

Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts Background Information

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, a major center for music, opera, theater, and dance, opened in downtown Kansas City, Missouri on September 16, 2011. The Kauffman Center presents a wide range of entertainers and performances from around the world, including classical, pop, and jazz music, ballet and contemporary dance, Broadway productions, comedy shows, and more. In addition, the Kauffman Center serves as the performance home of three of the region's leading performing arts organizations—Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Symphony, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. The Kauffman Center's two venues, Muriel Kauffman Theatre and Helzberg Hall, offer audiences engaging and intimate performance experiences, while providing resident companies with dramatically enhanced technical capabilities.

Designed by architect Moshe Safdie, the 285,000-square-foot Kauffman Center includes two stand-alone performance halls, housed within a dramatic overarching shell featuring a glass walls that provide sweeping views of Kansas City.

- **Muriel Kauffman Theatre** – This 1,800-seat venue hosts dance performances, plays, musicals, and more and serves as the performance home of Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Inspired by the great opera houses of Europe, Muriel Kauffman Theatre is designed to be visually striking, yet retain an intimate experience for both audiences and performers. Audiences are seated in front of the stage in a variation on the traditional horseshoe configuration – bringing them closer to the performers than in auditorium-style venues.
- **Helzberg Hall** – From chamber music to full orchestra, from jazz and pop to lectures and recitals, the 1,600-seat hall is the performance home of the Kansas City Symphony as well as the host of renowned international soloists and ensembles. The stage extends approximately one-third of the distance into the auditorium, placing 40 percent of the seats alongside or behind the stage. This creates an intimate and immersive experience for both artists and audiences and allows a portion of the audience to experience the musician's perspective during performance. Helzberg Hall also features the Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant Organ, Opus 3875. The Casavant Frères built 5,548-pipe organ is a visual centerpiece in the concert hall, as well as an integral part of the musical experience.

The Kauffman Center is a \$413 million project which includes \$326 million for the creation of the performing arts center, a \$40 million endowment, and a \$47 million, 1,000-car parking garage funded by the City of Kansas City, Missouri.

Through its dynamic range of performances and educational programming, the Kauffman Center further advances the role of the arts as a catalyst for the educational, civic, and economic vitality of Kansas City. Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City's dynamic downtown, the Kauffman Center brings a spotlight to the region's performing arts community while attracting some of the world's most talented performers and entertainers, further establishing Kansas City as a major cultural destination.

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