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Brooklyn Academy of Music Restoration

Karen Brooks Hopkins, president of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, gives Bob a peek at the restoration of one of its facilities. BAM, which held its first performance in 1861, is the oldest performing arts center in country. The original location on Montague Street in Brooklyn presented New York with some of the popular performers of the time, Ellen Terry, Edwin Booth, Tomas Salvini, and Fritz Kreisler. After a fire in 1903, the center was moved to its current location at the edge of Brooklyn's business district in the fashionable neighborhood of Fort Greene. After World War II the neighborhood and Facility went into decline. In the past thirty years the area has gone through gentrification and the surrounding community has been revitalized. BAM is now the largest presenter of contemporary international dance, theatre, and opera in the United States. The entire weatherworn facade is being renovated, including the terracotta cherubs and the colorful cornices. The architectural firm managing the BAM renovation is Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates. Hugh Hardy is leading the team, using modern technology and materials to restore the terracotta ornamentation, and the reconstruction of the parapet and cornice, which was removed for safety reasons almost 50 years ago. Work being performed also includes replacing the cracked brickwork and lintels, creating handicap accessibility, a partial roof replacement, refurbishment of stained-glass windows, cleaning of the facade, and the addition of an undulating, 130 foot-long glass entrance canopy.

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