

# *The Arts Partnership*

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## **Plans for Transformation of Ordway Center for the Performing Arts Unveiled**

New 1,100-seat Concert Hall to replace existing 306-seat McKnight Theatre

\$51.575 million raised to date towards \$75 million project

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (Thursday December 8, 2011) – In an unveiling event today at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, leadership from the Arts Partnership (the Ordway, Minnesota Opera, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club) unveiled the plans for a transformation of the Ordway – a new 1,100-seat Concert Hall to replace the existing 306-seat McKnight Theatre. The Arts Partnership announced it has raised \$51.575 million to date toward the project’s \$75 million capital campaign, which covers both the cost of construction and an endowment to ensure long-term, affordable access to the Ordway for the Arts Partnership organizations. The goal is to complete fundraising by the end of March 2012, so construction can begin in the spring and be completed by early 2014.

At the event, Lowell Noteboom and Gus Blanchard, co-chairs of the Arts Partnership campaign, announced that, thanks to a \$5 million anonymous gift, the campaign is now more than two-thirds of the way toward its \$75 million goal. Corporate and foundation funders have committed \$19.1 million to the campaign to date. Individual funders have committed \$13.475 million. The City of Saint Paul has committed \$3 million and the State of Minnesota has committed \$16 million in bonding funds.

Allan Naplan, president and general director of Minnesota Opera; Patricia A. Mitchell, president and CEO of the Ordway; Sarah Lutman, president and managing director of The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra; and Paul Olson, interim executive director of The Schubert Club, were joined at the event by leaders from across the community, including Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman, as the renderings for the transformation of the Ordway were revealed.

Created by HGA Architects, the design is intended to be both seamless in its relationship to the original building and dramatically new in the experience it offers. According to Tim Carl, lead architect, “The

Ordway's building, as designed by Ben Thompson, is both an excellent venue for performance and one of the most beautiful buildings in the Cities in which to gather. The design of the expansion has tremendous respect for both of these characteristics. The new Concert Hall will have a physical and acoustical intimacy that will provide a visceral and direct connection between the audience and the artists on stage. Warm materials articulate and shape a beautiful hall with an acoustic environment that will envelop the listener with warmth and resonance. The Ordway's existing lobby dynamically frames views of Rice Park and the city beyond. New lobby space wraps the Concert Hall and continues the rhythmic beauty of the existing lobby windows and extends those views to Fifth Street and the Cathedral of Saint Paul to the west."

### **Concert Hall and Endowment Will Solve Long-Standing Challenges**

The project will solve long-standing challenges for the Arts Partnership organizations, while benefitting the entire community. According to Mitchell, "Scheduling the use of the Ordway is complicated, and it historically has been a difficult task to balance the needs of its four main users. The problem of access can be considered a sign of success, as there is more quality programming for the community than there is time in the Ordway. The new Concert Hall is a permanent solution to the scheduling challenge – benefitting all of the Arts Partnership organizations, but most importantly, the broader community."

The endowment is a critical component of the project, as it will ensure affordable access to the Ordway for the Arts Partnership organizations over the long term.

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra will make its downtown Saint Paul home in the new Concert Hall, and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's move will increase the number of open dates in the larger Music Theater, allowing the other Arts Partnership organizations to capitalize on availability in the space. Minnesota Opera will be able to extend its standard rehearsal and performance time in the Music Theater. The Schubert Club will be able to expand its offerings and have greater flexibility with dates. The Concert Hall will make new programming initiatives possible for the Ordway, while greater availability in the Music Theater will allow for enhancement and growth of the Ordway's world music, dance, theater and self-produced programming.

Above all, the community will benefit from increased offerings at the Ordway and in downtown Saint Paul. In addition to its use by Arts Partnership organizations, the new Concert Hall will be available for use by other performing artists and organizations. The addition of the Concert Hall will expand the number of available seats across the Ordway's two halls, allowing for more visitors to the Ordway and to downtown Saint Paul. It is estimated that attendance at the Ordway will increase by more than 130,000 people annually, resulting in an additional \$6.1 million of increased economic activity each year. An additional 30,000 children will be able to visit the Ordway through subsidized bussing and ticket programs each year. Finally, it is estimated that over 700 construction jobs will be created through this project.

### **The Arts Partnership: A Community Solution**

In August 2005, at the behest of Bob Senkler, CEO of Securian, and Carleen Rhodes, president of the Saint Paul Foundation, the Ordway and its resident arts organizations, along with an unprecedented collection of corporate leaders, philanthropists, and community volunteers, formed a task force dedicated to addressing the long-standing financial and operational challenges faced by the Ordway and its resident arts organizations. The result was the formation of the Arts Partnership, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, created to maximize the Ordway's potential from a community value perspective while ensuring the sustainability of the resident arts organizations and the Ordway. Governed by a Board of Directors composed of the board chairs and CEOs of each organization, plus an additional Ordway representative, the goals of the Partnership are to establish and manage the calendar for the Arts Partners' use of the Ordway, establish procedures for managing rent and operating costs associated with the Arts Partners' use of the Ordway and complete necessary fundraising for collaborative activity of the Partnership, including the current Arts Partnership campaign.

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