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BERKLEE

A look at Berklee College's new \$100 million, 16-story tower

Posted by Matt Rocheleau February 12, 2014 01:22 PM

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(Dave Green / Berklee College of Music)


By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff


Berklee College of Music this semester opened a \$100 million, 16-story tower in the Back Bay — the first facility the school has ever built from the ground up, campus officials said.

The building at 160 Massachusetts Ave. includes 369 student beds across 173 dormitory rooms, a 400-seat dining hall that doubles as a performance space, 23 practice rooms, six two-story common areas, a fitness center and will soon house a 14,000 square-foot, 10-studio music production complex that will be among the largest of its kind the country.

“[Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe called architecture ‘frozen music’ and this building is alive with musical resonance,” Berklee President Roger Brown said in a

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(Berklee College of Music)

statement.

“The oscillating windows on the lower floors are like a percussion bed over which the serpentine, red walls in the cafeteria float like a melody,” he continued. “The polyrhythms of the five- and four-pane windows create a visual syncopation

worthy of the music being made inside.”

“I don't think it's an exaggeration to predict that some major musical innovations are likely to come out of this magnificent building,” said Brown.

The tower's dorm rooms have loft-like windows. Many students have already used the sweeping views from those windows as backdrops in music videos, campus officials said.

The building's design was based in part on feedback students gave during campus meetings about the project.

“The energy of the students was incredible; their focused commitment to their music was infectious and inspiring,” said a statement from architect William Rawn whose firm helped design the building. “Our goal was to channel that energy into the building, and share it with city.”

“The Berklee building adds spark and energy to its section of Massachusetts Avenue, and represents what is best about Boston: arts, students and city life supporting one another unlike almost any other place in the country,” he added.

The 155,000-plus square-foot tower [opened last month](#). It was built on property that [used to house](#) a McDonald's fast-food restaurant.

Construction began in 2011. Lee Kennedy, Co. Inc. built the tower.

The Walters-Storyk Design Group helped designed certain parts of the building, including the music production, technology, and learning complex, which is nearly complete.

Two stories below ground, the space will feature three recording studios, a live room for up to 55 musicians, isolation booths large enough for a grand piano, and a mastering and critical listening lab. It also has a suite of four project studios, a music technology lab and a Dolby-certified dubbing stage “perhaps the only room of its kind in higher education” that will support post-production activities like mixing music, sound effects and dialogue to film and video games.

The college said that, including the new studios, it now has 37 music production rooms on campus, creating a compound “comparable to the largest and most versatile

production facilities in the United States, including Skywalker Sound and NFL Films.â
€

To see more photos, [click here](#).

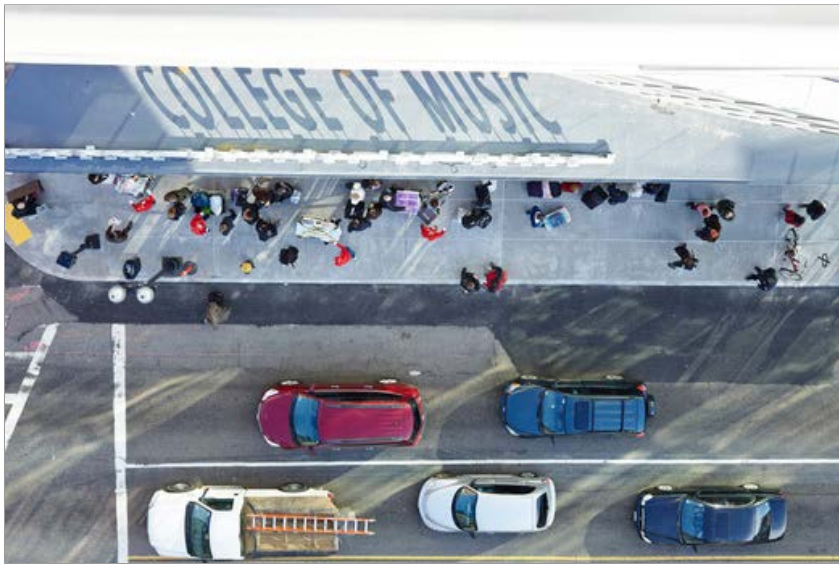
Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).



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HudsonDad 02/13/14 06:15 PM

Why so much negativity? It's a beautiful new space in an area that needs activity. Since Tower/Virgin/Best Buy closed, there is a lot of blandness to that end of town and I think this is a nice new addition to the city.

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Phil-B 02/12/14 05:55 PM

"We live in an art deco city"what? First off, it's DECO. Second, there is very, very little actual art deco in Boston. All that red brick everywhere isn't art deco, it's Federal/Georgian/Colonial/whatever you want to call it. And then the rest is Victorian/Queen Anne/Romanesque/Beaux Arts/etc etc. You could count on two hands the number of true art deco buildings in the city.

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lakemonsters 02/12/14 03:39 PM

No wonder Berklee is so expensive.

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stomv 02/14/14 11:31 AM

Boston needs more housing to help keep it affordable for families, long time residents, seniors, and others. That Berklee built housing for 369 residents, thereby freeing up apartments for other existing or potential Boston residents, should be applauded.

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Muddy-XXV 02/13/14 05:55 PM

BEHOLD!!!

First of all, Berklee doesn't "teach" music per se. EVERYONE auditions in order to gain entrance to the school. You're already, to a degree, a competent "musician" before you go there. All they teach is the music "business."

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