Graciano Corporation builds on a long history of success in New York

NEW YORK, NY

Many firms have come and gone in the historic restoration business. Yet, for almost 100 years, Graciano Corp. has been quietly and meticulously building itself into one of the industry’s premiere firms. A major player in the restoration of some of New York’s most beloved structures – such as the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Moynihan Station, Waldorf-Astoria, The Cloisters Museum, the MetLife Building, Rockefeller Center and the Queensboro Bridge – the company brings the same mindset to every potential project.

“Our success has grown out of a single commitment — delivering nothing but our best work on every project we undertake,” said David Graciano. “My grandfather built this business from the ground up by bringing together the right people with the correct skills to do what needed to be done exceptionally well. That formula is what got this business on its feet, and it’s still driving everything we do today. As a firm, we are measured by the success of every project we undertake. We do our homework, eliminate potentially costly surprises in the field, thoroughly address aesthetic challenges, and consistently go the extra mile to make sure our work delights our customers every time.”

Planning is the starting point for every proposal Graciano develops. And under the eye of Glenn Foglio, president of Graciano Corp., every facet of a project is reviewed before a proposal is developed. Foglio said, “Many of the projects we undertake involve complex work on high-visibility structures. Each and every one of these projects brings its own set of constraints and parameters to the table. It’s our job to pinpoint what needs to be done, and to work around those challenges to deliver the best possible result to our customers. We have developed an extremely accurate database of production standards for every restoration work task. This information allows us to assess and estimate projects with exceptional accuracy. It also helps us to eliminate guesswork and uncertainty from projects, while maintaining our quality standards and ensuring the lowest possible costs for our customers.”

But planning is only part of the equation. In New York City, Graciano’s reputation for hiring and retaining the finest craftsmen has become renowned in the restoration industry.

“We have been fortunate to have generations of craftsmen join our company and stay,” said Tom Corbo, vice president of Graciano Corp. “For us, it is not uncommon to have fathers, sons and grandsons working together on a project – something that’s almost unheard of in any business, but particularly in construction. There’s a lot of pride put into each project by our employees, and I think that really shows when you step back and look at the final product.”

This dedication to delivering exceptional work can be seen in numerous places in and around the New York metro area. Projects like the Queensboro Bridge, Brooklyn Academy of Music and the MetLife Building have garnered considerable attention and prestigious awards for New York restoration.

A New York City historic landmark built in 1910, the Queensboro Bridge featured space on the Manhattan side that was intended for use as an open-air market. After nearly 50 years of neglect, however, the structure was in total disrepair. According to Graciano, “The area under the bridge—a magnificent cathedral-like area—was in tough shape when we began the project. Today, it’s the Bridgemarket complex that houses several shops and an elegant restaurant. It has been quite a turnaround.”

This was one of the largest terra-cotta restoration projects in the world. More than 3,600 terra-cotta tiles, 1,728 trim borders and 3,290 ornate field pieces were removed, repaired and replaced.

This project marked the first time that the bridge’s amazing Gustavino-voie vaults were restored. “To restore the marketplace’s failed impression-vaulted ceilings, craftsmen carefully dismantled the Gustavino-tile arches and rebuilt them to a shorter radius,” said Graciano. “The new configuration provided better clearance between the bridge’s main structure and the masonry work comprising the ceilings and dampened the vibrations created from vehicles traveling over the bridge. It was a difficult task, but our craftsmen did an exceptional job in bringing this amazing space back to life.”

At Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), the project began at the building’s roofline with reconstruction of four parapets. With those repairs underway, attention was then directed at the building’s five ft. wide, 15 ft. tall cornice. Facade sections around the structure were shored and braced, and the entire terra-cotta surface, as well as a one-foot thick brick wall behind the cornice was removed to reveal the steelwork.

Significant rehabilitation of the masonry, terra-cotta, stone and metal trim features on the building’s facades was also necessary. The replicated brick matched the surface and size of the building’s original hand-made materials. In addition, restoration included some highly detailed ornamentation, such as cherubs and musical instruments.

And, at the 50-story MetLife Building, 40 stories of pipe scaffold were constructed to allow craftsmen access to the building’s Tuckahoe marble facades and intricate mosaic clock faces. By chance, a large piece of the marble was located in front of a Texaco station in Tuckahoe, N.Y., adjacent to the original quarry. The station-wagon-sized stone was purchased, transported and cut into segments for use in the restoration effort. At the site, stone masons carved the marble into lintels and other architectural elements.

On the clock, the mosaics were completely reset and all bronze components were cleaned and restored. To showcase the clocks, lighting was installed in each face to illuminate the mosaics and the metalwork, and to make them a more visible part of New York’s night sky.

“Whether our projects have been large or small, we continue to be proud of the work the Graciano team does in New York,” said Foglio. “It is truly our pleasure to play a continuing role in helping to keep New York’s architectural treasures looking their very best.”

**Company of the Month**

**PROJECTS INCLUDE THE BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC, MOYNIHAN STATION AND WALDORF-ASTORIA**

**Shown (from left) are: Graciano and Foglio.**