

BURTON-CONNER ARTWORK PROTOCOLS

Overview:

While the renewed Burton-Conner House is not a ‘mural building’ as designated and governed by the [campus mural policy](#) (Section I, Background), the following protocol supports the creation of student artwork in the building. Principles regarding student artwork were established by the Undergraduate Housing Working Group in 2018-2019. They are articulated below and guide this protocol.

Summary of Art-Making Discussion:

- Students value self expression, and art-making in residence halls helps build community and gives the dorms a sense of home.
- Painting in designated communal spaces is one way to sustain student art-making traditions.
- Art making costs must be effectively managed to avoid a higher financial burden on students.
- Stretched canvas, fire-proof wall board, and other media enables art-making that can evolve with current and future residents’ creative expression

Principles:

- Creative expression is an important facet of campus life at MIT.
- Students’ need for creative expression should be balanced with MIT’s needs to manage expenses in all campus buildings to provide a high quality education at the most affordable cost.
- Designating mural spaces should be a community effort and involve HRS, the house team, and student leaders.
- To help balance creative expression and managing costs, a portion of a house’s community space (e.g. external to private rooms or suites) can be designated as art-making space and dedicated to creative expression on stretched canvas, fire-proof mediums, or blackboards fixed, but not permanently attached, to the community space.
- Project proposals should be reviewed per the updated MIT mural policy, and approved proposals and associated maintenance costs will be funded through the individual house’s budget.
- Maintenance costs associated with unapproved art will be charged to individuals, groups, or the residence hall depending on the specific circumstances of the situation.

Protocols:

- Murals (defined as artwork created on a panel or another surface that is temporarily mounted in the residence) in shared space in any MIT residence must not contain material that has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual or group’s educational or work performance at MIT or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational, work, or living environment.

- Unacceptable material includes images or language that is derogatory on the basis of race, color, sex, orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin.
- Murals must comply with individual living group policies, MIT Policies and Procedures, the MIT Mind and Hand Book, and the law.
 - Some relevant parameters to consider in evaluating the appropriateness of a mural include context of the mural, and whether it is in shared or more private space.
- **Burton Conner's procedures** for vetting and maintaining murals consists of:
 - A resident with a proposal for a mural in their house shall formally introduce the proposal and identify themselves in writing to other residents of the floor community, and notify the House Operations Manager (HOM), Area Director (RLAD), and Head of House(HH). Floor executive must come to a consensus on the acceptability of a mural and should go to JudComm if they are unable to do so
 - **Content of Proposal:** The proposal for a mural must include the mural's location (which may be the location of a current mural in the case of a replacement), size, and some form of visual description. Acceptable descriptions include an informal sketch or picture collage – for largely textual or calligraphic murals and poems, the text itself suffices. A proposal may also contain potential creators and a non-binding timeline. If the proposer wishes to purchase any special supplies with house funds, they should mention this in the proposal. If the proposer wishes to modify any of these parameters after the initial notification, they must again inform the rest of the house in writing. Proposal must adhere to guidelines noted at: <http://studentlife.mit.edu/housing/housing-policies/murals>
 - Images that directly conflict with floor culture and community may be removed or altered at the discretion of the floor by majority vote. A majority requires a quorum of 33% of house residents and over 50% of voters in favor of keeping the original mural, unless that particular house has dictated alternative guidelines regarding the preservation of original murals.
 - **Approved Locations:** Burton Conner has designated locations for artwork within each of the community clusters in the building. These locations are noted in the attached floorplans and will serve as the locations for mural panels. Expansion beyond these locations will require further consultation with Housing & Residential Services.
 - Having JudComm survey and verify that existing murals meet community standards every three years
 - Allowing residents to confidentially report concerns about murals to the floor's GRA
 - All murals that have been reported will be reviewed by JudComm and if unable to be resolved, JudComm will contact the Heads of House

- If a mural is to be placed in a communal area such as the stairwells, entrance, or Porter Room bridge connector, the artist shall inform all floors, the House Operations Manager, and Area Director via a designated mailing list for this purpose.
 - **Replacing Murals:** A mural may be replaced whenever a proposal at a location with an existing mural is made. Floor residents must approve that replacement through the normal method of objection and modification. The proposal for replacement must include a picture of the current mural. If the majority of residents object to replacing a mural, the original mural must remain. A majority requires a quorum of 25% of house residents and over 50% of voters in favor of keeping the original mural, unless that particular house has dictated alternative guidelines regarding the preservation of original murals. It may also be approved to remove and preserve the original mural panels and replace them with new panels for the new mural, but this still must be approved as if the original mural is being repainted.
 - **Unfinished Replacements:** If the original mural is unfinished and the original proposer still lives within the house or may reasonably return to the house, then the original proposer must be contacted, who may then give consent to reusing the supplies for the new proposal. If the original proposer is unknown, or no longer a member of the house, then the house should be asked in writing if someone recognizes the original mural and if the supplies may be repurposed. If no one recognizes the original mural or wants to work on it, the supplies are automatically repurposed, pending the approval of the new mural. If more than a semester has passed without work on the unfinished mural or all of the original proposers graduate before completing the mural, a new proposal must be submitted to continue working on the mural or preserve it. Else, the mural panels will be removed.
 - All murals will be documented via an internal spreadsheet, and murals will be posted to the BC website (bc.mit.edu) with the consent of their creator.
- **Summer Exceptions**
 - **Summer Storage:** According to MIT Mural policy, “in the case of summer visiting students, murals that may be objectionable could be covered or removed.” The RLAD in conjunction with the House Operations Manager, will determine which murals are “objectionable.” Murals may also be covered or removed for the summer at the discretion of House & Residential Services Guest and Conference Housing Staff. These murals will be removed at the beginning of each summer term and replaced at the start of the subsequent fall term.
 - Should these decisions be made after the end of the term, an email should be sent out to the proper floor stating which mural was moved and where it is being stored. It must be reinstalled to its original place before students return to campus.
 - **Residents may not:**

- Alter or add to any part of the building structure or mechanical and electrical systems
- Place, affix, hang, or extend any materials on any exterior surface of an MIT residence, including rooftops.
 - any materials not hung with the pre-installed hardware must be done by professional staff with the oversight of the House Operations Manager.
- **Exception:** During undergraduate orientation (the period between August 15 and undergraduate registration day), communities are permitted to safely affix banners to their residence hall with the approval and assistance of the Area Director. All banners must be safely removed on or before undergraduate registration day.
- **Materials and Protection**
 - Murals may only be painted on any kind of lightweight, impermeable material which can be temporarily applied to the wall. Non oil-based paint, mixed media, or other artistic medium may be used. Paint or other materials may not be applied directly to the wall.
 - Use of aerosols is permitted only outdoors
 - Whenever possible, the creation of the mural should take place in the makerspace and not in the halls. If the mural must be painted on the hall, drop cloths must be used for large murals in order to protect the walls and floor. Newspaper can be used for smaller projects. Before painting begins, residents must ensure that there is enough tape to cover all wall edges surrounding the mural. It is the creators job to clear hallways after working on the mural and protect the floor during the work process. Materials cannot be left in the hallways overnight.
- **Attachment to Walls:** Murals will be attached to a wall using the pre-installed system designed as part of the Burton Conner renovation project. HRS will provide documentation as attachments to this proposal that specify the locations where panels may be hung. The locations will align with the design intent of the design team from the Burton Conner renovation project. The documentation will also include exact specifications for hardware and installation processes. Any changes to the number or location of designated artwork must be made in consultation with HRS, Environmental Health & Safety and the House Operations Manager.
- It is preferred that the setting of any mounting materials in the artwork itself is done in coordination with one of the creators of the mural, or a proxy, present. Organizing these meetings may be done in conjunction with the Facilities Chair and House Operation Manager. Any modifications to the hardware affixed to the building must be performed by professional staff in coordination with the House Operations Manager and Environmental Health and Safety. To specify a location and position within the approved area, tape and notes may be attached to the walls in the case where no meeting with the HOM is organized.

Budget for Costs of Materials

- Funds for Burton Conner murals from the Burton Conner budget are to be used for the approved materials and other assorted supplies necessary for create of murals. Paints

and other supplies necessary for the creation of the mural itself will be the responsibility of the individual floor. For any potential funds coming from outside of Burton Conner, the budget will need approval from the RLAD and House Operations Manager. Any funds from Burton Conner itself will need to receive approval from the Treasurer and Facilities Chair.

- Pending a successful pilot, a scheme for continued funding of this program will be designed by interested parties, the Heads of House, RLAD, House Operation Manager, and relevant members of Dorm Exec including potentially Treasurer, Facilities Chair, and Makerspace Chair with approval from Housing& Residential Services on behalf of the Division of Student Life.

Disposal of unused/expired art material

- Canvas and wood materials can be disposed in dumpsters. If you need assistance please contact your House Operations Manager.
- For disposal of paint and other material please contact DSL EHS Program Manager at aurSELLa@mit.edu.