

SALVATION ARMY TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS

120-130 West 14th Street, Manhattan

Block: 609 / Lot 23, in part

Built: 1929-35

Architect: Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker

Style: Art Deco

Actions: Public Hearing 1982, 1990, February 11, 2014

The Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters, designed in 1928-29 by the pre-eminent New York architect Ralph Walker of Voorhees, Gmelin and Walker, exhibits the drama as well as the practicality of the Art Deco style popular in the late 1920s. It consists of a complex of three connected buildings running through the block and includes an auditorium and office building facing 14th Street as well as a dormitory facing 13th Street that is included in the Greenwich Village Historic District. Ralph Walker was the designer of numerous distinctive Art Deco towers including the Barclay-Vesey Building, the Western Union Building and 1 Wall Street (all designated New York City Landmarks). Walker's designs show a distinctive sense of modernism, using the Art Deco style to express the optimism and dynamism of the late 1920s period.

The Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters building was constructed between 1929 and 1935, of concrete and steel with buff-colored brick facing and cast-stone trim. Its sculptural massing and asymmetric placement define the component parts of the complex. The low mass of the four-story auditorium with its deeply inset entranceway is juxtaposed against the 11-story office building that was surmounted by a tower at its northeastern corner. The dramatically faceted surround of the three-story arched entry to the auditorium gives the effect of stage curtains, while the verticality of the office tower is emphasized by vertical brick bands. The contrasting geometric ornament concentrated at the roofline and window and door openings all reflect the linear, geometric quality associated with the Art Deco style.

The Salvation Army came to New York City from England in the early 1880s to begin its charitable work that continues today. The present buildings replaced an earlier, smaller group on part of this site that the organization had occupied since 1895. This complex continues to operate as a "primary focal point" of Salvation Army activities and is one of Walker's great works



