

Press release

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Fosters unveil concept design for Dallas Opera House

On June 9, Foster and Partners revealed their concept design for the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House. The Opera House is located in the Performing Arts District of downtown Dallas, Texas, and will accommodate the Dallas Opera Company. The Foster design reflects the international prestige of the Opera Company, which is renowned for its dedication to excellence and innovation.

The design addresses the questions: What is it to design an opera house for the twenty-first century? And how can we create a building that is a model for the future?

The Winspear Opera House is a distinctly twenty-first century interpretation of the traditional typology of the horseshoe-configured opera house. It inverts the conventional hierarchical closed form to offer a transparent, publicly welcoming project. It is Fosters ambition that the Opera House will not only be fully integrated with the cultural life of Dallas, but will become a destination in its own right for the non-opera going public. The building faces the Grand Plaza and the Annette Strauss Artists Square Performing space, and the rich red-stained drum of its auditorium will be a focal point for the Arts District.

In elevation, the building is opened-out to the public, with a sixty foot high curved glass wall that provides interior views of the buildings public concourse, upper-level foyers and grand staircase, and a large overhanging roof that shades the surrounding public spaces. The transition from the Grand Plaza through to the foyer and into the auditorium will heighten the dramatic experience of attending a performance. The acoustic design of the intimate 2,000 capacity performance space and the configuration of the support areas have been brilliantly considered. The Opera House also includes a restaurant, café and bookstore which will be publicly accessible throughout the year.

Following its completion in 2009 the Winspear Opera House will provide a world-class venue for opera performance. It will join other works by Pritzker prize winners Rem Koolhaas, IM Pei and Renzo Piano in the Foster masterplan for the Performing Arts District.

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