

NEW CONCERT HALL

AT ORDWAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

FACT SHEET

New Concert Hall at [Ordway Center for the Performing Arts](#)

The Concert Hall, located in Saint Paul, Minn., is a project of the Arts Partnership, a collaboration made up of the Ordway's principal resident organizations: **Minnesota Opera, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra** and **The Schubert Club**.

The expansion and renovation of Ordway Center adds a premier performance venue to the Twin Cities cultural landscape. **The world-class Concert Hall was designed specifically for the presentation of acoustic and electro-acoustic music in a most intimate and beautiful setting.** The space creates a visceral and direct connection – an artistic conversation – between the audience and the artists with **no seat more than 90 feet from the stage.**

Groundbreaking for the Concert Hall took place in Spring 2013 to replace the 300-seat McKnight Theatre. The new building is scheduled to **open to the public on March 1, 2015.**

The 1,100-seat state-of-the-art facility is a “shoebox” style concert hall where there is no separation between the performance platform and the audience. **Acoustic dampening curtains can be drawn for rehearsals or to enhance amplified programming.** Reverberation time of the Concert Hall has been designed to showcase small ensembles, especially The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

[HGA Architect Tim Carl](#) was inspired by Ben Thompson's original elegant design for the celebrated Ordway, which opened in January 1985. The Concert

Hall addition seamlessly integrates new and old by extending the second and third floor lobbies overlooking Rice Park, and connecting with the existing copper window detailing, monumental columns, water-struck brick and undulating façade.

The new Concert Hall features **three levels of seating, including a special choral loft behind the stage**, which can seat up to 117 chorus members or audience members during non-choral performances. The performance platform can accommodate up to **48 musicians.**

The new roof is 30 feet taller than the former in order to house the larger audience and acoustical volume. The original footprint has been extended 10 feet to the north and 20 feet to the east.

One of the most innovative features of the Concert Hall is a **spectacular sweeping ceiling made of 14.7 linear miles of mahogany-stained oak dowels** of subtly varied spacing, which ensures **vivid acoustical resonance, warmth and reverberation specifically designed for the sounds of unamplified instruments.** The dowel ceiling ensures that the volumes above and below are acoustically coupled and that the sound is never diminished as it passes through the dowel screen. While the ceiling adds drama and essential acoustic clarity, it is also practical as it masks the catwalk structures that support the lighting, sound and rigging infrastructures, as well as the dampening curtain systems.

More than **1,100 glass fiber reinforced gypsum (GFRG) acoustic panels** – each weighing more than 200 pounds – have been precisely hung on carefully-prepared concrete walls to optimize sound. Each of the panels – there are 10 designs – was **specifically created for its acoustic properties** by Tim Carl, in close consultation with acoustic consultant **Paul Scarbrough** of [Akustiks](#).

While the Concert Hall will boast superior acoustics, it will also set a **new standard for silence.** There is a 22-inch wall between the hall and West 5th Street and the double-slab roof system also keeps out exterior noise. Inside, to achieve this level of quiet, movable parts have been minimized with fixed, non-reclining chairs and the careful isolation of noise from fans and other building equipment.

The Concert Hall relates directly to the Ordway's warmly-appointed 1,900-seat Music Theater with its magnificent lobbies on each floor, including the second floor Marzitelli Foyer, a spacious, two-story atrium encircled by a glass façade, and the third floor **Securian Balcony Lobby**. The addition widens the city views to the St. Paul Cathedral and Landmark Center from the **elevated lobbies with wrap-around glass curtain walls.**

The Concert Hall includes **3M Plaza** (first floor lobby and outside area in front of the Ordway), **Target Atrium** (public spaces through the Ordway's second level), the **Securian Sky Lobby** (the third-level lobby of the new hall), the **Ecolab Grand Staircase, Travelers Artist Entrance** (stage door) and **Otto Bremer Foundation Court** (southside outdoor plaza).

The renovation of the Ordway also features expanded and redesigned box office space to improve traffic flow and accessibility, including two additional ADA compliant windows.

The Concert Hall is perfectly suited to classical and popular music, family events, lectures and small corporate events. Equipped with a full service recording facility and a digital infrastructure, it can also be used as a remote recording site or a live recording studio.

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The Arts Partnership

THE ARTS PARTNERSHIP

[The Arts Partnership](#) is a nonprofit collaboration among Minnesota Opera, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club in which the needs of the community are placed above the needs of any one particular organization. To date, the Arts Partnership has raised more than **\$83 million** to fund the construction of a new concert hall at the Ordway and an endowment fund that will support the use of the Ordway by all of the Partners. The Arts Partnership has been recognized as a national model of arts community collaboration.

MINNESOTA OPERA

In 1963, a world premiere sparked the creation of a small opera company spotlighting the rare and avant-garde. More than 50 years later, [Minnesota Opera](#) is one of the nation's leading opera companies, admired as an innovative creator of compelling operas, programs and new works. Nurtured by the supportive and adventurous culture of the Twin Cities, the company has championed the creation of new works and revival of works by American composers. Minnesota Opera's commission of *Silent Night* earned its composer the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music. Each season, the company brings together artists

worldwide to create five operas that expand the art form, enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.

ORDWAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

[The Ordway](#) is widely recognized as one of the nation's principal nonprofit performing arts centers and Saint Paul's most elegant and inviting performance space. The Ordway's Music Theater and soon-to-be completed Concert Hall present unsurpassed American musical theater, world music, dance and vocal performance. Education and community engagement are integral to the Ordway's mission, with major initiatives and education programs that serve more than 50,000 students annually. Together with Minnesota Opera, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club, the Ordway is a member of the Arts Partnership and serves as the principal venue for their performances.

THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (SPCO)

[The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra](#), now in its 56th season, is widely regarded as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. In collaboration with a team of artistic partners, its virtuoso musicians present more than 130 concerts and educational programs

each year, and are regularly heard on public radio's *Performance Today* and *SymphonyCast*. The SPCO has released 67 recordings, commissioned 139 new works, and performed the world premiere of 49 additional compositions, and has earned the distinction of 17 ASCAP awards for adventurous programming. Renowned for its artistic excellence and remarkable versatility of musical styles, the SPCO tours nationally and internationally.

THE SCHUBERT CLUB

For over 130 years, [The Schubert Club](#) has been Minnesota's leading performing arts organization with a reputation for presenting the world's most prestigious musicians in recital. Its International Artists Series has brought Jascha Heifetz, Arthur Rubinstein, Cecilia Bartoli, Alfred Brendel, Renée Fleming and Yo-Yo Ma, among many others, to the Twin Cities to perform in recital for sold-out audiences. One of the first arts organizations in the country, it has earned a prominent and distinguished reputation among musical organizations nationwide. In addition to world-class recitals, The Schubert Club is dedicated to expanding the enjoyment of music through premier educational programs and rare collections of musical treasures.

