

JS Bach / Zaha Hadid Pavilion

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2009	UK England	Manchester International Festival	Zaha Hadid Architects

The Pavilion was a special commission for Zaha Hadid Architects to create a temporary space specifically for the performance of solo J S Bach chamber music at the Manchester International Festival 2009.

The brief was to create an intimate space for small audiences – a modern take on the 18th century chambers where the music was originally played so that the intricacies of the music could be heard, rather than being lost in a large concert hall.

The shape was formed using lightweight non-fibrous fabric stretched over a metal frame with hidden acrylic reflectors to help project sound from the stage to the audience.



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Services provided

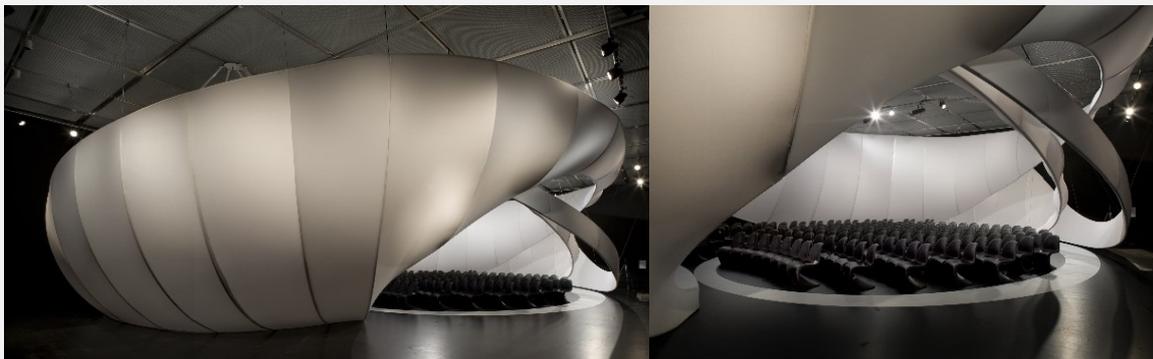
The challenge of the project was to take a gallery space primarily designed for visual art and help Zaha Hadid Architects in their vision to convert it into a modern extraordinary new performance space for chamber music.

For optimum conditions for chamber music it is important to ensure that the reverberation time is not too long as this blurs individual notes. Equally, the reverberation time should not be too short as this provides a lack of response for the performer and causes music to be overly dry.

Acoustic measurements that we took in the gallery space indicated that the existing ceiling and the large void behind it provided a significant amount of acoustic absorption. This influenced the choice of acoustic finishes and we worked with designers to enhance the conditions, particularly around the stage and audience areas.

The lightweight fabric frame was made of non-fibrous, synthetic fabric in order to minimise sound absorption. Using 3D computer modelling, we worked with the architect's proposals to create a shape that would eliminate unwanted characteristics such as flutter echoes.

Around the stage, specially shaped acrylic reflector panels were hidden within the fabric installation to direct early sound energy to the audience to increase the clarity and strength of the music while maintaining the reverberant response of the room.



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