

It's been nearly nine years since the true planning phase for creating the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts began. If you count the original inception, it's closer to 30. What hasn't changed in that time has been a community commitment to growing the arts and housing it in a venue befitting of this tireless city of industry. With that in mind, the center is set to bring the best performances from the country, but it's seen as just the beginning of an even larger awakening. The mission will be to create a conduit to Dallas expanding to several avenues.

Beyond culture, it's seen as an opportunity for businesses to open and stay open during this challenging economic time. Much as Broadway brings in millions to its city, so will the center through direct and indirect cooperation. In addition, the hope is it can be a meeting place for importance discussion, from possible town hall meetings to even future presidential debates, that it can be a place charities can look to for an upscale opportunity to raise much-needed funds. The center's goal is to serve the community in any way which will help it flourish—in good times and bad.

Meet Mark Nerenhausen, CEO of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts

It's more than a little satisfying for Mark Nerenhausen to be looking at the red color of the Winspear Opera House. Especially when you consider it all began for him with a red barn. As a high school student in Washington Island, Wisconsin, Nerenhausen felt there was a need for a place to gather for music—the Red Barn coffee house was born. Three decades later, it still stands as a symbol of creative expression, as does Nerenhausen. "I've always tried to have a sense that culture matters to the community and affects them beyond the actual buildings you create," he says.

Getting a Masters in Business from the University of Wisconsin's Arts Administration Program, Nerenhausen's career would begin with the arts component in Nashville and ultimately lead to national recognition as president and CEO of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. "I realized in Broward that an arts center isn't just a place for performances," he says. "It needs to bring people to the city and encourage residents to become artists there instead of just waiting for a tour to come." He saw his own place in his Florida community when he accepted an award alongside the CEO of Spirit Airlines. "That was the moment I realized how the arts are seen as big business and not just an extra."

Named the CEO of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts in 2008, Nerenhausen has far larger aspirations than just civic improvement. "My goal is to have Dallas be mentioned with the greatest cities in the world," he says. "Bringing the right artists here will help insure that."

An Eventful Season

If there was ever a season to be involved in the arts, this would be the one. The Lexus Broadway Series will highlight, leading off with Billy Crystal's *700 Sundays* from November 17-22. Named for the amount of Sundays he spent with his father, it's a touching love letter to a man who shaped this hysterical comedian's future. Then we switch to a classic with Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* from Dec. 15 – Jan. 3. Whether you want to hum

along to numbers like *I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair* or be dazzled by the dance numbers, you'll be wowed by a show which has been pleasing audiences for more than half a century.

Jan. 12-24th brings *August: Osage County* which took home the Tony for Best Play and the Pulitzer for Drama for 2008. This dysfunctional tale of the Westons is sure to grab you with its sharp dialogue and leave you with something to think about through its pulsating truth. Then it's time to sing again with *Spring Awakening* from March 23-April 4. This Tony Award-winner for Best Musical also led to the comeback of Duncan Sheik, a 90's pop icon who reinvented himself by collaborating on this sexually-infused tale inspired by the 19th century play by Frank Wederkind. The series concludes with *Avenue Q* from May 25-June 6. A Tony-Award winning musical about what happens when you go from the wealth of Ivy League to the financial difficulties of Manhattan, it reveals the struggles of the young adult on an avenue far away from the American Dream.

Still, it isn't just performances but the simple spoken word which will allure you through the Brinker International Forum. In a time of political change, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is a voice you want to listen to. Oct. 22 will be your chance to hear her perspective on where the country is going. Or if hearing from a modern-day Katharine Hepburn is your thing, Hilary Swank, already a two-time Oscar Winner by the time she was 30, takes to the stage November 9th.

December 7th and January 6th will give you two opportunities at a National Geographic Live! Program, one led by Lisa Ling, former co-host of *The View*. And you'll even have two more chances to find out how Hollywood really works from actor Bob Balaban, Producer Peter Guber and Director Brett Ratner, in a moderated discussion with CNN's Campbell Brown. Finally, if you love Best Picture Nominee *Frost/Nixon*, why not have a chance to talk with both. Okay, President Nixon won't be there, but the Oscar-nominated actor who played him, Frank Langella, will, along with David Frost, recounting the classic political talks and insight into Ron Howard's compelling film.

And the music doesn't stop! Jazz Roots will open with Al Jarreau (Nov. 4), the multi-Grammy winning Jazz great, who broke through to the mainstream Billboard chart and even found time to play on American Idol. The season will later follow with the vocal harmony of Manhattan Transfer (Dec. 9). Titas will also do 11 performances throughout the season, highlighted by Philip Glass' *Dracula Live!* on October 24 and José Carreras on June 23.

If you can't get enough of plays, The Dallas Theater Center brings the best in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and Neil LaBute's *The Beauty Plays*. For the Texas Ballet Theater, Tchaikovsky makes two appearances with *The Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* with Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* sandwiched between.

Opera lovers can thank The Dallas Opera for *Otello* and the world premiere of *Moby Dick* by Jake Heggie, highlighting five performances throughout the season. Finally, look to the Dallas Black Theatre at the Wylie Theatre to provide three thought-provoking series with winter, cultural awareness and spring celebration as the respective themes.

Nerenhausen expects the city to be blown away for this touchstone season: “They are about to see wonderful performances in some of the best venues in the world.”

Act III

With construction wrapping this fall, it is an end as well as a beginning. For many, it marks a decade of tireless work in planning, fundraising and building. To allow for a week of free activities for the inaugural week, providing everything from a concert with David Sanborn to architectural forums with Norman Foster and Joshua Prince-Ramus, a final fundraising has been created in the form of Act III.

This three-day event will showcase some of the most unique talents and performances you’ll ever see. Scene One will be directed by James Lapine, Tony award-winning Director of *Sunday in the Park with George*, held on Wednesday night (8:00) and Friday night (6:30 and 9:00). Scene Two will be Thursday Night with opera mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves and baritone Thomas Hampson, accompanied by a dance piece performed by Morphoses, never before seen. In addition, Christopher Wheeldon will choreograph the occasion to give the audience a glimpse of the kind of creativity they can look forward to in the upcoming arts season.

On Saturday night Tony Award-Winning director John Doyle, who directed *Sweeney Todd*, will lead Tony Award-winning stars in Patti LuPone, Kristin Chenoweth, George Hearn and Kiril Kulish for an evening salute to Broadway.

When Act III closes, there’s only one thing left to do: celebrate. After the final show, the Wyly Theatre becomes a nightclub with renowned musician Ellis Hall whose talent led to Ray Charles requesting him to perform at the Kennedy Center, to even opening for Natalie Cole and Herbie Hancock. The Ritz Carlton in Dallas will handle the food and leave it to Neiman Marcus to take care of the designs. Plus, the drinks, of course, will include cocktails aptly named Winspears and Wyls. More than 2000 people will celebrate into the early morning hours as it ends just one of the many experiences the city of Dallas will enjoy through these breathtaking buildings.

Meet Jeanne Marie Clossey, Host Committee Chair

Jeanne Marie Clossey, host committee chair, can’t get enough of art—In fact, she’s devoted her life to it. But it actually began with her devotion to her daughter. When she realized her little Sarah and friends might lose Sesame Street in her native Cleveland, Clossey went into action. The rush she got from helping raise the money to keep Big Bird on the air couldn’t help but lead to bigger things when it came to helping the arts. However, when Clossey learned she was moving to Dallas in 1980, a part of her thought her fundraising days were over. Truthfully, they were actually just beginning.

“There I was pouting at a party when someone came up to me and asked me why,” Clossey recalls. “Then they told me that I should be happy. I was leaving a place where it already happened for a place where it was happening. I realized that I had it all wrong.”

After endless days taking in New York theatre and ballet, it was Clossey's desire to see Dallas have its own Broadway, instead of waiting years to get everyone else's shows. "We used to have wonderful parties for actors and as acting communities folded they all left town," she says. "I want to see them stay and grow their talent here." Going back to graduate school and getting a Masters in art history from SMU, Clossey was a natural to raise funds for the Dallas Arts Center. "It was hard to say no when they approached because I truly felt the ballet needed a place to call its own if it was to get the recognition it deserved," she says.

Clossey has been integral in the host committee chair position, from raising funds for several years to helping to bring celebrities to events. Her biggest payoff has been the opening of the buildings. "I practically tear up when thinking of the Arts Center buildings going up and thousands of people who will walk in and see the theatre and picnic in the park. It will change the face of the city and it will be the soul of the city—I'm happy to play a tiny part in that." As for Sarah, her mother's work didn't go without notice. Today, she's a talent agent in Los Angeles and a collector of art. "Sarah's building her whole life around the arts," Clossey says. "I want other children to have a chance to do the same."