



THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

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July 3, 2023

Sarah Carroll, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Theater 80, 78-80 St. Mark's Place, Manhattan

Dear Chair Carroll,

The Historic Districts Council is writing to express support for Village Preservation's campaign to landmark Theater 80, at 78-80 St. Mark's Place. Given that the building has recently been sold at auction, it must be protected by landmark designation as soon as possible in order to safeguard the cultural history that this building represents.

Built circa 1845 as a Greek Revival rowhouse, this building has been a cultural icon in the East Village since at least the 1930s, when the building became a restaurant and cabaret catering to the German immigrant community of the East Village.

In 1959, the operators of the legendary club The Five Spot opened a new Jazz venue here at 78-80 St. Mark's known as the Jazz Gallery, which hosted performances by such luminaries as Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, and Frank Sinatra among others. By the mid-1960s the building was converted once more, this time into Theater 80, which flourished as a center of the off-off Broadway theater movement, drawing such talent as Joan Crawford, Myrna Loy and Gloria Swanson, whose signatures are still intact in the cement "walk of fame" on the sidewalk in front of the building.

Today, the building continues to serve the arts and cultural community of the East Village as the home of Theater 80 and the Museum of the American Gangster. Please help secure that legacy by protecting this piece of history.

Sincerely,

Frampton Tolbert
Executive Director