

Kimmel Center Public Space Project
Moderator Notes
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Submitted by Chris Satullo
Group "Green"

Users:

Current: Concert audiences, upper class, children, Comcast, businesses, students, performers, other cultural organizations

Potential: Grass-roots organizations, student performers, more field trips, public broadcasters, drop-in visitors, assisted living residents

Uses:

Current: Concerts, plays, master classes, rehearsals, private functions (price a problem), free events, lectures, exhibits

Potential: Art exhibits, weddings, dances/balls, flea markets, musical salons, job fairs, political debates, alumni meetings and graduations, "Philadelphia's wintertime Rittenhouse Square"; use lobby for promotion of programs; put laptops in so people can browse program and see performance clips; kiosks for info; teas; Mummers performances; WiFi; coffee; more programs like Winter solstice; winter spot for parents and kids; recreation program performers; movies; cheaper lunches; focal point for social gathering and networking in CC; open mike days; piano bar; resource center for artists; book stalls; "Performances for pop-ins"

Values

These are all "should be's": Broad-based welcome, freedom to linger, user-friendly, showcase for art, linchpin of tourism, point of Philly pride, arts education, free destination, firm focus on art, truly public space, support of up and coming groups, diversity in people, art and music; hub for community outreach; "village of art"; good citizen and neighbor.

What works

Impressive; handles traffic on busy day; performance spaces; idea of a small stage in plaza; info desk volunteers

What doesn't work

Front door is hard to open, literally and figuratively; Spruce St. entrance for disabled is poor; Spruce St. side is barren and uninviting; Broad St. entrance gives feel of unused space but no feel of wonderful art inside; chairs are too few and too low, elderly patrons find them impossible to get and out of; lighting in plaza doesn't work for performers or pedestrians; long, dead hallways. Slow, small elevators. No escalators. Worn and dangerous staircase. Long rows in Verizon creates fire code worries; if there's ever a fire, a lot of old people will never make it out.

Possible fixes

This group came totally alive when asked this question:

More lighting from below, not above

Movable, comfortable seating clusters

Greenery – create a partnership with the Philadelphia Horticultural Society – make it a showcase for them.

Escalators!

Make staircases safer

Screens inside and outside to show performances

Recorded music piped into plaza at all times

New uses, retail, food etc, to activate dead tier hallways.

Link to PAFA – student art shows.

More color in plaza

Better pr/marketing in building, on web, in community

Open the box office to outside, while keeping it inside – get rid of the black thing

Move the info station closer to Broad St. entrance

Break up the gift shop, creating stalls throughout the plaza; make the shop space an inviting coffee bar with art/music periodicals and books

Principles

- 1) Support up-and-coming art and artists of all media**
- 2) Open Commonwealth Plaza to the WHOLE commonwealth**
- 3) Make it a “lively” arts center**
- 4) Use the building to promote the program**
- 5) Design for comfortable conversation**
- 6) Caffeine! WiFi! Food!**
- 7) More color**