

# Tarble Arts Center

Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois

**Role:** Architect and Museum Planner for Original Museum and Two Expansions

**Program:** Art galleries, lobby, function space, classroom, and support areas

**Total Building Area:** 22,000 sf

**Status:** Original Museum opened in 1982, with expansions opening in 2006 and 2018

**Description:** The Tarble Arts Center is a major cultural arts resource serving east-central Illinois. Its founding purpose is to “take the arts to the people.” Conceived as an integral hub for inspiration and creativity on the Eastern Illinois University campus, the Museum was constructed along a well-established campus pedestrian path leading from the central academic part of the campus to student dormitories. The building’s forms, integrated landscaping and site elements transform the pathway into outdoor rooms featuring both permanent sculptures and changing installations. Skylight monitors with electrically operated black-out shades and concealed artificial lighting provide completely controllable natural and artificial light. All galleries and collection storage areas have strict humidity and temperature control. In addition to gallery space, the Museum includes robust art studios and work areas, a carpentry shop, a theater and an E-Gallery for multimedia art. The gallery spaces were designed for maximal flexibility, and include movable partitions.

The 2006 expansion featured a dynamic multi-purpose gathering space featuring a curved glass façade and clerestory lighting. During the day, black-out curtains can transform the space for a variety of installations or performances. In the evening, the transparency of the façade creates a seamless relationship between indoors and outdoors.

The 2018 addition included a new classroom that allowed for transforming the existing classroom space into an art/collections preparations room and “open” storage lab. EIU students, local high school students and faculty can





access the center's art collections in this lab space for study and discussion. This expansion was executed by White & Borgognoni Architects, P.C.

The Tarble has been accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) since 2001. AAM accreditation demonstrates the Tarble's commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued

institutional improvement. The Tarble Arts Center is 1 of only 32 museums accredited in Illinois, and 1 of 7 accredited university museums in the state.