

Imai Keller Moore Architects Colleges and Universities

Brandeis University

Fine Arts Studios, Epstein Building

4,100 sf
2015

Relocating the Fine Arts Studios back on campus and meeting the Strategic Plan's goal of renovating creative arts facilities led to identifying potential space in the Epstein Building. Built in the 1920s as a printing plant, Epstein offered an unencumbered first floor space with high ceilings and three large, north-facing skylights, as well as high-ceilinged space on the second floor.

A collaborative programming / schematic effort with the Fine Arts faculty and Brandeis' project management group resulted in the program: crit space / teaching area, 16 senior studios, 14 post-bac studios, media lab, wood shop, and support spaces.

Removing the ceiling to open up the first floor skylights meant that all the supporting utilities would be visible. To organize the systems, the mechanical ductwork, sprinklers, and conduit were located within the vertical zone created by two large trusses supporting the roof and painted white. The other structural elements, ceiling, walls, and doors were also painted a flat white to avoid reflecting colors onto artwork. The concrete floor was cleaned and sealed.



A variety of light fixtures were employed to provide adjustable track lighting for studios and crit spaces, pendant down lights for circulation, and uplights to illuminate the ceiling. All light fixtures were LEDs with 3000K color.

The senior studios have movable partitions to accommodate changes in the number of students, and all studio partitions are eight feet high with gypsum board over plywood to allow artwork to be attached to the walls. Water from the new sinks is filtered to remove contaminants, and the mechanical system is non-recirculating.