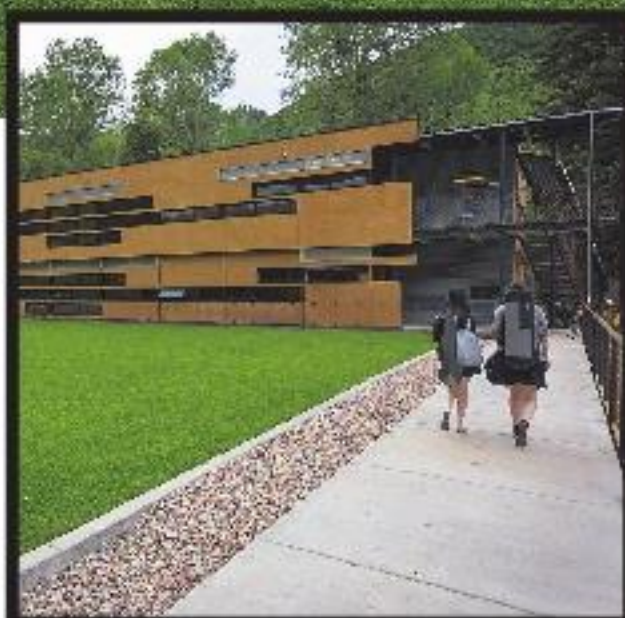


weekend



Big Music on Campus

Aspen Music Festival & School unveils final phase of \$80 million campus makeover



IN REVIEW 'Mamma Mia!' and the June Experience B6 & B8 • WHAT'S HAPPENING B2



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JEREMY WALLACE/THE ASPEN TIMES

A newly remodeled administration building features updated floor plan, light fixtures and other amenities.

New Season, New Digs

Aspen Music Festival and School students have a new home

Andrew Travers
The Aspen Times

Walking around the recently completed Aspen Music Festival and School campus Wednesday, the nonprofit's President and CEO Alan Fletcher pointed out design elements, discussed beaver ponds, noted the finer points of siding and siting and sighting of the new buildings in this long-in-the-works rebuild.

"It's very musical, very rhythmic," Fletcher said of the spruce log colonnades that run outside of each of the new buildings.

He noted a tree rising through the new cafeteria, holding ketchup and other condiments, drawing a parallel to the World Ash Tree in Wagner's "Ring" cycle.

But most importantly, the new buildings are now filled with music — lessons in the teaching studios, students in the practice rooms, orchestras in the orchestra halls.

After the long, scrupulous haul of remaking the Bucksbaum Campus, Fletcher is proud of his music school's new home.

"I'm still loving just walking around and looking at it," he said.

Fundraising and land-use approvals began eight years ago, with construction stretching over the winters since 2012, and landscaping continuing through this week. Meeting students during registrations for the Festival and School's 67th season, which opens this weekend, Fletcher was eager to welcome them to a campus now worthy of their talents.

There's a thin line between rustic and run-down. The

buildings on the Aspen Music Festival and School's campus on Castle Creek Road had unquestionably crossed it after more than four decades of hosting the world's best and brightest classical musicians.

This summer, the Music Festival unveils the final phase of an \$80 million redeveloped campus that promises to give its world-class students a world-class musical home. This freshest batch of buildings — including a new re-

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Harry Teague
architect

hearsal hall, a balcony-wrapped cafeteria and administration building — adds to the acclaimed new ones that opened in 2013 and earned Basalt-based architect Harry Teague an American Institute of Architects Western Mountain Region Design Excellence Award.

Renamed in honor of Matthew and Kay Bucksbaum, the former chairs of the festival's board of trustees whose \$25 million gift launched the redevelopment, the campus now has three elegant and acoustically pristine rehearsal halls situated around its Great Pond, with 68 practice rooms ringing the site.

The 38-acre site, nestled on a sliver of land between Cas-

to the Music Festival by former Aspen Institute President Robert O. Anderson in 1966. The festival threw together a functional collection of buildings that had grown dilapidated by the turn of the century. There was little charm left in them by the time the redevelopment process began — the old Music Hall, for instance, was literally condemned in 2010, which made for an easy demolition process.

"We brought in a bulldozer, pushed it and it just fell down," Fletcher quipped at the time.

Teague also designed the Music Festival's performance halls in Aspen's West End Harris Concert Hall and

the Benedict Music Tent, which opened in 1993 and 2000, respectively. Teague began his career working on the original

campus during a 1967 internship. With an intimate understanding of the site and the Aspen Music Festival, he works with a contemporary architectural vocabulary that also manages to reflect the campus's rugged and pastoral setting. Two historic mining-era structures from the 1890s have been preserved on the site. (The Aspen Historical Society consulted on the project.) Quirky historical elements, like original wood floors and fixtures, a fireplace and a safe left from the mining days have been preserved in the revamped administrative building. Walls of glass bring daylight into rehearsal spaces and connect musicians to

SCHOOL

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the mountains surrounding them. Outside, sidings constructed of metal and a wood-colored fiber cement remind you that you're in both the backwoods and in the 21st century.

Walking through the newest buildings this week, it was remarkable to find the mountains never quite disappear: windows in teaching studios draw practicing pianists and violinists eyes to mountain peaks, Fletcher's office includes a view of Highland Bowl and minute design elements in light fixtures and soundproofing material subtly mimic the shape and drama of the Rockies.

In its architecture review of the first phase of the new campus three years ago, Denver Post critic Ray Mark Rinaldi called the aesthetic "a potential game-changer" for mountain design.

"You cannot ignore the environment and the beauty of the place," Teague said. "I hope the buildings add to that, that they're inspiring, that they're not just rehearsal halls."

Hosting 600-plus music students in the summer, the campus doubles as the home of Aspen Country Day School the rest of the year. The brand-new orchestra rehearsal hall, for example, will double as a middle school gymnasium (removable wall panels allow for multi-angled acoustic-enhancing walls in the summer and kickball-friendly flat ones during the school year).

Along with providing space for practice and instruction, the new campus is a

If You Go ...

What: Matthew and Carolyn Bucksbaum Campus Dedication, Aspen Music Festival and School

Where: Bucksbaum Campus, Castle Creek Road

When: July 11, 10 a.m.

How much: Free

More info: www.aspenmusicfestival.com

Etc.

This weekend includes season-opening performances by the Aspen Chamber Symphony (today in the Benedict Music Tent) and the Aspen Festival Orchestra featuring soprano Renee Fleming (Sunday in the Tent). Sunday's performance also will feature Robert Spano conducting Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances, the beginning of a season themed "An Invitation to Dance."

work of visual art and an attraction worth a summer visit. The festival is welcoming the public there this season for a free, kid-friendly Family Concert on July 21 and for regular performances including free showcases, competitions and concerts by brass, woodwind, strings, harp and classical-guitar students. A grand-opening celebration is scheduled for 10 a.m. on July 11. Free campus tours run at 10:15 a.m. on Monday mornings from July 18 through Aug. 15.

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