

Detroit Country Day School—Media, Fine & Performing Arts Center

Beverly Hills, MI

Artistically inclined middle and upper school students now have room to shine at this private institution. The project emphasizes a technology-enabled, project-based, collaborative learning model coupled with advanced fine and media arts instruction. The 25,000 SF renovation and addition features four new art studios: ceramics, photography, jewelry/metalworking and painting/drawing. A new robotics studio, digital media studio, middle school art rooms, and a new professional-quality theater are also included.

The new commons features a digital media studio for student collaboration and directed learning. The space was formerly a low-ceiling locker room which challenged designers. Architects responded with exposed ceilings, painted mechanical equipment and floating acoustical "clouds." Now a student destination, the commons enhances exposure to the fine arts program and encourages the cross-fertilization of technology and art. Tackable surfaces, a flexible tensioned artwork suspension structure, whiteboard paint, magnetic glass markerboard surfaces and flat screen TVs support teaming, display and content sharing activities.

The old underutilized gym was converted into the fine arts pavilion. Designers took advantage of the gym's inherent high-bay spaces, creating art studios complete with usable mezzanines. The open-area robotics studio includes an



enhanced mechanical and dust collection system and exterior garage door for easy "in and out" options, accommodating large equipment and supplies.

The theater provides a unique venue for fine arts productions, transformational learning and student performance showcases. Multiple seating configurations offer an intimate venue for up to 100 people, with space between performer and audience removed. The 6,000 SF two-story addition is located where HVAC units once were. A design/build project delivery method

and aggressive four-month fast-track construction schedule required a high level of cooperation between design/builders and school leadership. A steel mezzanine system was delivered and installed during the first week of construction. Emphasis on readily available and pre-purchased materials was essential.



Remodel/Adaptive Reuse/ Restoration

Media/arts/performing arts center

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DESIGN TEAM

Timothy Casal, FAIA, Project Designer/ Project Manager

Laura Casal, IIDA, LEED AP, Interior Designer
Cunningham-Limp, Design Build Contractor

OWNER/CLIENT

Detroit Country Day School
Beverly Hills, MI
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KEY STATS

Grades Served: 6–12

Capacity: Black Box Theater (100 students)

Building Area: 250,000 sq.ft. (total); 25,000 sq.ft.

(renovation); 6,000 sq.ft. (addition)

Completion Date: September 2015

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