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## DE-INSTALLATION PROPOSAL FOR RIFFS & RHYTHMS MOSAIC BY JOHN YANCEY

In accordance with the request to submit a proposed plan to AIPP for the de-installation of the mosaic art work at the Austin Convention Center, we are respectfully submitting the following plan proposal:

NOTE: The submitter reserves the right to revise or amend this plan based on further information regarding deinstallation processes.

### **2025 De-Installation Assessment Process**

1. Assess the mural for any conditions that might make removal difficult. This includes protection from other deconstruction activities, ability to lift and move the work out of the building and final method of transport. Use original installation documentation and as built conditions to inform the process.

#### **Assessment includes:**

- a. Feasibility / Desirability of moving the mural in one piece.
- b. Advisability of maintaining the concrete based installation or panelizing the piece for easy reinstallation
- c. Identifying suitable materials for use on the project both for protection, repair and reinstallation.
- d. Evaluation and recommendations by an art conservator.
- e. Determine the type of re-installation desired.
- f. All assessments should be done in collaboration with the original artist.

2. Provide mock-ups of critical procedures or techniques. Provide submittals of all materials proposed to be used. Allow adequate time for review of all submittals and allow for possible changes as field conditions or outcomes of review require.

Riffs+Rhythms Austin Convention Center Artwork De-Installation Plan



## 2025 De-Installation Process

1. Conservator Recommendation: To protect the mosaic's front during the process, Chicago master art conservator Julian Baumgartner recommended facing it with conservation-grade Beva 371 adhesive applied between two layers of artist's canvas-linen.
2. Applying conservation grade adhesive (Beva 371) between two layers of artist canvas-linen.

*[\*Facing the front of the mosaic using this proven method will help prevent any tiles from shifting or falling off when the work is freed from the wall or during transport.]*

3. Adhere two layers of 2" thick rigid foam insulation boards.
4. Attaching "box" casing constructed of multiple sheets of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood sheets joined together to encase the clothed-faced, foam covered mosaic.
5. The box-casing will also have additional supports attached across the front of the box-casing for floor braces to be secured to avoid compromising the protected work
6. Brace the front of the mural with beam structure secured to the floor.
7. Cutaway areas of stone and CMU wall above and below mural to construct support brace and expose original anchoring pins and scratch coat system (i.e. custom built specialty support wooden scaffolding along the bottom of the work).

Riffs+Rhythms Austin Convention Center Artwork De-Installation Plan



*[Riffs and Rhythms Convention Center Mosaic Back CMU of Exhibit Hall 1 Wall 2]*

8. Cut sections in back of CMU wall behind mural to brace the back of the mural with beam structure secured to floor.
9. Devise support system around mural (bottom to top) to be connected to crane
10. Once crane support is in place, use a 14" diamond-tipped saw to cut around the entire perimeter of the mural.
11. From the back, remove metal pins securing the mosaic to the back CMU wall.
12. Once the mosaic is no longer connected to the architectural structure, a crane will lift and move the mosaic and attached section of stone wall to a flatbed of truck that will transport the mural.
13. Secure mosaic to a flatbed or other appropriate vehicle in preparation for transport

It has been suggested that the safe removal and de-installation of the Riffs and Rhythms mosaic mural is impossible without destroying the work in the process. This simply is not necessarily true.

- There are removal, restoration, preservation techniques that have been used on modern mosaic murals for relocation, as well as ancient mosaics that have to be moved to be preserved.
- The actual materials of the mural, the substrate and the attachment to the main building all determine the methods that are used.
- They are not for the faint of heart, as they involve cutting through the substrate and separating that from the structure.

Riffs+Rhythms Austin Convention Center Artwork De-Installation Plan

- Once more detailed information is available, it may be that, for a mosaic of this size, there remains a possibility that it might ultimately involve cutting the mural into smaller sections.

This approach has been successfully employed for other large-scale artworks, both within construction projects and independently.

These are examples of large scale mosaic art removal and relocation†:

- <https://rlaconservation.com/project/mosaic-removal-and-relocation/>
- <https://mckaylodge.com/remove-mount-another-concrete-bound-mosaic/>

*[†Please note that with both examples, these are art conservation companies planning and executing the work.]*

## Additional Information

Review of 1996 Installation Process:

1. Iron 3" elbow frame constructed in scale and shape of mosaic attached to wall.
2. Diamond iron mesh attached to the interior area inside the iron frame.
3. Approximately 30 metal rods were inserted into the wall throughout the diamond mesh wire covered area at a downward angle to anchor the structure to the CMU wall behind the surface stone wall.
4. Scratch coat of concrete applied to the entire area to permanently attach structure to the wall and create a foundational bed or material layer for mosaic.
5. Brown coat applied to create a more finished smooth surface to apply mosaic.
6. Mosaic (previously cut into approximately 300 smaller sections) applied like puzzle pieces to smooth brown coat with concrete.
7. Border tiles applied to the border edges.



*[Riff + Rhythms Mosaic finished border edge view.]*

8. All Mosaic surfaces cleaned, grouted and polished.