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Mural too off the wall for new dental office

Former bar's rock god tribute covered up, leaving a cavity in west-end neighbourhood

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EMILY MATHIEU
 STAFF REPORTER

It was a vibrant tribute to the rock gods, now almost buried beneath a coat of stucco. A massive mural on the outside of the building that used to house the Time Zone Bar and Grill is in the final stages of being covered up.

"That was a beautiful picture, man," said former owner Gerald Vasilakos, who ran the bar at Rogers Rd. and Keele St. for close to four decades, when told about the cover-up. "It was a rock and roll bar, and we had live bands all the time."



SUPPLIED PICTURE (LEFT), EMILY MATHIEU/TORONTO STAR
 Stucco now covers a rock 'n' roll mural and local landmark at the former Time Zone restaurant.

Featuring images of the Beatles and logos from bands like the Rolling Stones and KISS, the mural was painted by Vasilakos's son and a group of his friends about 14 years ago. Vasilakos, 71, sold the building about a year ago when he decided to retire.

The new owner is gutting the bar, transforming the space into a dentist office. Workers began covering the mural last week. The remaining portion will disappear once the city gives the all-clear to cover an area thick with wires, according to people working on the building.

"We were actually thinking about doing something with it," owner Dr. Gregory Stelmaszyk said, adding the mural is "dated," and doesn't fit with the look of the business. The dentist said they hope to open in about a month.

Interior designer David White, who also consulted on the exterior look of the building, said even if the mural was a good fit for the dentist office, structural issues meant it was impossible to save.

"The wall was so badly decayed," said White, adding some bricks were crumbling. "It was not safe," he said.

But Vasilakos disputed that. "That is not right. The bricks were excellent actually."

White added it was a bit sad the musical tribute had to be covered up. "Everybody knows about the mural. If you know the area, or are born in the area. That is why it was sad."

Vasilakos said the mural put the restaurant on the map.

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"Everybody had a comment about it," he said. "But the guy bought the building, he can do whatever he wants."