



Goldwater Memorial Hospital Murals

ROOSEVELT ISLAND, NY

The first step in the restoration of two historic murals was to find them. While it was known that two WPA murals had been commissioned for the Goldwater Memorial Hospital in the 1940, no information about their exact location or their design had survived. At some point in the past, these mural by artists Joseph Rugolo and Albert Swinden had disappeared under layers of paint. When the Goldwater Memorial Hospital was to be torn down to make space for the development of Cornell's Tech Campus where the murals were to be reinstalled, the search began.

Conservators investigated and confirmed the location and assessed their conditions and safe removal options. Once removed from the site, conservation began at EverGreene's plaster studio in a special negative-air chamber and lead-containment area. Conservators used both chemical strippers and hand tools to remove the overpaint from the murals: scalpels and small blades proved most useful in the removal of certain areas of overpaint from the Swinden murals, while heat guns and wooden sculpting tools were effective in revealing the Rugolo artwork. The murals turned out to be works of jazz-like abstraction, bold fields of color that barely suggested any literal imagery.

After the overpaint was removed, conservators began inpainting areas of complete loss or damage to match the existing mural. Conservation paints were used to match the historic color palette of the artworks. After the completed conservation, the murals were then transported and installed at the new Cornell Tech Campus.

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MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/goldwater-memorial-hospital-murals/>

(1) AWARDS

SERVICES PERFORMED

Art Handling & Salvage
Conservation Treatments
Investigation, Testing & Analysis
Murals & Mosaics
Surveys & Condition Assessments

PROJECT DETAILS

Original Architect

Weiss/Manfredi

Muralist

Albert Swinden & Joseph Rugolo

Client

Cornell University

Client

New York City Economic Development Corporation

Architect

AKRF



