



**NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION**

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, Sept. 14, 2010
No. 10-10**

COMMISSION DESIGNATES THREE LANDMARKS IN MANHATTAN

A Former Methodist Church in the East Village, a Rare Cast-Iron Commercial Building on the Bowery and a Thomas Lamb-Designed Movie Theater in Chinatown Now Protected

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously voted to give landmark status to **Eleventh Street Methodist Episcopal Chapel** at 545 East 11th Street, the **Loew's Canal Street Theatre** at 31 Canal St., and the **97 Bowery Building**, at 97 Bowery, citing their distinctive architecture and role in the cultural and economic development of New York City.

"These buildings collectively speak to many aspects of the immigrant experience in the East Village and on the Lower East Side in the 19th and early 20th centuries," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "As a result of our staff's extensive survey work in these areas, we already have designated a number of landmarks in both areas in recent years, and continue to pursue many others."

Descriptions of the sites follow below:

Eleventh Street Methodist Episcopal Chapel (now the Father's Heart Church)



Located between avenues A and B, the Gothic Revival-style church was completed in 1868, and constructed by the New York City Sunday School and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation was established to serve the neighborhood's burgeoning immigrant population, and offered religious services, instruction, and medical care.

The two-story, red-brick church was designed by William Field and Son, an architecture firm that specialized in affordable apartment houses constructed in the late 19th century such as the Home, Tower and Riverside apartment buildings in Brooklyn's Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights historic districts.

The sanctuary's façade was renovated in 1900 to the designs of architects Louis Jallade and Joel Barber, who moved the front door from the center to the western side of the building. When the alterations were completed, the church reopened in 1901 as The People's Home Church and Settlement.

The church closed in 1930, and was sold in 1941 to the Russian Ukrainian Polish Pentecostal Church in 1941, the first Slavic Pentecostal Church in the United States, and changed its name to in 1998 to the Father's Heart Ministry.

The exterior of the church has an entranceway surmounted by a stone lintel, window hood moldings, pointed finials at the roof, and a pointed arch corbel table along the underside of the cornice. "This elegant, yet sturdy building has been serving a large variety of ethnic groups for

more than 140 years, and we hope that today's designation enables the congregation to continue to do so for many years to come," said Chairman Tierney.

Loew's Canal Street Theatre, 31 Canal Street, between Ludlow and Essex streets



The four-story Spanish Baroque-style Loew's Canal Street Theatre was built as a neighborhood movie house and designed by Thomas W. Lamb, one of the world's most prolific theater architects. A native of Scotland, Lamb was responsible for more than 300 theaters in the United States, including a number of Broadway theaters and movie palaces in New York City.

Clad almost entirely in ornate terra cotta, the Loew's Canal opened in 1927, at the beginning of the so-called "Golden Age" of cinema, the period that lasted to the late 1940s when five major studios dominated the film industry, including Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. MGM was a subsidiary of Lowe's Inc. theater chain, which commissioned of Loew's Canal Street Theatre.

Loew's was founded by Marcus Lowe, who was born to a Jewish Austrian father and German mother and raised on the Lower East Side. He started as an operator of penny arcades,

and later moved on to nickelodeons and vaudeville theaters before forming MGM in 1925.

With 2,300 seats, the Loew's Canal was one of the largest theaters on the Lower East Side, which at the time had not only the densest population in the United States, but also the highest concentration of movie theaters.

"Of all of those theaters, the Loew's Canal was the most architecturally distinguished remains and the best preserved to this day," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "Its lavishly decorated façade building is still a riot of sea monsters, griffons, eagles, garland, foliate and other flamboyant ornament."



The theater shut its doors in the late 1950s, and the building was sold in 1960. The lobby was later converted to retail space.

97 Bowery Building, between Hester and Grand streets (at right)

The five-story, cast-iron structure was built in 1869 for John P. Jube & Co., a carriage supply and hardware business. The building was constructed by John P. Jube, a prominent resident of Newark, N.J., at a time when the Bowery was a major commercial thoroughfare. It was designed by Peter L.P. Tostevin, a mason and builder who constructed several row houses and tenement buildings nearby.

The three-bay façade of 97 Bowery features arched windows that are framed by Corinthian columns, a cornice with a segmental arched pediment and diamond-patterned spandrel panels. The façade was forged by the J.B. & J.M.



Cornell Iron Works, one of New York City's major producers of cast-iron architectural elements and fireproof buildings. Cast iron became a popular material in the mid-to-late 19th century because of its low cost, strength, and ease of assembly.

"Cast iron facades are uncommon on the Bowery, which makes this building a rare find," said Chairman Tierney. "Buildings such as this one are more typically found nearby in SoHo."

The building was occupied by John P. Jube & Co. until 1931, when it was sold to a store fixture and display manufacturing business that remained at the site until 1981 before moving to Queens. It now houses a café.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 27,000 buildings, including 1,261 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 100 historic districts and 16 historic district extensions in all five boroughs. Under the City's landmarks law, considered among the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.

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Contact: Elisabeth de Bourbon/ 212-669-7938