

POLY 
ARTS CENTER

PLAY YOUR PART



“The sound of the sea, the curve of a horizon, wind in leaves, and the cry of a bird leave a manifold impression in us. Suddenly, without our wishing it, one of these memories spills from us and finds expression...I want to sing my interior landscape with the simple artlessness of a child.”

— Claude Debussy

“Creativity is fundamental to humankind and even the youngest among us have the ability to shed light on feelings and experiences. As educators, often we talk about the aspects of teaching that produce curious learners who are fearless in their pursuit of knowledge. Artistic expression is just one of many ways we encourage students to seek all that life has to offer and to flourish—*eudaimonia*.”

— Audrius Barzdukas P’20
Head of School

CENTER FOR CULTURE:

“The new 10,000-square-foot arts space will rise upwards from the site of our important theater facility and provide state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces dedicated to fostering music and dance, as well as a new exhibition gallery for the visual arts. The Arts Center will anchor the growth of Poly Arts and inspire and nourish creativity, discovery, interdisciplinary programs, and community-engaged partnerships.”

— Michael S. Robinson
Head of Arts

HOW YOU CAN PLAY YOUR PART

Poly Prep is on the verge of completing the \$10 million campaign for the Arts Center. The initiative began in 2012, and has been recently reimagined as a comprehensive, multidisciplinary facility for the performing and visual arts. You can help deliver a facility—endorsed by the Board of Trustees and with a strong foundation of philanthropic support—that matches the level of excellence demonstrated every day by our students and faculty.



\$10 million
budget



24-month
time frame



10,000 square feet
of additional space for

- Dance
- Instrumental Music
- Art Exhibition



State-of-the-art technology
and **engineering**



A hub for professional
artists in Brooklyn

See what Poly is planning >>>



Multipurpose spaces impact all art forms



« The 1,260-square-foot, multipurpose Grubman Family Dance Studio is a vital addition designed to keep pace with our expanding curriculum. More than a center for dance, it provides space for theater and musical theater rehearsals and can accommodate small-scale performances and workshops. Flexible seating and a professional lighting grid will allow audiences to witness works in progress.

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A new Lobby Gallery, adjacent to the entrance of the Richard Perry Theatre, creates an expanded 2,362-square-foot space for student and professional exhibitions, as well as a gathering place for pre-theater audiences and intimate social events.



The 1,250-square-foot Instrumental Music Room will be nearly double the size of the existing Band Room. With professionally designed acoustics and outfitted with state-of-the-art audio capabilities, the new space dramatically improves our facilities to meet the standards of excellence that define Poly Prep.





“The new Dance Studio is paramount to the development of young dancers. It will allow us to specialize even further and build out the dance program for more students.”

— Danielle Bensky, Upper School Dance Faculty, and Ashley Hacker, Middle School Dance Faculty

TIME TO PLAY Instrumental Music Room resounds with joy

Poly Prep has an abundance of enthusiastic and talented musicians. Our program offers students in Grades 3-12 a host of opportunities to experience the joy of music-making, from our growing string ensemble to traditional concert band and jazz ensemble. The program extends beyond the mastery of a particular instrument to include music theory, musicianship, and music production, as well as exposure to non-Western traditions like African drumming and microtonal music.

The new Instrumental Music Room will:

- Nearly double the size of rehearsal space, allowing for the first time ever, the opportunity to perform large-scale band repertoire and orchestral music for mixed ensemble.
- Ease the burden on the existing band room, which dates from the original 1917 construction, allowing more frequent rehearsals and better scheduling overall.
- Expand the number and quality of spaces available for Poly Conservatory, our after-school program of private instruction, ensembles, and classes in music.
- Support seniors who are applying to advanced college-level programs by offering the necessary space, time, and equipment to prepare applications and audition materials.
- Offer state-of-the-art facilities for collaborations with professional musicians for workshops, master classes, and public performances.

TIME TO MOVE Grubman Family Dance Studio is a leap forward

Dance “with a capital D” launched 25 years ago on the Dyker Heights campus. Now, a generation of young artists has proven that, with the right encouragement, the sky is the limit. POLYDANCE begins in the early grades and continues throughout Middle and Upper School, exposing students to folk, jazz, modern, ballet, and traditional African forms. Advanced dance classes function as a repertory company and the program has produced many professional dancers in its relatively short history.

The new Dance Studio will:

- Create a dedicated space for group instruction, rehearsals, and 1:1 coaching so pivotal to the development of young artists.
- Feature specialized protective flooring for advanced ballet technique, including en pointe, and expand our curriculum to include other technically demanding forms.
- Unleash the full potential of partnering, jumps, leaps, and other movements that require a double height ceiling.
- Offer time and space for senior dancers as they prepare for college applications and the all-important audition materials.
- Strengthen Poly’s ties to community-based artists and companies such as Elizabeth Streb, Paul Taylor Dance, and the Dance Theater of Harlem, among others, who regularly collaborate with our faculty and students.

“We strive to give students of all levels the opportunity to explore and develop as artists and to be appropriately challenged as they grow, to advocate for the importance of arts education and to make sure all students have access to this important part of their development.”

— Dan Doughty,
Performing Arts
Department Chair





“An important aspect of the theater program at Poly is that the students get to work side by side and collaborate with theater professionals, and get to experience a high level of theater production whether on stage or behind the scenes.”

— David Higham P'07
Performing Arts Faculty, Theater

TIME TO SHOW

Art expresses beauty and emotion

Visual arts are an integral and expanding aspect of POLYARTS. Our distinguished faculty includes many award-winning professional artists who teach a variety of mediums including drawing, painting, photography/video, ceramics, fabric arts, and 3D design. Students learn from experts in art history, curation, and exhibition who guide their intellectual growth with exposure to museum collections, visits to galleries, and tours of private collections.

The new Lobby Gallery adjacent to the Richard Perry Theatre, will:

- Provide a welcoming and highly trafficked entry point to the performing and visual arts hub on the Dyker Heights campus.
- Create the first-ever facility designed specifically for exhibiting flat art, video installations, and 3D art with appropriate lighting, digital technology, and display cases.
- Double the size of the existing theater lobby with comfortable seating for theater patrons and for students throughout the day who need a quiet place for study and reflection.
- Bolster arts programming by community-based artists including lectures, juried exhibitions/art sales, and other public activities.

TIME TO CREATE

Theater and Musical Theater share our stories

The theater and musical theater programs routinely produce two or three *different* productions simultaneously each semester, and space is at a premium. These programs—historic strengths of Poly’s arts curriculum—will directly benefit from the new Band Room and Dance Studio, providing significantly larger spaces for *sitzprobe*, read-throughs, staging and blocking, and rehearsing large-scale dance numbers. In particular, the flexibility of the Dance Studio with a professional repertory lighting rig and bleacher-style seating makes possible activities such as poetry and spoken word performances, film exhibitions, and workshops.

The new spaces will impact Theater and Musical Theater with:

- Purpose-built spaces for rehearsals when the mainstage is occupied.
- Greater flexibility in scheduling during particularly busy times each semester.
- Rooms large enough to replicate the mainstage, particularly for blocking rehearsals and staging complex choreography.
- Best-in-class facilities for visiting directors, choreographers, playwrights, and designers, as well as other partnering organizations.
- Space for developmental works and commissions.

“As an entryway into the Arts at Poly, the exhibition space will introduce our community to the variety of artistic approaches students are engaged in, both in and beyond the studio.”

— Laura Coppola '95, P'35,
Charles and Valerie Diker Chair
of Visual Arts



»» TIME TO SHARE

Our Talents and Resources

Since 1854, Poly Prep Country Day School has been an anchoring institution in South Brooklyn, with strong ties in Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Fort Hamilton, and beyond. Poly Prep

“The new Arts Center marries our world-class arts program with distinguished working artists. Through artist-led collaborations, students experience the creative process and make important connections that will serve them for years to come.”

— Robert Aberlin '62, P'00, '03, Director of Arts Outreach

has an opportunity to bring the community closer still with the construction of the new Arts Center. In recent years, we have welcomed many distinguished Brooklyn-based artists and companies to work with our students through the Arts Partnerships program. These professionals—composers, choreographers, filmmakers, and storytellers of all kinds—energize and inspire our students.

Additionally, the new Arts Center will expand the number and quality of low-cost rental spaces available to our professional

collaborators for their own rehearsals, workshops, and small-scale performances.

We are eager to share our artistic resources with our nearest neighbors including public school children and residents of nearby senior centers. Several of our recent residencies have included partnerships with public middle and high school students who, too often, lack access to professional artists. We look forward to expanding this effort with greater capacity in our programming, thanks to the construction of the Arts Center.

“Performance artist Dread Scott joined grades 7-12 in early March for a provocative, riveting talk followed by countless thoughtful questions from students. Then, a few days later, faculty members led students in workshops about social change, activism, art, protest, historical reenactment, poetry and text, and more. Students from the Brooklyn High School for the Arts joined us on both days.”

— Laura Coppola '95, P'35, Charles and Valerie Diker Chair of Visual Arts

ARTS COLLABORATORS

Visual Arts

Sarah E. Brook
Brooklyn Museum of Art
Tawny Chatmon
Lee Quiñones P'27
Dread Scott

Dance

Chen Dance Center
Cora Dance
Cumbe Dance
Dance Theater of Harlem
Paul Taylor Dance Company
Jill Sigman '85
Streb Extreme Action
Ten Hairy Legs

Music

Cameron Bossert '02

Playwrights

Camilo Almonacid
Monica Flory
Miranda Rose Hall
Nylda R. Mark
Eric Ulloa
Elizabeth Wong

SUPPORTING YOUNG ARTISTS AND CREATING ADVOCATES

POLY ARTS CENTER

Poly Prep's primary focus is to educate and inspire young people who will be leaders of tomorrow. We cultivate change agents who will help shape the world in which we live. Poly Prep supports exceptional talent and provides a home for creativity among its students. The Arts Center—along with our other academic and athletic facilities—supports teaching and learning and serves the cultural hub for our community. When it is completed, this facility will demonstrate to prospective families our commitment to a balanced approach and offer myriad ways of engaging the larger community in Brooklyn in the rich and multifaceted life on our Dyker Heights campus. Already, Poly is known for producing graduates who excel in two or more disciplines—the football star who dances, the young scientist who plays piano, and the budding writer whose watercolors may alter the way you perceive the world. The Arts Center will feed our collective soul and is just the beginning of a new era of growth at Poly. **With your help, our vision will become a reality.**

PROMINENT ARTS ALUMNI AND GRATEFUL PARENTS

Poly Prep has a long and distinguished history of producing alumni who are leaders in the performing and visual arts. A small sampling includes legendary record producer **Richard Perry '60** (Rod Stewart, Carly Simon, The Pointer Sisters) and film producer **Robert Cort '64** (*On the Basis of Sex*, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, *Jumanji*), among others. More recently, Poly's arts alumni include director **Shaka King '97** (*Judas and the Black Messiah*), actors **Dan Fogler '94** (*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *Kung Fu Panda*), and **Grace Gummer '04** (*American Horror Story: Freak Show* and *Mr. Robot*), as well as Broadway dancers **Jill Sigman '85** and **Noah Aberlin '00**, and musical theater star **Doug Jabara '84**. In the visual arts we proudly claim **Akili Tommasino '05**, assistant curator at the Metropolitan Museum, and video game illustrator **Zachary Pytlak '99**. Thanks to your investment, Poly will continue to produce alumni leaders in the arts.

Frederic Wills '15 >>> College Dancer

"Dance was an integral part of my eight-year Poly career and I continued to dance at Wesleyan. I will always remember the 2014 production of *A Chorus Line* with some of the most intricate, fun, fast-paced, and certainly tiring choreography that I have ever experienced. I was so proud of the cast, their hard work, and the hours of rehearsals that it took to get to our finished product."



<<< Akili Tommasino '05, Associate Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Art Department

"Thanks in part to my time at Poly, I studied art history at Harvard and founded the Prep for Prep/ Sotheby's Art Academy in 2017 to give high school students of color an earlier window into the art world."

Rick and Frances Knutsen P'18, '21 >>>

"Poly's amazing arts faculty and the warm, collaborative spirit they foster among the students were essential to the growth of our daughters, Olivia (Northwestern U. '22) and Charlotte (Brown U. '25) as performers!"



Charlotte Knutsen as Sandy in *Grease*

TV, Film, Theater

Khail Bryant '17
Robert Cort '64
Liz Feldman '95
Dan Fogler '94
Alyssa M. Gold '08
Nikki Grillos '02
Grace Gummer '04
Will Hochman '10
Shaka King '97
Nina Lisandrello '00
James Manos Jr. '77
Aaron Matthews '89
Robert Maylor '96
Laura Terruso '99
Amedeo Turturro '08
Jonathan Sanger '61
Bonnie Somerville '91

Musical Theater

Doug Jabara '84
Leah Horowitz '97
Robert Underwood '04

Music

Hans Bilger '12
Simon DuFour '06
David Flemming '76
Paul Josephs '96
Howard Levy '69
Neale Perl '73
Richard Perry '60
Evan Wilson '96

Dance

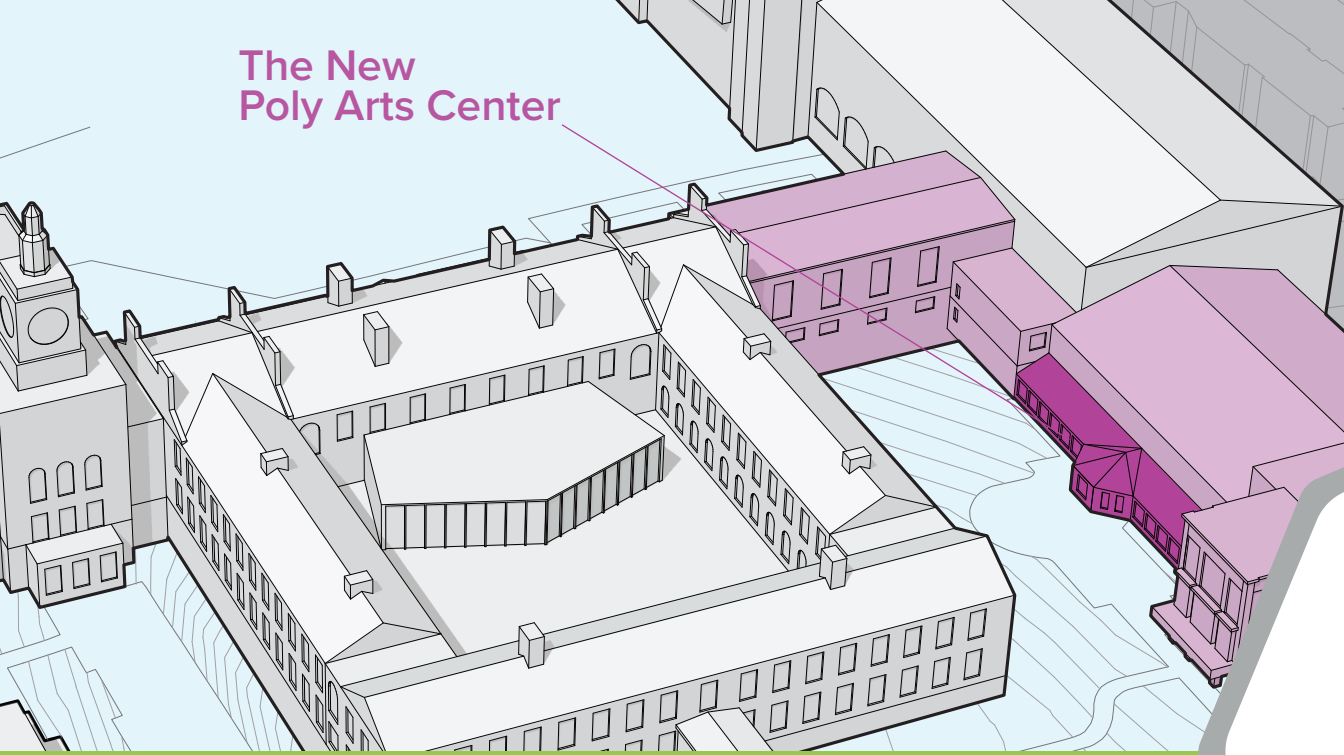
Noah Aberlin '00
Lauren Perilli '00
Jill Sigman '85

Visual Arts

Olujimi Akili Tommasino '05
Marina Gluckman '08
Peter Mauss '69
Zachary Pytlak '99
Rodger Stevens '84
Andrew Zarou '90

Partial List

The New Poly Arts Center



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