



## Harvard University-Memorial Hall & Sanders Theater

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MA

Harvard's Memorial Hall, which was designed by Henry Van Brunt & William Robert Ware, and built in 1870 is considered one of the foremost examples of the Ruskinian Gothic style in the United States. During a comprehensive restoration by the University in 2013, our team conserved and reinstated the historic decorative painting and wood finishes in the dining hall (Memorial Hall), center hall, and Sanders Theater.

In Sanders Theater, our conservators cleaned and refinished the wood furnishings. The scope of restoration work included the treatment of primarily oak, with some mahogany and walnut woods; selective stripping, distemper painting, conservation cleaning, in-staining, and restaining were completed. Our team also executed refinishing with shellac and sanding, sealing, staining, and varnishing the wood floors.

In Memorial Hall, our scope of work on the wooden elements of the space included; Treatment of Southern Yellow Pine, Oak, and Walnut woods, the selective stripping of necessary sections, the in-staining of the beams. Our team also executed the conservation of the natural shellac finish, ammonia-stained finish, and stenciling. Selective refinishing was done to match original surface treatments. Traditional linseed oil, shellac, and hand-rubbed (French polish) finishes on the furniture were all reinstated. Conservation of the original distemper decorative painting and stenciling, cleaning, and loss compensation was done on the Decorative painting, which also included gilding. Our last step was the Marble cleaning of memorial plaques in the space.

These spaces have now been fully conserved for the decades of Harvard students to come!

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/harvard-memorial-hall/>

### SERVICES PERFORMED

Conservation Treatments  
Decorative Painting & Finishes  
Mortar Analysis & Petrography

### PROJECT DETAILS

#### Architect

Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc.

#### Historical Architect

Robert G. Neiley Architects

