FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION SEASON
2 EPISODE 7 - MY STORY

[scrubs]

THE MAKING OF A REVIVAL

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: ROGER FIRES
SET DECORATOR: LIZZI PEDERSEN
ART DIRECTOR: KAT DOMBSKY

Some places never really leave you. For millions of fans, and for the cast and crew who spent years inside its halls, Sacred Heart Hospital was one of those places: from the scuffed linoleum to the classic murals. For over two decades, that building lived in people's memories as something more than a set. It lived as a feeling.

I took on the work of recreating Sacred Heart from scratch inside a Vancouver soundstage, with the help of a fantastic and equally devoted Art Department: over 30,000 square feet of meticulous detail. Built not just from directors' plans and old tech packs, but from hours of rewatching, from memory, from an almost obsessive fidelity to what the original felt like underfoot. An equal obsession was how to bring the set into a new technological era, how to honour the legacy while meeting the far higher standards today's audiences carry in their eyes and personal experience in a real hospital.

Practical problems demanded creative answers. How do you fit the original square footage so needed for Scrubs' signature walk-and-talk sequences?

You build a modular and interchangeable environment. The detached entrance, which no longer exists anywhere in physical form, was rebuilt on a loading bay and made believable through a reverse-perspective optical illusion inspired by the artist Patrick Hughes, so that the first time the cast walked back through those doors, it looked exactly like coming home. Signage and wall art on magnets, swappable between setups.

Modular rooms, elevators, and nurse stations that could be rearranged overnight. Because everything could shift, those 30,000 square feet could become, in practice, an effectively limitless hospital, reconfigured overnight to suggest corridors and floors that had never existed, filling the audience's imagination. A set built not just for what the camera needed to see, but for what the memory needed to feel. Every solution designed to protect the show's soul while giving the crew the tools a modern production demands.

But for me, Scrubs carried a different kind of weight long before any of this began. I wasn't inside those walls as part of the crew; I was on the other side of the screen, part of the audience. I watched Scrubs at a time when I was chasing a dream: to leave everything I knew, move to North America, and work in film. Episode by episode, those hallways became my classroom. I trained my ears on J.D.'s voiceovers, on the rhythm of the jokes, on the quiet emotional beats tucked between the laughs. Scrubs taught me English, not just the words, but the feeling behind them. It made a foreign language feel like somewhere I already belonged. Standing here now, I realize Sacred Heart was never just a set I admired from afar. It was part of the map that led me here.

The photographs you are about to see tell the story behind that homecoming: the craft, the problem-solving, and the quiet alchemy of rebuilding a world that had existed, for most of us, only in memory and reruns. A testament to what a dedicated team can accomplish in six weeks when the thing they're building isn't just a set. It is a promise to an audience that has waited sixteen years to walk those halls again and, finally, come home.

[scrubs]



STAGE PLAN

With a build spanning nearly 30,000 square feet, the use of magnetic signage, wall art and modular set dressing meant the hospital's footprint on camera could expand to virtually unlimited possibilities for directors and writers. Stories could now venture beyond the confines of the original series' limited three-storey practical hospital, opening the world up to entirely new locations and spaces.

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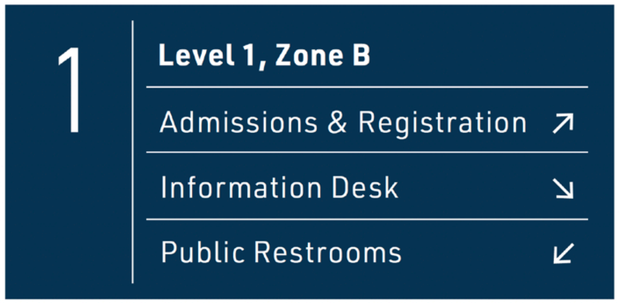


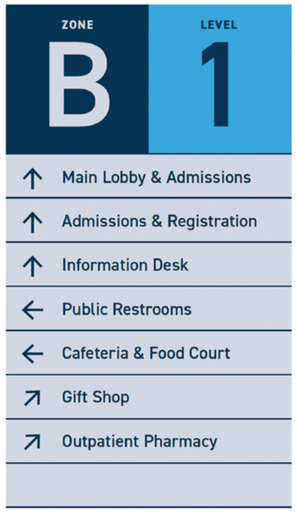
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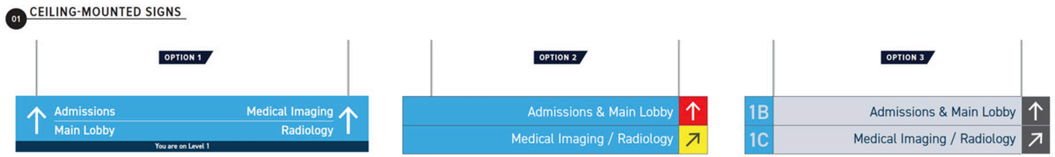


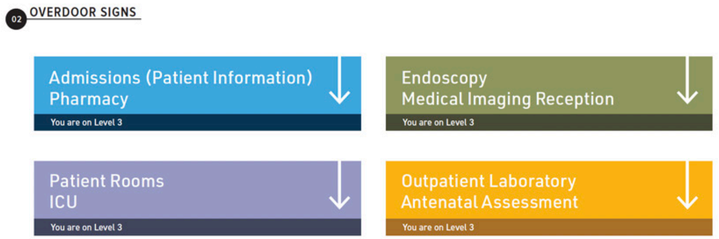
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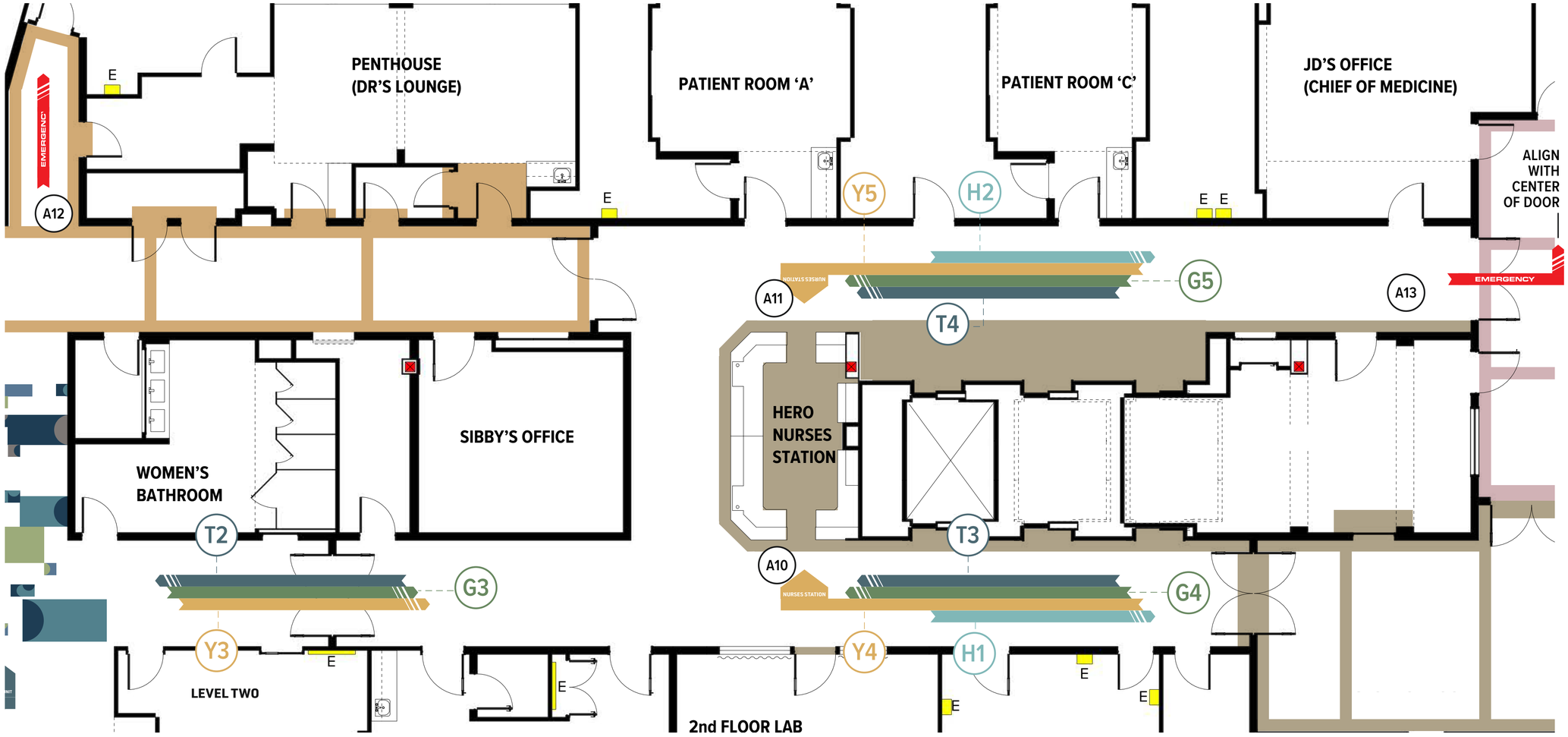




Branding was the first aspect of the Sacred Heart update to be designed and established. A solid foundation and clear brand direction would guide the updates after 15 years and strengthen the standards of communication between doctors, staff, and patients and the foundation to the new hospital look. Every signage was done on magnets for easy interchangeability, giving the hospital an almost unlimited range of possibilities and levels to adapt and evolve their environment as needed.

GRAPHICS

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GRAPHICS

[scrubs]









EXTERIOR
SACRED HEART

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Patrick Hughes's reverse perspective technique was the ideal solution for creating the illusion of a continuous hallway bridging the exterior detached set piece and the interior soundstage.
The first time the technique had ever been deployed at full scale and connected to a practical set.

To sell the effect, the vanishing point needed to shift dynamically with each camera angle, working in tandem with a practical hallway set to achieve the precise parallax required for a convincing moving POV.



REVERSE PERPECTIVE

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ADMISSIONS

[scrubs]









ADMISSIONS
GIFT SHOP

[scrubs]









HALLWAY
ADMISSIONS

[scrubs]









CAFETERIA

[scrubs]





In the original Scrubs location, the cafeteria sat beside a street. To capture the feel of moving traffic and a lively neighborhood, the Art Department built a miniature highway. Using 1:24 scale cars as a reference, we calculated the distance, speed, and angle at which the miniature needed to run to create the most impactful and realistic background.





OUTSIDE CAFETERIA

[scrubs]









ICU WAITING ROOM

[scrubs]









ICU

[scrubs]









ICU

[scrubs]









O.R.

[scrubs]









NURSES' STATION

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HALLWAY

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ELEVATOR

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PENTHOUSE

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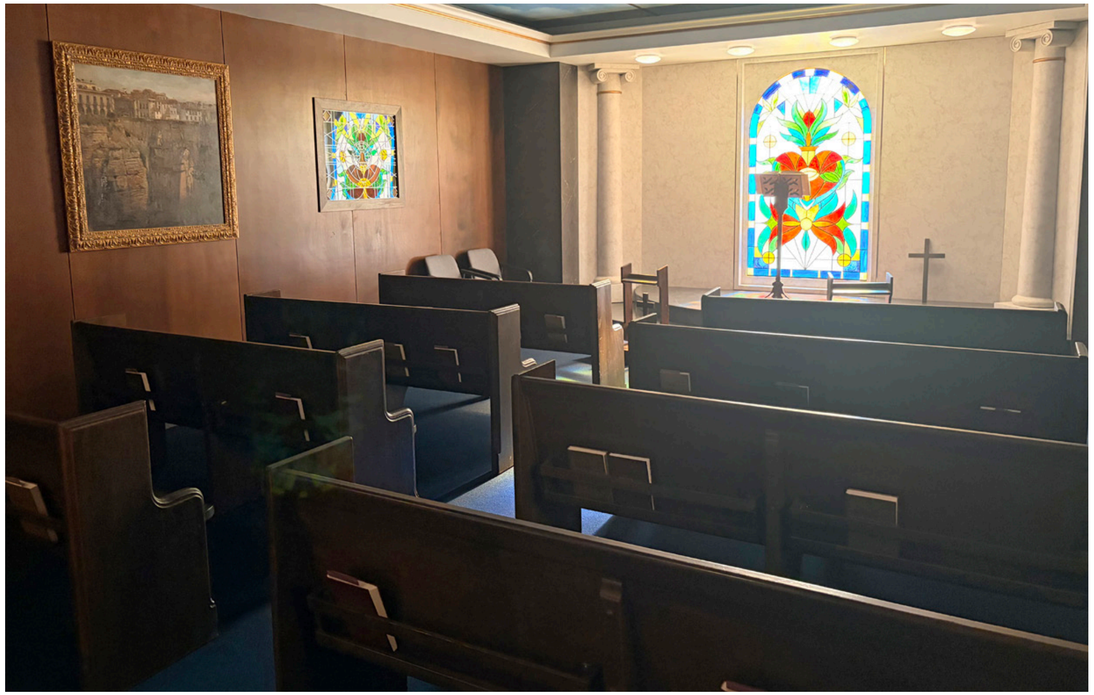


PATIENT ROOMS

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CHAPEL &
HALLWAY OUTSIDE

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LLOYD'S JUNCTION

The bar was named as an in Memoriam tribute to Sam Lloyd, incorporating a play on the Legal term "injunction" in Reference to his beloved character, Ted the lawyer. This inspired the name "Lloyd's Junction," along with its train-themed design.





[scrubs]





JD’s fantasy sequences make Scrubs unlike any other show on television. One minute you’re on the set of Sinners, the next you’re in a haunted patient room, a 1970s one or on the Maury show. For the Art Department, that means reinventing the show’s look at a moment’s notice and building worlds that exist only inside one man’s head. It’s demanding and a blast, like the upside-down patient room, where every piece was replicated to put the bed on the ceiling.





FANTASIES

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A complete patient room, built upside down. A T-bar ceiling and its fluorescent panels run along the floor, while cables structured with wires upwards. Everything is inverted, so Mrs. Croft seems to defy gravity, lying in her bed on the ceiling while the world hangs beneath her.





MRS. CROFT'S UPSIDE DOWN PATIENT ROOM

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A fully practical stretched hallway: JD stands on a wheeled platform that rolls backward, making the corridor seem to lengthen around him. As the hallway stretches, he's dragged out of fantasy and back to reality, away from where he wants to be and toward where he needs to be.

ELLIOT'S HOUSE





[scrubs]









JD’S APARTMENT

[scrubs]

AD

"When I knew we were going to do a revival, I never thought in a thousand years it would be on a set that was this enormous. I mean, I think there's 30,000 square feet of hospital. It's pretty effing insane." - **Zach Braff**

"I got goosebumps the first time I walked on here.
And I hadn't, like, mentally prepared that it was going to be identical." - Sarah Chalke

Arch Digest
Inside The Rebuilt Scrubs Hospital
With Zach Braff, Donald Faison, and Sarah Chalke
https://youtu.be/_StpDQecoss?si=wqpkl-a353f6ooQJ

domus

"I walked them through one by one, It was clear they were returning to a place that, after all, they already knew." - **Roger Fires**

Scrubs is back. And with it, the ambitious set design of Sacred Heart Hospital

https://www.domusweb.it/en/news/gallery/2026/03/13/scrubs-return-sacred-heart-hospital-set-design-streaming-disney-plus.html

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

None of this exists without my devoted crew. Every detail, every late night, every ounce of craft poured into this show meant everything — and I am endlessly grateful to the people who built this world alongside me.

To my fellow production designers industry-wide: it is an honor to stand among such extraordinary talent. I see you, I admire you, and I am grateful every day to share this craft with you.

With love and gratitude,

- Roger Fires

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