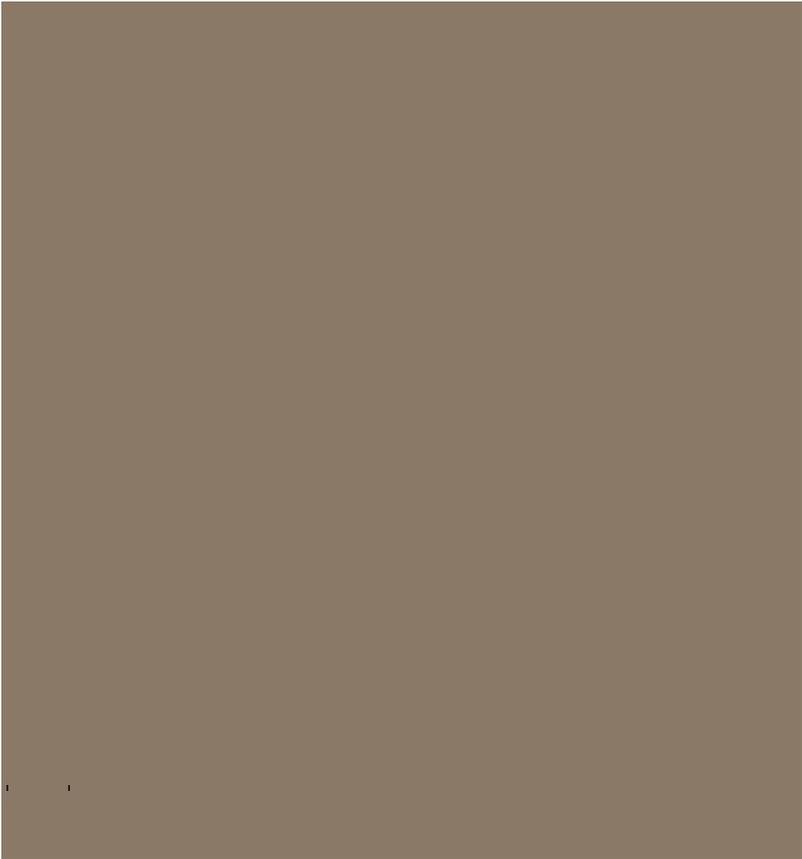


Pittsburgh African American Cultural Center Design Competition

The mission of the Cultural Center is to create “a new center to celebrate the contributions of people of African descent to the art, culture and history of America with the ultimate focus on contributions of Western Pennsylvania’s African American community and to offer a forum to educate the public about the richness of the art, culture and history of people of African descent.” Simply stated, the firm’s vision for the design was to create a new icon of African American culture, in keeping with the Cultural Center’s vision to create a new landmark attraction

for both local residents and tourists, supporting growth in entertainment, while adding social and economic benefits to the region. The Center is more than a museum. It is designed to be an experience that creates an understanding that African-American culture, like others, has a distinctive history, one that supersedes stereotypes, and embodies common life experiences. The firm’s design incorporates one of the common symbols of early civilization, the djembe, and uses it to draw the visitor into the African American cultural experience. The talking

drum, in an interpretive form, is the drum that represents one of the earliest vehicles for expression and communication. The glass and copper clad drum folds itself into a piece of art that communicates waves of sound energy that are repeated in the design form. Spaces radiate and flow from the drum creating a sense of rhythm. This building celebrates rhythm by using a form that mimics movement.



Location
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Owner Information
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA)
200 Ross Street, 12th Floor Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219 (412) 255-6595
Contact
Gerald (Jerry) Williams Development Manager
Square Feet
70,000
Services Provided
Design Competition
Completion Date
2003
Estimated Cost
\$20,000,000 (\$30,000 stipend to selected finalists)