

I. MILLER BUILDING, 1552-1554 Broadway (aka 167 West 46th Street), Manhattan. Redesigned and reclad, 1926; Louis H. Friedland, architect; sculpture by Alexander Stirling Calder, 1928-29.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 999, Lot 1.

On July 14, 1998, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the I. Miller Building, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Six witnesses spoke in favor of designation, comprising representatives from the 1560 Broadway Company, owners of the adjacent building, and representatives of Actors Equity, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, and the Municipal Art Society. There were no speakers in opposition to this designation. The Commission has received many statements in support of designation including letters from Manhattan Community Board Five; the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York; the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists; the American Guild of Musical Artists; the American Guild of Variety Artists; the Associated Musicians of Greater New York, Local 802; the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers; the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States and Canada; the League of American Theatres and Producers, Inc.; the League of Off-Broadway Theatres and Producers, Inc.; the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers; Treasurers and Ticket Sellers Union Local 751; United Scenic Artists Local 829; the Writers Guild of America, East; the Rosa Ponselle Foundation; and the Times Square Business Improvement District. An attorney representing the owner spoke at the designation public meeting and stated that the owner does not oppose designation.¹

Summary

The I. Miller Building, with its four statues of leading actresses of the 1920s by the noted sculptor Alexander Stirling Calder, is an evocative reminder of the history of the Broadway theater district. Designed by architect Louis H. Friedland, this 1926 remodeling of the Times Square branch of the fashionable I. Miller women's shoe store chain was commissioned by shoe manufacturer Israel Miller as a tribute to the theatrical profession. Miller, who began his career as a designer and maker of shoes for theatrical productions, had become a leading importer and manufacturer of shoes with a national chain of over 200 retail stores. The store's handsome design incorporates rich materials -- limestone, marble, and mosaic -- and motifs from several different classically-inspired historic styles. It pays tribute to theater, both with an inscription beneath the cornice that reads "THE SHOW FOLKS SHOE SHOP DEDICATED TO BEAUTY IN FOOTWEAR" and with the statues which depict Ethel Barrymore as Ophelia (representing drama), Marilyn Miller as Sunny (musical comedy), Rosa Ponselle as Norma (opera), and Mary Pickford as Little Lord Fauntleroy (film).



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Development of the Broadway Theater District²

The development of the Times Square area was primarily a result of the steady northward movement of Manhattan's population, abetted by the growth of several forms of mass transportation. A district of farmlands and rural summer homes in the early 1800s, Long Acre Square (now Times Square) evolved into an urban center following the opening of Grand Central Depot in 1871 and the completion of the Third Avenue, Sixth Avenue, and Ninth Avenue Elevated Railways in the mid-1870s, all linked by the 42nd Street horsecar service which had been established in 1861. The area initially was built with rowhouses, flats, tenements, saloons, and small shops to accommodate working- and middle-class tenants. North of West 42nd Street, Long Acre Square developed as Manhattan's center for the harness and carriage businesses, but was little used at night when it seems to have become a "thieves lair."³

In 1893, a cable car line was established from Central Park South running along Seventh Avenue to Broadway at Long Acre Square and then south to Bowling Green. New York's subway system was inaugurated in 1904, with a major station located at West 42nd Street and Broadway. This was followed by the construction of a new Grand Central Terminal (Warren & Wetmore and Reed & Stem, 1903-13) and Pennsylvania Station (McKim, Mead & White, 1904-10, demolished), which served the Pennsylvania and Long Island Railroads, and the northern terminus of the Hudson River Tube Lines (now the PATH) at West 33rd Street and Broadway (1908-09). By 1920, the 42nd Street shuttle had opened, linking the Seventh Avenue and Lexington Avenue lines of the IRT. These improvements made it comparatively simple for both New Yorkers and out-of-towners to reach Long Acre Square.

With the opening of the Broadway and West 42nd Street subway station in 1904, the area around Long Acre Square began to be redeveloped with a mix of hotels, including the Astor Hotel on the west side of Broadway between West 44th and West 45th Streets (Clinton & Russell, 1904-09, demolished) and Hotel Knickerbocker on the east side of Broadway between West 41st and West 42nd Streets (Marvin & Davis with Bruce Price, 1901-06, a designated New York City landmark), and office buildings, notably the New York Times Tower (Eidlitz & MacKenzie, 1903-05, altered), which caused city officials to change the name of Long Acre Square to Times Square in 1904.

The theaters, which had been gradually moving up Broadway for most of the nineteenth century, began to open in the area just south of West 42nd Street in the 1880s.⁴ Oscar Hammerstein I was responsible for the move into Long Acre Square in 1895 when he began the enormous Olympia theater complex on Broadway between West 44th and West 45th Streets.⁵ The development of the Long Acre/Times Square area as a transportation hub encouraged other theater owners to follow his example since playhouses needed to be easily accessible to their audiences. In the years 1901-1920, a total of forty-three additional theaters appeared in midtown Manhattan, most of them on the side streets east and west of Broadway. The general economic prosperity after World War I made possible the construction of thirty additional playhouses in the Times Square area, expanding the boundaries of the theater district from just west of Eighth Avenue to Sixth Avenue, and from 39th Street to Columbus Circle.⁶

With the advent of motion pictures in the 1910s, Times Square, with its access to mass audiences and the metropolitan and theatrical press, also became home to many of the country's grandest movie palaces, such as the Roxy, the Capitol, and the Strand (all demolished). By the early 1920s, radio programs were originating from theaters and studios in the Times Square area. New York's theater district also encompassed rehearsal halls, scenery, costume, lighting, and makeup companies, offices of theatrical agents and producers, theatrical printers and newspapers, and other auxiliary enterprises. Close to the theater district were boarding houses offering accommodations to the hundreds of performers who came to New York. A number of commercial hotels were also erected in the Times Square area during the 1920s, catering primarily to businessmen and tourists planning to take advantage of Times Square's entertainment opportunities. Providing sustenance to all were the area's hundreds of restaurants, cafes, and saloons.

Israel Miller and the I. Miller Building

Israel Miller, shoe manufacturer and merchant, was born in Grodno, Poland in 1866.⁷ He learned the shoemaking trade from his father in Poland, then in 1888 went to Paris, where he worked for four years as a designer and cutter for an exclusive shoe manufacturer. He came to the United States with his family in 1892, settling in New York, where he found employment with a leading maker of shoes for

theatrical productions. After a short-lived partnership with a fellow workman, Miller established his own business in 1895. At first he made shoes almost exclusively for the theatrical profession. His excellent design and workmanship brought him the patronage of many leading stars, and he was soon receiving orders to outfit entire casts of dramatic productions. As actresses began turning to him to design shoes for their personal wardrobes, and society women began commissioning evening footwear, he decided to produce shoes for the retail trade. He established factories in Brooklyn, Long Island, and Haverhill, Massachusetts, eventually opening a factory with 149,000 square feet of floor space in Long Island City in 1925-26. In 1911, he opened his first retail store at 1554 Broadway near West 46th Street in a residential building with commercial space on the first and second stories. Miller's business continued to expand and at his death in 1929, the company was distributing shoes to 228 branch stores throughout the nation. These included sixteen shops owned entirely by I. Miller & Sons, Inc., while the balance were franchises. Miller's holdings included four New York shops, with a flagship store in the company's office building at 562 Fifth Avenue (1920-21). In addition to selling shoes of his own manufacture, Miller also imported shoes from France by the famous designer Andre Perugia, which were sold in a special department called "Corner of Paris." Miller also sold Perugia's "sun tan" stockings, considered revolutionary because women's stockings had previously been white, black, or dark brown.⁸ He continued to produce dance and theater footwear.

In 1920, Miller negotiated a new long-term lease, effective in May 1926, to take over the entirety of 1554 Broadway and the adjoining building, 1552 Broadway, which had frontages on Broadway and West 46th Street.⁹ In March 1926, in anticipation of taking control of the properties, Miller had architect Louis H. Friedland file plans to join and completely renovate the buildings, creating new facades on both Broadway and 46th Street.¹⁰ Work commenced in May 1926 and was completed by December.

Louis H. Friedland¹¹

Brooklyn resident Louis H. Friedland practiced architecture for about fifty years, maintaining an office in midtown Manhattan between 1922 and 1971. During the 1920s, he established a reputation for designing elegant retail spaces, especially shoe stores. In addition to this building, he was

responsible for the I. Miller & Sons store in Washington D.C. (c. 1930) and for the company's store in the Aeolian Building at 689 Fifth Avenue (designed in association with architect Robert Carson, c. 1939). He also designed the interior of the Broadway National Bank & Trust Company at 261 Fifth Avenue (completed 1929), perhaps securing the commission through Israel Miller, who was a founder and director of the bank. Other notable works by Friedland included the opulent Milgrim Store at 6 West 57th Street (1928), and Frank Brothers Shoe Store, New York (c. 1937). (All of the commercial spaces in New York City have been remodeled.)

Friedland's earlier designs employed historicizing elements in a free and inventive manner, while his later works featured a "restrained use of modernist decorative motifs."¹² His work at the Milgrim Store incorporated designs on different floors by leading French decorative designers; it was warmly praised for creating a "harmonious" and "distinctive" design uniting "a variety of new forms ... with taste and attention to detail"¹³ and is credited with introducing French Modern Classic design to America. To critic Lewis Mumford, Friedland's "suave and urbane" design for the I. Miller store at 689 Fifth Avenue was "perhaps the most satisfactory piece of remodelling on the upper Avenue,"¹⁴ while critic-historian Talbot Hamlin praised the work as "so refined, so charmingly handled in detail, so pleasant and harmonious in color [that] it becomes an addition to the distinctive character of Fifth Avenue."¹⁵

The Design of the I. Miller Building

Located on the east side of Broadway at West 46th Street, opposite the triangle now occupied by the Father Duffy monument, 1552 Broadway and 1554 Broadway were four-story tenements which had been altered for commercial use at the first and second story. Since 1911 the commercial space at 1554 Broadway had been occupied by an I. Miller retail store catering to both the general public and theatrical clients, while the ground floor at No. 1552 had been leased to the F.K. James Drugstore, and the second floor had been leased to various businesses including the Broadway Clothes Shop. By the early 1920s, Miller had leased the upper floors of both buildings as workrooms. He or the buildings' owner was also renting the upper-story Broadway facades of the two buildings for a prominent neon sign advertising the Knickerbocker Theater. Just to the north and east of No. 1552 and No. 1554 were similar tenements that were

replaced by the sixteen-story, L-shaped Embassy Theater Building, 1556-60 Broadway, in 1925. Also located on the block, just north of the Embassy, was the Broadway entrance of the Palace Theater.¹⁶ In keeping with this prominent location, Miller commissioned an elegant and distinctive store design that would pay tribute to the theatrical profession. Thus, the new design was to incorporate a large inscription reading "THE SHOW FOLKS SHOE SHOP DEDICATED TO BEAUTY IN FOOTWEAR" and to feature four statues of prominent actresses. In this way, Miller was able to acknowledge his debt to the theatrical community, which had given him his start in business. At the same time, he sought the continued patronage of his show business clientele at what was to be his company's primary retail outlet for its theatrical and dancing shoes. Moreover, he advertised the link between his retail shoe business and his "glamorous" theatrical trade by soliciting the theater-going public to vote by ballot to select its favorite actresses in drama, comedy, opera, and film, to be depicted by the statues.

Friedland's design had to take into account these special programmatic elements as well as the building's proportions (it had a frontage of forty feet on Broadway and eighty feet on West 46th Street) and the multiple viewpoints from which it would be seen. (From the south and southwest, both facades would be visible; from the north, west, and northwest, only the Broadway front would be seen; and from the east, only the West 46th Street front would be visible.) Friedland elected to treat the two facades individually, concentrating most of the decorative features and statues on the longer West 46th Street front, while devoting most of the Broadway facade to show windows.

On Broadway, a projecting glass and metal storefront with curving corners extended from the first to the second story. At street level, the facade was divided into two arcaded shop fronts, since Miller continued renting the commercial space at 1554 Broadway to other tenants. Arcaded shopfronts, which were just coming into fashion in the mid-1920s, permitted the maximum amount of show window space "by recessing the doorways and lining the resulting exterior passageways with display windows."¹⁷ (Although its bulkheads have been refaced and the show windows and supports have been replaced, the northern entrance bay survives.) A sketch of the building, published prior to the completion of the project, indicates that Friedland had initially planned to reface the upper stories with stucco, retaining the original rectangular

window openings with molded lintels at the third story, and sealing the fourth story windows to provide a flat surface for an oval plaque with the company logo. This design was not executed and the original facade was left unchanged, probably because Miller was unable or unwilling to cancel the lease for a large v-shaped sign which extended across the upper stories of 1552 and 1554 Broadway. This sign has been replaced by the current angled sign that conceals the upper stories of the Broadway facade. At present, the third-story window openings still survive but are sealed with infill; the second- and fourth-story windows are covered by signage and are not accessible for inspection.

On West 46th Street, the first and second stories are sheathed in limestone while the upper stories are faced with stucco which is tinted to match the stone. The inventive and elegantly detailed design has been described as "a brilliantly and appropriately theatrical marriage of architectural elements" from several different classically-inspired historic styles.¹⁸ The segmental arches framing the first- and second-story windows are based on French Rococo sources, while the pedimented niche frames are Georgian-inspired, and the round-arch window surrounds with anthemion moldings are derived from Italian Renaissance architecture. The opulent materials -- carved limestone, marble, terra cotta, and mosaic -- suggest the quality of the goods to be found inside, while providing an elegant backdrop for Alexander Stirling Calder's four marble figures.

Alexander Stirling Calder and the I. Miller Building Sculptures

In September 1927, nine months after the building had been completed, an article in the *New York Times* announced that the ballot to select the actresses to be depicted by the statues had been completed. Those chosen were Ethel Barrymore as Ophelia to represent drama, Marilyn Miller as Sunny to represent musical comedy, Mary Pickford as Little Lord Fauntleroy to represent motion pictures, and Rosa Ponselle as Leonora in *La Forza del Destino* to represent opera [later changed to her starring role as Norma].¹⁹ According to the article, Miller had already commissioned Alexander Stirling Calder to execute the works.

Born in Philadelphia, A. Stirling Calder (1870-1945) was the son of sculptor Alexander Milne Calder (1846-1923), who was responsible for the extensive sculptural program at Philadelphia City Hall, including the monumental statue of William Penn atop City Hall tower.²⁰ Stirling Calder studied

with Thomas Eakins and Thomas Anshutz at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and later attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1892, he returned to Philadelphia, where he became an instructor at the Pennsylvania Academy. Having won prizes for his sculpture in several competitions, notably a silver medal at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 and the grand prize in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909, he moved to New York City in 1910, where he taught at the National Academy of Design and later the Art Students League. From June 1913 to 1915, Calder lived in San Francisco, where, as Acting Chief of Sculpture for the Panama-Pacific Exposition, he ran the workshop that produced all the sculpture for the exposition. He also produced a number of designs for sculpture at the exposition, including monumental groups representing the *Nations of the East* and the *Nations of the West*, and the *Fountain of Energy*. In 1917, Calder was commissioned to design the monumental figure of *Washington as President*, accompanied by reliefs depicting "Wisdom" and "Justice", for the west pier of the Washington Memorial Arch in Washington Square, New York City.²¹ His notable works also include the Swan Memorial Fountain (1924) in Logan Circle, Philadelphia; the heroic statue of Lief Ericsson (1932), presented by the people of the United States to Iceland in celebration of the 1,000th year of its parliament; *Native Dance* (1938) in Brookgreen Gardens, South Carolina; and *Man Cub* (1901), a childhood portrait of his son Alexander Calder (1898-1976), the modernist sculptor, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A theater enthusiast from the age of six, when he was taken to see Edwin Booth in *Hamlet*, Calder especially enjoyed the I. Miller project because it involved working with performers.²² The commission to depict actresses posed in their most famous roles was particularly suited to his expressive style. His sculptures are life-size figures carved in marble.²³ In keeping with Calder's Beaux-Arts training, the works are representational. The "stylized decorative renderings of the figure with sharp edges to define plane and accentuate pattern"²⁴ exhibit the tendency to abstract and simplify that characterizes his work of the late 1920s and 1930s and that makes him such an interesting transitional artist between the Beaux-Arts and Modernist movements. Though the figures are carefully studied portraits which work well as individual works of art, they are arranged in complementary poses to create a unified ensemble.

The I. Miller Building, 1929 to Present

Israel Miller died suddenly in Paris in August 1929. Two months later, the four I. Miller Building sculptures were unveiled in a grand ceremony before a crowd of 3,000.²⁵ Marilyn Miller and Rosa Ponselle jointly unveiled the statue of Mary Pickford. Producer-theater owner Daniel Frohman did the honors for the figure of actress Ethel Barrymore, comedian DeWolf Hopper unveiled the statue of Marilyn Miller, and actress Elsie Ferguson unveiled the figure of Rosa Ponselle. Also in attendance were musical comedy stars Gertrude Lawrence and Evelyn Herbert and comedian Willie Howard. Mayor James Walker offered the closing remarks.

When the I. Miller Building opened, it contained an I. Miller & Sons retail shoe store in the commercial space at 1552 Broadway. The basement and commercial space at No. 1554 were subdivided and leased to a jewelry store and dress shop. The company's theatrical department and executive offices for its retail division occupied the upper stories. Other corporate offices continued to be housed in the Miller Building at 562 Fifth Avenue. When the Depression brought a retrenchment, the executive offices were consolidated at 1552 Broadway, which also continued to house a retail store and the theatrical shoe department. The firm maintained branch stores at 562 Fifth Avenue, 450 Fifth Avenue, and 49 West 34th Street in Manhattan, and at 498 Fulton Street in Brooklyn.

In 1940, George and Maurice Miller, who had taken over their father's company, erected a sign on the roof of the I. Miller Building.²⁶ Around that time, the company moved its executive retail offices to 450 Fifth Avenue. Sometime in the 1950s, the Genesco Corporation acquired the I. Miller Retail Shoe Salons. In 1967, Genesco exercised the Miller family's option to renew the lease on 1552-1554 Broadway for a term of twenty-one years. Genesco continued to operate an I. Miller Shoe salon at 1552 Broadway until at least 1972. In 1972, the owners of 1552-1554 Broadway sold the building to a group of investors. In 1978, both the building and lease were acquired by companies associated with the Reise family. The building remains in their ownership.

Description

Two converted dwellings were joined in 1926 to form the present four-story commercial building, which extends forty feet along Broadway and eighty feet along West 46th Street. Dating from the 1926 alteration, the building's facades are designed in a

modern classical style that draws on prototypes from several different periods. Both facades were articulated with a two-story base and two-story upper section topped by a simple molded cornice and a parapet. Currently, the Broadway facade is almost entirely concealed by signage except for the ground-floor storefronts. The northern storefront retains its historic configuration behind a rolldown gate. The five-bay-wide West 46th Street facade retains most of its original features, including the bronze lettering proclaiming it "THE SHOW FOLKS SHOE SHOP DEDICATED TO BEAUTY IN FOOTWEAR" and the four statues of famous actresses set in gold-mosaic-lined niches. The aluminum window frames and storefronts at the first story are non-historic replacements. The upper-story windows retain their original metal surrounds, mullions and transom bars and wood sash. Some of the windows have been removed within the last year.

Broadway facade.

The arcaded entrance in the north bay of the Broadway facade retains its historical configuration, although the metal supports for the windows are now aluminum and the bulkheads beneath the show windows are covered with linoleum tiles. The ceiling of the recessed entrance is entirely covered with fluorescent light fixtures. The storefront has a rolldown aluminum gate and supports for an illuminated electric sign. The south storefront is faced in orange marble, has metal and glass windows and the framework for a fixed awning installed in the mid-1980s. The second story is entirely concealed by a metal framework for a backlit sign that extends around the corner, covering the first bay of the West 46th Street facade. (The sign faces have been removed.) The third and fourth stories are covered by an angled sign that replaces an angled sign that had been installed by the 1920s. (The original rectangular window openings are still visible on the third floor of the building, though they are currently blocked; the current condition of the fourth-story windows is not known.)

West 46th Street facade

The two-story base is sheathed in limestone. There are granite bases at the foot of the piers. The base is divided into five bays by double-height segmental-arch window openings trimmed with gray marble moldings. In the second to fifth bays (reading west to east), the orange marble bulkheads, metal and glass ground-story doors and windows, and orange marble spandrel panels and metal framing were installed in the 1980s. The second-story windows retain their original tripartite metal

surrounds and wood window sash, in which a large central light is flanked by narrower lights. In the fifth bay the storefront has been replaced by aluminum sheeting and a metal door topped by louvered grilles, and an air conditioner. Circular decorations on the spandrels between the second-story arches draw attention to the inscriptions naming the actresses depicted by the figures in the third-story niches. The base is capped by a narrow band molding and the molded sills of the upper-story windows.

The upper two stories are faced with stucco that has been scored and colored to match the limestone base. The two-story arches that frame the third- and fourth-story windows have terra-cotta surrounds decorated with an anthemion motif. The windows retain their original tripartite metal frames, marble spandrel panels, and wood sash. (The center windows have been removed from the second bay at the third story and at the base of the fourth bay, where an air conditioner unit was removed. At the fourth story, the center windows have been removed from the first, second, third and fourth bay.) Original wrought-iron rails survive at the first, second and fifth bays (reading west to east). The four niches between the windows at the third story have pedimented terra-cotta surrounds lined with gold mosaic. The statues rest on rounded stone bases. Reading west to east, the sculptures depict Ethel Barrymore as Ophelia, Marilyn Miller as Sunny, Mary Pickford as Little Lord Fauntleroy, and Rosa Ponselle as Norma. Though somewhat soiled, the sculptures remain in an excellent state of preservation.

Capping the facade is an entablature and parapet. The architrave molding and cornice of the entablature are terra cotta; the frieze is scored stucco with applied bronze lettering reading "THE SHOW FOLKS SHOE SHOP DEDICATED TO BEAUTY IN FOOTWEAR." Similar lettering on the parapet that read "I. MILLER BUILDING" was removed from a plaque at the center of the parapet in the 1990s. The parapet is coped with a terra-cotta molding and terra-cotta scrolls frame the corners of the center plaque. The flat roof supports a large billboard facing Broadway. Though the present superstructure dates from the last two decades, there has been a billboard in this approximate location since c. 1940. There are also visible HVAC units near the parapet on the eastern end of the roof.

Report prepared by
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Research Department

NOTES

1. The Landmarks Preservation Commission previously held public hearings on this item in 1985 (LP-1565) and 1990 (LP-1813).
2. This section on Times Square is adapted in part from the section on the development of the Broadway Theater District by Margaret Knapp in Landmarks Preservation Commission [LPC], *Golden Theater Interior Designation Report* (LP-1336) (New York: City of New York, 1987), 2-4; and from LPC, *Paramount Building Designation Report*, prepared by Elisa Urbanelli (LP-1566) (New York: City of New York, 1988), 1-2; William R. Taylor, ed., *Inventing Times Square* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1996), 2-82.
3. Philip Paneth, *Times Square, Crossroads of the World* (New York: Living Books, 1965), 20.
4. In 1882, the Casino Theater opened on the southeast corner of Broadway and 39th Street. A year later, it was joined by a most ambitious undertaking--the construction of the Metropolitan Opera House on Broadway between 39th and 40th Streets.
5. Although the complex was to have included three theaters, a bowling alley, a turkish bath, cafes and restaurants, only the Lyric Theater and Music Hall were built and the Olympia closed its doors two years after it opened.
6. Most of this activity was inspired by the competition between two major forces in the industry, the Theatrical Syndicate and the Shubert Brothers, for control of the road. As each side in the rivalry drew its net more tightly around the playhouses it owned or controlled, the other side was forced to build new theaters to house its attractions. The result was a dramatic increase in the number of playhouses, both in New York and across the country.
7. This material on the life and career of Israel Miller is based on "Miller, Israel," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* v. 24, 46-47; "Israel Miller Dies Suddenly in Paris," *New York Times*, Aug. 14, 1929; "2,000 at Funeral of Israel Miller," *New York Times*, Aug. 22, 1929, 23; William Thompson Bonner, *New York the World's Metropolis* (New York: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1924), 617; "I. Miller, Noted Shoe Manufacturer Passes Away," *American Shoemaking*, Aug. 21, 1929, 9.
8. For the store at 562 Fifth Avenue and I. Miller's dealership in Andre Perugia designs see Ronda Wist, *On Fifth Avenue Then and Now* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1992), 159.
9. The lease ran for three terms of twenty-one years with an option to purchase the property for the first five years of the lease. See "\$4,635,000. Times Sq. Lease," *New York Times*, Dec. 23, 1920, p. 25.
10. New York City Department of Buildings, Alteration Permit 526-1926. The program for the renovations to Nos. 1552 and 1554 Broadway called for the removal of the center wall between the two buildings and the installation of new columns and girders to support the upper floors. The rear portions of the buildings, which had been only two stories high, were raised to four stories. The old stairs were taken down and replaced by new stairs and an elevator.
11. This section on Louis H. Friedland's life and career is based on New York City directories 1920-25; New York Telephone, White Pages, 1925-72; Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 183, 312, 361, 364; "The Broadway National Bank and Trust Company, New York City," *Architecture & Building* 61 (Dec. 1929), 360-67; John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "Milgrim -- A Fashion Shop for Women," *Architectural Record* 65 (June 1929), 523-33; "Planning Techniques for New and Remodeled Buildings," *Architectural Forum* 66 (Mar. 1937), 190; Lewis Mumford, "The Skyline: New Faces on the Avenue," *New Yorker* 15 (Sept. 1939), 62-64; Talbot Hamlin, "Some Restaurants and Recent Shops," *Pencil Points* 20 (Aug. 1939), 496-97; "I. Miller & Sons, Inc., NYC," *Architectural Forum* 71 (Dec. 1939), 438-39.
12. Stern, *New York 1930*, 183.
13. Boyd, 524.

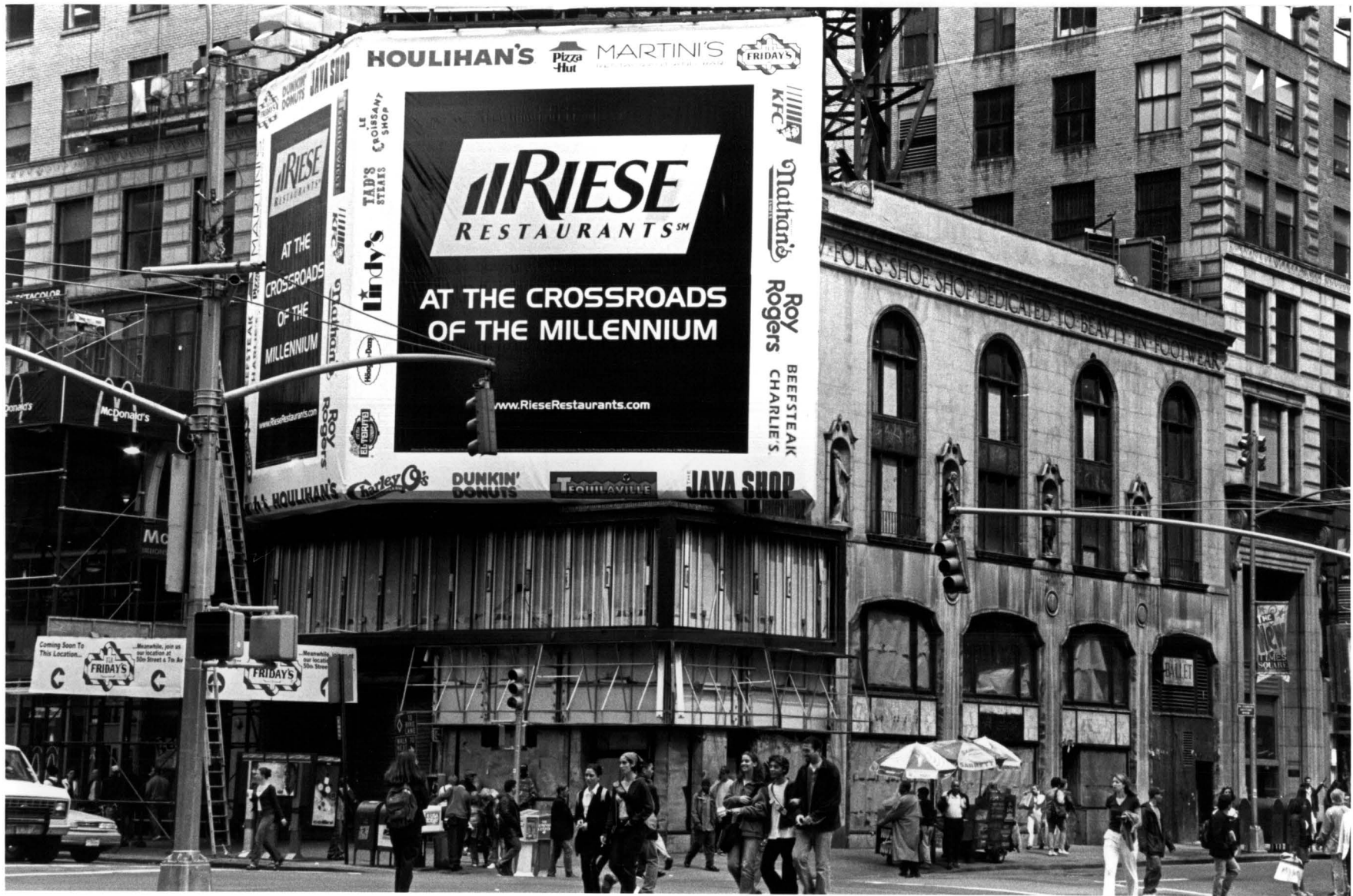
14. Mumford, 63.
15. Hamlin, 497.
16. The eleven-story Broadway office wing of the Palace Theater Building was replaced by the present Doubletree Hotel in the 1980s. The interiors of both the Palace Theater and Embassy Theater are designated New York City Landmarks.
17. Stern, *New York 1930*, 296.
18. Robert A.M. Stern, letter to Jennifer Rabb, Chairman, June 26, 1998, in the Landmarks Preservation Commission, I. Miller Building, LP-2023 file.
19. "Name Stage Favorites," *New York Times*, Sept. 6, 1927, 21.
20. This material on the career of Alexander Stirling Calder is based on "Calder, Alexander Stirling," [Grove's] *Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner (London: Macmillan, 1996); "A. Stirling Calder Sculptor, 74, Dies," *New York Times*, Jan. 8, 1945; "Calder, Alexander S," New York Public Library, Artists Files, fiche c32; Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press; New York: Cornwall Books, 1984), 570-573; *200 Years of Sculpture in America* (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1976), 118-119, 263; Margaret Calder Hayes, *Three Alexander Calders: A Family Memoir* (Middlebury, Vt: P. S. Eriksson, c. 1977; John D. Barry, *The City of Domes* (San Francisco: John J. Newbegin, 1915).
21. The Washington Memorial Arch is located within the Greenwich Village Historic District.
22. Alexander Stirling Calder, *Thoughts of A. Stirling Calder on Art and Life* (New York: Privately printed, 1947), 3; Hayes, 174.
23. For a discussion of Calder's sculptural style in the 1920s, see Craven, 572-73; *200 Years of Sculpture*, 118, 263; Kinton Parkes, "Stirling Calder and the American Sculpture Scene," *Apollo* 15 (Mar. 1932), 109-113. The I. Miller sculptures are briefly discussed in Margot Gayle and Michele Cohen, *The Art Commission and the Municipal Art Society Guide to Manhattan's Outdoor Sculpture* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1988), 161; Joseph Lederer, *All Around the Town: A Walking Guide to Outdoor Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 153.
24. Craven, 572.
25. "Stars Unveil Statues of Women of Stage," *New York Times*, Oct. 21, 1929, p. 30.
26. New York City Department of Buildings, Electric Sign Application [ESA], 11-1940. Under ESA 872-1940, they also filed to place new sign faces on the v-shaped sign at the front of the building.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

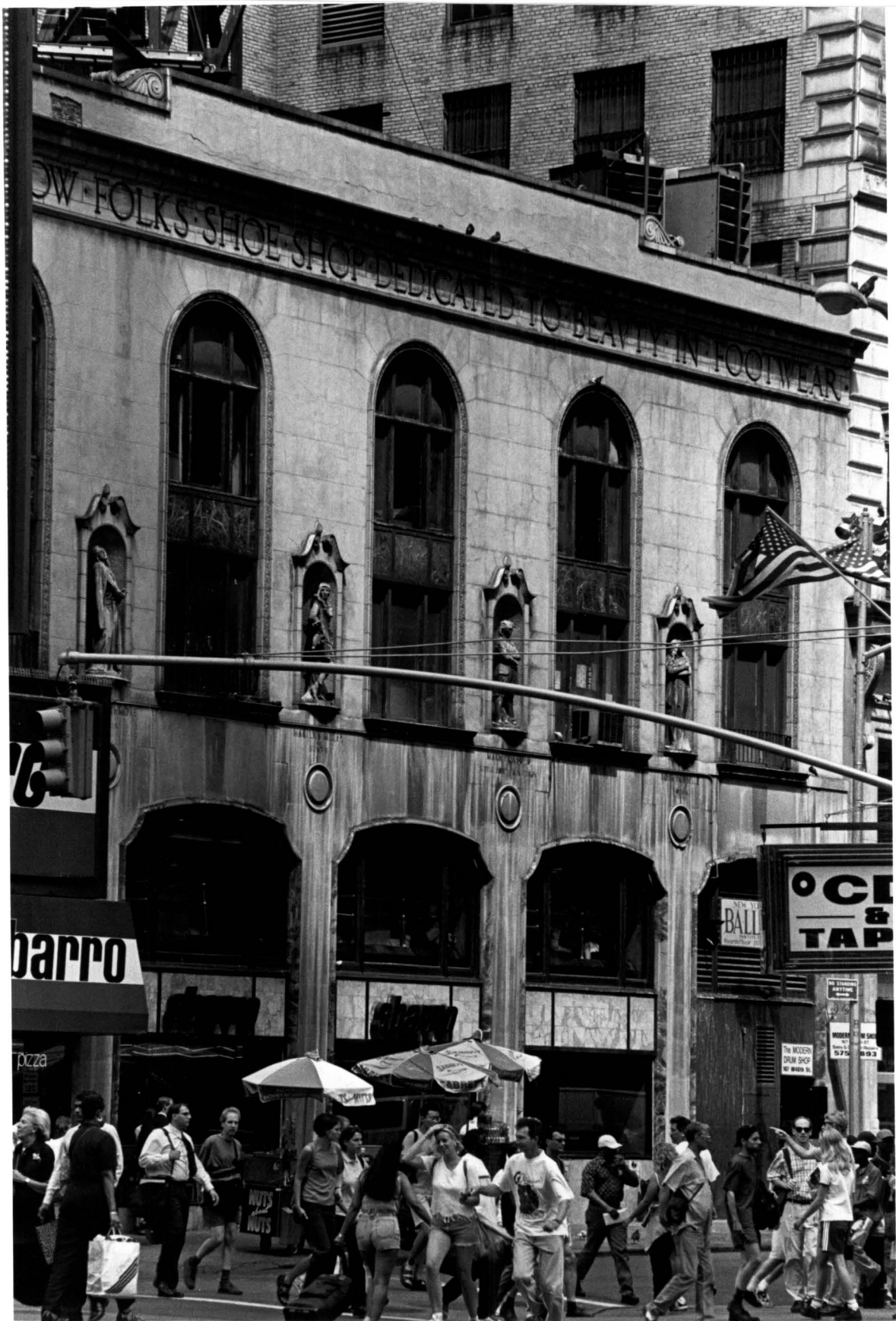
On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the I. Miller Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the I. Miller Building, with its inscription reading "THE SHOW FOLKS SHOE SHOP DEDICATED TO BEAUTY IN FOOTWEAR" and statues of four leading actresses of the 1920s, is an evocative reminder of the history of the Times Square theater district; that this 1926 remodeling of the Times Square branch of the fashionable I. Miller women's shoe store chain was commissioned by shoe manufacturer Israel Miller as a tribute to the theatrical profession and that it served the show business community for over sixty years as the headquarters of I. Miller & Sons theatrical shoe division; that the I. Miller company also became a leading importer and manufacturer of shoes for the retail trade, with a national chain of over 200 stores; that the I. Miller Building was designed by architect Louis H. Friedland, a specialist in commercial design during the 1920s and 1930s; that the building's handsome modern classical design draws on prototypes from several different periods and is executed in rich materials including limestone, marble, and mosaic; that the facade provides an elegant backdrop for the statues, by the noted sculptor Alexander Stirling Calder, which depict Ethel Barrymore as Ophelia (representing drama), Marilyn Miller as Sunny (musical comedy), Rosa Ponselle as Norma (opera), and Mary Pickford as Little Lord Fauntleroy (film), and that the figures are carefully studied portraits which work well as individual works of art and are arranged in complementary poses to create a unified ensemble.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the I. Miller Building, 1552-1554 Broadway (aka 167 West 46th Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 999, Lot 1, as its Landmark Site.



I. Miller Building, 1552-1554 Broadway (aka 167 West 46th Street), Manhattan
 Redesigned and reclad, 1926; Louis H. Friedland, architect
 View from the southwest showing Broadway and West 46th Street facades
 Photo: Carl Forster



I. Miller Building, 1552-1554 Broadway (aka 167 West 46th Street), Manhattan
Redesigned and reclad, 1926; Louis H. Friedland, architect
West 46th Street facade
Photo: Carl Forster, July, 1998

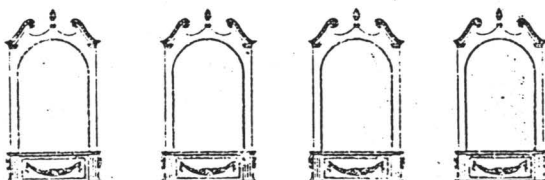
WHO ARE AMERICA'S FOUR BEST-LOVED ACTRESSES?

How They Will Be Selected *YOU Will Decide*



THE FOUR NICHES OF FAME

DRAMA COMEDY OPERA SCREEN



As an appreciation of the close harmony that has existed between the stage and himself for thirty-five years, I. Miller has erected this beautiful building at 46th Street and Broadway--the new Showfolk's Shoeshop with the four golden niches in which he proposes to honor America's best-loved actresses.

The NEW YORK THEATRE PROGRAM CORPORATION has been requested by I. Miller to undertake this enormously important inquiry.

Look at the wonderful new building dedicated to beauty in footwear. Located in the very heart of the world's theatrical center! Glance at the vacant golden niches!

Perhaps you can instantly picture your favorite in drama, comedy, opera and screen, whose statue you would like to see in each of these niches, looking out on, and being observed by, Broadway's marvelous throngs! Maybe you'd rather first discuss it with your friends!

The four most beloved American actresses in drama, comedy, opera and screen!

The opportunity to express your views is open all through November. Your decision is final.

New York Theater Program Corporation,
108-114 Wooster Street, New York

I vote for the following actresses:

DRAMA _____

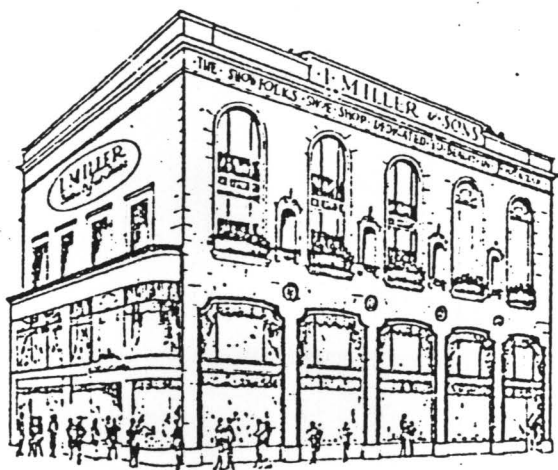
COMEDY (Musical or Farce) _____

OPERA _____

SCREEN _____

My name is _____

Address _____



I. Miller

Ballot to select the subjects for the I. Miller Building sculptures
Detail showing early design for the building (left); Portrait of Israel Miller (right)

Sources: Ad courtesy of Jack Goldstein; Port. from Bonner, *New York the World's Metropolis*



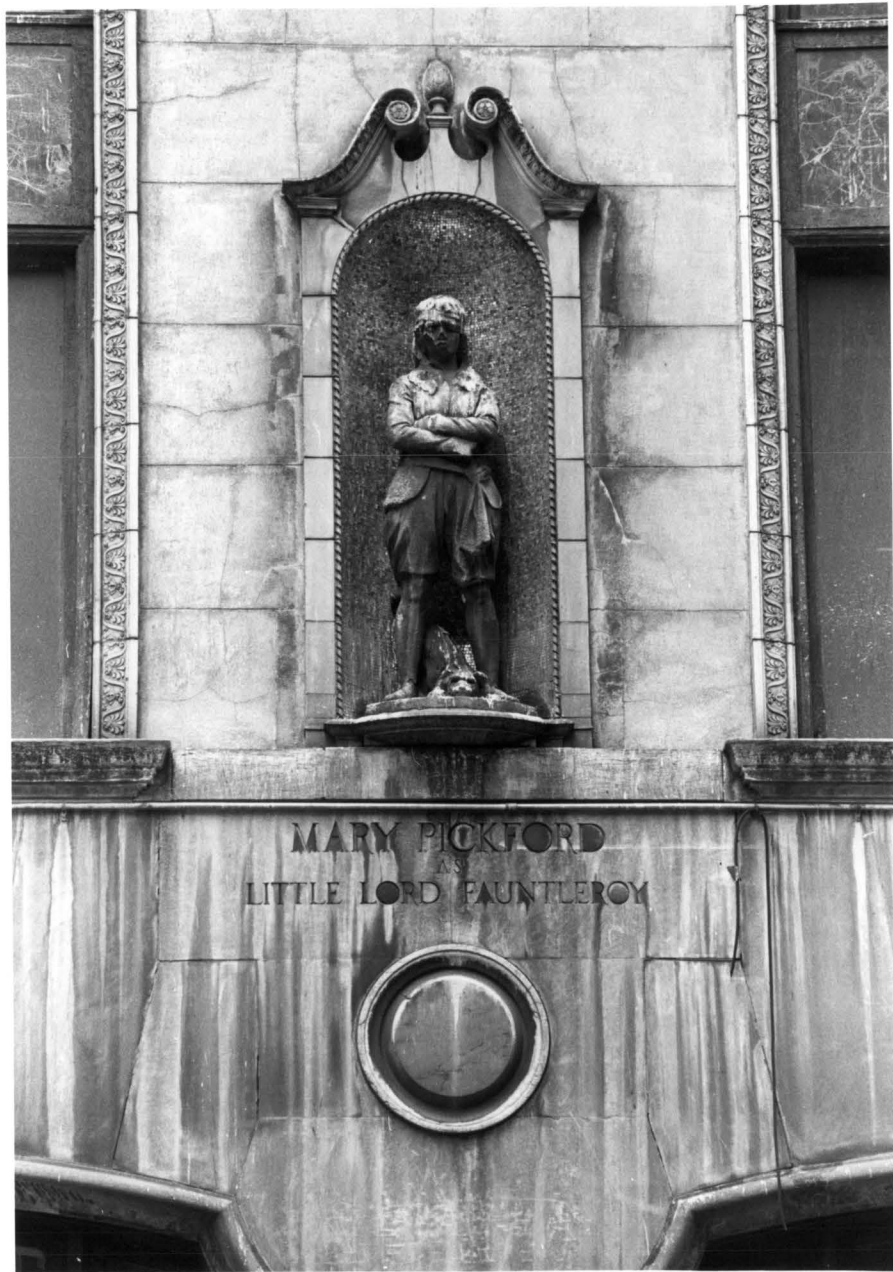
Detail of the West 46th Street facade
Photo: Carl Forster



West 46th street window surround and detail
Photos: Carl Forster

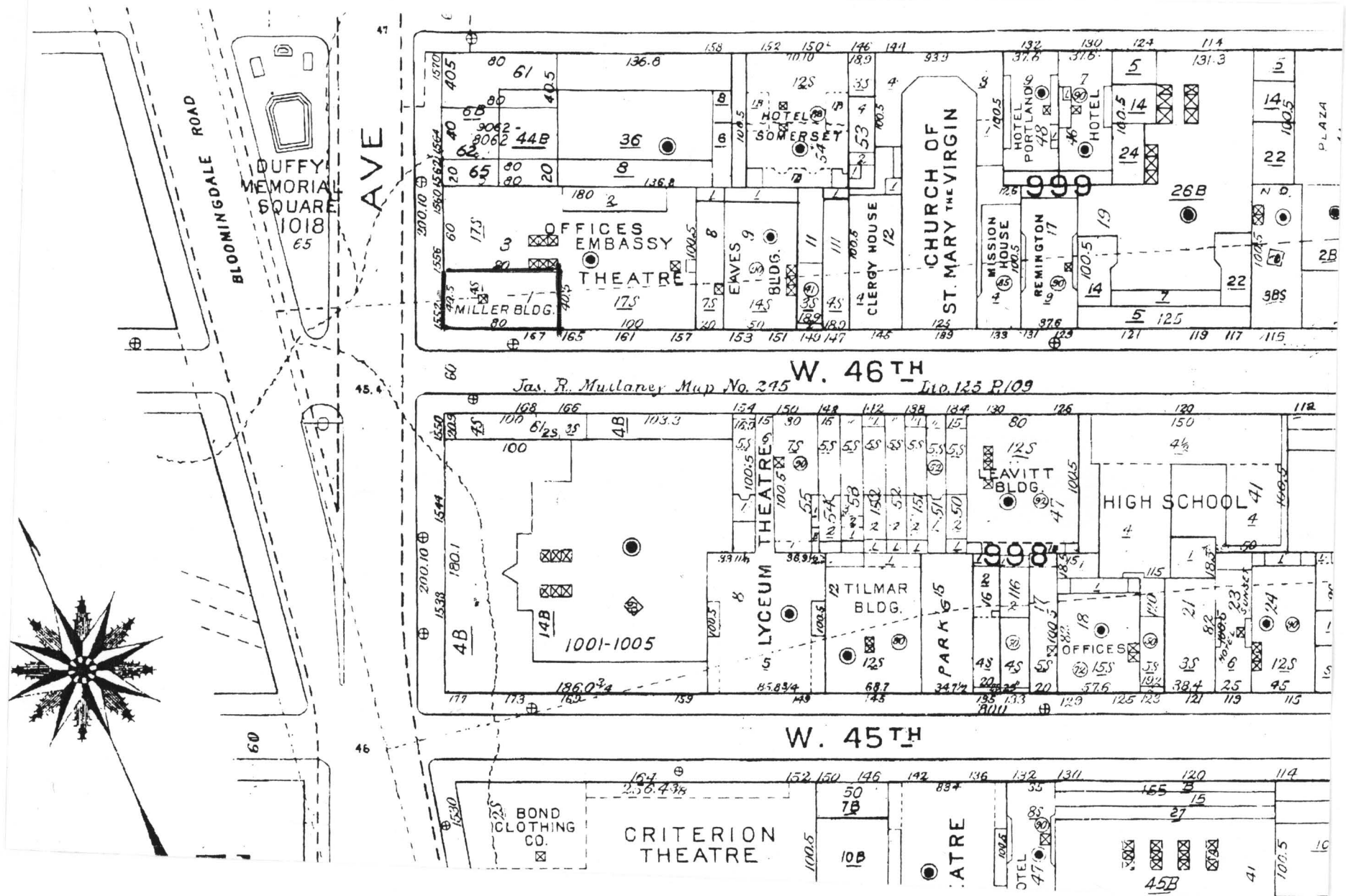


Alexander Stirling Calder, *Ethel Barrymore as Ophelia* (left) and *Marilyn Miller as Sunny* (right)
Photos: Carl Forster



Alexander Stirling Calder, *Mary Pickford as Little Lord Fauntleroy* (left) and *Rosa Ponselle as Norma* (right)

Photos: Carl Forster



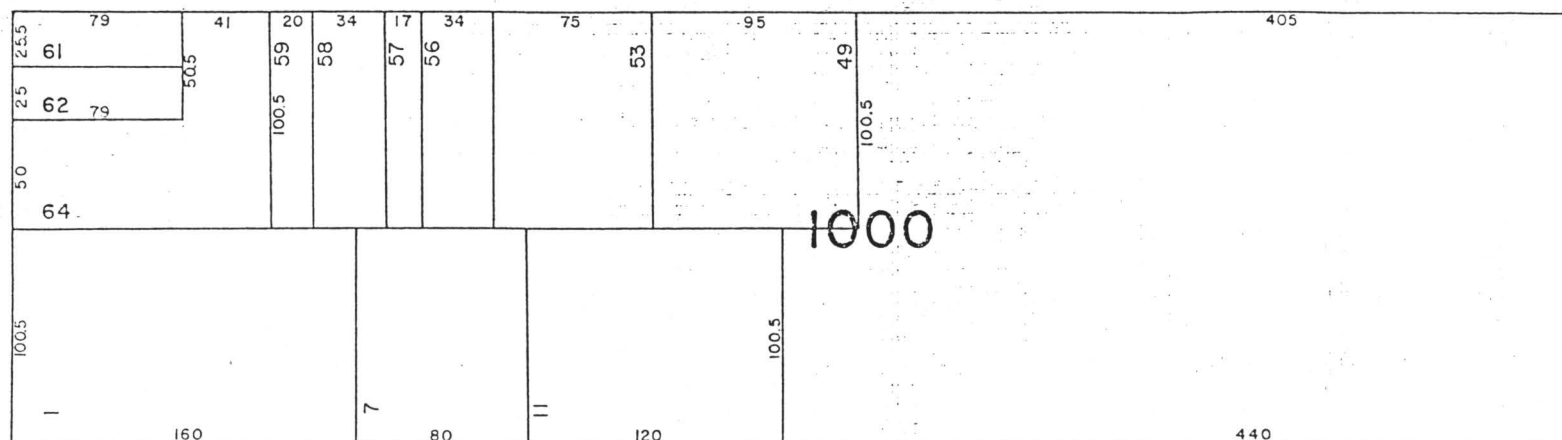
I. Miller Building, 1552-1554 Broadway
 (aka 167 West 46th Street), Manhattan
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 999, Lot 1
 Source: Sanborn Manhattan Land Book, 1998

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W.

48TH

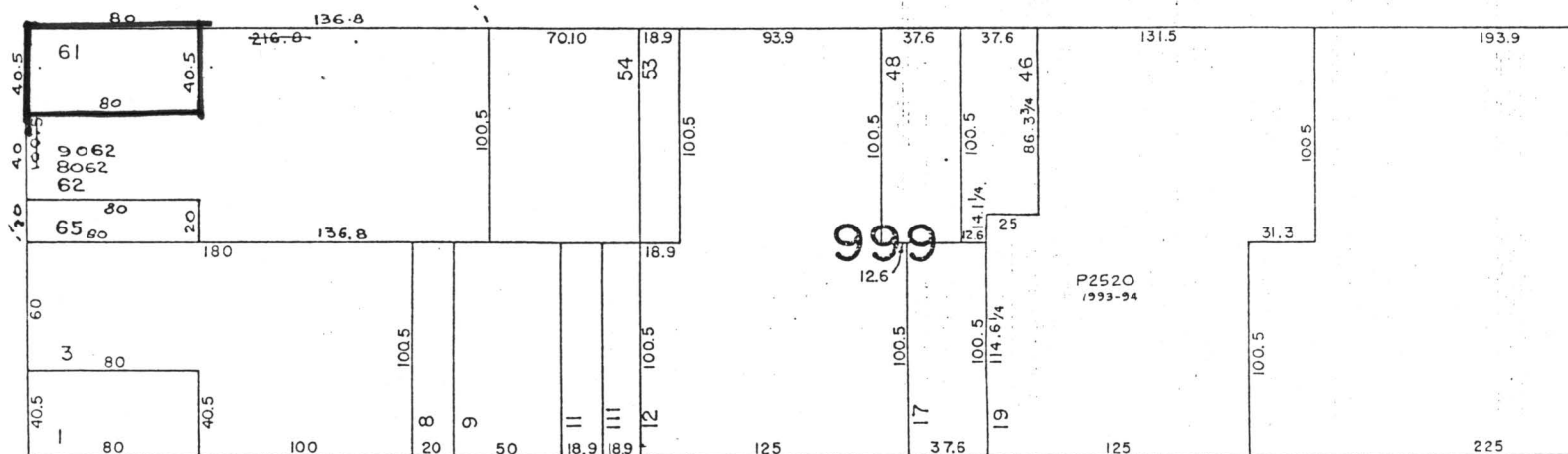
ST.



W.

47TH

ST.



W.

46TH

ST.

I. Miller Building, 1552-1554 Broadway (aka 167 West 46th Street), Manhattan
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 999, Lot 1
Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map