

Project Fact Sheet: Stern Grove

Stern Grove

19 th Ave. and Sloat Blvd. , near Stonestown Galleria and San Francisco State University
San Francisco , CA
www.sterngrove.org

Restoration

Started: September 2004
Completed: May 2005

Cost

\$15 million total, which includes stonework.

Total Stonework Tonnage

1400 tons

Landscape Architect

Lawrence Halprin

Stonemasonry

QuarryHouse
217 San Anselmo Ave. , Ste. C
San Anselmo , CA 94960
Phone: 415-482-9094
www.quarryhouseinc.com

Project Manager

David Elkington

Superintendent

Jason Joplin

Number of crew members: 30

History of Stern Grove

Sigmund Stern Grove is a 33-acre public park in San Francisco 's Sunset District that hosts a natural amphitheater set among giant eucalyptus, redwood and fir trees. Over the past 68 years, it has become one of Northern California's favorite concert sites, offering free summertime musical performances on Sundays through the Stern Grove Festival Association, a non-profit organization committed to providing the people of the Bay Area with admission-free access to diverse performing arts. Past performances include the San Francisco Symphony, Diana Krall, Los Lobos and Isaac Stern.

Restoration Overview

After nearly seven decades of concerts and more than six million visitors, Stern Grove suffered hillside erosion and dilapidated facilities, which date back to the 1950s, while the overall infrastructure is even older. Prior to the current restoration efforts, Stern Grove was little more than a grassy field with rudimentary seating and sawhorse picnic tables among the trees and slippery hillside. For generations of park goers to continue to enjoy the area, the park needed a major facelift.

QuarryHouse Involvement

In the fall of 1999, the Stern Grove Festival Association hired renowned landscape architect Lawrence Halprin to design a plan for the renovation of Stern Grove. With a budget of \$15 million, Halprin allotted \$3 million to stonework alone and recommended longtime partner

QuarryHouse to build an amphitheater that would seat 10,000 and endure for 1,000 years, rivaling the great architecture of the Romans.

QuarryHouse founder Ed Westbrook searched quarries in Canada , Mexico and China for suitable stone before selecting a small rural quarry in the Shandong Province of China. Westbrook worked with 75 local villagers to select gabbro 326 boulders, which were then delivered to his Chinese partners, Chen-Ragen LLC and San Francisco on a cargo ship.

Under a tight eight-month production timeline, QuarryHouse assigned a crew of 30 men to painstakingly hand carve stones to fit into the hillside structure like an intricate puzzle, using age-old methods of hand chiseling and ancient tools like feathers and wedges. The end result is an amphitheater that provides concertgoers with comfortable seating and unobstructed views of performers, yet blends seamlessly with the tranquil outdoor setting.

Key Stonework Restoration Elements:

- Provide improved seating and sightlines through an amphitheatre of stone tiers gradually rising along the hillside
- Stabilize hillside erosion
- Improve handicap access

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