

## MAKING THE MOVE TO THE BIG TIME

In keeping with contemporary theater's trend toward bigger, more elaborate stage productions, the Orpheum's owners, the Shorestein Company, spent \$20 million and 15 months upgrading and renovating the facilities. It took 192,000 construction hours using 70 to 90 workers per day, 60 subcontractors and vendors, 200 tons of reinforcing steel, 1,000 cubic yards of concrete and 350 tons of structural steel.

# BEHIND THE PROSCENIUM AT THE ORPHEUM

What you won't see when the curtain goes up

**E**xpanding the Orpheum Theatre stage was a design and engineering coup. As this cutaway view shows, the entire stage house was rebuilt, from a raised roof and muscular new grid to voluminous trap space below the stage. Tons of grout, injected below the surface, help support the heavier new structure.

It took 14 weeks to build the new proscenium wall, which joins the enlarged stage to the theater's ornate plaster auditorium. The two decorated columns on either side of the stage, trimmed and rotated 45 degrees out toward the audience, served as massive hinges to swing the proscenium forward.

The design swallowed 300 seats and required a new rake, or slant, for the mezzanine level to adjust sight lines. For every upholstered red seat in the house, as theater consultant Roger Morgan says, "the target onstage just got closer."

—Steven Winn

New roof

New working platform

**New stage area**  
75' high  
68'6" wide  
39'1" deep  
2,672 square feet  
200,405 cubic feet

**Old stage area**  
60' high  
58'6" wide  
29'5" deep  
1,726 square feet  
103,545 cubic feet

Old stage area

**New riggings**  
Pipe battens can now carry up to 70 stage sets and backdrops instead of the previous 50

**New proscenium opening**  
30' tall by 50' wide

**Old proscenium opening**  
25'6" tall by 48' wide

Corner shaved off gaining 10 inches of space behind stage area

Wall moved 12"

+10' Stage left

Center stage +9'

**Old orchestra pit wall**  
Two rows of seats removed

**New variable-level orchestra pit**  
Moved forward 5 feet

### OTHER RENOVATIONS

- New stage is hardwood maple flooring.
- Larger trap (underneath stage) area created by removing and relocating dressing rooms.
- Major seismic retrofitting.
- New backstage area and dressing rooms.
  - Previous dressing rooms: 10 with 47 stations.
  - New dressing rooms: 13 with 70 stations.
- Adding women's lavatories and upgrading for patrons with disabilities.
  - Previous women's rest room stalls: 20.
  - New total: 34.
- New painted velour stage curtain, based on a photo of the original house curtain. Curtain will be installed in June.
- Orchestra pit renovated.
- Lobbies renovated and newly decorated, with new bars.
- Main ceiling cleaned and reit. Gold highlights restored.
- Carpets replaced and seats reupholstered.
- 65 miles of electrical wiring, 100 existing lights renovated and 1,200 light fixtures added.



Expanded trap area underneath stage

Plaster columns rotated 45 degrees and moved out