

# National Headquarters, March on Washington

Why is preservation so important? What can we learn from the subject we are preserving and is it worth the impact? How do we decide what's significant enough to preserve? And how do we preserve a structure that is still fertile allowing for new history to grow without stunting this growth? The National Headquarters for the March on Washington contributed to one of the most important events of our history; but it also acted as a hub for a variety of organizations producing rich Black history before and after The March on Washington. So do we allow for the other pieces of history to become forgotten or overshadowed by The March by preserving the building as a type of museum or do we preserve the building through the life breathing through the structure by the people occupying it? Living Radical Preservation gives birth to new history while ensuring the celebration and honor of the powerful history behind us.



The National Headquarters is layered with history having affected small groups of people all the way to the entire world. So how do we choose what to preserve? Is this choice governed by impact on the masses or how impactful it was to the few? There is a fierce battle of erasure versus futurity within this site. When I visited The National Headquarters on



9/11/25, I noticed there was not a single indication of its history, nothing about the march or the other organizations that used this space. The plaque installed in 2023 had already been removed by the time I had visited. This lack of preservation erases the struggle of Black people that fought for the rights we have today, it erases the lessons we can learn from those who have failed and succeeded, we lose sources of inspiration for young Black people that are struggling to thrive in this climate.

The argument could be made that this space would serve the community efficiently by continuing its operation as an apartment building. The lack of affordable housing emphasizes the need to utilize all of the space we have available in the city. The March on Washington is also a well known event in history that has become a part of our standard education curriculums. So why dedicate an entire apartment building with people living in it to preserve a piece of history that already has means of preservation? Why not solely rely on pictures in textbooks and the words of your teachers?

The impact of words and pictures in a textbook do not compare to physically experiencing the space itself. A great architect is one who studies theory and history as well as

building and learning through experience. This is due to the impact that experience has on our mind and body. Not only are we able to better understand this history through experience but when dealing with information sources such as textbooks, key details and other important pieces of history may be excluded as well. Radically preserving this building allows for a lasting impact on generations to come and the telling of important stories forgotten over time.