between musicians and the audience, and the musicians are grateful for the exchange. Designed as an abstraction of a mining map, the amplifying wood backdrop to the stage again connects us to the environment, history, and location. Each wood panel is composed with five lines, a reference to five lines in a musical stave.

Together, the Aspen Music Festival and School buildings deliver a unifying connection to the music and to Aspen, providing inspiration for us all, no matter from where we came or where we go.

