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Acoustics of the Bing Theater, USC: Computer simulation for acoustical improvements

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Abstract: The objective of this thesis was to study and analyze the acoustics of an existing theater/auditorium space. Background research and a case study were conducted on different types of auditorium spaces. The Bing Theatre on the University of Southern California (USC) campus was selected as a case study. The Bing, a one level, 551 seat Theater is primarily used for the theatrical performances of USC and occasional opera. Acoustical measurements, manual reverberation time calculations and computer model simulation were performed to determine the most important acoustical aspects for drama-speech intelligibility and uniformity of sound level. A survey was also conducted to find out the audience’s response to the Bing acoustics during a live performance. The results of the study and analysis indicated that the acoustics of the Bing Theatre in general is fine, for its primary uses. A few improvements might be made to the space, but the cost could most likely not be justified in light of the small improvement that might be achieved in the performance.

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