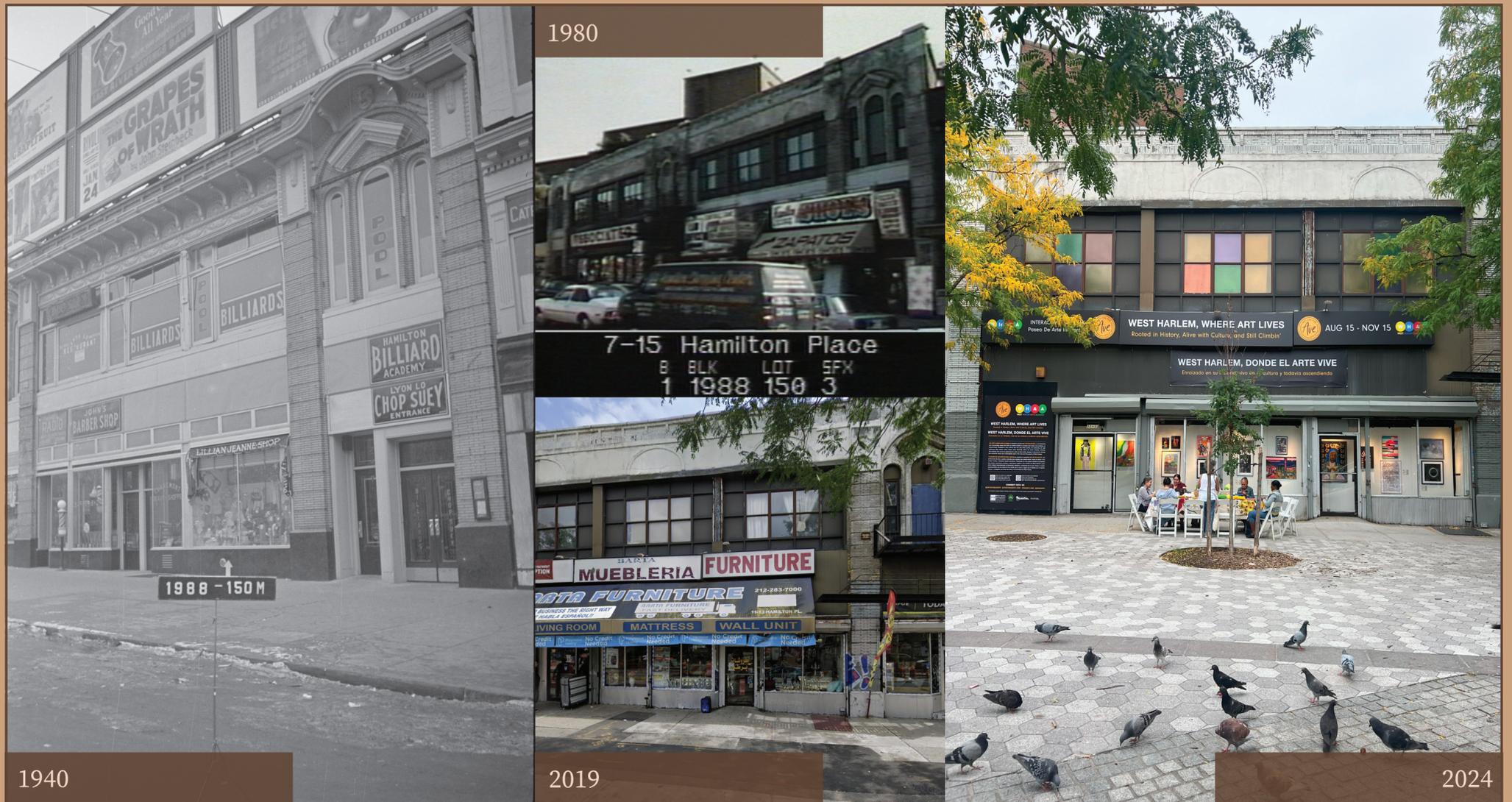


THEN N NOW

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This case study explores the evolution of a building that has remained largely unchanged in its physical form but continues to embody a vibrant spirit of community. The building has served a range of purposes over the years—transitioning from a barber shop to a radio station, shoe store, church, furniture store, and now a temporary art gallery. Though its function has evolved, the essence of its role in bringing new opportunities to the community remains intact, as the building has continuously adapted to meet the needs of its surrounding neighborhood.

INTANGIBLE HISTORY

The building's transformation has been driven more by its changing uses than by any significant alterations to its physical structure or décor. This reflects a blend of the building's tangible presence and its intangible significance. While its physical form has not dramatically shifted, its purpose makes it difficult for people to form lasting connections with the space. One of the key concerns is the uncertainty surrounding the building's future. With the threat of gentrification and the possibility of demolition or redevelopment, we face the risk of losing a space that has been a symbol of Harlem's changing demographic. The arrival of wealthier businesses could drive up the cost of living, displacing longtime residents and local businesses. However, the building still plays a crucial role in the community. The current art gallery, though temporary, provides a platform for local artists—many of whom are from Harlem—to showcase their work to their own community. This gives a sense of belonging and pride in the neighborhood. Additionally, the building's strategic location on Broadway, surrounded by accessible public transportation options, ensures that it remains visible and prominent to the community.