MAKE CREATIVITY PART OF YOUR LEGACY

arts council
GREATER BATON ROUGE
TAKING SHAPE

A VISIONARY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

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GREATER BATON ROUGE
Taking Shape

For nearly 50 years, the Arts Council has served the Capital Region by providing advocacy for thousands of artists of every medium who enrich our lives and help define Louisiana’s unique and rich culture. Affording educational opportunities for generations of students and professionals, the Arts Council introduces the arts as disciplines that open doors to expression, innovation and cultural well-being.

As you read further, you will learn about the Arts Council’s extraordinary community investment to expand its reach and strengthen its mission through the revitalization of a new physical space. The new Cary Saurage Community Arts Center will provide a dynamic and much needed resource to the Capital Region for artists and the community to collaborate, learn about, create and shape the arts for generations to come.

I encourage you to discover more about this exciting project. As you do, just imagine what it will mean in terms of future opportunities for students, artists and the community.

Something truly inspiring is TAKING SHAPE.

Many Thanks,

Rose Hudson
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
2019-2020 Board Chair
Nearly 50 Years of Creativity

1973 Community members came together to form an organization dedicated to promoting and cultivating arts and culture among its citizens which they knew would define the Capital City. What was then known as the Arts & Humanities Council of Baton Rouge quickly became a catalyst for civic pride with demonstrable evidence of the city’s commitment as the capital of the most culturally rich state in the U.S.
The Art Council’s First Home

1978 The historic Robert A. Bogan Fire Station on Laurel Street became the organization’s first official home. This location reflected the organization’s respect for preservation of the region’s history, while the second-floor arts space gave room for new cultural organizations and artists to grow.

Baton Rouge & Beyond

1989 The Arts & Humanities Council of Baton Rouge became the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, taking a more focused role of improving the lives of others through the arts. It expanded its reach as one of Louisiana’s Regional Arts Councils which serves 11 parishes in the southeast part of the state while remaining the official arts agency for the city of Baton Rouge.

Growth & Development

1996 - 1997 The Arts Council led a collaborative of Baton Rouge community leaders, artists, educators and advocates to define the goals and trajectory of the arts in Baton Rouge through a cultural strategic plan. With a focus on neighborhood development, Create Baton Rouge became the catalyst for a surge in arts awareness and development for downtown Baton Rouge and beyond.
A Place Where Creativity & Culture Thrive

2016 The Arts Council gathered with civic leaders, artists and stakeholders to imagine the future of the cultural community, aligning its mission in response to a greater focus on fostering the creative capacity and vibrancy of the Capital Region through advocacy, resources and education.

Local, regional and national response to the Arts Council's implementation of these platforms—such as Creative Relief, Kennedy Center Partners in Education, Creative Aging, and the Louisiana Arts Summit—affirmed that the Capital Region has a thriving community of artists and creatives whose processes impact the lives of others in significant ways across a national spectrum. The need that emerged was a central place where these artists and their community could meet, share and create.
The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center

“The Triangle Building” at 233 St. Ferdinand Street has remained abandoned in its ever-growing and thriving downtown neighborhood for nearly three years. This unique structure presents a unique opportunity for the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge and the community to build a lasting legacy of arts education and advocacy with a space designed to facilitate creativity, nurture learning and inspire minds for generations.

The new community arts center will provide artists, students, professionals and the community with a space in which to create, share and thrive.

I urge you to consider joining us in being part of this amazing opportunity to build a lasting legacy of inspiration and creativity in the Capital Region by learning more about this new art space’s plans and potential.

As the new Cary Saurage Community Arts Center takes form, a dynamic future for the arts in the Capital Region takes shape.

BE A PART OF IT!

Thank You,

Donna M. Saurage
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
A Vision for the Future is Taking Shape

In 2016, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge developed a strategic plan which built upon the research and strategies of Create Baton Rouge, a city-wide cultural action plan which also aligned with Plan Baton Rouge. Faced with an aging building and limited capacity, the City of Baton Rouge provided a long term, exclusive use of the unique, triangular building at 233 St. Ferdinand Street to the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge. This generous opportunity promises to provide the valuable resource of space needed to implement the council’s strategic plan while rejuvenating an architecturally iconic building which has stood empty for nearly 3 years.
A Unique Structure & Perfect Location

The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center’s prominent address is no accident. Adjacent to City Hall, the River Center Performing Arts Theatre, historic Government Street and Beauregard Town, this location takes this center of arts process and creative work to the center of civic life. The new community arts center’s triangular, mid-century modern design complements the contemporary Shaw Center for the Arts, the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, the compelling landscape of North Boulevard, and brings new life to an important and well-traveled corner of downtown Baton Rouge.

We’re excited and proud to reimagine this unique building as a cultural and creative hub for Baton Rouge.

Scott A. Ritter, AIA
Principal, Ritter Maher Architects
Inside the New Cary Saurage Community Arts Center

To better meet its mission and the growing needs of the community it serves, while establishing a sustainable model for future generations, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge plans to expand and renovate 233 St. Ferdinand Street, focusing on the following:

An arts education center, complete with rehearsal and workspaces, convertible classroom space and resources for teachers and teaching artists.

A two-story, open exhibition gallery suitable for traveling exhibitions, with the capacity to hold workshops, receptions and serve as a creative art workspace.

Community accessible rehearsal, meeting, class and creation space for local arts performing groups and visiting artists.

Conference and administrative space available for rent by outside organizations with discounts for arts nonprofit organizations and individual artists.

A premier outdoor terrace with uniquely beautiful views of the skyline and river and conveniently located near established performance venues.

State-of-the-art sustainable design elements which include a sound recording space, new mechanical systems, equipment and finishes.

A new main entry on the north face of the building and an inviting west entrance.
Dear Friends,

I have been involved with the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge for over thirty years in so many capacities that I have forgotten most of them. Why? Because I believe that the Arts Council is a critical component of the fabric of the capital region.

The Arts Council has developed a strong and comprehensive plan to address the ever-growing needs of our area. Arts education and advocacy are crucial to the development of our students, our artists, our neighborhoods and our state.

The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center will positively impact our Council’s mission in the capital region, our city’s tourism and economy, the sustainability of arts in our community, our regional advance in national arts recognition and our civic pride.

The time for making a significant contribution to the future of arts in the capital region has arrived. An extraordinary opportunity to meet our goals is taking shape.

JOIN US IN MAKING IT HAPPEN.

Thank You,

Charles Landry
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
Advisory Board
Four Strategic Priorities

Building on the goals and achievements of Create Baton Rouge, the Arts Council’s strategic plan is built upon four strategic priorities. The new Cary Saurage Community Arts Center directly answers these strategic goals in addition to moving forward some of the objectives from Create Baton Rouge.
Paving the Way for Generations

The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge constantly strives to be worthy of its designation as the official arts agency for the city of Baton Rouge and the regional arts council of southeast Louisiana—to be a living center of engagement and ideas that excites the public about art, arts education and cultural identity. Filled with diverse creative spaces guaranteed to ignite the creative spirit in all of us, the Arts Council’s new home will positively touch the lives of thousands: students, teachers, parents, professional artists, veterans, seniors and residents.

Driven to support, educate and inspire through active processes and interactive experiences, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge seeks to welcome people of all abilities, backgrounds and generations to participate in arts and cultural experiences that celebrate the human condition, inspire discovery and build stronger communities.
The Need is Real — The Time is Now

The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge is operating beyond maximum capacity, limited by spatial constraints of a shared space in a building which no longer conforms to the needs of its constituents and which is being converted to service the Baton Rouge Fire Department. A mere three rooms are serving as classroom, assembly, conference, administrative and special event space, which are inadequate for the community’s growing needs. In addition, there is no space in the current location (or anywhere else in the city) well-suited for community artist workspaces, audio recording and administrative workspace, which means that artists must go elsewhere to record demos, rehearse new works or conduct board meetings. Open studio spaces, adequate gallery space and central locations for traveling exhibitions will help to develop offerings in the city resulting in a major opportunity for the region to realize significant economic impact.
Serving the Capital Region

As a native of Baton Rouge with a life-long career in the arts, I have had the honor to witness wonderful community leaders, students, artists and advocates give generously of their time, talent and treasure in support of the arts as a critical component of the Capital Region’s growth.

The triangle is the strongest shape in nature, providing stability and support from the sub-atomic to the cosmic scale. Like our Council’s mission to provide arts advocacy, education and resources, it is three-sided. The new community arts center will provide support and strength to artists, students and creatives who will discover and build their futures within its three walls.

On behalf of the Arts Council’s staff and the many remarkable and talented people we serve in the Capital Region, I offer you my gratitude for helping make the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center a reality.

With Thanks,

Renee Chatelain
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
President and CEO
Strengthening the Arts Council’s Mission

The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge fosters the creative capacity and vibrancy of the Capital Region through advocacy, resources and education led by the vision to inspire the creative spirit, promote cultural diversity and spotlight the unique history of the region served, encouraging individual and community involvement in the arts.

The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center will provide a tangible and much-needed resource for artists and arts organizations in the community.
Providing a Space to Create

Based upon The 2017 Transition Reports Prepared For Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome in Arts, Culture & Leisure, the new Cary Saurage Community Arts Center responds to the needs of artists in the community who have communicated that there are no affordable spaces in the Baton Rouge area in which to create work, rehearse and collaborate across media/genres. This need was echoed in the feasibility study conducted by MJR Consultants in the first phase of the JP Morgan Chase Planning Grant for the new community arts center. Conversations with community arts organizations and arts stakeholders confirmed such a need.
A New Center
for a Vibrant Arts Future

Workforce Development through the Arts

- Professional development opportunities
- Louisiana Arts Summit
- Create U Webinars and Seminars
- Artist certification programs
- Vocational arts training for at-risk students
- Vocational arts training for people with disabilities

Retention of Talent through the Arts

- Collaboration with LSU and SU to provide student artist workspaces.
- An audio recording studio for local music artists to create demos and quality recordings.
- Space for writers, poets and design entrepreneurs to gather or work independently.
- Adequate studio and rehearsal space to experiment, workshop and develop new works.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities through the Arts

- An exhibition gallery and small retail space for artists’ marketing opportunities.
- Space availability for community programs, classes and events.
- Meeting space for boards and new collaborators.
- Reception space for networking events and gatherings.

Educational Opportunities through the Arts

- After school arts programs led by CREATE BR and the Arts Council's Community School for the Arts’ master plan.
- Classes and mentoring by local artists.
- Public exhibition space for artists to share their art form, expressions and messages.
- Affordable master classes for city-wide access in performing and visual arts.
- Camps and classes for students of all ages.
- Professional development for teachers in conjunction with the John F. Kennedy Center Partners in Education.