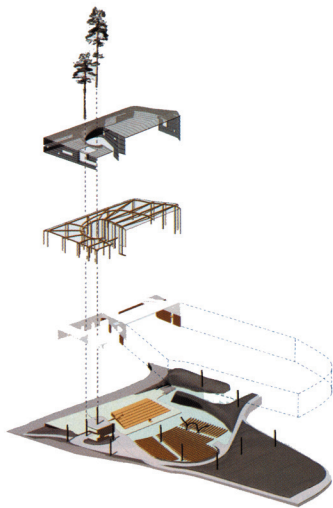




Ojai Libbey Bowl, Ojai, California



Exploded axonometric

On the Boards

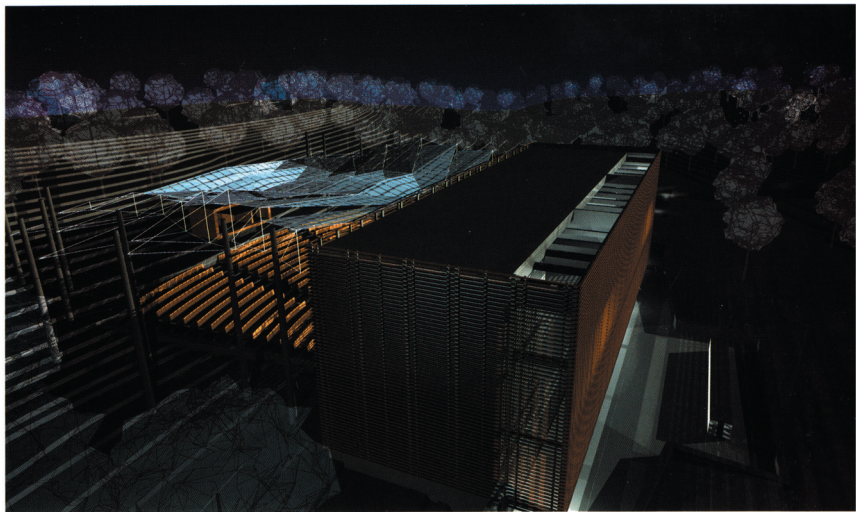
Hanrahan Meyers Architects
Ojai Libbey Bowl
Ojai, California

Resolution: 4 Architecture
Nature's Theater
Saluda Shoals, South Carolina

"It's just a shed," Eero Saarinen is reported to have said in disgust when he was asked to modify his design for a covered performance space on the grounds of Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. His dismay aside, the name stuck, and the Koussevitzky Shed has become a beloved venue. Two similar structures are currently in the works. Hanrahan Meyers Architects have designed the Ojai Libbey Bowl, in Ojai, California, which will serve as the summer home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic; and this spring, Resolution: 4 Architecture won an open competition for Nature's Theater, an amphitheater in a cultural park just outside Columbia, South Carolina.

Because the Hanrahan Meyers project is for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, acoustics

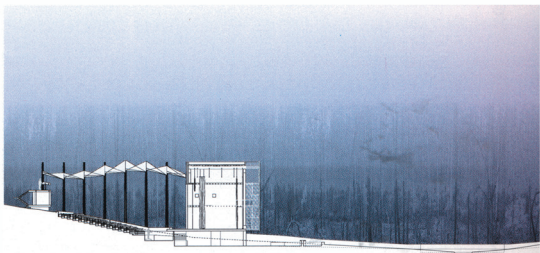
drove the entire process. The firm collaborated with Nagata Acoustics, which is also working with Frank Gehry on Disney Hall, on the band shell's double-layered design—the inner layer, of concrete and wood, is for acoustical purposes, the outer, of translucent fiberglass panels, is for shelter and aesthetics. A second important consideration was tree preservation. Principal Victoria Meyers says that when she was told that any scheme that required cutting down trees would never get by the local board, she took the advice literally. The only way to make the structure big enough to accommodate a full orchestra was to wrap it around two existing trees. So they did. All of the service areas and mechanicals are stashed in a spur off to the side of the main stage; the open-air space in between serves, literally, as a green room.



Nature's Theater, Saluda Shoals, South Carolina

Resolution: 4 Architecture's brief was more general than that of Hanrahan Meyers, but with no less of an emphasis on nature. The new Saluda Shoals Park was conceived as an open-air venue for the performing arts, so the amphitheater had to both accommodate as many kinds of performance as possible and incorporate the landscape. The firm's response was an airy box with slatted cedar walls set at the edge of a rise; a delicate awning of polycarbonate panels offers the audience some shelter from the rain. Principal Rod Luntz explained that the approach to the amphitheater, which requires visitors to cross a small footbridge over a stream, was devised to increase one's sense of being in the woods. Both projects are scheduled to begin construction in 2002, and both offer an elegant rebuttal to Saarinen's critique of a simple shed.

Anne Guiney



North-south section