

# Overture Center for the Arts

While the arts have maintained a presence in downtown Madison, Wisconsin, for almost 80 years, Overture Center for the Arts has transformed Madison's city center into a vibrant, fully integrated, cultural arts district. This development was made possible through what is believed to be the largest single gift from an individual for the construction of an arts center in the United States.

In 1998, local businessman W. Jerome Frautschi announced a breathtaking gift of \$50 million for the development of a cultural arts district in downtown Madison. Through the leadership of his Overture Foundation, the space needs of the City's major arts organizations were identified and a plan developed for Overture Center for the Arts. Wanting to see the 400,000 square foot multi-venue project accomplished now, as a single project, Mr. Frautschi decided to personally fund the entire cost of this state-of-the-art facility in the amount of \$205 million. Construction began in June 2001 and is scheduled for completion this year.

Internationally renowned architect Cesar Pelli was engaged to design the project, which encompasses a full city block. In addition to the **Madison Museum of Contemporary Art**, the complete Overture Center for the Arts is home to many distinctive and functional spaces for the visual and performing arts. Among these are:

- the 2,255-seat **Overture Hall**, which features the Overture Concert Organ, the largest movable concert organ in the world;
- the opulent, 1,089-seat **Capitol Theater**, originally a 1920s movie palace and now restored to provide a home for the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra as well as a variety of touring groups and performers;
- the 347-seat, thrust-stage **Playhouse**, home to the Madison Repertory Theatre and to other local and out-of-town groups and performers;
- the **James Watrous Gallery** of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, a 1,500-square-foot space, which exhibits the work of state and regional artists;
- the **Rotunda Stage**, an informal, lower-lobby performance space, ideal for family-friendly programs and intermission and break-out space;
- the unique second-floor space, **Promenade Hall**, the largest of three community access and performance spaces, completely equipped for full-scale theatrical, music and dance performances, rehearsals and events;
- three community art galleries for the exhibition of the work of local artists; three new flexible community performance, rehearsal and exhibit spaces; and three pre-function/reception spaces.

The opening of the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art on April 23, 2006, marks the completion of Overture Center for the Arts. For additional information about Overture, visit [www.overturecenter.com](http://www.overturecenter.com) or contact Tina Frailey, Director of Press and Community Relations, at 608.258.4151.

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