SEATTLE SYMPHONY UNVEILS PLANS FOR OCTAVE 9: RAISBECK MUSIC CENTER

NEW VENUE FOR IMMERSIVE MUSICAL EXPERIENCES OPENS FEBRUARY 2019

Architectural renderings provided by LMN Architects

SEATTLE – Today the Seattle Symphony unveiled plans for Octave 9: Raisbeck Music Center, a new venue at Benaroya Hall slated to open in February 2019. Octave 9 reimagines the former Soundbridge Seattle Symphony Music Discovery Center at the corner of Second Avenue & Union Street through the nexus of technology and design, creating a versatile, immersive environment for inventive performances, education opportunities and community engagement. Construction will begin in June 2018.
“Octave 9 will be a beautiful home for our community, engaging audiences in incredible live performance experiences and deepening learning and access for youth, families and schools across our region. With its unique mix of immersive technology and user-friendly architecture, Octave 9 will empower the Seattle Symphony to offer transformative musical experiences to more people throughout our region,” said Seattle Symphony Board Chair Leslie Jackson Chihuly.

The launch of Octave 9 coincides with the 20th anniversary of Benaroya Hall, the Seattle Symphony’s home since 1998. Centrally located in downtown Seattle across the street from the Seattle Art Museum and blocks from the Harbor Steps, Pike Place Market and the Seattle Theatre District, Octave 9 will add a third performance venue to Benaroya Hall. As the only known space of its kind, it will open new opportunities for cross-genre collaborations and allow the Symphony to continue to boldly push boundaries and engage new audiences.

“We have always sought to expand what it means to Listen Boldly, and I look forward to continuing our creative adventure together with the launch of Octave 9. I am tremendously curious to explore the creative possibilities of the new space with the musicians of the Seattle Symphony and the amazing artists we want to invite to Seattle,” added Seattle Symphony Music Director Ludovic Morlot.

Octave 9: Raisbeck Music Center is named in honor of Seattle philanthropists James and Sherry Raisbeck, who provided a $2 million matching challenge to transform the former Soundbridge. The name, created by LORE naming, was inspired by the size of a concert grand piano, which spans just over seven octaves. A nine-octave range, then, pushes past the boundaries, redefining what is musically possible.

“Sherry and I are thrilled to support the Seattle Symphony’s commitment to both innovation and community in this new space,” James Raisbeck shared. “Our gift is a vote of confidence and an invitation for others to join us in making Octave 9 a destination for education, inspiration and engagement for music lovers of all ages.”

Combining a modular surround video screen with 13 moveable panels, 10 ultra-short-throw projectors, motion-capture cameras, and a state-of-the-art Meyer Constellation Sound System with 42 speakers and 30 microphones, the technology in Octave 9 can create a 360° shared virtual experience or disappear into the background for a more traditional setting.

“In this time of virtual reality and questions of whether we need physical environments or digital experiences, Octave 9 is both. It is not just a new performance venue for the Symphony, it is also an exploration into the future of musical performance and education,” commented
Mark Reddington, FAIA, Principal, LMN Architects. “With Octave 9, the Seattle Symphony has made a commitment to collaborating with emerging artists who are expanding the definition of musical performance while also making these new technologies accessible to the greater community.”

**AN ENDLESSLY ADAPTIVE VENUE**

Octave 9 seamlessly transforms to become a performance space, meeting room or interactive classroom, adapting the structure of the space and the acoustics to suit any needs. In addition to transforming to the needs of a specific performance or activity, Octave 9 ensures that each visitor’s musical experience is tuned to perfection, no matter where they are in the room.

This musical experience is achieved through Meyer Sound’s Constellation® Acoustic System. With the touch of a button, Constellation will transform the acoustics of Octave 9 from a 50-seat cozy lounge to the spacious sound of a concert hall. A series of custom system presets will provide supportive acoustic environments for a variety of ensembles, and additional presets can be customized by musicians to meet any need, empowering a limitless range of possible acoustic environments. The system’s SpaceMap® spatialization and Wild Tracks™ playback will provide the opportunity for artists to place sounds anywhere around the environment, opening the door to innovative sonic exploration.

“The Meyer Constellation® Acoustic System removes the need to physically shape the space for controlling acoustics which allowed for the creation of a highly flexible space that can be digitally tuned to a wide variety of performance conditions. Throughout the project, LMN Architects leveraged parametric modeling to coordinate the variety of consultants and systems that occur within the space in order to deliver a design that goes beyond the typical high-tech black box studio,” added Scott Crawford, Principal, LMN Architects.

Musical performances will be further enhanced by the visually immersive capabilities of the venue itself. Octave 9 transports musicians and audience together through a customizable, 360° projection surface, allowing artists and musicians to visually transform the space into virtually any environment, further enhancing the multi-sensory experience.

The acoustics and visuals in Octave 9 are integrated through an interactive system of motion-capture cameras connected to high-definition, short-throw projectors. The surround video can be programmed to respond to the motion and sound in the room — creating a multi-sensory environment and a shared virtual experience.
The technology is integrated into the design of the space through a custom ceiling designed and manufactured by LMN Architects. The asymmetrical complex of honeycombs conceals an array of microphones, speakers, motion-capture cameras, projectors and LED-lights.

Architectural rendering of a theatre-style seating arrangement (left) and a detail of the ceiling (right).

INVENTIVE PERFORMANCES

In Octave 9 a broad range of creative residencies and performances are possible, leveraging the embedded technology to push boundaries and pioneer the future of musical experiences. Starting in February 2019, the Seattle Symphony will invite composers, musicians and interdisciplinary artists to explore the venue as a creative tool.

Derek Bermel, the Seattle Symphony’s 2018–2019 Composer in Residence, will be the first to curate a series of concerts and community experiences in Octave 9. Taking advantage of the technology in the space, Bermel has been commissioned to compose a new work for Seattle Symphony musicians to premiere in Octave 9 as part of his residency.

Cellist and interdisciplinary artist Seth Parker Woods will become Octave 9’s first Artist in Residence in the 2019–2020 season. Woods will begin his relationship with the Seattle Symphony during the 2018–2019 season, performing with the Seattle Symphony in the community. He will continue in the 2019–2020 season with multiple creative projects in Octave 9. During his residency, he will premiere a number of new works for cello and multimedia commissioned by the Seattle Symphony from a diverse group of composers and visual artists.

In addition to Seattle Symphony creative projects, Octave 9 will serve as an artistic incubator, welcoming our community and local artists to take advantage of the venue’s unique capabilities as a small chamber music hall or experimental performance environment.

Additional programming and ticket information will be announced in October 2018.
DEEPENING LEARNING & ACCESS

The former Soundbridge opened in 2001 as a vibrant musical classroom for students, families and communities in the Puget Sound area. Part exhibit and part classroom, the interactive space welcomed more than 10,000 children and families each year for concerts, community workshops, student recitals, guest lectures and other activities. Soundbridge closed in the fall of 2016 and many of the activities were temporarily relocated in preparation for construction.

Building on the history of Soundbridge, Octave 9 will continue to be a home for the Seattle Symphony’s community and family programs, expanding to serve approximately 28,000 visitors each year. Leveraging the technology and design of the venue, Octave 9 will provide a platform to pioneer new experiences that deepen learning and access for youth, families and schools across the Puget Sound region.

In addition to new opportunities, Octave 9’s transformative visual and sound capacity will enhance existing community, school and family programs which have previously taken place in Soundbridge, including Sensory Friendly Concerts, the Merriman Family Young Composers Workshop, Community Compositions and the Lullaby Project.

CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

The building process for Octave 9 will take place between June 2018 and February 2019 with two major phases:

- Phase 1 (June–December): demolition and construction
- Phase 2 (December–January): audio-visual installation, commissioning and tuning

Programming and ticket information for Octave 9 will be announced in October 2018 and open in February 2019.
SUPPORT

The $6.7 million capital project is funded through a combination of public and private funds, spearheaded by a $2 million match from local philanthropists James and Sherry Raisbeck. Support for Octave 9 comes from the 4Culture/King County Building for Culture Program, Norcliffe Foundation, Apex Foundation, Paula Boggs and Randee Fox, Children Count Foundation, Joshua Green Foundation, The Tagney Jones Family Fund at the Seattle Foundation, LMN Architects, and Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc.

Benaroya Hall, including Octave 9 (formerly Soundbridge), is owned by the City of Seattle and is operated and maintained by the Seattle Symphony under a lease agreement. The city also has invested funds to help make Octave 9 possible and preserve an important public asset.

To date, $5.925 million has been raised towards the project and the remaining $775,000 will be raised by February 2019 in time for the grand opening of Octave 9: Raisbeck Music Center.

PROJECT PARTNERS

ARCHITECTS: LMN ARCHITECTS

LMN Architects specializes in the planning and design of significant public and private projects, including cultural venues, education facilities, convention centers, office buildings, mixed-use developments, transit stations, and other urban environments that celebrate and enrich communities. The firm is recognized internationally for design excellence, practice innovation, and the successful delivery of complex projects. LMN is the recipient of the 2016 American Institute of Architects Architecture Firm Award. [lmnarchitects.com](http://lmnarchitects.com)

DIGITAL ACOUSTIC ARCHITECTURE: MEYER SOUND

Meyer Sound continually strives to elevate the overall dialogue about sound and bring greater awareness to the importance of how we hear and listen. A collaborative, results-focused approach to sound solutions drives a company philosophy where creative thinking, old-fashioned craftsmanship, and entrepreneurial technology are strongly intertwined. Tours for top-grossing artists and respected concert and entertainment venues rely on Meyer Sound, as do houses of worship, cinemas, restaurants, universities, corporate offices, and museums. With field offices and authorized distributors worldwide, Meyer Sound designs and manufactures all products at its Berkeley, California headquarters, allowing for rigorous quality control and testing, and starting in 2018, all products are covered by a five-year warranty. Scientific acoustical research and product development have earned Meyer Sound more than 100 US
international patents and numerous awards since its founding in 1979 by John and Helen Meyer. meyersound.com

**ACOUSTICS & AUDIO-VISUAL INFRASTRUCTURE: JAFFE HOLDEN**
Jaffe Holden is a full-service acoustic, audio/video, and IT infrastructure consulting firm with a passion for exceeding client and audience expectations. Since 1968, the firm has provided consulting services for performing arts facilities of all types including theaters, concert halls, recital halls, auditoriums, opera houses, black box theaters, rehearsal rooms and multi-purpose performance spaces. Jaffe Holden’s expertise in Seattle is evident in Octave 9, Benaroya Hall, the 5th Avenue Theater, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, and the renovation of Town Hall.

jaffeholden.com

**THEATRE PLANNING AND LIGHTING DESIGN: SCHULER SHOOK**
Schuler Shook is valued internationally as a creative and insightful design partner to provide exceptional design solutions in theatre planning and architectural lighting design, today and for the future. With over 30 years of experience, Schuler Shook fully engages all team members—users, planners, designers, engineers, and builders—to understand and elevate the project vision, and make innovative ideas a practical reality. schulershook.com

**IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY: BELLE & WISSELL, COMPANY**
With exceptional craftsmanship and modern tools, Belle & Wissell, Co. crafts participatory media experiences for exhibits, landmarks, and other public spaces. The firm provides design and technical capabilities, content development, and curatorial services for a wide variety of subjects and experience types. Belle & Wissell subscribes to a prototyping, form-follows-function approach—reinventing its process to best fit each client’s needs. Founded in 2003, Belle & Wissell’s experienced studio collaborates with partners around the globe to create and guide audiences through memorable, participatory experiences. bwco.info

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR: JTM CONSTRUCTION**
JTM Construction is a Seattle-based general contractor delivering client-focused construction from concept to completion. The firm provides expertise in multiple market sectors, including performing arts centers, class “A” office buildings, medical facilities, hotels, residential, towers, retail centers, restaurants, tenant improvements, renovations, and parking structures. Founded on trust, performance, and reliability, JTM is positively engaged in building the neighborhoods, work places, and infrastructure support systems of the Pacific Northwest. jtm-construction.com
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING: HOLADAY-PARKS, INC.
Holaday-Parks creates state-of-the-art mechanical solutions, ranging from small scale improvements to large scale high-rise design-build structures, and serves each client with personalized care. The firm has been in business for over 125 years, and today is one of the premier mechanical contractors in the Pacific Northwest. Working collaboratively, Holaday-Parks designs, fabricates, and installs with environmentally conscious efforts, and ensures that each mechanical solution reflects the team’s success. holayparks.com

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING: SEQUOYAH ELECTRIC, LLC
Sequoyah Electric provides clients with a coordinated approach to meet their electrical design-build and construction needs. The firm’s expertise ranges from complex, multi-phased design-build projects to technically challenging industrial and low voltage installations. Sequoyah is a single-source provider for all electrical construction and low voltage technology needs, including in-house engineering and design. sequoyah.com

BRANDING & LOGO DESIGN: KARASS CREATIVE
Karass Creative is a team of idea alchemists. We bring the beat to your brand, composing compelling content that captures your company’s story. Crafting everything from logos to websites to interactive demos and more, we’re a seasoned, trusted team of experts with a deep understanding of how to communicate effectively. karasscreative.com

NAMING: LORE NAMING
Based in Seattle, LORE develops names and brand stories for clients large and small. LORE’s focus is developing great names with the power to build brands — helping them both stand apart and stand for something. lorenaming.com

STRUCTURAL: MAGNUSSON KLEMENCIC ASSOCIATES
Magnusson Klemencic Associates (MKA) provides structural and civil engineering services worldwide, including 47 states and 54 countries. Founded 97 years ago, the firm is headquartered in Seattle. MKA has been presented with the American Council of Engineering Companies' (ACEC) National Engineering Excellence award 27 times in the last 30 years, as well as the ACEC's "Grand Conceptor" award three times, which recognizes the firm responsible for the top engineering project in the nation. mka.com

BENAROYA HALL
Benaroya Hall is the home of the Seattle Symphony and the venue of choice for many local arts organizations. Over 450,000 people participate in public and private events annually, making Benaroya Hall the most-visited performing arts venue in Seattle. It is located on an entire city
block in downtown Seattle and is surrounded by numerous restaurants, retail stores and parking facilities. The Hall has two performance spaces — the 2,500-seat S. Mark Taper Foundation Auditorium and the 540-seat Irlene Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall — and a 430-stall underground parking garage. Benaroya Hall has received numerous awards, including a 2001 American Institute of Architects (AIA) National Honor Award for outstanding architecture.

SEATTLE SYMPHONY
The Seattle Symphony is one of America's leading symphony orchestras and is internationally acclaimed for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September 2011, the Symphony is heard from September through July by more than 500,000 people through live performances and radio broadcasts. It performs in one of the finest modern concert halls in the world — the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall — in downtown Seattle. Its extensive education and community engagement programs reach over 65,000 children and adults each year. The Seattle Symphony has a deep commitment to new music, commissioning many works by living composers each season. The orchestra has made nearly 150 recordings and has received three Grammy Awards, 23 Grammy nominations, two Emmy Awards and numerous other accolades. In 2014 the Symphony launched its in-house recording label, Seattle Symphony Media.

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