

Scottish Ballet

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2009	UK Scotland	Scottish Ballet	Malcolm Fraser Architects

The Scottish Ballet – Scotland’s national dance company - is based in a purpose built home at the Tramway complex in Glasgow.

The building is divided into three main areas that reflect the spectrum of activities performed within. At ground level there is a large technical workshop, with administration, wardrobe and the ballet’s music department occupying the floor above. The top floor of the building is dedicated to providing rehearsal space, and features three dance studios. All of the studios are naturally ventilated using a cross ventilation strategy and the main studio features nine truncated pyramid skylights that are designed to maximise the amount of daylight.

The headquarters replaced a derelict section of the Tramway Arts Centre with a venue that has won the Grand Prix Award for Architecture and Best Public Building 2010 at the Scottish Design Awards.



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Services provided

Sandy Brown was commissioned by the Scottish Ballet to provide the acoustic design for their headquarters, with specific attention paid to achieving the high sound insulation performance needed for a leading rehearsal space. Important elements of the acoustic strategy were:

- sound insulation between internal spaces
- control of impact sound from dance activities to other sensitive spaces
- the acoustic quality of the rehearsal studios
- using a natural ventilation strategy wherever feasible.

Special acoustic features

One of the key issues was agreeing the optimum balance between the requirement for acoustic treatment in the studios, and the need for an exposed soffit in relation to the natural ventilation strategy. The acoustic treatment was integrated into the architectural design, comprising horizontal bands of acoustic treatment on high level walls, and perforated plasterboard in the large pyramid lightwells.

Sound insulation between areas was also a key concern and the design had to cater for a wide variety of adjacencies such as between dance studios, from rehearsal studios to offices, and from a fitness room to music practice room below. Key to this was gauging the client's expectations, and measuring and understanding the noise levels typically created in their dance and music practice studios. This helped to determine the most appropriate constructions without over designing and adding unnecessary cost and complexity to the project.

The required sound insulation was achieved in both new-build and refurbished areas using a variety of construction types such as new drywalls, cavity blockwork walls, upgrades to existing masonry walls, and floor build-ups providing high levels of both airborne and impact sound insulation.