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DESCRIPTION

Current appearance - Exterior

The Krause Music Store is a 2 story plus basement commercial property which boasts an exquisite Louis Sullivan Terra Cotta façade in front, which neatly frames the plate glass display window and oak doors. The building is located in Lincoln Square, on lively Lincoln Avenue in Chicago, Illinois. It is surrounded by the other, more conventional storefronts of the neighborhood.

The façade faces southwest, is bilaterally symmetrical in design and reaches a height of twenty-eight feet. The ornamental aspects of the façade are particularly noteworthy. The façade is dominated by a large cartouche which rises vertically through the second story to a height of 3 feet above the roof line. The cartouche — created of pale green terra cotta, the same as the rest of the façade — is composed of curvilinear plant forms surrounding geometric shapes and the letter “K” for Krause. The ornament found around the doors and second story windows is more subdued than the ornament atop the building. Vertical panels of geometric design flank the windowed oak doors and bands of horizontal curvilinear shapes accent the row of 4 inset French leaded glass windows. The picture window is recessed about 3 feet back from the sidewalk. The ground of the recess has the name Krause spelled out in checkered tile mosaic. This mosaic is continued into the foyer. The window is surrounded by an extremely dense foliate motif; just above the display window the terra cotta is punctured by a row of small incandescent bulbs which increase the play of light and shadow on the building’s surface. This strong framing of the picture window draws attention to the commercial display of the first floor and distinguishes it from the more relaxed and residential nature of the apartment above.

The remaining walls are common brick and the roof is a tar paper coated roof sloping to the rear with longitudinal parapet walls and tile coping. Due to surrounding buildings which abut the Krause Music Store, these features are mostly unseen. The original building is twenty-five feet wide and sixty-eight feet long with two stories and a basement, but an 10 foot wide by 11 foot long extension has been added in back that is constructed of cinder block. The back of the building has a wooden deck with stairs that go to the back door of the apartment. The deck

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and stairs rise above the extension. There is also a set of concrete stairs that enter the basement.

The property has a small back yard between the back of the building and the front of the garage. The garage is constructed of a frame structure and has a shingled roof. The garage was extended by 4 feet into the backyard at some indeterminate time and is now twenty feet long by twenty feet wide.

Current appearance - Interior

The basement has a storage space in front. There are two bathrooms along the north wall and a laundry room and boiler room to the rear. The back portion had been used as a mortician's work room, but is now extra storage. The back room also has a door that leads to concrete stairs that go to the back yard.

The store proper on the first floor is entered to the right of the display window. Upon entering the building, one walks through a small vestibule to a second oak door. To the left in this vestibule are a set of French doors that open into the display area (which is fronted by the large window). The main room is large with high ceilings (permitted by the structure of the building, which utilizes steel I-beams to allow a wide open floor plan). There is a set of stairs into the basement along the north wall and in the back of the room is a divider wall that extends 2/3 of the way to the ceiling that conceals the entrance to the back of the store. Handsome maple strip hardwood flooring can be seen throughout the building and the plaster walls are buff painted. There is a 12" ceiling molding around the main room based on classical models (beaded, denticulated, egg and dart, acanthus leaf). Molding does not appear to be original based upon examination of original drawings. It is also painted buff. The back of the store, beyond the divider wall, is a bathroom and the small addition. Both are carpeted with grey industrial carpeting.

The second floor apartment is entered by the door to the left of the display window. Proceed

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up the striking oak stairs with art deco detailing topped by a small landing in front of the door. The apartment has a large living room across the front and is reached from the stair hall by going right through a reception hall. Two bedrooms off the hall to the south have windows opening to a small light court. Opposite is storage, a bathroom, and a pantry around another similar light court. At the rear is the kitchen and formal dining room. The dining room opens via french doors to a sleeping porch. The sleeping porch and the kitchen share entrance to the closed area which was previously an open porch. There is then a door that leads to a wooden deck and stairs to the back yard.

Historic appearance and Alterations

The Krause Music Store has sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The property appears as it did when it was first erected in 1922. The lot on which the Krause music store was constructed was bought by William P. Krause and his wife Olga who wished a music store on the main floor and an apartment for his family above. William Presto was the architect who designed the building and who hired Louis Sullivan to do the front façade. The store remained a music store until 1929 when it was converted into a Funeral home which was run by a succession of morticians. On June 25, 1958 the property was sold to Francis M Wagner, who, in turn, sold it to James M. Coleman on October 15 of the same year.

The building did undergo a series of significant changes while under the ownership of James M. Coleman. The large plate glass window of the original design was changed to three smaller windows set in a gold anodized frame with medium rectangular windows. He also replaced both oak doors with glass and aluminum doors. He drilled holes into the façade to hang a sign advertising his funeral parlor. On the second story he hid the four casement French leaded-glass windows with double-hung storm windows and venetian blinds. He bricked up some of the back wall windows and enclosed the southeast corner of the porch on the second floor. He added the cinderblock addition on the northeast corner as a flower cool storage and added the wooden steps and deck leading to the second floor apartment.

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On the inside, Coleman converted the display area into an office. He moved the central wooden French doors from the center of the space to the South wall, allowing them to open into the vestibule. He added a wood arch to the same area. In the basement he added 2 bathrooms, a pantry, and a casket elevator, and on the second floor he removed the fireplace. He also made an attempt to clean the façade, which damaged it somewhat.

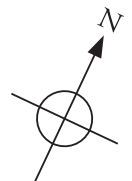
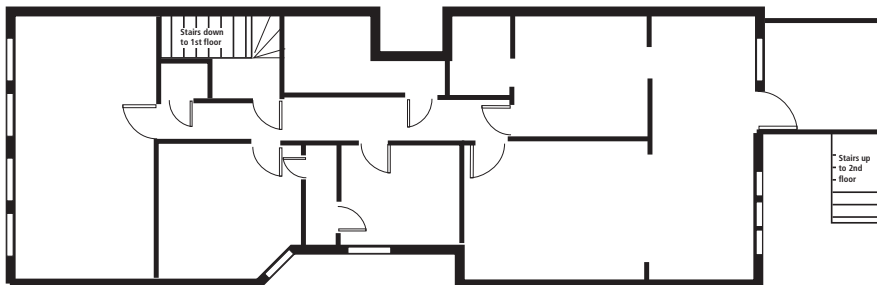
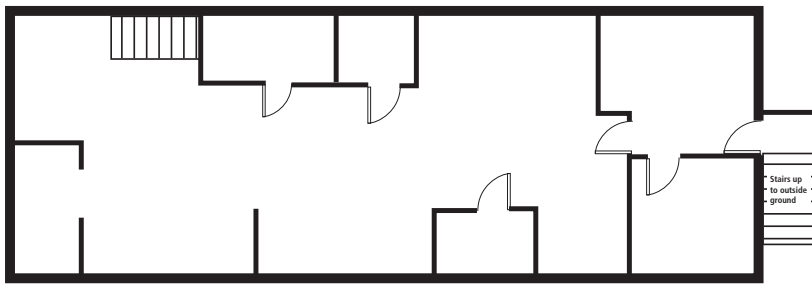
About 1990, the property was purchased by Scott Elliott who opened an art gallery. Well versed in the period, Elliott restored the façade to the original intent. He removed the sign. He removed the aluminum framed windows and doors and replaced them with a new large plate glass window. The oak doors are believed to be replacements that were made to match the original doors. Elliott also removed the storm windows from the second story and allowed the original leaded glass windows to be seen again.

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Rough Floor Plans: Basement, First Floor (inc. Garage), Second Floor

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Krause Music Store with its Louis Sullivan designed façade and located at 4611 North Lincoln Avenue in Chicago is significant for National Register listing under Criterion C for architecture. The elaborate terra cotta façade with decorative framing of the display window and large cartouche at the top, stands as a jewel among the adjacent stores on the busy shopping street. Built in 1922, the Krause Music store is the last work of a master architect (Morrison, 191).

With its curvilinear plant forms and intricate framing of the picture window, the façade is an outgrowth of Louis Sullivan's belief of organic architecture. Sullivan's love of decorative elements that are inspired by nature and his philosophy of "Form follows Function" can be seen on all of the buildings he designed, famous examples of which include: Chicago's Auditorium Building, the Old Chicago Stock Exchange Building, and the Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company Building.

History of The Krause Music Store and its Significance

The Krause Music store was commissioned in 1921 by William P. Krause to be a music store with a second floor apartment for his family. Krause who chose his neighbor, architect William Presto to design it. (Commission, 3). William Presto designed the building and wanted the exterior should be something special, so he hired Louis Sullivan to do the front façade.

Sullivan and Presto had become acquainted in 1919 when Presto worked as a draftsman for architect George C. Nimmons. Sullivan was at work on a series of small bank buildings and was in the middle of what was to be the seventh and last of them (The Farmers' and Merchant's Union Bank in Columbus, Wisconsin). Having need of a skilled draftsman, Sullivan asked Nimmons for loan of Presto. Shortly afterwards, Presto went to work for Sullivan. (Commission, 3). Shortly after the bank was completed, Sullivan was forced, for financial reasons, to let Presto go.

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Presto described the experience in a letter dated 1963 as “a wonderful time together doing this job.” and said of Sullivan “I had the greatest confidence from Mr. Sullivan that anyone ever had.” It is therefore natural, for Presto to have thought of his friend and mentor to design the façade. (Commission, 3–4)

Presto submitted sample floor plans to Sullivan who then, according to Presto, sketched out an idea for the elevation on the back of an envelope. (Commission, 4) Sullivan, taking the job very seriously, then developed the design into a working drawing at the scale of one half inch to the foot. Sullivan did this work at the offices of the American Terra Cotta Company, where he had a room in which to work on drawings for his published portfolio entitled *A System of Architectural Ornament According With a Philosophy of Man’s Powers*. He came to Presto’s office nearly every day to consult with the draftsman Clarence Oak, who prepared the working drawings of the floor plans and sections. (Greengard, 8)

The material for the façade was furnished by the American Terra Cotta company and was contracted for \$3,770. Sullivan and Presto made several trips to the plant in Crystal Lake to supervise the modeling of the ornamental features of the façade. The company had a modeler of great skill in the person of Kristian Schneider, who had often collaborated with Sullivan and understood the architect’s intentions well. (Greengard, 8).

The building’s plans was received very well by William Krause, who proudly showed his friends the blueprints. In 1922, the building was completed and Mr. Krause took possession of the shop, selling pianos, phonographs and records, and sewing machines. The store prospered for a time, but fell on hardship in under ten years. William Krause committed suicide and his wife Olga converted the building into a funeral parlor.

The building was sold in 1958 to Francis Wagner who then sold it a few months later to James Coleman. (HABS, 2) Under James Coleman’s stewardship, the building underwent many changes. While the façade itself remained more or less intact (some holes were drilled to hang a sign for the funeral home), the elements which the façade skillfully framed changed significantly. The plate glass display window was removed and replaced with three smaller windows

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in anodized aluminum frames. The oak and glass doors were similarly removed and replaced with standard glass doors. The windows on the second floor were concealed by storm windows and blinds. The interior was also significantly altered. (Greengard, pg 10)

The Krause Music building was designated a Chicago Landmark on September 20, 1977. (Chicago, 5982)

About 1990, the building was purchased by Scott Elliott, who opened Klemscott Galleries, a gallery dedicated to the Chicago school of architecture and to American and European crafts of the twentieth century. Mr. Elliott was well versed in the period and familiar with Sullivan's work and he was determined to restore the front of the building to its original intent. He replaced the oak doors with doors replicating the original design. He removed the three small windows and replaced it with single pane plate glass. Finally he removed the storm windows from the second floor and again let the original French windows be seen. (Elliott)

The Krause Music Store is significant primarily because it is the last of the 126 buildings worked on by Louis Sullivan, considered one of the greatest architects of the Chicago School of architecture. Sullivan believed that the function of a building gave rise to its form and that the two can and should work in concert with each other to be beautiful. (Szarkowski, 24-25) The catch-phrase "form follows function", while created by Sullivan to describe his ideas, is too simple a phrase to describe his philosophy fully. (Morrison, 196).

The Krause Music store's function was to be a place of music and life, the form had to draw in the passers-by had to bring them in to contemplate the instruments within. The display window was treated as a large scale picture, with an elaborate frame of decorative organic terra cotta surrounding it. The frame set off the display window, making it precious and increasing its importance.

Further, the frame of the façade is recessed and at an angle, creating a slight visual funneling effect. Not only does this draw the eye in, the recessed nature of the display and doors causes one to be pulled into the space and enter it without impediment. There are no doors or divid-

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ers barring you from entering the space of the building. Once in the embrace of the building, surrounded by it to the left, right and above, and standing on the tile work that spells “Krause”, it is a simple step to enter the store proper. The tile work extends into the vestibule, making it part of the interior of the building. In essence, you’ve subconsciously entered the building even before you open the door.

The activeness of the store front is contrasted by the second story. The second story apartment functions as a living space. The ornament is subdued and lighter, the windows elegant. Its lines are inviting, but not competing any way with the display below. The second story is capped with an elaborate cartouche which again arrests the eye. The cartouche has a strong vertical line downwards, down the center of the building towards the frame of the display window, which again draws the eye to the contents of that window.

The motifs of the decoration are elaborate, complex, and inspired strongly by nature. The terra cotta flows organically and moves the eye along the lines of the building in a very natural way. Sullivan viewed architecture as a living art, an art that needs to celebrate life and humankind’s place in it (Morrison, 196) and that passion can be seen not only in the Krause Music Store, but in countless other Sullivan buildings where he developed and displayed his talents. The Krause Music Store is a significant expression of Sullivan’s theory of organic functional architecture, and the last expression of a master.

The Significance of Louis Sullivan and the Chicago School

Sullivan is the progenitor of modern architecture and the inspiration of many great men who followed. (Morrison, 195) Students and collaborators of Louis Sullivan include Frank Lloyd Wright (creator of the famous Prairie Style school of architecture), Daniel Burnham (creator of the Burnham plan for Chicago and organizer & planner of the Columbian Exposition), and Dankmar Adler (with whom Sullivan created The Auditorium Building and the Wainwright Building). He successfully pulled together many ideas that had been developed independently and creating a new philosophy and a new art of building. (Morrison, 196)

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Sullivan forged a new path in architecture. He abandoned the imagery of the past and — with the help of new construction techniques — formulated a new visual language. (Szarkowski, 24). He was not alone in this new style, others also took advantage of the devastation wrought by the Chicago Fire and the technology that allowed steel framework construction to create a whole new style of building. This style came to be known as The Chicago School and Louis Sullivan was at the vanguard.

The Chicago School of architecture is characterized by and celebrates the steel construction that is its skeleton. The steel technology had reached a point that allowed for the first time tall and relatively slender buildings with many windows, thus creating the first skyscrapers. Before this, one needed massive stone walls to support the upper stories. The taller the building, the thicker the walls, or the more massive the base. But now buildings could soar. The upper stories and roof could now be hung on strong steel, and more delicate structures could be made. The steel beams of the structure would often be emphasized and/or decorated...not concealed. This gave the buildings strong vertical lines, such as in Sullivan's Guaranty (now Prudential) Building in Buffalo, New York. (Szarkowski, 102–119). The form, function, and construction of the building were all unified into one bold statement. Chicago School architecture can still be seen in many city buildings, not just in Chicago, but around the country. It was a positive, modernist movement that spoke of progress and influenced architecture for decades to come.

Sullivan wrote extensively on his philosophy of art and architecture, its relation to humanity and nature, and the promise of democracy and what it means to the human spirit. His famous "Inspiration" essay was read before the Third Annual Convention of the Western Association of Architects in Chicago in 1886. Over three hundred architects were present while he laid out a summary of architecture as organic growth in very poetic terms. Other essays included, "Ornament in Architecture", "Objective and Subjective", and the series (later collected) *Kindergarten Chats*. His final book, *The Autobiography of an Idea*, began as a series of articles for the *Journal of the A.I.A.* (Morrison, 198).

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Some of the more famous Louis Sullivan buildings include:

The Auditorium Building, Chicago (1889)
Wainwright Building, St. Louis (1890)
Bayard Building (now Bayard-Condict Building), New York (1898)
The Transportation Building at the Columbian Exposition (1893)
Carson, Pirie, Scott store, Chicago (1899)

In the latter part of his life, Louis Sullivan also designed a series of banks throughout the Midwest. He did 8 in total (Morrison, pg 174). The first of which was the National Farmers' Bank at Owatonna, Minnesota (1908).

Louis Sullivan's last work was the Krause Music Store in 1921-22.

WORKS CITED

Chicago City Council Notes. *Journal of Chicago City Council Notes*; Reports of Committees.

Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, *Summary of Information on The Krause Music Store*. August 18, 1971.

Elliott, Scott. Former owner of building. Phone interview.

Greengard, Bernard C. "Sullivan/Presto/The Krause Music Store", *The Prairie School Review*. Third Quarter, 1969.

HABS report No. ILL-1073. Krause Music Store (now the Coleman Funeral Home)

Morrison, Hugh. *Louis Sullivan, Prophet of Modern Architecture*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 2001.

Szarkowski, John. *The Idea of Louis Sullivan*. Boston: Bulfinch Press, 2000.

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LOCATION OF ORIGINAL WORKS

Burnam Library, Art Institute of Chicago (312.443.3671)

Drawings on Microfilm. Microfilm 1973, 1, Reel 20: Frame numbers 257–262A

257 - Façade elevation with palm (façade only) at first and second floor, and vertical section through façade looking North

258 – Basement and First Floor Plans

259 – Second Floor Plan and Longitudinal Building Section Looking South

260 through 262A – Correspondences regarding Krause Music Store.

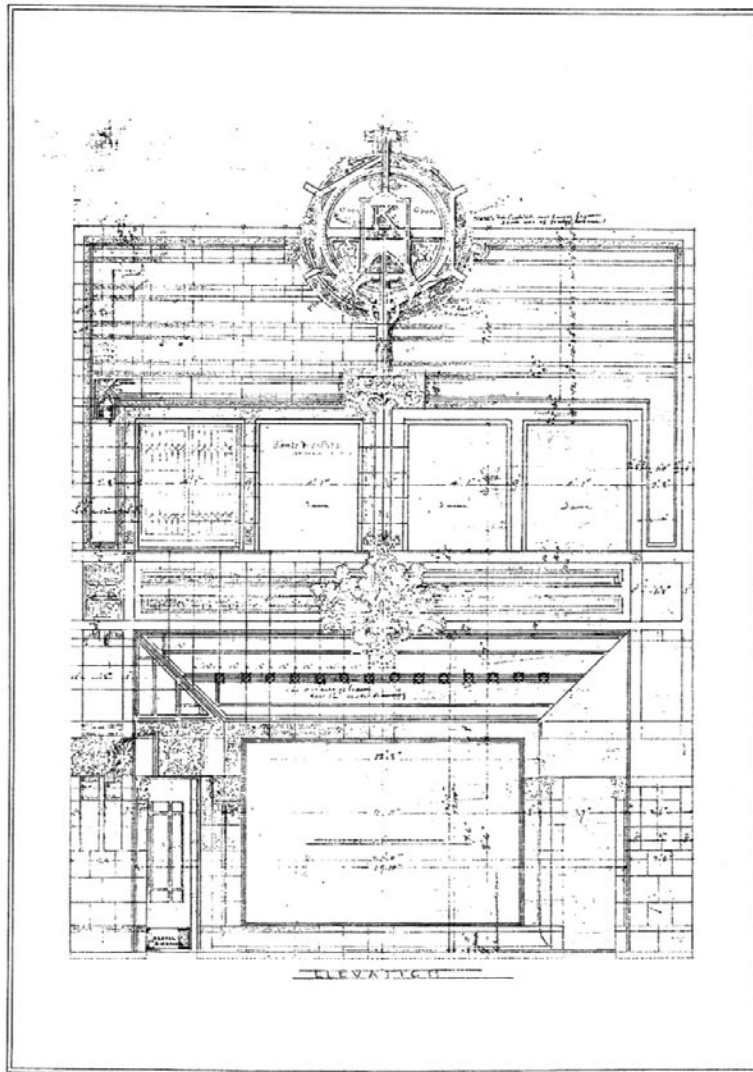
Original Drawings are in the possession of Seymour Persky. Framed Linens. Previous owner, Lord Palumbo.

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Elevation of Facade, Louis Sullivan
Burnam Library, Art Institute of Chicago (312.443.3671)
Microfilm 1973, 1, Reel 20, Frame 257

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Krause Music Store as it appears today

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Krause Music Store as it appeared in 1969
(Greengard, 10)

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Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 232 in Circuit Court Partition, being a subdivision of that part of lot 1, lying northeasterly of Lincoln Avenue, in Court Partition of the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 18, Township 40 North, Range 14 East of the Third Principal meridian, in Cook County Illinois.

Boundary Justification

Chicago city lot as described on Plat of Survey, May 1998