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Creativity takes center stage

Bradley Central High School Fine Arts Center, Cleveland, Tennessee

From the 600 seats in the new Bradley Central High School Fine Arts Center auditorium, proud families and community members watch young actors, dancers, singers and musicians take the stage. Also attracting the eyes of the audience will be the creative design of the auditorium ceiling, where beautifully curved clouds seem to float and dance in a performance of their own.

Products in use

- Rockfon® Curvgrid™ Two-directional
- Chicago Metallic® 1200 Standard
- Rockfon® Infinity™

A community gem

Located in Cleveland, Tennessee, Bradley Central High School is a National School of Excellence serving 1700 students in grades 9 through 12. When plans were made to construct a new fine arts center, continuing that standard of excellence was a priority, even within a tight budget and time frame.

The 25,000 square-foot-building was designed to house a 600-seat auditorium with new lighting and sound systems, dressing rooms, a band room and a choral room, classrooms plus a lobby and gathering space. The school district wanted the $3.3 million project completed within 12 months, with a grand opening by the end of the 2011 school year.

A compelling performance

Taking center stage in the project was the auditorium, where Lyon worked to shape the space in a way that complemented the creativity of student performers. Using the space above the audience was an integral part of the design. Lyon chose the Rockfon Curvgrid ceiling system to create the look she envisioned. "I didn't want a traditional flat ceiling," said Lyon. "My vision was for a feeling of movement, something that would draw the eye. [Rockfon] Curvgrid is fluid and dynamic."

Lyon chose the Rockfon Curvgrid two-directional suspension system with flexible metal panels in Morning Dew, a soft, metallic gold color. The color selection complemented the warm golds and yellows used throughout the Fine Arts Center interior.

In addition to the Rockfon Curvgrid, Lyon chose Chicago Metallic 1200 ceiling suspension system to create floating ceiling sections housing acoustic panels. The sections had a stepped perimeter for visual effect and were finished with Rockfon Infinity Perimeter Trim, to create a crisp, clean look.

Having never worked with Rockfon specialty products before, Lyon was pleased with the support she received. "Carlo Grohovac, my Rockfon rep, was very involved and cared about getting us what we wanted. He explained the product, made sure I was comfortable, and cared about it being right."

"Our goal was to create a little gem for the high school campus," notes Angie Lyon, project architect with KBJM Architects. "We wanted this to be a showpiece, with lots of natural light and upgraded finishes."


BCHS

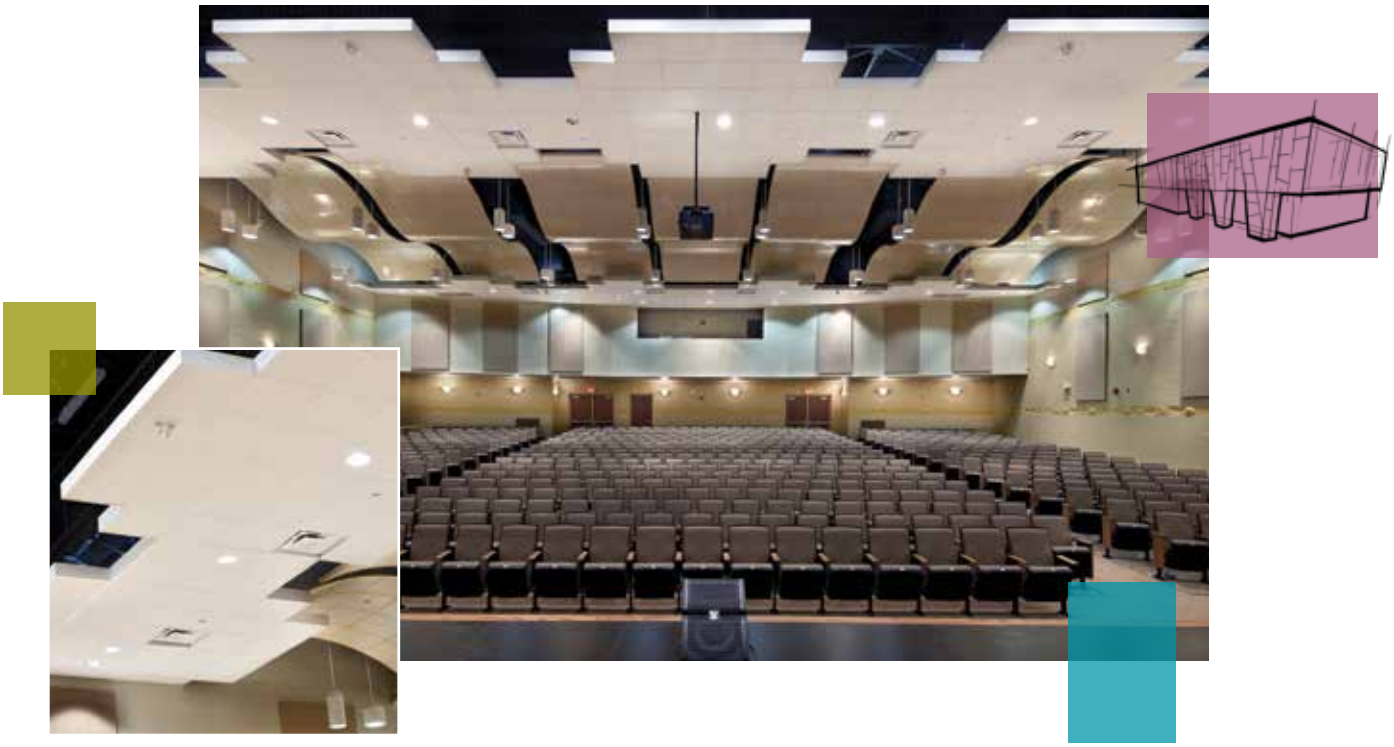
A choreographed installation

Rockfon customer support became equally important when installation challenges arose. "We had a very tight frame for completing this project," notes Cason Conn, project manager for general contractor TRI-CON. "We had to condense the schedule and that meant the auditorium seats needed to be installed prior to the ceiling system going in. As a result, scaffolding could not be erected for the ceiling installation. That presented quite a challenge for our installer, Wallace Tile.

Wallace Tile Vice President Seth Bussey worked with Rockfon's Grohovac, to develop an alternate installation plan. Their solution was to assemble the Rockfon Curvgrid sections on the ground, connect them into pods, hoist the pods up to the ceiling area using a lift, and then connect them in the air. In all, five 8' x 25' pods were assembled.

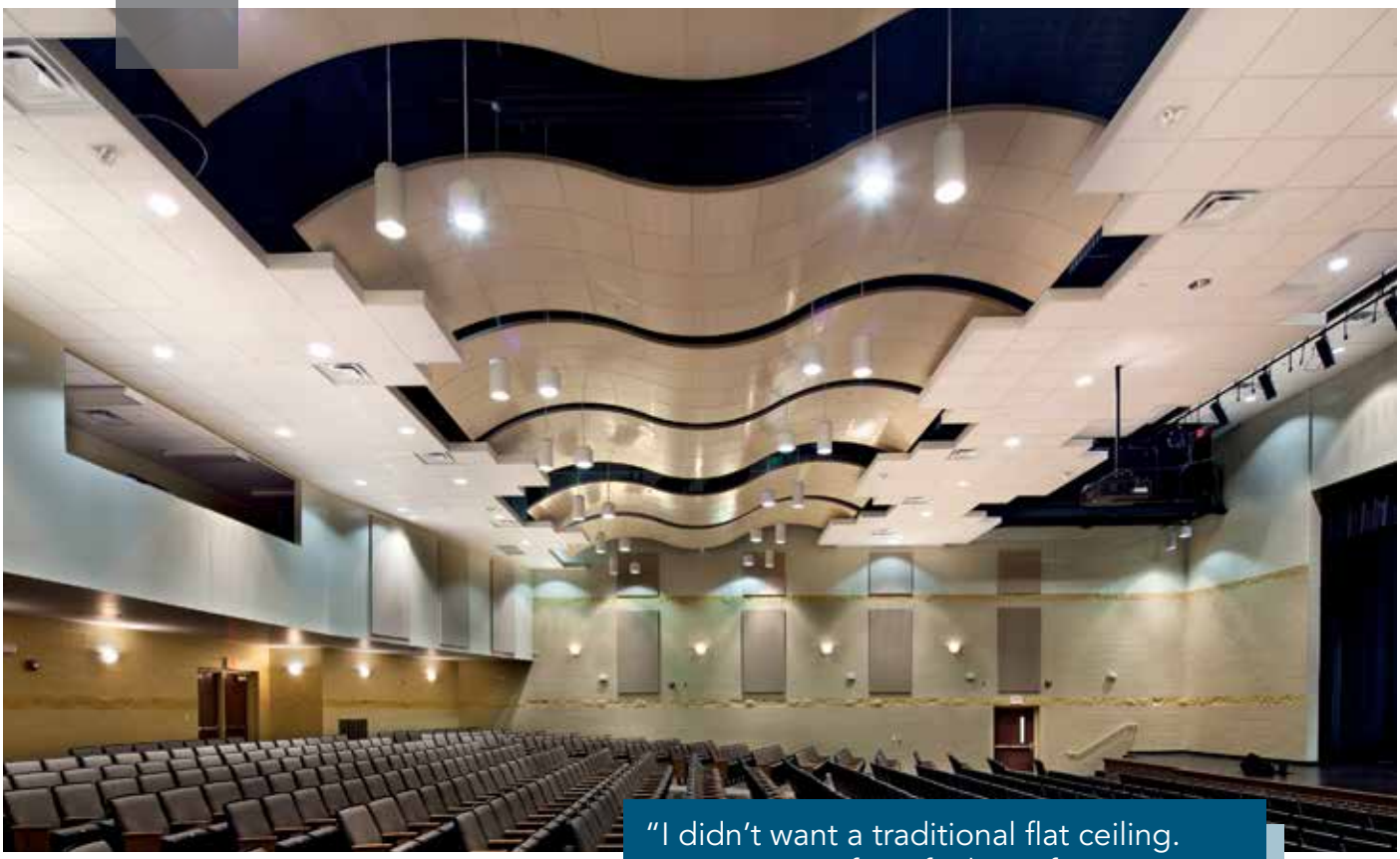
An installation like this would be virtually impossible to accomplish with any other curved ceiling system. "What made this possible was [Rockfon] Curvgrid's combination of rigidity and light weight," noted Grohovac. "The system incorporates a Primary Carrier, which is essentially a backbone that runs along the back of the [Rockfon] Curvgrid panel. It ties the suspension components together, creating a stronger system that is lifted into place and attached to suspension wires." The primary carrier also allows for fewer suspension wires that are set back from the edge of the pods, further enhancing the floating cloud effect.

With initial assistance from Grohovac, Bussey's installation teams quickly learned how to assemble and install the system. Two men assembled the pods on the floor, while another two picked them up and installed them in the air. "Once we got the idea of how the puzzle went together, it was very easy to install," says Bussey. "We got faster all the time. The system is very user friendly, and [Rockfon] did a great job in helping us work this out."



A thrilling premier

In June, 2011, the Bradley Central High School Fine Arts Center was completed, and the curtain officially went up on the center's premier event, a baccalaureate service for graduating seniors. By all accounts, the administration, students and community are thrilled with the results. Equally pleased are the project's architect, general contractor and installer. "Through this project, I learned that Rockfon makes a great product," said TRI-CON Project Manager Cason Conn. "I will definitely recommend [their product] for other design-build projects."



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Photographer: Robert Pepple, Pepple Photography, Jacksonville, FL