

Acoustics in Iceland

1. Much is happening these days regarding room acoustics in Iceland:

In Reykjavik a concert hall is being built with “The Main Hall” for up to 1800 seats. Also a part of the project is a large Conference Hall, a Rehearsal Hall and a “Fourth Hall” for chamber music etc. (200 seats.) Acoustic consultants are Artek from USA and the house will be ready in December 2009. The house will be the home of The Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, but will also host single, larger opera events. There is an orchestra pit but not a full size stage tower.



The new Reykjavik Concert Hall

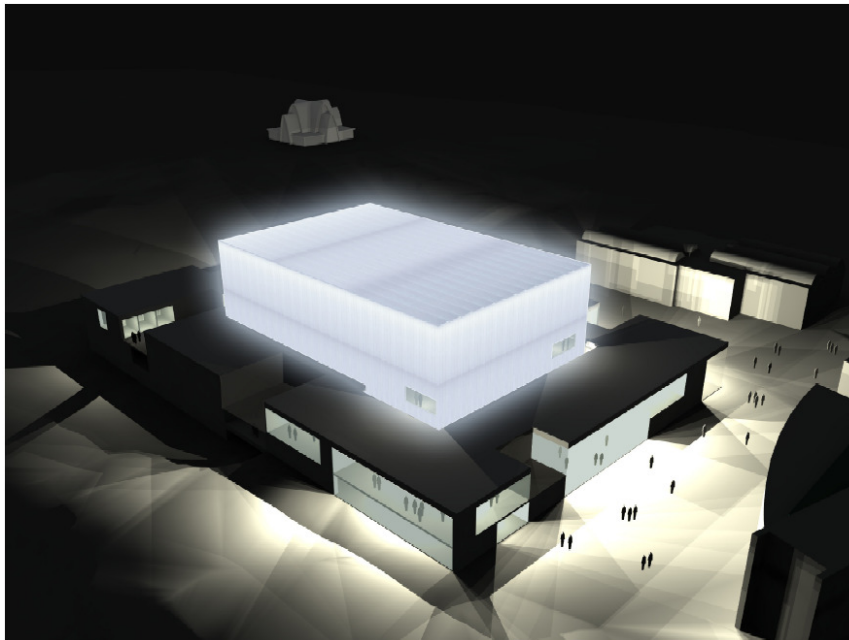
The Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson has designed the facade glass construction

In Akureyri in northern Iceland a Cultural House is being built. Here the “large hall” has about 500 seats. First priority is classical music and the hall is the home of the Symphony Orchestra of Northern Iceland (about 50 musicians). There is an orchestra pit and the hall has variable acoustics for musicals and even for theatre performances with a fly tower. There is also a music school in the house and a smaller multi-purpose hall with about 200 seats. Acoustic consultants are Akustikon ab in Sweden and VST in Iceland, and the house will be ready in September 2009.



A new Cultural House in Akureyri in northern Iceland

The Icelandic Opera is also getting a new home. In Kopavogur close to Reykjavik there has been an architectural competition for an Opera House. Two projects were chosen to be further developed, and a winner will be chosen in June 2008. The plans are then to start the building process as soon as possible. The Opera Hall will have about 800 seats.



The Icelandic Opera. One of the two projects being further developed



The Icelandic Opera. The other one of the two projects being further developed

In Keflavik (close to the airport) a “Music House” is being built. Here an old hall is rebuilt and beside it a music school is built with two smaller halls and besides that a Museum for Popular Music. The old hall will be a multi-purpose hall for all kinds of music: Classical, pop, rock and also musicals, theatre etc. Because the volume of the hall is too small for classical music, and also because of the demand for high flexibility, an electronic “help-acoustic” has been chosen with the VRAS- system. Acoustic consultants are the Icelandic firm VST.



The Music House in Keflavik

2. Other acoustic news from Iceland

Besides unusually many room acoustical projects in Iceland, acoustics as a separate profession has gained some foothold in Iceland the last 3-5 years. There are now three large multi disciplinary consulting firms with separate acoustical divisions, with two or more acousticians each. There are also two or more independent acoustics consultants and a few acousticians in government employment too.

In 2005 the Icelandic Acoustical Society was founded and it now has about 30 members. We are now members of the Nordic Acoustic Society NAS, and from 2006 we are also members of the European EAA.

We have already held a domestic acoustic conference, and in August 2008 we host NAM 2008. The web-page of the conference is www.bnam2008.com . Welcome to Iceland !