

# Carter Hodgkin Electromagnetic Fall

A large-scale mosaic for Remsen Science Hall, Queens College, New York  
Commissioned by: The New York Percent for Art Program

**For more information:**

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**“ELECTROMAGNETIC FALL,” THREE-STORY MOSAIC BY CARTER HODGKIN,  
CREATED FOR REMSEN SCIENCE BUILDING AT QUEENS COLLEGE**

*--Artist Used Digital Imaging and Thousands of Mosaic Tiles to Create Large-Scale Mural--*

FLUSHING, NY, February 25, 2010 – “Electromagnetic Fall,” a three-story glass-tile mosaic by artist Carter Hodgkin, will be on view March 1 at the official opening of the newly expanded Remsen Hall on the campus of Queens College in Flushing, Queens. This permanent interior installation—visible externally through Remsen’s glass walls—was commissioned by the Percent for Art Program, which integrates site-specific pieces into construction projects funded by New York City. The expansion of Remsen, begun in 2006, was done by Mitchell/Giurgola Architects.

Building on the historic use of mosaic in public places, “Electromagnetic Fall” is expressed in a modern, digitalized vernacular that unites art and science. “Remsen primarily houses chemistry teaching and research labs,” says Professor Robert Engel, Interim Dean of the Division of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. “So we’re delighted that the artist has created this dazzling work based on a science theme.”

Hodgkin employed a unique, experimental process to construct an artwork that is both evocative and whimsical. Using algorithms, she created a design simulating an atomic particle collision that occurs on the top floor of the glass atrium, causing the particles to fall dramatically three floors to the bottom. A torrent of thousands of small, colored tiles cascade down, forming loops and circular arrays of orbiting particles along the way. Silver, chromium, and gold tiles reflect light, conveying a sense of motion. Then Hodgkin united the interior architecture by creating mosaics for Remsen’s nine columns. Trajectories of particles wrap around each column, extending the design along each hallway.

The mosaic forms a bold emblem on the exterior while remaining intimate on the interior. Occupying 1096 square feet, “Electromagnetic Fall” incorporates 55,162 small mosaic tiles in 105 colors, with each tile corresponding to a pixel in the computerized design. Like the students and faculty of QC, the piece is multinational: the tiles come from Mexico, France, Italy, and China. The result is a work of complex color and texture.

Carter Hodgkin was born in Warrenton, Virginia. She holds a BFA from Virginia

Commonwealth University and has received fellowships from the Pollock Krasner Foundation, the Gottlieb Foundation Emergency Grant, and the New York Foundation for the Arts (Painting, 1989, Digital/Electronic Arts, 2009). She lives in New York City and teaches at the Parsons School of Design.

Queens College of the City University of New York (CUNY), founded in 1937, is dedicated to the idea that a first-rate education should be accessible to talented individuals of all backgrounds and financial means. Its more than 20,000 students come from over 140 nations and speak scores of languages, creating an extraordinarily diverse and welcoming environment. Located on a beautiful, 77-acre campus in Flushing, Queens College enjoys a national reputation for its liberal arts and sciences and pre-professional programs. Each year Queens College has been cited by The Princeton Review as one the nation's 100 "Best Value" colleges, thanks to its outstanding academics, generous financial aid packages, and relatively low costs. In addition, U.S. News & World Report's *America's Best Colleges* (2010) ranks QC among the top 10 public universities in the category "Best Universities—Master's (North)." The college opened its first residence hall in August 2009. More info on Queens College at [www.qc.cuny.edu](http://www.qc.cuny.edu).

# Queens College upgrades labs

*CUNY campus's Remsen Hall gets three-story, 26,000-square-foot expansion*

By Anna Gustafson

Thursday, March 4, 2010 9:16 AM EST

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Carter Hodgkin stands with part of the artwork she made for Queens College's new science space. "Electromagnetic Fall" depicts a nucleus collision. Photo by Anna Gustafson

Queens College officials celebrated this week the completion of a \$30 million renovation that brought 11 new labs and a three-floor mosaic of a nucleus collision to one of the main science buildings on campus.

"This is truly a success," Queens College President James Muyskens said. "We had a lot of really old labs, and many of our students come here specifically to study science, so we wanted state-of-the-art labs for them. We also have so many world-class faculty who need this."

Officials held the ribbon-cutting for the three-story, 26,000-square-foot extension to Ira Remsen Hall Monday morning. The addition, which took two years to complete, includes seven teaching and four advanced research labs for the chemistry department as well as high-tech equipment that had been much needed in the 60-year-old building.

"We are extremely pleased that we will now be able to present for our students modern learning facilities in a safe and constructive environment," said Robert Engel, dean of the division of mathematics and natural sciences at the college.

The renovation, which was funded with a \$30 million state grant, is the first of three phases to modernize science facilities at Queens College. A 55,162-piece mosaic entitled "Electromagnetic Fall" runs throughout all three floors of the new area, including on the walls and columns.

"It was based on a subatomic collision," said Carter Hodgkin, a Manhattan artist who created the piece. "You see the nucleus collision on the third floor, and the particles fall down to the other floors."

The piece includes thousands of colorful glass tiles that cascade down walls and columns, forming loops and circular arrays of orbiting particles. College officials pointed out that, like the students and faculty of the college, the piece is multinational — the tiles come from Mexico, France, Italy and China.

"The piece is fitting for the sciences," Muyskens said. "It's like a digitized computer image."

The second phase of the renovation projects will be completed by the fall of 2010 and will include new biology and chemistry research labs in Remsen. The third phase, which should be completed by the winter of 2011, will include the renovation of the Center of Biology and Natural Sciences in Remsen.

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**Bio**

Carter Hodgkin lives and works in New York. She is represented by Denise Bibro Fine Art. Ms. Hodgkin has exhibited extensively in the United States, Europe and Asia. Solo shows have ranged from New York; Cincinnati and San Francisco to Tokyo, Japan and New Delhi, India. The work has been featured in group shows including "The Digital Body", ZKM Center for Art & Media in Karlsruhe, Germany and "Excess in the Technomediocratic Society", Musee Dole, France. In 1998 she exhibited at Nature Morte Gallery in New Delhi and was the U.S. representative artist in the Khoj International Workshop.

Most recently Americans for the Arts cited her permanent Public Art Project "Electromagnetic Fall" as one of the best public art projects for 2010. Hodgkin is a 2009 Fellow in Digital/Electronic Arts and a 1989 Fellow in Painting from the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has been awarded fellowships from the Gottlieb Foundation and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation as well as being nominated for fellowships from Anonymous Was a Woman and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation.

Articles and reviews of her work have appeared in such publications as Artforum, Art in America, Arts Magazine, Flash Art, Artbyte and The New Yorker. Her work is included in Art+Science Now, a visual survey of artists working at the frontiers of science and technology published by Thames & Hudson. Her work is included public and private collections including the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, the U.S. Art in Embassies Program, and the Library of Congress.

Ms. Hodgkin received a B.F.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Certificate of Advanced Multimedia from NYU. She also attended the San Francisco Art Institute, Pratt Institute and the School of Visual Arts. She teaches at the Parsons School of Design.

For more information, please visit [www.carterhodgkin.com](http://www.carterhodgkin.com).