

Architectural fact sheet

The Lillian Goldman Fountain of Life

PROJECT	The restored Lillian Goldman Fountain of Life, designed by Carl Tefft in 1905, will be unveiled to the public on October 22, 2005. Conceived in the spirit of the popular turn-of-the-century City Beautiful movement and representing the golden age of American civic art, the sculpture presents bronze allegorical figures on a white marble base, centered within a white marble basin. Three sculptural groups, combined with flowing water, depict a fantastical portrayal of the struggle for existence. The Fountain of Life is located directly in front of the Beaux Arts-style Library Building and is a prominent architectural feature at The New York Botanical Garden.
COMPLETION	October 22, 2005
COST	\$2,000,000
DESCRIPTION	<p>In this comprehensive restoration, the Botanical Garden is reconditioning and rebuilding all elements of the fountain. The marble basin and sculpture group are being restored and soiling, stains, and residues removed. Loose blocks are being reset, sealant removed, and joints re-pointed. Small losses of marble on edges and surfaces have been accepted as part of the natural patina and aging.</p> <p>Plumbing and electrical systems have been refurbished with new pumps to recycle the water at its original water pressure, copper piping replaced, and drainage systems repaired. Submersible lighting fixtures are being added to the lower basin and wet/dry fixtures for the top of the pedestal. Lighting will accentuate the cascading water and newly restored features.</p> <p>Restoration of the bronze sculpture has occurred in situ. Cracks, fissures, and seals have been brazed, surfaces cleaned, and a chemical patination treatment applied to corroded surfaces to create a green patina matching the cleaned sculpture. Two figures lost decades ago, a mermaid and a merman, have been recast in accord with archival photographs and finished with a patina to match the main sculpture. A protective wax coating is being applied to all bronze surfaces.</p> <p>In front of the fountain, pavement and a deck have been removed and a historic planting is being reestablished to include extensive turf, climbing hydrangea, and an elegant row of fastigate conifers. Restoration will be completed in October 2005, in the centennial year of the fountain's completion in 1905.</p>

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LEADERSHIP

Michael Adlerstein, Vice President for Capital Projects

PROJECT TEAM

Principal Conservators: Building Conservation Associates, Inc., New York, NY;
Ray Pepi, Preservationist.

Restoration Contractors: A. Ottavino Corp., Ozone Park, NY; Kreilick
Conservation, LLC; Orland, PA; Glenn and Diane Hines, Hammond, ME;
Modern Foundry, Queens, NY.

Plumbing Contractor: WDF Greene, Mount Vernon, NY.

Electrical Contractor: Uptown Electric, Long Island City, NY.

Project Managers (NYBG): Bernice Chu, Project Manager;
Errol Armstrong, Assistant Project Superintendent

**LEADERSHIP
GIFTS**

Leadership support was provided by The Lillian Goldman Charitable
Trust.

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possible by capital support from the Mayor of the City of New York and the
City's Department of Cultural Affairs, and from the City Council.

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