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MEDIA CONTACT: Sara Ring
310-582-4564
sring@xrds.org

Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences selects architect teams for performing arts facilities

Santa Monica school taps architectural firms JFAK and SPF:a to design new spaces for drama, music, dance and filmmaking.

Santa Monica, California — Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences recently announced the selection of two architectural teams to develop plans to enhance performing arts facilities on the School's 21st Street Campus, which houses the Middle and Upper Schools. Says Crossroads Head of School Bob Riddle, "The time has come to give our students and faculty state-of-the-art teaching, performance and rehearsal spaces to match the exceptional performing arts program that our School offers today. We want to envision new facilities that will challenge our students to stretch the limits of their creativity."

The School has hired JFAK (John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects) and SPF:a (Studio Pali Fekete Architects) to collaborate on the project. JFAK's project lead Alice Kimm and partner John Friedman will design a new classroom, rehearsal and black box theater building to better serve the expanding needs of students. Zoltan E. Pali of SPF:a will design a new 650-seat theater, recital hall and music department building that will enhance the school's civic engagement. Michael Ferguson of TheatreDNA will serve as a technical consultant for both the theater and classroom/rehearsal spaces.

"We are thrilled to have Alice Kimm and John Friedman, Zoltan Pali, Michael Ferguson and their design teams turn the dream of new performing arts spaces into a reality," says Riddle. "We look forward to working with them to develop facilities that will best serve the talents of our remarkable students and dedicated faculty."

Enhancing performing spaces is an objective in the school's newly created strategic plan. Developed over two years with the participation of individuals from across the Crossroads community, the strategic plan establishes 15 goals to guide the school over the next five to seven years.

"Amazing stuff happens at Crossroads, because Crossroads celebrates interaction, connectivity and bold endeavors as much as it nurtures contemplation and self-expression," says Alice Kimm, FAIA. "JFAK is privileged to have been welcomed into this innovative and creative environment, to bring to life new spaces that will expand Crossroads' power to communicate and inspire, as well as bring joy and enlightenment to diverse audiences both large and small."

Adds Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA, principal-in-charge at SPF:a, “We are deeply honored to be working on such a large and impactful project that will not only enrich the lives of the Crossroads’ exceptional family, but expand the cultural offerings of Santa Monica. Not much satisfies me more than creating for the performing arts; few spaces are able to stir such joy and imagination while also profoundly deepening the bonds between us.”

About JFAK

John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects (JFAK) was founded in 1996 by design principals Alice Kimm, FAIA and John Friedman, FAIA. JFAK designs environments that influence people’s experiences, creativity and everyday lives, for individuals and organizations who understand the power of space to inspire, communicate and awaken wonder and joy. JFAK’s widely recognized work spans schools, university centers, commercial and creative office facilities, houses/housing and public spaces. Each project, while embracing technology and sustainable principles, is approached as an opportunity to artfully enhance its cultural context. Recent works include La Kretz Innovation Campus in DTLA, The Resnick Sustainability Institute at Caltech and Roberts Pavilion at Claremont McKenna College. Current projects, in addition to Crossroads’ new classroom and studio theater building, include Cal State University Long Beach’s new Alumni Center, a new public park at Pio Pico Public Library and a new homeless services center for Council District 8 in Los Angeles.

About SPF:a

Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA is the design principal of SPF:architects (SPF:a), a firm he founded in 1990 alongside partner Judit M. Fekete-Pali. SPF:a has been responsible for hundreds of projects across Los Angeles ranging from custom-built single-family residences to sculptural bridges to large-scale cultural institutions. Some of the studio’s most notable works include the award-winning Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills; the restoration and renovation of two Los Angeles icons, the 1933 Greek Theatre and the 1928 Hollywood Pantages Theatre; and the \$300M renovation and expansion of the Getty Villa Museum, for which SPF:a served as the executive architect. In addition to designing Crossroads’ new performing arts venue, SPF:a is currently involved in the renovation of San Pedro’s historic Warner Grand Theatre, as well as the rehabilitation and expansion of the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles.

About Crossroads School

Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences is a K-12, coed college preparatory school in Santa Monica, California. Crossroads was founded upon five basic commitments: to academic excellence; to the arts; to the greater community; to the development of a student population of social, economic and racial diversity; and to the development of each student's physical well-being and full human potential. One in four students receives financial assistance. The School is highly acclaimed for its programs and is a leader in public/private educational partnerships.