

---

## Arts Community

Columbus has a long history of supporting the arts. The most recent example, of course, is the new Center for Visual and Performing Arts that opened January 2007 at CSU's RiverPark campus in downtown Columbus.

The Theatre portion of the Center, named Theatre on the Park, includes a 350-seat proscenium theatre, studio theatre, scene shop, light lab, student performance space, and costume shop.

The Corn Center for the Visual Arts houses the CSU Department of Art and includes an oversized art gallery and almost a dozen spaces customized for art study, work, and display.

For more information on Theatre on the Park, please see our [Facilities](#) page.

### RiverCenter for the Performing Arts

[RiverCenter](#) for the Performing Arts is located in the heart of historic downtown Columbus. RiverCenter is owned by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The 246,000-square foot complex contains the 2,000-seat Bill Heard Theatre, the 450-seat Legacy Hall, and the 220-seat Studio Theatre. CSU's Schwob School of Music is located in the complex plus six nonprofit arts organizations.

A public-private partnership, The Columbus Challenge, raised over \$100 million to construct the RiverCenter and support other projects, including renovations to The Springer Opera House and an expansion of the historic Liberty Theatre Cultural Center.

### Schwob School of Music

The [Schwob School of Music](#) was established in 1969 as a result of the vision and generosity of the Simon Schwob Foundation and other interested individuals and business leaders of Columbus. The school is located within the RiverCenter.

### Springer Opera House

The [Springer Opera House](#) opened February 21, 1871, and soon became nationally known as the finest opera house between Washington and New Orleans.

In 1998-99, the Springer underwent a comprehensive \$12 million historic renovation that included areas of the building untouched in the 1964 renovation and expanded program space from 35,000 to 75,000 square feet. The preservation project included one of the most ambitious historic interior treatments of any theatre in America and a complete re-equipping with state-of-the-art lighting, sound, rigging, rehearsal facilities, and technical support equipment.

### The Liberty Theatre

The [Liberty Theatre](#) was built in 1924 and opened in 1925. It was used to show motion pictures and also had a stage for musical performances and plays which were popular at the time.

The Liberty was the first black theatre in Columbus, Georgia, and at the time of its construction, it was the largest movie house in the city. It served as an influential place of entertainment for 50 years until it was shut down in 1974 as a result of the desegregation of local facilities and the deterioration of the building. It stood abandoned for years until it was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1984. In 1993, a \$1 million grant was approved for the rehabilitation and restoration of the Liberty. It then reopened its doors in 1996 as the first African-American arts institution and musical playhouse in Columbus. It is now used as a Performing Arts Cultural Center for the entire community hosting musical events and plays.

## **Columbus Museum**

The second-largest art museum in Georgia and one of the largest in the Southeast, the [Columbus Museum](#) welcomes visitors from all over the world - free of charge! The museum focuses on American art and regional history and is particularly known for its concentration on the art and history of the Southeast and the Chattahoochee River Valley.

## **Chattahoochee Theatre Ensemble**

The Chattahoochee Theatre Ensemble is dedicated to producing theatrical presentations that examine the redemptive nature of the human spirit. CTE promotes an atmosphere of hope and the betterment of life through the exploration of real life challenges within an individual, a group, or society as a whole.

## **The Columbus Symphony Orchestra**

The [Columbus Symphony Orchestra](#), founded in 1855, was the third orchestra formed in the nation. The CSO, under the direction of George Del Gobbo, has long been considered one of the Southeast's premier musical ensembles. In 2002, the CSO became a tenant of the new RiverCenter for the Performing Arts. The orchestra performs regularly in the 2,000-seat Bill Heard Theatre, which offers a state-of-the-art visual and acoustical experience.