

CLEVELAND INSTITUTE OF MUSIC CLEVELAND, OHIO

PROJECT PROFILE

Wenger[®]
Your Performance Partner



SOUNDLOK[®] SOUND-ISOLATION ROOM WITH VAE TECHNOLOGY

“We’re extremely happy with these Wenger practice rooms. They were the right solution for our student housing facility. For the caliber of our students, the VAE technology was really important.”

– Eric Bower, Senior Vice President
Cleveland Institute of Music



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CHALLENGE

Provide state-of-the art practice rooms for new residence hall.

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BENEFITS

- Guaranteed sound isolation minimizes distractions
- Digital record/playback enables self-critique
- Keycard access improves scheduling and security
- Realistic acoustical simulations enhance learning
- Chamber-size rooms facilitate small ensembles
- Advanced ventilation system offers comfort



HIGHLIGHTS

“In planning for our new residence hall, we wanted our students to have high-quality, sound-isolated practice rooms, both individual and chamber sizes,” says Eric Bower, Senior Vice President with the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM), in Cleveland, Ohio.

Given CIM’s role as a leading American conservatory, practice space was prioritized over the lounges or exercise rooms typically found in student housing. According to Bower, the availability of chamber-size practice rooms was particularly important due to CIM’s celebrated string quartet tradition; three of the 22 new practice rooms are chamber size.

Evaluating Options

“We recommended Wenger to our real estate developer as a leader in this industry,” explains Bower. “From our perspective, this was an easy call.” CIM had been ordering Wenger equipment for many years, including conductor’s equipment, music stands, orchestra chairs and cello chairs.

Early in the planning process, both Wenger’s modular rooms and stick-built rooms were evaluated. Developer NewBrook Partners also hired an acoustician to review options.

“We considered stick-built practice rooms but couldn’t figure out how to achieve the quality of Wenger rooms by building them,” comments Guy Totino, Principal with NewBrook. “Wenger technology for sound isolation and active acoustics is state-of-the-art and unequivocally the best for sound.”

Selecting the Wenger practice rooms was a confidence-building moment for entire project team according to Denver Brooker, Architect/Principal with VOCON.

“Wenger had completed many projects successfully,” he notes. “With Wenger’s reputation, we knew that the practice rooms would perform as expected.”

During the installation process, Bower was in close contact with the Wenger team; the timeline was very

tight. He said Wenger was “extremely efficient and very responsive” in addressing any issues.

“I had good working relationships with the installers,” says Bower, “Along with the Wenger office personnel handling the contracts and logistical details.” He adds, “All and all, it was a good experience.”

Enhancing Acoustics

Initially, only regular SoundLok practice rooms were specified. “We later realized the rooms would be acoustically dead without VAE technology,” recalls Bower, adding that if musicians cannot receive their desired acoustical response, it makes a huge difference. Because of the high caliber of CIM’s students, the VAE technology was deemed essential and added to all 22 rooms.

According to Bower, CIM students are “elated” with the practice rooms, while also appreciating the flexibility of both individual and ensemble space.

Guaranteed sound isolation performance ensures students hear only themselves, without interference from outside or other practice rooms. VAE technology enables them to practice in various acoustical environments, including the spaces most conducive to different repertoire.

“The students realized the benefits right away,” explains Bower. “You can play Bach in a cathedral setting – it’s great!”

The record/playback capability allows student self-evaluation. “That’s a wonderful feature,” he remarks, adding that there’s nothing better than a recording of your own playing to hear what’s actually going on.

Similar to the record/playback feature, Bower considers a mirror vital in each practice room. For singers and instrumentalists alike, it’s important to be able to see their body alignment and technique.

Improving Accessibility

An important project goal was providing practice room access for non-residential students. Launched in 2019, CIM's reservation system enables students to schedule practice room time in advance. The new Wenger practice rooms each feature 24-hour keycard access; rooms are connected to CIM's scheduling software and online room inventory.

Across campus, there are approximately 50 other dedicated practice rooms, all built-in, along with teaching studios sometimes available for student practice.

With the new practice rooms, students appreciate the controlled access; it's also a security feature because not all building residents are CIM students. During COVID,

time was scheduled for important cleaning and sanitizing of practice rooms. "This keycard functionality was a good addition," cites Bower. "It's really a great benefit."

CIM marked its 100th anniversary in 2020, with a related fundraising campaign. The practice rooms in the main music building already have donor names on them; Bower said the new practice room may eventually add them. "We like to connect philanthropy back to our students," he explains. "I hope it helps them appreciate how donors make their great experiences here possible.

"We're extremely happy with these Wenger practice rooms – they are so very important to our students," concludes Bower. "They were the right solution for our student housing facility."



PRODUCT LIST

SoundLok® Sound-Isolation Rooms with VAE® Technology, Student Chairs, Cello Chairs, Classic 50® Music Stands, RoughNeck™ Music Stands, Conductor's Podium, Conductor's Chair and Director's Stand.



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MUSIC EDUCATION AND PERFORMING ARTS

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