SANDY BROWN

Clore Music Studios, New College, University of Oxford

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2019	UK England	Austin Newport Group	John McAslan + Partners

Oxford University's Clore Music Studios opened its doors in summer 2019 and features a double-height rehearsal space on the ground floor within a 3 storey solid stone structure. Two studios dedicated to chamber music rehearsal sit on the upper floors alongside four other practice rooms.

The contemporary building is connected to the neighbouring Savile House by way of a glazed atrium extending into the partially sunk ground floor rehearsal studio, and subsequently providing a direct visual connection to the street.

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The key acoustic design issues considered by Sandy Brown were:

- Controlling music egress to neighbours
- Internal sound between the rooms – vertical and horizontal
- Acoustic finishes – controlling reverberation, room-modes, and flutter echoes to provide suitable conditions for the musical uses proposed
- Building services noise – control of noise egress to the atmosphere and internal noise levels from building services plant.

Sandy Brown's acoustic implementation included an environmental noise survey carried out to determine the existing noise climate in the area. The results of the survey were used to set appropriate limits for plant noise egress in line with the requirements of BS4142 and the Local Authority.

The survey results were also used to set appropriate limits for music egress outside the nearest noise sensitive premises. Consequently, a high-performance building envelope utilising independent heavy structures and wide-airspace windows was provided to control music egress.

Four practice rooms were separated by wide--airspace glazed partitions which were faceted to help control flutter echoes and room modes. Slatted timber detailing was to conceal deep absorbent panelling.

Isolated box-in-box constructions were used for the studio spaces and practice rooms with concrete floated floors and sound insulating lids to provide high levels of acoustic separation within the building.

A low-noise MEP design was implemented to provide ideal conditions for music rehearsals and recitals.