

MUSEUMS

Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music opens at New Jersey's Monmouth University

Designed by COOKFOX Architects, the 30,000-sf, all-electric building both celebrates Springsteen's work and tells the story of American music.

By Novid Parsi, Contributing Editor

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Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music at Monmouth University. ©COOKFOX_Alex Ferrec

The [Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music](#) has opened at [Monmouth University](#) in New Jersey. Located blocks from where Springsteen wrote “Born to Run,” the center both celebrates his work and tells the story of music in the U.S.

With design by [COOKFOX Architects](#) and structural engineering by [DeSimone Consulting Engineering](#), the steel and mass timber building serves as a multiuse destination for exhibition, education, performance, and research.

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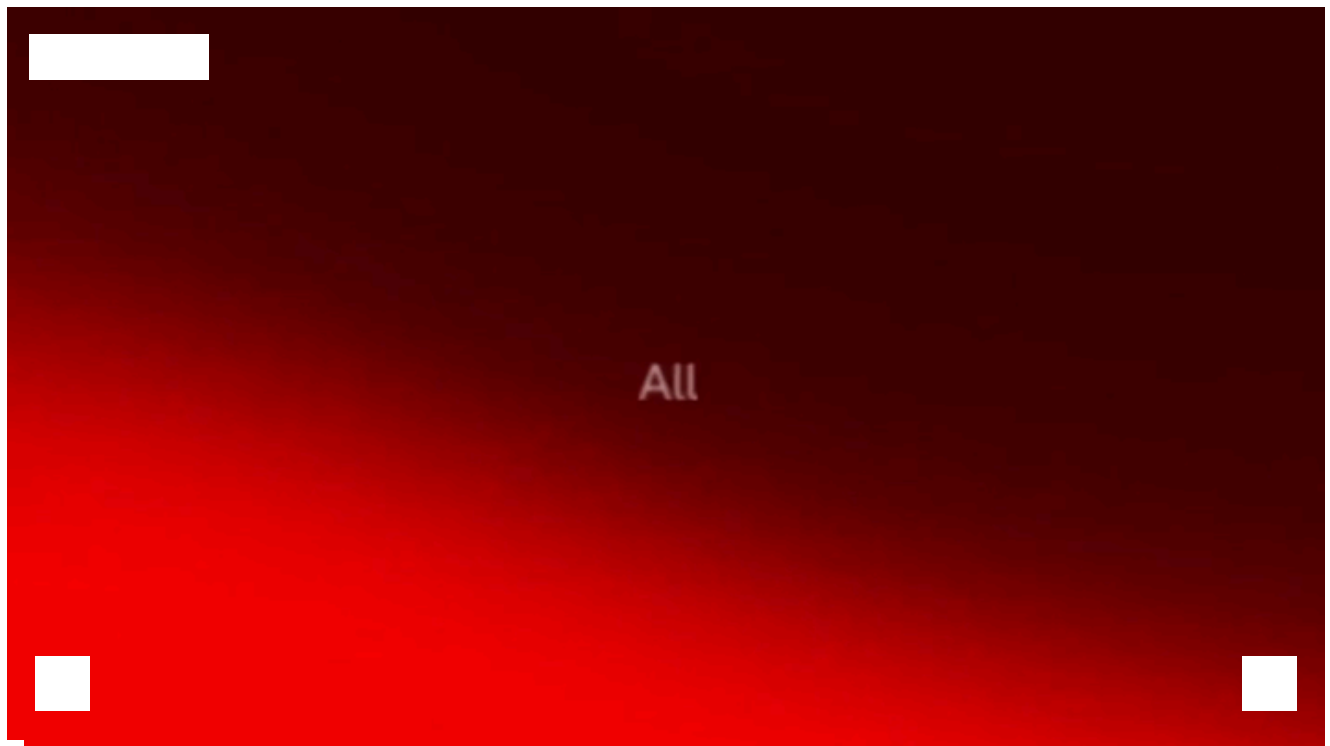
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The 30,000-sf, all-electric building houses exhibits on Springsteen's music and American music, gallery space for changing exhibitions, and the Springsteen archives, which can be studied onsite in private carrels. The center also features a 240-seat auditorium for concerts, lectures, and screenings.

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The facade, made of weathering steel rainscreen panels, nods to New Jersey's

industrial heritage of dockyards and factories.

The building's mass timber structure uses sustainably harvested European spruce in glue-laminated timber and cross-laminated timber. The wood has been left unstained to express its natural character. The millwork's resin-infused paper surfaces use a material common in guitar fretboards.



Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music at Monmouth University. ©COOKFOX_Alex Ferrec

Visitors enter the two-story, rectangular structure via a long boardwalk. In the double-height entry hall, floor-to-ceiling windows provide daylight and a connection to the outdoors. Two levels of galleries are to the left; the auditorium is to the right.

The auditorium features thin vertical wood slats concealing acoustic panels that both absorb and reflect sound. The end-grain wood block flooring reveals the growth rings of the trees it's made from. On the stage, a full window wall brings in daylight and connects the building to the surrounding campus.

The exhibition design by [C&G Partners](#) includes eight galleries of rare artifacts, interactive experiences, iconic photography, a hands-on rehearsal studio, and an immersive concert experience. Artifacts include instruments, garments worn onstage, lyric notebooks, alternate album covers, and early concert posters.

The landscape design by [LaGuardia Design Group](#) provides native grasses and trees and manages stormwater via bioswales and detention systems.

On the building team: [Monmouth University](#) (owner), [Pure Project Management](#) (owner's project manager), [COOKFOX Architects](#) (architect), [DeSimone Consulting Engineering](#) (structural engineer and facade consultant), [Dagher Engineering](#) (mechanical engineer), [Langan](#) (civil engineer), [French & Parrello Associates](#) (geotechnical engineer), [LaGuardia Design Group](#) (landscape architect), [Timberlab](#) (mass timber), [Dissimilar Metal Design](#) (weathering steel), [C&G](#)

[Partners](#) (exhibition designer), [Torcon](#) (general contractor).



Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music at Monmouth University. ©COOKFOX_Alex Ferrec



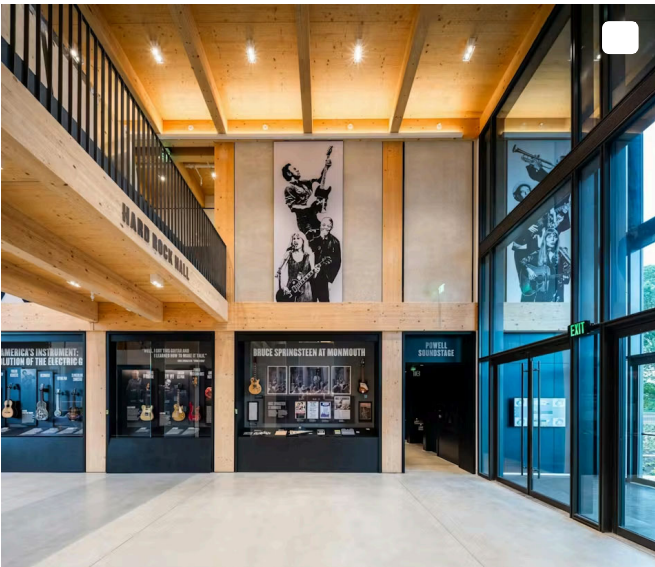
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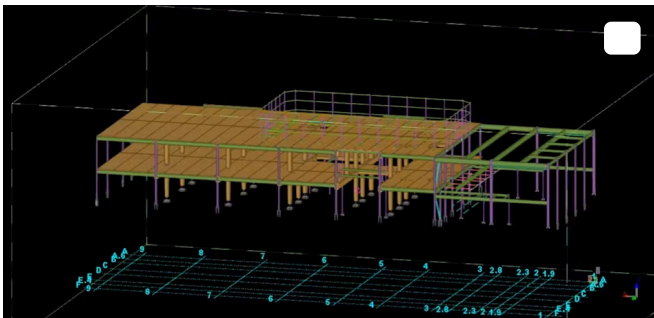
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Tesla model of the Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music at Monmouth University. Courtesy DeSimone

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