

Report of the University Senate Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee

The Performing Arts at Columbia:

The Need for Additional Performance and Practice Space and the Improved Management of Existing Space

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Executive summary: Over the past year, the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee has studied the space needs for on-campus performance activities², including music, theater, and dance, both in fulfillment of degree requirements and for extracurricular activities. It is the opinion of the Committee that the current space shortage relating to these activities is acute, and that it is our Undergraduate population that is most negatively affected. Accordingly, the Committee urges the University to begin to address this situation expeditiously and comprehensively.

Artistic endeavors, whether for course credit or as extracurricular activities, contribute to an individual sense of well-being and to a sense of belonging and shared community. Such endeavors are all the more important in the wake of an extended period of remote teaching and learning. The importance of these activities to the relative standing of universities is underlined by the recent unveiling of spacious new performing arts centers by peers, including Princeton, Brown, Yale, and the University of Chicago. (See Appendix A where a sample of these competitor spaces are presented.) Finally, continued success in these areas is particularly important at a time when undergraduate expansion is being considered. In summary,

¹ This section has been updated to include titles.

² This includes the activities of the Department of Music, its Music Performance Program, the School of the Arts, including its MFA in Theatre, the Barnard College Department of Dance, where numerous Columbia undergraduates take courses, and the Barnard and Columbia undergraduate theatre program (based at Barnard College).

the committee feels that now is the time for the University to act to enhance and expand the on-campus space available to the Columbia Community, and particularly, the undergraduate community, for its artistic endeavors.

Specifically, the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee recommends that:

- In the short-term, the University expand the use of electronic assignments systems to include practice rooms, that the limited stock of these rooms presently available may be more intensively utilized;
- In the short- to medium-term, the University consider the creation of additional multi-function spaces to support performance activities;
- In the medium-term, the University consider ways to enhance current facilities and anticipate new performance space needs, creating shared spaces to be available across the institution;
- In considering ways to expand performance spaces, that the University think creatively about the possibilities offered by buildings such as Uris Hall, and, in the near future, the University initiate planning for a new consolidated performing arts center on the Morningside or Manhattanville campuses.

In the first section of this report we detail performance needs in terms of music, theatre, and dance, looking in detail at the Department of Music, the School of the Arts, and the Barnard College Dance Department, in whose program many Columbia undergraduates participate. We next consider the available spaces and, where applicable, their limitations.

In these discussions we detail the complications and drawbacks, most especially associated with the use of Miller Theatre, Lenfest Center for the Arts, and the much anticipated Artist's Cove space currently under construction in Lerner Hall. In short, these spaces are not available to the entire Columbia Community, being essentially either already fully booked or compromised in design. But space needs are not limited to formal performance venues alone: more practice and rehearsal space is also needed. In the third section of this report, we suggest available software solutions that could encourage a more useful allocation of existing practice and rehearsal rooms. The final section contains our recommendations.

I. Performance Space Needs

Whatever the nature of the performance, there are a number of broad needs common to all that must be met:

- (1) Guaranteed access: Whether music or theater, involving the Music Department or the School of the Arts, organizers need to know space availability before a semester begins, and, therefore, need to know the process for reserving space. Under current procedures at the University, it can be difficult to find out who oversees many of the existing practice and performance spaces, and what priority of use is in effect.
- (2) Adequate storage space: Musical instruments and theatrical production sets can only be moved from building to building expensively and at risk of damage. Space adjacent to the venue itself, where instruments and sets can be stored, is critical.

(3) Appropriate acoustics: Acoustics designed specifically for the maximal acoustic benefit of the audience is essential.

(4) Proximity: Proximity to the Morningside Campus, where the majority of students are based, is essential. It also would allow easy access to transportation for those coming to campus to attend a performance.

II. Existing Performance Spaces

Currently, there are five performance spaces available on the Morningside and Manhattanville Campuses: Miller Theatre, Lenfest Center for the Arts performance space, the Artist's Cove, currently under construction in Lerner Hall, the Italian Academy, and Maison Française.

Each of these spaces is challenged in at least one of the four ways noted above.

- **Miller Theatre:** A theatre space to showcase Columbia as a center for the performing arts, Miller Theatre is no longer available for degree-related student music performances or practice. The Committee finds it somewhat ironic that a lack of availability in this first class performing arts center forces departments to rent external space for student concerts, including in Carnegie Hall, at great expense.
- **Lenfest Center for the Arts Performance Space.** This accommodates the needs of the MFA Theatre Program thesis productions, which were performed formerly in the Riverside Church Theatre, and in other rented theatre spaces throughout Manhattan. Presently, it is fully programmed throughout the academic year. There is no excess capacity available for other departments, programs, or productions. While state of the art in certain respects, its black box theatre has no formal raised stage and very limited audience capacity. There is little storage space and no freight elevator; all scenery, props, musical instruments et cetera must be loaded in and out of the theatre for each production, sharing the same elevators that are used for public access. It was not designed as a concert space and is not available. See Appendix B for a more detailed discussion of the Lenfest spaces.
- **Artist's Cove.** This space is under construction and, under current thinking, will be used during daytime hours for faculty supervised rehearsals, tutoring, or individual lessons. It is a very welcome additional space for these activities and will help to satisfy some of the needs detailed in this proposal. After 5:00 PM and on weekends it will be exclusively available for use by student groups. Unfortunately, it does not assist in providing effective performance space for the Music Performance Program³: recitals et cetera need to be held during evening hours if they are to attract a significant audience. Students have classes and other activities during daytime hours, making recital scheduling, for both performers and audiences, very difficult. While a wonderful addition

³ The Music Performance Program matches undergraduate students with performing artists in the New York area for instruction. Entrance is competitive and admission entitles a student to course credit. At present the scarcity of practice rooms limits the size of the program.

to the inventory of performance spaces at the University, it will not alleviate the shortage of performance space for the Music Performance Program.⁴

- **The Italian Academy and Maison Française.** These spaces have the same drawbacks as the Lenfest Center for the Arts Performance Space, while also suffering from the lack of availability during the critical end-of-semester period.
- **External spaces.** Because of the shortage of adequate on-campus performance space, the Music Performance Program has been forced to rent external venues such as Symphony Space and Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall for end of year concerts. While these venues are acoustically excellent, they are distant from campus and expensive to rent.

For a first-class university, the clear dearth of performance spaces is an embarrassment. It is becoming more so, since our peer institutions (e.g., Princeton and the University of Chicago) have recently constructed new performing arts centers that offer state-of-the-art facilities to their music and drama students. Many premier small colleges that do not have a Department of Music, per se, also provide at least one dedicated auditorium, recording studio, and dedicated practice rooms with superior light and air. In contrast, for the 494 individual students and 42 ensembles in the Music Performance Program at Columbia University, it is essentially hopeless for all the students who would benefit from formal recital time to receive it. While we recognize that there are many financial demands on the University’s resources, it is the view of the Committee that a new performance space should be an absolute priority.

B. The State of Practice Rooms

The availability of practice rooms is also in crisis. Below, we first detail the class and practice rooms available to a typical Music Performance Program student, together with the effective restrictions on each. This is followed by an assessment of the current demand for such rooms as well as a projection of future needs considering the expansion of SEAS and the College currently under consideration.

1. Currently Available Space

	Potentially Available Classrooms	Use Restrictions
1.	555 Lerner	available to orchestras only, weekly classes
2.	112 Broadway	used daily for jazz ensembles only
3.	109 Dodge	used daily for piano lessons only
4.	110 Dodge	used daily for piano lessons only
5.	716 Hamilton	Fri., Sat., Sunday only, chamber music lessons only
6.	803 Dodge	only non-piano individual lessons

⁴ This space is presently under construction, and is expected to be open in the summer of 2023. The Artist’s Cove repurposes a meeting room (The Party Space) into a performance venue. There will be storage space and a grand piano, drums, amplifiers etc. permanently on stage. While it promises to be a spectacular performance venue, its arrival will not increase the overall availability of useful spaces.

7.	404 Dodge	after 7:30 PM; chamber lessons and ensembles
8.	405 Dodge	after 7:30 PM; chamber lessons and ensembles
9.	620 Dodge	after 7:30 PM; chamber lessons and ensembles
10	622 Dodge	after 7:30 PM; chamber lessons and ensembles
11	Carmen B01	access restricted due to Covid and not yet restored
12	204 Broadway	access restricted due to Covid and not yet restored

	Available Practice Rooms	Use restrictions
1.	Shapiro Hall	8 rooms for all University affiliates; no MPP priority
2.	East Campus	3 rooms; only available to East Campus residents
3.	Broadway	3 rooms; only available to Broadway residents
4.	Carman Hall	3 booths; only available to Carmen residents
5.	Carman drum booth	1 room; generally not available

2. The Demand for Practice Spaces

We first detail the number of Music Performance Program students (2019, pre-Covid) and then go on to measure the additional population with which these students must compete to gain practice time.

	Instruction Type	Number of MPP Students	Number of MPP Ensembles
1.	Classical lessons	41	
2.	Jazz lessons	62	
3.	Chamber ensembles	72	23
4.	Jazz ensembles	86	13
5.	World ensembles	39	6
6.	Orchestra	105	
7.	Piano lessons	89	
	Total	494	42

Here is the reality: The eight rooms in Shapiro Hall are available to all 31,500 Columbia students. At the present time, approximately 2,000 non-student affiliates have swipe access, and this is in addition to the

approximately 500 Music Performance Program students. If each Music Performance Program student should individually wish to practice two times per week for one hour each time, the total demand would be roughly 1,000 hours, distributed most likely over the 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM twelve hour time interval. In other words, if each Music Performance Program student were to be accommodated for two hours per week, the University would thus need to provide at least 12 practice rooms, to be continuously occupied full time by participants in that program alone. If the restricted practice rooms in East Campus and Shapiro were available to Music Performance Program students exclusively, the then-available 11 rooms would just about suffice. There would be, however, next to no availability for the 2000 other Columbia affiliates with swipe access. With everyone presently granted the same priority, there is no easy access for Music Performance Program students.

3. Special Difficulties Encountered by Music Performance Program Students: Recital Spaces

It would be desirable for each Music Performance Program to be able to give one concert per year. Accordingly, the Department of Music receives open dates in the various on-campus performance spaces noted above in exchange for the year-long responsibility for tuning and maintaining the musical instruments present there. There are, however, many restrictions that make scheduling largely unworkable. These are detailed below:

- **Lerner Hall:** The grand piano in 555 Lerner is serviced in exchange for 12 rentals per semester pending availability. The dates given to the Music Department for related performances are given the absolute last priority. Many of the available dates are unworkable. Music Department use is further restricted on the available days to conclude by 5 PM, and only for Monday-Friday. As card access is required to access this room, it is unavailable, even in non-Covid times, to non-Columbia affiliates making it difficult for the family and friends of artists to attend recitals. It is this room that will be replaced by the Artist's Cove.
- **Maison Française:** The grand piano in the East Gallery is provided and serviced in exchange for a paltry three venue rentals per semester. Furthermore, the Department of Music must pay for guard service after 5:00 PM and staff must bring in the necessary recording equipment, music stands et cetera. The arrangement with the Italian Academy is identical.
- **St Paul's Chapel:** The Department of Music maintains this grand piano in exchange for three, Wednesday-only rentals, and covers the cost of guard service and cleaning. The rentals must be held within the time span of 5:00 to 9:00 PM, pending availability.
- **Earl Hall:** In exchange for three rentals, pending availability, the Department of Music maintains the grand piano and pays cleaning and guard service fees.
- **Uris Hall⁵:** It is about to be significantly reconstructed for use by the Arts and Sciences division of the University. It is the Committee's understanding that no new performance space is scheduled to

⁵ Background: As a natural and relatively inexpensive solution to the absence of adequate performance space, the Committee considered a refurbishment of Uris Hall Room 142. This room has many advantages. It seats about 70 persons, a desirable size that could be increased, and has three exits. It is located immediately at the entrance to Uris Hall, convenient for concert or

be created in this building despite its many advantages locationally and otherwise. In a previous draft of this report the Committee had recommended Uris 142 as a natural space to be transformed, something that presently is not under consideration. The Committee views this outcome with regret. On a more optimistic note, the Committee understands that Calder Lounge on the first floor of Uris Hall is to be retained as a meeting space, and the configuration of the room and its flooring make it ideal as a venue for small concerts. Moreover, the Arts and Sciences has committed to dedicating Calder Lounge to student recitals every night for the last two weeks of each term, providing essential support for the Music Performance Program⁶.

To be clear, the phrase “pending availability” means that the Music Performance Program is given dates after all other activities have been booked. Having the last choice means that the few available times may be either undesirable or unworkable, particularly if a general audience is sought. Accordingly, it is the belief of the Committee that any new performance space must come under the exclusive scheduling priority of those departments and programs involved in performance activities, including the Department of Music and the School of the Arts.

C. Externalities Provided to the University by the Department of Music and Music Performance Program

Music Performance Program students actively enhance the Core Curriculum by providing live performances for Music Humanities classes throughout the academic year. In this way, the Program annually serves a large population of Columbia Undergraduates. In the Music Humanities course evaluations, these live performances are often cited as among the highlights of the course.

Music Performance Program students are also active in undergraduate recruitment, helping to make Columbia competitive overall with our peer institutions. The Office of Admissions regularly involves Music Performance Program faculty, staff, and student in recruitment events for prospective and admitted student. The faculty is composed of some of the world’s finest musicians, a significant draw for undergraduate applicants. The Louis Armstrong Jazz Performance Program, part of the Music Performance Program, is the largest and most prestigious program of its type across all the Ivy League and for students with an interest in jazz, its presence is often the deciding factor in the choice of Columbia. It is shameful that instructors of such high caliber may be unable to view their own students performing in first class performance spaces. In total, Music Performance Program students provide performances as many as 75 times per year for various other Columbia Administration events.

theatre goes. At the present time, there are four administrative offices underneath the higher-level seating that could easily be adapted to create ample storage space for sets and instruments. Redesigned fifteen years ago at a cost of more than \$1,000,000, it is gently tiered and has excellent acoustics. A new addition to Uris Hall, there is likely to be no asbestos removal required. Lastly, there are ample bathroom facilities on the same floor.

⁶ Correction: The earlier version of this report noted that although it has been informally suggested that the Music Performance Program be given five nights of access to the Calder Lounge space per year, no formal guarantees of any time in this space have been given.

We are all aware of the dramatic increase in mental health services demanded by Columbia undergraduates. For many students, musical activities are crucial to their wellbeing. During the pandemic, the on-line presence of their instructors, whether for one-on-one lessons or with small ensembles, helped many students to better manage these difficult circumstances. There also is evidence that the discipline learned through the continued practice of an instrument materially facilitates the success of students who eventually study medicine or the law.⁷

Music Performance Program students provide weekly concerts, open to the public, at Faculty House and Maison Française. This enriches the entire community of Morningside Heights. As delightful as these experiences may be, they are not an adequate substitute for a formal recital in a well-designed performance space.

D. Future Growth in the Music Performance Program

The lack of performance and rehearsal space effectively prevents the expansion of the Music Performance Program. The program can, for example, offer a maximum of 25 chamber music ensembles. Without these constraints, it could easily accommodate an additional 10 ensembles. If the expansion of the College and School of Engineering becomes the reality, the waitlist to join an ensemble is likely to become significantly longer. It is unfortunate that many undergraduate Columbia students who could benefit from and contribute to the Music Performance Program are disappointed, often early in their time at Columbia as a result of the lack of adequate performance space and sufficient practice rooms. The Music Performance Program simply cannot accommodate more students give the physical resources available to it, yet a 20 percent increase in enrollment that could see undergraduate enrollment increase from just over 8,800 (OPIR, Fall 2020) to 10,600, is under active discussion. It is reasonable to suggest that this 20% increase would lead to an identical increase in demand for inclusion in the MPP program.

E. Summary

The Music Department and its Music Performance Program enrich the cultural life of the University enormously while at the same time fostering community on campus. Nevertheless, it is forced to beg for the necessary space. This is an extremely unfortunate situation for a world-class University in the artistic capital of the United States.

II. School of the Arts Needs

A. Introduction

While this report has thus far emphasized the Department of Music and its Music Performance Program needs, the brutal fact is that School of the Arts needs are even more acute, so much so as to measurably degrade the educational experience of full time, full tuition paying students. Presently, there are

⁷ <https://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/medical-school-admissions-doctor/articles/how-a-music-background-can-help-premed-students>; https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/pre_law/

approximately 190 MFA Theatre students, and 50 undergraduate theatre majors, and 40 undergraduate dance majors. Enrollment in undergraduate theatre courses is approximately 600 per year, while enrollment in undergraduate dance courses, which can also satisfy the undergraduate physical education requirement, ranges from 2,000 -2,400 per year.

From the perspective of the School of the Arts, it is both inconvenient and inefficient that the performance spaces available, inadequate in number and design as they are, presently occupy multiple buildings stretching between 115th Street and 133rd Street. Furthermore, most of the available performance spaces typically lack critical ancillary features, such as secure storage areas for sets and costumes, that facilitate ease of production. The dispersal of available venues makes this problem more acute. In what follows we provide an overview the current space inventory and associated shortcomings. In the appendix to this document, a more detailed description of the Lenfest Center for the Arts spaces is provided. Our discussion is organized by functionality of the available spaces.

B. Inadequate Storage Space

The lack of adequate performance-related storage space is the critical issue across the School of the Arts, the Columbia/Barnard Theatre Program, the Barnard College Dance Department, and extracurricular student groups. As will be detailed below, for many of the available performance spaces there is no storage space whatsoever. In other cases, what is available is either insufficient, inappropriate, or insecure. As a result, a large amount of time and expense must be devoted to the movement of sets, props, and costumes to and from the venue to what storage space is available. While the School of the Arts teaches its students the importance of sustainability and encourages them to make production decisions that are environmentally friendly and cost effective, it is ironic that academic departments and student groups often have no alternative but, for lack of storage space, to discard materials that could otherwise be reused or recycled for future productions, and/or rent equipment at a much higher annual cost than if the same equipment were purchased by the University and stored in an appropriate secure space on campus. Below we consider currently available storage from the perspective of each theatre program.

1. The School of the Arts: For the Theatre Program, classes, rehearsals, and performances are spread across the following multiple buildings between 115th Street and 133rd Street.

- Shapiro Theatre and Studios (115th Street): very limited dedicated storage space available in several closets.
- Watson Hall (115th Street): no storage space.
- Dodge Hall (116th Street): no storage space.
- The Riverside Church tower (Claremont Ave., 120th and 122nd Streets): no storage space⁸

⁸ Some students object to holding classes and rehearsals in churches, because of the larger religious purposes to which they are put.

- Lenfest Center for the Arts (119th Street): storage space limited to items required for the current production. (See Appendix B)
- Nash Building (133rd Street): temporary storage space on the 4th and 5th floors. There is permanent prop and costume storage space on the 5th floor (referred to as “Production Resources” space).

Although the Nash Building does have permanent storage space, the Theatre Program is then required to rent a truck to transport materials and sets between Nash and other rehearsal, classroom, or performance locations throughout Morningside Heights and Manhattanville, a requirement that discourages multiple rehearsals.

2. Columbia/Barnard Undergraduate Theater Program (managed by Barnard College’s Department of Theatre): Presently, the only available storage spaces are in hallways and storage lockers in the basements of Altschul and Milbank Halls. Yet, even these spaces may soon be unavailable due to anticipated renovations.

3. Extracurricular Student Groups: Other than the Varsity Show’s storage space in Hartley Hall, it appears that there is no regular storage space available to undergraduate student-led performing groups.

In summary, large amounts of money and enormous amounts of faculty, production staff, and student time are wasted due to insufficient storage space. This waste takes many forms. The storage of flats, platforms, scenery, and props would allow for these items to be reused or recycled which would save the time and expense currently devoted to building similar set pieces for each production. Currently, sound and lighting equipment is rented separately by each student production group. If adequate secure storage space were available, this equipment could be purchased, held in inventory, and rented to student groups at a modest charge to maintain a replacement sinking fund. Rechargeable battery packs to facilitate outdoor practice could be purchased and shared by various student groups. Under the present arrangement, students invariably store items in their dorm rooms, which could lead to safety or liability issues. Lastly, we note one unfortunate incident directly attributable to the shortage of student storage space: during construction in 2019, a miscommunication led Columbia Housing Facilities to dispose of everything in the Varsity Show storage facility in Hartley Hall.

C. Inadequate Classroom and Rehearsal Space

1. The School of the Arts: The Theatre (MFA) and Film (MFA and Undergraduate) Programs suffer from a profound lack of rehearsal space. Theatrical productions cannot be prepared for presentation by students studying in their dorm rooms or the library. It is, almost by construction a ‘multi-agent enterprise.’ Adequate rehearsal space is thus critical to a successful program. Besides rehearsal and classroom spaces being spread across multiple buildings between 115th and 133rd Streets as noted earlier, during the regular spring and fall semesters these spaces are fully booked not only during the day but also for evening classes, production rehearsals, and performances.

- Because space allocation naturally prioritizes class sessions and formal production rehearsals, there is limited to non-existent rehearsal space available for students who need simply to prepare work for class.
- The spaces that are currently being used for production rehearsals are often inappropriate to the work being done in them: frequently the available spaces are too small or the acoustics inadequate; immovable furniture may make the space unsuitable for practice; the type of flooring may make the rehearsal of dance scenes unsafe or impossible. In summary, although a space may technically be available this does not guarantee that it is fit for all types of rehearsals. This is not surprising: most of the spaces presently in use for rehearsals were not designed for this specific purpose.
- The lack of classroom and rehearsal space effectively prevents the expansion of these programs or the addition of new ones.

2. Columbia/Barnard Undergraduate Theatre Program: The situation here is shocking. Each semester there are approximately 300 students (approximately 35 to 40 percent from Barnard College, with the remaining 60 to 65 percent from Columbia College and General Studies), including approximately 50 undergraduate theatre majors.

- Each semester, approximately ten to 15 courses in this program require that, in the aggregate, approximately 120 to 150 students rehearse between class sessions.
- Presently, **there is only one classroom/studio** (229 Milbank Hall) that is regularly available for student rehearsals.
- The Theatre Department is then forced to seek standard classroom space for theatre majors who are rehearsing for their thesis productions.
- Due to the limited classroom/rehearsal space available, students regularly rehearse in stairwells, randomly encountered empty classrooms, residence hall lounges etc. These spaces frequently are inappropriate to the work done in them, besides displacing other students who might have a legitimate competing claim on the space.

3. Dance Department: In the Barnard College Dance Department, there are approximately 1,000 to 1,200 students each semester (approximately 40 percent from Barnard College, with the remaining 60 percent from Columbia College, the School of Engineering, and General Studies), including approximately 40 undergraduate dance majors.

- The curriculum itself is diminished by the lack of performance space. Other departments of the same size and quality at peer institutions require their students to participate in more performances and allow for more rehearsal time to prepare for each performance. The Dance Department must often rent space in Miller Theatre and various downtown venues for major presentations.
- Presently, there are three dance studios and one smaller rehearsal room. Two dance studios are in operation for classes daily between 8:00 AM and 9:00 PM. While some space is available for student rehearsal or practice, it is limited to approximately three to four hours per week per student,

which is insufficient. Historically, any remaining studio time has been offered to extracurricular student groups, but that has been significantly reduced as the Department has grown over the years.

- Since there is no support space, students are often expected to change their clothing in hallways and bathrooms. No space is available for warmups prior to class. These circumstances represent significant potential safety and Title IX issues.
- There is no proper storage space for costumes, which are presently stored in an office. Equipment is rented rather than purchased as there is no permanent storage space.
- The anticipated addition of a Barnard Wellness Center may further reduce the space available for dance practice and performance.

4. Extracurricular Student Groups: These groups are primarily composed of students from Columbia College, Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science, General Studies, and Barnard College, with occasional graduate student participation. More than 1,500 undergraduate students participate in extracurricular performing arts groups each year. All the space challenges mentioned earlier for majors and course work are even more acute for this population. For student-led groups, reserving rehearsal space is an inequitable, random, free-for-all process. Since there is not enough space available for students, competition for space becomes intense: most theatre, dance, and music groups want to rehearse weeknights between 8:00 PM and 11:00. PM Presently, it is not even remotely possible.

- Since there is not enough available space for those who need it, groups will often reserve whatever space they can get and then, if necessary, trade with another group for a more appropriate space. As with students in the Undergraduate Theatre Program, rehearsals end up being held in dorm rooms, stairwells, hallways et cetera. Student groups often find and “squat” empty classrooms, 520 Mathematics and specific Hamilton Hall classrooms being the most popular. It is inevitable that students who have more experience navigating the Columbia system have an unfair advantage over other less conversant students. There are well-founded reports of better-informed students tricking less informed ones into surrendering reserved spaces. Increasingly, residence hall lounges have become off limits to rehearsals.
- Classroom space is not officially available to extracurricular groups during the first three weeks of each semester, at the very time that all such groups need to get organized, hold auditions and begin rehearsals. The lack of space leads to a great deal of competition and confusion among groups. Imagine yourself as a first-year student interested in the performing arts choosing to audition during the first week of your first semester. Presently, you would be introduced to a performing arts environment that appears completely haphazard and disorganized.
- More than 1,000 students across the University participate in extracurricular dance groups. Those groups are required to fundraise to cover the cost of rehearsal and performance space rental. As a result, students often are forced to resort to rehearsing outdoors on concrete in all types of weather and temperatures. These are significant health and safety issues and every year there are injuries related to rehearsing under these conditions.

In summary, there is a profound lack of performance, rehearsal, and storage space for the performing arts across the University. Following on the Pandemic, the current space shortage continues to diminish student well-being by adding unproductive pressures and anxieties. The inability to schedule practice or rehearsal rooms, and the last minute “juggling” that follows, adds to anxiety. The Committee frequently hears the expression “scrambling for rooms,” especially from undergraduates. Thus, we argue for immediate investment in dedicated space for the activities.

III. A Suggestion for More Effective Use of Existing Practice Rooms

There are two ways to deal with a space shortage: (1) create more, and (2) more fully utilize existing spaces. While we are passionate in our belief that a new space, suitable both for musical concerts and recitals and theatrical productions must be given overwhelming priority, we will also argue that existing spaces, particular music practice and theatrical rehearsal rooms can be managed more efficiently so that they are maximally available to those who need them the most.

Our remarks here are thus focused on the use of room assignment technologies to assist in the more efficient use of the existing practice rooms. It is not a suggestion that such a technology could serve to remove the need for additional practice rooms. It will not. The Committee met with Gaspare LoDuca, Chief Information Officer and Vice President for Information Technology at Columbia, to assess the feasibility of using assignment technologies to allocate practice rooms. The University Registrar’s Office uses Event Management Systems (EMS) software for room allocations, although this software offering is batch oriented, with substantial pre-loading of requirements and restrictions, something that might not be best for rapidly changing practice room needs. However, ease of access and monitoring could be possible through the Lenel access system while Robin software, currently used by CUIT to manage its own approximately 350 cubicles, may provide the needed flexibility. In terms of cost, the already licensed EMS and Lenel software would be free of charge if extended to the practice room application. The Robin system would be available at the additional annual cost of approximately \$40,000. Any dedicated software developed in-house or acquired for the practice room focus could be integrated into the existing Columbia System, something that would be undertaken by CUIT itself at zero marginal cost to the University if sufficient lead time were allowed. This emphasizes that software is available for practice room assignment and that the University is blessed with CUIT resources capable for its successful integration. Additionally, a “functional owner” would need to be regularly available to adjudicate disputes, evaluate exceptions, et cetera.

IV. The Recommendations of the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee

The present space shortage has its origin in and is a consequence of the decentralized evolution of the University. Essentially, a space comes under the full control of the Department or School that has financed its creation. As a result, many spaces around the Morningside and Manhattanville campuses are not fully

utilized, a problem that has been aggravated by the “controlled building access” currently in effect across the University. Undergraduates suffer the effects the most.

Adding a performance space “here” and an additional storage space or practice room “there” does not really solve the performance space issues facing the School of the Arts and the Department of Music. Ultimately an integrated new building will be necessary if Columbia is to be competitive with its peers in music and the performance arts offerings. And the faculty who will oversee the use of the space must be involved in the design and control the direction of its use. We offer the following recommendations:

- 1. We ask that the Administration recognize the critical lack of performance and practice space on the Columbia campus available to its performing artists and, in particular, its undergraduates.**
- 2. We ask that resources be made available for the creation of one new performance space to be shared by the key schools and departments active in this area, the School of the Arts and the Department of Music. For example, Uris Hall should be considered for the incorporation of a new performance space, including the necessary storage space, with first priority given to Department of Music–School of the Arts needs.**
- 3. We ask that the University establish an electronic assignment system for practice rooms.**
- 4. We ask that the Administration initiate discussion around a new performing arts center.**

Respectfully,

John Donaldson and Patrice Derrington,

Co-Chairs, Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee

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2021-22 & 2022-23

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Appendix A

In this appendix we provide photographs to give some indication of the performing arts centers recently created at peer institutions. A listing of the relevant web sites follows these photos. Detailed information can be found there.

Princeton University:

BUILDINGS & ACCESS

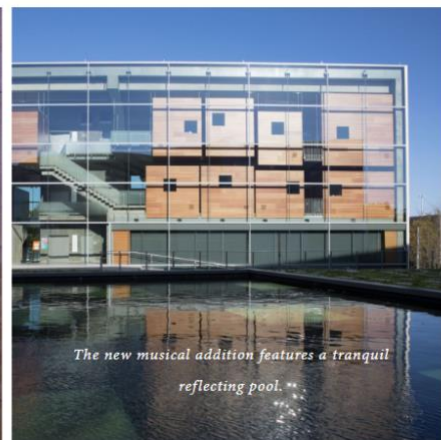
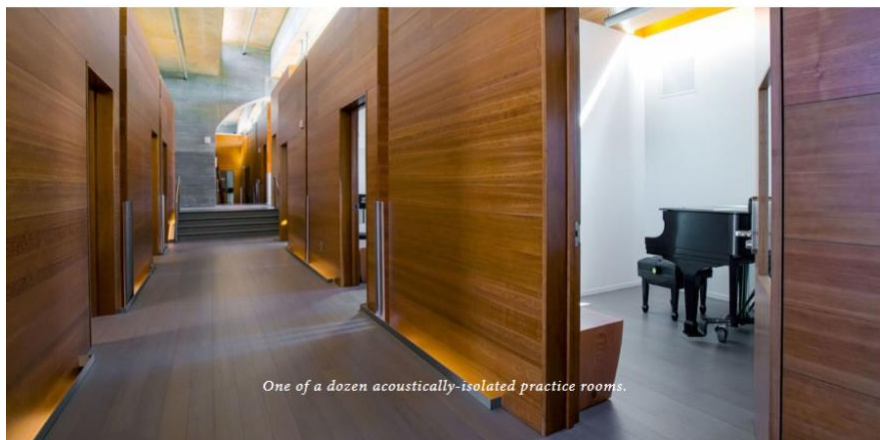
Woolworth Music Building and Efron Music Building house the Department's administrative offices, classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and the Mendel Music Library.



Woolworth Music Building Efron Music Building

All Department-affiliated students (graduate, majors, certificate, studio lesson and ensemble participants), faculty, and staff automatically have access to Department buildings once their department affiliation has been confirmed. Other members of the Princeton University community may request access through this form:

Music, theater, dance and visual arts come together at the three-building complex made possible in part by a \$101 million gift from the late Peter B. Lewis, Princeton Class of 1955.



Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts

A multidisciplinary home for the arts at the University of Chicago



We're back! Our building is now open and we're excited to see you.

In light of recent elevated COVID-19 metrics on campus and in the City of Chicago, and Chicago's **Community Risk Level** being changed to "medium" last Friday, the University is recommending that individuals wear a mask in indoor settings when others are present.

Please read our [COVID-19 Updates](#) for current information on building access and health & safety protocols.

Like 7.4K

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Contact

773.702.ARTS (2787)

Brown University

The Lindemann Performing Arts Center

Capital Projects

Current

Active Projects List

Brook Street Residence Halls

Churchill House Renovation and Addition

Greenhouse Gas Reduction & Decarbonization Project

Lincoln Field Building Renovation & Addition

Stonewall House

The Lindemann Performing Arts Center

Completed

Planning Resources

Project Delivery Process



The Schwartz Center



The Department of Performing and Media Arts is housed within the elegant Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts. A regionally recognized cultural facility, the Schwartz Center attracts 20,000 patrons a year to its varied activities.

Sources of Information; Performing Arts Centers at Other Peer Universities:

Princeton Lewis Center/Dept Overview:

<https://music.princeton.edu/facilities/>

Detail with picture:

<https://www.steinway.com/news/steinway-chronicle/spring-2018/playing-a-new-steinway-at-princeton-is-just-like-floating-on-air>

Policies:

<https://www.musicprincetoninfohub.com/practice-rooms>

Yale's Hendrie Hall was recently updated:

<https://music.yale.edu/2015/02/13/ydn-57-1-million-music-complex-slated-begin-construction>

<https://music.yale.edu/campus-facilities>

Brown just added a major performing arts center:

<https://www.brown.edu/facilities/projects/capital-projects/current/lindemann-performing-arts-center>

<https://www.brown.edu/initiatives/performing-arts-center/project-details>

<https://music.brown.edu/about/our-facilities/accessing-and-requesting-music-spaces>

Cornell's newish Schwartz Center:

<https://pma.cornell.edu/schwartz-center>

Univ of Chicago Logan Center:

<https://arts.uchicago.edu/explore/rev-a-and-david-logan-center-arts>

Very detailed listing of space assets and policies <https://arts.uchicago.edu/logan-center/logan-center-facilities-information-and-space-requests>

Appendix B:

Comments on the Lenfest Center for the Performing Arts:

While the various performance spaces in the Lenfest building are extremely attractive from the perspective of the audience experience, they are extremely inconvenient spaces for those who work in them, the actors and producers who create the artistic works. It appears as though the spaces were designed without input from those who would use them.

This Appendix provides photographs of the various performance spaces in Lenfest with special attention to the storage spaces associated with them. We emphasized that these performance spaces are quite functional from the audience perspective, while being much less so for those creating the performances. Three relevant spaces, the Lantern, an exhibition space on the top floor, the Black Box Theatre for theatrical performances, and the KOA Screening Theatre are considered.

1. The Lantern space is an open, exhibition-hall like space bounded on the south side by a curtainwall of glass that allows magnificent views of the surrounding neighborhood looking downtown. It is attractive for meetings, dinners, lectures etc. although the high degree of ambient light makes the viewing of slides difficult. Suitable in principle for dance performances, the floor unfortunately does not contain any shock-absorbent materials. More elaborate theatrical productions require vendor provided lighting systems and sound systems (at great expense) as the current facilities are more conducive to an art gallery than to a live performance. Any use beyond a lecture or dinner requires that protective plywood be put down to preserve the expensive flooring.
2. The Black Box Theatre (Flexible Performance Space) is an excellent space for theatrical performance. The lighting and sound system are excellent. There is, however, next to no storage space, temporary or otherwise: sets must be dismantled and carried to the storage facility by truck if the space is to be used for a different production the next day. If the collapsible seating is put in place, the effective performance floor area is small, and the temporary storage space further compromised. We illustrate the dearth of storage space not only immediately proximate to this theatre but also in the entire Lenfest building in Appendix B.
3. The Katharina Otto-Bernstein Screening Room. Once again, this is an excellent space for the single purpose for which it was designed: to screen movies and discuss them. It is actively used by the Film School for lectures, classes and special screenings. It is not congenial to theatrical performance, however, for a number of reasons. In particular, there is no stage, no backstage area or any other directly accessible storage space. Conceivably, it could serve as a concert hall. Unfortunately, none of the entrances is large enough to admit a grand piano. A Steinway Model D would have to be turned on its side and the legs perhaps removed if it were to be brought into the space, something that only outside professional piano-movers could accomplish. And the speaker's area is too small for such a piano to remain as a permanent fixture. It turns out that only the lobby is suitable for a grand piano and its environment is too variable to allow the piano to be properly maintained.

Figure 1: Theatre Lighting Closet



Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 confirm that there is little storage space adjacent to the Black Box Theatre.

Figure 2: Backstage to Black Box Theatre

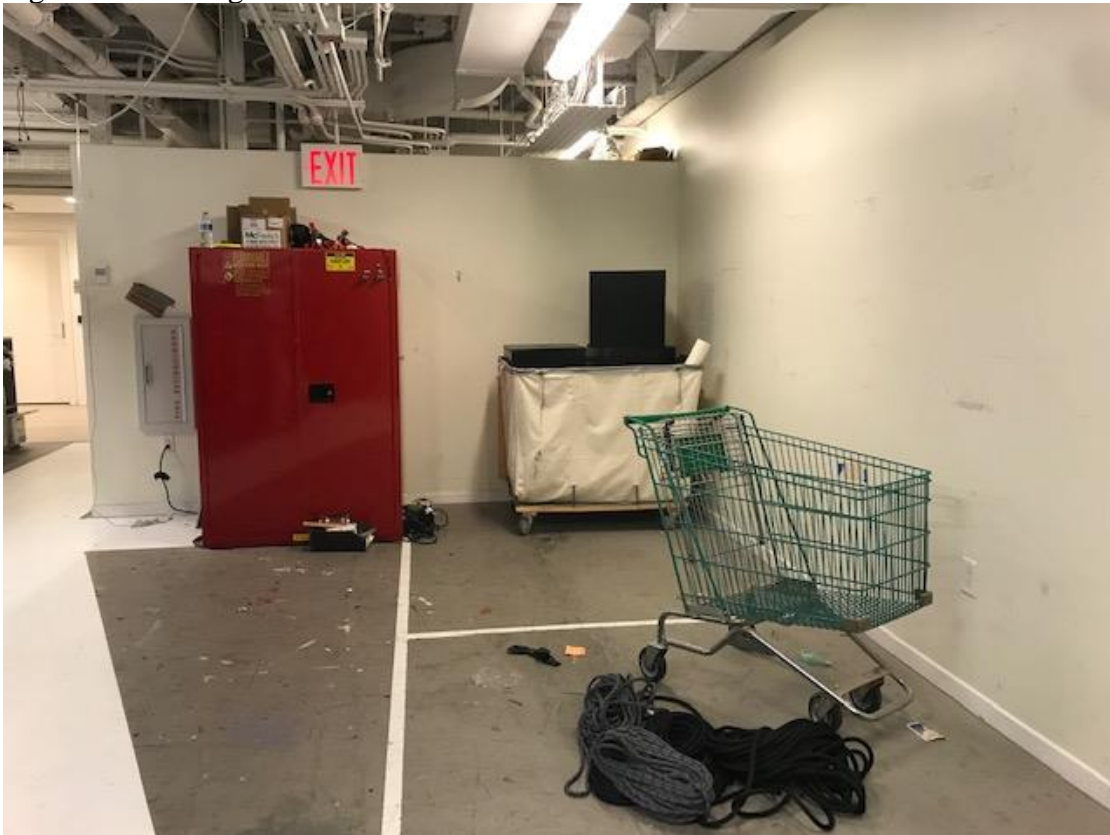


Figure 3: Backstage to Black Box Theatre

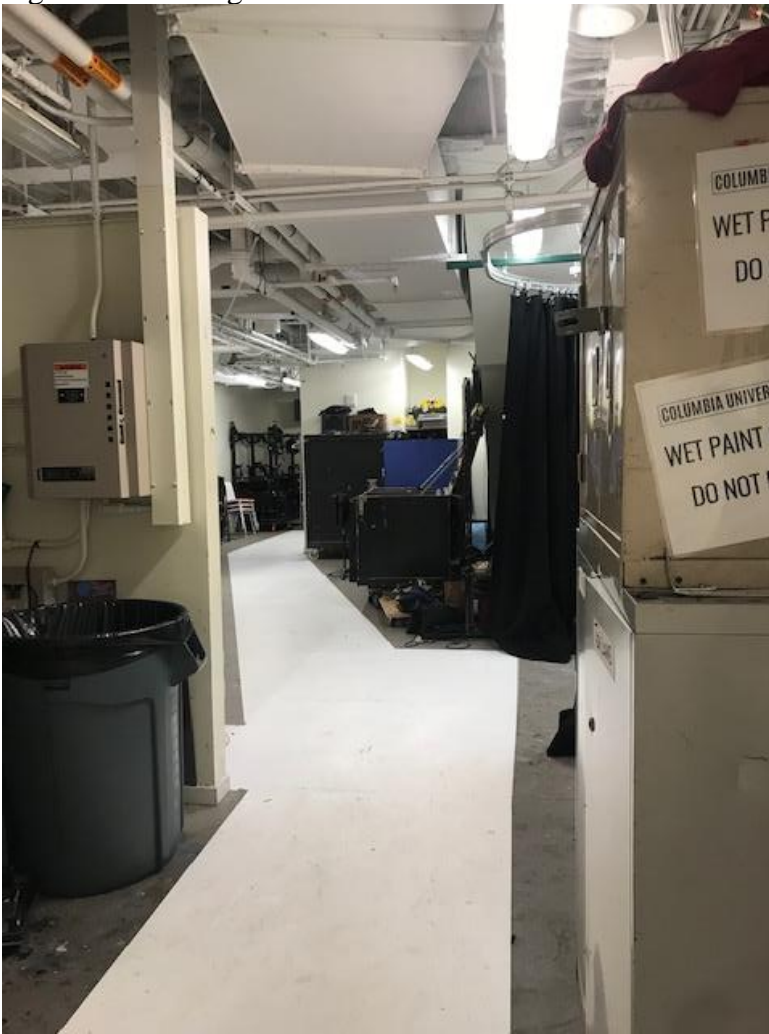


Figure 4: Backstage to Black Box Theatre



Figure 5: Backstage to Black Box Theatre



Figure 6: Paint Room



Figure 7: Lantern Storage Room



There is little surplus storage space if chairs, etc. are to be easily accessible.

Figure 8: C Level Building storage



This is storage of items (tables, ladders) that are used intermittently. Practically speaking, there is no surplus storage space for the School of the Arts.

Figure 9: Costume shop



This is only a 10' by 15' space. To the right of the space is the sole stacked washer and dryer.

Figure 10: E Level storage



It is already full; no storage space for sets, costumes, etc.

Figure 11: C Level rehearsal room



This is the single dedicated rehearsal space in the Lenfest building. It is already occupied virtually all the time for course preparation, theatrical rehearsals etc. by the School of the Arts. This rehearsal room is located in the basement.

Figure 12: C Level, riser storage (second set of collapsible seating for the Black Box Theatre)



No surplus storage space here.

CPPD FINAL REPORT

The Need for Additional Performance and Practice Space and the Improved Management of Existing Space at Columbia University

Focus: Undergraduate students at Columbia University

Message: The shortage of such spaces is acute, almost to the extent of compromising the mental health, contentedness and aspirations of Columbia University undergraduates.

A change of direction is needed. This problem will not solve itself. It will only become more severe, and is already at a crisis stage.

The CPPD Committee's Recommendations

Recommendation #1

We ask that the Administration recognize the critical lack of Performance and Practice Spaces on the Columbia campus available to its performing artists, and, in particular, its undergraduates.

Illustration of Need:

Columbia/Barnard Undergraduate Theatre Program

300 students/semester take classes, 60% from CC and GS

10-15 courses/semester with 120-150 students must rehearse between classes

Resources: 1 rehearsal room regularly available

Outcome: Students forced to rehearse in classroom, hallways, dorm rooms, lounges, etc.

Recommendation #2

We ask that resources be made available for the creation of one new performance space shared by the key schools and departments active in this area, the School of the Arts and the Department of Music.

For example, Uris Hall should be considered for the incorporation of a new performance space with first priority given to Department of Music – School of the Arts needs.

Illustration of Need:

Current Performance Spaces (Music Recital Perspective)

Lerner Hall 555:	restricted use; prior to 5:00 PM
Maison Française:	3 rentals/semester
Italian Academy:	3 rentals/semester
Earl Hall:	3 rentals/semester
St. Paul's Chapel:	3 rentals/semester
Uris Hall Calder Lounge:	14 nights/semester (pending)

Recommendation #3

We ask that the University establish an electronic assignment system for practice room

Problem: space silos at Columbia.

Advantages: more efficient use of existing space. Our CUIT can implement inexpensive software.

Recommendation #4

We ask that the Administration initiate discussion for a new Performing Arts Center.

Conclusion: The need is great and cannot be ignored.