

8 Restoring the Band Organ Facade

The band organ facade that Rosa was asked to restore had been overpainted with a garish combination of pink, orange, and mint green. It gave no hint of the landscape scenes beneath the park paint.

Rosa used two different methods to restore the band organ facade. For the flat surfaces that eventually revealed the landscape and flower paintings, she cleaned those areas to the original paint, protected the paint with Acryloid B-72, and inpainted the designs to restore the original appearance. This is the same method she used on the drum panels.



For the scrollwork, she cleaned windows to the original paint, documented the colors, removed several layers of paint, and applied Acryloid B-72, white pigmented shellac, and primer. She filled uneven areas with Polyfilla, sanded the surface, and applied the primer again until the surface was smooth. She applied a base coat and then painted and bronzed the surface to restore the original appearance. This method is similar to the one she used on the carousel animals.

Restoring the landscape paintings

Rosa cleaned the landscape and flower paintings to the original paint using a scalpel with a number 10 blade and low heat from a heat gun (250°F). In some areas Rosa used methylene chloride paint remover to remove the top layers of paint. She brushed the remover on thinly in controlled areas, left it to sit for 1 or 2 minutes, and carefully scraped old paint away with the scalpel until she reached the original paint.



Rosa discovered that above the original paint there was a second landscape painting with parrots and leaves. It was not, however, the original paint. That showed mountains and lakes, like the drum panel scenes.

