Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Auditorium Building

AND/OR COMMON
Roosevelt University

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
430 South Michigan Avenue — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Chicago — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
7th

STATE
Illinois

CODE

COUNTY
Cook

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	XX PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	XX EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	XX ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	XX YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Roosevelt University

STREET & NUMBER
430 South Michigan Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Chicago — VICINITY OF

STATE
Illinois

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC
Cook County Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
County Building

CITY, TOWN
Chicago

STATE
Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE
August, 1963 — X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, NPS, Dept. of Interior

CITY, TOWN
Washington

STATE
D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	XX ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	XX ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Bounded by Wabash Avenue, (162') Michigan (187-1/2') and Congress Street (362') the Auditorium covers 63,500 square feet of ground. The building is rectangular with the hotel on the east was 45' deep (Michigan Avenue facade, Congress Street flank). The offices faced Wabash Street. The load bearing masonry building had a basement and rose 10 stories (240') surmounted by a 17 story tower. The tower provided the high rent office space, below were spaces for 136 offices and stores on ground level on the Wabash Street side, this construction wrapped around the interior theatre and secured it from street noise. Rusticated gray granite was used on the first three stories, smooth Indiana limestone sheathing above. The arcade on Congress Street was cut through in 1952 when the street was widened. The weight of the office tower required ingenious engineering devices which Adler worked out--he used cast iron interior frame with wrought iron trusses to support the weight of the tower which was 15,000 tons, Adler used all his skill--Hugh Morrison described the problem: "The actual area of the tower was 2,870 square feet, but its foundation was much larger, spreading...over 6,700 square feet. It might be described as a kind of platform composed of a five-foot thickness of concrete reinforced by two layers of heavy timbers, three layers of criss-crossed steel rails, and three layers of iron I-beams...

But still the necessary settlement had to be allowed for and this introduced one of the most baffling problems, and one of the most ingenious solutions in the entire structure of the Auditorium...Under normal conditions, the settlement of the foundations would have progressed uniformly as the building continued to rise and the load was increased. But the foundation under the tower was designed to support between six and seven thousand tons more than the adjacent wall the weight would be insufficient to compress its foundations, the adjacent walls would settle more than the tower walls, and cracks in the masonry would ensure. The problem was to load the tower foundations concurrently with the wall foundations in proportion to their ultimate loads so that the settlement would be even throughout...

The only solution was an artificial loading of the tower. This Adler did by means of adding pig-iron and brick in vast quanitites to the lower stories and basement, increasing the artificial load gradually as the height of the walls and tower approached the tenth story, but always maintaining a constant mathematical equation between the relative weight of the adjacent wall to its foundation-capacity. Thus the settlement proceeded absolutely uniformly. After reaching the tenth story the full settlement of all the foundations had been reached. Above this, as the tower rose above the adjacent wall, the problem was

(CONTINUED)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	XX ARCHITECTURE	XX EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	XX ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	XX THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1889 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural firm of Adler and Sullivan brought together two men with rare talent-one complimenting the other. They created between 1886 and 1889 the Chicago Auditorium, which was the most important structure of its time in Chicago and probably in the United States. Before it was completed it housed the Republican National Convention in 1888 (Benjamin Harrison and Levi Morton were nominated) and in 1889, they returned as President and Vice President for the dedication.

The Auditorium grew out of Chicago's need for a civic center housing primarily a concert hall and opera house but also space for political conventions, charity balls, etc. Sullivan's biographer, Hugh Morrison, documents carefully the developing plans and ideas that gave the final structure its form. He writes that the building had to finally financially support its size and "cultural services" and had to also be revenue producing so that business offices and hotel were designed to enclose the theatres. The Chicago Auditorium Association was formed and the architects began to solve the enormous design and engineering problems. The final cost reached $3,145,291 but it was the most important complex under a single management, the theatres; Chicago's best, the hotel the most beautiful, the large banquet hall the finest public room. Carl Condit writes that: "On the Auditorium, the later success of Adler and Sullivan was built, and in good measure, the later fame of the Chicago school and of the city itself."[1]

The engineering genius of Dankmar Adler was at its height in the complicated construction and machinery needed to make the mass of the auditorium function. Sullivan's understanding of space arrangement makes the interior coherent and it is in these spaces that one can see the organic ornament that was his special genius. The exterior of the Auditorium is rugged and devoid of delicate ornament because, as Carl Condit points out, Adler and Sullivan and Ferdinand W. Peck, a Chicago civic leader had admired H. H. Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store of 1885. Most scholars agree that this building marks the turning point in Sullivan's career and that it reveals his development

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[1]Condict, Carl. The Chicago School of Architecture, Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp. 77

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adler, Dankmar. "The Chicago Auditorium," Architectural Record, Vol. 1, April-June, 1892.

Adler, Dankmar. "Foundations of the Auditorium Building, Chicago," The Inland Architect and Newsletter, Vol. XI, No. 3, March, 1888.

Adler, Dankmar. "Theater Building for American Cities," Inland Architect, November, 1967.

"The Auditorium Building - Its Component Parts - The Interior Decoration," The

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	444160	4636598010
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Part of Original Lot 5 and Original Lots 6,7,8,9, and 10 in block 9 in Fractional Section 15, Township 39 North, Range 14, East of the Third Principal Meridian.

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

Carolyn Pitts

ORGANIZATION — DATE

National Park Service - Historic Sites Survey — 3/10/75

STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

1100 L Street NW.

CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Washington — 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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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merely to translate artificial load into real load, and this was done by gradually removing the pig-iron and bricks as the tower grew to its full height and weight. When the tower reached the top, ninety-five feet higher than the adjacent walls, all the artificial load was gone. but the total weight was just the same as it had been at the tenth-story level."[1]

However, the even greater problem involved the large theatre in the building's core which had to provide for hydralic stage equipment to be housed in the basement which was seven feet below the water level of Lake Michigan--he made it water tight. Seating capacity in the theatre was 4,237 and it takes up 1/3 of the interior space of the building. Vision and acoustics were near-perfect even in the highest balcony and the vast enclosure was cooled by air tempered by roof sprays--it was the first air conditioned structure. Hugh Morrison has again described it vividly "Sullivan made them [the ceiling arches] the dominate theme of the interior and the repeated curves have a grand sweep over the hall. They are decorated by plaster reliefs, chevron mouldings dividing the faces into hexagons enclosing the grilled bosses, and smaller triangles enclosing other foliage designs. The whole surface is covered by gold leaf and studded with electric lights, gleaming like dull, mellow gold. Even the borders of the arched panels are enriched by relief bands and an inner lace-like pattern delicately stencilled in gold. Rarely has there been such a wedding of large and majestic simplicity with refined and subtle detail. The effect is superb."[2]

This structure is so complex and an unquestioned architectural engineering triumph that further descriptions can be seen. (HABS measured drawings and documents)

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[1] Morrison, Hugh. Louis Sullivan, W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1935 p. 90-92

[2] Ibid, p. 103-104

of the theories that clearly express the logic of tall buildings, the genesis of skyscraper construction as we know it today.

The complex flourished for 40 years but in 1929 a new opera house was built and the depression further threatened the aging office and hotel facilities; bankruptcy came in 1940. In 1945, Roosevelt University began a courageous program to restore this famous building and today the building is serving as a city college and public theatre. Although slightly altered to serve as a college (the banquet hall is now the library), the building survives and is a source of pride to the University--the Auditorium is one of the outstanding examples of American ingenuity and genius.

American Architect and Building News, December 28, 1889.

"Auditorium Building," Roosevelt University announces plans for the restoration of Adler and Sullivan's Auditorium Building.

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