

When The Clarice was first built, food service was considered a mere support function. With the renovation of Applause Café, the client re-imagined food and drink as performance, their project brief calling for the transformation of the lackluster lunch spot into a star attraction.

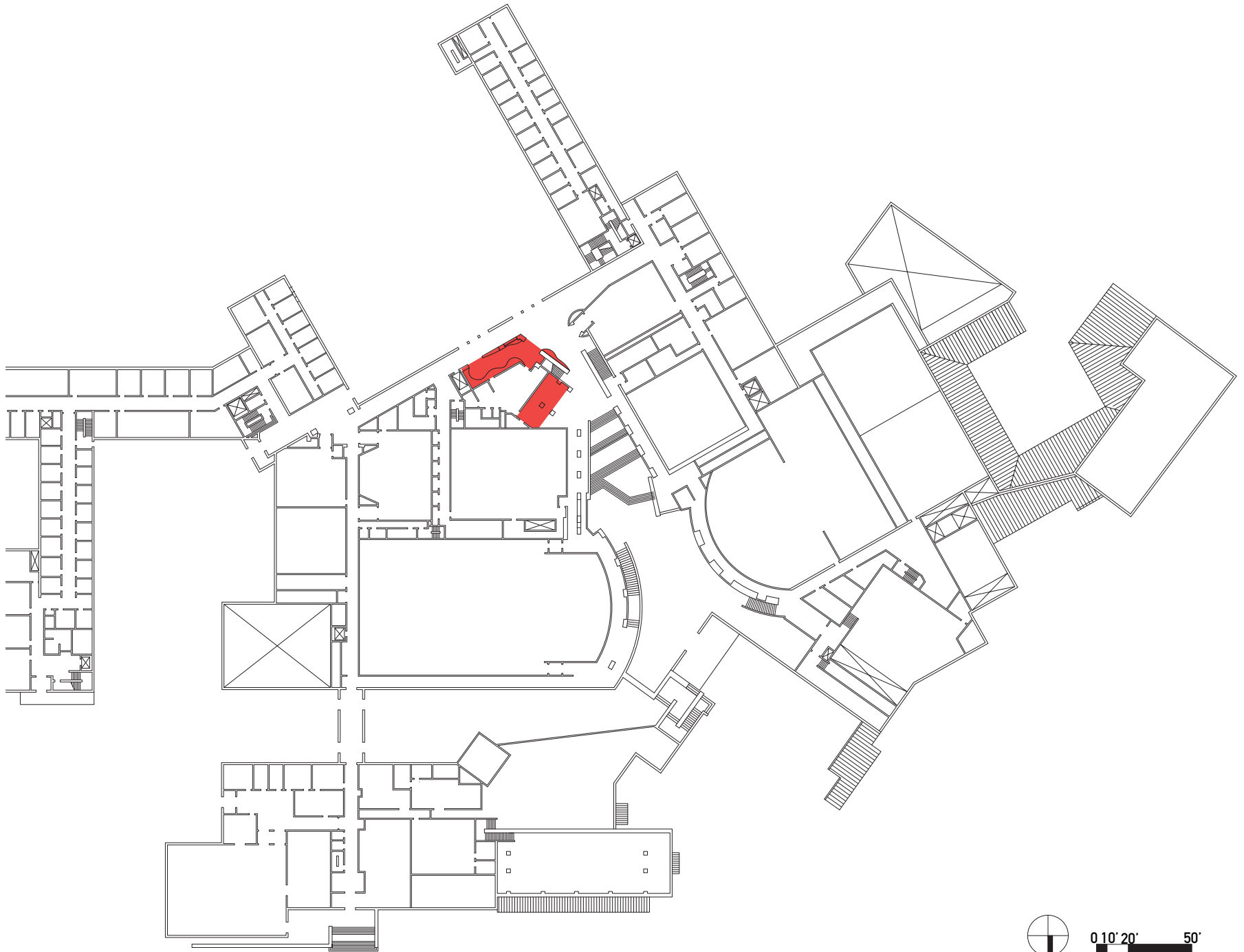
Located at the top of the grand stair, the existing café consisted of a serving area and a seating area, separated by another stairway. A key challenge was to unify the two spaces and create an imagable place. At the food service area, refrigerator cases were replaced with a counter, from which customers select freshly made soups and salads. In the seating area, a curvilinear element wraps walls and stairway, fulfilling the client's desire for a hub where The Clarice's constituents-artists, students, faculty, staff, and audiences-come together for meals, work sessions, or chance encounters.

The new Applause Café activates the upper lobby, providing an attractive meeting place for dancers, musicians, actors and technical personnel to come together with audiences at the heart of The Clarice. A sustainable solution, the seating element and furniture, designed through a prototyping process that took advantage of The Clarice's scenery and prop fabrication facilities, was constructed from Plyboo, a renewable material. Sparkly LED lighting spotlights the food and reduces the space's energy costs.



**The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
College Park, Maryland**

Applause Cafe Renovation

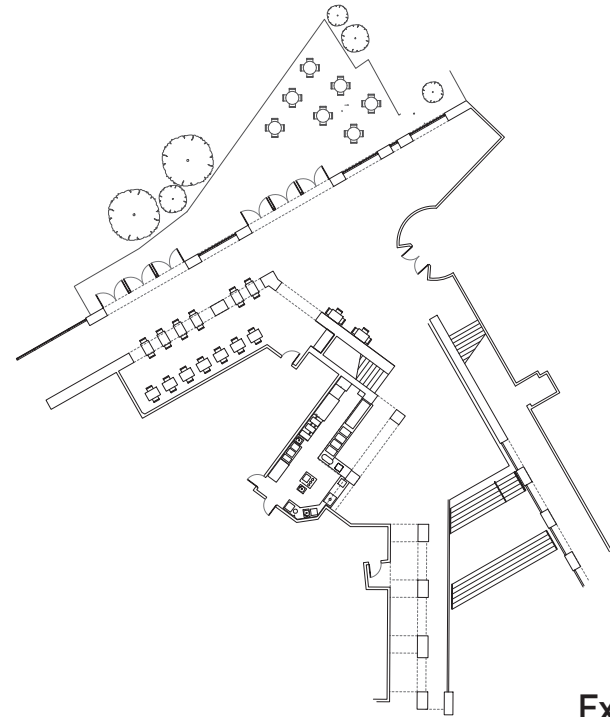


Context Plan





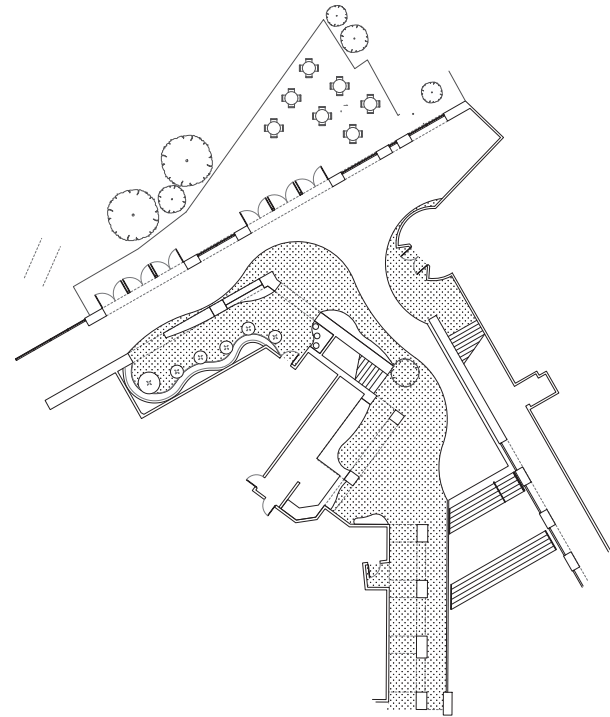
Existing Seating



Existing Floor Plan



New Seating



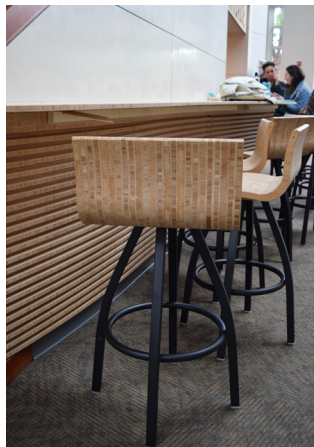
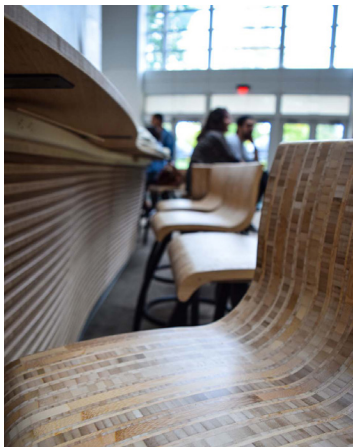
New Floor Plan

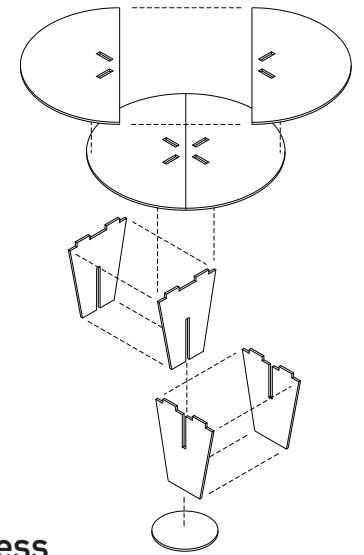


Serving Area





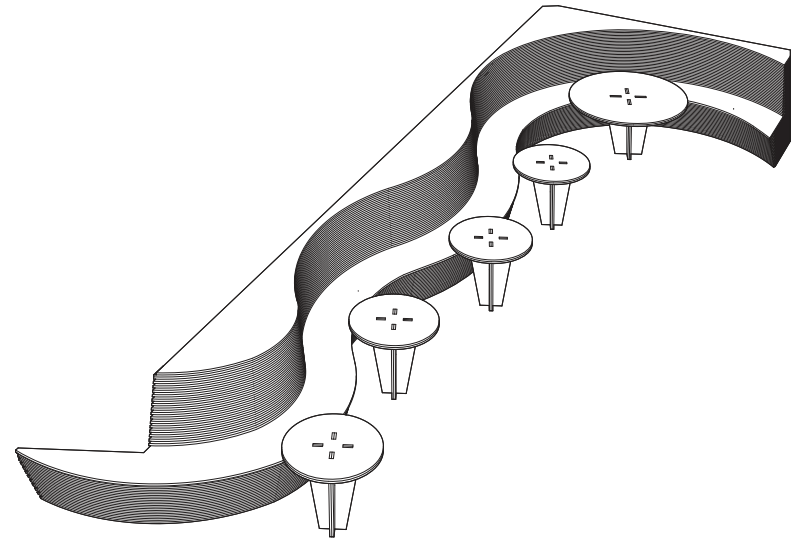
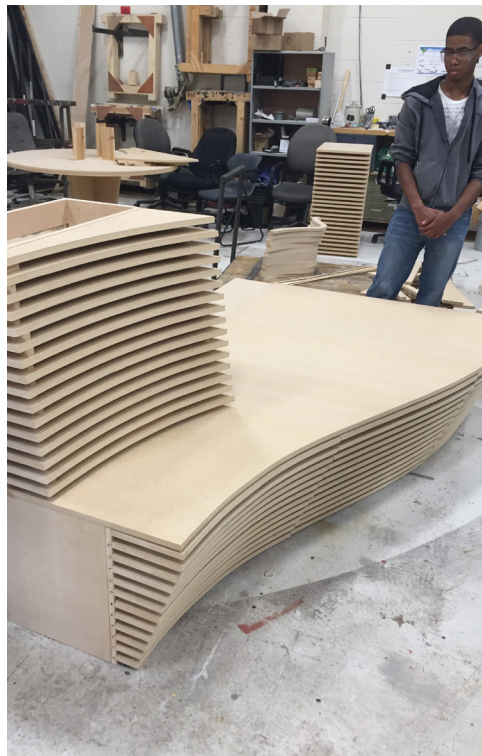




Furniture Design and Prototyping Process

The team began the furniture design process with sketching and small-scale physical modeling; transitioning into digital modeling; then full-scale prototyping on the CNC router in the scenery/prop shop at The Clarice; testing mock-ups of bench, counter, tables, chairs, and bar stools on site in the cafe with users; and iterating digital model and prototypes to refine the designs.





Bench Prototyping and Fabrication Process

A commercial scenery shop used the team's digital model to fabricate the built-in furnishings, tables, chairs, and bar stools out of Plyboo.

