



Testimony of the Municipal Art Society
Before the New York Landmarks Commission
By Margaret Hayden, Municipal Art Society
Horn & Hardart Building 2710-14 Broadway
June 27, 2006

The Municipal Art Society is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote a more livable city. Since 1893, the Society has worked to advocate excellence in urban design and planning, contemporary architecture, historic preservation and public art.

I am Margaret Hayden, speaking on behalf of the Municipal Art Society. The Horn & Hardart Building has significant architectural and cultural value and we strongly support its designation as a New York City landmark.

The building is in the Art Deco style and features polychrome, terra-cotta ornamentation and geometric forms. These elements create a lively façade that was meant to draw customers into the bustling automat inside. The automat was a fixture of early twentieth-century urban life that helped shape the character of New York City. Celebrated by Hollywood, Broadway, and Edward Hopper, it captivated the imaginations and the nickels of New Yorkers and visitors alike; both drawn to the automat as an emblem of a bustling metropolis.

The Horn & Hardart Building is a tangible reminder of what *The New York Daily News* once called, ‘a study in democracy’ in which ‘chorus girls and lost souls’ dined on macaroni and cheese beside business men, press agents, and the occasional celebrity.

The terra-cotta decoration and monumental arched show window make the Horn & Hardart Building architecturally significant in its own right. But this distinguished architecture also acts as a physical repository for a bygone era. For this reason, the MAS finds the building worthy of designation.

Thank you.