At 400’ long, McCarty/Bullock/Hollisapple’s School of Art and Architecture introduced a new vocabulary to the University in 1976. Designed around the conceptual interior “street”, a concrete and glass structure embraced a more modern language and technology that informed the campus of its occupants.

Our project reinterprets this attitude and “street” concept. As much as the original “street” is a link in the maze of pedestrian paths on the campus, our scheme acts as an alley way between the university body (human) and the sky (light); two forces that bring architecture to life.

The scheme extracts DNA from the original architecture building and combines it with newer technologies and materials. The concept is literally bent and contorted to fit within its new site, in doing so exposing opportunities that lie dormant in the existing space.

The 2-layer ETF inflated structure rises from the courtyard, establishing an assembly space that at times seems natural, at other times unavoidable. Through a rational exploitation of this material’s unique qualities the exterior skin references the traditional (brick) campus architecture with pattern and color. Concrete is replaced by air pressure and the distinction between solid and void, inside and out is blurred to create an assembly space that requires minimal energy and material input.

A series of step-seats creates an outdoor assembly space that is accessible to the entire campus. The new composition creates a place that is as much about architecture as it is about sculpture and the landscape. The Orange Alley introduces new technologies and form making to the university and reaffirms that this is a place where architects and artist assemble.