

Commissioned Sculptures at The Music Center at Strathmore



Located on the Bou Family Terrace, *Tetra Con Brio*, a monumental sculpture of cast bronze, steel and polished concrete, stands 12 feet tall and weighs 4,500 pounds. Created by California artist Roger Stoller, the commissioned work was generously underwritten by Kenneth and Phillip O'Brien in memory of their father, Ben O'Brien, founder of Music & Arts Centers.

Suspended above a three-level staircase and spanning 96 feet of open vertical space by the Discovery Channel foyer, New York artist Meryl Taradash's *The Music of Light* is composed of shaped acrylic prisms, curved polished aluminum arcs and reflected light. It is the focal point for thousands as they enter the Music Center.



In the Gazette Promenade, *Schubert's Trout Quintet*, by Murray Stein is inspired by the work of the same name by composer Franz Schubert. The woodwork displays the instruments used in the musical piece. The overlap of the violin and the viola form a fish—a trout highlighted with dichroic glass.

The Music Center at Strathmore

5301 Tuckerman Lane
North Bethesda, MD 20852

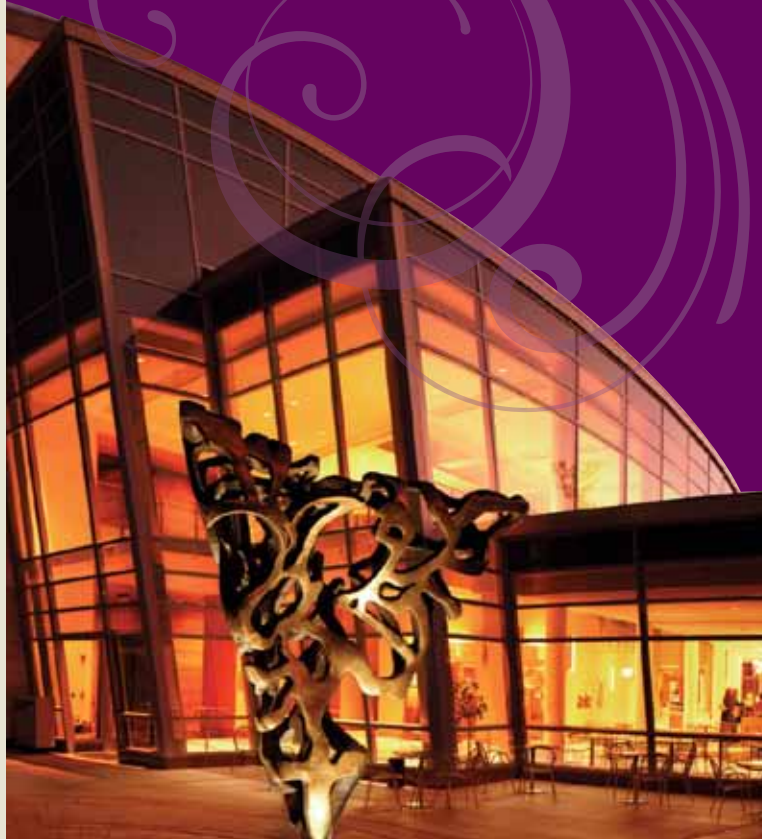
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photos by Jim Morris

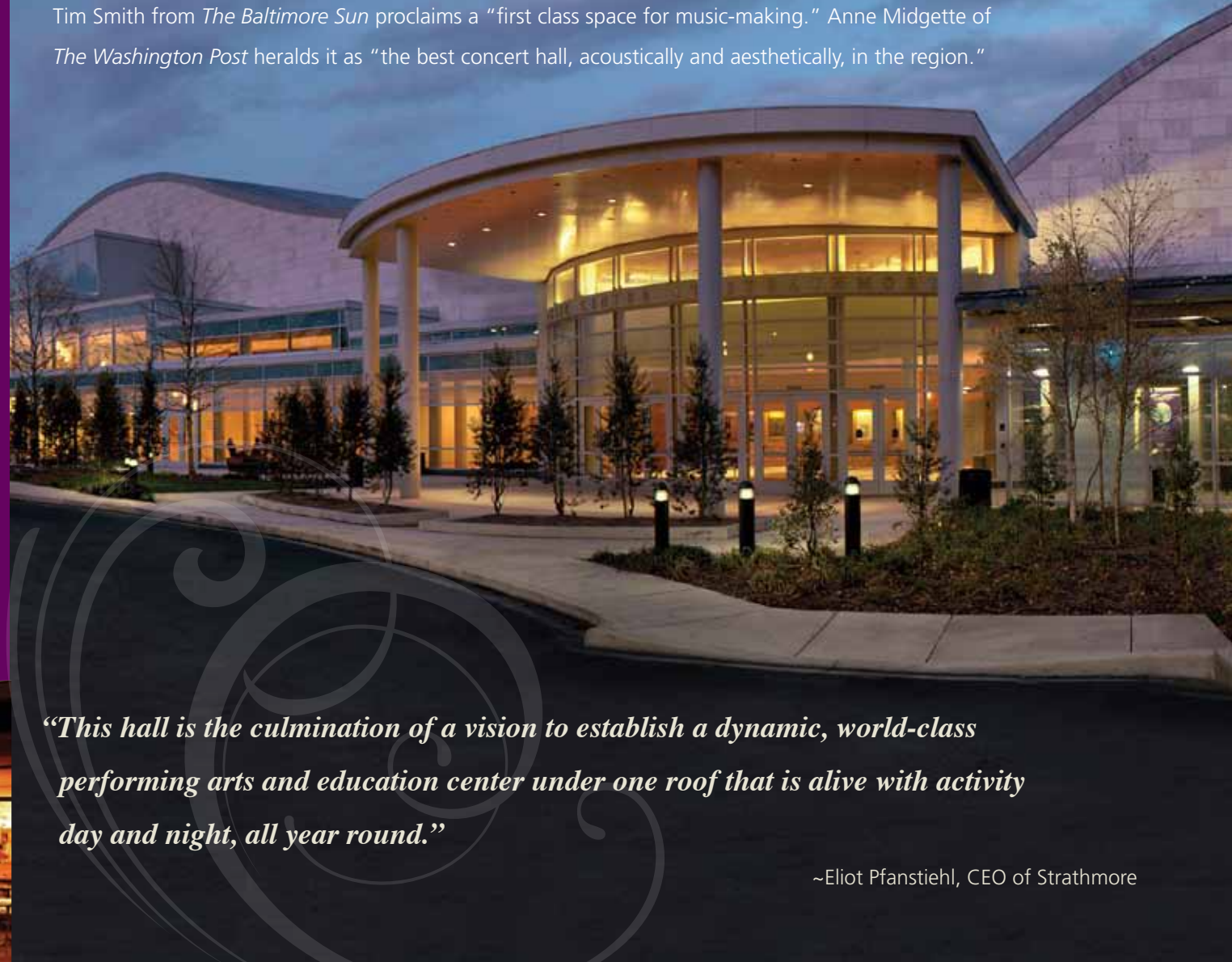


The Music Center at Strathmore History & Architecture



On February 5, 2005, the Music Center at Strathmore, a 1,976-seat concert hall and multi-disciplinary education center, opened its doors. Offering world-class performing arts in a state-of-the-art facility, the opening marked a defining moment for arts and culture in the Washington, D.C. region. Anchored by the founding partners, Strathmore and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, resident artistic partners include the National Philharmonic, Washington Performing Arts Society, CityDance, Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras and Levine School of Music. The venue presents over 150 performances a year and over 75 arts and music education classes each week.

Designed by William Rawn Associates, Architects, Inc. of Boston, acousticians Kirkegaard Associates of Chicago and Theatre Projects Consultants of South Norwalk, Connecticut, the result is a critically acclaimed venue that Tim Smith from *The Baltimore Sun* proclaims a "first class space for music-making." Anne Midgette of *The Washington Post* heralds it as "the best concert hall, acoustically and aesthetically, in the region."



"This hall is the culmination of a vision to establish a dynamic, world-class performing arts and education center under one roof that is alive with activity day and night, all year round."

~Eliot Pfanstiehl, CEO of Strathmore

Design & Acoustics

The Music Center at Strathmore features a softly undulating roof that outlines the sloping form of the concert hall. Inspired by the rolling hills of the Strathmore grounds, the 190,000 square-foot building is nestled into the 11-acre park-like setting.

The warm German limestone façade is punctuated by large glass walls, which bathe the building in brilliant light. A six-story, 64-foot high glass wall in the Lockheed Martin Lobby features 402 panes of glass, and opens to the outdoor Trawick Terrace that overlooks the Strathmore campus.

The concert hall, designed in the traditional “shoebox” form of many distinguished international concert halls, incorporates soft curvaceous lines to enhance the intimacy of the space. The gracefully curved ceiling of the hall follows the rising and falling lines of the exterior roof, and the high ceiling at the rear of the hall slopes down to a lower ceiling above the stage. A sophisticated riser system optimizes stage conditions for the orchestra or a chorus, and can be easily removed to accommodate many forms of music, theater and dance.

Above the stage, a mechanized canopy of 43 individually controlled acrylic panels can be adjusted to fine-tune sound for clarity and reverberation. Tunable sound-absorbing curtains behind the bronze grilling and banners in the ceiling can be deployed out of sight to dampen or enliven the sound. These

acoustical adjustments enable sound technicians to accommodate a wide range of programming—from a solo recital to full symphony orchestra to amplified performances.

The interior finishes of the Concert Hall include 24,000 square feet of maple wood floors, and 19,000 square feet of custom white birch wall paneling, with red birch details. Custom design details include 700 bronze mesh wall panels, 250 alabaster art glass light fixtures and maple wood and aubergine velour seats.

The Education Center, located at the opposite end of the building, features four expansive rehearsal spaces, including a dance studio with a sprung floor and two rehearsal rooms with 40-foot high ceilings. This wing of the building also features a children’s music classroom, a small two-story rehearsal room and nine solo and small group practice spaces.

ARCHITECT: William Rawn Associates, Architects, Inc., Boston, MA

ACOUSTICIAN: Kirkegaard Associates, Chicago, IL

THEATRE CONSULTANT: Theatre Projects Consultants, South Norwalk, CT

ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS: Grimm + Parker Architects, Bethesda, MD

History

Strathmore, which began as a turn-of-the-century historic Mansion featuring small chamber performances and art exhibitions in 1983, developed its plans for the Music Center over 20 years ago. In 1985, Strathmore’s Board of Directors and CEO Eliot Pfanstiehl began discussions about the need for a larger educational and performance space. 11 years later, in 1996, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, under the leadership of former president John Gidwitz, expressed interest in creating a second home in Montgomery County, and joined Strathmore as the founding partner for the Music Center at Strathmore.

The vision became a reality when, in 1998, the Montgomery County Council and the Maryland State Legislature approved matching capital support (\$48 million each) for the Music Center at Strathmore. With a positive marketing study and an excellent site in hand, the Music Center at Strathmore plan was strongly supported and led by Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan and Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening. After the design team was selected in 2001, work began under the direction of Montgomery County.

The public-private partnership between Strathmore Hall Foundation, Inc., who assumes the day-to-day management and artistic programming of the Music Center and Mansion, along with the support of the public, and its elected leaders at the State and County levels, created one of the most significant buildings constructed in Montgomery County. Additionally, hundreds of generous individual and corporate donors stepped forward to help build, equip and sustain the operation of the Music Center, including \$1 million donors *Comcast, Discovery Communications, Inc., The Gazette / The Washington Post / Post Newsweek Media / Philip L. Graham Fund, J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation and Lockheed Martin.*

With the creation of the Music Center at Strathmore, Montgomery County has redefined the character of the local arts community and ensured that future generations of area residents will grow up with the joy of wonderful music, dance, theater and art in their lives.

