



PROJECTS

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Container Globe theatre

Bradley Wheeler

It's a collaboration between a Rock and Roll manager and New York City based Perkins Eastman, this theatre is made with old containers. It's inspired by the Shakespearean Globe

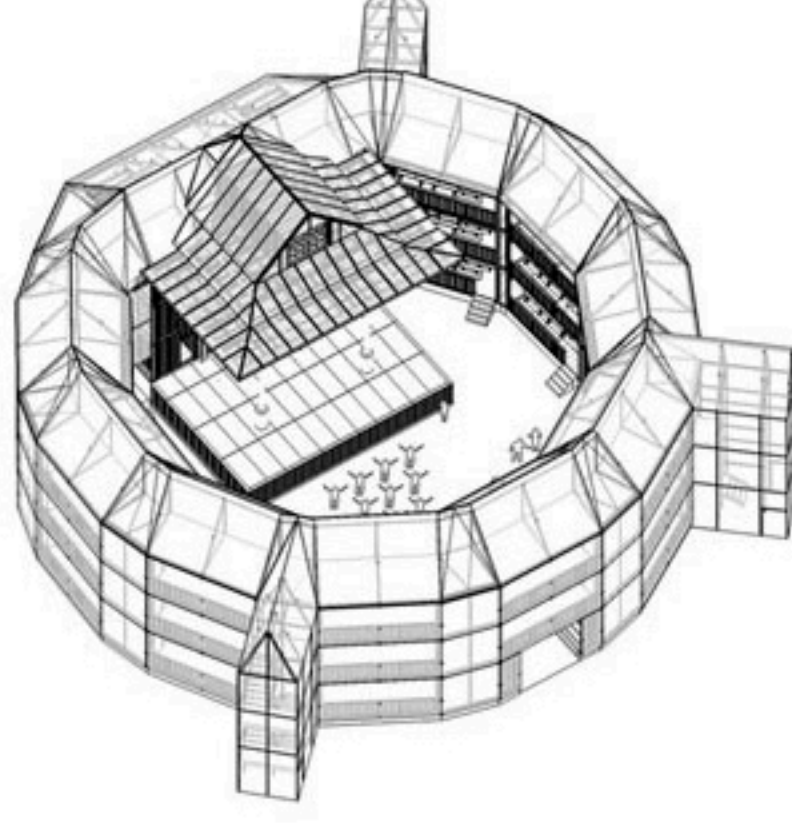
"To be or not to be?" is no longer the question for the **Container Globe theatre**, now that its first iteration has struck terra firma in Highland Park, Michigan, a small city located within metropolitan Detroit.



↑ Bird's eye view of the Container Globe assembled in Waitangi Park, Wellington, New Zealand.

The Container Globe is the brainchild of rock-and-roll business manager **Angus Vail** (INXS, Kiss), whose passion for Shakespeare is equal only to his exuberance for punk rock. Originally from New Zealand, Vail realized early on his journey that he would need to partner with a well-known, respected architectural firm, one that would have the same enthusiasm for his vision and be able to help make it a reality. After formally presenting his concept at an American Institute of Architects event, the alliance with New York City-based **Perkins Eastman** was forged. Vail recognized that working with an established firm with 1,000 employees in 15 interdisciplinary offices worldwide would propel the 1599 Globe theatre-in-the-round concept into his 21st century re-imagined version.

Approximately 6-million containers are shipped yearly to the United States, many destined never to leave the country again. This continuous "flow of metal" is only one of the noble motives to repurpose some of these imported "boxes" into cultural venues around the US (and eventually around the world). This metamorphosis from container to theatre will bring Shakespeare's artistry to life in underserved communities, such as Highland Park, Michigan, that lack any outlets for artistic expression. Vail also envisioned programs for school children who normally would not be able to experience the love story of *Romeo and Juliet* or the delight of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Beyond Shakespeare, the newest Globe also would serve as a setting for live performances of music, dance, and performing arts.



↑ Exterior Axonometric view demonstrates how closely the massing of the 2018 Container Globe resembles the 1599 London Globe.

Architecturally, the Container Globe is comprised of **a combination of modified containers that are separated into audience and stage/backstage uses**. The audience galleries are created with nine modules of 6.1-metres long containers stacked three high. The majority of the stage/back stage is of the same height and is constructed with six 12.2-metres long examples. All stacked containers are secured with standard connectors used on container ships. The entire ensemble is reinforced with strategically placed steel pillars and bracing. Vertical circulation is created with two main stairwells, which jut out from the otherwise circular footprint. The stairs provide access to the 2nd- and 3rd-level seating galleries, which are reached via hallways that wrap around the exterior of the theatre and are built with scaffolding and industrial flooring. A transparent roof made of standard greenhouse roofing panels is placed on top of the scaffolding whose steep pitch recalls the London Globe. The final stage of construction consists of adding a durable industrial metal mesh over the roof and exterior of the entire form. The mesh reinforces the composition by giving it a more solid presentation and could potentially be embellished with graphics that recall the original Elizabethan structure.



↑ Exterior view of Container Globe Theatre. Note the industrial metal mesh which covers the roof and exterior. The potential for graphics which express the original 1599 structure is enticing.

The mesh not only serves as shade and protection from the wind, but also allows air and light to penetrate through to the inside. In addition, the mesh will break up and soften the fall of raindrops, thus quieting the impact of storms.

During dusk and at night, the structure will take on a completely different persona. Interior lights will shine against the transparent roof and exterior skin, and the structure will glow from within, reminiscent of a Japanese lantern whose beauty takes discerning onlookers by surprise. The genius of a container modular system is its portability. The fact that the entire space could be demounted, transported and reassembled is particularly noteworthy and also highlights its dual purpose as theatre in locus as well as a sort of traveling Shakespearean celebration. This low cost "Punk Rock" alternative to standard brick-and-mortar theatres would be able to serve a multitude of underserved communities, around the world.



↑ Interior view of the stage from the upper level seating galleries