



RESTORATION AND RENOVATION OF MEMORIAL HALL, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Architects: Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc. in association with Bruner/Cott and Associates, Inc., and Robert G. Neiley Architects

Location: Cambridge, MA

Client: Harvard University

Area: 85,000 sf

Construction Cost: \$20,000,000

Completion: 1996

We restored and renovated Harvard University's Memorial Hall as a campus and dining center.



Designed by Ware and Van Brunt between 1865 and 1870 to commemorate Harvard's Civil War dead, Memorial Hall is one of the finest examples of Ruskinian Gothic architecture in the United States. The new Memorial Hall contains the soaring Annenberg Hall, restored to its original use as a dining facility, the Loker Commons student center beneath it, and the paneled, polychromed Sanders Theatre, a 1,200-seat lecture and performance venue. Students may now choose between a formal, traditional dining experience upstairs in Annenberg Hall and informal dining downstairs in Loker Commons.

We changed the historic public rooms as little as possible. Loker Commons' modern needs are accommodated in the basement level with a small addition extending from an earlier addition to provide loading, food preparation, and storage facilities. The basement level has an exciting bazaar-like quality and encourages flexible social interaction for meeting, eating, circulating, and communicating.



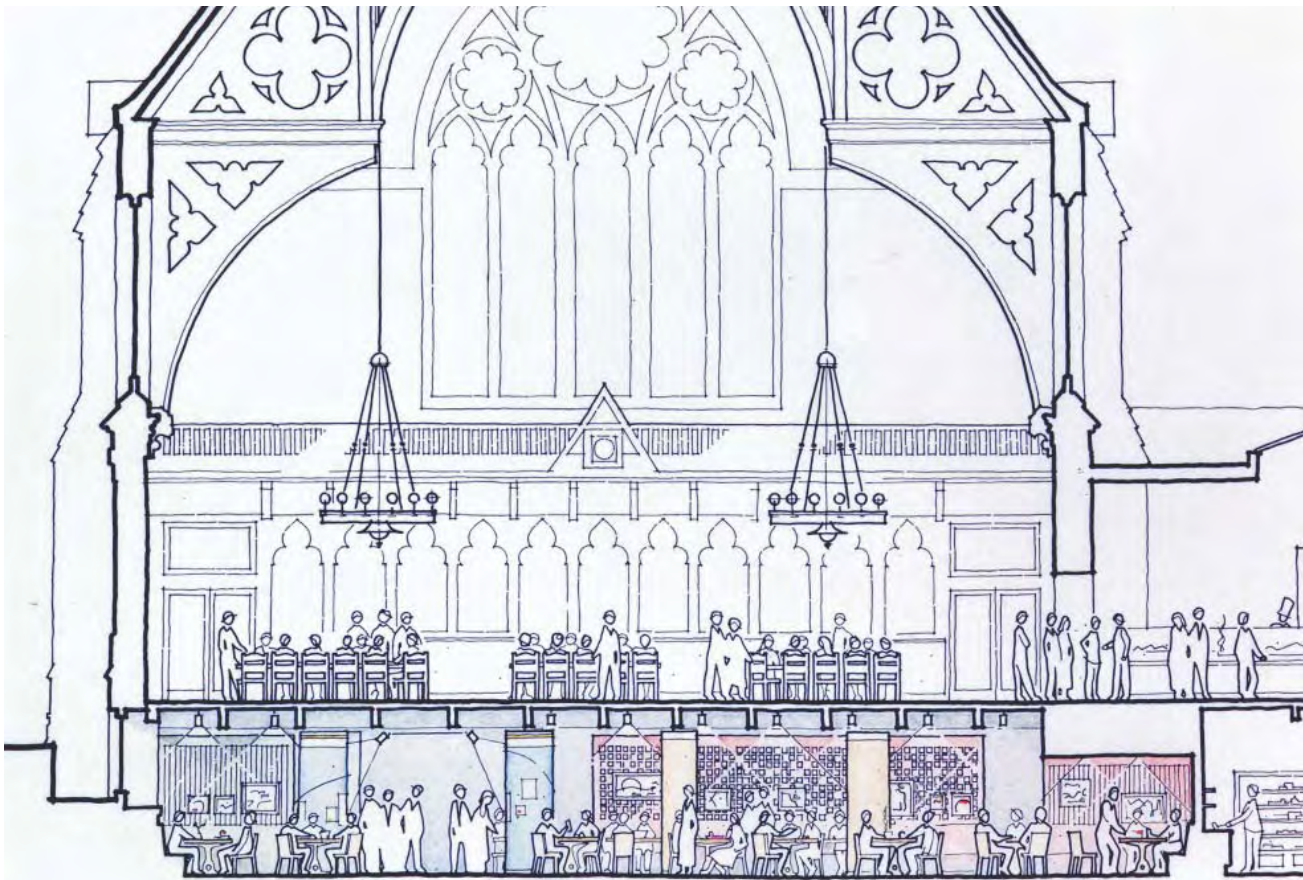
Lighting design was crucial in making the below-grade areas serve many functions at once. We used diminishing ambient light alongside local spot and decorative lighting -- in sometimes colorful ways -- to promote character, identity, and amenity. Along the main circulation route, ornamented by lively fluorescent lights, are old-fashioned spot-lit bulletin boards, while a big-scale LED display at the end of this axis provides dynamic and varied communication, including graphic information and iconography.

We also restored Sanders Theatre, home of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and one of the most prominent, intimate venues in the Boston area. VSBA restored the theatre to its original appearance while augmenting it with new sound, lighting, audio-visual, and mechanical systems. Support spaces, including a green room and dressing rooms, were added below.

Exterior of Memorial Hall, interior detail of Annenberg Hall, and Loker Commons

Awards: National Honor Award, American Institute of Architects, 1997; Merit Award, Society for Environmental Graphic Design, 1996.





- ROOM KEY**
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| A LOKER COMMONS | H SEMINAR ROOM |
| B CAFE | I BUILDING OFFICE |
| C SERVING | J MECHANICAL |
| D COPY | K STORAGE |
| E NEWSSTAND | L ELEVATOR |
| F KITCHEN | M RESTROOM |
| G GREEN ROOM | N PIANO LIFT |

LOWER LEVEL
© 2007

Section through Annenberg Dining Hall and plan



Lokor Commons -- study areas, traditional info board, servery and study areas, LED info wall display, e-mail stations -- and Sander's Theater