

Harlem Hospital Women's Pavilion

Demolished 2022

16 West 137th Street



Mural by Charles Alston for the Women's Pavilion of Harlem Hospital. Photographed by Levy for the FAP/WPA Photographic Division 1939. Photographic print 10 x 8 in. Photo: Mark Nadi

The Harlem Hospital complex was designed by Joseph Friedlander in the Neo-Georgian style. The Women's Pavilion was the place where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life was saved with emergency surgery in 1958, after he was stabbed at Blumstein's Department Store during a book signing. King lived another 10 years and went on to lead an inclusive movement which led to the establishment of voter and civil rights for African Americans. However, this history did not save the building from demolition.

Note: Harlem Hospital's white administrator initially refused to allow a series of black murals, like the one pictured, to be installed when the building opened. The murals were sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA).