

Emma Marconi
HP Studio I
Due: October 18, 2010

Documentation and Analysis of Historic Buildings

The Rose mausoleum was built in 1931 for William R. Rose, a lawyer and founder of Proskauer Rose LLP. The mausoleum, commissioned by his wife, Clara S. Rose, is located on the Columbine Plot at Woodlawn Cemetery. Clara chose their family friend and architect, Ely Jacques Kahn, to design the structure while its materials and construction were handled by the contractor, Presbrey-Leland Studios.¹

The Rose family, emigrating from Germany to the United States in 1849, has a long and successful history. In 1878 at the age of 24 William R. Rose founded the firm today known as Proskauer Rose LLP.² On October 7, 1885 he married Clara Siegel Rose with whom he had two children (Alfred Leopold Rose and Lilian Rose Wheeler), three grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. Thanks to William's prosperous law firm, the family had the ability to live in both the Plaza Hotel and the Savoy Plaza Hotel (where William died on November 19, 1930).³ As early as 1900, the U.S. Census shows the Rose family employed three servants, one of whom, Hattie Freund, stayed with the family for over 55 years.⁴ She had no family of her own and as a result she was buried within the mausoleum. Another family friend buried with the Rose's is Jack Blumstein, "companion of Joan Wheeler Leidesdorf," who was William and Clara's granddaughter (Rose). Blumstein, owner of Blumstein's Department Store on 125th Street, promoted equal rights during a time of racial segregation and was praised as a Harlem leader in an Amsterdam News editorial (Greenberg 112). Upon the death of Clara Siegel Rose she stated that any

¹ Woodlawn Cemetery (New York, N.Y.). Woodlawn Cemetery records, 1863-1999. Rose 896. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

² "Obituary I -- No Title." *New York Times (1923-Current file)*. 21 Nov. 1930, ProQuest Historical Newspapers New York Times (1851-2006) w/ Index (1851-1993), ProQuest. Web. 4 Oct. 2010. <<http://www.proquest.com>>.

³ Rose Family Documents. Rose Mausoleum, Columbine Plot, Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York.

⁴ Ancestry.com. *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

blood relative and their spouse could be placed within the mausoleum if cremated or outside in the ground depending on availability. Currently, none of the 10 ground plots are occupied.⁵

Well known architect, Ely Jacques Kahn, designed the mausoleum along with an apartment and library for the Rose family. Kahn is known for his use of setbacks and large majestic entrances which can both be seen on a smaller scale at the mausoleum. While Kahn designed the mausoleum, the construction was allotted to Presbrey- Leland, a memorial building company. Presbrey- Leland used fine hammered, white Dummerston granite from their quarries at West Dummerston, Vermont for the exterior of the Rose mausoleum. This granite was also used for the highly polished interior floor while the walls of the interior are composed of a highly polished white Vermont marble.⁶

Located on the Columbine plot, the Rose mausoleum is horizontally lined up with its neighboring mausoleums. The plot was laid out in a formal manner: From the roadway a stone path flanked by two urns and carefully placed shrubs was to lead the viewer directly to the entrance. Today while the urns are present the shrubs and walkway are gone. Whether they were ever there is unknown.⁷

The south facing, Art Deco inspired, rectangular mausoleum rests on three steps and has a tripartite roof (Figure1). On the façade these steps are interrupted by two larger projecting blocks flanking the entryway guiding the viewer and establishing a clear path to the doorway. All edges of the structure are chamfered and have two deep setbacks. This technique along with the roof creates an optical illusion that the structure is battered when it is vertical. The oversized doorframe consists of two architraves and an above piece of granite with centrally placed vertical lines. The bronze door has undulating patterns creating a sense of rhythm. On the door two of the convex vertical members are larger and have a Greek Revival inspired design including a linear pattern overlaid with x's and

⁵ Rose Family Documents. Rose Mausoleum, Columbine Plot, Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York.

⁶ Woodlawn Cemetery (New York, N.Y.) Woodlawn Cemetery records, 1863-1999. Rose, Clara. 2016.009. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

⁷ Kahn, Ely Jacques. William R. Rose Mausoleum, Woodlawn Cemetery (N.Y.). NYDA. 1978.001.06500-1978.001.06505. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

rectangles in between semicircle forms. Both side elevations consist of two large pieces of granite only interrupted by four vents at the wall's edges while the rear elevation has a stained-glass window (Figure 2). This deeply recessed tripartite, geometrically patterned, stained-glass window was a modern Art Deco interpretation of a Palladian window. Similarly, it consists of three parts (one larger flanked by two smaller) separated by flat pieces of granite. On the interior there is a bench below the window, both of which are on axis with the doorway. The east and west interior walls are formed by crypts. The east side crypts are full while only the top is full on the west side below which is an opening where urns are now kept.

Upon first glance the Rose mausoleum appears to be a straightforward design; however, by formally analyzing the structure its intricacies are revealed. For example, the structure's massive appearance derives from the large blocks of granite used throughout the exterior. The large blocks reduce the amount of horizontal joints, which were strategically placed. On the rear elevation the main joint lines up with the smaller windows while the larger window protrudes into the upper block of granite. This affect allows the upper block to be locked into the lower structure giving the mausoleum the appearance of strength and power. The façade doorframe is also enlarged and projects above the horizontal stone joint increasing its massiveness and adding to the façade's monumentality. Another architectural technique used to further enlarge the mausoleum is the roof where one's eye continues the stepped pattern creating a triangle reaching into the sky.

Numerous architectural forces are at work to ground the mausoleum, creating a stable and imposing appearance. The overall massiveness of the structure is the first contributing factor. The second is the progressive chamfering. The third is the structure's base which creates a stable triangular form. As a result, it further grounds the structure emphasizing its place on the lot.

An interesting feature of the façade is the off centered name plate lowered to eye level. Originally, the rear elevation window was to be placed above the door (Figure 3). This would allow

no room for the family name.⁸ As a result, I believe it was moved to eye level on the east side which also happens to correspond to William R. Rose's tomb. He was the head of the family and the Rose family name is on axis with the head of his crypt. In addition, it is possible that when the window was moved to the rear elevation the name plate remained for aesthetic reasons.

Overall, the Rose mausoleum was built to honor William R. Rose and his family in hopes that no family member would be forgotten. Through its design, the mausoleum dominates the plot with its massiveness and emphasizes the power, strength and wealth of the family.

⁸ Rose Family Documents. Rose Mausoleum, Columbine Plot, Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York.

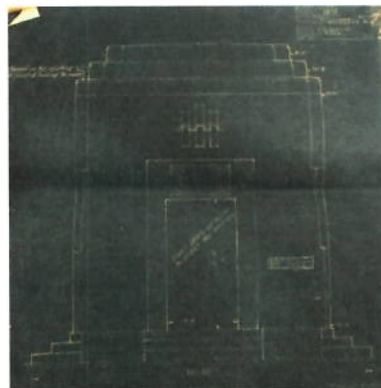
Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Woodlawn Cemetery (New York, N.Y.) Woodlawn Cemetery records, 1863-1999. Rose, Clara. 2016.009. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Works Cited

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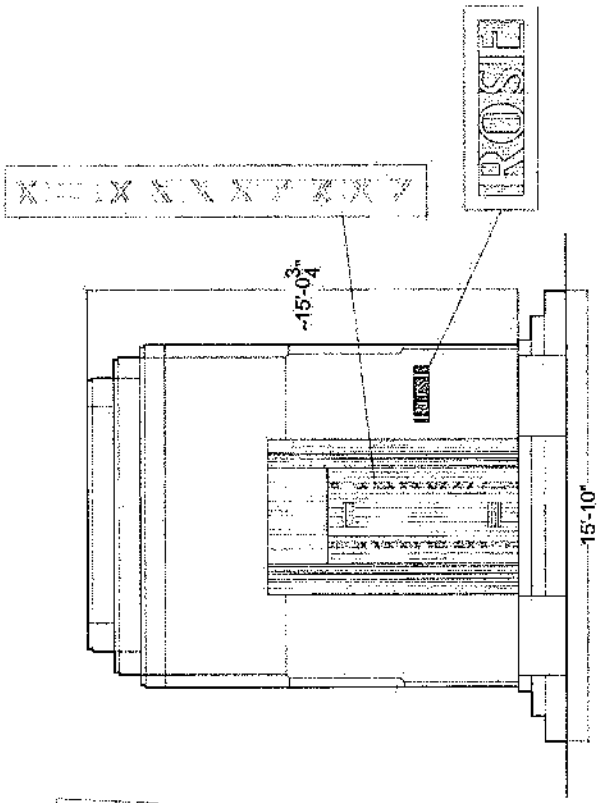
Kahn, Ely Jacques. William R. Rose Mausoleum, Woodlawn Cemetery (N.Y.). NYDA. 1978.001.06500-1978.001.06505. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

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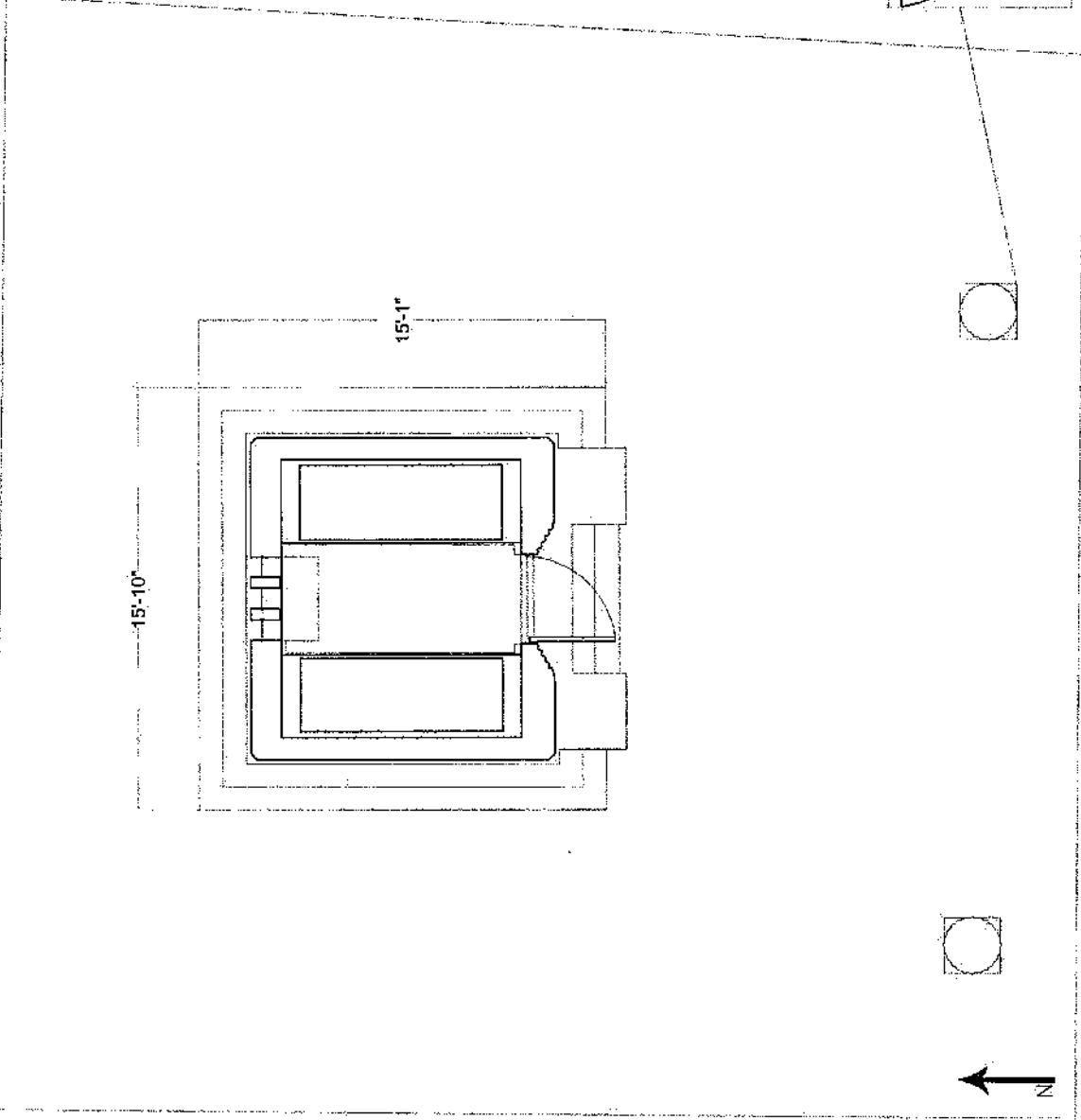
Rose Family Documents. Rose Mausoleum, Columbine Plot, Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York.

Woodlawn Cemetery (New York, N.Y.). Woodlawn Cemetery records, 1863-1999. Rose 896. Avery Drawings & Archives, Columbia University, New York, NY.

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ELEVATION

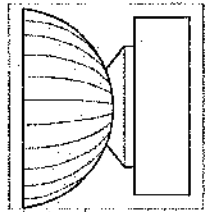


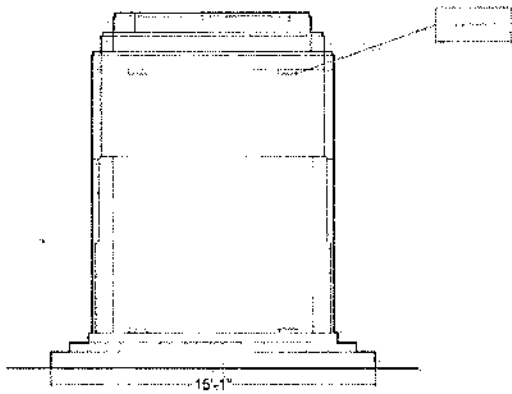
PLAN ON LOT

PROBLEM 3: DOCUMENTATION AND ANALYSIS
 OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
 ROSE MAUSOLEUM- COLUMBINE PLOT
 HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDIO I: READING BUILDINGS
 FACULTY: FRANCOISE BOLLACK, WARD DENNIS,
 ANDREW DOLKART, CLEARY LARKIN

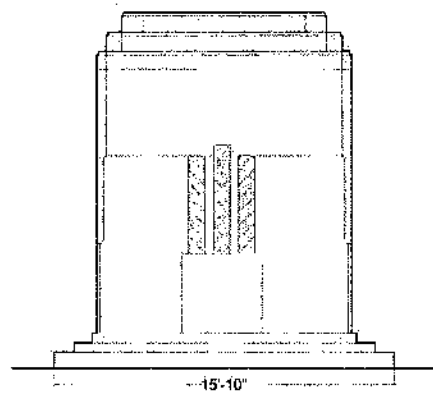
EMMA MARCONI
 OCTOBER 18, 2010

SCALE: PLAN, SECTION, ELEVATIONS 1/2" = 1'-0"
 DETAILS 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

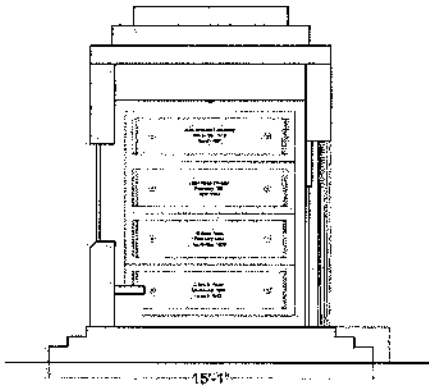




SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



SECTION

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 HISTORIC BUILDINGS:
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