

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández

other names/site number The Manhasset; Casa Hernández; Casa Amadeo

2. Location

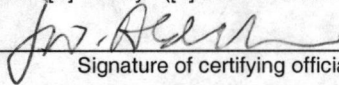
street & number 786 Prospect Avenue [] not for publication

city or town Bronx [] vicinity

state New York code NY county Bronx code 005 zip code 10455

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)



Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

Date

8 December '00

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

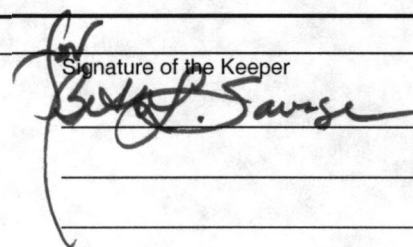
- [X] entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined not eligible for the National Register

[] removed from the National Register

[] other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action



3/23/01

Name of Property

County and State

Ownership of Property

[X] private
[] public-local
[] public-State
[] public-Federal

- [] building(s)
- [] district
- [] site
- [] structure
- [] object

1

0	TOTAL
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N/A

0

other

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
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7. Description

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández is located within the Manhasset apartment building (1905), situated on the southeast corner of Longwood and Prospect Avenues in the Longwood section of the Bronx, Bronx County, New York. The triangular building fills its lot: three elevations are visible from the street, and there is an air space in the center of the lot. The building is located across the street from the elevated IRT subway station. The neighborhood consists of mixed residential and commercial buildings from the early twentieth century, vacant lots, and a few new housing developments constructed during the rebuilding of the Bronx in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The Manhasset is an important physical reminder of the early twentieth century building boom of the Bronx. Longwood, a neighborhood in the Hunts Point area of the southwestern Bronx, was developed after the IRT subway line was extended from Manhattan in 1904, providing cheap and rapid transit. New housing sprung up along this line and helped the Bronx become known for its fine apartment buildings in the early decades of the twentieth century. Many Jewish and Italian residents living in crowded Manhattan tenements moved to spacious new apartment buildings in the Bronx.

Longwood went through a transition in the 1940s and 1950s when many of the long-time Jewish and Italian residents moved to new housing in the north Bronx and the suburbs. African Americans and Puerto Ricans, many displaced by slum clearing in Manhattan, moved to Longwood. In addition, this was the period of Puerto Rico's Great Migration when many people left the island due to changing economic policies and settled in East Harlem and the South Bronx. At the same time, there was also a large migration of African Americans from the South, thereby putting African Americans and Puerto Ricans in direct competition for jobs and housing. It was in the early days of this era that Victoria Hernández established her music store in a storefront at the Manhasset. City building records from 1959 show that the apartments in the Manhasset were subdivided to accommodate more tenants.

The Manhasset and its music store survived the troubled period of the late 1960s and early 1970s when many buildings in the Bronx were destroyed by arson and vandalism. Its current surroundings reflect both the period of rampant arson and the reconstruction and rebuilding that followed.

The Manhasset is a Neo-Renaissance style apartment building with commercial storefronts on the first floor. It was built in 1905 to the design of architect James F. Meehan. The six-story building retains a high degree of period integrity. The lower two stories are faced in rusticated stone, the upper floors in dark red brick. Above the entrance porch are metal fire escapes supported by large stone voluted brackets on the third through sixth floors. All fenestration from the second through the sixth floors appears to be the original double-hung wood sash. The building is crowned by a deeply projecting sheet metal cornice with paired scroll brackets. The two long street facades meet in a rounded corner bay that is set off by vertical bands bearing ornamental stone relief panels at the second and fifth floor levels and by a slight reveal at the Longwood Avenue elevation.

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The main entrance, on Longwood Avenue, features a projecting porch flanked by Corinthian columns on pedestals supporting an entablature bearing the name Manhanset. The doorway itself is set within a segmental arched opening. Oval-shaped window openings are located on either side of the porch. The ground floor accommodates shopfronts set within the enframing of the original rusticated stone piers and entablature band.

The second floor is faced with stone ornamented with pronounced joints, including prominent flat arches over the double-hung windows. The third through sixth floors are faced with red brick. On the third, fourth, and sixth floors, the windows are surmounted by stone lintels with projecting voluted keystones. On the fifth floor, the windows giving access to the fire escape follow this pattern, but all others are framed with stone trim: every other window also bears a scrollwork pediment with a shell-like central element. The fifth floor windows stand on a stone belt course, as do those on the sixth floor.

Triangular bay windows rise from the second through the fifth floors on the Longwood Avenue elevation. These are clad in sheet metal ornamented with pilasters, entablatures, and garlanded horizontal bands. The bays are topped at the sixth floor by stone balconies resting on large voluted brackets and bearing metal railings.

The Manhanset is an example of a mixed-use building with apartments on the upper floors and shops at the street level. As is characteristic of this early twentieth-century building type, the masonry upper wall is separated from the street level storefronts by an entablature. Supporting this feature are rusticated masonry pilasters with a classical ovum ornament at the cap which divide the ground story into distinct storefront units. These pilasters frame the storefront openings. The storefronts at the Manhanset remain with varying levels of integrity. Some original storefront elements may be intact, in situ, but hidden behind modern materials. Storefront changes include the installation of modern signage or awnings, the addition of roll-down metal security doors, and removal of some historic materials.

The Casa Amadeo storefront, at 786 Prospect Avenue, occupies a single structural bay on the ground floor. It is a typical example of a tripartite shopfront with a recessed central doorway with transom flanked by plate glass display windows with tripartite transoms above and solid panel below. Flanked by rusticated stone pilasters, the storefront bears a modern metal sign announcing "CASA AMADEO/INSTRUMENTOS MUSICALES" mounted in front of the stone entablature. The shop window itself stands behind a modern roll-down metal security grille bearing a painting of hands playing musical instruments. The housing bears the painted inscription "ANTIGUA CASA HERNANDEZ." The wall below the display windows is clad in black pigmented structural glass dating from c. 1940 or earlier. A historic photograph from c. 1940 shows that all of the storefronts in the Manhanset had pigmented structural glass at that time. Casa Amadeo is the only storefront which retains this material. Back-painted directly onto the show glass window above the front door is the word "NOVEDADES" (novelties), added in the 1940s when this shop housed an eclectic assortment of wares including records, musical instruments, and dresses.

Casa Amadeo is a humble and modest commercial space. The design of the store is predicated largely on function and practicality rather than high style design. Finishes include plaster walls, resilient floor tiles, and

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a dropped acoustic tile ceiling. The interior walls of Casa Amadeo are largely lined with shelves or pegboard with metal brackets holding compact discs. There are also built-in glass-fronted display cases for guitars, wooden bins for discs and records, and a glass-topped counter. The upper zone of the walls, between the display shelves and the dropped ceiling, is decorated with posters and photographs of musicians, and above the guitar cases are recesses, framed in elaborate rococo wood moldings and containing framed paintings of noted Puerto Rican composers. A doorway leads to a rear storage room which is organized as an informal music archives with old 78s and memorabilia on wood shelving.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave
- ☐ **D** a cemetery
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☒ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by historic American Building Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Ethnic Heritage: Puerto Rican

Performing Arts

Period of Significance:

1905; 1941-1969

Significant Dates:

1905; 1941, 1969

Significant Person:

Hernández, Victoria

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Meehan, James F.

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☐ Other repository: _____

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8. Statement of Significance

Introduction.

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández¹ located in the Manhasset Building in the South Bronx, Bronx County, New York, possesses local exceptional significance under Criterion A as a site that embodies the history of the development of Latin music in New York City and its role in the Puerto Rican migration experience. The Manhasset, constructed in 1905 during the Bronx building boom of the early twentieth century, is significant under Criterion C as an outstanding example of a Neo-Renaissance style apartment building with commercial space on the ground floor. The property has two distinct periods of significance: 1905, the year in which the building was completed, and 1941 to 1969 for its association with the music store. The property continues to have an integral role in New York's Latino community and Latin music scene. Casa Amadeo is also significant under Criterion B for association with Victoria Hernández, the store's founder, one of the earliest female Puerto Rican entrepreneurs in New York, and the sister of one of Latin America's greatest composers, Rafael Hernández. Victoria Hernández sold the store in 1969 to its current owner, musician and composer Mike Amadeo, the son of popular Puerto Rican composer Titi Amadeo. The store is recognized by musicians and music historians as a site significant in the history of Latin music in the City; and as the oldest Latin music store in New York City, Casa Amadeo's story is a microcosm of the Puerto Rican experience in New York. It is also one of the few remaining intact sites connected to the Latin music scene which developed in New York City.

Since the early decades of this century, Latino culture and music have been linked to and have directly affected the mainstream U.S. cultural experience. In the 1930's *rhumba*² became popular with North Americans. This popularity, coupled with a large influx of Latinos just after World War II, enabled a nexus of talent, activity and audience, and made New York City the epicenter of a Latin music explosion. In the early 1950s *mambo* burst onto the New York cultural scene with a force that lasted for 20 years and spread throughout the Americas and much of Europe. In the United States, especially in New York's Italian, Irish and Jewish communities, at least one mambo was played at weddings and bar mitzvahs. By 1951 mainstream singers were cutting pop versions of mambo, and in 1954 stores were carrying mambo dolls, mambo nighties and mambo kits which included a record, maracas, and a plastic sheet with mambo steps one could put on the floor to learn the dance. Within a decade of the onset of mambo mania the world was treated to the subsequent musical crazes of the *cha-cha-cha* and *pachanga*.

The Bronx played an important role in the development of the Latin music scene in New York City. While Manhattan's Palladium Ballroom³ was called the "Home of the Mambo," it was in the Bronx where many of the musicians lived and, in the heyday of the mambo era, dozens of venues ranging from catering halls and theaters to small bars and large ballrooms provided performances of the latest in Latin music. In the

¹"Casa Amadeo, antigua (formerly) Casa Hernández" is the wording on the store's entrance awning.

²For musical terms see Glossary in the Additional Documentation section of this nomination.

³For venue descriptions see "Some Important Latin Music Sites in New York City" in Additional Documentation.

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southeastern part of the Bronx, spreading out from the Longwood/Hunts Point area, a special music scene was unfolding, different even from what was taking place in El Barrio (East Harlem — the first major, thriving Puerto Rican neighborhood in New York). Hundreds of Latino musicians lived in the Bronx. Many were internationally known, including Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Marcelino Guerra, Charlie and Eddie Palmieri, Orlando Marín, Manny Oquendo, Ray Barretto, Barry Rogers, Johnny Pacheco, Joe Loco, Joe Quijano, and many more. They rehearsed, jammed and played in apartments and courtyards, on rooftops and street corners, in social clubs and ballrooms, in after-hours joints and movie theaters, in parks and schools. Many of them were the creative bridge through which Afro-Cuban rhythms and styles such as *son*, *charanga*, *chachachá* and *mambo* were transformed into the distinct New York Latin sound that was labeled *salsa* in the last 1960s.

Architectural Significance.

The Manhasset Building in which Casa Amadeo is located is significant as a representative example of early twentieth century residential and commercial architecture in New York City. Built in 1905, the Manhasset is notable as an example of Neo-Renaissance style architecture. The design of the building reflects a predominant use of Renaissance forms and details including a rusticated stone base at the first and second stories, accentuated main entrance porch with Corinthian columns, stone lintels with voluted keystones, three-dimensional stone carving, and prominent sheet metal cornice with paired scroll brackets. The applied classically-inspired ornamental details add richness to the façade of the Manhasset. The popularity of the style was influenced by the principles of the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the architecture of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. American architects in general, influenced by the World's Columbian Exposition, shifted their attention during this period toward interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque prototypes of Italian and French origin that were at the crux of the Beaux-Arts curriculum. The resurgence of classicism in the 1890s had its roots in the broader cultural movement of the "American Renaissance"; American architects drew parallels in their design aesthetic between their own society, the American neo-classical past, and the enlightened Greco-Roman and Renaissance civilizations.

The Manhasset is also important as an intact example of the well-built apartment buildings erected during the early twentieth century building boom of the Bronx after the IRT subway line was completed in 1904. Improved public transit to the area allowed many people to move from the crowded tenements of Manhattan to more spacious apartments in the Bronx.

Significance of Music Stores to Latino Communities.

Music stores were integral elements of the burgeoning Latin music scene in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, continuing through the 1950s "mambo era" and the later development of *salsa*. Musicians went to the record stores looking for orchestras and *conjuntos* (musical groups) that were in need of instrumentalists. Music stores such as Casa Amadeo also became gathering places for musicians, knowing they could find work either from record companies looking for session players or from bandleaders looking for an instrumentalist (Carp 1994). The major record companies, such as Victor and Columbia, depended on the store owners to act as "middlemen" in obtaining musicians for recordings and to gauge the community's musical tastes as to what

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might sell; and some record stores produced and pressed records right on the premises. To help ease the pain of being transplanted from Puerto Rico, record stores, along with institutions like hometown social clubs, were places where new migrants flocked to in order to hear and buy the sounds of home.

Casa Amadeo opened as Casa Hernández just prior to the large post-war Puerto Rican migration to New York City. Due to a failing economy on the island, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans moved to New York, where many settled in East Harlem, and later moved to the Bronx. Those that were musicians quickly found employment in the Latin music boom that centered around the popularity of Cuban music. However after diplomatic relations between Cuba and the U.S. were severed in 1962, interaction between New York City and Havana lessened, thereby promoting the development of a more New York identified sound that was performed largely by Puerto Ricans, who added the rhythms and sounds from their culture. As the early record stores in El Barrio and the Bronx served to remind migrants of their island and culture, so this new music scene helped shape and celebrate the Puerto Rican experience in New York, by the new generation known as Nuyoricans.⁴

Music, in its various manifestations, has been one of the most significant ways in which Puerto Ricans of all generations have shared a defining element in retaining their culture. Especially since 1898, with the U.S. takeover of Puerto Rico, certain institutions and popular traditions declined due to Americanization and industrialization. In studying the revival of popular traditions like *Fiesta de Cruz* (devotional rites to the Holy Cross consisting of sung prayers and hymns), ethnomusicologist Martha Ellen Davis sees the key element leading to its increased practice as its musical aspect because “for Puerto Ricans music is related to national and regional identity, and even today music plays a greater role in Puerto Rico than in any other equally modernized societies (1972:47).

In today’s world of impersonal mega-music stores, Casa Amadeo retains many of the original features from its humble beginnings and continues in the tradition of providing music for the community, acting as an unofficial “archive” for musicians searching for the best selections of songs for their albums, and providing a gathering place for musicians and fans from around the city. Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández is one of the few physically intact spaces that remains representing the heyday of the Bronx Latin music scene. Most of the sites, if they are still standing, no longer retain any connection to the music scene (see attached list of “Some Important Latin Music Sites in New York City”). Casa Amadeo’s presence preserves a sense of continuity of the music and history that is New York City’s, and the Bronx’s, legacy to popular music. It has served the community from the pre-mambo days to the present as a purveyor of Latin music; and it traces the Puerto Rican community’s steps musically, economically and culturally. Thus it serves as a symbol of what it means to be Puerto Rican in New York.

⁴ “Nuyorican” is the term for a person of Puerto Rican descent born and/or raised in New York City.

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Puerto Rican Migration to New York.

In 1941 after moving to the Bronx, in the vanguard of a popular path of migration that led from the island to East Harlem to the Bronx, Victoria Hernández and her brother Rafael, opened their second music store, Casa Hernández, at 786 Prospect Ave. The storefront was located in The Manhasset apartment building (850 Longwood Avenue), where Victoria resided, and where Rafael stayed when he was living in New York City.

New York City has had a Latino community since the early 1800s. By the turn of the century this small community of principally merchants expanded as artisans and laborers came in search of employment, and political exiles from all over Latin America began to immigrate here. (In fact, New York City became the headquarters of the Cuban and Puerto Rican independence movement of the era). By the 1930s, Puerto Ricans were the largest Latino group in the city, making up almost 41% of the Latino population (Haslip-Viera 1996:7). This was due to the fact that while both Cuba and Puerto Rico were ceded to the United States after the Spanish-American War, Cuba was granted independence in 1904. Puerto Rico remained an unincorporated territory, and the Jones Act of 1917 conferred U.S. citizenship on Puerto Ricans, allowing unlimited migration to the mainland.

Economic factors had a great impact on this early surge in migration. The United States directed all its investment to the island's sugar sector, thus disrupting the labor-intensive coffee and tobacco sectors (Haslip-Viera 1996:9). By the 1930s these sectors were no longer an integral part of the Puerto Rican economy and many workers were left unemployed. Migration slowed during the Depression and World War II. Following the war, the United States implemented the economic and industrialization plan, "Operación manos a la obra" or "Operation Bootstrap." At first some benefits were seen, but the expanding industrial sector could not absorb all the workers who had been displaced by the decrease in the agrarian sector. This was the beginning of the Great Migration. Between 1950 and 1960, 500,000 individuals (about 20% of the island's population) migrated off the island (Santiago 1994:171). In 1953, the peak year of migration, 52,000 individuals migrated from the island and by the early 1960s New York had a larger Puerto Rican population than San Juan (Jonnes 1986:165). The primary destination was New York due to existing shipping routes, and later, the frequent air travel that operated between San Juan and New York. Between the years 1945 and 1970 in New York City, "the Puerto Rican community became synonymous with the Latino community" (Haslip-Viera 1996:12).

East Harlem had become New York's largest Puerto Rican community by the 1930s. *El Barrio* (the neighborhood) as it came to be known, was usually the first stop for migrants arriving from the island. By the late 1940s and early 1950s many Puerto Ricans moved northward to the southern portion of the Bronx, relatively close to *El Barrio* and made accessible by the many subway lines that traversed it. Soon the South Bronx was to become the largest Puerto Rican community in the city.⁵

⁵ In 1967 the term "South Bronx" referred to the small area bounded by 161st St. to the north and Third Ave. and Boston Rd. to the west. By 1980, the City and the media had redefined the boundaries to include everything south of Fordham Rd.—20 square miles of the Bronx—basically anywhere where neighborhoods had become minority slums (Jonnes 1986:8).

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Against this backdrop, the story of Casa Amadeo begins in East Harlem. Victoria and Rafael Hernández migrated to New York City and were to become key players in the burgeoning Latin music scene. Born in Aguadilla to poor Afro-Puerto Rican tobacco workers, Rafael, Victoria and their brother Jesús all became accomplished musicians. Rafael became part of James Reese Europe's 369th Infantry "Hellfighters" military band (the famous African-American regimental band that toured throughout Europe and is credited with introducing jazz there). In 1919 soon after Rafael's discharge from the military, he, Victoria and other family members moved to New York City. In 1927, after working as a seamstress in a factory and giving piano lessons on the side, Victoria opened Almacenes Hernández, what was likely the first Puerto Rican-owned music store in New York City (Glasser 1995:107; Salazar 1980:89). Located on 1724 Madison Avenue between 113th and 114th St., the store supported her family and gave Rafael time to write music — he would become one of the most prolific and well-known composers in Latin America. She supplemented the income with ongoing piano lessons to individuals in the community including a young Tito Puente. Though Victoria was an accomplished musician, she stayed on the business side of the industry, probably due to the fact that being a merchant was more respectable than being a musician (in general and especially for women). She was one of a handful of women entrepreneurs: in the mid 1920s approximately 16 women, or .5%, of the Puerto Rican female migrant population supervised or owned their own businesses (Sanchez Korrol 1983:108).

The Latin - American Cultural Context.

By this time the popularity of Latin music was on the rise. Though Latin music fads had swept the country since the turn of the century, (e.g., the Argentine tango), when the Cuban folk music *son*, under the misnomer *rhumba*, was introduced to New York City in 1930 (by Don Azpiazu's Havana Casino Orchestra performance of "El Manicero" at the RKO Palace Theater on Broadway), a musical trend began that would last to the present and become an international phenomenon.⁶ Many factors led to the popularity of *rhumba* here, including the rise in the Latino population as well as the White middle- and upper-classes' acquaintance with this music — many of whom had flocked to Havana, "the Paris of the Caribbean," for liquor and entertainment during Prohibition (Glasser 1995:86). Politics continued to play a role, especially the Good Neighbor Policy of the Roosevelt Administration (1939-1947), which had a large impact:

In economic terms, Latin American was the only foreign market available for exploitation during the Second World War. However, pan-Americanism was also an important key word for the Roosevelt Administration, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the newly created (1940) State Department Office of the Coordination for Inter-American Affairs (CIAA) headed by Nelson Rockefeller. Concerns about America's southern neighbors' dubious political allegiances and the safety of U.S. investments in Latin America led to the resurrection of the long dormant Good

⁶ The current "Latin explosion" in the United States featuring Ricky Martin and Marc Anthony has its roots in mambo and its successor, salsa. The music has gone international with African salsa coming from South Africa and one of the hottest salsa bands in recent years, Orquesta de la Luz, originating in Japan.

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Neighbor Policy and the official promotion of hemispheric unity, cooperation, and non-aggression . . . Charged with the responsibility of coordinating all efforts to promote inter-American understanding, the CIAA set up a motion picture section (López 1993:69).

This motion picture section put pressure on American movie studios to become more sensitive to issues and portrayals of Latin Americans in the movies. Of the movies released during this period, musicals were the most successful, with titles conjuring up images of passionate lovers, fun and music, such as *Weekend in Havana* (1941), *They Met in Argentina* (1941), *The Thrill in Brazil* (1946) and *Carnival in Costa Rica* (1947). Hollywood's Latin American musicals paralleled the rise of Latin music that led to the "mambo era." Thus, Puerto Rican musicians arriving at this time found employment and had a strong presence in Cuban *cuartetos*, and were actively forming their own *tríos* and *cuartetos*.

In this emerging music and recording industry, local music stores had an important role. For instance, the Spanish Music Center in East Harlem was opened in 1934 by Puerto Rican Gabriel Oller. He sold recordings, pianola rolls and guitars. In the back of his store he recorded the music of neighborhood *tríos* and *cuartetos* for Dynasonic label, the first Puerto Rican-owned recording company (Salazar 1980:91). (The Spanish Music Center is no longer in operation.) Later in 1949 when Casa Latina on 110th Street and Park Avenue in East Harlem was bought by the Puerto Rican musician Bartolo Alvarez, it too had many roles in the music industry. Casa Latina sold music and instruments and in 1950 Bartolo started Alba Records, where Charlie Palmieri first recorded as a bandleader and which recorded some of the most popular artists at the time, including the Puerto Rican singer Davilita. Later Bartolo started Rival Records there. (Casa Latina is now the oldest Latin music shop in East Harlem.) Ironically Bartolo Alvarez said he was inspired to become a musician when at the age of 14 he began stopping by Almacenes Hernández and listening to Rafael Hernández play music (Carp 1994).

According to historian Ruth Glasser, Victoria Hernández, as manager of Almacenes Hernández, provided similar services, as did Bartolo Alvarez and Casa Latina, to both musicians and recording companies. Victoria served as manager of Rafael's group, Cuarteto Victoria (which Rafael formed in 1932) — organizing tours and record dates and making sure the group fulfilled their contracts. Her role as booking agent extended beyond Rafael's career. One musician remembers when a recording label like Victor, "would go to a record shop in El Barrio, and they would say to the store owner, 'We want to make a number of records. Recommend me a group that plays well.'" (Glasser 1995:148). Victoria served as such an intermediary and became known as "La Madrina" (the Godmother) by musicians. The major record labels like Victor and Decca realized that the shopkeepers of music stores would understand better than they what was popular within the community. Victor gave Victoria an exclusive dealership for their records that extended several blocks (many record stores were in *El Barrio* during this period in the early 1930s), while the record company gained a guaranteed outlet for their merchandise and a place to recruit musicians (Glasser 1995:147). Victoria was also involved in the production, as well as the marketing of music, producing records by Las Estrellas Boricuas and Los Diablos de la Plena.

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Within the Puerto Rican community music stores functioned on different levels. On the cultural level they were outlets for musical creativity; and in economic terms they provided jobs, income and are early examples of entrepreneurship in the city. According to historian Virginia Sánchez Korrol:

As a business venture, the small music store spread quickly throughout the *colonia hispana* and came to symbolize the Latin settlements as the candy store had characterized other ethnic immigrant neighborhoods. Emanating from these establishments the rhythms of *el Son*, *la Guaracha*, Puerto Rican *Plenas* and *Aguinaldos* combined with the romantic *Boleros* and *Danzas* to serenade the Spanish-speaking neighborhoods day and night, nurturing a continuation of vital cultural expression rooted in Puerto Rico and Spanish America (Sánchez Korrol 1993:80-81).

For an ethnic group dealing with a constant barrage of negative images in the mainstream media, music and the individuals who created it, "served as a cohesive cultural force among the migrants, being a recognized national form around which Puerto Ricans gathered at home, at hometown clubs, and at cultural and social events. The traditional rhythms became a tool of cultural survival, a carrier of national identity and unity against the opposing conditions" (Cortes et al. 1976:126). And later with the proliferation of stores to buy the music and venues to hear it, music became an essential element to daily life. Musician Al Santiago states:

The thing was that Latinos, because of the lack of bucks or living in ghettos, could not look forward to a week in Europe or going to the Met. Their moral boost was a weekend visit to a dance hall. . . You worked 40 hours in a factory, very simple, and then on the weekend, you saw a live band and listened to records at home. Music was so important to the Latino. . . Music was our narcotic. (Boggs 1992:220).

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández and the Bronx.

In November 1939 Victoria and Rafael sold Almacenes Hernández to Luis Cuevas, another entrepreneur and record producer from Puerto Rico.⁷ In 1941 Victoria opened Casa Hernández in the Bronx. The new store featured merchandise cases filled with music and instruments and in the back left corner were two listening booths where patrons could listen to the latest 78s, and on the other side, dresses. This eclectic assortment of wares was not uncommon. It wasn't until the late 40's that music shops became more specialized in their wares. This assortment was reflected in the painted lettering that still remains above the front door, *Novedades* (novelties).

⁷ Victoria's original store, Almacenes Hernández, was at 1724 Madison Ave. (between 113th and 114th). Luis Cuevas ran the store from that location and soon after moved the store to 116th St. Eventually during the 1950s, Cuevas got out of the record business and began to sell furniture (he saw the furniture business as more lucrative since furniture was needed by all the new migrants), so he moved to a larger site at 2136 Third Ave. (between 116th and 117th St.), where it remains today. Cuevas and his nephew who currently runs the business decided to keep the name Almacenes Hernández, in honor of the original owners. Victoria's original store at Madison Ave. is gone and in its place is a housing project.

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Victoria's decision to include clothing among her wares reflects another aspect of the Puerto Rican migration experience – how women migrants made their living. There were not many options open to women for work, but domestic help and needlework employed large numbers of them. In the 1920s Puerto Rican women became a major segment of the garment industry's labor force. They took the jobs that were once held by earlier generations of Jewish and Italian immigrant women in the trades of dressmaking, accessories and children's clothing (Ortíz 1996: 58). Needlework of various kinds and lace-making has a long history in Puerto Rico, and after World War I they became especially important when there was a halt to the export of these materials from Europe. Not only did many of these women work as seamstresses in factories but, here and in Puerto Rico, many worked at home doing piecework to supplement their family's income while also taking care of domestic duties (Boris 1996:36; Sánchez Korrol 1996: 59).

Not as much is known about Victoria's career while she lived in the Bronx. However, Casa Hernández also played an important role in the developing Latin music scene. Victoria continued to give piano lessons to budding musicians in the neighborhood. Rafael, though he now lived in Mexico, spent periods of time residing at the Manhasset with his sister, so the store continued to be a gathering place for musicians. Younger musicians, like percussionist Adolfo "Lefty" Maldonado, remembers buying his first records there (as did Mike Amadeo, see below). So it was part of the formative years of many of the up-and-coming musicians who lived in the neighborhood.

Earlier it was mentioned how record stores played an important role in the burgeoning *colonia* on economic and cultural levels. Economically their role increased in the postwar years. While initially there was a boom in the economy after the war, soon jobs became harder and harder to obtain. The Puerto Rican community was hit especially hard by this. One source of stability and leadership in the community came from the small business owners such record stores and *bogedas*, especially (Sánchez Korrol 2000).

Victoria owned Casa Hernández until 1969 when she sold it to composer and musician Mike Amadeo. Mike renamed the store, but in recognition of its history he called it "Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández." In 1948 soon after he moved to the Bronx, when he was fourteen years old, Mike had bought his first 78 record at Casa Hernández. He and his cousin listened to "Siete besos" by Felipe Rodríguez y su Trío in one of the listening booths and paid \$.75 for it (Martínez 2000). Listening booths were essential features in music shops during the 40s and 50s. Victoria had two of them in the back lefthand corner, where many musicians from that neighborhood remember listening to the newest releases as youngsters. Only 78s were played in the booths (78s were favored among the Latino communities), but the booths lost their popularity when 78s began to be replaced by 45s. Store owners didn't want to have booths for 45s because since they were smaller they were much easier to take in the booth and steal. About 30 years ago when Mike did some remodeling, he removed the booths but put one on the other side of the store. However after six months he took it out and also stopped selling 78s.

Mike had experience working in other record stores which were important to the Latin music scene in New York City. As a teenager he worked in Casa Latina in East Harlem. Later he was manager at Casalegre in the Bronx (down the block from Casa Hernández), which was owned by Al Santiago, who also started the

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record label, Alegre. Aside from being a prominent *bolero* composer in his own right (many well known musicians have recorded his compositions including Celia Cruz, Hector Lavoe and El Gran Combo), Mike is the son of an important Puerto Rican composer, Titi Amadeo.

Like Almacenes Hernández and Casa Hernández before it, Casa Amadeo, continues the traditions of the early music stores. As the longest continually-run music establishment in the Bronx and most likely New York City, it continues to play a key role in New York's Latin music scene. For the general public Mike is a source of information. He states, "I'm 67 years old and I've been 50 years in the business. Most of the time when people come into the store, they can't remember the title of a song. They'll sing a little line and 80 percent of the time, I can tell them what it is" (Siegal 2000). Mike Amadeo serves as an unofficial music "archivist." Many in the Latin music scene who are considered authorities on the music learned about it from Mike, by going to Casa Amadeo and talking with him. Mike remembers when music historian and producer, René Lopez and record salesman Harry Sepulveda (of noted Latin music store, Record Mart, formerly of Times Square), used to constantly visit him at the store and bombard him with questions. Mike also functions to some degree as an "A&R" person (Artist & Repertoire). In the record business this is a term for the individual who matched songs and performers as well as acted as the representative of the record company. Today this role is filled by a producer. There are constant calls to his store from musicians (from New York and Puerto Rico) searching for a song for their next recording. For example, in the 1970s when *salsa* superstars Willie Colón and Hector Lavoe decided to record an album of traditional Puerto Rican Christmas songs with *salsa* arrangements, they went to Casa Amadeo to find the *aguinaldos* which would work best. The album, *Asalto Navideño*, proved to be a bestseller.

This album is also important because of its emphasis on the "Puertoricanization" of popular Latin music. The music which came to be called *salsa* in the 1960s and 70s is based on Afro-Cuban rhythms, which young "Nuyorican" musicians blended with traditional Puerto Rican music like *bomba*, *seis* and *aguinaldo*. The creation of this new sound was due to the large Puerto Rican presence in New York City and their influence and involvement in the music during the previous 40 years.

Music and Its Role in the Puerto Rican Community.

The importance of music in the Puerto Rican/Nuyorican identity, even from the music's earliest days, is reflected in the decor of Casa Amadeo. The paintings of the composers Rafael Hernández and Pedro Flores have places of prominence in the store, set in the original wall niches above the instrument cases. These musicians composed some of the songs which are considered standards in the repertoire of popular music and which have become unofficial anthems among the Puerto Rican community, such as *Lamento Borincano* by Hernández and *Sin Bandera* by Flores. Music historian Jorge Javaríz comments upon their music: "The bulk of what we call popular Puerto Rican music was written and recorded in New York. Puerto Rico is the only Latin American country whose popular music was mainly created on foreign soil. The curious thing about this phenomenon is that it was precisely in those years that the popular Puerto Rican song became more Puerto Rican than it has ever been before or since" (Glasser 1991:24).

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While these songs responded to the yearnings of the transplanted community, the later music also became part of what it meant to be a Nuyorican. After the recent death of *el rey del mambo* (Mambo King), Tito Puente, New Yorker Aurora Flores commented, “. . . ever since I can remember, being Puerto Rican in New York meant rice, beans and Tito Puente (Moreno-Velazquez 2000:4).

During the heyday of the “mambo era” and into the 1960s, New York City became the crucible for the emerging music scene. This was due to the growing Caribbean Latino population and to the close proximity of other ethnic groups who contributed to Latin music. The Jewish community was an avid consumer of Latin music, patronizing the dance venues as well as participating as musicians, such as pianist Larry Harlow and trombonist Barry Rogers. According to ethnomusicologist Roberta Singer, Rogers, who was from the Bronx, was a “pivotal figure in the incorporation of non-Latin musical sensibilities which have become integral to the New York Latin music sound” (2000:17). Perhaps more important was the influence of popular African-American music of the period. The migration of African-Americans from the South coincided with the Puerto Rican migration to the mainland. These communities tended to settle in adjacent neighborhoods:

By the early 50's there were eleven Puerto Rican communities in New York City but despite this dispersion, Puerto Rican areas of settlement were not distributed randomly throughout the City, but were linked closely to those of African-Americans. Puerto Rican settlements existed on the edges of African-American ghettos – on the east and west sides of Harlem, in the South Bronx, in St. Albans-Jamaica in Queens, and on three sides of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn (Schneider 1999:40).

The influence of these communities on each other's music goes back even earlier. Harlem became the home to the big band jazz sound and by the late 1920's New York City was the home of more jazz musicians than any other city in the country (Burns and Sanders 1999:330). The Latinos in neighboring East Harlem began transforming their small *conjuntos* to big orchestras, inspired by the African-American big bands of the jazz era, culminating in the 1942 debut of Machito's Afro-Cubans, the band that was in the vanguard of creating the Latin jazz style. The Palladium Ballroom, located at 53rd and Broadway was around the corner from Birdland, an important jazz venue, so musicians from both places were exposed to new sounds. In the 1960's, another crosscultural fusion occurred in the development of a Latin *bugalú*—a blend of Latin music with the African-American music of boogaloo. This continual fusion of the two types of music progressed naturally to sociologist Juan Flores: “the Cuban style was the most influential style among Latinos in the States, and the most powerful styles in the States were coming from the African-American experience—jazz, R&B, doo-wop—these were the styles that were out there in the street” (2000).

While Manhattan mainstream dance venues attracted people from throughout the City, the borough where hundreds of musicians lived was the Bronx. Its roster includes 17 internationally known stars such as Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Charlie and Eddie Palmieri and Johnny Pacheco. There were literally hundreds of lesser known musicians, ranging from sidemen and session players, to many who were to become key figures in the new styles originating in New York: Orlando Marín recorded one of the earliest *pachanga* hits, *Se te*

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quemo la casa; Pete Rodríguez whose hit *I Like It Like That* became one of the anthems of Latin *bugalú* and is still recorded today; and Manny Oquendo, whose group, Libre, has become a training ground for many of the young musicians on the scene today. The Bronx also had many of the hottest places to perform. There were at least 20 clubs, ballrooms or halls for hire and 5 theaters where one could see a variety of Latin music ranging from *la música típica* of the *tríos* to the hottest mambo *orquestas*. At least four important music stores (including Casa Amadeo) where one could hear and buy the latest hits were all in the Longwood-Hunts Point area. The dance venues included the sophisticated Tropicana, which was inspired after the Tropicana Cabaret in Havana; the Tritons Club, where in 1960 Johnny Pacheco “invented” the *pachanga* dance; and the Hunts Point Palace, a 2,500-person ballroom that was called “the Palladium of the Bronx.” Every weekend during the “mambo era” hundreds of people flocked to the Bronx to listen to the sounds of Latin music. Today the Bronx is still considered the “*condado de salsa*” (Salsa Borough). Through the years, due to the changes in the neighborhoods and troubles in the borough during the time that is referred to as “the burning of the Bronx,” most of these venues have been razed, are empty or have been renovated into other structures (office space or churches).

Despite great odds, Casa Amadeo is one of the only places that has remained at its original site and serves the same function.⁸ Musicians still call searching for songs, or they stop by to talk or play music, including musicians from the neighborhood, or those visiting from Puerto Rico like former neighborhood resident Joe Quijano or members of El Gran Combo, and even local politicians--Bronx Congressman José Serrano is known to drop by and sing while Mike plays the guitar. Cuban music aficionado Matt Dillion usually drops by about once a month to look through the 78s in the back room searching for treasures of old Cuban *son* recordings from the pre-mambo days. Casa Amadeo is also an annual supporter of a local park’s summer series of Latin music concerts.

Although the South Bronx became a national symbol of urban decline in the 1970s and 1980s, it continued to provide a cultural context for musical creativity. Casa Amadeo’s history mirrors the Puerto Rican experience in New York City and especially the Bronx — the economic and cultural obstacles Puerto Ricans faced, and the music which defined and sustained them. Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández stands as a symbol of New York’s legacy of Latin music, a cultural expression that developed here, and yet has eclipsed its New York City origins to become an international phenomenon.

⁸ The Manhasset, where Casa Amadeo is a tenant storefront, was abandoned in the late 1980s after the owner died. The only tenants were the music store and a few squatters staying in the apartments. The neighborhood had deteriorated during the infamous years of arson and vandalism in the late 1960s through the early 1980s, and once the Manhasset was abandoned there were constant attempts at break-ins to the store. Mike Amadeo had to supply running water for the store from a pump on the street. This continued for three years until the building was bought by the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, a non-profit housing rehab and social service organization started in 1977 by a group of Kelly St. residents to rehabilitate abandoned buildings in the neighborhood. It is now one of the borough’s major landlords.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one-half acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 592591 4519046
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By (See continuation sheet)

name/title Contact: Kathleen A. Howe, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation date November 30, 2000

street & number P.O. Box 189, Peebles Island telephone (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188-0189

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Banana Kelly, Inc. Attn: Ms. Yolanda Rivera, Chair

street & number 863 Prospect Avenue telephone

city or town Bronx state NY zip code 10459

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination boundary is shown as the heavy black line on the attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary incorporates the entire lot historically associated with the Manhasset apartment building in which the storefront for Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández has been located since 1941.

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Research and text by:

Elena Martínez for Place Matters, a project of City Lore and the Municipal Art Society
-and-
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Photographs

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández

Bronx County, New York

Photographers: Martha Cooper (exterior views)

September 2000

Edwin Pagán

July 2000 (interior views)

Location of negatives: Municipal Art Society

457 Madison Avenue

New York, New York 10022

1. West elevation of the Manhasset Building, corner of Longwood and Prospect Avenues. Casa Amadeo occupies one of the storefronts of this elevation. Looking east.
2. North elevation of the Manhasset Building. Looking south.
3. West and south elevations of the Manhasset Building. Casa Amadeo storefront is located at the west elevation. Looking northeast.
4. Casa Amadeo storefront at the west elevation of the Manhasset Building. Looking east.
5. Detail of display window of Casa Amadeo storefront. Looking east.
6. Interior of Casa Amadeo, showing entrance and display windows. Looking west.
7. Interior of Casa Amadeo, north and east walls. Looking northeast.
8. Interior of Casa Amadeo, south wall. Looking south.
9. Guitar display case on east wall. Looking east.
10. Niches for paintings of musicians above east wall. Looking east.

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Glossary of Musical Terms
(For additional terms see Roberts:1999)

<i>Aguinaldo</i>	Puerto Rican song style from the island's Spanish heritage. These songs are usually associated with the Christmas season.
<i>Asalto Navideño</i>	The name of a Willie Colón and Hector Lavoe album from the mid-1970s. An <i>asalto</i> (literally "assault") is the term given to the strolling groups of musicians when they go from door to door during the Christmas/Three King's Day season, singing and looking for refreshments. The term is used as a pun here—while it is an album of Christmas songs from the island, the album cover shows a humorous Christmas scene in a <i>barrio</i> in New York City, where Santa Claus is stealing—reflecting the Nuyorican's dual mainland and island realities.
<i>Bolero</i>	Originally a medium-tempo form played by <i>tríos</i> ; as it moved into Cuban dance music it became slow and sentimental.
<i>Bomba</i>	Puerto Rican drum and dance style from the island's African heritage.
<i>Boogaloo/bugalú</i>	Boogaloo is a rhythm and blues offshoot, which was the inspiration for the Latin <i>bugalú</i> , whose lyrics were sung primarily in English. It was a short-lived fad between 1966-1969.
<i>Chachachá</i>	Dance form originating in Cuba in the early 1950s, inspired by <i>danzón</i> and mambo steps. The name possibly comes from the sound of the dancers' feet as they swish across the floor.
<i>Charanga</i>	Musical orchestra consisting of flute, violin, timbales and a distinctive duet singing style.
<i>Conjunto</i>	A musical group which usually includes voices, trumpet, piano, bass, conga and bongo. The 2-3 trumpet front line is the most obvious feature.
<i>Cuarteto</i>	Four person ensembles featuring strings and percussion.
<i>Danza/Danzón</i>	Ballroom music of Puerto Rico's and Cuba's elite (respectively).
<i>Guaracha</i>	Originally a Cuban tropical song form for chorus and solo voice with improvisation during the solo.
<i>Mambo</i>	An Afro-Cuban form thought to derive from Congolese religious cults; in the U.S., it became a popular dance and music form in the 1940s and 1950s.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 12 Page 3

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
Name of Property
Bronx County, New York
County and State

<i>Música jíbara</i>	<i>Jíbaros</i> are the mountain peasants of Puerto Rico. Their songs reflect styles from the island's Spanish heritage, including <i>seis</i> and <i>aguinaldo</i> .
<i>Pachanga</i>	Energetic and fast dance form from the 1960s, which originated from the <i>charanga</i> musical style.
<i>Plena</i>	Puerto Rican musical style that is a blend of the island's African and European heritages. Because the lyrics usually include social commentary and record topical events, it is called the "sung newspaper."
Salsa	Commercial term used to label the forms of Latin music encompassing mambo and later styles. In Spanish it means "sauce" and is also used the same way that "soul" is used for African-Americans, as in soul music or soul food.
<i>Seis</i>	Puerto Rican musical style from the island's Spanish heritage.
<i>Son</i>	Oldest creolized Cuban form of African and Hispanic elements originating in the Oriente province.
<i>Trío</i>	Musical group consisting of three musicians, centered on guitars.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 12 Page 4

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
Name of Property
Bronx County, New York
County and State

Some Important Latin Music Sites in New York City

Most of these venues are in the Bronx, and pertain to research conducted by Place Matters and City Lore for the South Bronx Latin Music Project, though a few other sites are included which were also important to the early Latin music scene. Most of the properties either house different businesses or have been razed.

Alhambra Supper Club, 936 Southern Blvd. (at 163rd St.), Bronx

Small club that featured only Latin music performances, from roughly the 1940s to 1960s. It is no longer there and only an empty lot remains.

La Campana, 446 E. 149th St. (near 3rd Ave.), Bronx

Small club downstairs from the Caravana Club. The building is no longer there.

Caravana Club (Previously Bronx Casino; later El Cerromar), 442 E. 149th St. (near 3rd Ave.), Bronx

Dance hall from approximately the 1950s to the 1970s. Now it is a church, Templo de Renovación Espiritual.

Casa Latina, 157 E. 116th St., Manhattan

Now the oldest Latin music shop in El Barrio.

Casalegre Record Store, 852 Westchester Ave., Bronx

Record store owned in the 1960s by musician Al Santiago. The record store is no longer in business although the building is still extant.

Casino Puerto Rico/Teatro Casino, 250 Willis Ave. (at 138th St.), Bronx

Casino Puerto Rico was a ballroom on the second floor, which was originally a catering hall for weddings and dances. The theater below it originally featured Irish-oriented vaudeville in the 1930s and 1940s. Later they began to feature Latin music performances. The ballroom and theater are gone, but the building still remains and is home to a supermarket.

Club Cubano Interamericano, 671-681 Prospect Ave., Bronx

Dance hall which started out as a social club for Tampeños (Cuban immigrants who originally settled in Tampa) in 1945. The building now houses a community center but members still meet annually at Bohemian Hall in Queens for a reunion called Baile de Mamoncillo.

Club Tropicoro, 1035 Longwood Ave. (and Southern Blvd.), Bronx

Nightclub owned by boxing champion Carlos Ortiz in the 1960s to 1970s. The building has been razed and a new building erected on the site for the 41st Police Precinct.

Colgate Gardens, 1209 Colgate Ave., Bronx

A dance hall which originally was a wedding hall for the Jewish community.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 12 Page 5

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
Name of Property
Bronx County, New York
County and State

Hunts Point Palace, 953 Southern Blvd. (at 163rd St.), Bronx

Largest dance hall in the Bronx. It was built in the early part of the century and has been used for weddings, political meetings and social events for the different ethnic communities who resided in the neighborhood. The building has been converted into office space.

Palladium, Broadway and 53rd St., Manhattan

It was built in 1942 and started as the Alma Dance Studio. In 1949 it was bought and renovated into a dance hall. The "mambo era" can "officially" be dated from 1952 when the Palladium switched to an all-mambo policy, featuring the best in Latin music, including the "Mambo Kings"—Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodríguez. It closed in 1966.

Park Palace Ballroom, 5 W. 110th St. (at 5th Ave.), Manhattan

One of the earliest Latin music venues, it featured performances from the 20s to the 40s. The Park Palace was on the second floor; another ballroom, the Park Plaza, was on the first floor, and behind that was a small nightclub called the Golden Casino. It is now the La Hermosa Christian Church.

P.S. 52, 681 Kelly St., Bronx

The school is now M.S. 52, and this school is where many of the young Bronx musicians went to middle school. In the 50s a band of young alumni including Orlando Marín, Joe Quijano and Eddie Palmieri rehearsed in the school's auditorium and in exchange would play Friday night concerts at the school.

Royal Mansion, 1315 Boston Rd. (at 169th St.), Bronx

In the late 1940s the African-American community booked this site for dances, cocktail sips, fashion shows and political meetings. From 1948 to 1952, it featured Saturday night Latin music dances. The ballroom was on the second floor. It is now a Pentacostal church, House of Prayer Deliverance Church.

Teatro Puerto Rico, 490 E. 138th St., Bronx

In 1947 the Forum Theater started featuring Latin music performers and entertainers. The years from 1947-1956 were the heyday for *la farándula* (term for Spanish language entertainment that included comedy, poetry, drama, music and movies) at the theater. In 1948 the theater changed its name to the Puerto Rico in recognition of the growing Puerto Rican presence there. The building now houses a church - Iglesia Universal del Reino de Dios.

Tritons, 961 Southern Blvd (at 163rd St.), Bronx

It was a nightclub on the second floor of the Spooner Theater which was started in 1960 by members of the Sparks, a local stickball team. In the early 1960s it became famous as the place where Johnny Pacheco started the *pachanga* dance, and later the home of the Alegre All-Stars. The theater is named after the famous stock company actress, Cecil Spooner, who in the 1910s operated her stock company from it. Stores are now located in the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

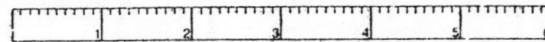
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 12 Page 6

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
Name of Property
Bronx County, New York
County and State

Tropicana, 915 Westchester Ave., Bronx

In the 1940s to the mid-60s it was owned by the Cuban brothers, Manolo and Tony Alfaro. It was originally a Russian/Turkish *shvitzbud* (baths). The building is extant, though vacant.



SCALE IN 1/10 OF AN INCH

BL
2688

LOT
55

NEW
56,58,60,62,63,64
66,157,158,159

DATE
4-17-95
WESTCHESTER AVE.

SEE VOL. 4

PROSPECT

2688

E. 156TH
LEGETT AVE.

ST.

SEE VOL. 4

AVE.

AVE.

LONGWOOD

PL.

MACY

2688

165

PL.

SEE PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 7

HEWITT



10/5
8X

Dark line indicates nomination boundary.
Sanborn map, 1995.
Scale 1" = approx. 100'

Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Hernández
Bronx County, New York

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Casa Amadeo, antigua Casa Henandez
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Bronx

DATE RECEIVED: 2/07/01 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/23/01
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/11/01 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/25/01
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 01000244

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT ___DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

This record store possesses exceptional local significance as the oldest extant Latin music store in New York City. It is associated with Victoria Hernandez, the store's founder, who was an influential female Puerto Rican entrepreneur, and with the history of the city's Latin music as an important factor in the Puerto Rican migration experience. Its function is upheld/continued by the current owner Mike Amadeo.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+B+C Amadeo.

REVIEWER Savage

DISCIPLINE Architectural History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 3/23/01

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.
#1



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N. Y.
#2



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.

#3

CASA AMADEO

786

INSTRUMENTOS MUSICALES

786

CASA HERNANDEZ



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.
4

6/



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.

#5



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.
#6



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.

#7



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.

#8



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.
#9

Rafael Hernández



Casa Amadeo
Bronx County, N.Y.
#10



NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CENTRAL PARK QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK - NEW JERSEY
7.5 MINUTE SERIES PLANIMETRIC
SW/4 HARLEM 15' QUADRANGLE

406737 DP



Casa Amadeo
antigua Casa
Hernández
Bronx County, NY.
Central Park Quad
Scale 1:24000
Zone: 18
Easting: 592591
Northing: 4519046

Prepared and published in 1975 by the New York State Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

Map base from 1966 U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle.

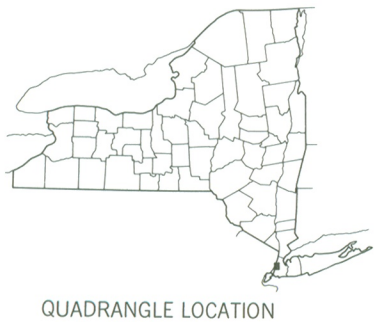
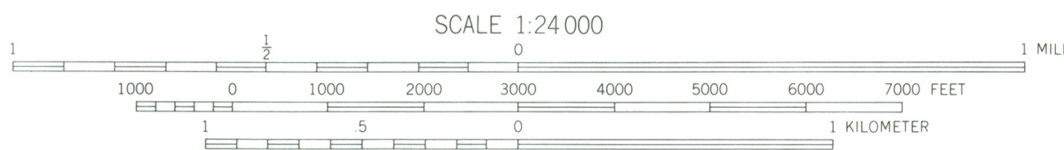
Map revisions made using 1974 aerial photography, construction plans, official records and other sources. Features revised include: highways and other transportation facilities; civil boundaries; recreation sites; hydrography; and buildings. Grey tint indicates intensively developed areas in which only landmark buildings are shown.

Revisions may not comply with National Map Accuracy Standards.

Correspondence concerning this and other maps of the Department of Transportation should be directed to: Map Information Unit, New York State Department of Transportation, State Campus, Albany, New York 12232.

Map revisions outside New York State are limited to major highways.

1975 revisions by F. G. Califano



Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum.
1,000-meter ticks based on the New York Transverse Mercator grid.
Between 72° and 78° West Longitude, this grid is identical to Zone 18 of the Universal Transverse Mercator grid. Areas east of 72° and west of 78° are direct mathematical extensions of Zone 18.
10,000-foot ticks based on the New York Plane Coordinate grid, Long Island Zone.
ENTIRE NEW YORK STATE MAP AREA IS WITHIN THE NEW YORK CITY METROPOLITAN URBAN AREA
SPECIAL TOPOGRAPHIC EDITION
Contours, at 10-foot intervals, shown unrevised from 1966 U.S. Geological Survey map. Datum is mean sea level.

BOUNDARIES:
State.....
County.....
Town or City.....
Incorporated Village.....
Federal-Aid Urban Area.....

ROADS:
Touring Route markers:
Interstate.....
U. S.
State.....
State Highway number and limit.....
County road.....
Interchange number.....
Divided highways and streets:
Wide mail.....
Narrow mail or barrier.....
Undivided highways and streets:
.....
Vehicle track; trail.....

CENTRAL PARK QUADRANGLE
SECOND EDITION - 1975

Ruth Glasser, Ph.D
Public Historian

PO Box 3274
Waterbury, CT 06705

December 4, 2000

(Ugent
E. 200

Commissioner Bernadette Castro
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
Agency Building #1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238

Dear Commissioner Castro:

I am writing to recommend that an important site in the Bronx, Casa Amadeo, receive historic landmark status.

Casa Amadeo is the direct descendant of what may be the first Latin music store in New York City. It is certainly one of the first businesses owned by a Puerto Rican. In its original incarnation in the 1920s, the store was owned by Victoria Hernández, sister of the great Puerto Rican composer Rafael Hernández. An early example of entrepreneurship by a Puerto Rican woman, the store not only sold records but also became a haven for many of the finest Puerto Rican musicians of the era. Within its doors, Puerto Rican musicians made connections with each other, with record companies, and with venues for performing live music. Its back room piano was where Rafael Hernández composed many of his famous songs.

Later, the store passed into the hands of Miguel "Mike" Amadeo, who owns it to this day. Amadeo is himself from a distinguished musical family. His father, Alberto "Titi" Amadeo was an important composer and musician, a contemporary of Rafael Hernández.

In sum, Casa Amadeo is a historic purveyor of music to New York's Latino community. Its very presence also embodies Puerto Rican musical creativity during the pre-World War II period. For these reasons, I would strongly recommend that Casa Amadeo be officially designated a historic landmark.

Sincerely,


Ruth Glasser, Ph.D.
Author of *My Music is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917-1940*



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

100 Old Slip New York NY 10005 TEL: 212-487-6820 FAX: 212-487-6796 TTY: 212-487-6745

<http://nyc.gov/landmarks/>



December 7, 2000

Ruth Pierpont, Director
New York State Office of Parks Recreation
and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field services bureau
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Re: Casa Amadeo, Antigua Casa Hernandez at (The
Manhasset, 850 Longwood Avenue) 786 Prospect
Avenue, Bronx, New York

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

I write in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of the Casa Amadeo, Antigua Casa Hernandez at (The Manhasset, 850 Longwood Avenue) 786 Prospect Avenue, Bronx for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Mary Beth Betts, the Commission's Director of Research has reviewed the materials submitted by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau. She believes that the Manhasset Building would be a contributing building within a National Register historic district, if one existed. With respect to the issue of determining Casa Amadeo's contribution to Latin American culture, the staff respectfully defers to the expertise of the SHPO.

Sincerely,

Ronda Wist
Executive Director

cc. Mark Silberman
Mary Beth Betts



OFFICE OF THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT
THE BRONX COUNTY BUILDING
851 GRAND CONCOURSE
BRONX, NEW YORK 10451

FERNANDO FERRER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

TEL. 718-590-3500
FAX: 718-590-3537
E-MAIL: FFERRER1@compuserve.com

December 13, 2000

W. J. B. 300

Bernadette Castro
Commissioner
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Agency Building #1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12238

Dear Commissioner Castro:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Casa Amadeo to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. I am pleased that your office is looking into the proposal, sponsored by the South Bronx Latin Music Project.

Latin Music has played a vital role in the history of The Bronx, and vice versa. For more than half a century, the borough has served as a home and meeting place for some of the most prominent artists, contributing greatly to the development of Latin Music as an internationally acclaimed genre.

Established in 1941, Casa Amadeo is the longest operating Latin Music store in The Bronx. For generations it has been key in the distribution and preservation of Latin Music, as well as in the unification of the Latin music artists community in The Bronx and all of New York. The store, first known as "Casa Hernández," embodies the legacy of the Puerto Rican migration to New York after World War II, the contribution of Victoria Hernández, one of the earliest Hispanic female entrepreneurs in New York, and the work of Rafael Hernández, one of Latin America's greatest composers.

It will be a great asset to include Casa Amadeo in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

FERNANDO FERRER