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FOR RELEASE UPON RECEIPT

The University of Toledo's board of trustees today (Jan. 9) approved preliminary plans for a \$2.775 million Theater-Music Building to be constructed south of Towerview Boulevard and west of the Law Center.

The building, which will lie close to the north side of the Ottawa River, will have a total of 45,640 square feet and will house a total of 21 space units for the music and theater departments. Estimated start of construction is next September.

Dr. Glen R. Driscoll, UT president, hailed the new building as a great opportunity for expanding and enriching the University's cultural and arts program.

"Fine arts is a dimension of university activity which seems to be overlooked so often," he said. "In my experience it too often has been relegated to second or third place on a building list and has remained there."

"The University hopes that the new building will provide students an opportunity to explore and perform musical and dramatic pieces, and to present their own products of imagination, emotion and intellect," Dr. Driscoll said. "It demonstrates our interest in the fine arts as a legitimate and necessary part of a student's experience, both as a part of general education and as an appropriate major academic experience."

"The facility also should permit us to pursue more aggressively our present efforts to develop collaborative efforts with Bowling Green State University and the community in general," he said.

The building, L-shaped as viewed from the west, will be of brick and limestone exterior, with a bid alternate of limestone in lieu of face brick, according to Robert J. Trotter, University architect.

Mr. Trotter noted that the building will be situated to take advantage of the University Master Plan concept of pedestrian linkage, particularly the proposed pedestrian walkway on the north side of the river, extending from the Law Center on the west to the Engineering-Science Building on the east.

That part of the building to be used by the Theater Department includes a main theater of 280 seats; secondary theater of 175 seats; rehearsal laboratories which will be third and fourth theaters of 100 seats each; a control booth; a design workshop-classroom, and spaces for faculty offices, dressing rooms, makeup rooms, and scene and costume shops.

(more)

The Music Department will include a main recital hall of 335 seats; instrument and voice rehearsal areas; broadcast control booth; piano laboratory; 32 practice rooms; faculty offices, and 21 teaching studios.

Robert Sitzenstock, of Rossi & Nickerson, Inc., architects, was singled out by Dr. Bernie Coyne, chairman of the UT Theater Department, for his work on the building.

"Bob Sitzenstock has come up with some extraordinary and imaginative solutions to the problem of designing a facility which will be used by students working in these two different art forms," he said.

The main theater space is really exciting and was co-created by the entire department, faculty, technicians and students. Like Shakespeare's Globe Theater, it will provide a multitude of challenges for all the artists who use it, because it offers limitless possibilities for staging and design.

"Overall, the building is simple in design --- form following function in the best sense --- and easily used by students as an environment for learning. For audiences I think it will be a pleasant and surprising theater space for new experiences," Dr. Coyne said.

Dr. Merrill E. Brown, professor and chairman of the University's Department of Music said, "This indeed will be a useful structure, a much-needed addition of facilities for our department, and will allow us to serve our students in the manner to which they are entitled. The building's recital hall is of special interest and will be a fine locale for the many musical performances which occur on the University campus."

The building is expected to be ready for occupancy in April, 1976. It will be constructed with state funds. Preliminary plans were approved by the state on Dec. 21.

All space now used by the Music Department in University Hall will become available for other purposes when the new building is opened, as will Doermann Theater. The Theater Department will continue to use space in University Hall for offices, practice laboratories and other functions.

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