

## Preface

This book tells the story of the restoration of the 1921 Dentzel menagerie carousel in Glen Echo Park, located in the town of Glen Echo, Maryland. Between 1983 and 2003 the carousel was restored to the appearance it had when it was first delivered to the park in 1921. For the parts of the carousel not subject to heavy wear – the panels surrounding the inner mechanics and the ceiling canopy – restoration meant removing the many layers of paint that had been added by the amusement park owners to reveal the original paint underneath, and then repairing damage and touching up the original paint.

However, for the parts of the carousel that would be touched, handled, and even abused by an adoring public – the animals and chariots – restoration took a different route. Here a balance needed to be struck between a work of art that was of great historical importance and an amusement park ride that was meant to be enjoyed. Nick Veloz, the curator of the park who supervised much of the restoration, proposed the following solution: uncover enough sample areas to discover the original colors of each animal or chariot, protect the original paint with a reversible sealer, and then repaint the animals and chariots using the original colors, including all the pin striping, shading, dappling, and other decorative detail that was on the original objects. Restoration artist Rosa Ragan implemented Nick's method and developed the techniques needed to make each animal a functioning work of art.

The result is a fabulously beautiful carousel that shows off the elegant carving and painting style of an earlier era.

We hope this book will interest carousel lovers, historic preservationists, and antique furniture restorers everywhere. We hope it will inspire those who own or restore carousel animals. The focus is on the techniques used in the restoration so that those techniques can be used and improved upon by the next generation of restoration artists.

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