“Over the last few years, Olmos and his Latino Film Institute have worked closely with the Santa Ana Unified School District to pioneer the Youth Cinema Project, which now serves as a model for districts across the state of California. Through the project, Heninger Intermediate and Santa Ana High School students discover the art of filmmaking by working with film industry professionals and studying screen writing, editing, special effects and more.”

SAUSD District Website
Santa Ana High School opened in 1889 as the first high school in Orange County.

After 128 years, Santa Ana High School has developed many pathways for educational success for the students who attend this flagship school. Several years ago, the campus began working with the Latino Film Institute and Mr. Olmos' Youth Cinema Project that fosters students’ dreams for big screen careers by bringing industry professionals to the school to work with the students studying Screen writing, Editing, Broadcasting, Special Effects and more.

The program at Santa Ana high school is flourishing and a desire to create a specific identity for the program culminated in the naming of the program as the Edward James Olmos School for Film and Cinematic Arts.

In 2017, the District decided the success of the program warranted an investment to improve the facilities and create even greater opportunities for students to participate in the largest industry in Southern California.

District Goal: To provide exemplary Career Technical Education, workforce preparation and college readiness that contributes to student academic and career success and towards the economic development of our community.
PROJECT SCOPE

The Film and Cinematic Arts Pathway really begins at the adjacent Heninger K-8 School where students are using their voices and their stories to write, direct and produce films in the 4-7th grades. When in 8th grade, they walk across to the adjacent campus and work directly with the 9-12th grade students in Digital Media Arts class at the Santa Ana High School.

The Program at the high school provides training in technical and aesthetic tools of the major disciplines of cinematic arts through directing, producing, editing, cinematography, production design, lighting, writing, and sound in a compromised space. Currently, the Digital Media Arts class and other rooms associated with the San ARTS program are spread across the campus. The District is the process, by way of this project and others, of relocating all of the SanARTS program into one building.

To support the Youth Cinema Project at Santa Ana High School, the District decided to create a film studio on campus on the 2nd floor of this building. The existing Library was 14,000SF of underutilized space on the second floor of a non-descript, three-story building. The Project is to re-imagine the entire floor by re-creating the library in a smaller 5,400SF footprint and add the Film Studio components to the freed space. The Film Studio consists of a large Studio outfitted for filming and instruction, two editing rooms, a Digital Broadcast suite with Control Room and Studio, a Digital Media Lab and a Flex Lab.

| students served | 400 |
| project cost    | $3.7 million |
| construction cost | $2.9 million |
| area            | 14,000 SF |
Santa Ana High School is located in Santa Ana, California. The predominantly Hispanic community has a long history of ties to the LA area film industry.

The high school offers many pathways to their students and the latest is the School for Film and Cinematic Arts.
“Santa Ana and I in our group project, have had a love affair that has been overwhelming throughout the last three years because it was the first district to officially implement the cinema project”

Edward James Olmos, Actor

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Several Stakeholder Meetings were held to review the requirements for the conversion of a portion of the existing library space into the CTE Media Arts Program - Film and Cinematic Arts.

Campus VAPA students and staff, citizens of the community, and 10-12 members of the Latino Film Institute were involved in the process.

Discussions centered around the GOALS, FACTS, and NEEDS of the Program which lead to CONCEPTS. These topics led to existing site conditions, adjacencies, and the Film and Cinematic Pathway and the Latino Film Institute program requirements.
GOALS

Create a professional film studio on the campus to support the Youth Cinema Project

Consolidate all SanARTS programs into one building

Existing Library has 14,000SF of underutilized space on the second floor of a non-descript, three-story building. Re-imagine the entire floor by re-creating the library in a smaller 5,400SF footprint and add the Film Studio components to the freed space.

Professional Development efforts with the Latino Film Institute

NEEDS

• Mimic professional spaces in the real world
• Digital Media Arts Lab
• Smaller Library with Flex-use Room and Project Labs
• Sound isolated editing bays
• Accessible equipment bays
• Flexible spaces
• Green Screen walls
• Technology-rich
• Specialized lighting
• Elevator expansion

CONCEPT

FACTS

Santa Ana High Unified is the 7th largest district in California. Established in 1889, Santa Ana High School is the oldest high school in Orange County.

The school is situated in a densely populated urban setting surrounded by a mixture of businesses and residences.

98.6% Hispanic
24.6% English Learners
86% Free-Reduced Lunch Meals
2,963 enrollment
400 students enrolled in the Program
HOW THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS THE PROGRAM

State of the art, industry-standard facilities, resources, and tools equip students to be workforce ready as they enter college and career with higher level skills and up-to-date work environment expectations. Students’ access and opportunities will push them to exceed current learning through more hands-on, experiential opportunities that allow them to be self-directed, demonstrating the entrepreneurship skills they will need to thrive beyond high school. In addition, they’ll have the ability to direct their own learning through inquiry-driven practices where they engage in trans-disciplinary research in service of their own ideas – student centered and student driven making their work much more meaningful and professional. The physical environment will elevate the quality of the work with access to high quality learning spaces.

The inclusion of Industry Professionals through the Master Class Program is a key element in providing students with a “Next Generation” Arts Conservatory education. Here, they are able to directly engage with industry based professionals in a collaborative setting. We strongly believe that these experiences will guarantee them the pipeline required to further explore and define their craft, their story, their purpose.
EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
Edward James Olmos School of Film and Cinematic Arts | SANTA ANA HIGH SCHOOL

The Film Studio is the flagship space of the project. The studio is set up in two primary zones: instruction and filming. The filming area is set up with a large ‘green-screen’ area including a hanging track system for ‘flats’ (student-built hard construction stage-set panels which hang in front of the green screens. The instructional areas are deliberately within the studio space for full immersion into the workings of a soundstage and making best use of precious student time.
This suite provides small scale digital broadcasting opportunities that can support the program and the campus at large by providing a professional venue to produce student announcements, student news. The studio provides experience with broadcast (TV) media ad its complexities and differences with cinematography.

“The Studio should come as close to replicating a professional television studio in facility and design as possible to create meaningful, real-life experiences for students.”
Stakeholder Meeting
The Digital Media Lab will round out the post-production capabilities of the program along with the Editing Suite. The focus of the space is individualized, concentrated work digitally produced to create the final product. A flex Lab is also provided and will augment all of the other spaces by providing a place for rehearsal, study, writing, set construction and other less frequently needed tasks to support filming.
Integral with any filming endeavor, editing is a critical part of the crafting process. The editing suites are designed to create an isolated environment where small teams of 2-3 people can work to transform raw footage into crafted scenes that reveal the art of the actors and the strength of the storyline.
The decision to dedicate more than half of the existing library to the Cinema Arts school required the recreation of the library in a smaller space. Designed to be fully updated to a modern 'library' that relies less on Book Stacks and more on digital information retrieval and exploration. The new library provides more areas for quiet study and student collaboration than the previous 'traditional library' design.
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

EDWARD JAMES OLMOS SCHOOL OF FILM AND CINEMATIC ARTS

PHYSICAL ATTRAIBUTES

The school is situated in a densely populated urban setting surrounded by a mixture of businesses and residences.

Santa Ana has a population of 333,605 people and is the 57th largest city in the United States. The population density is 12,290 per sq mi compared to California’s which is 232 per sq mi.

The site size for Santa Ana HS is 21.17 acres with 2,800 students the site is 32.9% of what California Department of Education recommends the site should be based on the student population of this size.

CAMPUS INTEGRATION

The design of the modernized studio space within the 130-year-old high school in Orange County is no small feat. The design honors the history and ancestry of the facilities while pushing possibilities forward. The space will allow for students from all disciplines to use the facility. For example, dance students can collaborate with the film and video production students to create promotional videos for their events. Design teams can host industry professionals to coach and support students in their real-life learning. Students across all disciplines can host industry panels and pitch sessions and be elevated beyond the typical classroom space. The non-traditional and open spaces allow for much creativity in their usage – including ways that have not been anticipated as students will come up with ingenious ideas and innovative endeavors, paralleling the workforce with jobs that will happen that have yet to be created.
DAYLIGHTING

The existing building currently has no windows on any floor. The Cast-In-Place concrete structure makes use of concrete infill panels between the floors. In the Research Library and Digital Labs windows are being added to bring daylight into the second floor Film School. In the library the windows provide naturally lit areas for reading and study. Natural light is also brought in to the Flex and Digital Media Labs. The cast-in-place concrete structure makes use of non-bearing infill panels for the exterior walls, making the addition of windows a feasible option to improve the learning environment in these spaces.
INSPIRE & MOTIVATE

Students’ self-confidence will grow and they will be able to see many things happening simultaneously and connect to other students. Collaboration sparks more creativity and inspires innovation and brings about newer, fresher, even better ideas than individuals working in isolation.

The students will create new things not yet imagined, perpetuating the cycle of innovation and creativity that will inspire and motivate students to do even more.

RECLAIMING LOST SPACE - ACHIEVED EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

RESULTS OF PROCESS & PROJECT
DISTRIBUTION & COMMUNITY GOALS:

SanArts is a capstone and specialty school of choice for students who are industry-bound arts and creative-industry professionals.

Along with 31 other educational pathways provided by the District, the School for Film and Cinematic Arts is fully in keeping with the District vision of bringing staff, parents and community together to raise the achievement level of all students in preparation for success in college and career.

Local community goals are met by providing a unique pathway that is developed to support local industries and finding ways for students to be successful in life within the Santa Ana community. This strengthens the community and provides lifelong success in opportunities for students.
The design of the modernized studio space within the historic space of oldest 130-year-old high school in Orange County is no small feat. The design honors the history and ancestry of the facilities while pushing thinking and possibilities forward. The space will allow for students from all disciplines to use the space. For example, the dance students can collaborate with the film and video production students to create promotional videos for their events. Students can collaborate in the various flexible spaces. Students across all disciplines can host industry panels and pitch sessions and be elevated beyond the typical classroom space. The non-traditional and open spaces allow for much creativity in their usage – including ways that have not been anticipated as students will come up with ingenious ideas and innovative endeavors, paralleling the workforce with jobs that will happen that have yet to be created.

Results of Process & Project

Edward James Olmos School of Film and Cinematic Arts | SANTA ANA HIGH SCHOOL

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