

2021 LEsolutions Awards

Alta High School Performing Arts Center

SANDY, UTAH

HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

PROJECT OF DISTINCTION



Executive Summary

The freestanding Alta High School Performing Arts Center gives the Community a place to gather. The lobby concourse, adjacent festive outdoor terraces and courtyard provide space for a variety of events. The project includes a full fly loft, and a large instructional room, a fully accessible stage and orchestra pit, and generous storage areas for all the props, costumes, and music collected by a 45-year-old school.

The main mass of the PAC is a solid anchor of warm gray-toned bricks. The elliptical fly-loft and main house are clad with vertical metal panels, and slender red metal trim compliments the front entry of the existing school. A stunning zero-edge mirrored canopy shelters theater goers and students waiting for a ride.

Inside the main house, tilt-up concrete panels feature a form-liner pattern complimenting the woven bird's nest motif of the school mascot, the Hawk. Color changing RGB lighting in the house glows from alternating woven panels resembling a hawk nest on a clifftop, evoking a sense of pride for both the school community and the greater community.



School & Community Research / Engagement

Alta high Performing Arts Center was designed to satisfy requests from the stakeholders for a building that would:

- Provide an amazing place for music, dance & theatrical performances
- Create a professional environment for community events and performances
- Become an iconic landmark for the community
- Provide an inspiring setting for teaching and learning the arts
- Act as the catalyst for a new image for a 45-year-old school

Stakeholders included:

- Community Members
- Current students
- District & School Administration
- Current Teachers

Challenges:

- Providing storage for 45 years of props, etc.
- Designing state-of-the-art systems that instructors and students could easily learn to use
- Creation of a Hall suitable for Dance, Choral, Instrumental and Dramatic productions.



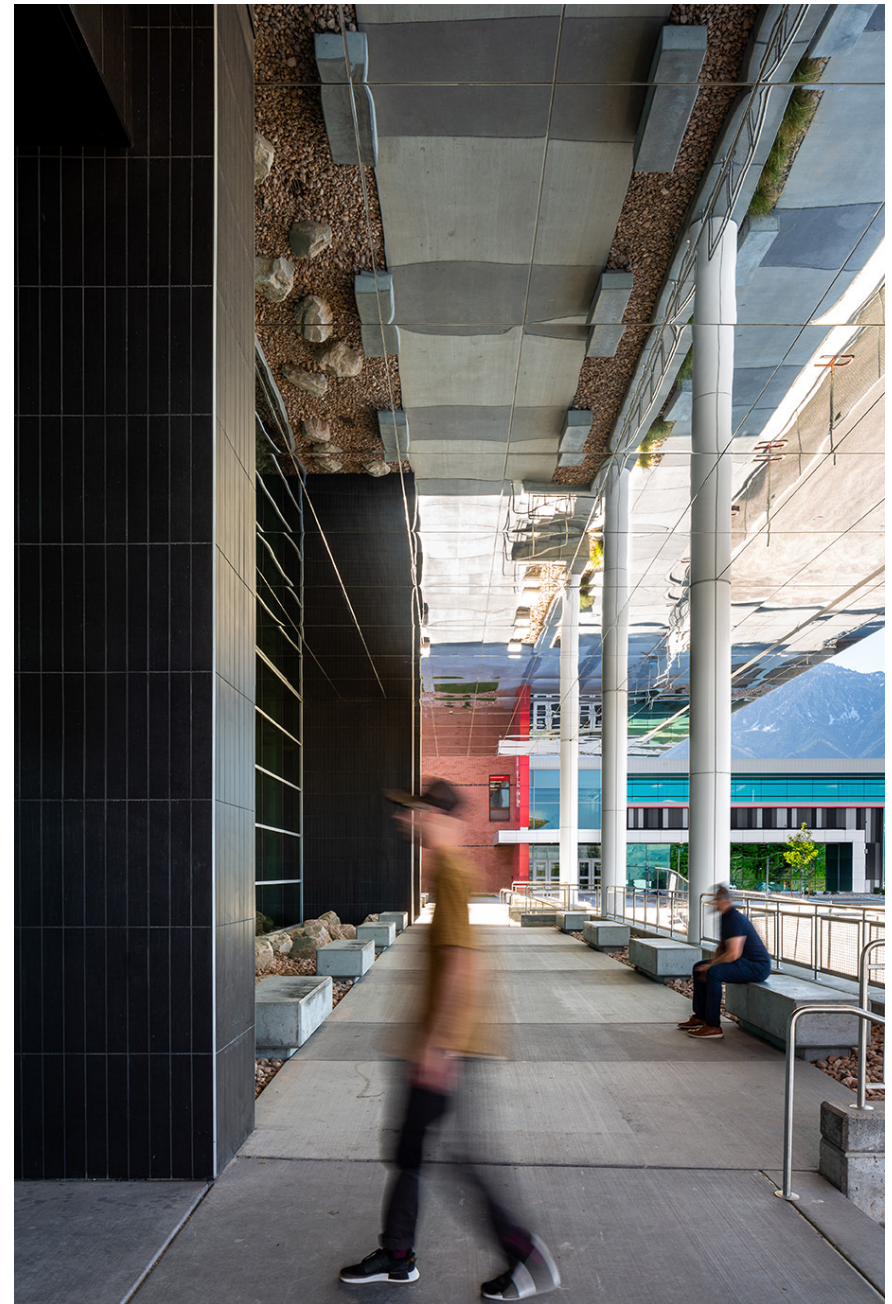
Educational Environment Design

The school community and the greater community had a thirst for a facility that would allow productions of all kinds - a professional and beautiful venue, and a point of pride for all.

The existing school auditorium was small and antiquated, landlocked in the center of the existing school, and was without a scene shop or a full fly loft. There was very little storage, and elderly rigging, lighting and sound systems.

The first portion of the transformation of the 1970s school was to build the PAC, thus freeing up the first space in a series of domino spaces to be relocated and renovated.

At right, the stunning zero-edge mirrored canopy shelters theatergoers and students waiting for a ride, while providing a place for lingering pre- and post-performance.



Educational Environment Design

The Alta High School Performing Arts Center is designed to serve both the school and the community as a place to come together for a wide variety of productions.

The lobby concourse and the adjacent festive outdoor terraces provide additional space for outdoor events, like dances, fund raisers, and pre- and post-performance experiences.

The project includes a full fly loft, a large instructional room, a scene shop, dressing and make-up rooms, a fully accessible stage and orchestra pit, and generous storage areas for the years of props, costumes, and music collected by a school with 45 years behind it.

The two black-tiled entries into the concourse from the exterior feature integral display cases for performance props and posters.



Educational Environment Design

The lobby concourse and the adjacent festive outdoor terraces provide additional space for outdoor events, like dances, fund raisers, and pre- and post-performance experiences. The red wing beyond the glass is the Main Entry to the school.



Educational Environment Design

Patrons can enter the Hall from either the rear corners, by stair or elevator, or through floor level entrances at each side.



Educational Environment Design

The project includes an oversized classroom/ greenroom backstage.



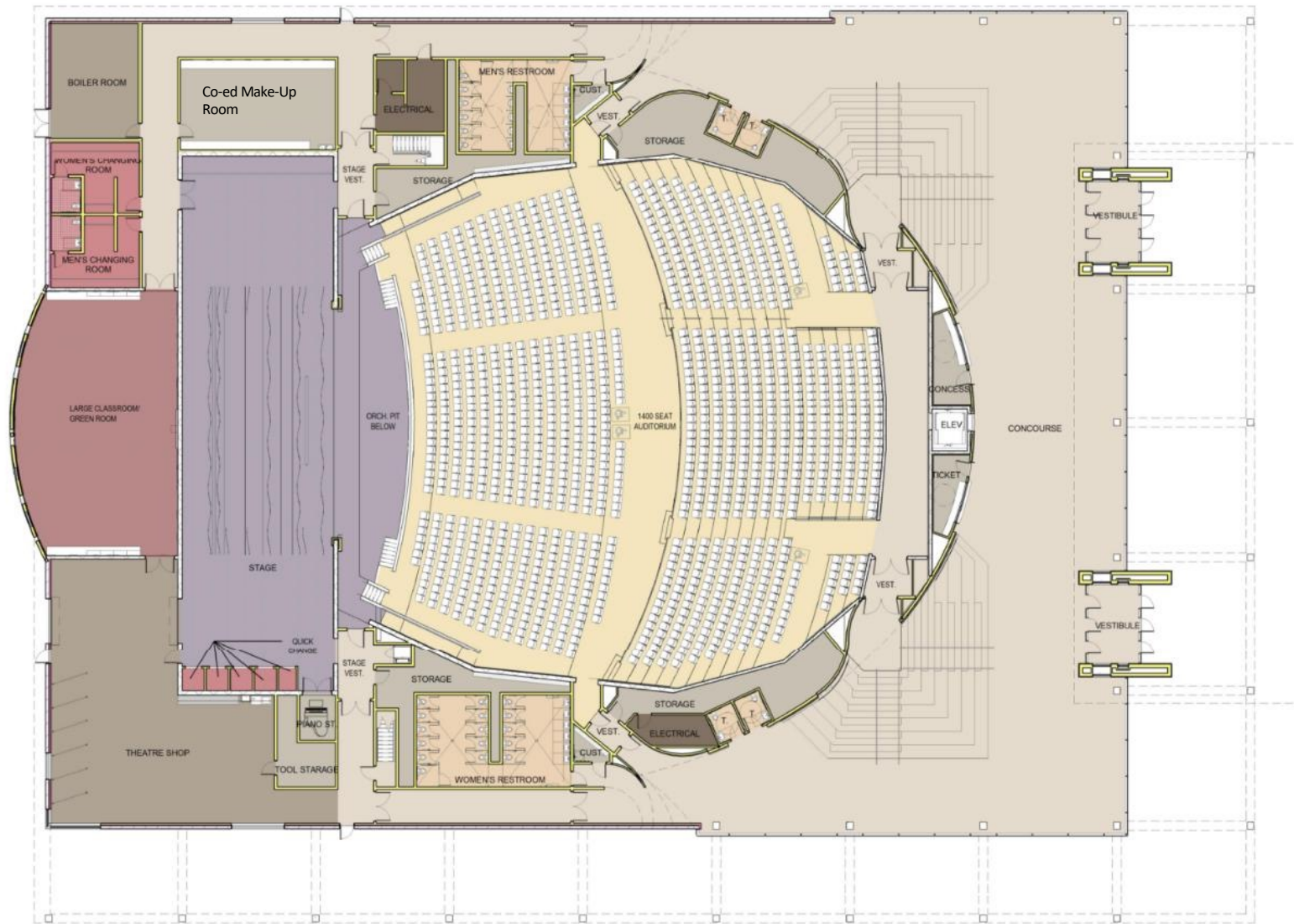
Students practicing for their upcoming concert.

Educational Environment Design

The acoustical baffles and the ceiling panels are designed to evoke a bird's nest and a Hawk in flight – the school's mascot. Upholstery is in multiple shades of red in order to create texture – and make it easier to reupholster in the future. The accent lights can be changed to any color or combination of colors to set a mood for each production.



First Level Plan

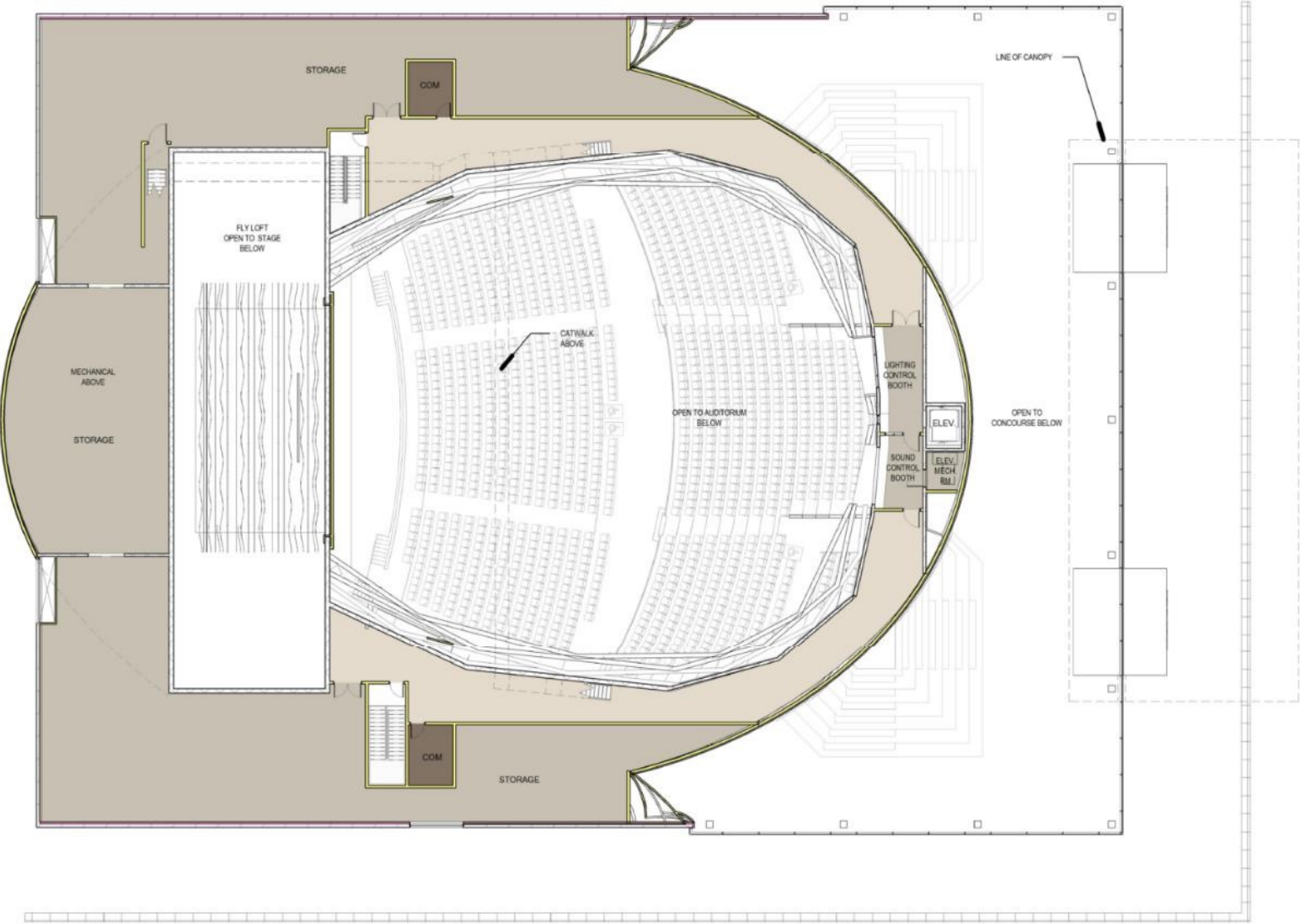


Alta Performing Arts Center MAIN LEVEL PLAN

- Arts/Alternate Classrooms
- Circulation
- Dressing/Makeup
- Electrical/COM
- Mechanical
- Performing Arts/Multi-Purpose
- Restroom
- Seating
- Stage
- Support/Storage

← NORTH

Second Level Plan



Alta Performing Arts Center UPPER LEVEL PLAN

- Circulation
- Electrical/COM
- Support/Storage

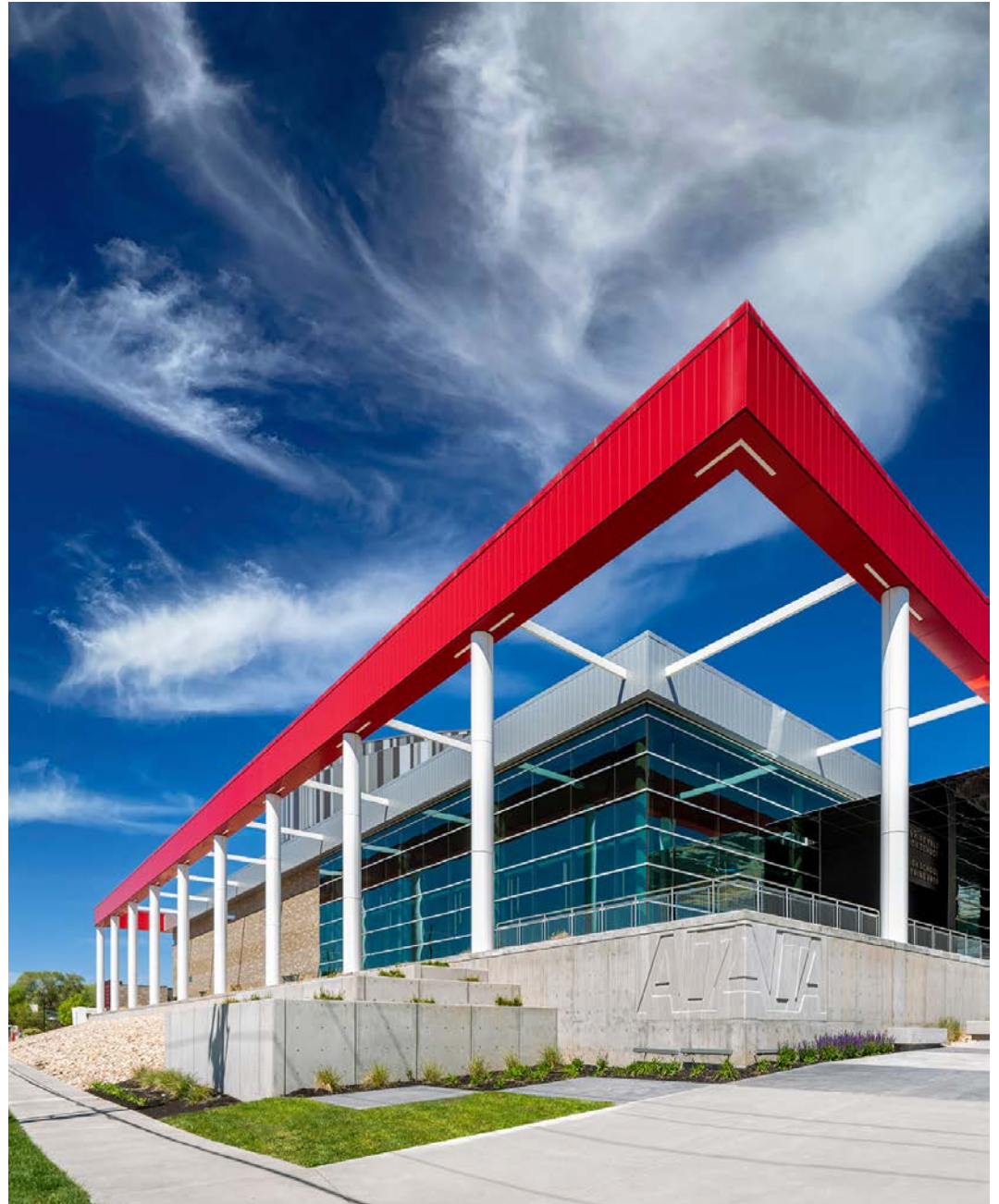
← NORTH

Physical Environment Design

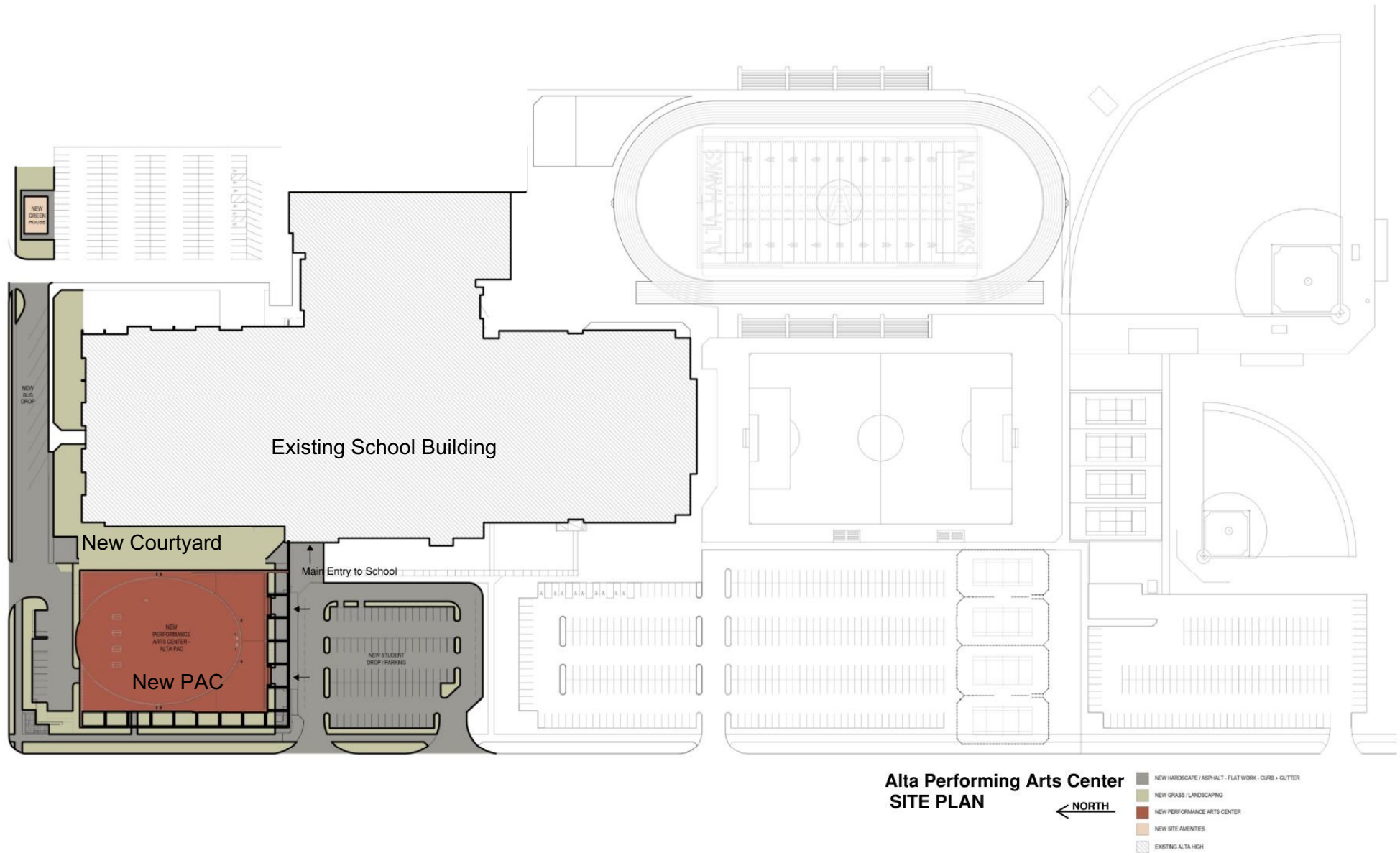
Hard-wearing, dynamic yet economical construction materials are used throughout the project. The main mass of the PAC acts as a solid anchor comprised of load-bearing bricks in a mix of warm gray tones.

The elliptical fly-loft and main house are clad with vertical profile metal panels, multi-toned in the same warm gray color palette as the brick of the base. A slender red metal trim to match the existing front entry of the school traces around the lower roof.

At the entry, a stunning zero-edge mirrored canopy shelters theatergoers and students waiting for a ride.



Site



Physical Environment Design

A photo of the Pandemic-delayed Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, in the festive courtyard between the PAC and the existing school.



Physical Environment Design

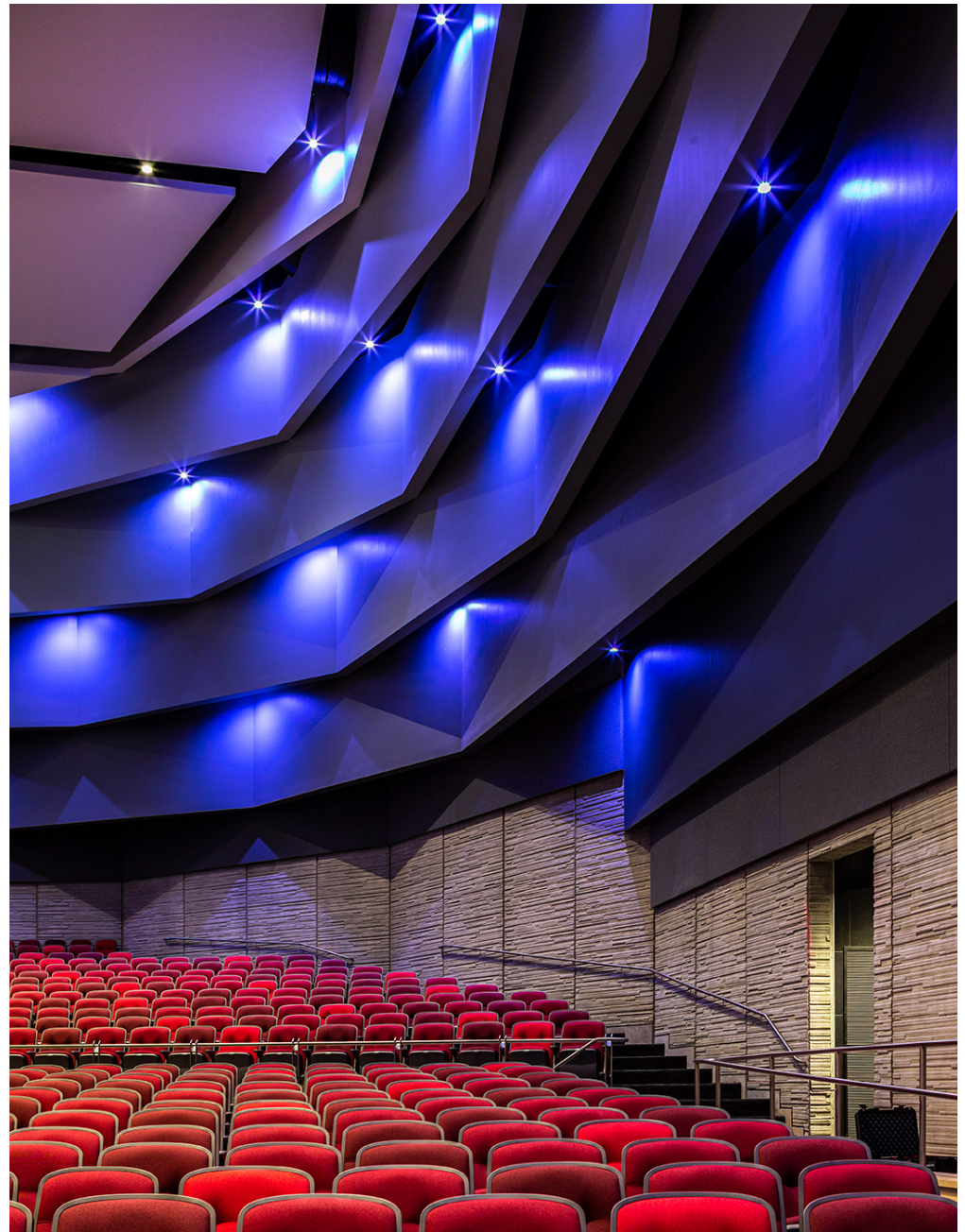
The 12 foot high letters and electronic marquees at the NW corner of campus set the stage to welcome students to Alta. The oversize letters have become a favorite place for student photo opps.



Physical Environment Design

Inside the main house, tilt-up concrete panels feature a form-liner pattern complimenting the woven bird's nest motif of the Alta High School mascot, the Hawk. The tilt-up panels are durable and handsome, as well as contributing to the acoustic properties of the hall. There are 1,375 seats multi-toned in deep red, ready to be filled with visitors to watch a performance.

Additionally, color changing RGB lighting in the house allows a mood to be set. Within the raised oval auditorium, alternating woven panels resemble a nest on a clifftop, evoking a sense of pride for both the school community and the greater community.



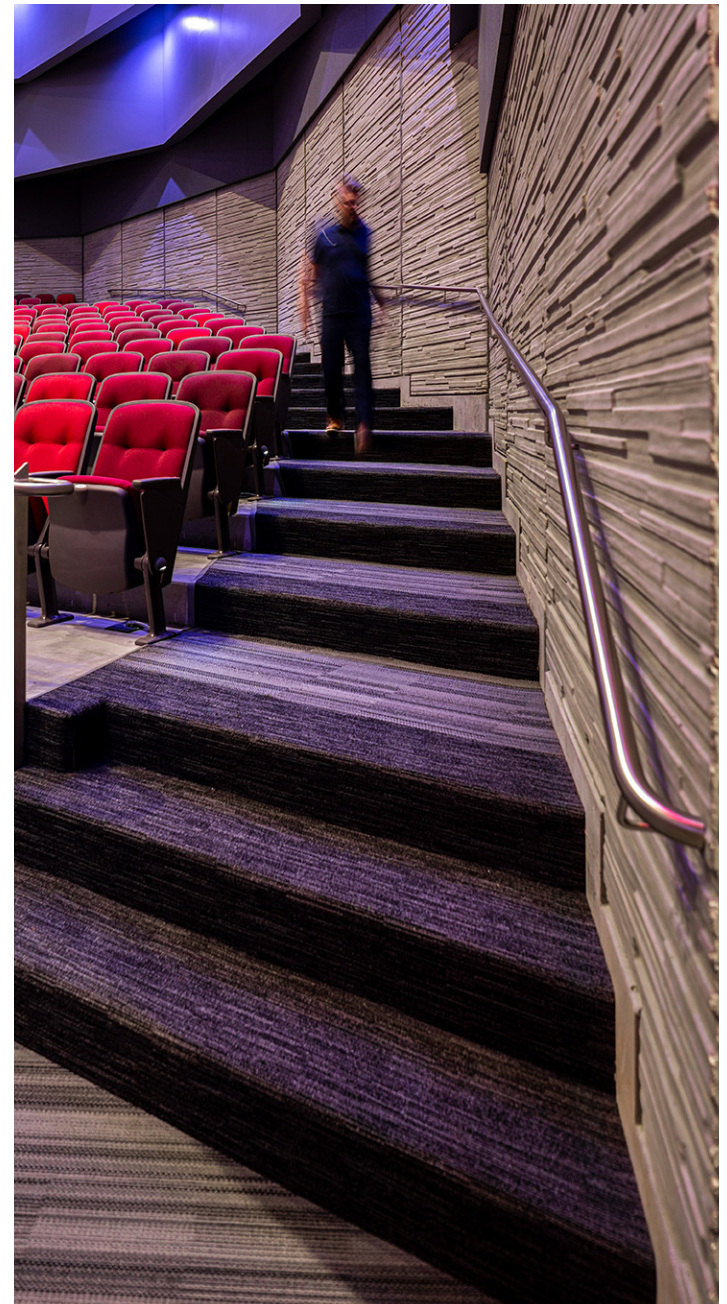
Physical Environment Design

A unique aspect of the project is the material selected for the structural portion of the stage and house. Originally conceptualized as a structure built from locally fabricated concrete masonry blocks, the decision was made during design, in concert with the Construction Manager/General Contractor, to move to a concrete tilt-up structure.

The reasoning was that the very tall walls surrounding the stage and fly loft, as well as the house, would be more economically feasible and the schedule would be accelerated.

As a result, the facility became a record-breaking architectural feat. Its tilt-up concrete panels raised the state record for height by nine feet and two inches, with the tallest panel reaching a stunning 75 feet and eight inches. Some panels weigh as much as 135,000 pounds.

Utilization of the tilt-up panels ultimately saved the owner \$1 million and months of work.



Physical Environment Design

The front of the existing school was also reimagined during the design of the PAC. Stakeholders felt it was dated and uninspiring, resulting in a lack of school pride. The new façade has been described by patrons as “magnificent.”



Results of the Process & Project

A POE survey is planned, but waiting to be implemented until the final pieces of the school's renovation are completed. Informal conversations indicate that the facility has given a new life and enthusiasm to the staff, the students and the community as a whole.



Sustainability and Wellness

From a sustainability aspect, masonry and metal materials were manufactured locally. Glazing was carefully selected to control heat gain.

The mechanical system is a high-performance central plant, and the lighting is all LED.

The design team was committed to making the concrete an asset to the project – both aesthetically and acoustically. Numerous form liners were studied for beauty and sound, until the final selection was made.

Below, the original 1970's signage was repurposed and repositioned at the front of the school.

