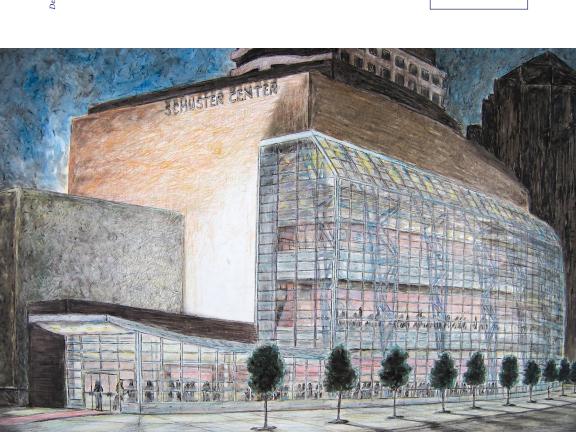
PLACE 9MATS 3M3H





## A Visual Community Narrative

The Benjamin & Marion Schuster Center for the Performing Arts is Dayton's most recent spatial accomplishment of the arts. Completed in 2003 on the former site of Rike's, once Dayton's premier downtown department store, the Schuster's position cater-corner to the nineteenth-century Victoria Theatre represents the almost century-and-a-half evolution of community arts within a stone's throw distance across the street. In counterpoint to the Victoria's recognizable Italianate gables, the modernist glass-and-steel Kettering Wintergarden is the Schuster's key architectural identifier. Inside, patrons are welcomed into a sixstory atrium boasting towering palms and an elliptical staircase leading to a balcony lobby. Architect Cesar Pelli's Mead Theatre

within seats 2,300 under an even more imaginative setting: a proscenium auditorium with a domed ceiling mimicking the night sky. Fiber-optic stars hang above the audience just as they did on the eve of the Wright Brothers' first flight, December 16, 1903, one hundred years before the Schuster's opening. The theatre can accommodate all the performative arts and features state-of-the-art acoustics and performance technology. In addition, an attached, sixteen-story office and condominium tower brings added business to the community. The building's construction has been characterized as a harbinger of a cultural renaissance in downtown Dayton, reinvigorating public celebration of the arts.