

# **PIERRE BOULEZ SAAL CONCERT HALL OF THE BARENBOIM-SAID AKADEMIE**

## **PROJECT FACT SHEET**

**Barenboim-Said Akademie** The Barenboim-Said Akademie (BSA) was created in the spirit of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, established in 1999 by Daniel Barenboim and the late American-Palestinian literary scholar Edward W. Said to bring together as equals young Arab and Israeli musicians. In 2012, Barenboim founded the BSA to train young musicians from the Middle East, with a curriculum rooted in both music and the humanities. Students are invited to study on scholarship in a four-year program leading to a bachelor's degree. The BSA welcomed its first class of 37 students in fall 2016, and once at capacity, up to 90 students will be enrolled at a time.

**Pierre Boulez Saal Project Overview** The Pierre Boulez Saal is a new concert hall in the heart of Berlin, purpose-built for the BSA. The room is designed to provide an exceptionally flexible rehearsal space for students and faculty and to accommodate an ongoing schedule of student performances, chamber music concerts, lectures, conferences and academic events.

**Development of the Design** The design for the hall emerged out of a close collaboration among Daniel Barenboim, Pritzker Prize-winning architect Frank Gehry and acclaimed acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota. Gehry has generously donated his services to the project. The hall is named for composer and conductor Pierre Boulez (1925-2016), a longtime friend of both Barenboim and Gehry, in tribute to his relentless dedication to learning and his insatiable curiosity.

**Location** Französische Straße, between the Staatsoper Unter den Linden and the Federal Foreign Office Building. The Pierre Boulez Saal has been created in a portion of the Staatsoper's former storage building (the Magazin), constructed in 1952-55 and designed by Richard Paulick. It stands in the Mitte district, the culturally vibrant and historic center of Berlin, in close proximity to Humboldt University and Museumsinsel (Museum Island).

**Project Leadership** Daniel Barenboim, Founder, Barenboim-Said Akademie  
Architect Frank Gehry, Founder and Principal, Gehry Partners, LLP  
Architect Craig Webb, Designer and Partner, Gehry Partners, LLP  
Acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota, Founder and President, Nagata Acoustics America  
Michael Naumann, Director, Barenboim Said Academy  
Carsten Siebert, Chancellor, Barenboim Said Academy  
Tabaré Perlas, CEO, Daniel Barenboim Stiftung

Ole Bækhøj, Director, Pierre Boulez Saal

<b>Size</b>	990 square meters (10,660 square feet) Room Dimensions: 23.5m W x 26.5m L x 14m H
<b>Cost</b>	33.7 M Euros for the academy and concert hall
<b>Key Dates</b>	2012: Barenboim-Said Akademie established; start of planning phase May 6, 2014: Construction of Pierre Boulez Saal begins June 15, 2015: Topping-off ceremony October 2015: BSA starts a pilot program for students October 2016: BSA welcomes first class of students March 4-5, 2017: Inaugural concerts

## Principal Design Features

---

<b>Overview</b>	<p>The Pierre Boulez Saal is part of the conversion of the former stage depot of the State Opera Unter den Linden, the Magazin, into the Barenboim-Said Akademie. The wood-clad hall has flexible seating configurations for up to 682 people over two levels that surround the musicians on all sides. The upper level is a set of two oval shaped, column free, sloping balconies, which are rotated slightly against the axis of the oval stage, enhancing the sight lines.</p> <p>The hall is designed for intimacy, with the maximum distance between the conductor and the farthest seat being about 14 meters. The hall readily accommodates performances by soloists, chamber music ensembles and medium-sized orchestras.</p>
<b>Seating Configurations</b>	<p>To achieve immediacy between audience and musicians, the seating is divided into retractable and fixed sections. This flexibility allows the audience to be as close as possible to the musicians.</p> <p>For solo and small ensemble performances the front row seats are placed directly on the stage. By eliminating the traditional stage edge between musicians and audience, the boundary between performers and listeners is dissolved. For improved sightlines, the seat rows further back are on tiered telescopic seating platforms. The uppermost tier is a row of built-in bench seating, the only fixed seating on the entry level. The balcony seats are also fixed, but leave open areas for off-stage musicians.</p>
<b>Exterior Envelope</b>	<p>To provide the required acoustical volume for the hall, the floor slabs and shear walls of the existing Magazin building were removed and only the façade and roof maintained. On the east and south sides, four bays of three windows each connect the hall visually to the surrounding neighborhood and make the space</p>

feel like a room in the city. Because of this, the interior of the hall reflects the ever-changing Berlin sky.

On the west side, another four bays of three openings connect to the four story atrium of the music academy. On the ground floor and first floor, these openings have been converted into sound and light locks, and on the second floor they provide a visual connection between the atrium and the hall.

### **Balcony**

The balcony is designed like a bridge and tied back into two new concrete shear walls concealed in the north and south façades. The balcony structure is a concrete truss with a trapezoid cross section, with an openness factor of over 35% for acoustics. Like a speaker, the open face of the structure is clad with acoustically transparent material that lets the sound pass through and reflect off the main walls of the room.

### **Materials**

The walls and the ceiling are made of vertical grain douglas fir panels. The surfaces requiring air permeability are either left open or clad with speaker fabric. The railings are made of painted steel. The seats and the seat fabric are both custom designed by Gehry Partners, LLP.

The wall and ceiling surfaces are slightly undulated in response to the acoustics, and the windows are built out of three layers of glass to achieve sound separation to the street.

## **DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION TEAM**

---

<b>Architect, Pierre Boulez Hall:</b>	Gehry Partners, LLP Los Angeles, California, USA
<b>Architectural Team:</b>	Design Partner – Frank Gehry Project Designer – Craig Webb Managing Partner – Laurence Tighe Project Architect – Gesa Buettner Chief of Staff – Meaghan Lloyd Project Team – Christopher Skeens, Alvar Mensana, Fayez Ahdab, Liron Elkan, Andrew Graham, Joseph Justus, Kumiko Koda, Justin Oh, Mok Wai Wan
<b>Acoustician, Room Acoustics:</b>	Nagata Acoustics America, Inc. Los Angeles, California
<b>Acoustical Team:</b>	Dr. Yasuhisa Toyota Daniel Beckmann
<b>Architect, Barenboim Said Academy:</b>	HG Merz Berlin, Germany
<b>Executive Architect:</b>	RW+ Berlin, Germany
<b>Acoustician, Sound Separation:</b>	Mueller-BBM Berlin, Germany
<b>Structural Engineering:</b>	GSE Ingenieur-Gesellschaft mbH Berlin, Germany
<b>Building Services:</b>	ZWP Ingenieur-AG Berlin, Germany
<b>Theater Consultant:</b>	Ingenieurbüro Schaller Karlsruhe, Germany
<b>Lighting Designer:</b>	L'Observatoire, Inc. New York, USA
<b>Sound &amp; Projection Consultants:</b>	Sonitus, LLP Los Angeles, USA
<b>Project Manager:</b>	teamproject Berlin, Germany