

# Restoring a city landmark

The Arcade, located in St. Louis, MO, had been abandoned for nearly 40 years before it was transformed to house local workers, artists and students

**BY JASON KAMERY**

Photo Credit to John Flack of ByFlack Photography

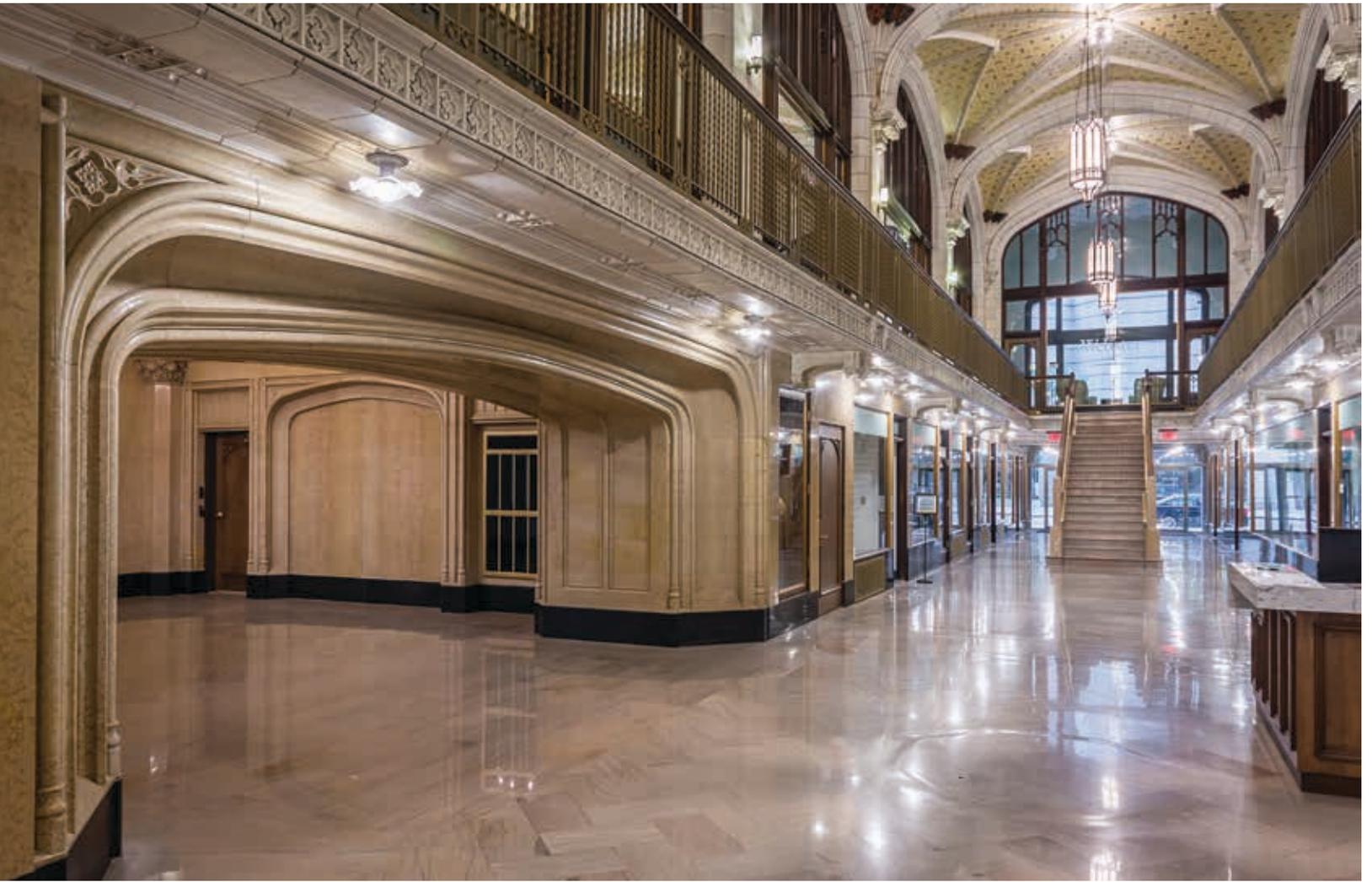


Situated in the heart of the central corridor of historic downtown St. Louis, MO — across from the Old Post Office — is The Arcade. A historic structure of both local and national significance, The Arcade is a 500,000-square-foot building that was initially designed in 1913 by architect Tom Barnett. Original plans were revised to integrate the adjacent Wright Building of 1907, designed by architects Eames & Young.

Named for the spectacular two-story interior rib-vaulted shopping arcade, or "interior street" inspired by the galleries of Milan and Naples, Italy, The Arcade is one of the city's prime examples of a gothic revival skyscraper. It was modeled on "a city-within-a-city" prototype, creating an area where people could not only live, but do most of their shopping. The building houses top-notch retail merchants in its first six floors and office spaces in the upper stories. In 2005, architect Paul Hohmann had original plans to work on the building, and started the project in September 2014 under the firm Ebersoldt + Associates.

The 15-month renovation project was completed in December 2015 and provided 282 new apartment units in the upper floors and commercial and educational space in the restored two-story "arcade." Designed to meet the needs of artists and others with an appreciation for the arts, the building offers residents access to more than 11,000 square feet of shared artist studio spaces, a 19th-floor rooftop terrace and clubroom, and a wide range of other community amenities.

Ford Marble and Tile provided a historical restoration package, the main goal of which was to use as much of the site's reclaimed stone as possible. After an exhaustive inventorying process, the company restored and refabricated 301



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stone slabs, all in the onsite basement fabrication shop created to minimize transportation risks. "All of the reclaimed material we fabricated, we fabricated on site," said Scott Ford, president of Ford Marble and Tile. "We had to get the reclaimed material from every floor down to the ground level and then took a crane at night and boomed it through a hole in the sidewalk where they were doing electrical work. That's how we were able to get it all in the basement fabrication shop. We had to move about 30 tons of material by hand and then could use the crane to move it into the basement."

The project also utilized original wall

cladding application techniques for these slabs in hallways and around elevators, and integrated 280 new panels seamlessly into the project as required. "When we were sending material to the basement we had to remove all panels that were loose or leaning and had to number the wall and the panel so we knew where it would have to go back. Then we had to bring those panels back up from the basement after they were fabricated to reinstall them and had to replace the panels that were completely damaged.

"When we took off the panels, we reinstalled them the exact same way they did it in the 1920s," Ford went on to say. "We drilled holes right next to the holes they

had and they were all put back on with plaster and copper wire. We did it with the new pieces as well because you kind of had to — you were dealing with the old fire block and it's brittle so you can't really use a mechanical anchor." Ford Marble and Tile used 3,009 2cm ungauged original floor tiles that were planed to a consistent 5/8-inch thickness as needed for a smooth transition on the top of the original, undisturbed mortar beds in extended hallways, all from reclaimed material. For the showcase arcade on the mezzanine, they were able to restore the missing Spanish black marble and damaged wall base from stone remaining on the first floor, where a new product was used. The



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company used 100 percent reclaimed and refabricated Tennessee Pink marble on the grand staircase for the wall base, stair treads, thresholds and surrounding floor tiles, except for two newly carved marble newel posts ordered from Italy. The fabrication for the marble was done in the basement of The Arcade, which later became the building's underground parking. For the adjoining marquee room that connects The Arcade to the elevator lobby, new product had to be installed just within the marquee arch and expertly integrated to the original surrounding stonework and framed arch.

Four different types of stones were salvaged for the project. On floors two

through 19, 3,773 square feet of White Carrara marble was employed. A total of 60 panels were reinstalled from existing loose clad, and 51 panels were fabricated from salvaged cladding that was found onsite. A black marble was fabricated from salvaged base clad installed in the mezzanine — totaling 175 square feet. Additionally, a total of 1,989 square feet of reclaimed Tennessee Pink base clad was used for cladding on floors two through 19. For the flooring, 3,691 square feet of Tennessee Pink marble floor tiles were salvaged for floors one through 19. The project included 1,305 12- x 12-inch tiles, 1,480 10- x 20-inch tiles and 224 10- x 20-inch fabricated tiles from salvaged panels.

Also in the second through 19th floors, 10,296 square feet of Bianco Gioia marble with a polished finish, from Carrara, Italy, was used, and supplied from Global Granite & Marble. The company also provided 1,753 square feet of Negro Marquina polished marble, quarried from Spain, to be used as the cladding at the base of the building on the first floor and the mezzanine. The wall cladding for the first floor and elevator lobby comprises 1,221 square feet of Beige Rosato polished marble from Verona, Italy, also supplied from Global Granite & Marble. Bruno Luchetti supplied the newel post from Beige Rosato and a first-floor grand staircase that used two slabs



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of the Beige Rosato. The slab flooring and exterior entrances used 236 square feet of Absolute Black granite that was given a flamed finish, and 295 square feet of 3-cm Dakota Mahogany granite that was flamed, both supplied by Global Granite & Marble. Unique Stone Concepts supplied 575 square feet of 2-cm Missouri Red granite that was used for the exterior entrance cladding. "The size of the job was the hardest part of this project," said Ford. "You are talking 19 floors and we used three blocks of material for the panels that were missing. There was a tremendous amount of wall panels that had to be tied back in. When you do a project that size you're going to have shading. Back when they built it, I don't know how many blocks of material they used for the project originally. So we took samples from three different floors of

different shading of that material so that we could find a happy medium shade. We sent it over to Italy and they could match it to the blocks they have so you wouldn't really be able to tell a new panel from an old panel."

The building has 202 units set aside for artists, awarded based on income qualifications and commitment to an art — anything from sculpting to writing to makeup artistry. The building houses 80 luxury units that go at the market rates. The Arcade Building's first two floors and the mezzanine house new Webster University classrooms, a community kitchen, an art gallery and a 170-seat auditorium.

Construction on the \$118 million renovation was completed December of 2015. In 1980, the building was designated a city landmark, and in 2003 it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It re-

cently received the 2016 Pinnacle Award of Merit from MIA+BSI in the category of "Renovation and Restoration." ■

### The Arcade Building

St. Louis, MO

**Architect:** Ebersoldt + Associates Architecture, St. Louis, MO

**Fabricator and Installer:** Ford Marble and Tile, New Athens, IL

**Stone Supplier:** Global Granite & Marble, St. Louis, MO (Bianco Gioia, Negro Marquina, Beige Rosato, Absolute Black, Dakota Mahogany, Missouri Red Granite); Bruno Luchetti, Italy (newel post from Beige Rosato). Salvaged material found onsite (White Carrara, Black Marble, Tennessee Pink)

**General Contractor:** Paric Corporation, St. Louis, MO

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