

Landmarks Preservation Commission
November 13, 2001, Designation List 331
LP-2100

STEINWAY HALL, 109-113 West 57th Street (aka 106-116 West 58th Street), Manhattan. Built 1924-25; [Whitney] Warren & [Charles D.] Wetmore, architects; Thompson-Starrett Co., builders.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1010, Lot 25.

October 16, 2001, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of Steinway Hall and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eight people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the property's owners, Community Board 5, Municipal Art Society, American Institute of Architects' Historic Buildings Committee, and Historic Districts Council. In addition, the Commission received two letters in support of designation, including one from the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

Summary

The sixteen-story Steinway Hall was constructed in 1924-25 to the design of architects Warren & Wetmore for Steinway & Sons, a piano manufacturing firm that has been a dominant force in its industry since the 1860s. Founded in 1853 in New York by Heinrich E. Steinweg, Sr., the firm grew to worldwide renown and prestige through technical innovations, efficient production, business acumen, and shrewd promotion using artists' endorsements. From 1864 to 1925, Steinway's offices/showroom, and famous Steinway Hall (1866), were located near Union Square. After Carnegie Hall opened in 1891, West 57th Street gradually became one of the nation's leading cultural and classical music centers and the piano companies relocated uptown. It was not until 1923, however, that Steinway acquired a 57th Street site. Designed in a restrained neo-Classical style, Steinway Hall is L-shaped in plan, with a front portion clad in Indiana limestone that terminates in a set back, four-story colonnaded tower, and a central campanile-like tower with a steep pyramidal roof and large lantern. The main facade's base is embellished by a music-themed sculptural group by Leo Lentelli and by a frieze with medallion portraits of distinguished classical composer-pianists. The style, materials, setbacks and massing, picturesque towers, and decorative elements add distinction to the building and make it a monumental architectural presence along the West 57th Street cultural corridor. Warren & Wetmore was best known for its designs for hotels and railroad-related buildings, most notably Grand Central Terminal. Steinway, the city's only remaining piano maker, has continuously utilized the building's lower four stories, as well as the famed "basement" for artists' concert grand pianos. The upper twelve stories also have an illustrious history, rented to many organizations associated with music and the arts, such as the Oratorio and Philharmonic Societies of New York; Columbia Artists Management Inc.; Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing; *Musical America*; Colbert Artists Management; and Kohn Pedersen Fox, architects. The Manhattan Life Insurance Co. owned the building from 1958 to 1980, and was headquartered here until recently.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Steinway & Sons¹

Steinway & Sons, a piano manufacturing firm that “has dominated the industry from the late 1860s to the present,”² was founded in 1853 in New York City by Heinrich Engelhard Steinweg, Sr. (1797-1871), previously the owner of a piano and instrument shop in Seesen, Germany. His son Carl G. (Charles) (1829-1865) had immigrated to New York in 1849 and reported back on the potential of the American piano market. Most of the Steinweg family, including sons Heinrich (Henry), Jr. (1830-1865); Wilhelm (William) (1835-1896); and Albert (1840-1877), immigrated to New York in 1850, while the eldest son, Christian Friedrich Theodor (Theodore) (1825-1889), remained in the piano business in Germany. The Steinwegs worked as journeymen in New York piano factories during the next three years. After embarking on their own in a rented building at 85 Varick Street, the firm moved in 1854 to larger quarters in several adjacent buildings at 82-88 Walker Street.³

In 1859-60, Steinway & Sons (the family name was legally changed in 1864) constructed a mechanized pianoforte manufactory (Louis Burger, architect), one of the world’s largest, at Fourth (Park) Avenue and 52nd - 53rd Streets (it was expanded in 1863). To further assist in meeting the growing demand for its product, in 1864 Steinway opened a showroom, piano depository, and offices at 71-73 (later renumbered 109-111) East 14th Street [see below]. Steinway Hall was added to the rear of this building in 1866. With the deaths of both Charles and Henry, Jr., in 1865, Theodore moved to New York and merged his piano business interests with his family’s. William Steinway became the firm’s financial/business director in charge of promotion and marketing, while Theodore became the technical director. These brothers were responsible, in large part, for elevating Steinway pianos to worldwide prominence. By 1870, the neighborhood of the Steinway factory had developed and left no room for expansion, so Steinway & Sons began acquisition of some 400 acres of property in Long Island City, Queens. By locating outside of New York City, the firm also wanted to escape the labor problems that it had through the 1860s. It developed the company town of Steinway in the 1870s with housing and a complex that included a lumberyard/ sawmill, a foundry, a piano factory, and a piano case works. Steinway’s Park Avenue facility then became the finishing manufactory. In London, Steinway opened a showroom and Steinway Hall in 1875, followed by a branch factory and showroom in Hamburg in 1880.

Early in the firm’s history, Steinway pianos were recognized for their superior craftsmanship and design and, by the 1860s, Steinway was in competition with Chickering & Sons for prominence among American piano makers. Steinway’s numerous awards included thirty-five first prizes at American industrial fairs (1855-62); first prize at the International Exhibition, London (1862); gold medals for its grand, square, and upright models at the Exposition Universelle, Paris (1867); and the top piano award at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia (1876). A recent account stated that “the firm quickly grew in size and esteem through a combination of technical developments, efficient and high-quality production, shrewd business practices, and successful promotion through artists’ endorsements and advertising,”⁴ as well as direct management of artists. Noted for continual experimentation in the design and construction of pianos in the second half of the nineteenth century, Steinway & Sons acquired over one hundred technical patents. Steinway first concentrated on square pianos, designing in 1855 an overstrung square grand piano that employed a cast-iron plate. The Steinway grand piano was developed as a distinct type by the late 1860s. The Steinway upright piano, manufactured on a large scale by the early 1870s, emerged as the standard American home piano by the end of the century. The Steinway concert grand piano was patented by Theodore Steinway in 1875. Steinway & Sons aggressively marketed its pianos through the endorsements of composers and pianists, a policy developed by William Steinway. Not only was Steinway one of the world’s leading piano makers, but its pianos were also popular in Europe and the firm gained renown as the purveyor of the pianos of choice for the greatest concert pianists.

After Henry Steinway, Sr.’s death in 1871, Steinway & Sons was incorporated in 1876, with its stock held solely within the family. The firm’s presidents have been William Steinway, from 1876 to 1896; Charles H. Steinway (1857-1919), from 1896 to 1919; Frederick T. Steinway (1860-1927), from 1919 to 1927; Theodore E. Steinway (1883-1957), from 1927 to 1955; and Henry Z. Steinway (b. 1915), from 1955 to 1977. By the early twentieth century, the company’s advertising slogan was “Steinway, the Instrument of the Immortals,” and Steinway custom-made pianos became popular in the homes of the wealthy. The firm discontinued the management of artists, but “expanded its services as suppliers of concert and rehearsal instruments to scores of

artists,”⁵ and created dealerships around the United States that handled sales, concert services, and repairs. A Steinway Hall was constructed in Chicago (1894-95, Dwight H. Perkins; demolished).⁶ After Steinway expanded its piano manufacturing plants in Long Island City, its Park Avenue facility was sold in 1910. A new retail store was opened in Berlin in 1909, the Hamburg plant was expanded in 1909-13, and a second Hamburg factory was completed in 1921. Steinway & Sons closed its office/showroom on 14th Street in 1925, and constructed new Steinway Halls in New York and London. With the stock market crash in 1929 and the resultant collapse in the market for luxury goods, Steinway in the 1930s focused on the sale of pianos to radio stations and the development of smaller “S” grand pianos for those of modest means.

“Steinway Hall” on East 14th-15th Streets (1864-1925)⁷

Steinway’s building (1863-64, John Kellum)⁸ on East 14th Street near Union Square housed its offices, showroom, and a piano depository.⁹ The firm had also planned a musical venue, Steinway Hall, as part of the project; delayed by the Civil War, it was added to the rear of the property in 1866, facing onto East 15th Street. The complex became familiarly known as “Steinway Hall.” The music hall was said to have been “planned and erected by members of the firm, no professional architect having a hand in its construction,”¹⁰ under the supervision of William Steinway. William had convinced his father that if Americans became more interested in music, they would be more likely to become Steinway customers. Additionally, Henry Steinway, Jr., had proposed the firm’s sponsoring of artists, believing that

*the excellence of the instrument would be evident to the most critical of critics and that their enthusiastic acceptance of it would give it increased value in the public eye. These plans eventually took shape in the form of Steinway Hall concerts, which combined publicity value for the firm with a tangible service to music and musicians. To ensure quality in the concerts, the firm operated, and most successfully, as artists’ managers.*¹¹

Steinway Hall’s location was within both New York’s classical music center and the *Kleindeutschland* German-American neighborhood.¹² The nearby Academy of Music (1853-54, Alexander Saeltzer), at East 14th Street and Irving Place, an opera house with the world’s largest seating capacity at that time, had quickly become an important part of musical and social life in New York. After the building burned in 1866, the new Academy of Music (1868, Thomas R. Jackson) remained fashionable until the opening of

the Metropolitan Opera in 1883; it was demolished in 1926. Irving Hall, a ballroom and concert/lecture hall annex to the Academy, opened in 1860 and served briefly as home to the New York Philharmonic. By the mid-1860s, a number of legitimate theaters also opened in the vicinity of Union Square. Most of the leading piano makers followed Steinway’s lead and had showrooms in the area, including Decker Brothers (at 2 Union Square East in the 1860s, and at 33 Union Square West after 1870); Sohmer & Co. (founded 1872; Irving Place and East 14th Street, and after 1898, 170 Fifth Avenue); and Chickering & Sons (at 11 East 14th Street in the 1860s, and at Fifth Avenue and 18th Street after 1875).¹³

Begun just after the first Academy of Music burned, Steinway Hall was New York’s largest musical venue (with around 2000 seats in the main hall, a smaller hall with 400 seats, and studios and music lesson rooms), as well as one of the few large American concert halls devoted to classical music. It has been stated that “no larger auditorium – before or since – has ever been built by a musical instrument manufacturer.”¹⁴ Inspired by such earlier examples as the Pleyel (1839), Paris, and Chickering Hall (1862), Boston, Steinway Hall was for a quarter of a century one of America’s most famous auditoriums, used for concerts, lectures, and political and civic gatherings. *King’s Handbook* in 1892 noted that “Steinway Hall... has been the cradle of classical music in this country; every prominent orchestral organization has been heard within its walls, and so have the most eminent vocalists and instrumentalists.”¹⁵

After the opening of Carnegie Hall (1889-91, William B. Tuthill), at West 57th Street and Seventh Avenue,¹⁶ and its ascension as the city’s premier classical music venue, New York’s classical music center (including the piano companies) gradually relocated uptown.¹⁷ Steinway Hall’s main auditorium space was closed in 1890 and converted for business use by the Steinway firm, though the smaller recital hall remained in use. The Steinway property was sold in 1923 to the S[amuel]. Klein Union Square Realty Corp., and closed in 1925. The 14th Street portion was razed, but the altered Steinway Hall portion on 15th Street survived until the 1980s.

Steinway Hall on West 57th Street¹⁸

For a number of years after the closing of the Steinway Hall auditorium, Steinway & Sons contemplated moving uptown to the music center developing on West 57th Street near Carnegie Hall. It was not until July 1916, however, that the firm found a site adequate for its needs. Steinway announced its intention to construct a new building with the

purchase, for nearly one million dollars, of adjacent town house properties on West 57th and 58th Streets from Dr. Hermann M. Biggs, the State Commissioner of Health, Mrs. Henry Flagg, and Estelle P. Anderson. Architects William K. Benedict and Marvin & Davis¹⁹ filed for a ten-story office building to house Steinway salesrooms on the lower five stories (but no concert or recital hall) and studios above. But in July 1916, the City passed the Zoning Resolution, which in this instance prohibited businesses along that block of 58th Street because it was residential. After Steinway rescinded its purchase agreements, Biggs and Anderson filed suits. Among the first “encumbrance” test cases due to the Zoning Resolution, these lawsuits were not resolved until July 1920. Having lost, Steinway was obligated to proceed in taking title to the properties (the zoning was also amended to allow business on 58th Street). Plans for a new building were further delayed due to the company’s finances after a piano workers strike in 1919. A total of eight lots (three on 57th Street and five on 58th Street) were officially conveyed to Steinway & Sons between August 1920 and January 1924,²⁰ though the company announced the completed purchase by October 1923.

Steinway & Sons, with a revised project and larger site, selected the architectural firm of Warren & Wetmore, which filed for the construction of a sixteen-story building in October 1923. The *Real Estate Record & Guide* that month displayed a preliminary drawing of the proposed structure and stated:

*On the Fifty-seventh Street side the facade of the new building will be faced with stone and the roofs of the various setbacks, required by the Zoning Law, faced with tile. Attractive terraces will be formed by the treatment of the roofs at the floors where the setbacks are planned.*²¹

Construction began in June 1924 and was completed in April 1925. W. L. Hopkins of Warren & Wetmore was in “charge of the planning [of] both exterior and interior of the building,”²² while the Thompson-Starrett Co. was the builder. The Steinway building was conceived not only to house the company’s salesrooms that showcased its pianos and as a “monument to past achievements, celebrating all that Steinway had achieved since 1853,”²³ but it was also a speculative real estate venture. The project, however, reportedly had a twenty-five percent cost overrun, for a total of over three million dollars (including \$547,500 for the land, architects’ fee of \$145,500, and \$2.4 million for construction),²⁴ a sum that represented approximately one fourth of Steinway’s assets.²⁵ “Steinway Hall,”²⁶ an architectural success, was featured in 1925 in

Architectural Record and *Architecture & Building*, the latter publication calling it a “much more glorified new home.”²⁷

Designed in a restrained neo-Classical style, Steinway Hall is L-shaped in plan. Clad in Indiana limestone, the front 57th Street portion rises twelve stories before setting back with a four-story tower, ornamented with monumental Ionic colonnades, that is capped by a set back penthouse story with a hipped roof. The 58th Street portion, clad in tan brick, limestone, and terra cotta, has setbacks above the ninth and twelfth stories. The center of the building is terminated by a campanile-like mechanical/tank tower with a steep pyramidal roof and large lantern. The base of the main facade features a central showcase window, behind which is an ornate, domed formal Reception Room. Above this, a round arch is decorated with a sculptural group by Italian-American sculptor Leo Lentelli,²⁸ depicting the Muse of Music placing a laurel wreath (or crown of musical triumph) upon the head of Apollo, the Greek god of Music, flanked by a mask and an infant, representing the range of music from dramatic to light. The large amount of ashlar wall on the third story reflected the location behind it of the windowless recital hall. The base is capped by a frieze bearing laurel festoons and medallions with portraits of distinguished classical composer-pianists (Brahms, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, and Grieg) flanking a central plaque originally bearing the name “STEINWAY.” The classical style, materials, setbacks and massing, picturesque towers, and decorative elements add distinction to Steinway Hall and make it a monumental architectural presence along the cultural corridor of West 57th Street.

Because few buildings were constructed in New York City during World War I and the following recession, tall buildings erected in the early 1920s, such as Steinway Hall, were among the first to reflect the provisions of the Zoning Resolution, including setbacks on the upper stories. Skyscraper architects, including Warren & Wetmore, thus became “sculptors in building masses,” as remarked by architect Harvey Wiley Corbett.²⁹ The colonnaded tower that caps the main 57th Street portion of Steinway Hall, loosely inspired by the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, as well as the central campanile-like tower, follow in the long tradition in New York of skyscrapers with embellished terminations. The front tower also recalls the mausoleum’s inspiration on the towers of contemporary skyscrapers such as the critically-acclaimed Standard Oil Building (1920-28, Carrere & Hastings, with Shreve, Lamb & Harmon), 26 Broadway.³⁰

Steinway & Sons utilized space on the lower five levels of the building: the basement, with storage, shipping, and an area for artists' testing of concert grand pianos; the first story, with the Reception Room and salesrooms; the second story, with additional salesrooms; the third story, with Steinway Hall (a recital hall seating 240) and executive offices; and a portion of the rear fourth story, with space for piano adjustment and refinishing. The fourth and fifth stories held insulated rental music studios, while the rest of the building housed rental offices. The exterior of the building reflects the interior arrangement, differentiating between Steinway's lower stories and the upper rental ones. A penthouse apartment had been planned for then-president Frederick T. Steinway and his wife, but it was deemed against building regulations so it was later converted into a radio studio. Steinway Hall (the recital hall) was opened on October 25, 1925, with an invitation-only, society musical event that was attended by Steinway grandsons Frederick T., Theodore E., and William R., and Henry Ziegler.

Since its construction, Steinway Hall has been the sole sales location in New York City for Steinway pianos. In addition, "artists select their Steinway for concert performances from the company's unique 'piano bank,' an inventory of more than 300 pianos valued at over \$15 million," according to the Steinway firm, a large portion of which is stored in the "famed 'basement'" of the building.³¹ Theodore E. Steinway, in his 1961 account of the company's history, called the building "a rendezvous for the many friends of the firm. There private studios may be visited by Leopold Stokowski, looking for a place to practice a concerto... Hardly a day goes by that a musician, professional or amateur, does not drop in to try a new piano, talk over developments in the concert field, or simply pass the time of day."³² A recent article in *The New Yorker* stated that "almost every twentieth-century virtuoso has passed through [the Reception] room en route to Steinway's Concert and Artists Department, housed in the basement, where he or she can select a concert grand for performances at Carnegie Hall, across the street."³³ Among these, for example, was "the legendary first meeting of Vladimir Horowitz and Sergei Rachmaninoff"³⁴ in the basement. After the closing of the recital hall after World War II, the Reception Room has also been used for recitals.

The Architects: Warren & Wetmore³⁵

Whitney Warren (1864-1943), born in New York City, studied architectural drawing privately, attended Columbia College for a time, and continued his studies at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1885 to

1894. Upon his return to New York, he worked in the office of McKim, Mead & White. One of Warren's country house clients was Charles Delavan Wetmore. Born in Elmira, New York, Wetmore (1866-1941) was a graduate of Harvard University (1889) and Harvard Law School (1892), who had also studied architecture and had designed three dormitory buildings (c. 1890) on that campus before joining a law firm. Impressed by his client's architectural ability, Warren persuaded Wetmore to leave law and to establish Warren & Wetmore in 1898. While Warren was the principal designer of the firm and used his social connections to provide it with clients, Wetmore became the legal and financial specialist. Whitney Warren was also a founder of the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects and the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design.

Warren & Wetmore became a highly successful and prolific, largely commercial architectural firm, best known for its designs for hotels and for buildings commissioned by railroad companies. The firm's work was concentrated in New York City during the first three decades of the twentieth century, but it also received projects across the United States and overseas. The designs were mainly variations of the neo-Classical idiom, including essays in the Beaux-Arts and neo-Renaissance styles. Warren & Wetmore's first major commission, the result of a competition, was the flamboyant New York Yacht Club (1899-1900), 37 West 44th Street. Early residences by the firm included town houses on the Upper East Side, such as the Marshall Orme Wilson House (1900-03), 3 East 64th Street; James A. and Florence S. Burden House (1902-05), 7 East 91st Street; and R. Livingston and Eleanor T. Beeckman House (1903-05), 854 Fifth Avenue.³⁶ Warren & Wetmore was responsible for the design of the facades of the Chelsea Piers (1902-10, demolished) along the Hudson River between Little West 12th and West 23rd Streets; the Vanderbilt Hotel (1910-13), 4 Park Avenue, including the Della Robbia Bar (with R. Guastavino Co. and Rookwood Pottery Co.); and a number of luxury apartment houses, such as No. 903 Park Avenue (1912).

Warren & Wetmore is most notably associated with the design of Grand Central Terminal (1903-13, with Reed & Stem and William J. Wilgus, engineer), East 42nd Street and Park Avenue, as well as a number of other projects in its vicinity. Whitney Warren was the cousin of William K. Vanderbilt, chairman of the board of the New York Central Railroad, who was responsible for the firm's selection as chief designers. Nearby development by the firm over the span of two decades included: Hotel Belmont (1905-06,

demolished); Ritz-Carlton Hotel (1910, demolished); Biltmore Hotel (1912-14, significantly altered), Vanderbilt Avenue and East 43rd Street; Park Avenue Viaduct (designed 1912, built 1917-19); Commodore Hotel (1916-19, significantly altered), 125 East 42nd Street; Equitable Trust Co. Building (1917-18), 347-355 Madison Avenue; Hotel Ambassador (1921, demolished); and New York Central Building (1927-29), 230 Park Avenue.³⁷ With the firm's success with Grand Central Terminal came commissions for other railroad stations for the New York Central, Michigan Central, Canadian Northern, and Erie Railroads. Notable among these are the Fort Gary Station (1909), Winnipeg, Canada; Yonkers Railroad Station (1911); Union Station (1911-12), Houston; and Michigan Central Station (1913-14, with Reed & Stem), Detroit.

The firm's later work displayed an increased interest in the "composition of architectural mass."³⁸ Prominent later commissions included the Heckscher Building (1920-21), 730 Fifth Avenue; Plaza Hotel addition (1921), 2 Central Park South; Steinway Hall (1924-25); Aeolian Building (1925), 689-691 Fifth Avenue, for Aeolian Organs and Pianola Pianos and for which the firm received a 1926 gold medal from the Fifth Avenue Association; Tower Building (1926), 200 Madison Avenue; Consolidated Edison Co. Building Tower (1926), 4 Irving Place; Erlanger Theater (1926-27), 246-256 West 44th Street;³⁹ and Stewart & Co. Building (1929, demolished), 721-725 Fifth Avenue. The Heckscher, Steinway, Aeolian, and Consolidated Edison Buildings, in particular, show the firm's success in its use of setbacks and picturesque towers. Little was constructed by the firm after 1930. Whitney Warren retired from Warren & Wetmore in 1931, but remained a consulting architect. Charles Wetmore remained the firm's senior partner until the end of his life.

Thompson-Starrett Co., Builders ⁴⁰

The Thompson-Starrett Construction Co. was founded in 1901 by Theodore, Ralph, and William (and later Goldwin) Starrett. The Starretts were four of the five brothers who became associated with large construction and architectural firms based in New York and Chicago. Originally from Kansas, the Starrett family moved to the Chicago area. Eldest brothers Theodore and Paul began their careers in 1887 in the office of architect Daniel H. Burnham. Theodore Starrett (1865-1917) became a structural engineer and a prominent designer of Chicago hotels and apartment buildings, and formed the Whitney-Starrett Co., which built Union Station (1897, Burnham; demolished), Columbus, Ohio. The subsequent Thompson-Starrett Co. specialized in

large-scale industrial, commercial, hotel, and skyscraper construction. The firm's many projects included Union Station (1903-08, D.H. Burnham & Co.), Washington, D.C.; and, in New York City, the St. Regis Hotel (1901-04, Trowbridge & Livingston), 699-703 Fifth Avenue; Municipal Building (1907-14, McKim, Mead & White), 1 Centre Street; Woolworth Building (1910-13, Cass Gilbert), 233 Broadway; Equitable Building (1913-15, Ernest R. Graham and Peirce Anderson), 120 Broadway; and Paramount Building (1926-27, Rapp & Rapp), 1493-1501 Broadway.⁴¹

West 57th Street: a Cultural Center of New York ⁴²

West 57th Street, particularly the blocks between Sixth Avenue and Broadway, is part of the wide cross-town thoroughfare that has sometimes evoked comparison to the elegant Rue de la Paix in Paris, and has had a distinguished history associated with the arts for over a century. In the early 1870s, town houses and mansions for New York's elite began to be constructed along Fifth Avenue and the adjacent blocks on West 57th Street. Other structures also began to pave the way for the neighborhood's eventual reputation as an artistic center. The Sherwood Studios (1880, attributed to John H. Sherwood; demolished), 58 West 57th Street, built by financier-art collector Sherwood; and the Rembrandt (1881, Hubert & Pirsson; demolished), 152 West 57th Street, organized by painter/minister Jared Flagg, were early apartment houses that provided large studio space for artists. The Osborne Apartments (1883-85, James E. Ware; 1889; 1906), 205 West 57th Street, was one of the largest and grandest apartment houses of its era and attracted numerous musicians over the years. Carnegie Hall, at the southeast corner of Seventh Avenue, became one of the nation's most legendary concert halls; residential studios were added to the building in 1896-97 (Henry J. Hardenbergh). The American Fine Arts Society Building (1891-92, Hardenbergh), 215 West 57th Street, has been home to the Architectural League, Art Students League, and Society of American Artists, providing exhibition, classroom, and studio facilities; it was the site of "virtually every important exhibition of art and architecture held in the city"⁴³ for many years. Later buildings that provided residential and working space for artists include the 130 and 140 West 57th Street Studio Buildings (1907-08, Pollard & Steinam) and the Rodin Studios (1916-17, Cass Gilbert), 200 West 57th Street. The Lotos Club (1907, Donn Barber), 110 West 57th Street, was a literary club founded in 1870. By the time the Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing (1916, G.A. & H.

Boehm), one of the earliest American schools to instruct teachers in dance, was built at 163-165 West 57th Street,⁴⁴ it was said that the neighborhood “abounds in structures devoted to the cultivation of the arts.”⁴⁵ As indicated in the Federal Writers’ Project’s *New York City Guide* in 1939, “the completion of Carnegie Hall in 1891 established the district as the foremost musical center of the country. Manufacturers of musical instruments, especially pianos, opened impressive showrooms along Fifty-seventh Street.”⁴⁶ These included Chickering Hall (1924, Cross & Cross), 29 West 57th Street, headquarters of the American Piano Co. which “manufactured its own line of pianos and held a controlling interest in the companies Knabe, Chickering, and Mason & Hamlin;”⁴⁷ and Steinway Hall.

Later History of Steinway Hall ⁴⁸

The speculative investment of Steinway Hall never proved lucrative for Steinway & Sons, yielding only about two percent yearly, and as early as 1947 its sale was considered.⁴⁹ President Henry Z. Steinway finally decided that the building “was a luxury that the company could no longer afford.”⁵⁰ The Manhattan Life Insurance Co. purchased Steinway Hall for three million dollars (about the same as the construction cost) in April 1958. The purchase was arranged by Thomas E. Lovejoy, Jr., president of Manhattan Life (1950-68 and 1971-73) whose wife was a cousin of Mr. Steinway.⁵¹ Under a twenty-year leaseback agreement (renewed in 1978), Steinway & Sons continued to occupy its space in the basement and on the first, second, and part of the fourth stories of Steinway Hall. After Steinway also sold one of its plants in Long Island City, it used the combined sales monies to invest in one consolidated factory there, which was “one of the most expensive and elaborate construction projects in the piano industry.”⁵²

The Manhattan Life Insurance Co. was founded in 1850. The company’s success and growth was evidenced in its fifth home office (1893-94, Kimball & Thompson, with Charles SooySmith, engineer; demolished), 64-66 Broadway, the tallest skyscraper yet constructed in New York.⁵³ The company sold that property in 1928 and acquired a building at 120 West 57th Street; the Depression delayed renovations, however, until 1936. Expansion throughout the 1950s forced Manhattan Life to seek new space, and the company leased offices on the third story of Steinway Hall in 1957 for its accounting and premium collection divisions. After Manhattan Life acquired Steinway Hall, the company called it the “Manhattan Life Building.” During the period from September 1958 to April 1959, the remaining departments of the

insurance firm were relocated into the building, with Manhattan Life occupying about one-third of the total space. Wanting to “make the building more readily identifiable the facade was altered to show the company’s name, the year of its founding (1850) and a replica of the Statue of Liberty done in relief. The Statue has long been a prominent part of the company’s logotype.”⁵⁴ The logo was displayed on limestone panels that covered over the Leo Lentelli sculpture on the building’s base (until 1990). Manhattan Life’s headquarters remained in the building until 2001 (the company was a tenant after 1980).

In 1972, Steinway & Sons entered a new phase of corporate ownership when it was taken over by CBS, under chairman William Paley. CBS sold Steinway & Sons in 1985 to Steinway Musical Properties, Inc., controlled by John R. and Robert M. Birmingham of Boston, who were investors and heirs to a fuel oil fortune. Steinway & Sons was acquired in April 1995 by a Los Angeles investment group and merged with Selmer Co., Inc. Steinway & Sons became a subsidiary of Steinway Musical Instruments, Inc., a holding company in Waltham, Massachusetts, whose entities specialize in the design, manufacture, and sale of musical instruments.⁵⁵

Steinway Hall was conveyed in 1980 by Manhattan Life to 111 West 57th Street Associates (Bernard Mendik, principal). Mendik sold his interests in 1985, but the ownership entity’s name remained the same. The building was reacquired by Steinway & Sons in May 1999, including a 99-year lease on the land which was retained by 111 West 57th Street Associates. Prior to the sale, an executive of Steinway Musical Instruments, Inc., considered Steinway’s “the most successful piano retail store in the world.”⁵⁶ Today, Steinway is the only piano manufacturer remaining in New York City.

Steinway Hall Tenants ⁵⁷

Throughout its history, the twelve upper rental stories of Steinway Hall have housed many organizations associated with music and the arts, greatly contributing to West 57th Street as a cultural center. As the Federal Writers’ Project’s *New York City Guide* reiterated in 1939, the building’s “lower stories are devoted to [piano] displays; the remainder house sales offices, headquarters of musical organizations, shops of specialized instrument manufacturers, studios, and a concert hall.”⁵⁸

The Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing and Columbia Artists Management Inc. (CAMI) had intertwined histories in Steinway Hall and another nearby structure. The Chalif School, established in

1905 by the first Russian ballet master to teach in America, was located at 163-165 West 57th Street from its construction in 1916 until that property's foreclosure in 1933. The Chalif School then moved into Steinway Hall, from about 1935 to 1955. Columbia Concerts Corp. was formed in Steinway Hall in 1930 through the merger of a number of leading independent concert bureaus.⁵⁹ Known as CAMI after reorganization in 1942, it became one of the world's largest and most influential management and booking firms specializing in classical music, opera, theater, and dance. The third-story recital hall, not a success in the 1920s under Steinway management, was turned over to CAMI for its recitals (the space was converted to offices after World War II). Steinway Hall remained CAMI's headquarters until 1959, when it purchased the former Chalif building.

Among the musical organizations in Steinway Hall have been: the Philharmonic Society of New York, established in 1842 and the oldest continuous symphony orchestra in the United States (1925-62);⁶⁰ the Oratorio Society of New York, an amateur chorus founded in 1873 by Leopold Damrosch and the city's second oldest cultural organization (1925-58); Musicians Emergency Fund, organized in 1931 for the relief of destitute musicians (to 1950s); and National Orchestral Association, a training orchestra founded in 1920 as the American Orchestral Society (c. 1930s-80s). Since 1972, the building has been the home of Colbert Artists Management (established in 1948 by Henry and Ann Colbert), a management agency for opera performers and classical musicians, who have included Joan Sutherland (her entire American career), Christa Ludwig, Anja Silja, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, James Morris, Jose van Dam, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Juilliard String Quintet, Alfred Brendel, George Solti, Christoph von Dohnanyi, and Richard Bonyngé. The building is also the national headquarters (since 1993) of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, founded in 1957 and a sponsor of the "Emmy" awards, with eighteen chapters and numerous programs. Publications with offices in the building have included *The Musician*, founded 1895 and published monthly in New York after 1918 (c. 1920s-40s); *Musical America*, a weekly established in 1898, published semi/monthly after 1929 (1929-65); *Psychology* (c. 1940s); *Architectural Forum* (c. 1960s); and *The Economist* (since 1990).

In 1928-29, the penthouse of Steinway Hall was used as a radio broadcasting studio for William Paley's fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System, while CBS concerts were broadcast from the building's recital hall.⁶¹ The penthouse is the location

of one of the city's oldest recording studios, originally (since c. 1940s) the Harris (Harry) Smith Studios. This was the site of jazz recordings by, among others, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis. It became Nola Penthouse Sound Studios (Nola Recording Studios), founded by recording engineer Vincent J. Nola. This studio has recorded many types of music, including Barbra Streisand's first recording at age 13 in 1955.

Several prominent architects and architectural firms have had offices in Steinway Hall. Pietro Belluschi and Eduardo Catalano (c. late 1950s-60s) designed the Juilliard School of Music (1968, with Westermann & Miller). Belluschi also worked on the PanAm Building (1963, with Walter Gropius and Emery Roth & Sons). The joint firm of Kallmann McKinnell Russo & Sonder, with offices here in 1970-78, produced the design for the Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center (1977) in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. [Michael] Kallmann & [Gerhard M.] McKinnell, established in 1962 with the winning competition design for the Boston City Hall (1963-68), was also responsible for the Motorgate and Fire Station (1974-75) on Roosevelt Island. Since 1981, Steinway Hall has housed the head office of Kohn Pedersen Fox, founded in 1976 by A. Eugene Kohn, William Pedersen, and Sheldon Fox. KPF, with offices also in London and Tokyo, has designed a wide variety of buildings and complexes in over thirty nations, including in New York, a number of buildings on West 66th Street for ABC (1978-90s), and the Smith Barney Building (1989), 388 Greenwich Street.

Description ⁶²

The sixteen-story (plus basement) neo-Classical style Steinway Hall is L-shaped in plan, with a West 57th Street frontage of sixty-three feet and a West 58th Street frontage of 100 feet. Clad in Indiana limestone, the main facade of the 57th Street portion rises twelve stories before setting back with a four-story tower, ornamented with monumental Ionic colonnades, that is capped by a set back penthouse story with a hipped roof; the side facades, also clad in limestone (and brick below the eastern fifth story), are exposed above the fifth (western) and second (eastern) stories. The 58th Street portion, clad in tan brick, limestone, and terra cotta, has setbacks above the ninth and twelfth stories. The center of the building is terminated by a campanile-like mechanical/tank tower with a steep pyramidal roof and large lantern. Windows were originally three-over-three double-hung metal sash; they were replaced (c. 1988) by metal double casements with two-pane transoms (louvers in a few cases).

57th Street Portion

Base The three-story base consists of a large amount of smooth limestone ashlar wall, above a polished pink granite watertable, pierced by three openings. A large central multi-pane **showcase window**, with historic bronze framing and convex bottom portion (a later alteration), is flanked by Ionic columns and is surmounted by an entablature, set within a surround with pilasters supporting a molded round arch. At the base of the window is a brass plaque with the inscription "Steinway & Sons Pianos." Within the round arch is a **sculptural group** by Leo Lentelli, executed in cement, depicting the Muse of Music placing a laurel wreath upon the head of Apollo, flanked by a mask and an infant. (The sculpture was covered over by limestone panels bearing the logo of the Manhattan Life Insurance Co. from c. 1958 to 1990; damage to the sculpture was recently repaired. A keystone ornamented with a female head was originally part of the arch; this was removed c. 1958). The two flanking **entrances** have molded surrounds with entablatures and lead to semi-circular vestibules through large double paneled oak (now painted) sliding pocket doors.⁶³ The **eastern vestibule** has a step and floor of polished pink granite; limestone pilasters, cornice, two decorative panels with festoons and musical instruments, a molded entrance surround similar to that on the exterior facade, and a coffered domed ceiling; double brass and glass doors and multi-pane transom, set within an historic enframing; a bronze plaque with the inscription "ERECTED A.D. 1925"; and the letters "Steinway & Sons." The **western vestibule** has a floor of polished pink granite, with a corner section with black-and-white-checkerboard pattern terrazzo; limestone cornice, molded entrance surround similar to that on the exterior facade, and coffered domed ceiling; double painted wooden and glass doors set within an historic enframing; and the letters "The Economist Newspaper Group." To the west of the western entrance are the letters "Manhattan Life Insurance Company," and to the east of the eastern entrance are the letters "Steinway & Sons." A flagpole has been installed above each entrance. The base is capped by a **frieze** bearing laurel festoons and medallions with portraits of distinguished classical composer-pianists (Brahms, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, and Grieg) flanking a central plaque originally bearing the name "STEINWAY" (later "FOUNDED 1850" (Manhattan Life), now "THE ECONOMIST"), capped by a projecting band course ornamented by a Greek fret motif. Two stone courses below the frieze was (from c. 1958 to 1990) the inscription "THE MANHATTAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY";

the stone was recently replaced.

Midsection The midsection is comprised of the fourth through the twelfth stories. It is pierced by windows and is terminated by a decorative band course (that continues along the side facades) and a balustrade/parapet ornamented with three large cast-stone urns (an urn originally located at the southeast corner has been removed). There are also urns at the northeast and northwest corners of the same story. The balusters and urns were originally unpainted and are currently painted gold. A large flagpole has been placed above the balustrade. The **side facades** are pierced by windows, except for the lowest two exposed brick-clad stories on the eastern facade, which are buttressed.

Upper Section The three-story main portion of the **tower** (thirteenth through fifteenth stories), with chamfered corners, is ornamented with two-story Ionic colonnades on the front and side facades, with spandrel panels bearing medallions, that support entablatures. The fifteenth story is terminated by parapets. The set back sixteenth-story **penthouse** has round arches with keystones on the front and side facades, within which are doors and multi-pane fanlights (a large metal vent obscures those on the 57th Street facade), and a hipped roof covered with standing-seam copper, with a cornice decorated with anthemion and cresting along the ridge. An angled chimney rises from the southeast corner, anchored by a flying buttress.

58th Street Portion

Base The two-story base is clad in rusticated limestone (now painted) above a polished pink granite watertable. At each end is a large rectangular loading bay with a metal enframing and non-historic rolldown metal door. The western loading bay is flanked by entrances; the western one has a metal door and multi-pane transom, and the eastern one has a non-historic metal door with a multi-pane window and an historic decorative transom. The base is capped by a balustrade supported by seven foliate corbel brackets and ornamented with four cast-stone urns.

Midsection The midsection is comprised of the third through the twelfth stories. Clad in tan brick with tan terra-cotta spandrel panels on the three central bays, the midsection has triple window groups (those on the third story are taller) and sets back above the ninth story and the twelfth story. A molded cornice caps the ninth story, and a decorative band course and balustrade/parapet, with four large cast-stone urns, cap the twelfth story. The **west facade**, visible from the street, is a brick wall that is unarticulated except

for the returns of cornice, band course, and balustrade. The **rear southern and eastern facades** are currently visible from 57th Street; they have double and triple window groups and are unarticulated except for upper band courses.

Upper Section The upper (thirteenth through fifteenth) stories along 58th Street are ornamented with Ionic pilasters supporting an entablature. On the roof terrace, behind parapets, are an air-conditioning condenser and an original brick-clad bulkhead structure.

Central Tower Terminating the center of the building is a campanile-like mechanical/tank tower ornamented with band courses at the base, glazed-brick corner piers, shallow blind arches (with central rectangular grilles) that are surmounted by oculi with multi-pane tilt windows, and a modillioned cornice

with rosettes. The tower has a steep pyramidal roof covered with standing-seam copper and a large copper lantern with a bracketed balustrade, columns supporting a cornice, open latticework, and a steel stack. Original elements that have been removed include: four large cast-stone urns, supported by pedestals and tripods, at the tower's corners; urns atop the lantern's balustrade; and spheres atop the lantern's cornice.

Report prepared by
JAY SHOCKLEY
Research Department

NOTES

1. Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York* (Boston: M. King, 1892), 876; "Steinway & Sons," www.steinway.com website; Fiorello H. LaGuardia Archives, LaGuardia Community College, "Steinway: Family and Factory" calendar; "Steinway & Sons, Founders of Steinway, Long Island City;" Vincent F. Seyfried, "The Steinways and the 'Steinway Settlement'," in *300 Years of Long Island City 1630-1930* (N.Y.: Edgian Pr. Inc., 1984), 69-74; "Christian Friedrich Theodore, Henry Engelhard, and William Steinway," *Dictionary of American Biography* 9 (N.Y.: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1964), 566-569; Theodore E. Steinway, *People and Pianos: A Century of Service to Music* (N.Y.: Steinway & Sons, 1961); Steinway & Sons, "Steinway & Sons 140th Anniversary: A Continuing Tradition of Excellence" (c. 1993); Ronald V. Ratcliffe, *Steinway & Sons* (San Francisco: Chronicle Bks., 1989); D.W. Fostle, *The Steinway Saga: An American Dynasty* (N.Y.: Scribner, 1995); Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman, *New York 1880* (N.Y.: Monacelli Pr., 1999).
2. "Steinway," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 24, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publrs. Ltd., 2001), 344.
3. The firm later leased space at 133 Walker Street, 91 and 109 Mercer Street, and 96 Crosby Street. Ratcliffe, 39.
4. "Steinway," *New Grove...*, 345.
5. Theodore E. Steinway, 63.
6. Perkins' office studio in the attic of Steinway Hall was shared at the turn of the century by some of the architects who created the Prairie School, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Irving and Allen Pond, Robert Spencer, Myron Hunt, Walter Burley Griffin, and Marion Mahony. Eric E. Davis, *Dwight Heald Perkins: Social Consciousness and Prairie School Architecture* (Chicago: Univ. of Illinois, 1989), 4-6.
7. "Steinway Hall" in T. Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage 2* (N.Y.: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1964), reprint of 1903 edit., 516-521; LPC, *East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1976)(N.Y.: City of New York, 1998), prepared by Jay Shockley and Gale Harris; "Transfer of Steinway Hall Will Mark Passing of World-Famous Piano Center," *The Music Trades*, July 15, 1916, 8-9; "Old Steinway

- Hall," *New York Times (NYT)*, Oct. 18, 1924, 26; "Old Steinway Hall, a Landmark, Passes," *NYT*, June 16, 1925, 13.
8. "Messrs. Steinway & Sons' New Building," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 28, 1864, 157; Deborah S. Gardner, "The Architecture of Commercial Capitalism: John Kellum and the Development of New York, 1840-1875" (Columbia Univ. Ph.D. dissertation, 1974), 416, 418.
 9. Most accounts referred to it as a marble-fronted structure, but the *E. Robinson Atlas* of 1885 indicated cast-iron construction.
 10. *The Music Trades*.
 11. Theodore E. Steinway, 34.
 12. With the waves of German immigration to New York City in the 1840s and the 1870-80s, the German-American neighborhood stretched from the Lower East Side as far north as East 18th Street. Approximately one-third of the city's population was German or of German descent by 1880, and this was the leading German-American community in the United States. Germans dominated the production of music and musical instruments in the United States and, particularly, in New York City.
 13. The Decker Building (1870, Leopold Eidlitz) was replaced by a later one (1892-93, John Edelmann), where the company was located until 1913. It is a designated New York City Landmark. The Sohmer Building, 170 Fifth Avenue, is located within the Ladies Mile Historic District. Chickering Hall (1875; demolished) was designed by George B. Post.
 14. Fostle, 157.
 15. King, 563. The hall was the home of the Oratorio and Philharmonic Societies of New York. Conductor Theodore Thomas, backed financially by Steinway, was the most frequent performer at the hall; he conducted the American premiere of "The Damnation of Faust" here. A few of the prominent musicians sponsored by the firm (who played or were accompanied by Steinway pianos) were Christine Nilsson, "the Swedish Nightingale" in her American debut (1870); sopranos Adelina Patti and Lili Lehmann; pianist Anton Rubenstein (1872-73); Fritz Kreisler, in his New York debut (1888); Victor Herbert, in his American debut; Anton Seidl; and violinist Ole Bull. Famous persons giving readings at the hall included Charles Dickens (1867-68), Fanny Kemble, Edwin Forrest, Charlotte Cushman, Mark Twain, and Henry Ward Beecher. The National Woman Suffrage Convention took place here in 1872.
 16. Carnegie Hall is a designated New York City Landmark.
 17. Chickering Hall closed in 1898. "New York Concert Halls," *NYT*, Feb. 1, 1925, II, 6.
 18. New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; NYC, Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets (NB 514-1923); Steinway Hall blueprints, courtesy of John C. Sweeney (111 West 57th Street Associates); Richard K. Lieberman, *Steinway & Sons* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Pr., 1998); "Steinways to Move," *Musical Courier*, July 13, 1916, 23-25; "Steinway & Sons to Move Uptown," *NYT*, July 4, 1916, 15; "New Uptown Fine Arts Center is Rapidly Being Created," *Real Estate Record & Guide (REG)*, Oct. 6, 1923, 426; "The New Steinway Hall in New York is Formally Opened to Public," *The Music Trade Review*, June 20, 1925, 23-26; "Steinway Building, New York City," *Architecture & Building* (Aug. 1925), 69-71 and pl. 171-174; "W.L. Hopkins, "The Steinway Building, New York," *Architectural Record* (Sept. 1925), 201-210; Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930* (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1987), 358-359.
 19. "Projected Buildings," *Record & Guide Quarterly* (1916), 345.

20. The grantors were Dr. Hermann M. and Frances R. Biggs; Peachy J. (Mrs. Henry) Flagg; Estelle P. Anderson; Georgette deG. Fahnstock; Grace McCullagh; and the executors of Emeline Y. Danforth.
21. "New Uptown..."
22. *Music Trade Review*, 25.
23. Lieberman, 151.
24. *Ibid.*, 331.
25. Fostle, 458.
26. Following the historic familiar usage of the name of its 14th Street property, Steinway & Sons refers to the building on 57th Street as "Steinway Hall." Other sources [See: W.L. Hopkins] have historically called it the "Steinway Building," reflecting in part the fact that twelve of its sixteen stories have been rental offices not in use by Steinway & Sons.
27. (Aug. 1925), 69.
28. Leo Lentelli (1879-1961), born in Bologna, apprenticed in Rome prior to his immigrating to the United States in 1903. He assisted in the studios of John Massey Rhind, Henry Hudson Kitson, and others, before gaining his first major commission at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine: angels on the reredos (no longer extant). Lentelli came to be profoundly influenced by Rodin. He executed colossal works at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (1915), San Francisco, including "The Nations of the East and the West." Lentelli remained in San Francisco, where he provided the ornament for the Public Library (1915-17, George Kelham) and for the Memorial Museum (1921) in Golden Gate Park. At Rockefeller Center in New York, he was responsible for relief sculpture on the Palazzo d'Italia and International Building North (1935). "Leo Lentelli," LPC, *Rockefeller Center Designation Report* (LP-1446)(N.Y.: City of New York, 1985), prepared by Janet Adams, 120-121, 129-130, 262.
29. Cited in *New York 1930*, 509.
30. The Standard Oil Building is a designated New York City Landmark.
31. www.steinway.com.
32. Theodore E. Steinway, 95.
33. James B. Stewart, "Matchmaker," *The New Yorker*, Aug. 20 and 27, 2001, 78.
34. Steinway & Sons, "Steinway Hall at 70" (1995), 5.
35. Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1840-1900* (N.Y.: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1979), 80-81; James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1900-1940* (N.Y.: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1989), 82, 84; LPC, Architects files; Dennis McFadden, "Warren & Wetmore," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* 4 (N.Y.: Free Pr., 1982), 377; Warren obit., *NYT* and *New York Herald-Tribune* (*NYHT*), Jan. 25, 1943; Wetmore obit., *NYT*, May 9, 1941, and *NYHT*, May 10, 1941; "Whitney Warren" and "Charles D. Wetmore," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 34 and 42 (N.Y.: James T. White & Co., 1947), 173-174 and 213-214; Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900* (N.Y.: Rizzoli Intl. Publs., 1983); *New York 1930*; Janet G. Potter, *Great American Railroad Stations* (N.Y.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996); "Fifth Avenue Association Makes Annual Medal Awards" [Aeolian Hall], *REG*, Dec. 18, 1926, 7.

36. The New York Yacht Club and Burden and Beeckman Houses are designated New York City Landmarks. The Wilson House is located within the Upper East Side Historic District.
37. Grand Central Terminal is a designated New York City Landmark and Interior Landmark. Pershing Viaduct and the New York Central Building are designated New York City Landmarks.
38. McFadden.
39. The Della Robbia Bar is a designated New York City Interior Landmark. The Plaza Hotel is a designated New York City Landmark. The Erlanger Theater is a designated New York City Landmark and Interior Landmark.
40. LPC, *Starrett-Lehigh Building Designation Report* (LP-1295)(N.Y.: City of New York, 1986), prepared by Jay Shockley; Sarah B. Landau and Carl W. Condit, *Rise of the New York Skyscraper 1865-1913* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Pr., 1996).
41. The St. Regis Hotel and Municipal, Equitable, and Paramount Buildings are designated New York City Landmarks. The Woolworth Building is a designated New York City Landmark and Interior Landmark.
42. Adapted from: LPC, *Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing Designation Report* (LP-2041)(N.Y.: City of New York, 1999), prepared by Jay Shockley.
43. *New York 1900*, 104.
44. The Osborne Apartments, American Fine Arts Society Building, 130 and 140 West 57th Street Studio Buildings, Rodin Studios, and Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing are designated New York City Landmarks.
45. *REG*, Apr. 15, 1916, 595.
46. Federal Writers' Project, *New York City Guide* (N.Y.: Octagon Bks., 1939), 232.
47. John Tauranac, *New York From the Air* (N.Y.: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998).
48. NY County; Wendell Buck, *From Quill Pens to Computers: An Account of the First One Hundred and Twenty-five Years of the Manhattan Life Insurance Company of New York, N.Y.* (N.Y.: MLIC, 1975); *Directory of Manhattan Office Buildings* (1978); *Manhattan Office Buildings: Midtown* (1984 and 1985); "Steinway," *New Grove...*, 346; "Steinway Sells Home on 57th Street," *NYT*, Apr. 22, 1958, 57; "Steinway Changing Amid Tradition," *NYT*, Mar. 28, 1991; "Steinway & Sons/Steinway Musical Properties, Inc.," *International Directory of Company Histories* 19, Tina Grant, ed. (N.Y.: St. James Pr., 1998), 426-429; "Steinway Buys Its Building," *NYT*, May 30, 1999, XI, 1; "Steinway & Sons Factory Nears End of \$5 Million Makeover," *NYT*, July 12, 2000.
49. Fostle, 483.
50. Lieberman, 264.
51. Susan Goldenberg, *Steinway, From Glory to Controversy: The Family, the Business, the Piano* (Buffalo: Mosaic Pr., 1996), 139. Mr. Steinway became a director of Manhattan Life in 1961. Buck, 84.
52. Lieberman, 264.
53. The Manhattan Life building is also credited with being the first skyscraper with a full iron and steel frame, set on pneumatic caissons.

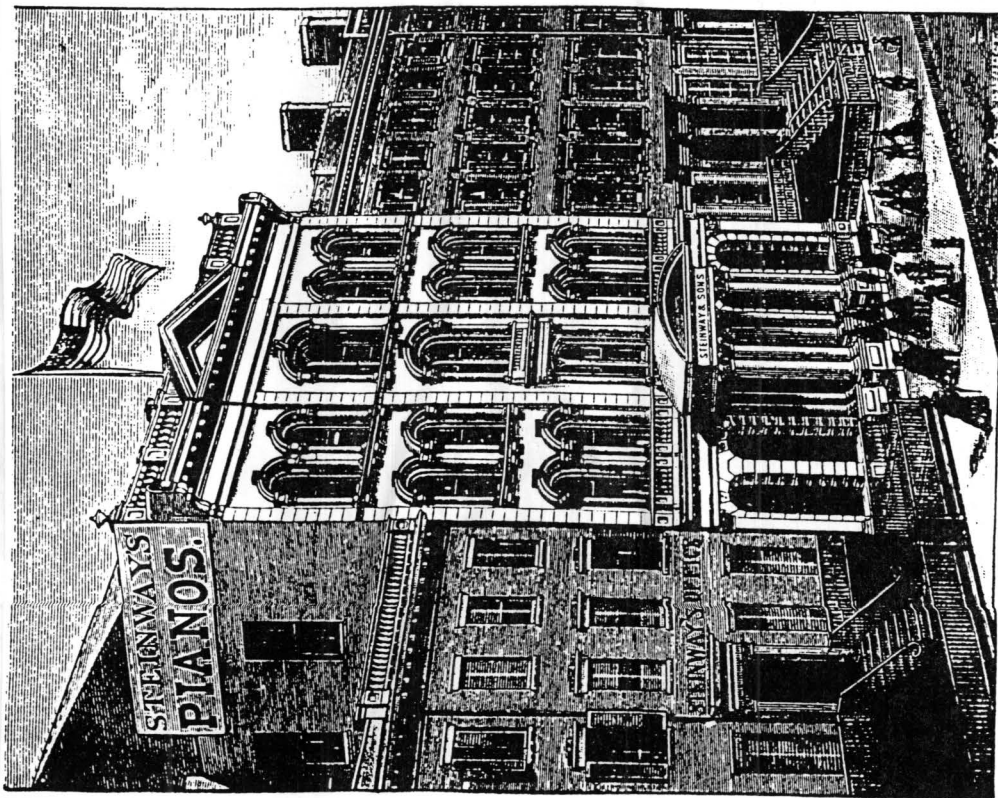
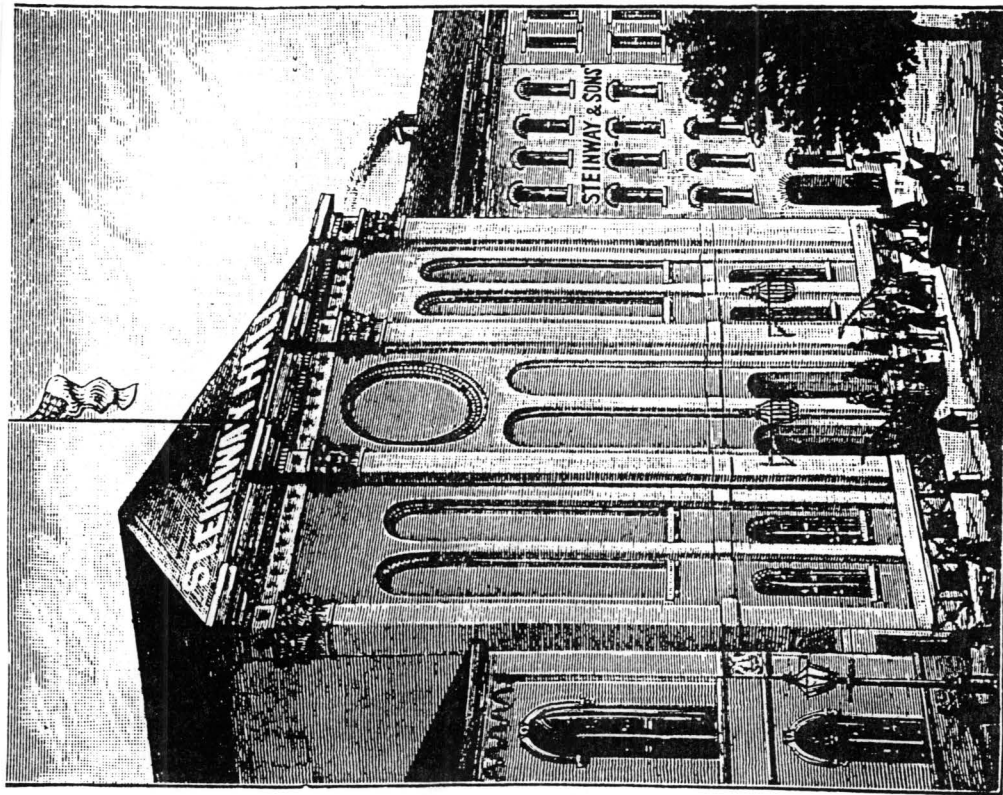
54. Buck, 74.
55. "Steinway," *New Grove...*, 346; www.steinwaymusical.com website.
56. www.steinwaymusical.com.
57. *Manhattan Address Directories* (1929-93); LPC, *Louis H. Chalif Normal School...*; Kohn Pedersen Fox, "Firm History" (2001); Norval White and Elliott Willensky, *A.I.A. Guide to New York City* (N.Y.: Three Rivers Pr., 2000); *International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians*, ed. Oscar Thompson (N.Y.: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1964); Nola obit., *NYT*, Apr. 2, 1970, 39; www.kmwarch.com website [Kallmann & McKinnell]; New York Philharmonic Archives; National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences; Colbert Artists Management; "Nola Penthouse Studios" and "Harris (Harry) Smith Studios," internet; Henry Z. Steinway; John Majeski.
58. Federal Writers' Project.
59. The entities involved in the merger, some already in Steinway Hall, included Concert Management Arthur Judson, Inc. (founded 1915); Judson Radio Program Corp., a pioneer in radio as an entertainment medium (formed 1926); Wolfsohn Musical Bureau, the oldest in America (founded 1884); Metropolitan Musical Bureau (established c. 1916); Evans & Salter; Haensel & Jones; and Community Concerts Corp., which booked concerts in towns throughout the country (formed 1927). These bureaus (and their successors) were maintained as divisions within the corporation. Arthur L. Judson (1881-1975) was Columbia Concerts' first president (1930-48). Called by the *New York Times* "the leading American concert manager," [Judson obit., *NYT*, Jan. 29, 1975, 38] he managed both the Philadelphia Orchestra (1915-35) and New York Philharmonic (1922-43), and, as well, had been one of the founders in 1927 of what became Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). CBS financed the Columbia Concerts Corp. merger by acquiring half interest. William S. Paley, head of CBS, was Columbia Concerts' first chairman of the board (1930-48). In 1942, however, after discussion of a possible government investigation of monopoly, CBS relinquished its stock and Columbia Concerts Corp. was reorganized so that its stock was held solely by employees and was renamed. After Judson, CAMI's presidents in Steinway Hall were Frederick C. Schang, Jr. (1948-49 and 1950-59) and Lawrence Evans (1949-50). Schang (1893-1990) graduated from Columbia University in 1915, worked as a reporter for the *New York Tribune* for two years, and then became the press agent for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballet Russe. Over the course of four decades, he was an artists' manager in the Metropolitan Musical Bureau (under F.C. Coppicus), Coppicus & Schang, and Schang, Douless & Wright, all divisions of CAMI, until his retirement in 1963. Evans (d. 1978), born in Atlanta, became the agent and then manager of opera singer Amelita Galli-Curci. He formed the partnership of Evans & [Jack] Salter, opera and concert managers, in Atlanta, later moving the firm to New York and joining Columbia Concerts Corp. In 1951, he left CAMI to become an independent manager. Chairman after Paley was Ward French (1948-59).
60. The Philharmonic Society merged with the National Symphony Orchestra in 1921; the City Symphony Orchestra in 1923; and the Symphony Society (founded 1875) in 1928.
61. Robert Metz, *CBS: Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye* (Chicago: Playboy Pr., 1975), 28-29; Lieberman, 150; Theodore E. Steinway, 65, 78.
62. Steinway Hall blueprints.
63. The doors were made by the Batavia and New York Woodworking Co. *Architecture & Building*.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Steinway Hall has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, Steinway Hall was constructed in 1924-25 to the design of architects Warren & Wetmore for Steinway & Sons, a piano manufacturing firm that has been a dominant force in its industry since the 1860s; that, founded in 1853 in New York by Heinrich E. Steinweg, Sr., the firm grew to worldwide renown and prestige through technical innovations, efficient production, business acumen, and shrewd promotion using artists' endorsements, and that from 1864 to 1925, Steinway's offices/showroom, and famous Steinway Hall (1866), were located near Union Square; that after Carnegie Hall opened in 1891, West 57th Street gradually became one of the nation's leading cultural and classical music centers and the piano companies, including Steinway, relocated uptown; that the sixteen-story Steinway Hall, designed in a restrained neo-Classical style and L-shaped in plan, has a front 57th Street portion clad in Indiana limestone that rises twelve stories before setting back with a four-story colonnaded tower, as well as a central campanile-like tower with a steep pyramidal roof and large lantern; that the main facade's base is embellished by a music-themed sculptural group by Leo Lentelli and by a frieze with medallion portraits of distinguished classical composer-pianists; that the style, materials, setbacks and massing, picturesque towers, and decorative elements add distinction to the building and make it a monumental architectural presence along the West 57th Street cultural corridor; that Warren & Wetmore was best known for its designs for hotels and railroad-related buildings, most notably Grand Central Terminal; that Steinway, the city's only remaining piano maker, has continuously utilized the building's lower four stories, as well as the famed "basement" for artists' concert grand pianos; that the upper twelve stories also have an illustrious history, rented to many organizations associated with music and the arts, such as the Oratorio and Philharmonic Societies of New York, Columbia Artists Management Inc., Louis H. Chalif Normal School of Dancing, *Musical America*, Colbert Artists Management, and Kohn Pedersen Fox, architects; and that the Manhattan Life Insurance Co. owned the building from 1958 to 1980 and was headquartered here until recently.

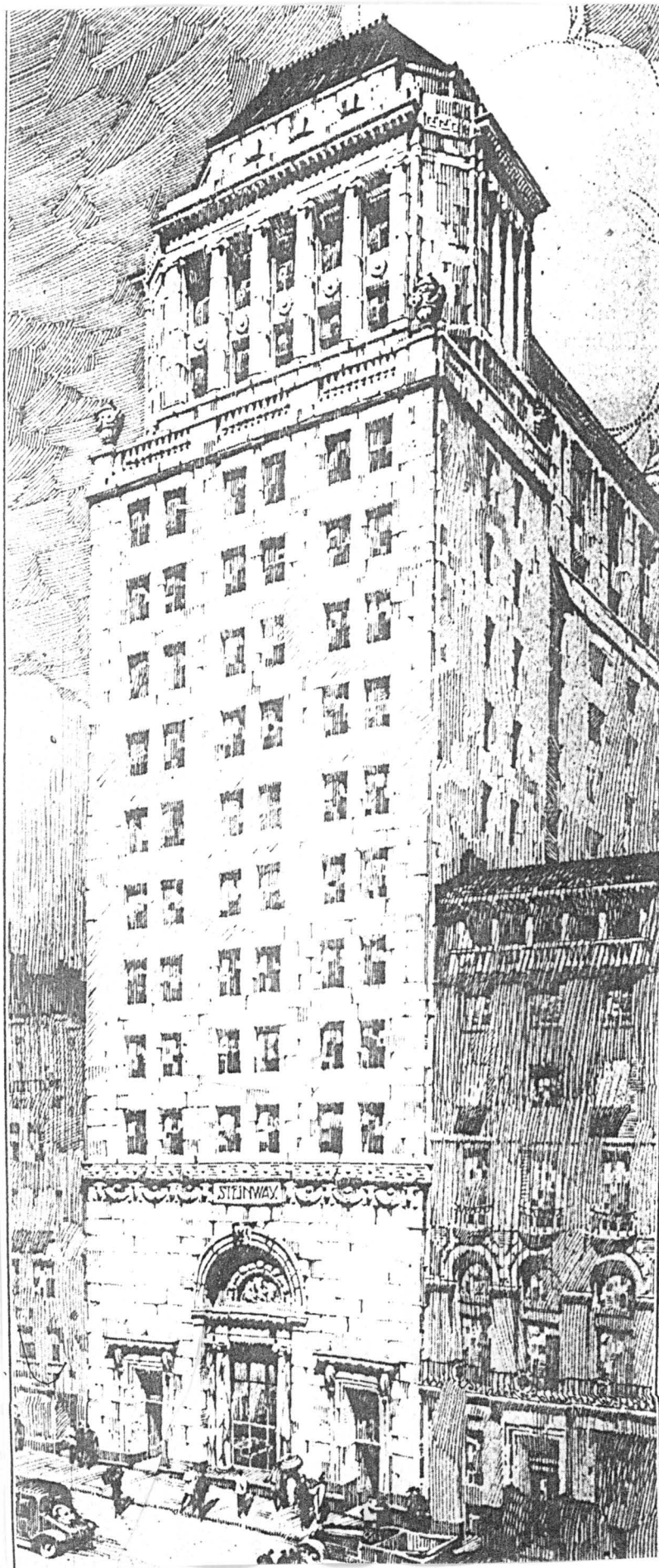
Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark Steinway Hall, 109-113 West 57th Street (aka 106-116 West 58th Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Manhattan Tax Map Block 1010, Lot 25, as its Landmark Site.



(left) **Steinway Offices/Showroom** (1863-64), East 14th Street

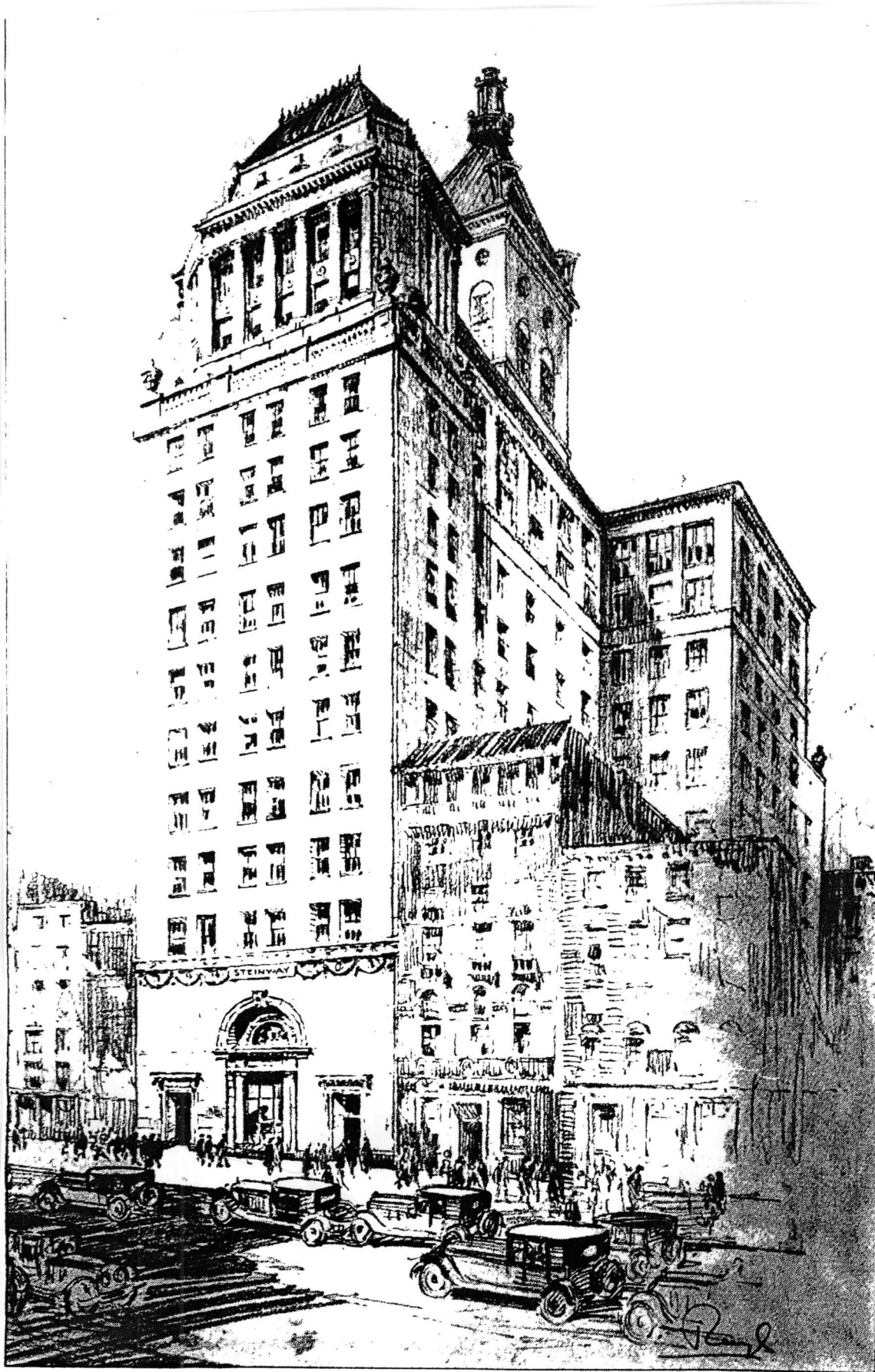
(right) **Steinway Hall** (1866), East 15th Street

Source: D.W. Fostle, *The Steinway Saga*



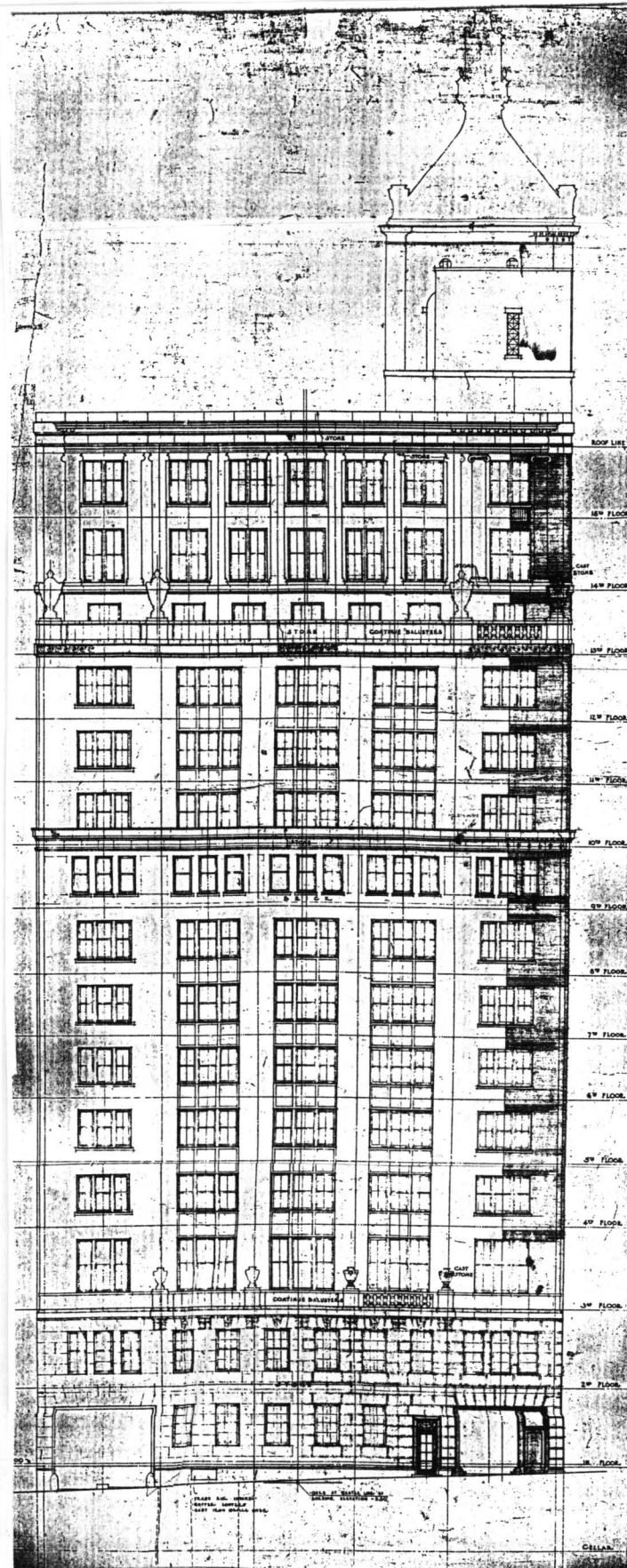
Preliminary Rendering of Steinway Hall

Source: *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Oct. 6, 1923

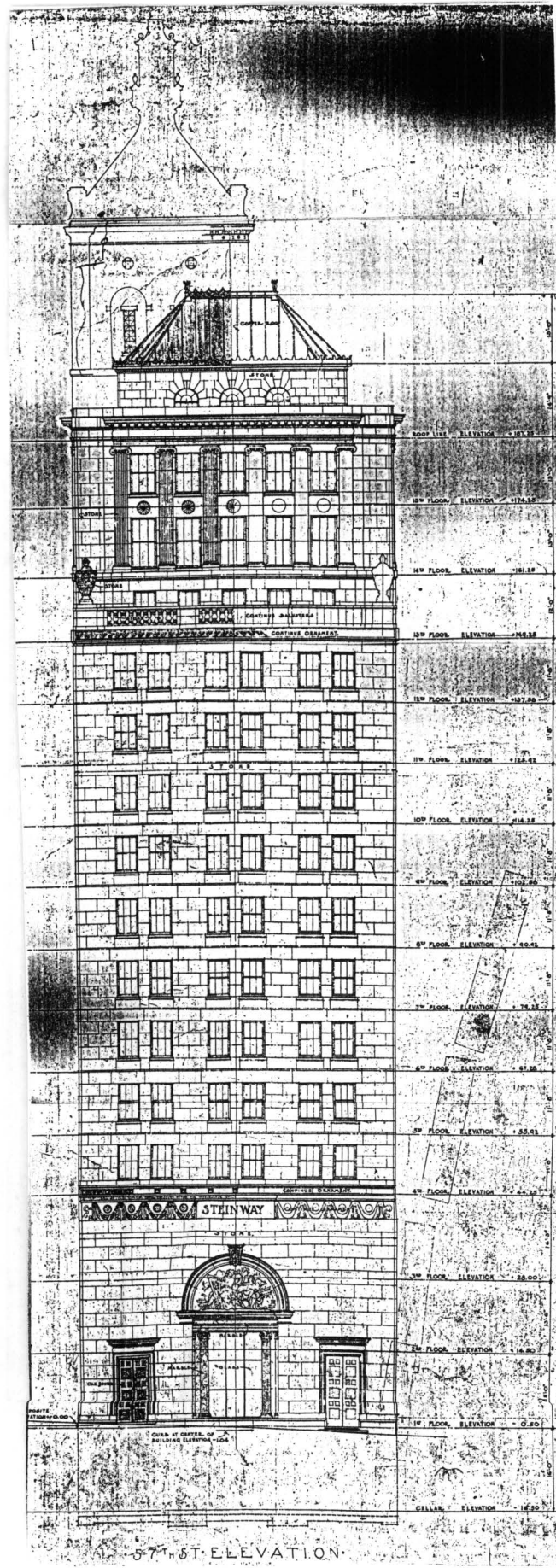


Rendering of Steinway Hall

Source: *Music Trade Review*, June 20, 1925



Steinway Hall, blueprint of West 58th Street facade
Courtesy of 111 West 57th Street Associates



Steinway Hall, blueprint of West 57th Street facade
 Courtesy of 111 West 57th Street Associates



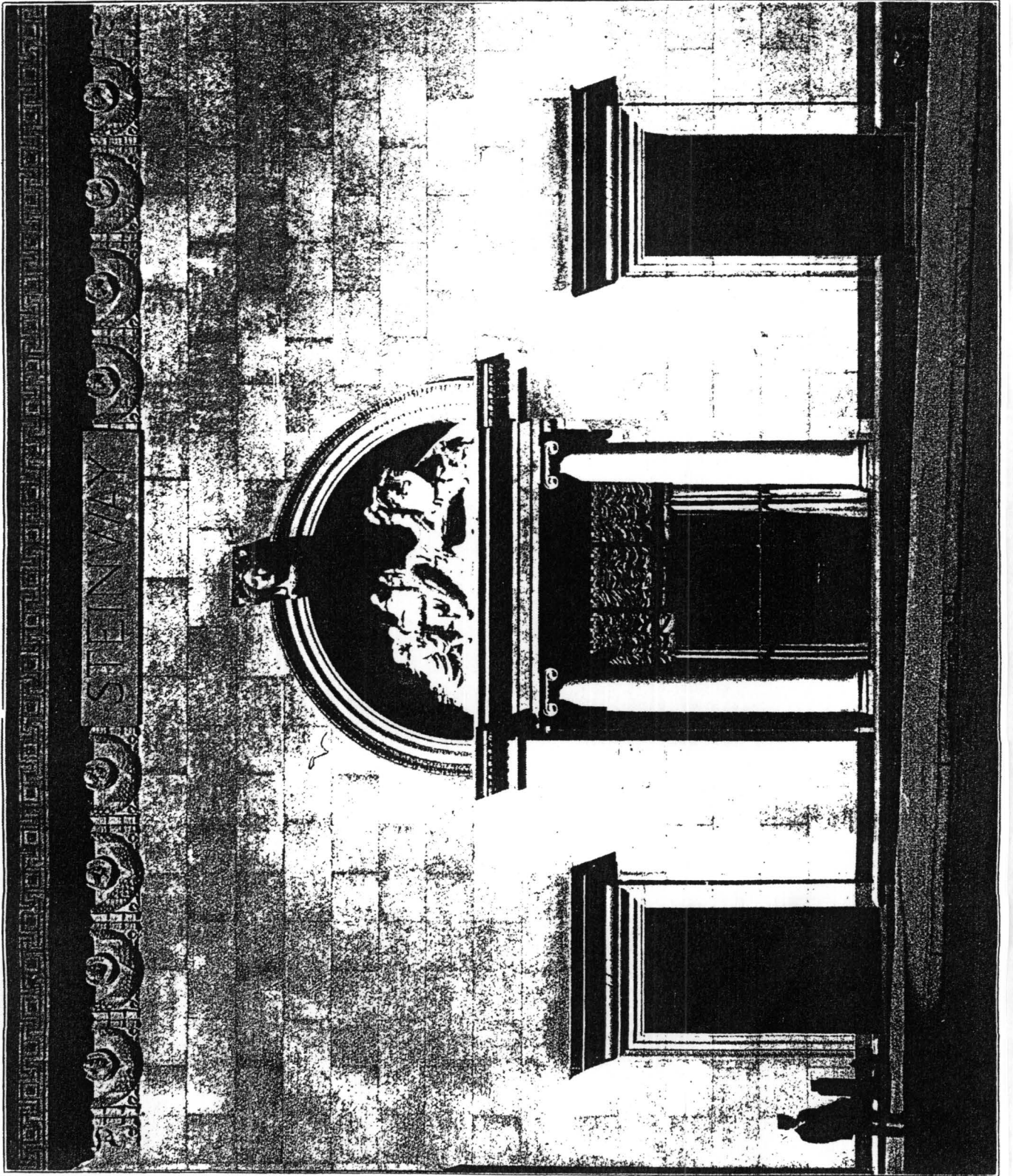
Steinway Hall

Source: Museum of the City of New York



Steinway Hall

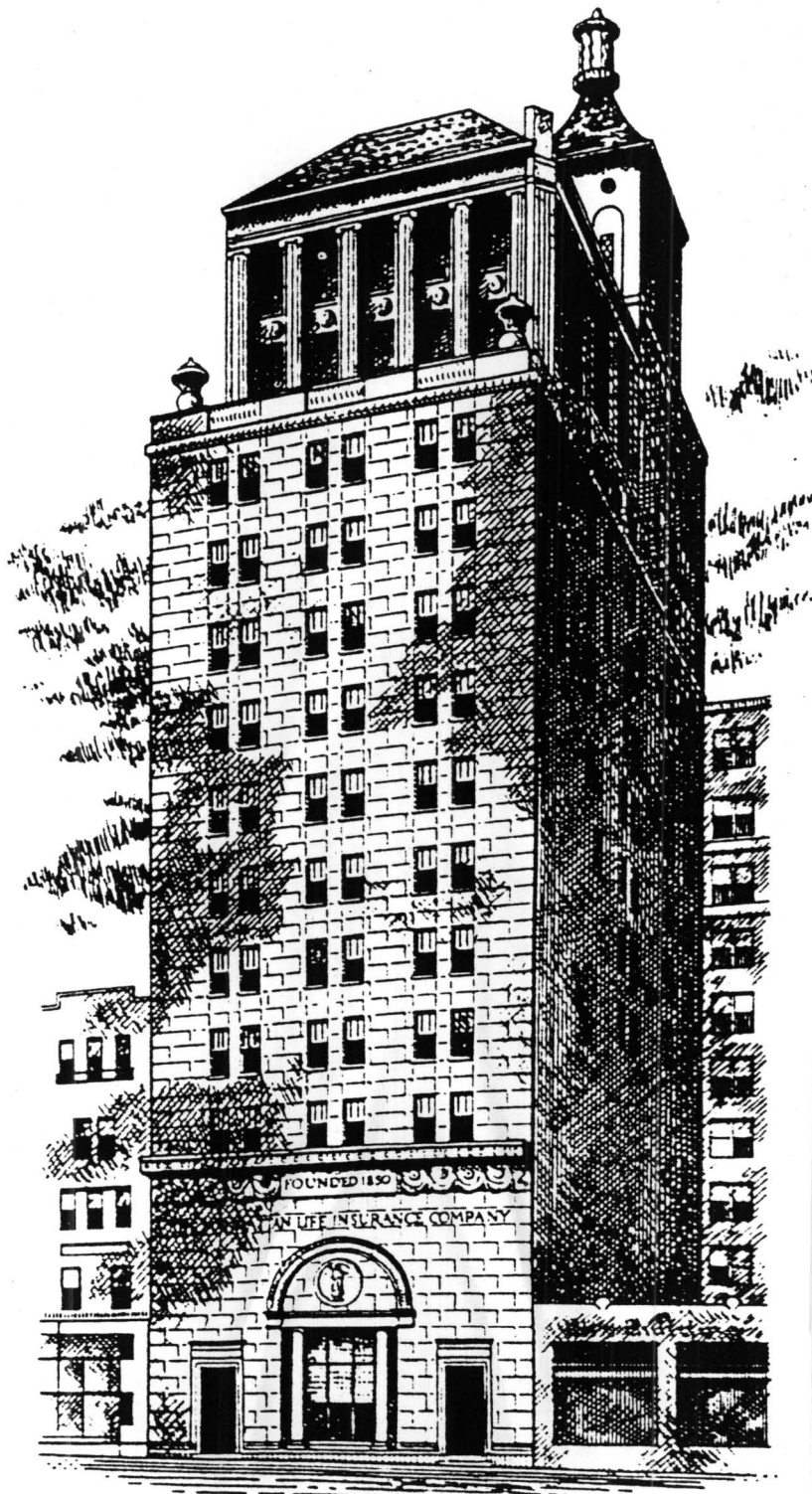
Source: Theodore E. Steinway, *People and Pianos*



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street base
Source: *Music Trade Review*, June 20, 1925



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street facade with base altered for Manhattan Life Insurance Co. (c. 1958)
Photo: Landmarks Preservation Commission (1985)



Drawing of Steinway Hall, West 57th Street facade with base altered for Manhattan Life Insurance Co.
Source: Wendell Buck, *From Quill Pens to Computers*

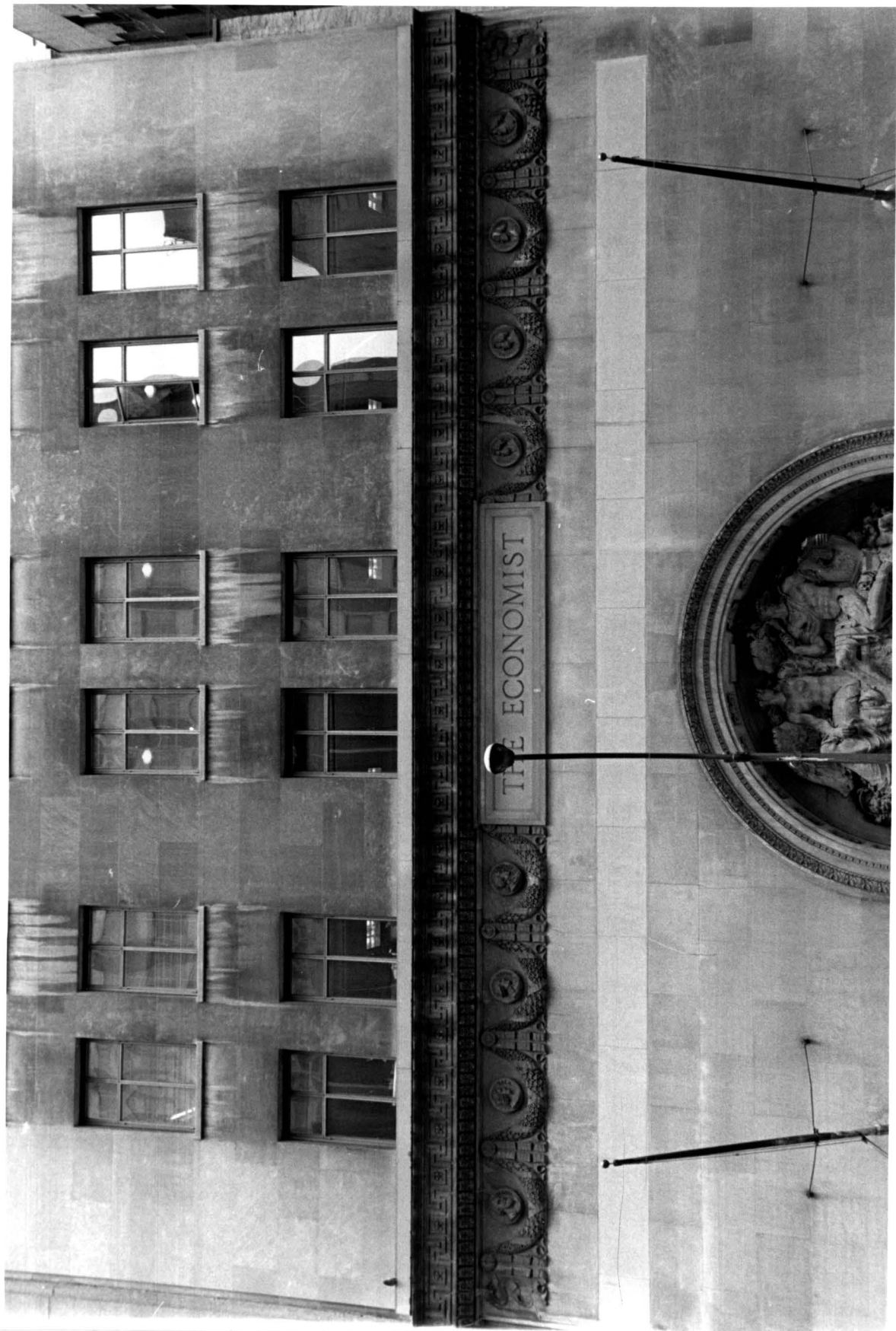


Steinway Hall

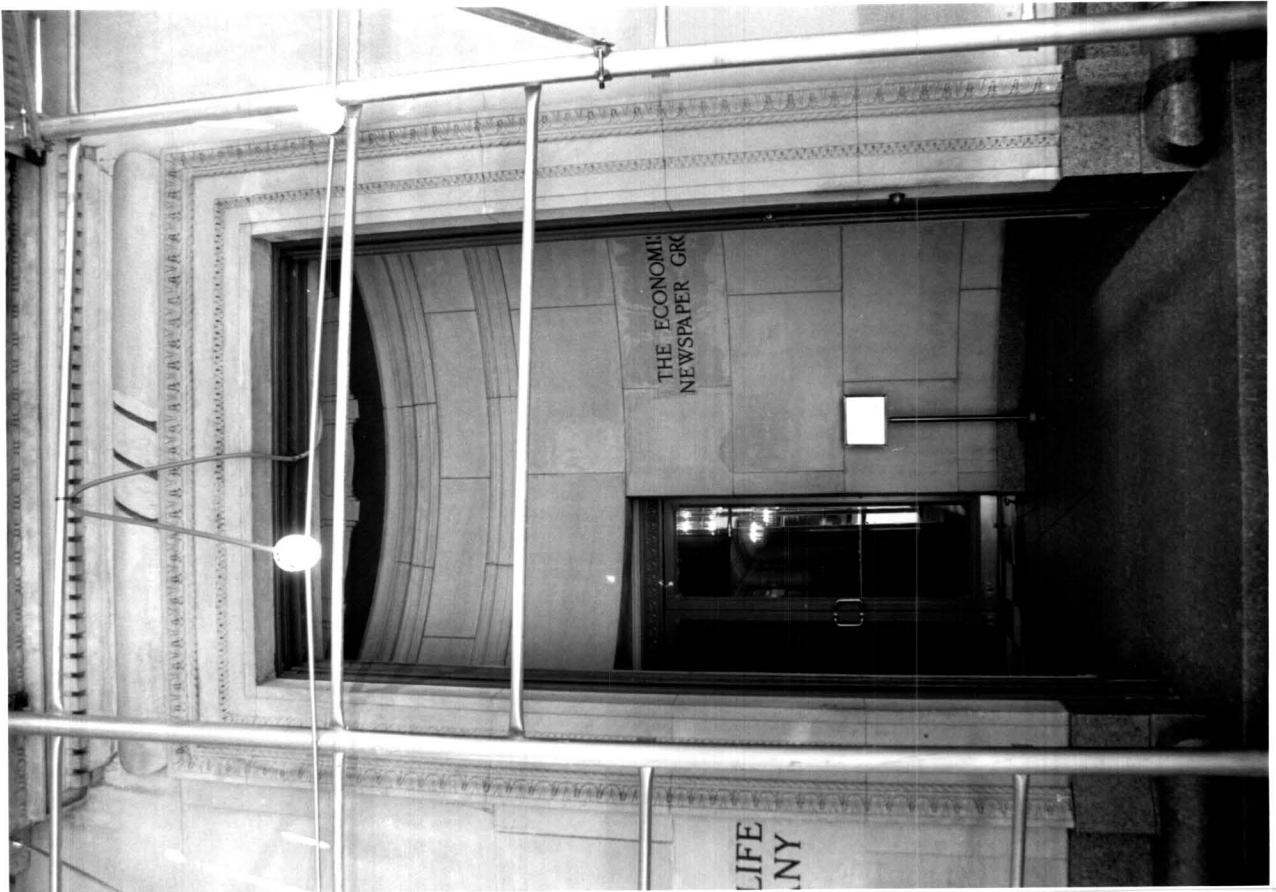
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street portion
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street facade base detail
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street entrance vestibules: western (left) and eastern (right)
Photos: Carl Forster



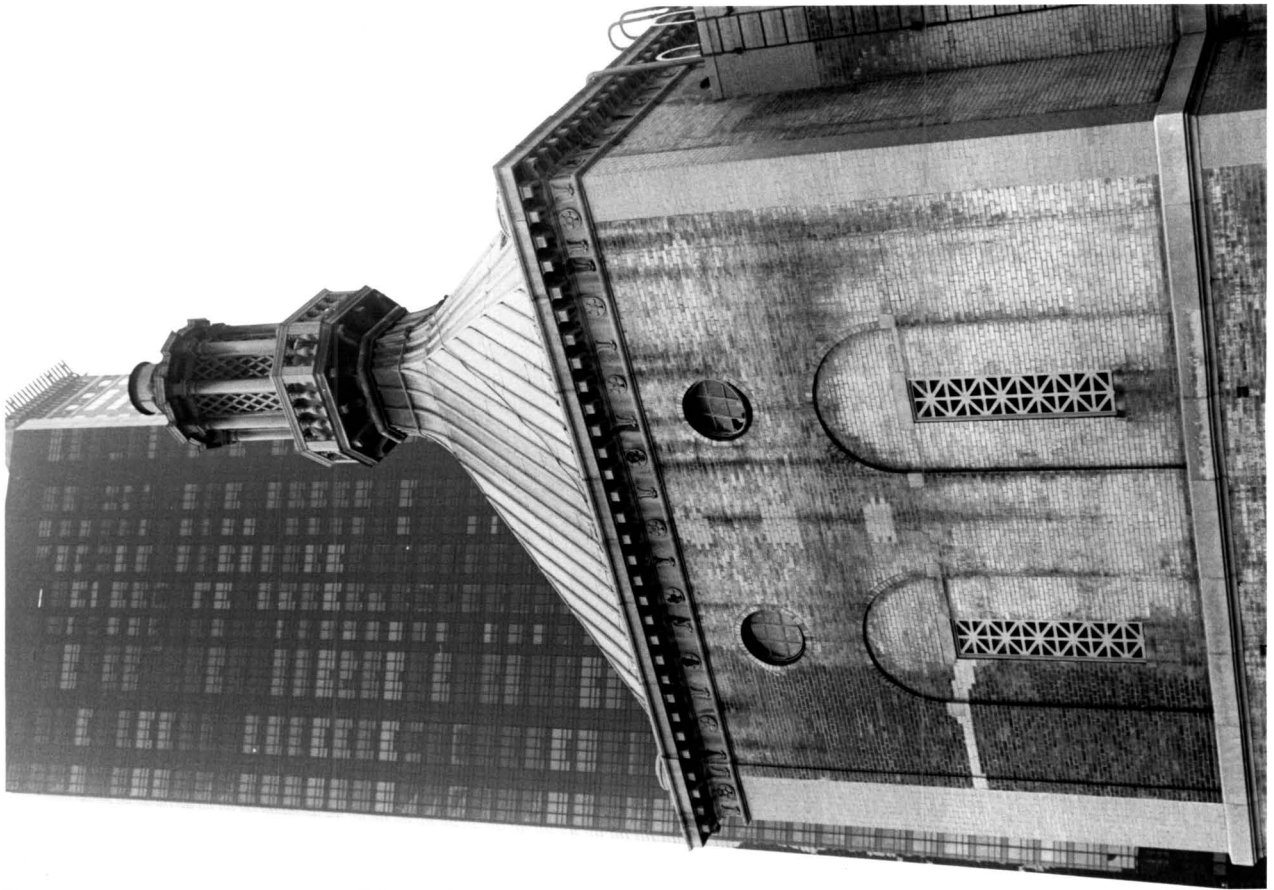
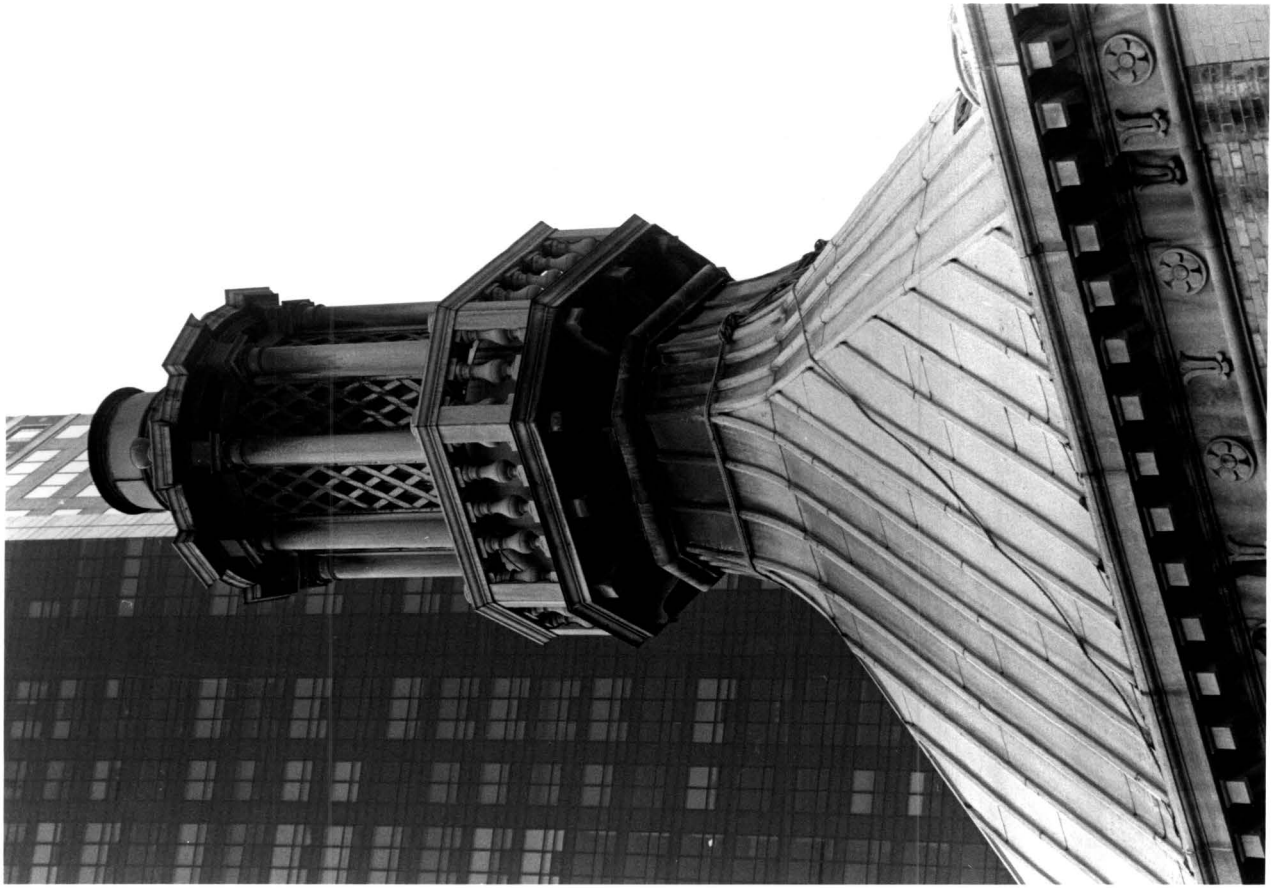
Steinway Hall, Sculptural group by Leo Lentelli depicting Apollo and the Muse of Music
Photo: Carl Forster



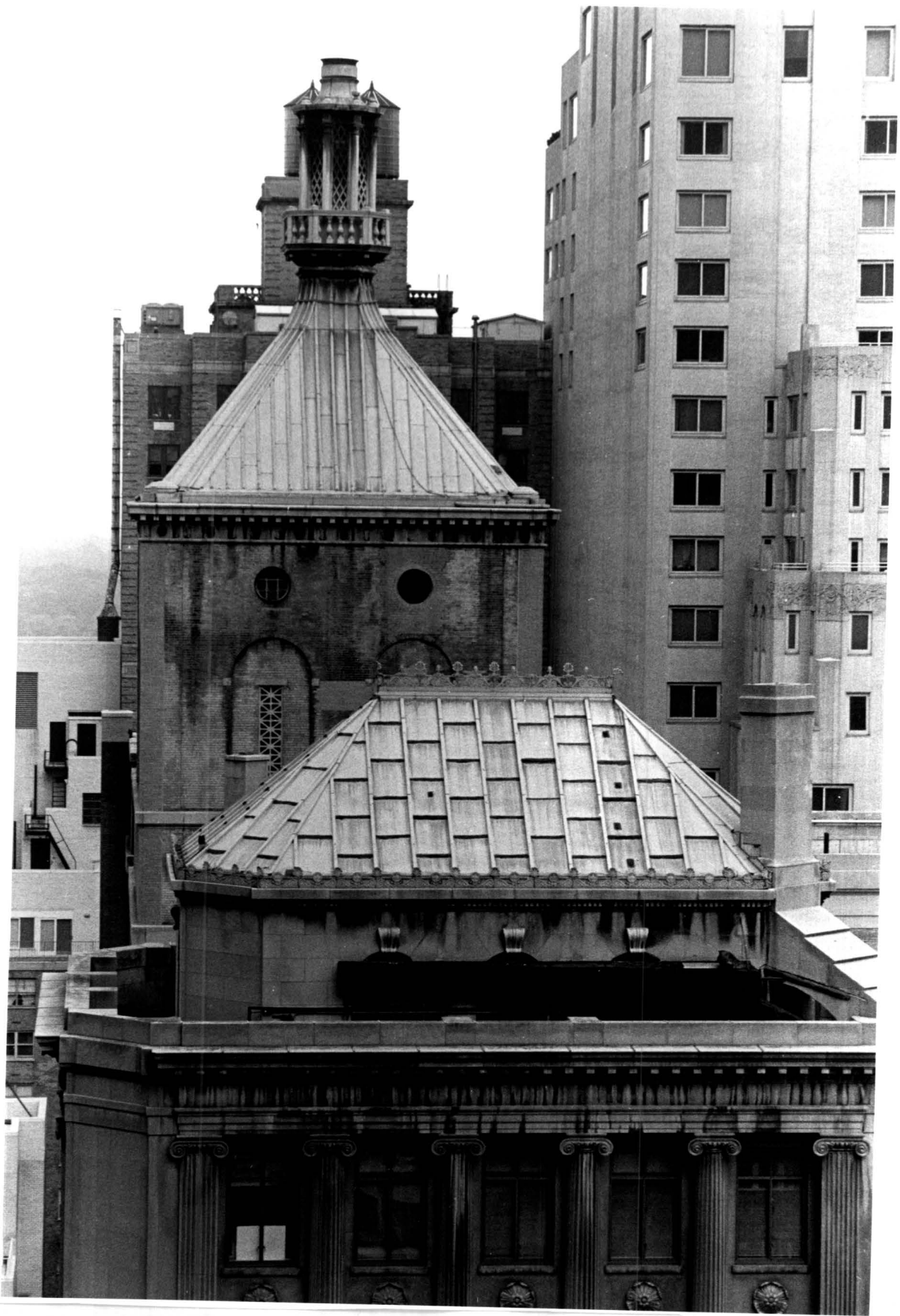
Steinway Hall, West 57th Street tower detail
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, West 57th Street tower details
Photos: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, central tower details
Photos: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, towers

Photo: Carl Forster



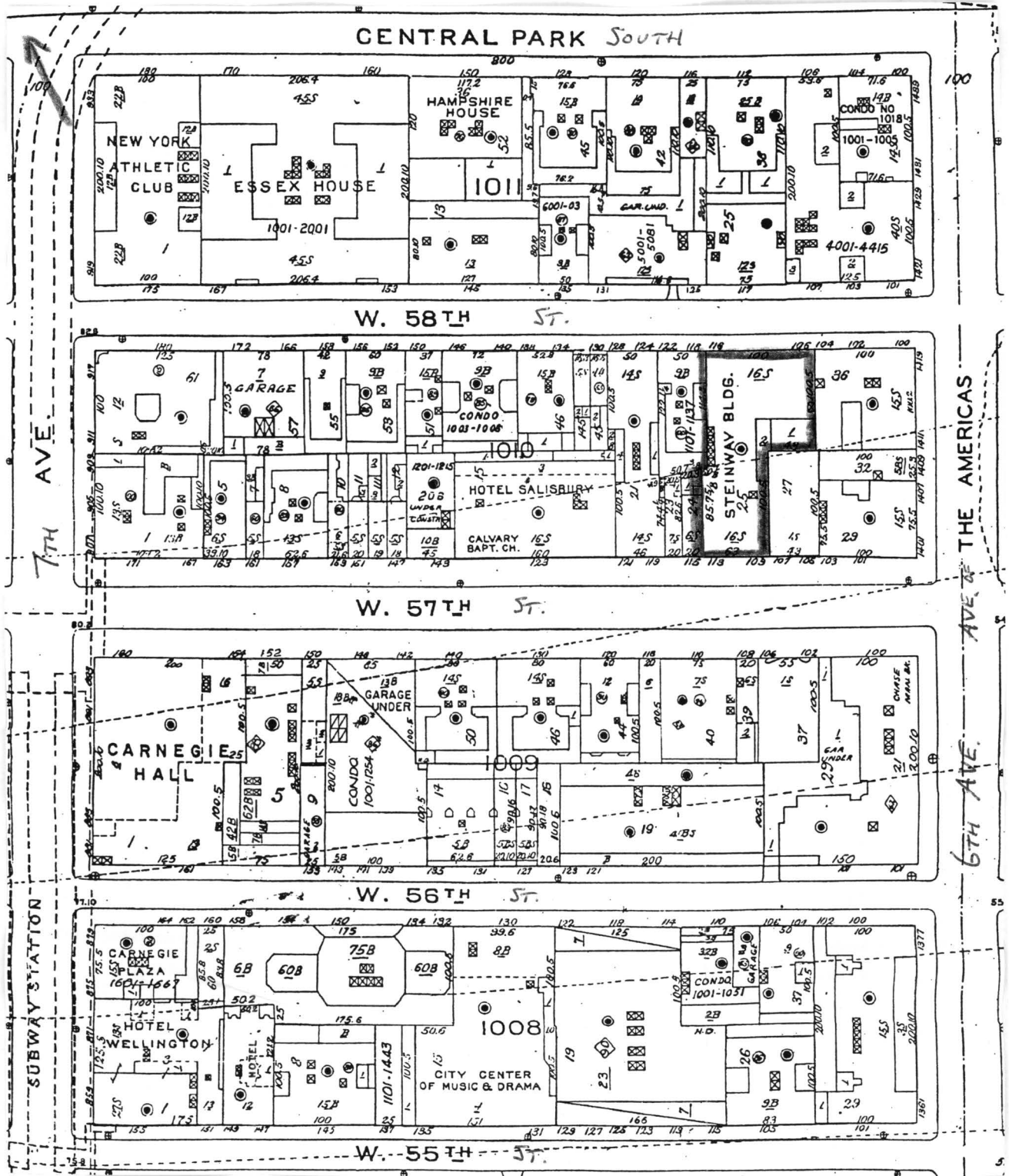
Steinway Hall, West 58th Street portion
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, West 58th Street facade
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, upper section of West 58th Street portion
Photo: Carl Forster



Steinway Hall, 109-113 West 57th Street (aka 106-116 West 58th Street)
 Source: Sanborn, *Manhattan Land Book* (2000-2001), pl. 83