

NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER CONTENTS OF BOARD ORIENTATION MANUAL

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THE NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER
FACTS AND FIGURES

THE NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER IS A YEAR-ROUND SHOWCASE FOR THE PROFESSIONAL ARTS; AN INSTRUMENT OF ARTS EDUCATION; A FORUM FOR COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, AND A RESOURCE FOR THE CREATIVE AMBITIONS OF COMMUNITY TALENT.

DESIGNATED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS AS A REGIONAL CENTER OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE AND A DISTINGUISHED ARTS ORGANIZATION, THE CULTURAL CENTER IS THE ONLY CENTER IN NEW JERSEY WITH MULTIPLE ADJACENT HOUSES AND FOUR HIGHLY REGARDED ARTS ORGANIZATIONS IN RESIDENCE: AMERICAN REPERTORY BALLET COMPANY, CROSSROADS THEATRE

- **THE COMBINED TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES FOR ARTS ACTIVITIES DURING THE 1991-92 SEASON IS \$8.5 MILLION.**
- **COMPANIES WITHIN THE CULTURAL CENTER PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT TO 184 PERSONS.**
- **1,725 ARTISTS WILL BE EMPLOYED DURING THE 1991-92 SEASON.**
- **ALL CULTURAL CENTER FACILITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED.**
- **THE STATE THEATRE'S EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR K-12 STUDENTS HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A NATIONAL MODEL BY THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

- **THE STATE THEATRE HAS BEEN DUBBED BY THE PRESS AS "NEW JERSEY'S CARNEGIE HALL."**

REVISED NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The New Brunswick Cultural Center is a regional multi-facility arts center that:

- * creates a unique environment for collaboration among its Resident and Affiliate Companies
- * promotes the continuing revitalization of New Brunswick as a principal arts and entertainment destination
- * assists the Resident Companies in achieving their goals of artistic excellence and fiscal stability and encourages the activities of Affiliate Companies
- * programs and operates the historic State Theatre

RESIDENT COMPANIES

American Repertory Ballet
The Crossroads Theatre Company
George Street Playhouse
New Jersey Designer Craftsmen
State Theatre

AFFILIATE COMPANIES

Middlesex County High School for the Arts
The Shoestring Players

March 16, 1995

**NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER
SUMMARY OF HISTORY**

January, 1979	New Brunswick Tomorrow announces results of first arts center feasibility study
June, 1982	Mayor John Lynch receives report from New Brunswick Arts Development Commission recommending creation of an arts center in the downtown area
June, 1982	New Brunswick Cultural Center incorporates
Fall, 1984	George Street Playhouse opens season at renovated YMCA
Summer, 1986	NBCC purchases State Theatre from the New Brunswick Development Corporation (DEVCO)
January, 1987	Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders approves \$3 million grant for renovation of State Theatre
June, 1987	William Wright hired as first President of NBCC
June, 1987	NBCC Board of Trustees approves Capital Master Plan
September, 1987	Renovation of State Theatre begins
April, 1988	State Theatre re-opens following \$4 million renovation
August, 1988	Middlesex County takes title to State Theatre
July, 1989	NBCC, Inc. awarded \$6 million capital grant for renovation and construction of facilities from 1987 Green Acres, Cultural Center, and Historic Preservation Bond Act
October, 1991	Crossroads Theatre Company opens season in newly constructed home at 7 Livingston Avenue
September, 1992	American Repertory Ballet Company moves into newly renovated studios at 80 Albany Street
November, 1992	David Fleming hired as second President of NBCC, replacing William Wright who resigned to accept another position
June, 1994	NBCC Board of Trustees approves revised Capital Master Plan
October, 1994	Construction of new backstage loading docks at State Theatre and George Street Playhouse begins as first phase of Capital Master Plan

NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER HISTORY OF THE STATE THEATRE

Of the three buildings which comprise the New Brunswick Cultural Center, only one, the State Theatre, is a historically significant building conceived for theater use. Although it opened in the early part of this century, much information about its original ownership, programming, and appearance has already been lost or obscured by unsubstantiated oral tradition. The lack of early interior photographs also makes a definitive description of all its features impossible.

The State Theatre, was built in 1921, opening after considerable overtime by the contractors, on December 26. The owner was the New Brunswick Holding Company. Supervision of the building's construction was under the direction of Walter Reade, whose company was its original manager. Reade had theaters in New York and New Jersey, as well as further afield. The first House Manager was Montgomery Moses, who had previously managed Reade's Capitol Theatre in Trenton.

The State was not, as has been suggested, built as a vaudeville house and then converted to show movies. From the beginning, the theater was intended to feature movies, although, as was customary at the time, these shared the stage with vaudeville acts. The first bill featured William S. Hart in "White Oak," along with five vaudeville acts. It was followed by Rudolph Valentino in "The Sheik," again accompanied by five vaudeville acts, plus a comedy show and a newsreel. Admission was 20 and 30 cents for the matinee and 30 and 50 cents for the evening show.

The designer of the State Theatre was Thomas W. Lamb. Although many architects designed movie theaters in the heady era between World War I and the Depression, Lamb's was one of the three outstanding practices in the field. The State Theatre is a typical, if relatively simple, example of his work. Favorite motifs inside his theaters included arched organ grills, flattened domes and arched sounding boards incorporating art work. The exteriors were likely to have no relation in style to the interiors, as was the case in New Brunswick.

Sometime during the early 1920s, the State's management was transferred to the B.F. Keith theater chain. Benjamin Franklin Keith, along with younger partner, Edward Franklin Albee, operated the largest string of vaudeville theaters and controlled the largest booking agency for vaudeville acts in the east. Albee continued the business after Keith's death and eventually merged it with the largest western booking agency, Orpheum, to form Keith-Albee-Orpheum (KAO). The Radio Corporation of America (RCA), which had entered the motion picture business after the advent of sound, acquired KAO in 1928. RCA named its new subsidiary Radio-Keith-Orpheum -- RKO.

Just when RKO (or its several successors) made alterations is unknown, although surviving photographs document them between 1931 and 1939. The New Brunswick Cultural Center purchased the State Theatre from the New Brunswick Development Corporation (DEVCO) in 1986, and immediately undertook plans to renovate the building for use as a performing arts hall. Construction work commenced in the fall of 1987, and the theater re-opened to wide critical acclaim on April 24, 1988. During that same year, the building was sold to Middlesex County and leased back to the Cultural Center for fifty years. Today it is a proud member of the League of Historic American Theaters, renowned for superb acoustics, programming excellence, and patron amenities.

NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER THE RESIDENT AND AFFILIATE COMPANIES

The New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc. serves as an umbrella organization for seven resident and affiliate companies, each an artistically and administratively independent corporation. Such a collective of arts institutions is unique in the state, making the Center New Jersey's premier showcase for the arts. Over 250,000 patrons from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New York annually enjoy a variety of the finest performances and exhibitions at its facilities.

Resident companies include the American Repertory Ballet Company, Crossroads Theatre Company, George Street Playhouse, New Jersey Designer Craftsmen, and the State Theatre. Middlesex County Arts High School and the Shoestring Players maintain affiliate status with the New Brunswick Cultural Center.

American Repertory Ballet Company (incorporated in 1954) tours nationally, presenting performances of works by established masters and emerging choreographers with an emphasis on American repertory. The company also presents abbreviated programs for schools and promotes dance as a career through its affiliated Princeton Ballet School and its New Brunswick-based school outreach program, Dance Power. **(908) 249-1254**

Crossroads Theatre Company (incorporated in 1981) promotes and develops African-American theater for its artistic and social value. The nationally prominent ensemble features a repertory that presents honest and positive portrayals of Black life, culture, and art. Building bridges between people of all backgrounds, Crossroads advances a better understanding and appreciation of Black society and provides a nurturing environment for the world's foremost Black artists. **(908) 249-5581**

George Street Playhouse (incorporated in 1974) is dedicated to the American playwright and the presentation of new American plays, musicals, and contemporary classics. The Playhouse aspires to illuminate those great moments which bring individuals face-to-face with the complex, sometimes devastating issues of modern life. Its Outreach Touring Theatre introduces school students to live theater through the presentation of classics as well as works that focus on contemporary issues meaningful to today's youth. **(908) 846-2895**

Middlesex County Arts High School (incorporated in 1969) identifies and recruits students from the county's public and private high schools with talent and serious interest in the literary, performing, or visual arts. In a time-release program, selected students attend Arts High School one day each week between January and May. Teaching artists offer a rigorous curriculum designed to develop artistic skills and creative expression. Students are exposed to career realities and helped to focus on professional goals. **(908) 249-5151**

New Jersey Designer Craftsmen (incorporated in 1967) showcases fine contemporary and traditional New Jersey craft at its sales and exhibition gallery in downtown New Brunswick and at other sites around the state. The gallery designs exhibits, gallery talks, workshops, demonstrations, and other programs of interest for schools, community groups, and corporations. It also maintains a slide registry, database of artists, and referral service. **(908) 246-4066**

New Brunswick Cultural Center
Resident and Affiliate Companies
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The Shoestring Players (incorporated in 1984) is a theater ensemble for young audiences that tours throughout the United States. Its unique style draws on the rich tradition of international folk tales and stimulates children's creative imagination. Shoestring also offers residency activities and workshops in drama, and creative movement and writing. **(908) 932-9772**

The State Theatre (NBCC incorporated in 1982) presents New Jersey's most diverse schedule of events in every performing arts discipline as well as the cinematic arts. Each season brings to the stage the world's very finest symphony and chamber orchestras, opera, musical theater, dance, comedy, jazz, country music, children's theater, popular entertainers, and films. It also offers a nationally recognized education program for students, educators, and the general public.
(908) 247-7200

**NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER
RELATIONSHIP OF NBCC TO THE RESIDENT AND AFFILIATE COMPANIES**

The New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc. is an assembly of facilities and organizations unique in the United States. It is composed of the following:

RESIDENT COMPANIES:

American Repertory Ballet Company - 80 Albany Street - Kilmer Square

Studios and office space leased by the New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc. from DKM Properties Corp

Sub-leased by American Repertory Ballet Company at a subsidized rate

Renovation cost: \$80,000

Crossroads Theatre Company - 7 Livingston Avenue - 265 seats

Built and owned by the New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc.

Leased by Crossroads Theatre Company

Construction cost: \$6,000,000

George Street Playhouse - 9 Livingston Avenue - 375 seats

Renovated and owned by the New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc.

Leased by George Street Playhouse

Renovation cost: \$2,000,000

New Jersey Designer Craftsmen - 65 Church Street - Kilmer Square

Gallery and office space leased by New Jersey Designer Craftsmen from DKM Properties Corp

The State Theatre - 19 Livingston Avenue - 1,840 seats

Owned by Middlesex County

Operated by the New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc. under a 50-year lease agreement

Renovation cost: \$4,000,000

AFFILIATE COMPANIES

Middlesex County Arts High School - 300 Somerset Street

Office space leased by Middlesex County Arts High School from the American Hungarian Foundation

Shoestring Players - Carriage House, Douglass Campus, Rutgers University

Space provided by Rutgers University

Each of the resident and affiliate companies is a separately managed, independently incorporated, not-for-profit organization.

**NEW BRUNSWICK CULTURAL CENTER
DESIGNATION OF RESIDENT AND AFFILIATE COMPANIES**

<u>RESIDENT COMPANY</u>	<u>AFFILIATE COMPANY</u>
<u>QUALIFICATIONS</u>	
Must have physically been a part of the New Brunswick Cultural Center for a three-year period, and continuously maintained its principal operation within the Center	Must be a New Jersey based arts organization with a primary focus on development of the arts in New Jersey. Must have a long range plan for development within the Cultural Center either as a principal location for its primary operations, or as a major user of facilities within the Center.
Legally constituted as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation and governed by a separate Board of Directors, Trustees, or Governors	Same
Full-time paid staff	Same
Broad-based financial support including the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, foundations and corporations, and its own board	Goal of broad financial support from sources consistent with the development of the Center
Mission consistent with the mission of the New Brunswick Cultural Center	Same
Must recognize in all print and broadcast media that it is a resident company of the New Brunswick Cultural Center	Same
<u>BENEFITS</u>	
Full voting membership on the Board of Trustees of the New Brunswick Cultural Center; representation on board committees, and recognition in all NBCC media	Recognition by NBCC and included, as appropriate, in all NBCC media as an affiliate company of same
First priority for use of NBCC facilities other than those used for the residency	Second priority on use of NBCC facilities
First priority for facility needs	Priority for physical location with NBCC, following fulfillment of resident needs
First priority for funding assistance from NBCC from its Endowment Fund, operating funds, loan guarantees, or other measures approved by the Board of Trustees	Priority for NBCC staff assistance in the development of the company