

5.4 Regional Cultural Assets

The Importance

The arts enhance the lives of the creator, the spectator, and the community. A thriving atmosphere of creativity makes a region attractive to residents and non-residents alike. Arts are essential to tourism. While they are not always the main attraction, the arts are essential to helping visitors and residents enjoy their time and the events in the Capital District.

Vibrant creative communities have been shown to attract people essential to a strong regional economy. Cultural outlets not only draw people to the region, they provide an excellent stage to put the Region's best face forward.

Sources for this Indicator

- Each organization was contacted.

Performing Arts in the Capital District

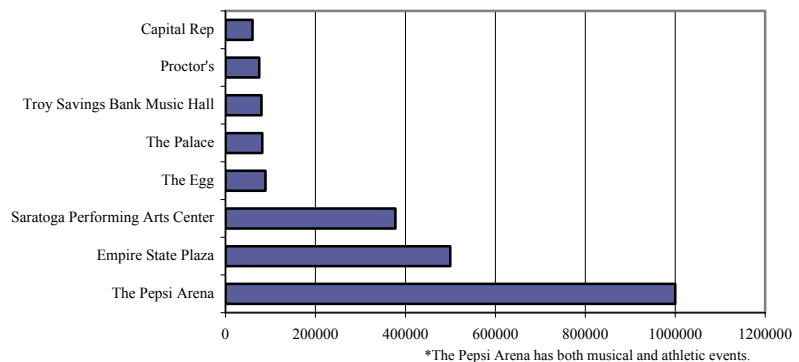
Music

The Capital District offers several fine arts venues. The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, Proctor's Theater, the Palace Theater, the Egg and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC) all offer a variety of fine arts performances throughout the year. Each has its own "claim to fame". The Troy Music Hall is considered to

be one of the most acoustically perfect music halls in the world for classical performance. It, along with the currently under renovation Palace Theater are the home of the Albany Symphony Orchestra, as well as stops for nationally recognized classical, jazz and other fine arts related musical performances. Proctor's Theater in Schenectady New York is a venue for nationally recognized fine arts performances along with The Egg, part of the Empire State Plaza, which is also a distinct element of the Albany City Skyline.

During the summer, two internationally recognized companies take up residency in Saratoga Springs. The New York City Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra both perform at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center for three weeks each during the summer.

2001 Approximate Attendance
at Major Area Venues



Theater

In addition to their role with fine arts, The Palace Theater, Proctor’s Theater, and The Egg, as well as the Capital Repertory Theater are all venues for theatrical performances in the Capital District . While the Capital Repertory Theater has its own company, the others are all stopping points for touring theater performances, with Proctor’s serving as the local stopping point for national tours of Broadway Musicals.

Popular Music in the Capital District

Aside from fine arts, there is always a desire for any region to maintain a steady flow of popular music artists through their venues. Several of the already mentioned venues also maintain a schedule of contemporary popular artists. The Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Proctor’s, The Palace Theater, and additionally, The Pepsi Arena all offer a wide variety of concerts. SPAC offering concerts only in the late spring and through the summer, while the other venues offer concerts year round.

Museums, Galleries, and Historic Sites in the Capital District

The Capital District is home to many museums and preserved historical sites. The most visited is the New York State Museum at the State Capital in Albany. The NYS Museum has exhibits on New York’s history, cultures, art, and natural history. It also hosts

Museum/Historic Site	Recent Annual Visitors	Location
New York State Museum	620,000	Albany
The Junior Museum	127,324	Troy
Children’s Museum at Saratoga	60,000	Saratoga Springs
The Schenectady Museum and Planetarium	60,000	Schenectady
Albany Institute of History and Art	45,000	Albany
National Museum of Racing & Hall of Fame	45,000	Saratoga Springs
USS Slater	16,000	Albany
Halfmoon Ship	12,000	Albany
Empire State Aerosciences Museum	10,000	Glenville
Schuyler Mansion Historic Site	10,000	Albany
National Museum of Dance and Hall of Fame	4,500	Saratoga Springs
Crailo State Historic Site	N/A	Rensselaer

exhibits and traveling exhibits of national and international interest.

The children’s museums in Saratoga Springs and Troy are next on the list along with the Schenectady Museum and Planetarium. Two ships dock on the Hudson River in Albany and allow visitors. The Halfmoon Ship is a replica of the ship Henry Hudson used in his attempt to find the Northwest Passage in the 1500’s. The Halfmoon docks in Albany in the fall and spring for six weeks. The USS Slater, a WWII Destroyer Escort Ship, is docked in Albany from April through November.