



## The Colburn School, LA’s World-Renowned School for Music and Dance, Unveils Frank Gehry Design for a Transformational Expansion of Its Campus

Leadership Gift from Terri and Jerry Kohl Adds New Performance Venue, “A Hall for All,” to the Celebrated Cultural Corridor of Downtown LA

\$270 Million Raised to Date in Support of Concert Hall and Dance Facilities to Benefit Colburn Students and the Community

Press conference streaming live until 11 am PT at [colburnschool.edu/livestream](https://colburnschool.edu/livestream)



Left: Rendering of the Colburn Center; view from Hill Street West towards Trudl Zipper Dance Institute entrance, adjacent park, and stairs leading up to Olive Street and public plaza. Right: Rendering of Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall within the Colburn Center. Courtesy of Gehry Partners.

**LOS ANGELES, CA, MARCH 16, 2022** —The Colburn School, one of the world’s preeminent schools for music and dance, today unveiled architectural designs by Frank Gehry for the Colburn Center, a 100,000 square-foot campus expansion in downtown Los Angeles to inspire and serve the region’s young performing artists and performing arts organizations and ensembles. The center will be located across the street from the School’s existing campus in the cultural corridor that includes Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Music Center, the Museum of Contemporary Art, and The Broad.

“With great joy and excitement, we share the design of Frank Gehry’s multi-dimensional project, which will welcome our students, performing artists, and audiences from across Los Angeles,” said Colburn

President Sel Kardan. “The Colburn Center is a physical manifestation of the School’s founding principle of ‘access to excellence,’ allowing Colburn to continue and expand our educational and performance activities in a design which breaks down barriers between audience and performer and reveals the educational process. We look forward to collaborating with our artistic partners in Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall, which complements the other stellar performance spaces in Downtown Los Angeles.”

Conceived as a major contribution to the cultural and civic life of Downtown LA, the Colburn Center will make the Colburn campus an even livelier hub of artistic activity and enable the School to expand its mission of presenting programs for the public, which include performance and educational collaborations with acclaimed local and touring artists and ensembles. It will also provide much-needed performance space in a mid-sized hall for the region’s established and emerging performing arts organizations.

Gehry’s design will welcome students and audiences alike, with a dynamic composition of transparent and opaque interlocking blocks that step down into the natural contour of the site. A 1,000-seat concert hall uses an in-the-round design to create intimacy between the performers and the audience and removes the stage lip, putting front-row seats at eye-level with the performers. Orchestra, opera, dance, and musical theater will all be at home in the hall, which is equipped with an orchestra pit and a stage large enough to accommodate the grandest works and the largest orchestrations.

Four professional-sized dance studios and a 100-seat flexible studio theater are enveloped in glass and provide a literal window into the beauty and rigor of dance training and performance. With a separate entrance and distinct architectural character, the light-filled dance facilities will have their own identity while harmonizing with the larger project.

The Colburn Center will be equipped to take a modern approach to multi-media technology and production. The facilities include commercial-quality recording and streaming capabilities, and performance spaces will be outfitted with state-of-the-art lighting. Public spaces include an outdoor plaza, giving visitors a front-row seat to the performing arts, and gardens which provide much-needed green space and pedestrian access to nearby public transit hubs.

The Colburn Center stands directly across the intersection of Olive and Second Streets from the Colburn School’s existing campus, complementing and completing both its facilities and its architecture, which already support over 500 performances a year. The new complex, which is expected to break ground in 2023 and to host its first performances in the fall of 2025, will add to the already dynamic activity at Colburn. The Colburn Center will complete the largest concentration of Gehry-designed buildings anywhere in the world, joining the soon-to-open mixed-use project, The Grand, and the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall.

The estimated \$350 million campaign for the building has raised \$270 million to date. Carol Colburn Grigor, Chair Emeritus of the Board of Trustees, has spearheaded the campaign, with generous leadership support from Terri and Jerry Kohl. In appreciation for the Kohl’s leadership gift, the 1,000-seat concert hall will be named Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall. Their gift also includes seeding an

endowment fund to help underwrite access to Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall for Los Angeles-based performing arts organizations, artists, and ensembles. The flagship ensemble of the Conservatory of Music, the Colburn Orchestra, will be generously underwritten by Eva and Marc Stern and will have its first permanent home in Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall. The campaign has been enthusiastically championed and supported by the Colburn School Board of Trustees, who welcome the community to join them in this effort.

“The Colburn School has its roots in a passion for both music and community. I’m thrilled to see both expressed so beautifully in the design by Frank Gehry,” said Carol Colburn Grigor, Life Chairman Emeritus. “As the only school in the U.S. that is fully and equally committed to teaching musicians and dancers at every level, and that devotes extraordinary resources to ensuring that students of any age, from any economic background, can pursue their artistic passions, we are deeply proud to unveil this major project. I’m grateful to Frank and to all the generous donors—including Terri and Jerry Kohl, after whom our visually and acoustically spectacular new performance hall will be named; Eva and Marc Stern, who are underwriting the Colburn Orchestra; and the School’s Board of Trustees—who have joined me to make possible this wonderful new contribution to Los Angeles and the world of the arts.”

“Our dream is to create a vibrant, welcoming space for the Los Angeles community—a hall for organizations of all sizes currently without a place to call home,” said Terri and Jerry Kohl. “Truly a ‘hall for all’ where diverse ensembles and artists from across the city can share their performances with an audience that reflects the makeup of the population of Los Angeles. We feel deeply honored to be recognized for our part in realizing this wonderful project, which will do so much for the entire community of Los Angeles.”

In addition to the Kohl’s generous gift, they have seeded an endowment fund that will underwrite access to the hall for Los Angeles-based performing arts organizations, artists, and ensembles. This fund will ensure that multiple, diverse groups have access to this beautiful and approachable performance space. It is the Kohl’s hope that other philanthropists will join them in building a robust fund that will help ensure vibrant community use of the hall all year round.

Making performance accessible to LA audiences and artists is a core tenet of Colburn that is also expressed through its educational experience. The new building will serve the Colburn School’s students at all levels and disciplines, including the renowned, degree-granting Conservatory of Music, and the Trudl Zipper Dance Institute, more than doubling the School’s facilities dedicated to dance. The expansion will also provide additional performance space for Colburn’s pre-collegiate Music Academy and its Community School of Performing Arts, a robust program of music instruction for thousands of children and adults each year. The new venues, which include an outdoor rooftop and garden spaces—will provide Colburn with an ideal suite of performance spaces when added to the existing 430-seat Zipper Hall and 189-seat Thayer Hall.

The expansion project reunites Gehry, one of the world’s most distinguished architects, with his collaborator Yasuhisa Toyota of Nagata Acoustics, chief acoustician for illustrious concert halls

including Walt Disney Concert Hall, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, and the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg. The all-star project team also includes Michael Ferguson, principal of TheatreDNA, who formerly consulted on Gehry's New World Center in Miami Beach and Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College.

Frank Gehry said, "The Colburn School is an incredibly important asset to the cultural district of Downtown Los Angeles. Their new hall is a major blessing for the music world of this city, and I am honored to be a part of it. I hope that we have helped create a setting to nurture and grow the next generations of talent."

### **The Design of the Colburn Center**

Conceived as an ensemble of interlocking volumes, each of which houses a distinct program while interacting dynamically with the whole, the center will be built into a terrain that slopes down from Olive Street to Hill Street. On the Olive Street side, a transparent, three-story-high main entrance and lobby will lead to the building's 1,000-seat concert hall: the Colburn School's first venue for a full-scale orchestra and home to the Conservatory's flagship ensemble, the Colburn Orchestra.

Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall will feature floating balconies and tiers of seats embracing a circular stage area, as well as an orchestra pit to accommodate up to 70 musicians. The panels of an acoustical ceiling suspended above will resemble clouds floating over the hall. In keeping with this airy atmosphere, two skylights will bring daylight into the space.

The dance spaces housing the Trudl Zipper Dance Institute will create the most comprehensive dance education complex in Downtown Los Angeles. Glass-enclosed studios and a studio theater with 100-seats will face Hill Street. The transparent spaces will create opportunities for the public to witness the beauty and hard work of dance training. The studio theater will sit atop a two-story stack of four dance studios—three measuring 2,600 square feet and another for tap dance measuring 1,400 square feet. Due to the slope of the terrain, the studio theater will be at the same level as the entrance to the concert hall.

"These glass studios will make dance visible every day as people walk by this building that dances," notes Silas Farley, Dean of Colburn School's Trudl Zipper Dance Institute. "We will be able to explore the synthesis of music and dance and be a global gathering place for the investigation of dance and music, architecture and design."

Two gardens will weave these elements together and add to the green space of Downtown LA. A roof garden on top of the studio theater offers views over 2nd Street and space for pre-performance receptions, intermission gatherings, or a place for small-scale outdoor performances. A second garden at ground level includes an area for the public as well as a gated entrance at Hill Street and 2nd Street, where students, faculty, parents, and visitors may gather, study, converse, and relax, as well as enjoy small concerts.

## About the Colburn School

Founded on the principle of “access to excellence,” the Colburn School provides the highest quality music and dance education at all levels of development, from children as young as 7 months old to adults. A busy downtown campus welcomes an estimated 10,000 people each week, including students attending classes, lessons, and rehearsals; community partners who rent the current performance and lecture spaces; and audience members who enjoy the offerings of over 500 performances a year in two different existing small venues. Robust scholarship support and active community engagement programs ensure that the Colburn experience is accessible to all. In a typical year, students receive over \$11 million in scholarship support, and community programming serves 15 Title I public schools within a six-mile radius of campus.

The units of the School are:

- The **Community School of Performing Arts** welcomes passionate, dedicated students of all ages, from seven months of age to adult, and is committed to making the highest quality music education available to all. It offers private instruction and group classes through over 120 classes each year in orchestral instruments, piano, guitar, voice, jazz, music theory, drama, and ensembles including orchestra, choir, chamber music, and more—taught by world-class teachers. The Community School is also the home of Colburn’s Jumpstart program, a 100% tuition-free program for young learners from early childhood through high school.
- The **Music Academy** brings exceptional pre-college students from around the world to Colburn and takes their training to the next level. Young musicians ages 14 to 18 balance performance, musical instruction, and academics in a residential program which prepares them for conservatory study and performing careers at the highest levels of achievement.
- The **Trudl Zipper Dance Institute** is dedicated to developing the talent and ambitions of its students, from beginners starting in Youth Dance to a national pool of aspiring professionals in the Dance Academy. Students receive training in ballet, tap, musical theater, and modern genres as part of a comprehensive dance education that emphasizes the joy of dance through artistic and technical accomplishment.
- The **Conservatory of Music** opened less than twenty years ago with one goal: to train the very highest level of instrumental performers for careers in music. Outstanding performance opportunities, unparalleled faculty, and unique all-scholarship model covering tuition, room and board for all students have allowed the Conservatory to produce dynamic young soloists, chamber groups, and orchestra musicians. In the short time since the Conservatory’s inception, over 140 alumni have gone on to professional orchestra positions.
- Created to serve all units of the School, the **Center for Innovation and Community Impact** empowers the musical and dance leaders of tomorrow by nurturing students’ passion and ability to serve their communities, preparing them for sustainable careers, and embracing the

development of new ideas. The Center embodies Colburn's commitment to developing young artists with the curiosity, skills, and commitment to make a difference in their field.

Each year, more than 2,000 students from around the world study at Colburn to benefit from the renowned faculty, exceptional facilities, and focus on excellence that unites the community. Learn more at [www.colburnschool.edu](http://www.colburnschool.edu).

### **Social Media**

Facebook.com/colburnschool

Instagram and Twitter: @ColburnSchool

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