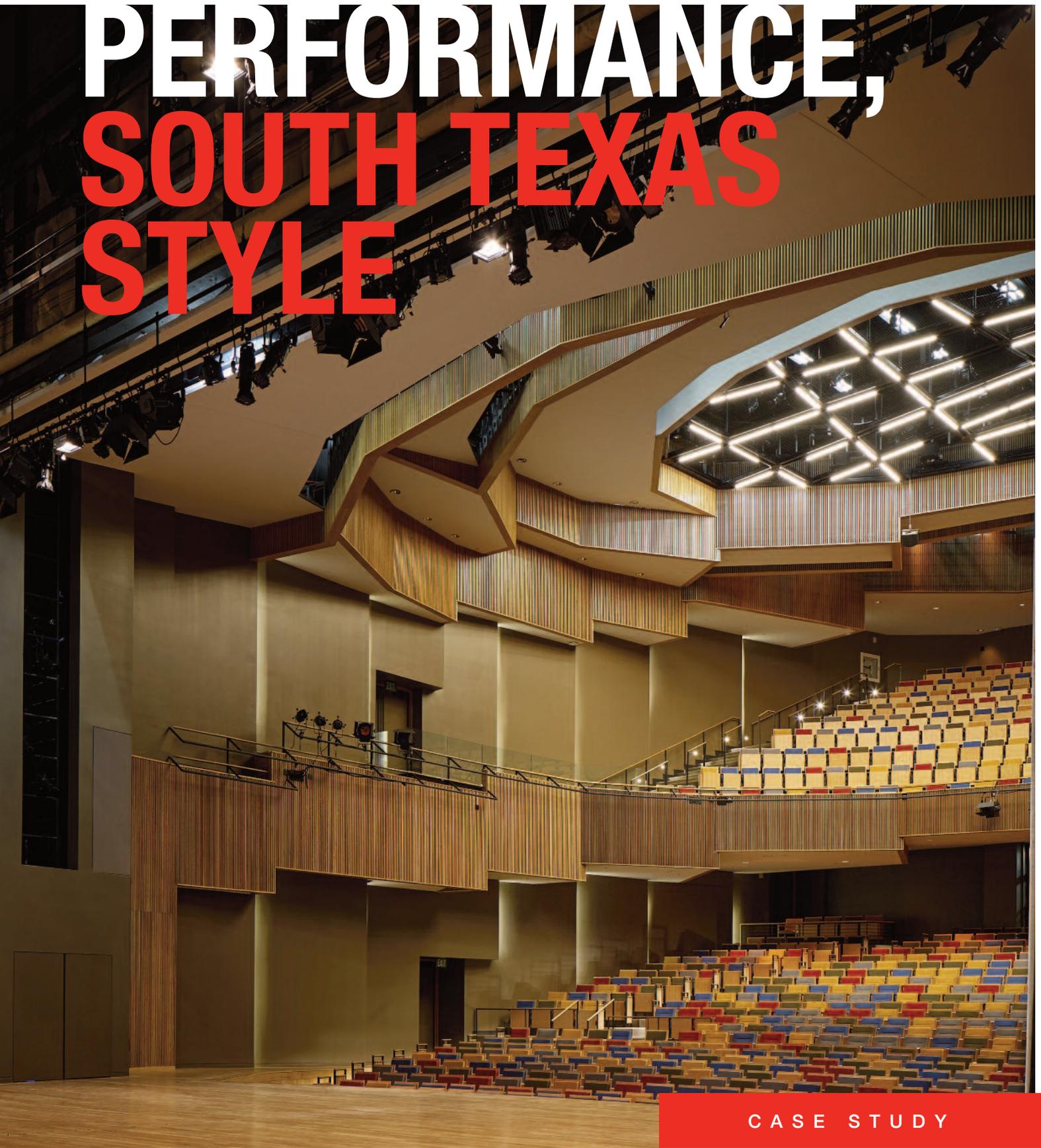


# PERFORMANCE, SOUTH TEXAS STYLE



CASE STUDY

# Performance, South Texas Style

## University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Performing Arts Center

Aesthetic treatment was critical for the faceted balconies and walls.



The project featured over 5,000 SF of varied-spacing grilles and 6,000 SF of Western Red Cedar Linears.



The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley’s new Performing Arts Center was designed for their nationally-recognized programs in Mariachi, Baile Folklorico, band, orchestra, and chorus. Over 5,000 SF of 9Wood grilles were specified throughout the faceted balconies and walls, and play a key role in meeting the specific acoustic requirements. Another 6,000 SF of Western Red Cedar linears join in on the visual performance by greeting guests with a colorful welcome in the exterior soffit areas.

Page Southerland Page paid homage to Houston architect Kenneth Bentsen in their building design, which replaced the former Center built in the 70s. Bentsen master planned and designed 20 buildings on campus. “We definitely used existing vocabulary as a springboard, but made it much more playful and irregular and lyrical,” said Larry Speck, Page’s senior principal. Irregularly-shaped openings have accents of bright color—reds, blues and yellows—which are quite prominent in south Texas.

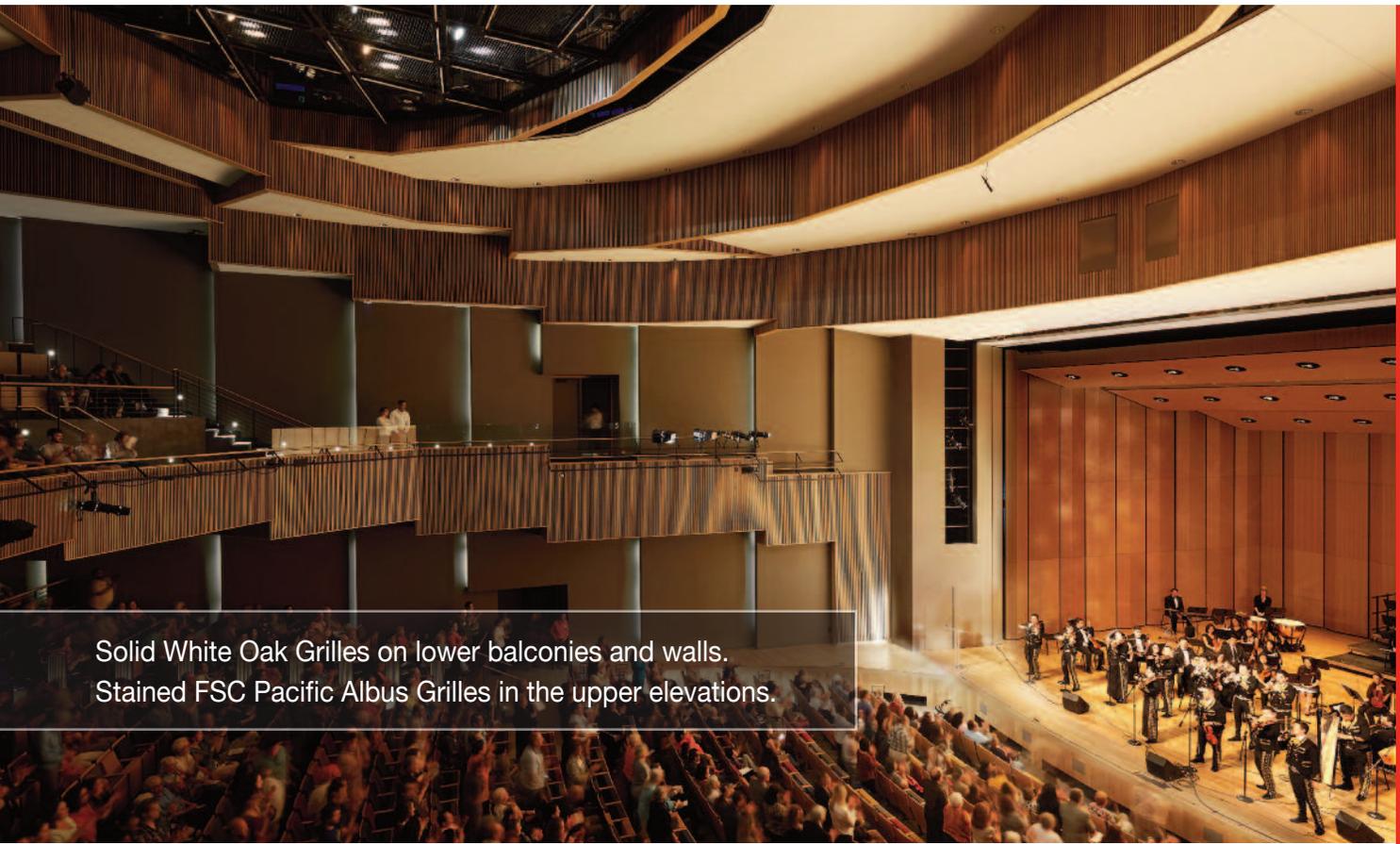
The centerpiece—the theatre—seats over 1,000. Solid White Oak was specified for the lower-elevation seating façades, while stained solid FSC Pacific Albus, a lightweight, economical hardwood, was

**“9Wood did a great job with the shop drawings and support.”**

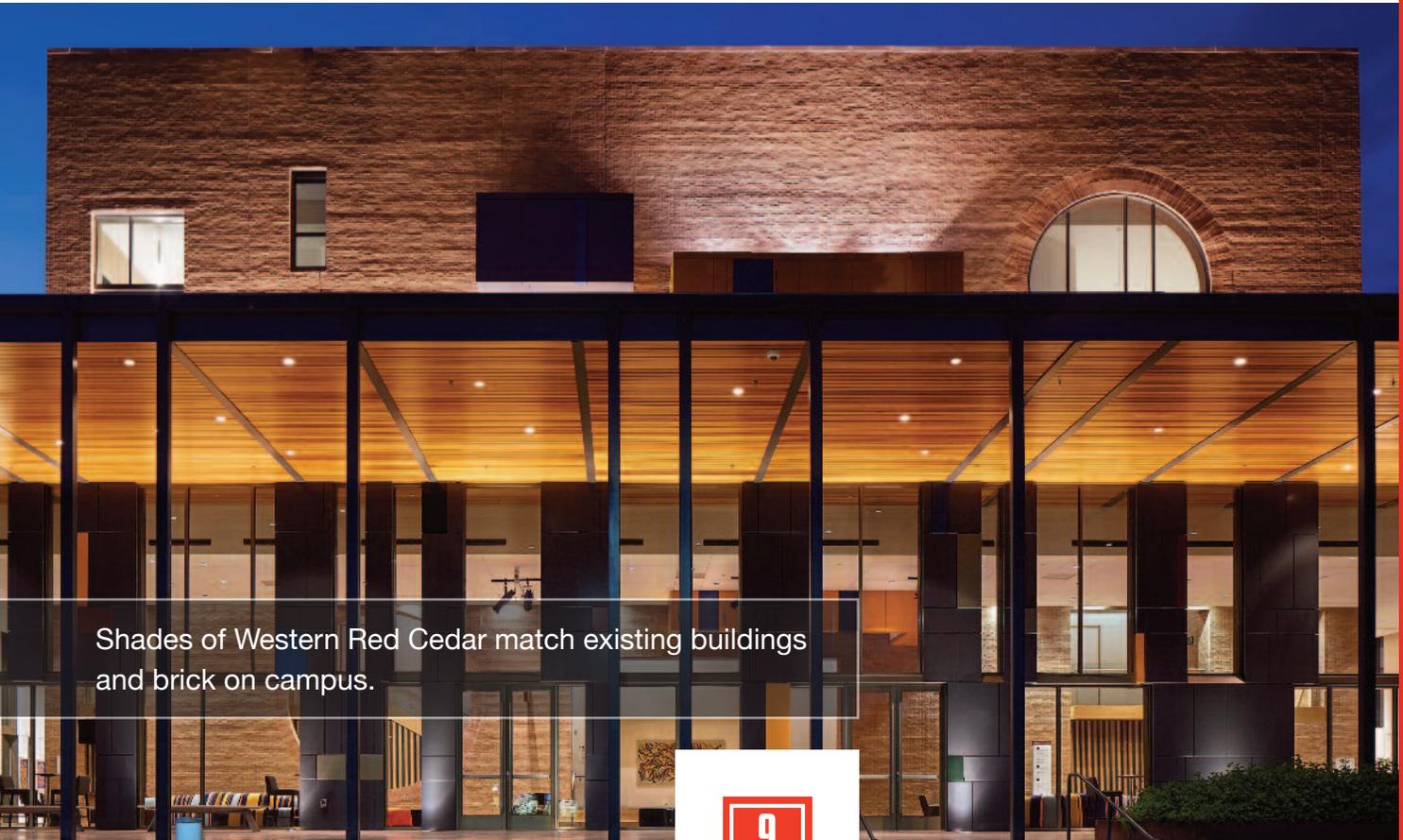


specified for the upper areas. Architect Josh Coleman commented that the grilles helped meet the space’s goals of “establishing proper base building geometry for acoustic reflections, creating acoustic dispersion on the walls within the audience chamber, providing acoustic transparency in the upper reaches to allow for acoustic tuning, and heightening the psychological perception of the acoustics through the selective use of materials, such as wood.” Coleman added, “Specifically, the choice of solid White Oak at the lower and the lightweight sustainable FSC Pacific Albus grille panels at the upper reaches allowed us to achieve all of these goals simultaneously.”

Various slat spacings were specified to create varied percentage openings and sound diffusion. Some panels had scrim to add to the varied acoustical textures. All surfaces were scrutinized, *(continued on page 4)*



Solid White Oak Grilles on lower balconies and walls.  
Stained FSC Pacific Albus Grilles in the upper elevations.



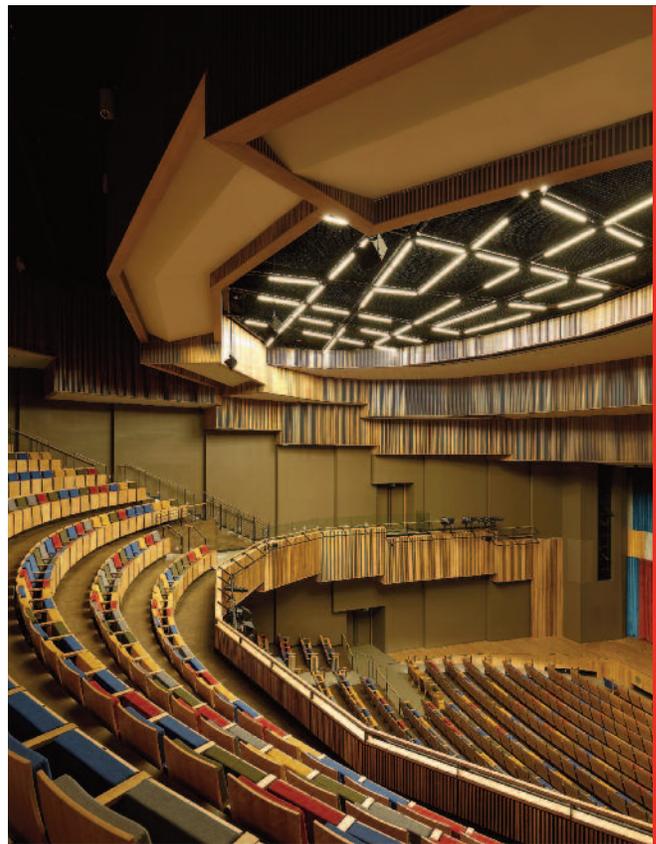
Shades of Western Red Cedar match existing buildings  
and brick on campus.



even to the point of specifying tunable curtains. Panels attached via z-clip to allow for cleaning and adjustment.

For the acoustical subcontractor, Marek Bros., this was a new installation experience. "It was our first job with this type of product...but the project actually went really smooth. The product was easy to work with. 9Wood did a great job with the shop drawings and support. They were very helpful." Marek cut nominally-sized panels to net length to fit the BIM and GPS data-confirmed geometric facades. 9Wood even fabricated matching "mini" grille panels for the seating row ends, which required coordination with the seat manufacturer.

The front door of the building features 9Wood Western Red Cedar Panelized Linears. The variegation of the species naturally ties in with the confetti-color theme of the building, and echoes the brick throughout campus. "The campus has a storied lineage of buildings featuring the use of Western Red Cedar on its exterior soffits, which have held up admirably over the decades," said Coleman. "We feel this project separates itself from other designs by the way wood and other materials helped to create unique and innovative solutions for multiple design issues – including architectural, acoustic, and theatrical."



## Project Details

University of Texas-Rio Grande  
Valley Performing Arts Center  
Edinburg, Texas

Total Scope: 11,000 SF

Products: 1100 Cross Piece Grilles,  
2100 Panelized Linear

Architect: Page Southerland Page

Contractor: Marek Brothers Systems



DIVISION 9 ENGINEERED-TO-ORDER WOOD CEILINGS

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