
NEWS SERVICE

DURHAM



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DURHAM CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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Why WICKED? Why Durham?

It's undeniable that the [DPAC - Durham Performing Arts Center](#) has had a significant and positive impact on Durham. But readers may have wondered how these first-rate shows get selected and make their way to Durham.

In the past two SunTrust Broadway Series seasons, DPAC has brought in some of the biggest names in Broadway musicals. From *The Color Purple*, to the premiere of *Cirque Dreams Illumination*, the time-tested *Phantom of the Opera*, and now *WICKED A New Musical*, DPAC has set a high standard for performance in Durham and the state of North Carolina.

"When DPAC first opened we had work to do," according to Jack Meyer, Vice President of Programming at [Nederlander](#), one of the nation's largest and most successful operators of prestigious entertainment facilities. "We had to convince major touring productions to take a risk on a new building in a city where there had never before been a large Performing Arts Center."

But by then, DPAC had all the right pieces in place...an outstanding state-of-the-art facility designed by Szostak Designs with a large, well equipped stage-house, plentiful backstage space, three loading docks, and great acoustics.



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Add to that a customer-centric staff led by Bob Klaus, General Manager, and overseen by PFM, Professional Facilities Management; plentiful parking adjacent in the center beautiful new parking decks provided by the City and County; and even a cadre of people called [Wayfinders](#) (a collaboration of DPAC and DCVB) ready to greet patrons in the parking garage and guide them to the theater, restaurants, or back to the highway; and DPAC

becomes a very, very appealing option.

It didn't take long for DPAC to earn a reputation as a great place for major touring productions. In fact, according to Meyer, "major touring productions want to play Durham – likely in the first year of their national tour. Touring shows look at economics – with 2,700 seats they know that there is potential for them to sell many tickets."

The available shows are analyzed by Nederlander each new season based on each show's popularity, price point, and Nederlander's understanding of how each show might resonate with local patrons. Dates and prices get negotiated, sometimes as much as two years in advance of the show. Then a series is stitched together, with somewhere around seven shows.

Because DPAC was able to achieve a total of 10,000 season ticket subscribers in their second season of operation, many of the touring "blockbusters" (i.e. *WICKED* and *Lion King*) have chosen to play DPAC for longer runs. "It all comes down to economics and what the market will support," according to Meyer. "So far, so very good!"



WICKED A New Musical Opens in Durham

Thirteen trucks have made their way to Durham, and a crew of about 100 has been working diligently for more than two days to prepare the stage at DPAC for tonight's opening of *WICKED A New Musical*. By now, the cast is warming up and more than 85,000 ticket holders are anxiously awaiting their turn to see one of Broadway's most successful shows. *WICKED A New Musical* will run tonight through May 16, with a total of 32 performances and is sure to "cast a spell" on all those who attend.

The winner of 35 major awards, including a Grammy award and three Tony Awards, *WICKED* is based on the novel by Gregory Maguire and is the untold story of the witches of Oz. Set before Dorothy blew into town, the musical is the story of two very different girls and their remarkable journey to becoming the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch.

The musical is directed by two-time Tony Award-winner Joe Mantello and features musical staging by Tony Award-winner Wayne Cilento. It is produced by Marc Platt, Universal Pictures, The Araca Group, Jon B. Platt, and David Stone.



Whether theater-goers are taking in the show because it's "Popular" or if they are just into "Defying Gravity," *WICKED* promises to deliver on the promise that Durham is Where Great Theater Happens. For more information about show times and to purchase tickets, visit www.dpacnc.com.



28 Days = \$7.1 Million in Non-Resident Spending

Visitors have a considerable impact on Durham's economy. On a typical day there are nearly 16,500 visitors in Durham. About 13,000 are day trippers, people who do not live in Durham and are here for purposes other than school or work, and the remaining 3,500 are overnight visitors.

So when *WICKED A New Musical* is in town for the next 28 days, it's no small feat that one out of every five visitors will be taking in a show at DPAC.

Visitors taking in a "performing arts" activity account for about 4.5% of travelers nationally. In Durham, 4% of overnight visitors and 10% of daytrip visitors take in a performing arts activity, but that number appears to be growing.

Although not every theater patron lists the show as their main purpose for visiting (some take in a show while in town for other reasons), it's a pretty safe bet that *WICKED* is the main reason for a visit to Durham for many of the 85,000 patrons who will be here over the next 28 days.



Tickets Sold	85,000+
Shows in Durham	32
First Time Attendees to DPAC	59,500
Estimated Overnight Visitors	8,500
Estimated Day Visitors	46,835
Estimated Spending by Visitors	\$7.1 million
Tax Revenue Generated for Local Governments	\$300,000

"We expect 70% of the patrons attending *WICKED* to be first-time visitors to DPAC," said Rachel Gragg, Assistant Director of Marketing and PR for the DPAC - Durham Performing Arts Center.

"Even after eliminating all resident spending and ticket sales to residents, *WICKED* is expected to bring in \$7.1 million in spending in Durham," according to Shelly Green, President & CEO of DCVB. "Although economists don't consider spending by residents "economic impact," because their spending is often displaced from one venue to another, these numbers are huge...and very significant," according to Green.



Make the Feeling Last

Carry over the excitement of *WICKED A New Musical* by purchasing season tickets to the third [SunTrust Broadway Series](#) Season or tickets to other [upcoming shows](#). DPAC – The Durham Performing Arts Center’s third SunTrust Broadway Series offers seven great shows representing a total of 26 Tony Awards.

The 10-time Tony Award-winning *Billy Elliot* opens the season on November 2, and runs through November 14. It is followed by *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein* December 7-12. The new year starts off with a bang with the most demanded show of the decade, *Disney’s The Lion King*, showing January 4-30, 2011.



The season rounds out with *In the Heights* February 22-27, *Blue Man Group* March 15-20, *Shrek the Musical* April 5-10, and ends with *Hair* May 10-15.

Season subscriptions are [available now](#). Individual tickets for these shows are offered for sale later in the season.

[Continue reading](#) to see other upcoming shows at DPAC.



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