

Altieri

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE ATHEY CENTER FOR PERFORMANCE AND RESEARCH AT PALMER AUDITORIUM

ARCHITECT

Ennead

LOCATION

New London, Connecticut

SIZE

32,000 SF

COMPLETED

2022



Courtesy of Ennead Architects

AWARDS

2022 Merit Award for Design Excellence, AIA Connecticut Design Awards

Connecticut College was founded in 1911 as the first woman's college in Connecticut. The campus comprises 750 acres of arboretum and 100 buildings, all contributing to the College's long history of architectural significance. The Athey Center for Performance and Research at Palmer Auditorium was built in the Art Deco style in 1939. The 1300-seat hall designed by William Lamb, principal architect of the Empire State Building, has hosted prominent performers and speakers including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Merce Cunningham, Alvin Ailey, and Billy Joel.

The objective of the renovation was to promote "pioneering artistic production and research, attract world-renowned artists-in-residence, and offer renewed spaces for community engagement." The transformation maintained the building's historic envelope and character while providing a new center for creative research and performance. Altieri's scope was comprehensive MEPF and IT systems designs reflecting high standards of energy efficiency and prioritized to meet specific project intentions including occupant-comfort environmental conditions. Careful insertion of building systems included diffusers situated beneath individual auditorium seats to provide cool supply air from underneath that is returned overhead for optimal energy efficiency.