

LANDMARK ACHIEVEMENT

Alexander's mural finds a home at the new Valley Hospital

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The famed Alexander's mural, a roadside landmark dismantled in Paramus 25 years ago, is finally making its homecoming at The Valley Hospital's new campus.

The mural's panels were unboxed on Tuesday morning and installation in the Paramus hospital's garden began on Wednesday morning.

Work to install the more than two dozen panels coming to the campus will continue throughout the month and will finish on or before Oct. 27, Blake said.

The iconic mural, composed of 280 panels, was created in 1962 by Polish-born artist Stefan Knapp, a World War II prison camp survivor. A giant burst of color in the gray commercial center of Bergen County, the artwork hung for years on the exterior of the Alexander's

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department store near Routes 4 and 17, where an IKEA now stands.

Knapp was commissioned to work on the 60-ton mural for \$250,000. He once described his creation as "violent, terribly strong, and full of brilliant reds, blues and oranges."

He painted it in an airplane hanger in London, using a combination of enamel

paint and glass to give it its signature look.

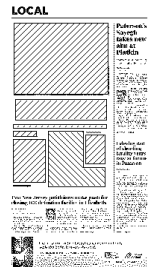
After Alexander's went out of business in 1998, the 200-foot-long panorama was taken apart. It made its way to various locations in North Jersey, including a former warehouse and a Public Works yard, before Valley announced in 2021 that some of the panels would come home to decorate the \$868 million campus the hospital was building in Paramus.

Twenty-four pieces will be erected in the hospital's outdoor garden, said Blake. Other sections, including six panels displaying Knapp's outsized signature, will be installed inside.

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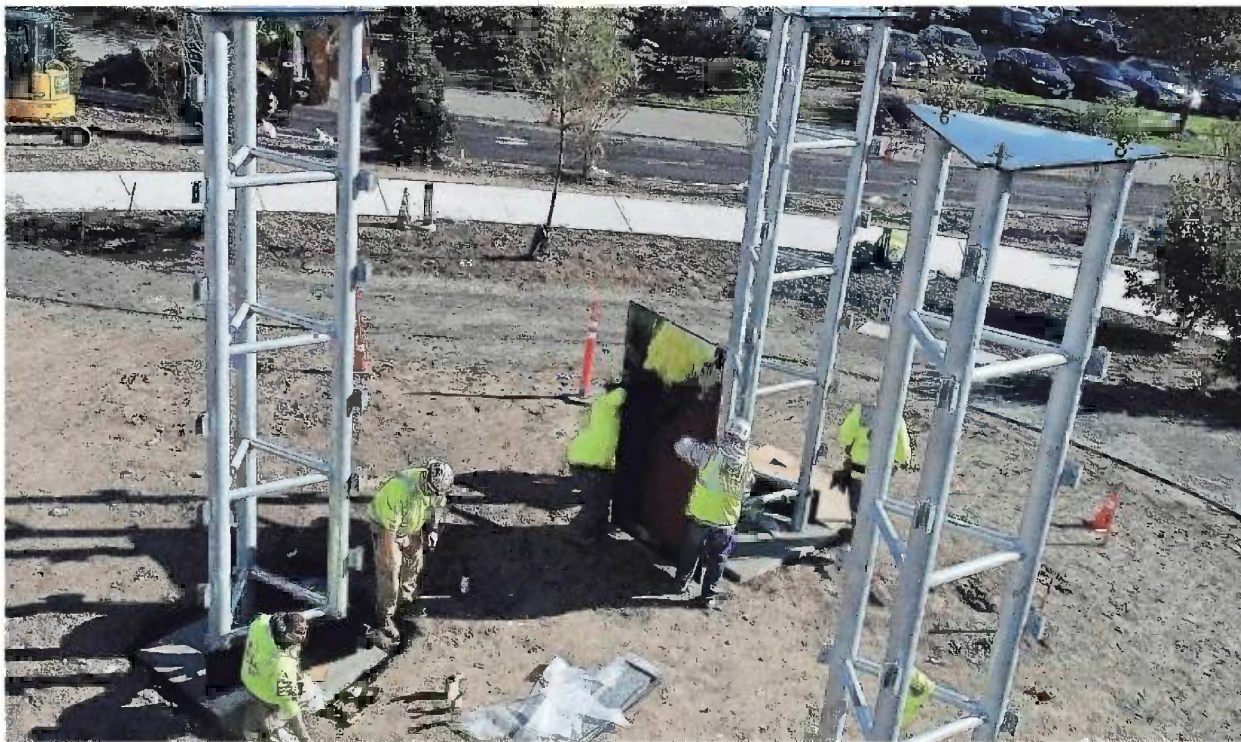
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Carpenters for Edward Leske Company put up the panels of the mural in the courtyard of the new Valley Hospital in Paramus on Wednesday.

PHOTOS BY TARIQ ZEHAWI/NORTHJERSEY.COM



Crews install the panels of the Stefan Knapp mural in the courtyard of the new Valley Hospital in Paramus on Wednesday.

TARIQ ZEHAWI AND DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/NORTHJERSEY.COM



The colorful, 200-foot and locally iconic Stefan Knapp mural on the side of Alexander's department store in Paramus is seen on March 7, 1985, when it was about to celebrate the 23rd year (on March 19) of its completion. AL PAGLIONE