



THE PROJECT

A \$38.7 million sustainable renovation of Portland's First Regiment National Guard Armory Annex, originally erected in 1891. Located in Portland's Pearl District, the rehabilitated building – now the Gerding Theater at the Armory – features:

- Two state-of-the-art theaters that are more appropriately sized for Portland Center Stage's audiences and repertory, answering a community need for more medium-sized performance spaces.
- Sustainable design that has led the Gerding Theater to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council as the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum building on the National Register of Historic Places and the first performing arts facility in the world to attain that pinnacle of sustainable building certification.
- Community spaces and programs, including an open lobby, interactive informational displays, the Armory Café, and a sliver park, plus events that range from late-night jazz sessions to tai chi classes.

In making philosophical, design, and construction decisions, project partners consistently returned to the guiding metaphor of The Four Pillars of the Armory: Theater, History, Sustainability and Community

THEATER

- A 599-seat Main Stage with a 18' x 36' proscenium and adjustable orchestra pit. Seating is designed with under-floor ventilation, wider seats, more leg-room, and a steeper grade than PCS' previous main stage in the PCPA's Newmark Theater.
- A 200-seat black box Studio with adjustable stage and lights and flexible seating configurations for a different experience with each new play.
- The first and only regional theater in the country with production information stored on interactive touch-screens (designed by Second Story Interactive Studios) that provide background on plays, performers, designers, and directors.

HISTORY

- The Armory is the second-largest 19th century building in Portland and has long been a prominent landmark and gathering place. Over its 115-year history, in addition to providing training space for the First Regiment of the Oregon Army National Guard, the building has been host to a wide range of community events, hosting opera divas, presidential visits, tennis matches, livestock shows, wrestling, rock concerts, and more.
- Key architectural features include rare 100-foot-long, old growth Douglas Fir bow trusses, crenellated parapets, locally mined basalt foundation, and 19th -century brick and stone masonry.
- In 1968 the building was purchased by Blitz Weinhard and used as a bottle storage facility. After the closing of the Blitz Weinhard brewery in 1999, the building remained vacant and unused until the roof was repaired and construction began on the Gerding Theater at the Armory.
- A uniquely crafted "rare cabinet" and a second moveable display – both created by Second Story Interactive Studios – help viewers explore the Armory's colorful past and learn more about historic preservation and sustainable design.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The Gerding Theater at the Armory's energy efficient design includes radiant heating, chilled beam cooling, skylights, and lighting that responds when employees enter or leave a workspace; the building operates 30% more efficiently than code.
- Water efficiency features include ultra-low-flow fixtures and a rainwater catchment system that supplies a 12,000-gallon cistern with water used for flushing toilets, reduces stormwater runoff to the Willamette River watershed, and reduces potable water use by 89%.

THE PROJECT *continued*

- An 18 x 200-foot sliver park, designed by locally based landscape architecture firm Murase Associates, will be both an urban oasis and an integral part of the building's stormwater management. Scheduled for completion in late summer 2007, "Vera Katz Park" features drought-tolerant landscaping, pervious pavers that filter stormwater, bioswales, comfortable seating, and a black granite water channel supplied by recycled rainwater.
- Alternative transportation is encouraged with 30 bicycle parking spots, showers for commuters, and adjacent access to the Portland Streetcar.
- 25% of construction materials contained recycled content, 45% of materials were regionally manufactured, and 21% of materials were obtained from within a 500-mile radius of the project.
- In addition to its LEED Platinum rating, the Gerding Theater at the Armory has been honored with a 2007 Award for Excellence: The Americas from the Urban Land Institute; a 2007 Top Ten Green Projects Awards Honorable Mention from the American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment; and a 2007 Grand Award for Engineering Excellence from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) of Oregon.

COMMUNITY

- Public spaces are designed as a theatrical community living room, with the aim of bringing the magic of the theater out into the lobby, and from the lobby onto the street.
- The Lobby is open to the public 10 am – 10 pm daily, and features the Armory Café (with free wi-fi access), a concierge desk with community and event information, and the interactive raree cabinet and touch-screen displays. Free guided tours of the facility are offered on alternate Saturdays, or by reservation.
- When not in use by PCS, the Main Stage and Studio are available for other performance, community, business, and educational events. Recent events have included free, late-night jam sessions in partnership with Portland Jazz Festival; a fundraiser, hosted by PCS, for Anonymous Theatre and Theatre Vertigo; a community forum on sustainability in Gulf Coast recovery efforts; and a reading/discussion series – Four Questions: Virtue, Community, Love, and Justice in the Theater – in partnership with the Oregon Council for the Humanities and Reed College.
- Portland Center Stage's new GreenHouse school offers acting and other theater-related classes for all levels, from beginner to professional, including summer day camps for children and youth.

THE CAMPAIGN

- Public, non-profit, finance and development partners collaborated to create a unique funding solution combining tax credits, private contributions and other financing to realize the dream of a new home for Portland's flagship theater company.
- \$17.5 million in project funding has been derived from New Markets Tax Credits, Historic Preservation Tax Credits, Energy Tax Credits, and Congressional appropriations for water and energy conservation and economic development..
- To date, the Center Stage in the Pearl capital campaign has secured 72% of its fundraising goal, with a balance to raise of \$10.9 million.
- The Meyer Memorial Trust has awarded the project a \$1.5 million challenge grant which matches gifts from individuals and businesses on a 1:3 basis; \$1.25 million has already been matched. A similar challenge grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation reached its \$750,000 goal in less than 3 months.
- Numerous naming opportunities are available with the project, ranging from naming the Main Stage (\$3 million), to naming the raree cabinet interactive historic display (\$100,000), to naming a seat in the Main Stage auditorium (\$1,891).