



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2007
No. 07-3

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COMMISSIONERS GRANT LANDMARKS STATUS TO THE FORMER HORN & HARDART AUTOMAT ON MANHATTAN'S UPPER WEST SIDE

Art Deco Style Building One of the Best Surviving Examples of a Restaurant Chain That Came to Symbolize New York City Life in the First Half of the 20th Century

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today granted landmark status to the Horn & Hardart Automat-Cafeteria Building at 2710 Broadway at 104th St., a three-story limestone-clad structure that housed the famed waiterless restaurant from 1930 to 1953.



The building was designed by Frederick Putnam Platt & Brother, the architect of many of the chain's other restaurants in New York City, as well as the New York Athletic Club and several Consolidated Edison Co.'s offices and plants. The



upper portion of the original** central segmental arch that held a show window and entrances on the ground story and multi-pane windows on the mezzanine levels and the top of the bronze entrance portal and decorative bronze spandrel are still visible. The building's third story is decorated by green, blue, tan and gold-colored terra cotta panels inscribed with stylized floral motifs and zigzag patterns.

“This remarkable Horn & Hardart building will now be preserved them for generations to come,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “Automats hold a special place in New York City's collective memory and were on the must-visit list of everyone who visited the city in the 1940s and 1950s, myself included.”

Automats featured giant, nickel-operated vending machines that sold hot and cold meals displayed behind a wall of glass and chrome doors. Horn & Hardart, founded in Philadelphia in 1898 by Joseph V. Horn and Frank A. Hardart, was one of the earliest American fast-food chains, and competed with restaurants such as Nedick's, Chock Full O'Nuts, Bickford's and Schrafft's. The City's first automat was instantly popular when it opened in July 1912 in Times Square, at 1557 Broadway (between 45th and 46th streets). By 1954, the number of Horn &

(more)

Hardart automats in New York City reached a high of 45, and the number of retail shops peaked at 44. The last automat in the City, at 200 East 42nd Street (at Third Avenue), closed in 1991.

In the last five decades, the Horn & Hardart Automat-Cafeteria Building on 104th Street has housed a coffee shop, a supermarket and a pizzeria and is currently occupied by a drug store.

To obtain high-resolution versions photos of the building, please call Lisi de Bourbon at 212-669-7938.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is the largest municipal preservation agency in the United States. Created in 1965, the Commission is dedicated to preserving New York City's architectural, historical and cultural treasures and protects more than 23,000 buildings in all five boroughs, including 1,151 individual landmarks, 107 interior landmarks, nine scenic landmarks and 85 historic districts.

**Historic photo of the 1942 exterior courtesy of The New York Public Library *Byrnes Automat Collection*.