



# DALLAS



The Winspear Opera House, designed by Norman Foster.

PHOTO BY NAN COULTER

# Downtown Revival

By Holly Haber

**A 12-YEAR-OLD EFFORT TO BREATHE LIFE INTO** the once-moribund city center appears to be finally paying off. There are now 5,300 residents in the central business district, along with new restaurants, hotels, nightlife and a thriving arts community. Another 25,000 people live in surrounding urban neighborhoods including Uptown, Deep Ellum, Victory Park, the Cedars and the Design District.

And while downtown Dallas may still not be as active as the cores of some older cities, it's enjoyed a huge improvement from 1990 when just 300 people resided downtown and the streets were utterly deserted after business hours.

"Downtown is well past the tipping point," said John Sughrue, founder and chief executive of Brook Partners, which has redeveloped three buildings downtown, including the Fashion Industry Gallery wholesale venue next to the Dallas Museum of Art.

"Everything happening in and around downtown is extremely positive and the best it's been in the 20 years I've been in Dallas."

More than \$1.8 billion has been invested over the past five years in the central business district, the skyline that's circled by a loop of freeways, according to Downtown Dallas, a non-profit advocacy group.

And it appears the best is yet to come.

The cornerstone of downtown's revitalization is the \$348 million Dallas Center for the Performing Arts rising only blocks from the DMA.

Set to open Oct. 12, 2009, the multitheater complex will boast dramatic architecture — an opera house encased in dark red glass designed by Norman Foster and a high-tech vertical theater by Rem Koolhaas — plus outdoor performance spaces.

The DCPA anchors the largest contiguous arts district in the country, and the only one to claim four buildings by Pritzker Prize-winning architects.

Besides Foster and Koolhaas, they are the Nasher Sculpture Center by Renzo Piano unveiled in 2003 and I.M. Pei's Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, which opened in 1989.

Entirely privately funded, the DCPA has reaped donations of \$1 million or more, the most of any arts cam-

paign in the U.S., said Billy Lively, president and chief executive officer.

"We are at 128 [donations of \$1 million or more] today, and we've raised \$333 million," Lively said. "More than 80 percent of donors have not before given to the arts. They say they are making an extraordinary investment in the future of Dallas. They believe it will help make Dallas competitive in attracting companies and families for relocation because our cultural landscape is about to be redefined dramatically."

The performing arts center will be active 340 nights a year with performances by the Dallas Opera, dance, theater and touring Broadway productions. It is expected to draw 800,000 people and pump \$200 million into the local economy each year, not including ticket sales, Lively said.

Another big score is a blockbuster exhibition of Egyptian artifacts starring King Tut's wardrobe and accessories at the DMA.

"We hope to change the way people think about coming downtown and break those barriers about parking and transportation," said DMA director Bonnie Pitman, noting one million people are expected to visit the museum to see the pharaoh's ancient finery.

"You will see Dallas come alive," predicted Lucy Billingsley, a founder and partner in Billingsley Co., which last year opened a 24-story tower next to the DCPA and has plans for a sister structure. "We've never had a beautiful heart-of-the-city, and once we have it, people will want to take part and take ownership."

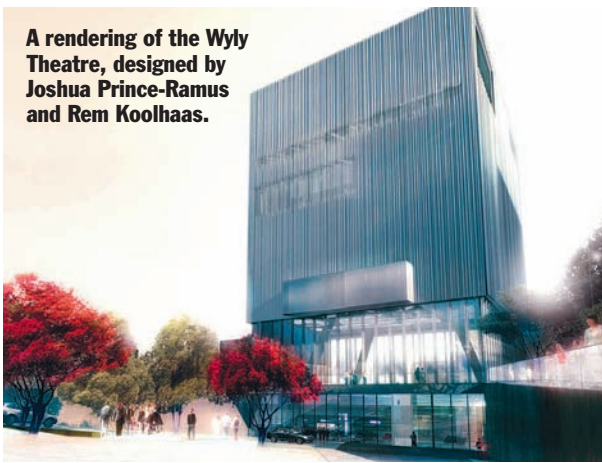
Billingsley's tower made history as the first addition to Dallas' skyline in 18 years, with a sleek contemporary building housing 7-Eleven Corp., 61 luxury condos and five restaurants.

Downtown also won the corporate relocation of AT&T, which is moving from San Antonio to a building it has long owned, as well as Comerica Bank and Tenet Healthcare.

On Monday, Capital One Bank said it will establish a regional office there, noting it is committed to the "vibrancy of downtown Dallas."

At the same time, however, big law firms have moved out of the city center, where the office vacancy rate remains a sizable 20 percent, about 2 percent less than three years ago.

A rendering of the Wylie Theatre, designed by Joshua Prince-Ramus and Rem Koolhaas.



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— John Sughrue, Brook Partners

"Over the last five or six years, downtown [office space] has been dramatically more attractive than it was in 2001 or 2002," observed Bret Hefton, senior associate at Cresa Partners real estate advisors. "The Arts District is a big draw because you see cranes and buildings going up.... But there is not enough parking [for office tenants]. That is by far the biggest negative about downtown."

Since retail follows residents, stores have trickled in slowly. They include Jos. A. Bank men's clothier, Crimson in the City contemporary boutique and Benji's Collezioni designer store. All are within a block of Neiman Marcus' flagship and headquarters, which stood as downtown's sole fashion merchant for years.

Inevitably, the national banking crisis is slowing down new development, Sughrue noted, including his plan to erect a \$200 million luxury condo tower in the Arts District.

"We have \$50 million in pre-sales," he said. "I am still hoping to get back on firm footing and break ground by yearend."

Some projects are already funded, such as the \$17 million Main Street Garden opening in February and the \$56 million plan to create a deck over Woodall Rogers Freeway, a 10-lane canyon-like motorway dividing downtown from Uptown.

The deck project will form a park linking the Arts District with Uptown, a hotbed of development where the Ritz-Carlton hotel and residences opened last year and four towers are currently under construction.

Other neighborhoods surrounding the central business district are also seeing major development. Baylor University Medical Center last month announced plans to build a \$350 million cancer center and hospital to be completed in 2013 on downtown's eastern flank.

Victory Park, the \$3 billion urban development on the northwestern shoulder of downtown, will move tenants into a new office tower starting Monday and a condo tower in December. Since 2006, the W Hotel & Residences, an office plaza and several apartment buildings with ground-floor retail, have opened on Victory's 75-acre site, which is anchored by the American Airlines Center arena.

"This city has re-created itself over the last five years and will re-create itself over the next five," Sughrue asserted. "I like downtown Dallas. I don't apologize for it. It is a pretty dynamic urban center."

## VITAL STATS

Number of Dallas homes posted for foreclosure, second quarter 2008: 7,638  
Increase in Dallas foreclosures over same period in 2007: 10.1 percent  
Number of U.S. homes posted for foreclosure,

second quarter 2008: 739,714  
Increase over the same period in 2007: 121 percent  
Current average price of a four-bedroom Dallas home: \$326,425  
Current average price of a four-bedroom home

nationwide: \$403,738  
Sales of existing North Texas homes in August: Down 18 percent from a year ago.  
Their median price: \$150,000, down 3 percent.  
Sales of existing homes in September: Up 2 percent.

Their median price: \$142,500, down 2 percent.

SOURCES: REALTYTRAC; COLDWELL BANKER REAL ESTATE; RESIDENTIAL STRATEGIES; STANDARD & POOR'S/CASE-SHILLER HOME PRICE INDEX; NORTH TEXAS REAL ESTATE INFORMATION SYSTEM AND TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY REAL ESTATE CENTER

# Region's Strength Driving Market DALLAS

By Holly Haber

**BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS ARE STRONG** for FashionCenterDallas' spring market beginning Oct. 23 — and ironically, part of the optimism can be attributed to the travails of the national economy.

"We're hearing that a lot of retailers did not go to New York due to the cost of travel, so they are looking to come here," said Cindy Morris, chief operating officer of the Dallas Market Center Co., which operates the wholesale fashion venue at the World Trade Center. "Our hotel bookings are up 10 percent. We are a huge travel bargain here, and that is a big selling point for us."

In addition, Morris expects an unusually large number of international retailers to attend the Dallas show as a result of changing market strategies.

"We will have 85 buyers representing 62 specialty stores coming in from Central America, the Caribbean, Japan, Iceland, the Dominican Republic, Saudi Arabia and Mexico," Morris said.

Another reason for optimism on the DMC event is the strength of the region's economy, she noted.

"There is certainly an amount of caution, but we are sitting in the right place because we have done better than the rest of the country," Morris said. "September was tough and Hurricane Ike didn't help at all, but that region [particularly the Houston area] is coming back. We are hearing that business is rebounding there."

The Dallas Fashion Awards will be a traditional highlight of the spring market, and this year "Mad Men" star January Jones will present the Fashion Excellence Award to Max

Azria on behalf of the DMC. The award salutes the swift success of Hervé Léger by Max Azria, the French dress label that has won a celebrity clientele since Azria relaunched it last year.

The designer has had a long relationship with the DMC via his corporate showroom for BCBG, which claims a prime spot on the 15th floor of the World Trade Center.

The winners in the eight DFA product categories awards will be revealed at the black tie gala on Oct. 25, and a Personal Style award will be presented to local editor Gianna Madrini, style editor and executive producer of Global Fashion News, a production company.

FashionCenterDallas at the DMC showcases more than 14,000 lines in 550 permanent showrooms and two temporary venues.

The October Dallas show also marks the kickoff of a new prom and pageant area covering 18,000 square feet on the 14th floor, where House of Wu, Alyce Designs, P.C. Mary's and Casablanca Bridal have taken corporate showrooms. Vendors in a contiguous temporary venue include Eden Bridals, Sharon Boikess with Morilee, John Amato with Maggie Sottero and Jordan Bridal.

In addition, several contemporary sportswear, loungewear, accessory and lingerie labels will be introduced to market at the new showroom of Deyanira & Rafael Espinal showroom in room 15016, including Maristella Citella dresses and tops and Fleur't Lingerie from Brazil.

Additional new showrooms include Mavi Jeans in 15002-A; Pink Lotus & Green Dragon in 15058, and Rob Koenig in 15802.

Labels new to the market include jewelry by Just Cavalli and Nicole Miller at Moore Collections, and junior contemporary sportswear labels Black Velvet, Golden State and Yumi/Uttam London at Leon & Associates.



The World Trade Center is home to FashionCenterDallas.

## MARKET CALENDAR

The Dallas Market Center will host the FashionCenterDallas apparel and accessories market Oct. 23 to 26 in the World Trade Center. Here's a rundown of events.

### MARKET HOURS

8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

### DAILY

8:30 a.m.: Java Jumpstart, World Trade Center (WTC 1), first floor, and Back Skylight, WTC 15.

8:30 a.m.: Hot Breakfast First on 14, Front and Back Skylights, WTC 14.

8:30 a.m.: Scene Breakfast, Scene Temps, WTC 13.

9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.: Market Massages, WTC 12 Atrium.

10 a.m.: KidsWorld Brunch, KidsWorld Atrium, WTC 8.

2 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 1 p.m. Sun.: Mix & Mingle, 15900 Aisle, WTC 15.

### THURSDAY, OCT. 23

9 a.m.: Bridge 2009 Spring Forecast by Gregor Simmons, Gregor Simmons Ltd. Buying Offices, Scene Seminar Stage, WTC 13.

3 p.m.: Discovery Tour: FashionCenterDallas Apparel

Adventure, Rawlins Gilliland. Meet at

Kim Dawson Runway Café, WTC 14.

4 p.m.: Contemporary Trends by Gregor Simmons, Gregor Simmons Ltd. Buying Offices, Scene Seminar Stage, WTC 13.

6-8 p.m.: A Tribute to John Denver With Roy Rivers and Steve Weisberg, 14300 Aisle, WTC 14. Featuring Roy Rivers, a six-time European CMA Award winner and singer/songwriter, and Steve Weisberg, FCD sales rep and former lead guitarist for John Denver, WTC, 14614.

6-9 p.m.: DMC Tours the Dallas Museum of Art's "King Tut" exhibit. Meet at the WTC Food Court, WTC 1, \$25 per ticket (tickets are limited).

### FRIDAY, OCT. 24

9 a.m.: Scene Top Trends by Gregor Simmons of Gregor Simmons Ltd. Buying Offices, Scene Seminar Stage, WTC 13.

10 a.m.: Discovery Tour: A Walking Tour of Accessories by Rawlins Gilliland. Meet at Kim Dawson Runway Café, WTC 14.

Noon and 1 p.m.: Kim Dawson Runway Café Fashion Shows, Kim Dawson Runway Café, WTC 14.

5-7 p.m.: Fashion Attack. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; fashion show begins at 6 p.m., Runway Café, WTC 14. Cocktails only, Scene, WTC 13; Front

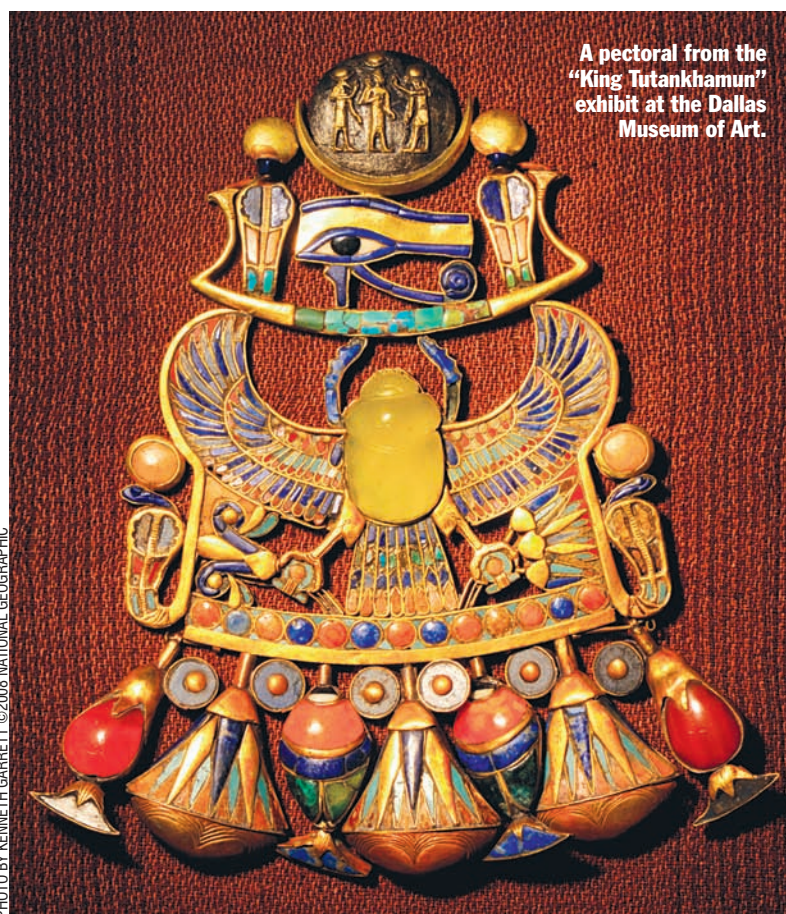
Skylight, WTC 15.

### SATURDAY, OCT. 25

10 a.m.: Keynote Seminar: The Big Picture: Incoming Trends in Style by David Wolfe of The Doneger Group, Scene Seminar Stage, WTC 13.

6:30 p.m.: 33rd Annual Dallas Fashion Awards Gala. Cocktails and silent auction start at 6:30 p.m.; dinner and awards begin at 7:30 p.m.; Grand Pavilion, TM 1. Tickets: 214-655-7635.

6-9 p.m.: DMC Tours the Dallas Museum of Art's "King Tut" exhibit. Meet at the WTC Food Court, WTC 1, Dallas Market Center.



A pectoral from the "King Tutankhamun" exhibit at the Dallas Museum of Art.

## SCENE

With creative dining, trendy shops and a rich cultural heritage, here are some spots where — as the city's slogan declares — it's always possible to "Live Large, Think Big."

**CIBUS:** Plenty of seafood and pasta are on the menu at Alberto Lombardi's latest concept, which opens today at NorthPark Center when it hosts the after party for Neiman Marcus' runway show at Fashion at the Park. Lombardi surveyed the Adriatic coastal region of his youth, Emilia Romagna in Italy, to create Cibus, which means "food" in Latin. Cibus is part casual cafe, part white-tablecloth dining room. And given Lombardi's preference for accessible pricing, everything on the menu is under \$20 — except, of course, the vino.

**JORGE'S:** This Tex-Mex import from Midland in west Texas makes one of the best margaritas in town — which is saying something in these parts — and serves carb-free "naked" chile rellenos, or spicy stuffed peppers without breading and covered in cheese. Featuring 50-year-old recipes from the family of Jorge Veloz plus some created just for Dallas, Jorge's serves breakfast all day plus lunch and dinner in the Arts District.

**THE MINT:** Finally, Nikki Phinyawatana has brought her wildly popular Asian cuisine closer to downtown with a branch on Oak Lawn Avenue. The concept is almost identical to the North Dallas original called Asian Mint, but has more emphasis on Bangkok favorites, like spicy coconut soup. The crisp modern decor is all white and turquoise, and most dishes are under \$13.

**THE PYRAMID:** The Fairmont Hotel's signature dining room has gotten more than just a facelift — it's a whole new restaurant. Floor-to-ceiling glass wine cases

anchor the contemporary decor, and the new menu is largely Texas-grown, from exotic game to herbs from the rooftop garden. Chef J.W. Foster believes in simple preparations that allow flavors to shine, and he's so particular about mustard, pickles, sausage and sorbet that he makes them in house.

**RENEE ROULEAU SKIN CARE:** Local beauty expert Renee Rouleau has come up with the ultimate age-defying facial: a two-hour, seven-step overhaul that promises glowing skin. If the \$600 price is too extravagant, consider a consultation for her treatments. Crafted for nine individual skin types instead of the usual three, they run from \$25 to \$69.

**DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART:** More than 130 artifacts including previously unseen jewels plus eerie photos of the boy king's mummy are on view through May 17 at "King Tutankhamun and The Golden Age of the Pharaohs" at the Dallas Museum of Art. The exhibition features this pectoral with solar-lunar emblems and scarab found with the Coronation Pectoral. The inlaid pendant has iconography and decoration on both sides that spell out Tutankhamun's birth name. A winged scarab with falcon tail and hind legs represents the rising sun. The pendant is made of gold, silver, glass and semiprecious stones.

The image of the left eye of Horus, supporting a crescent and disk with royal and divine figures, is a symbol of the moon.

— H.H.

# Working the Web

By Holly Haber

A GROWING NUMBER OF DALLAS SALES representatives are wielding the Web to attract new accounts, service retailers between markets and cut back or eliminate road sales as the cost of travel skyrockets.

"It's the way of the future," observed Pam Kramer of the Ferrell & Kramer showroom, which represents bridge and misses' contemporary resources at FashionCenterDallas. "It's changed the way we work after markets and between markets. We use it instead of going on the road or mailing pictures and packets."

While Web sites aren't intended to replace personal contact, reps agreed that they are perfect for prospecting and promotion, reorders and supplying line sheets to buyers who may have skipped a market or a line.

"It's been awesome and has increased our business a lot — like twofold," said Marty Leon, who built a Web site in January for his father's contemporary and denim showroom, Eddie Leon & Associates. "A lot of people are coming up to me and asking advice on how to do it."

It took only a weekend to create nowshowingdallas.com using templates he found online, Leon said, and he updates it himself. "I didn't need anything fancy. The main thing is that they can see what I have."

Other wholesalers, such as Launch, hired a local Web developer, Visual Internet Solutions, started two years ago by two former sales reps. The average Web site costs \$1,500 to \$2,500, and the rate to update the site is \$65 an hour, said Francisco Ramirez, owner.

"It's a great sales tool, and well worth the expense for us," said Allyson Lee Cooke, owner of Launch contemporary showrooms at FCD and Fashion Industry Gallery.

Launchshowroom.com became critical this spring when the steep jump in gas prices ended

trips to Kansas and Missouri in the company's diesel mobile showroom.

"It costs \$800 a week in gas, so we won't travel that far," Cooke explained. "They can all buy through the Web site."

Cooke, who spent about \$750 a month to update her site until learning how to do it herself, would like to see the Web replace most of her road work. But, she added, "some lines use so many different fabrics that a customer needs to see it." Her RV is still on the road most weeks between markets.

The Web works best for showing tops and bottoms, jeans and lines that use the same fabric consistently, such as Scanty's cotton jersey sleepwear or Anac's polyester mesh tops and dresses, reps said. Collections are harder to sell online because the buyer needs to discuss merchandising with the rep, if not see it in person. Ferrell & Kramer doesn't even put Michael Kors on its site because it usually sells out at market.

In many cases, sales reps still review orders on the phone personally with buyers who have reviewed the styles online.

"The Web site is a place for them to go and get more information, so we're not sending them a convoluted e-mail," pointed out Pam Martin, whose namesake showroom is at FIG. "People can look at it at night when they're not trying to work with customers. They would rather do that than have you come to their stores — not to mention, it's a lot cheaper."

Most showrooms require passwords to enter their Web sites to foil copycat competitors and enable reps to evaluate buyers.

"For us, it is all about making sure the right people see it — we screen our accounts very carefully," said Rick Drysdale, who was one of the first independent reps to exploit the Web four years ago when he hired his son's college roommate to build a site for his FCD showroom, Rick & Kathy Drysdale/D2. "It's great for opening new accounts and reorders. We have some people who buy all the time online, but in my mind, it will never replace what you can do in person. After all, we're salespeople."



## DALLAS

# FIG Prepares for Market

By Rusty Williamson

FASHION INDUSTRY GALLERY, THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOUTIQUE wholesale apparel mart that specializes in contemporary, denim and bridge fashion and accessories, is now fully leased and looking for room to expand next year.

The full house helps lift spirits among vendors, despite the difficult national economy, according to Shelli Mers, FIG director.

"Certainly the jarring events on Wall Street during the last few weeks have made the overall economy a growing source of concern for the entire country," noted Mers. However, "the costs of coming to market in Dallas are considerably lower than in New York and Los Angeles and we believe that this, in addition to our central location, will work in our favor as buyers and designers become more budget-conscious when making their travel decisions."

Meanwhile, several vendors will be showing at FIG for the first time at the upcoming market, Oct. 23 to Oct. 26.

Notable newcomers include Michael Stars accessories at Lerner et Cie; Testament, Sophia Golightly and Zoa at Pam Martin & Co.; Dear Cashmere at Work in Progress; Mini Fine children's wear at Sq Foot Gallery, and men's wear collections from Chip & Pepper, James Perse and Lacoste at Hatch, which is expanding with more showroom space at gallery 108.

Epic Showroom, new to FIG in gallery 115, will bow with Staci Dao, Phyl Couture, G-lish and Glam Cashmere. Hudson will relocate to gallery 120.

Located in the vibrant, growing downtown Dallas Arts District, FIG has 50 permanent showrooms representing more than 350 lines and the Shop temporary exhibits on the second floor. Designers at Shop, which boasts an edgier ambience that often includes a live DJ, often want to test the Dallas market before committing to a permanent space.

About 125 designers will be showing at Shop during the October market, including dVb by Victoria Beckham, Laundry, Custo Barcelona, Isabella Fiore, Lauren Conrad, Black Halo, Love Quotes, Amanda Uprichard, Analili Anne Leman, Apriori, Blue Tattoo, Cheryl Dufault/Dufault, Christina Angarola showroom and 12th Street by Cynthia Vincent, among others.

## FIG at a Glance

The October FIG show runs Oct. 23-26.

### • SHOW HOURS

**Thursday, Oct. 23-Saturday, Oct. 25:**

9 a.m.-6 p.m.

**Sunday, Oct. 26:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

• **The Shop** show, on the second floor, includes approximately 125 contemporary lines that do not have permanent showrooms in the city.  
**Oct. 23-25:** 9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
**Oct. 26:** 9 a.m.-3 p.m.