



Ringling Museum of Art - Ca' d'Zan

JOHN & MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART, SARASOTA, FL

The Ca' d'Zan is the home of legendary circus king John Ringling and his wife Mable. The Venetian Gothic residence overlooking Sarasota Bay, was completed in 1926 and bequeathed to the people of the State of Florida in 1936. The aim of our project was to assess, perform emergency stabilization, and restore threatened terra cotta elements of the structure. Work included: (1) a hands-on condition assessment of all exterior terra cotta units on the Ca' d'Zan, (2) stabilization and restoration of select architectural features to ensure the structural integrity of the house and (3) keeping the historical materials and color palette true to the original Venetian vision of John and Mable Ringling.

The comprehensive on-site assessment took place from December 2015 through January 2016. Non-destructive testing methods were applied by a consulting structural engineer on various elements in the Belvedere Tower and the southwest balcony (John Ringling's Office Balcony.) We concentrated on the locations of the Belvedere, the Balcony, and the cornice of the north and south elevations. Whenever possible, original terra cotta elements were retained. Where needed, damaged and unsound units were removed, cataloged and stored for future study. A comprehensive baseline documentation of all conditions affecting the terra cotta units was provided in the form of conditions drawings and high resolution photographs.

After completion of the assessment, EverGreene and The Ringling Museum worked with a terra cotta manufacturer to recreate the unique, ornate terra cotta elements to be used in the restoration effort. The balcony was disassembled and stabilized prior to reassembly. Original terra cotta units were cleaned, repaired, and reused whenever possible. Terra cotta elements in the Balcony and Belvedere Tower that were determined to be structurally unsound were replaced with historically accurate replicas of terra cotta with colored glazes matched to the original ornate finishes. A non-corrosive anchoring system was employed for attachment of the original and replicated terra cotta elements.

EverGreene provided documentation of the assessment, treatment recommendations, and the entire restoration process, as well as general recommendations relating to all aspects of the restoration effort. Conservation treatment took place over the spring and summer of 2018 with the partnership of The Ringling and EverGreene conservators, master masons, and fine arts painters to help to ensure the Ringling's legacy of the Ca d'Zan will be enjoyed for many generations to come.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/ringling-museum-of-art-cadzan-terra-cotta-assessment-and-restoration/>

SERVICES PERFORMED

Research & Documentation
Surveys & Condition Assessments

PROJECT DETAILS

Client

John & Mable Ringling Museum of Art



253 36th Street, Suite 5-C | Brooklyn, New York, 11232 | (212) 244 2800 | evergreene.com