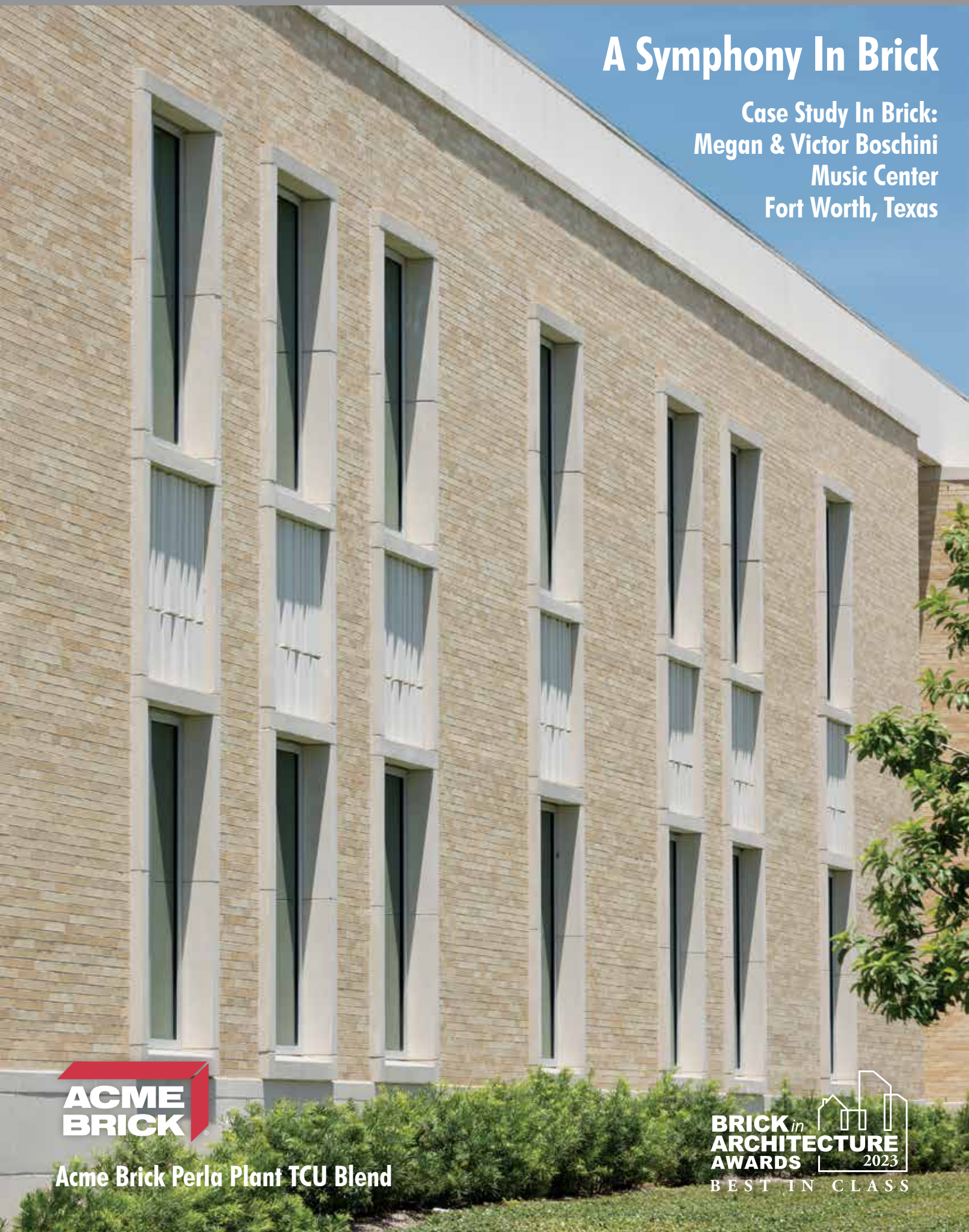
A Symphony In Brick

Case Study In Brick:
Megan & Victor Boschini
Music Center
Fort Worth, Texas



ACME BRICK®

Acme Brick Perla Plant TCU Blend

BRICK in ARCHITECTURE AWARDS 2023

BEST IN CLASS

South Side, Facing Rees-Jones Hall

As the latest addition to Texas Christian University's (TCU) award-winning School of Music, the Megan and Victor Boschini Music Center transformed what was once a quiet edge of campus into a lively gateway, welcoming students and visitors alike to the university's growing Art District.

Housing band and orchestra rehearsal spaces, instructional facilities, practice rooms, faculty studios, and the 717-seat state-of-the-art Van Cliburn Concert Hall, the center brings together scattered music facilities into a single eye-catching building.

The project is linked to the nearby Moudy Center for the Fine Arts by the Baker Martin Creative Commons, an expansive lawn and multipurpose natural gathering space. A north-facing glass-enclosed lobby floods the entry with natural light while a modest blend of buff brick—a campus staple—establishes a subdued, cohesive palette inside and out.

"For this building we were looking for a brick blend that both reflected and was consistent with the character of the other buildings on campus, as TCU is pretty specific about what the character of the campus is what the bricks will be," says Michael Tingley, Design Principal at Bora Architecture & Interiors. "We actually ended up with a relatively narrow band of brick colors that were not as diverse a range, as we really wanted the building to have a surface that was more uniform, so you saw the building as a whole—you didn't focus on the surface itself and the sort of high degree of variation or color change."

This uniformity in color serves to draw attention instead to the Megan and Victor Boschini Music Center's folded, accordion-esque brick perimeter walls, the likes of which aren't found anywhere else on campus.

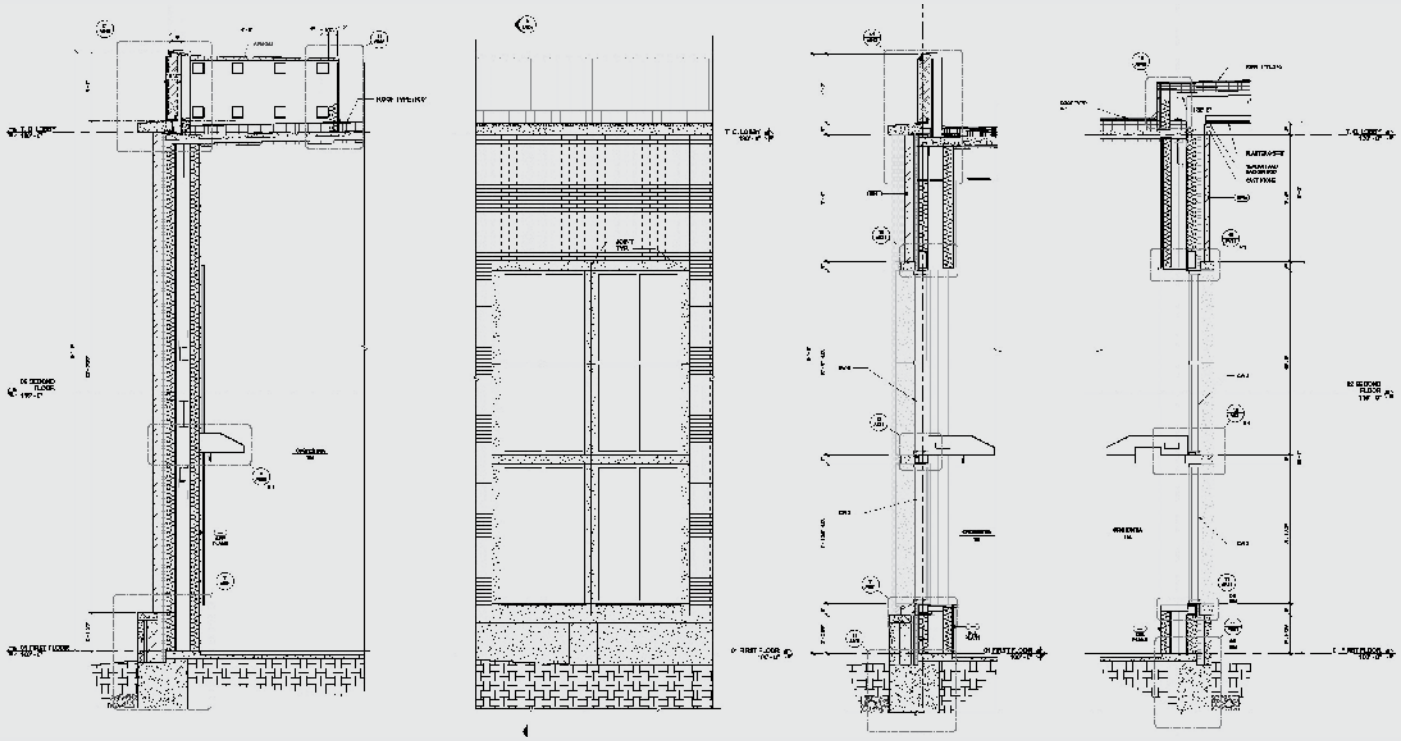
Corner Building Detail

Northern Face

Topped by richly textured cast-stone crowns, these folds contribute to the center's phenomenal acoustics and create a shifting, rhythmic dance of shadows as the sun travels overhead, helping the building stand out visually from neighboring structures.

"Music spaces are driven a lot by acoustical requirements and this building had a lot of large rehearsal spaces for big ensembles: band, orchestra, big percussion ensembles. In those spaces one of the things that is really important is to not have parallel walls. Parallel walls create what they call a flutter echo, where the sound just sort of bounces back and forth between two walls and creates a sort of echo in the room or creates some sound distortion.

"If you have one wall angled, the sound will come and it'll bounce off that and go in a different direction, and that avoids that flutter echo. We could have done that by simply angling the wall inside, with the brick as the outside surface and a stud wall on the inside, but during design we explored the idea of just actually building those walls as angled surfaces and expressing that on the exterior of the building."



Wall Sections

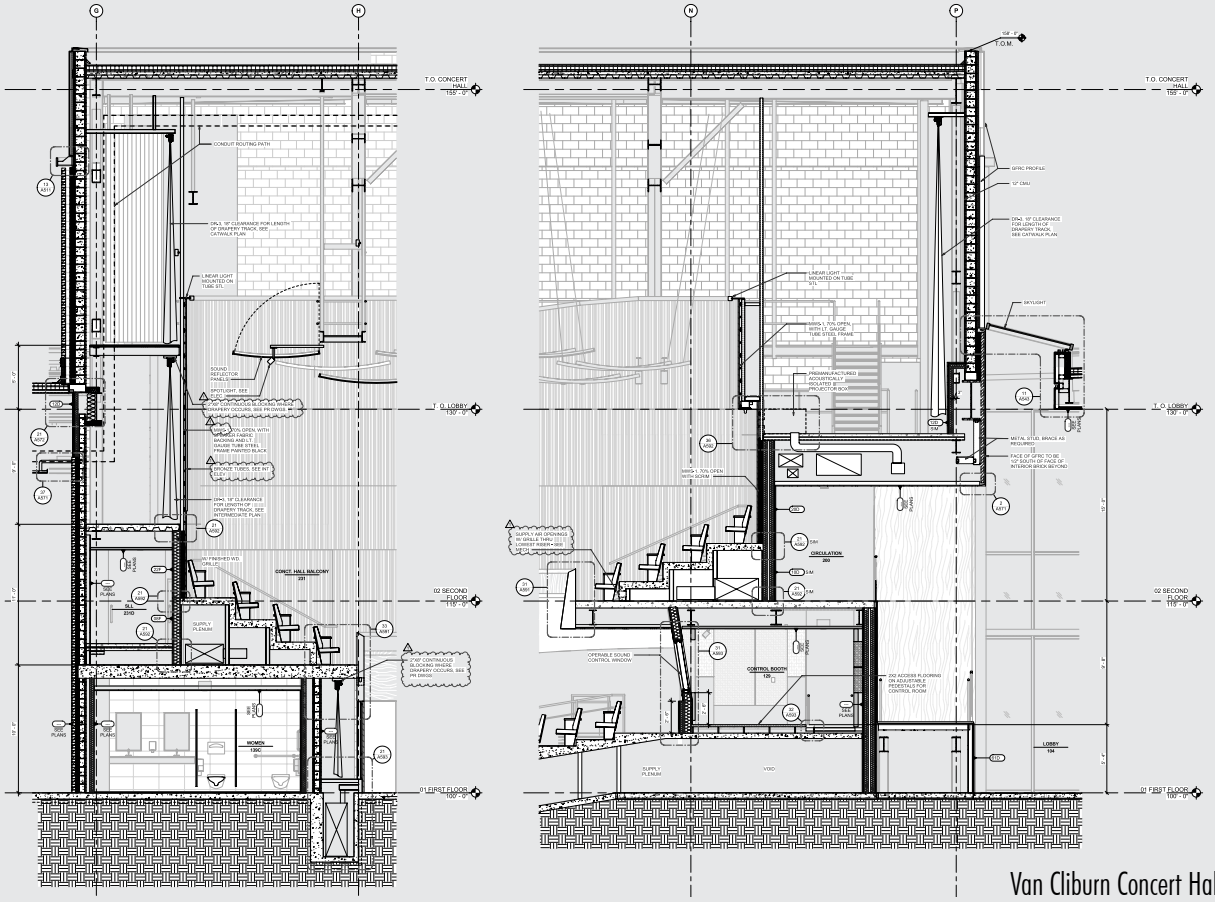
Southern Face

"We really appreciated both the way it worked with the play of light, how the building changes as the sun moves around the building, and also the fact that it became an expression that talked about what was happening inside those spaces. Even if you don't understand the physics of it, you realize there must be something unique happening in the spaces that have those angled surfaces."

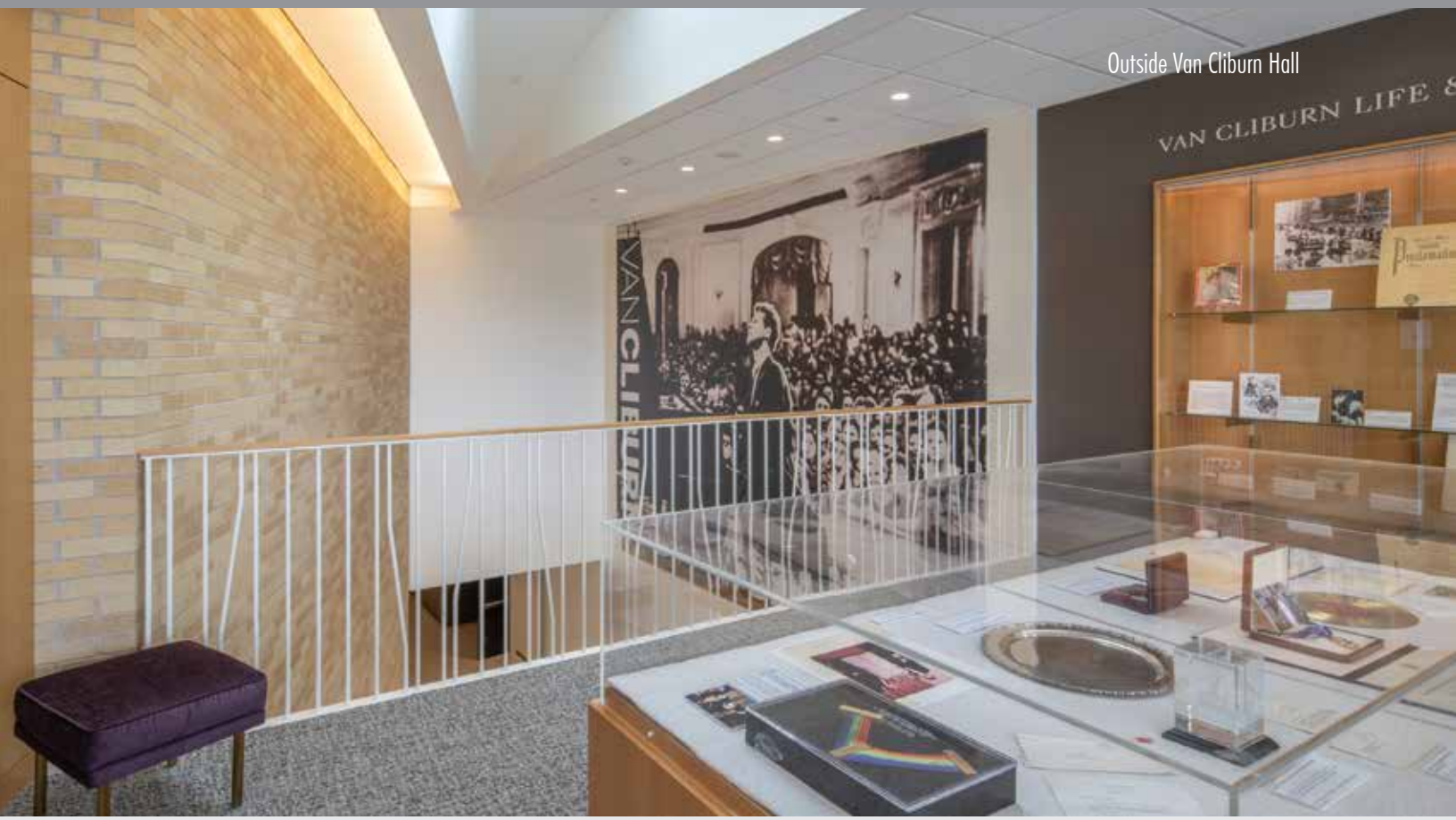
Southern Elevation Detail

Outside Van Cliburn Hall

The most impressive of these spaces is the Van Cliburn Concert Hall, which serves as the center's proverbial heart and is visible from the outside, its continuous brick walls stretching to an awe-inspiring height of 60 feet.



Van Cliburn Concert Hall



Outside Van Cliburn Hall

"At the very center of the building there is a 717-seat concert hall, and that concert hall is really driven by acoustical requirements—two of the key things for the concert hall is that it needs to be isolated from any other sound source, it needs to prevent sound from any activities happening around the perimeter from coming into that space. One of the ways to do that is through mass. Brick and concrete block, those sorts of materials are heavy, dense materials that will block sound transmission.

"The other is that that concert hall needs to have a lot of space inside of it, and the way that works is that the sheer volume of space—especially if the surfaces are hard and reflective—creates a situation where sound waves bounce around inside that space.

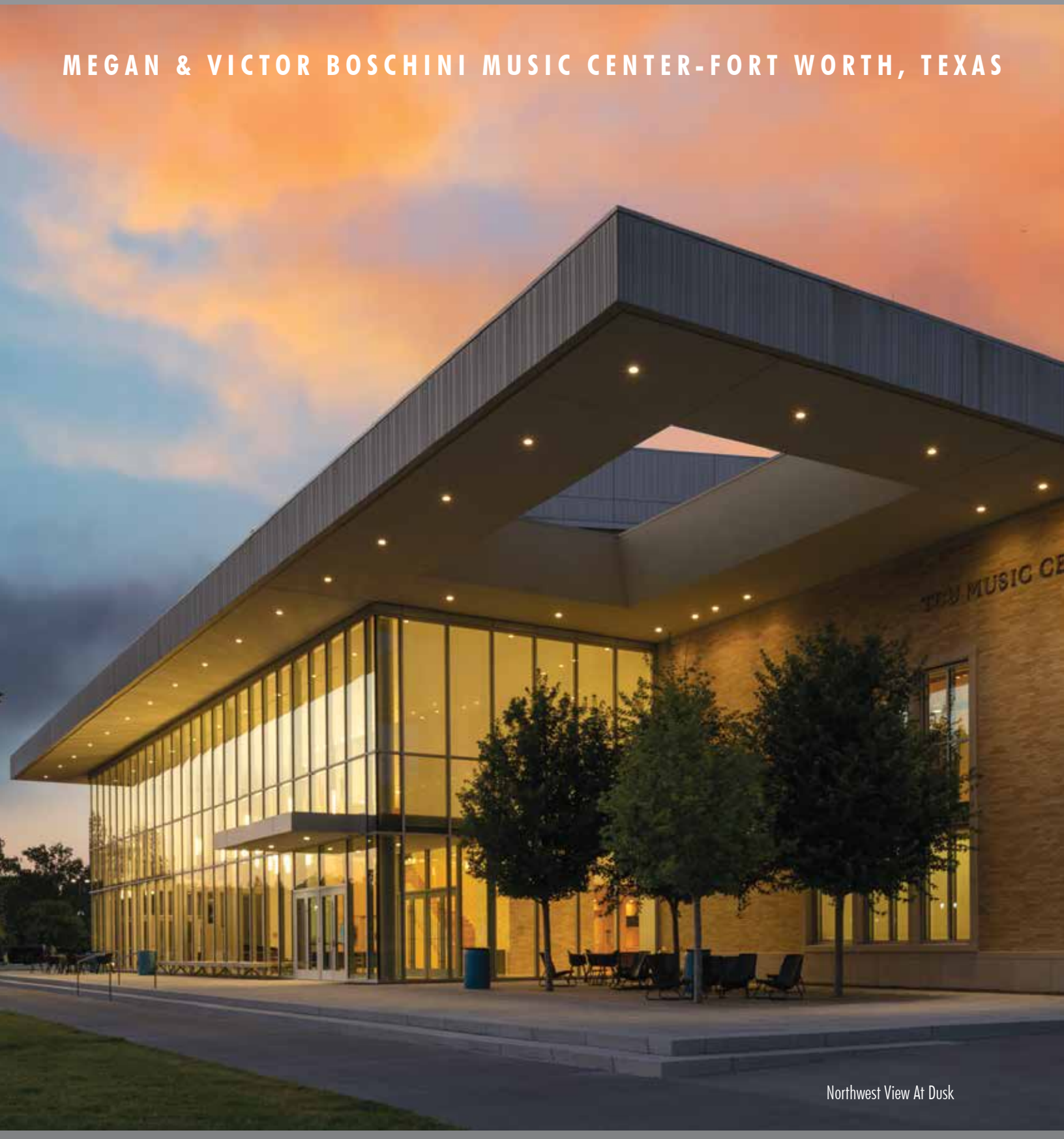
"To make that happen, that room had to be much taller than any of the other spaces in the building. The concert hall has exterior walls also, so we just came up with the idea of expressing the concert hall like a building inside of a building.

"The concert hall is a brick enclosure that, when you enter, serves all of those technical purposes but also creates the sense of entering a very special space inside the building."

- Michael Tingley, FAIA, Design Principal, Bora Architecture & Interiors

Interior Detail Outside Van Cliburn Hall

MEGAN & VICTOR BOSCHINI MUSIC CENTER-FORT WORTH, TEXAS



Northwest View At Dusk

Design Architect: Bora Architecture & Interiors, Portland, Oregon
Architect of Record: Hahnfeld Hoffer Stanford – GHC, Fort Worth, Texas
General Contractor: AECOM Hunt, Dallas, Texas
Masonry: Wilks Masonry LLC, Fort Worth, Texas
Landscape Architect: OJB Landscape Architecture, Houston, Texas
Performing Arts Consultant: The Shalleck Collaborative, Berkeley, California