

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Theme: The Complimentary Society
Subtheme: Music

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**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 Musician Association Building, Local No. 627
American Federation of Musicians

AND/OR COMMON Mutual Musician's Foundation Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1823 Highland Avenue NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN Kansas City CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 05
STATE Missouri VICINITY OF 029 COUNTY Jackson CODE 095

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc. Carroll Jenkins, Project Manager

STREET & NUMBER 1823 Highland Avenue 816-421-9297
CITY, TOWN Kansas City VICINITY OF MISSOURI STATE Missouri 64108

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the Assessor, City Hall

STREET & NUMBER 414 East 12th Street
CITY, TOWN Kansas City STATE Missouri 64108

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building is located in the East District of Kansas City, Missouri. Constructed in 1904, it was originally designed as a multi-family residential structure. The building is constructed above grade with its main facade facing west onto Highland Avenue.

Summary

The building, two stories in height, contains approximately 4,836 square feet of interior space. Native rubble limestone forms the foundation, while exterior walls consist of pressed red brick. The main, west facade, is stuccoed and painted magenta. The secondary, north and south facades are painted gray. The second story is presently surfaced with asphalt composition sheeting. Glass bricks are used for some window openings. The roof is flat, surfaced with built-up tar and tar paper.

Originally designed as an apartment house, the building has received extensive modifications from ca. 1940 to the present. Major alterations include:

1. removal of an original first story entranceway on the west and east facades.
2. addition and remodeling of present main entrance.
3. resurfacing with stucco of west facade.
4. removal of sash windows on west, north and south facades.
5. removal of five of the original six chimneys.

The building is located in the once flourishing commercial center of the black community. The immediate area surrounding the building contains single and multi-family residential buildings. Today the building serves as a clubhouse, recital hall and museum. The building is in fair condition.

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 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 1920s to 1940s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Rudolf Markgraf

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building in Kansas City, Missouri was a significant center for the development of the "Kansas City Style" of Jazz, one of America's indigenous musical expressions. The Foundation was a second home, a training ground and a source of jobs for approximately 90 percent of the musicians who created the powerful Kansas City sound of the 1930's and 1940's. Many of the nation's leading jazz men were or are members of the Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc. They include: band leaders Bill "Count" Basie, Bennie Moten, Jay McShann, and George F. Lee; singer, Julia Lee; trumpeter "Hot" Lips Page; tenor saxophonists, Dick Wilson, Hershell Evans and Lester Young; alto saxophonist, Charlie "Bird" Parker; drummer, Baby Lovett; and pianist, Pete Johnson. The building is immortalized in the song "627 Stomp," one of the original "boogie-woogie" tunes by jazz greats Pete Johnson and singer Joe Turner. The song is named in honor of the Musician's Union Local #627.

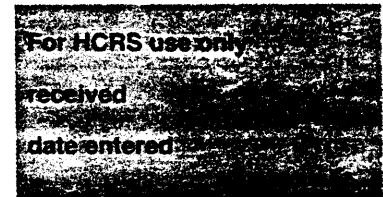
History

Between the first three decades of the twentieth century, Kansas City experienced an increase in its black population following a rapid migration to the urban areas. To satisfy the demand for entertainment that grew out of a diverse culture, a separate world of black entertainment and show business evolved; derived principally from minstrel shows, vaudeville, traveling companies and ragtime, culminating into its greatest product, jazz. Jazz developed simultaneously across the country in the early part of the century. Prior to World War I, the main center of jazz was located in New Orleans. In 1917, city authorities closed down the largest club and red light district in the country, dispersing many performers to other American cities. Many arrived in Kansas City. The genesis of Kansas City jazz dates to approximately 1917 following the organization of the Musician's Union Local #627.

Kansas City, in association with the other jazz centers - New York City, New Orleans and Chicago, became the western center of American jazz. Under the control of political boss Thomas Pendergast, night life flourished in Kansas City during and after Prohibition. In the 1920's, large bands formed throughout the region and gravitated towards Kansas City, whose night clubs and dance spots remained open around the clock. The most famous clubs were the Reno, the Subway, the Sunset and the ballrooms, El Paseo and El Torreon. The clubs nurtured jam sessions, a Kansas City speciality, encouraging jazzmen to participate in musical contests. During the late twenties all groups and bands with any reputation were heard at the annual tournament of bands staged by Local #627. The tournaments, begun in the early

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

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History

twenties, were strictly limited to union members. The proceeds from these events were used to purchase the building at 1823 Highland Avenue.

In 1929, the Negro Musicians Association was formed and chartered. It was comprised of a group of black professional musicians in need of rehearsal facilities. In 1958, the Association changed to its present corporate identity - Mutual Musician's Foundation, Inc. The foundation's prime tenent was the Local #627.

The general prosperity in Kansas City came to a sudden end in 1939 with the indictment of Thomas Pendergast for income tax evasion. Following his conviction, reform elements soon took over. Most of the clubs and speakeasys were forced to close down and the musicians who were not established in big travelling bands drifted away. Some musicians went to war and few remained in Kansas City. This great era of Kansas City jazz was over, and replaced with the "Behop Revolution." The mainstream of musical ideas that shaped this new jazz style emanated from Kansas City with saxophonists Lester Young and Charlie "Bird" Parker being the most notable practitioners.

By the late 1950's and early 1960's, Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc. held regular weekend and after hours promotions for its members and their friends. These concerts and jam sessions have outgrown the facilities at 1823 Highland Avenue, and have been periodically performed in the nearby Armory Building. The Kansas City Jazz Festival concerts have been presented with other jazz programs sponsored by or affiliated with the Mutual Musician's Foundation, Inc. The proceeds from these events have been used for musical scholarships and other charitable projects.