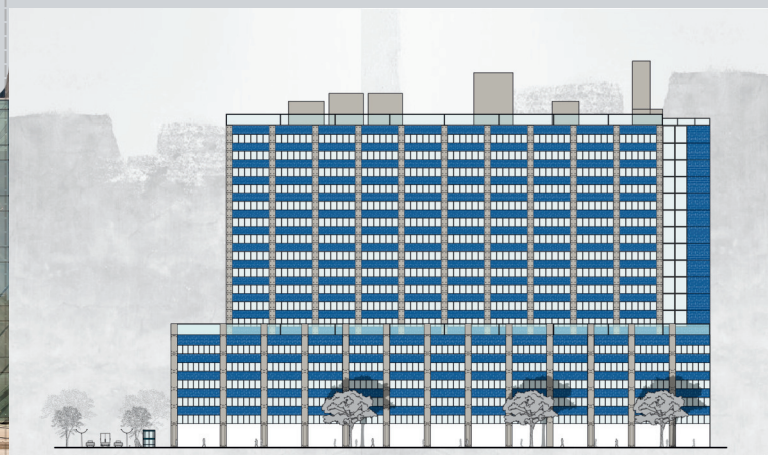




Hospitals, homes, churches, and cultural spaces across Harlem tell a layered story. Black communities shaped space through care, resistance, and creativity.



BLACK MODERNISM continues authored by memory, care, and community.

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE STORY

SCAN TO SEE WHAT YOU BUILT



HARLEM HOSPITAL CENTER

WHERE ARCHITECTURE, ART, HEALTH AND COMMUNITY MEET.



More than a medical institution, Harlem Hospital is a site of cultural and architectural significance.

Its once hidden murals now stand as powerful expressions of care, creativity, and resilience, marking the place where stories of community and transformation came into view.

HARLEM HOSPITAL CENTER

TRANSFORMATION FROM RACIAL SEGREGATION TO ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

1897 The original Harlem Hospital, located on East 120th Street, had just 54 beds and quickly became inadequate after the post World War I migration of African Americans to New York.



MAYOR WITHHOLDS REPORT ON CAUSE OF HARLEM RIOT
Received Final Findings of His Committee Thursday — Hospital Overcrowded
DISCRIMINATION DECLARED FACTOR IN NEGRO UNREST
Mayor LaGuardia has had the final report of the committee he appointed to investigate conditions underlying the Harlem riots of March, 1935, in his possession since Thursday. It was disclosed today. He was represented as having withheld it until he had had time to study it.
Sectional reports on various phases of the subject have been submitted previously, the last one on Tuesday, March 31. This deal with health and hospital facilities and vigorously criticized conditions of Harlem Hospital and of Hospital Commissioner S. B. Goldwater, who declined to testify before the committee headed by Dr. Charles H. Boe, appointed to study this part of the subject.
Discrimination against Negro doctors, nurses and patients is an important factor in Harlem unrest, the report says. Harlem Hospital has a theoretical capacity of 325 patients, but actually cares for as many as 450 at a time. Kitchens refrigeration and ventilation are criticized as inadequate. Garbage is kept in the hospital yard, according to the report.
The admission of Negro doctors and nurses to hospitals in all parts of the city is recommended, along with a proposal that the city withhold financial aid from any hospital not granting Negroes full equality. No information came from City Hall to indicate when the complete report would be made public.

Many white doctors left in protest as Black professionals joined the staff. Despite Dr. Wright's success, he was overlooked. Bias persisted, even when Dr. King was brought in, some hesitated to treat him due to the hospital's reputation as a "Black" institution. Harlem Hospital's history reflects medicine's ongoing racial divide.

"A LOT OF TIME WAS WASTED WHILE THEY ARGUED ... **THEY DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE HIM TO THE BLACK HOSPITAL.**"

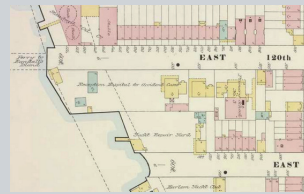
1966

The sculpture A Happy Family on Harlem Hospital's facade embodies its mission during segregation and symbolizes the Harlem Renaissance. It merges art and architecture to reflect a legacy of service, inclusion, and pride.



It symbolizes,

UNITY HEALING STRENGTH



Its riverside location was key, serving as a holding center for patients bound for Randalls Island, Wards Island, and Bellevue.

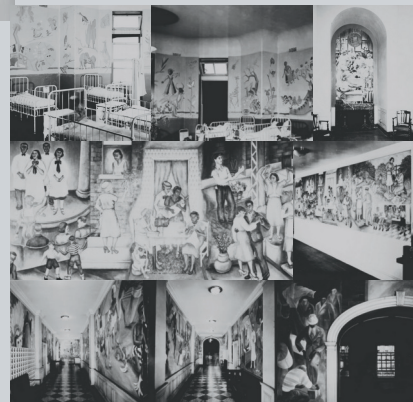


1903

Harlem Hospital was built on Lexington Avenue between 136th and 137th Streets, as the neighborhood grew with the expansion of the subway.

1907-1960

Many expansions occurred at the hospital during this period, increasing its bed capacity from 150 to 1,031. Several wings were added



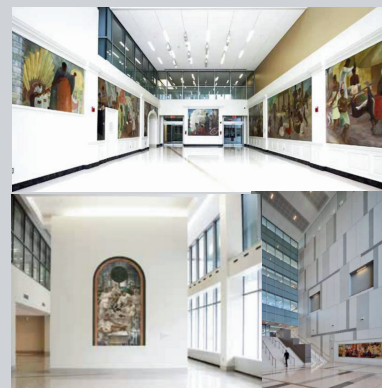
1935-1937

The WPA's Federal Art Project employed thousands, including Black artists, and helped preserve Black culture. At Harlem Hospital, many murals were approved but hidden from public view. Themes matched their

spaces, playful in children's wards, calming in nurses' rooms, and historical or therapeutic elsewhere.

2005

Harlem Hospital's modernization brought state-of-the-art care while preserving WPA murals and honoring the neighborhood's history and culture.



1907

The new hospital opened during the Harlem Renaissance, as the area became a hub of Black

cultural life. With an all white staff, the community began demanding Black doctors and nurses, challenging the exclusion from medical roles beyond menial labor.

1923-1977

Harlem Hospital trained Black nurses through its own school, which later closed due to citywide discrimination.

Meanwhile, fields like policing and firefighting remained largely white.



PRESERVATION PROCESS



recreated from historic photos, ensuring their preservation in the new gallery space.

2012

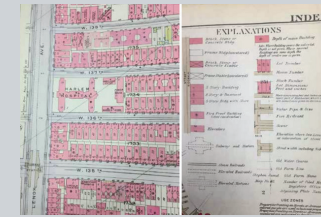
The mural pavilion opened, showcasing the preserved artworks in their new space.



2018



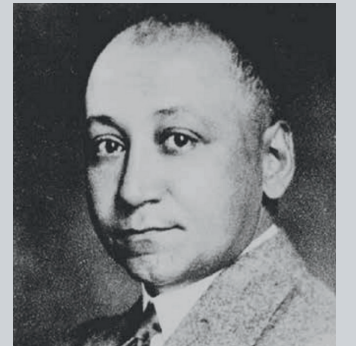
Community Works and New Heritage Theatre Group, in partnership with Harlem Hospital, created a timeline in the Mural Pavilion. It connects the WPA murals to Harlem's history and highlights the hospital's role in the community.



PRIDE FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY

1919

The hospital hired its first African-American physician, Dr. Louis T. Wright, who later became the first Black Police Surgeon in the city.

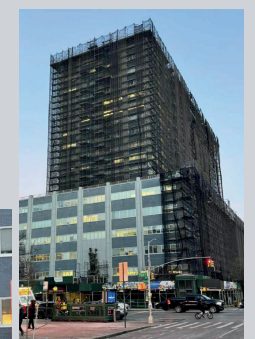
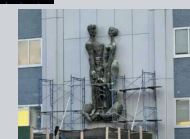


BREAKING SOCIETAL RULES, BUREAUCRACY, DISCRIMINATION AND BARRIERS.



2025

The Hospital is still undergoing renovation and expansion, and is expected to be completed by 2025



HARLEM IS..

THEATER CULTURE ART HISTORY