

The Library

The University of Massachusetts Boston

Harbor Campus



Introduction

Movable type replaced handwritten manuscripts at about the time the clock replaced the sundial, and it may be impossible to comprehend fully how much the world has changed because of it. A world without the printed word, which we take for granted, is not easy to imagine. There were universities before the printed book; like other institutions, they were transformed by it.

A library, indeed, has become the commanding presence in a university. Thomas Jefferson's library overlooks the centerpiece of the most beautiful campus in America; Widener Library dominates the Harvard Yard; the place of Yale's Sterling Library in the central quadrangle reflects the days when Cartesian logic ruled campus planning. With the separation of architecture from planning, it must be observed regretfully that campuses have come more and more to resemble giant shopping centers, where order gives way to chaos and the hierarchy of building elements becomes obscured. In the age of egoism, every building and every department should be unique.

The library at the University of Massachusetts' Dorchester campus manages to occupy the central position, not at the end of an axis, but between two structural building continuums linked by second-story access, facing a plaza. It remains the nexus, the place of quiet, redolent of knowledge.

High reading rooms give views over water and into the multi-tiered bookstacks flanking them. The furniture is devised to provide a variety of accommodations, for long-term and short-term study, with privacy provided by carrels, many of them double-decked. Congeries of work rooms and supporting facilities lurk behind these public spaces.

The building is raised on tall piers to afford through-views from the plaza to the bay and to lift the library symbolically above comings and goings, an eyrie one level removed, heavy with the accretions of knowledge, but accessible for use and users as various as the volumes it contains.

Harry Weese Architect March 1979



Welcome to the New UMB Library

A library is a library. Its purpose is to accommodate those who want to avail themselves of what it has to offer. Above all it has to offer books. The historical memory of our race, its literary achievement, much of the knowledge that enables us to survive on this planet — all are contained in the collections on the shelves. Seen from such an observation point, a library is awesome. We learn here where we came from and who we are, and we may speculate on the direction we choose to take. The library is by the same token the house man has built, his house. He is at home in the library, welcomed, comforted, humored, at ease.

The architects attempted to translate this vision of the library into the building you enter. As the character of the house is defined by its inhabitants as well as by the shape of the building, as the interiors speak the languages of their occupants, it will be the occupants who will give the building its soul. Building, collections, occupants together create the tone. May the sounds be harmonious.

The basic functions of a library define the major spaces. Simple, clear arrangements were sought: An entrance area, with check-out and book return, a reserve book area, a floor accommodating catalogue and bibliographical collection with working rooms for librarians of the catalogue and acquisitions departments. The two balconies seem to divide naturally into the general reference area on the north side and the government document and microform reading area on the other. The two floors above house the periodical collection and the book collection. On the perimeters, ample and diversified seating is placed. The last of the public floors houses art and music books and related periodicals, and offers listening facilities. A periwinkle stairway opens to terraces on the roof of the building. Library staff is distributed over all these areas to help and guide you to its resources.

This is the building. Use it, enjoy it, cherish it.

Walter Grossmann

Director of Libraries February 1974







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The Building

Architects

Harry Weese & Associates
Chicago, Illinois

Associates

Walter H. Pulsifer, Jr. & Associates
Waltham, Massachusetts

Consultants

Structural:

LeMessurier Associates
New York, New York

Soils:

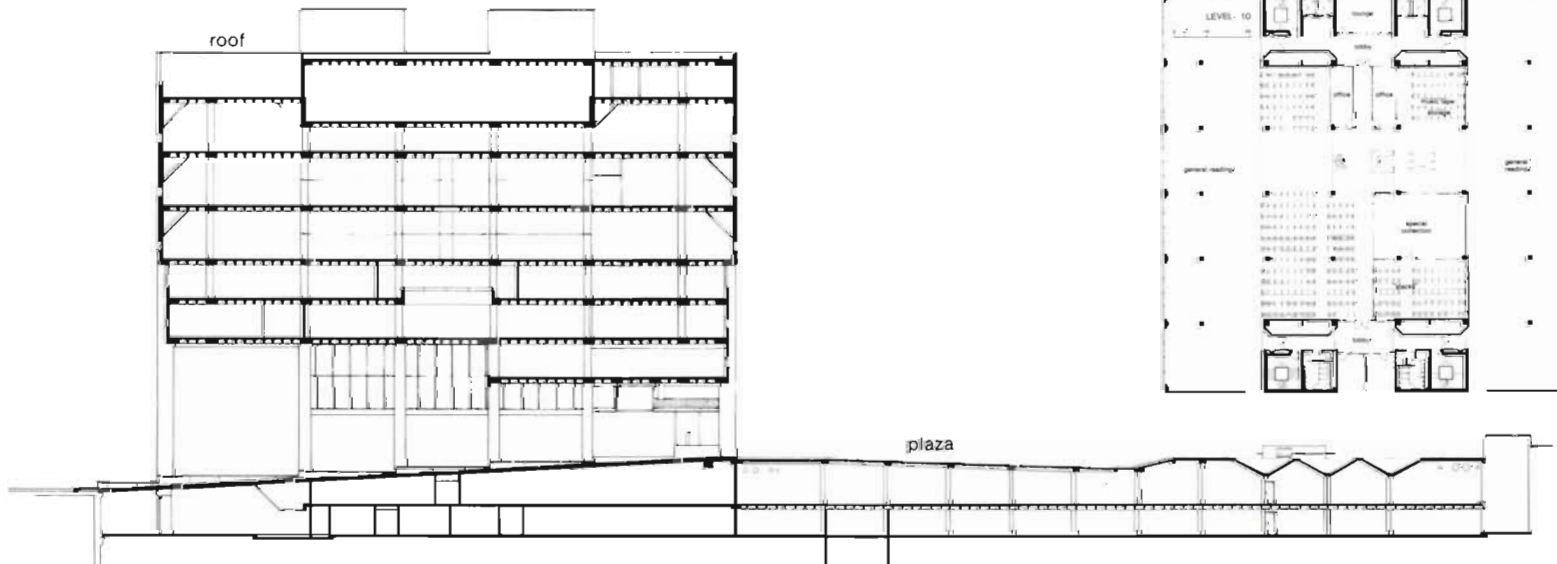
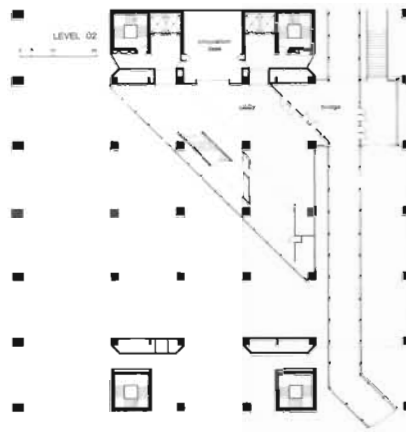
Haley & Aldrich, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

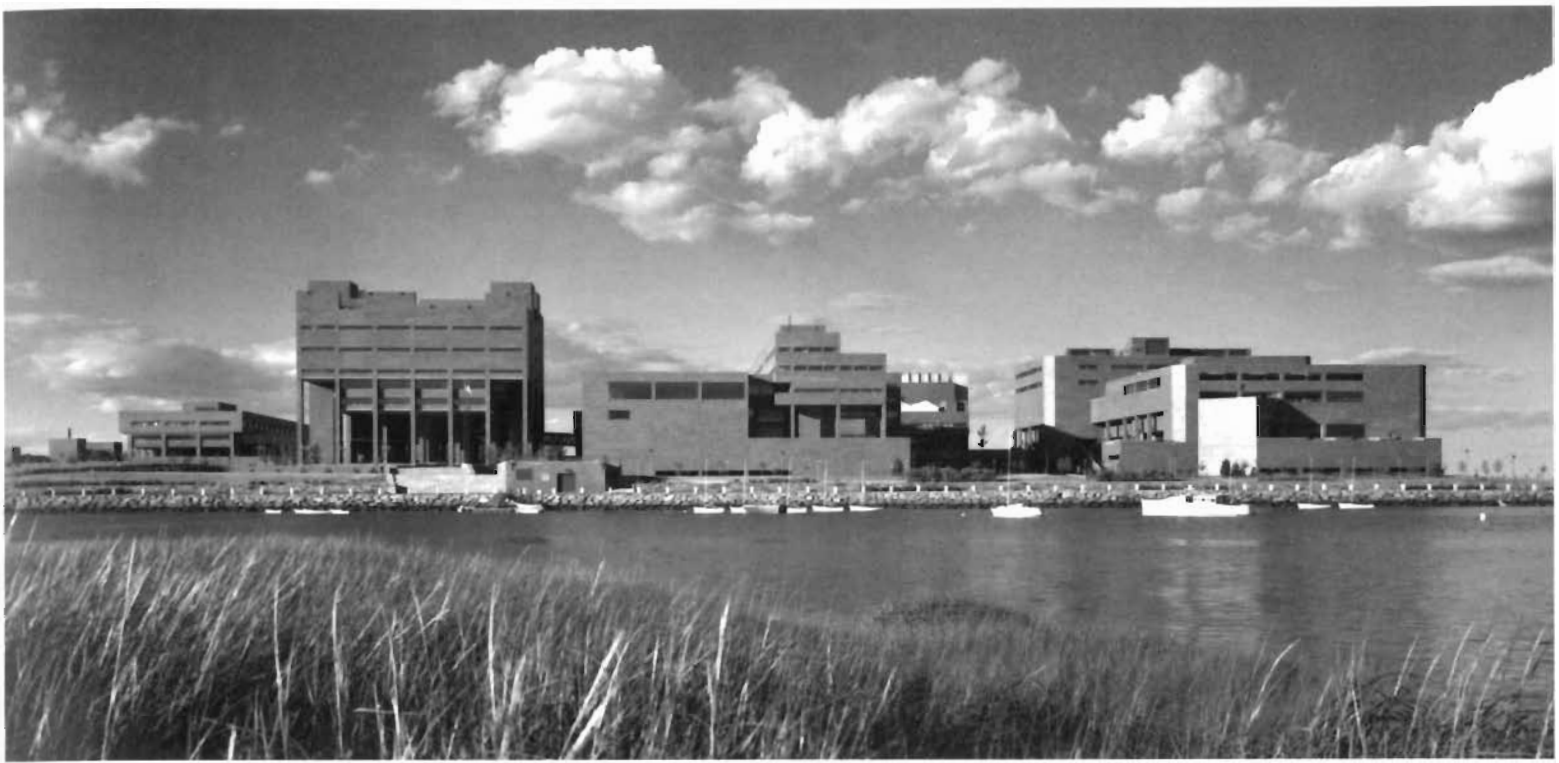
Site:

Charles T. Main, Inc.
Boston, Massachusetts

Mechanical:

Cosentini Associates, Inc.
Chicago, Illinois





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Contractor

Blount-Fontaine
Dorchester, Massachusetts

Construction Manager

McKee-Berger-Mansueto, Inc.
Boston, Massachusetts

Furniture Designers

Harry Weese & Associates
Chicago, Illinois

Furniture Manufacturers

Knipp & Company, Inc.
Baltimore, Maryland

Library

Walter Grossmann
Director of Libraries
William Quinn
Associate University Librarian
Molly Matson
Reference Librarian
George Morgan
Administrative Assistant

Planning & Development Offices

Francis E. O'Brien
Director
Willard W. Prince
Assistant Director for Planning
William Meehan
Assistant Director for Operations

Library Consultant

James Tanis
Director of Libraries,
Bryn Mawr College

Gross area square footage
283,872 square feet

Shelf space
727,000 volumes

Seating
1700 readers

Photography

Photograph Captions

- Cover.** View of the Library from across the harbor.
1. Reference desk, exhibition cases, bibliographical collection on fourth floor, and exhibition area on fifth floor.
 2. Reference desk in arts and music area with Geoffrey Clive Classical Record Collection on tenth floor.
 3. Stairway with sculpture 'Head and Long Arm' by Frank Tock.
 4. Sculpture 'Head and Long Arm' by Frank Tock.
 5. Reserve book area with painting 'Untitled 1962' by Jack Wolfe.
 6. Reading area on eighth floor with print 'Poem by Hölderlin' by Josua Reichert.
 7. Art and Music area, tenth floor.
 8. Carrel train on eighth floor.
 9. Check out desk at entrance.

10. Reading area on eighth floor.
11. Exhibition area on fifth floor: The Stuttgart Ballet, Production and Choreography by John Cranko.
12. Exhibition case on fourth floor: Friedrich Neugebauer Press, Bad Goisern, Austria.
13. Periodicals on sixth floor.
14. View of the Library from across the harbor.
- 15 and 16. The Library, front and back.

Photography Credits

Greg Heins:
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13
Jim Hedrich, Hedrich Blessing:
cover, 2, 14, 15, 16
Suzy Groden: 10
Thomas E. Curran: 11

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