

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Carnegie Hall

AND/OR COMMON

Carnegie Hall

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

7th Avenue and West 57th Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New York

VICINITY OF

17

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New York

36

New York

61

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

### PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

### ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

### PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

COMMERCIAL

PARK

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The City of New York, Department of Parks

STREET & NUMBER

Arsenal Building, Central Park

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New York

VICINITY OF

New York

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New York

New York

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                                 RUINS  
 FAIR                                  UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED, minor

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Carnegie Hall is an L-shaped composite of three buildings, constructed in close temporal sequence. The original building, which houses the concert hall, is an eight story rectangular building, designed by William Tuthill in the style of the Italian Renaissance, which sits on the southeast corner of Seventh Avenue and West Fifty-seventh Street, with the main entrance and marquee on Fifty-seventh Street. The interior space of this portion is occupied primarily by the concert hall. Upon passing through the glass doors, one enters the three story high lobby, which is dominated by a massive glass chandelier. The space above the entrance formerly was used as the organ loft, but now provides a lounge area. Continuing through the lobby into the auditorium itself, which is six stories high, there are two box balconies, one dress circle and an additional balcony above the main floor. The decorations, which are red on white walls, with gilt on the balconies, are tasteful though rather plain. Circa 1966, the seating was replanned to accommodate 2,800 people and the stage was deepened slightly. At the same time a new marquee was installed, in addition to air conditioning. Above the auditorium is the eighth floor which houses studios. This floor was added after the hall opened. It has a flat roof with a parapet and balustrade. The ground floor of this and the other two sections of Carnegie Hall is occupied by a collection of stores, a cinema and a restaurant, except at the main entrances to the different parts of the building. These stores were installed during the 1940's.

The eastern portion of the hall is a sixteen story tower which extends back from Fifty-seventh Street about half the width of the original section. The tower, which is architecturally undistinguished, houses a recital hall with a 299 person occupancy, and many studios. The thirteen story addition to the south, on the corner of Seventh Avenue and Fifty-sixth Street, is basically the same as that on the east, with the exception that it contains only studios and offices; aside from the dressing rooms on the second floor. It is virtually impossible to pass through all three sections on any floor except the eighth.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES May 5, 1891, opening concert BUILDER/ARCHITECT William Tuthill, Dankmar Adler, Acoustics

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The completion of Carnegie Hall in 1891 at Seventh Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, established the surrounding area of New York City as the prime musical center of the United States. As manufacturers of musical instruments, particularly manufacturers of pianos, opened showrooms along Fifty-seventh Street, the "Music Hall," as Carnegie Hall was originally named, commenced hosting the premiere musical talent of the day including Tschaikowsky and Paderewski. Designed by William Tuthill, with the aid of Dankmar Adler as the acoustics engineer, the hall was built for the Oratorio Society, with Andrew Carnegie supplying the principal investment. The hall was renamed Carnegie Hall in 1898.

Owned by the City of New York and operated by the Carnegie Hall Corporation, the six-story Italianesque building, with its fifteen story tower, continues to provide musicians in New York with an auditorium of superlative acoustical quality, as well as studios and a recital hall.

## HISTORY

Carnegie Hall was constructed from 1889 to 1891 for the Oratorio Society. Originally called the "Music Hall," the name was changed in 1898 to Carnegie Hall, in honor of Andrew Carnegie, principal investor in the building's construction. Believing he would profit financially from the enterprise, Carnegie made a two million dollar investment on the persuasion of Walter Damrosch, whose father, Leopold, founded the Oratorio Society in 1874. The venture was a failure financially, however, for the hall never paid its way, in spite of the large crowds that were drawn to performances held there. In 1960, it was acquired by the City of New York, when it was in danger of being demolished.

Carnegie Hall opened on May 5, 1891, with a five-day music festival. The Russian composer Tschaikovsky, in his first American appearance, conducted several of his own **works** at the festival, including the "Marche Solennelle." During the same season Ignace Jan Paderewski gave his first performance in America. Others who made their American debut in Carnegie Hall included Joseph Lhevinne and Mischa Elman. Efrem Zimbalist gave his first New York City performance in the Hall as well. In 1892, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, under the conductorship of Anton Seidl, made its first appearance in the hall. In 1926 and 1927, The Philharmonic appeared with Arturo Toscanini as the guest conductor. Toscanini then continued on as regular conductor until his memorable farewell concert on April 29, 1936. Two years later, an equally memorable performance was enjoyed by an audience with somewhat different tastes, for this concert featured the

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- American Guide Series, New York Panorama (Random House, New York, 1938).  
 Ethel Rose Peyser, The House That Music Built: Carnegie Hall (New York, 1936).  
 Richard Schickel, The World of Carnegie Hall (New York, 1960).  
 Charles E. Shedd, Jr., "Carnegie Hall," National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings form 10-317, December 14, 1962.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	586090	4512980	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the southeast intersection of West Fifty-seventh Street and Seventh Avenue, proceed south 205' along the east curb of Seventh Avenue to its intersection with the northern curb of West Fifty-sixth Street, thence east along the northern curb of Fifty-sixth Street for 125', thence north along easterly wall of the hall for approximately 80' to the south wall of the 16 story addition, thence east 31' along said south wall, thence north along the east wall of said addition for approximately 125' to the southern

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard Greenwood, Historian, Landmark Review Task Force

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

5-30-75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

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CONTINUATION SHEET Carnegie Hall      ITEM NUMBER 8      PAGE 2

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big band sound of Benny Goodman. Jazz and other popular music has been heard there many times since.

Carnegie Hall has continued to present a selective schedule of both classical and popular music. Although, since the completion of the Lincoln Center, the Philharmonic no longer uses the hall, under city management, Carnegie Hall has assumed a position of leadership in the propagation of New York's cultural life. Over 1000 programs are given annually in the building, and annual attendance exceeds 750,000.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Carnegie Hall      ITEM NUMBER 10      PAGE 2

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curb of Fifty-seventh Street, thence west along said curb, 157' to the point of origin.

These landmark boundaries are coterminus with the perimeter of Carnegie Hall.