

DPAC IN THE

ATLAS

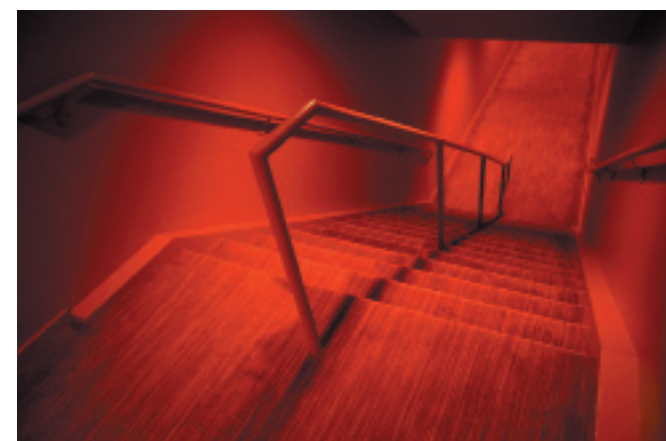
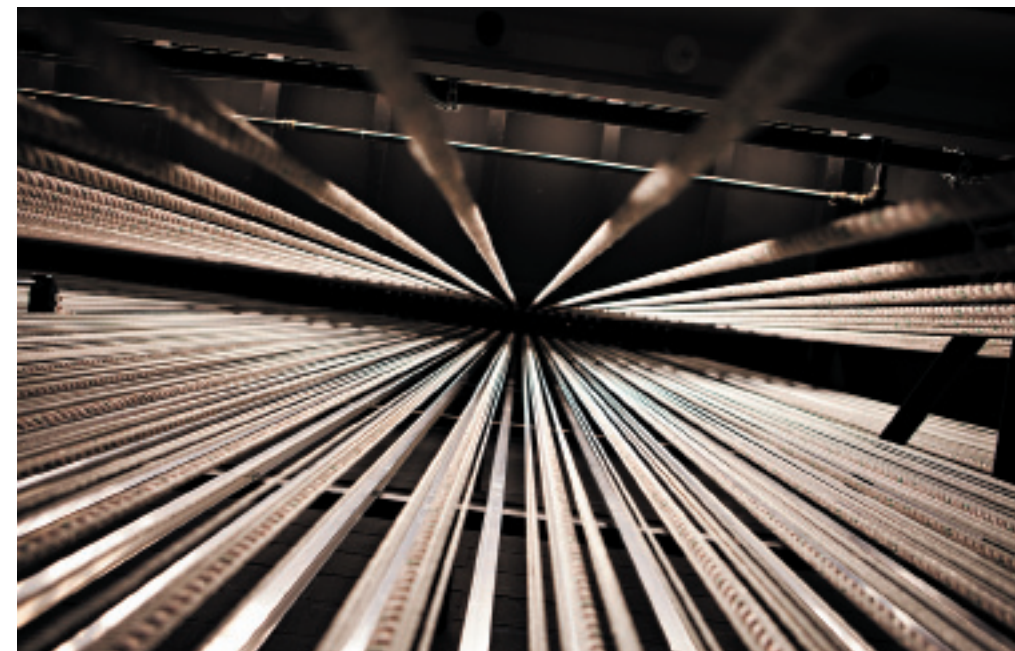
Including the **Durham Performing Arts Center** in this issue might seem a bit obvious. It certainly seemed that way to us, so our intention was to *not* profile the centerpiece structure that, while gorgeous, is well known to just about everyone. But, after about the fifth Durham architect held it up as a preeminent example of top design in our city, we had to take another look. So we got in touch with interior designer **Alison Steele**, principal of **A+S Design**, who worked closely with architect **Phil Szostak** on DPAC's interior finishes. She gave us the grand tour, showing us the attention to detail that led to this remarkable finished product.

"The public probably does not realize the time involved in producing a custom carpet or custom textiles for the seating and acoustical walls," Alison says. "At first, we wanted the carpet to be wool for its durability, sustainability, richness and color variation. There was a cost and lead time associated with that. Instead, we discovered this carpet in New York while working with **Suzanne Tick**, a textile designer with KnollTextiles, and saw this in her living room. We immediately began working with her partner, **Terry Mowers**, on developing the color to mimic a directional wool and went through many, many color iterations before achieving what is now known as the 'Red Carpet.'"

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIANA BROUGH



Above: The glass walls allow for a spectacular view of the city from the upper-level lobbies.
Above right: "The textile on the acoustical walls in the hall has a gold, vertical tape yarn that, as you walk past it, it plays with the light in a very subtle way, like a sequin. Even though it looks pretty, hours were invested in making sure we could actually add that fabric on top of the acoustical panels. It was tested at sound studios all over the country."



Above: Cables backstage.

Above right: Your tour guide, Alison.

Left: "The red halls leading from the lobby into the auditorium are shocking and have received the most comments. Either you hate being wrapped in red or love it. The intent is that as soon as you enter the passageway, it is setting you up for something big!"

"During construction, there were two things I was not involved in that I was obsessed with: the catwalks (above) and the cables (opposite page)," Alison says. "There is just something about being 60 feet above the hall looking down at a project that is so personal to you as a designer. The cables created such a wonderful texture, so much so it is inspiration for a textile I am designing."

Right: The cast of *Billy Elliott* signed the wall backstage, complete with a pair of dance shoes tacked on. Every traveling show leaves their mark backstage - right on the wall.

Far right: Sun and shadow on plush red stairs.

