

M. Leibovitz Building  
1818 E. Seventh Avenue  
Ybor City (Tampa)  
Hillsborough County  
Florida

HABS No. FL-266

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HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

M. LEIBOVITZ BUILDING

HABS No. FL-266

- Location: 1818 East Seventh Avenue, Ybor City, Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.
- Present Use: Demolished 1973 by the Urban Renewal Agency, City of Tampa. This report was written before the demolition.
- Significance: The building is representative of the transition between old and modern construction styles. Its balcony was the last of the old Ybor City balconies, and the railings and decorative patterns were formed from traditional wrought iron. The new construction feature of the balcony was the reinforced concrete slab supported by 3" pipe columns. This replaced the usual wooden decking which was composed of several framing components.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1917.
2. Original and subsequent owners: The building is located in the Ybor City subdivision, Block 47, lot 2, which was part of original holdings of Vincent Martinez Ybor, who was one of the founders of Ybor City cigar industries. Bankruptcy forced sale of the building to the Columbia Bank of Ybor City in 1932, but it was purchased again by Manuel Leibovitz in September 1944. He then divided ownership between his family, and after several sales, half interests were shared by Miriam Hirsch and Paulyne Fleischman. In 1967, The Urban Renewal Agency, City of Tampa, purchased the building which they demolished in June of 1973.

The following title records of the building are compiled from Chelsea Title and Guaranty Company.

1887

Deed recorded January 25, 1887, filed June 18, 1887  
Book X, page 64  
Vincent Martinez Ybor and wife  
to  
Ybor City Land and Improvement Company

1896

Deed recorded October 1, 1896, filed October 12, 1896  
Book N1, page 65  
Ybor City Land and Improvement Company  
to  
Angelo Caccitore and Carlos Palermo

1915

Deed recorded August 17, 1915, filed August 18, 1915  
Book 234, page 119  
Angelo Caccitore, widower  
to  
Maria Castellano Palermo

1915

Deed recorded September 7, 1915, filed September 7, 1915  
Book 229, page 134  
Maria Castellano Palermo, widow  
to  
Manuel Leibovitz

1917

Deed recorded March 16, 1917, filed March 19, 1917  
Book 235, page 144  
M. C. Palmero and Angelo Palermo  
to  
Manuel Leibovitz, (reaffirmation of deed made at the death of  
Angelo Palermo)

1929

Deed recorded January 16, 1929, filed January 17, 1929  
Book 849, page 179  
Manuel Leibovitz and wife Mildred  
to  
Manuel Leibovitz, Incorporated

1929

Deed recorded July 19, 1929, filed July 24, 1929  
Book 871, page 315  
Manuel Leibovitz, Incorporated, a Corporation  
to  
Manuel Leibovitz and wife  
(During the Depression, Manuel Leibovitz declared bankruptcy.  
Marcus F. Brown was appointed Special Master of sale and the  
Columbia Bank of Ybor City, a Corporation, assumed deed  
ownership to the building.)

1932

Deed recorded January 8, 1932, filed January 8, 1932  
Book 944, page 13  
Marcus F. Brown, Special Master  
to  
The Columbia Bank of Ybor City, a Corporation

1944

Deed recorded September 6, 1944, filed September 7, 1944  
Book 1290, page 496  
Columbia Bank of Ybor City, a Corporation  
to  
Rose, Manuel Leibovitz and wife Mildred  
(Manuel immediately divided the ownership of the land and  
building to his family):

--1/2 interest to Sam Steinberg and wife (the daughter of Manuel  
Leibovitz)

--1/2 interest to Manuel Leib and wife (son of Manuel)

1945

Deed recorded April 18, 1945, filed April 18, 1945  
Book 1321, page 245  
Sam Steinberg and wife Rose  
to  
Miriam Hirsch

1959

Deed recorded June 8, 1959, filed June 18, 1959  
Book 311, page 646  
Manuel Leibovitz and wife Mildred  
to  
Miriam Hirsch and Paulyne Fleischman. (This deed clarified  
title of ownership, giving 1/2 each to Fleischman and Hirsch).

1967

Deed recorded December 27, 1967, filed December 28, 1967  
Book 1184, page 222  
Miriam Hirsch and Paulyne Fleischman  
to  
Urban Renewal Agency, City of Tampa

1973

Building demolished by Urban Renewal Agency.

3. Contractor: Logan and Company, local contractors.
4. Original plans and construction: The original plans included a single store space on the first floor and a residence on the second floor.
5. Alterations and additions: A mezzanine was added in the interior in the 1920s. Interior balcony was added in the rear at an unknown date. These were among the few alterations made during the building's use, and the building was in its approximate original form when it was demolished.

B. Historical Context:

Manuel Leibovitz was born in 1889, in a small town outside Bucharest, Rumania. At the time of his birth, the Slavic Nations of Europe were undergoing a tremendous growth of Nationalism. This nationalism was based upon racial pride, and for Jewish families such as the Leibovitzs' it was a period of intense discrimination.

The Nationalistic unrest of Europe forced millions to emigrate to the New World in hopes of a better life. Manuel Leibovitz, at the age of twenty left his homeland for New York with the same aspirations. After remaining in New York City for a few years, he became acculturated to the American way of life and decided to reunite with his cousin in West Tampa, Florida. Manuel arrived by train to Tampa in 1907 and temporarily joined his cousin in the dry goods business, working for \$3.00 a week.

By 1915, he had established himself as a successful businessman. He bought out the owner of a store across from the future site of his own building. By 1917, he had constructed the Leibovitz building.

From 1917 to 1930 a furniture store leased the first floor, but in 1932 the fall of the stock market and the decline in business forced Leibovitz into bankruptcy. His continued perseverance in business allowed him to purchase again the building in 1944, which he sold in divided interests to his family.

Leibovitz then moved his dry goods business adjacent to the Leibovitz building. He presently manages the Sunshine Department Store with his son, Walter Leib. The Leibovitz family is representative of the many ethnic groups who resided in Ybor City and became prosperous and thriving American citizens.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The building's most distinctive feature is its balcony with its unique decorative iron work.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The two-story rectangular building measures 36'x 85' and is 28' high. The front elevation is five bays.
2. Foundation: Brick.
3. Walls: Side and rear walls are common brick with headers at every seventh course. Side walls have no openings. Back-up bricks are locally called "sand brick" and are made of lime and

sand. Front wall is face brick. The building is laid up in running bond with no decoration except the parapet on top with a small pediment in its center. Short pilasters with corbeled decoration stand on each side of the parapet and next to the pediment. The parapet also has evenly spaced corbeled decoration. The pediment includes the letters "M. LEIBOVITZ" with "1917" above the name. There is a running cap of headers at the top.

4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls and center columns support wood trusses. A deep reinforced concrete beam spans the storefront and doorway openings. This concrete beam also supports the concrete balcony slab. Interior trusses support wood floor framing.
  5. Balcony: The front has a balcony across its entire facade. This balcony is supported on 3" pipe columns set into concrete in the sidewalk and by a continuous pour with the concrete beam above the storefront openings. The balcony roof is supported on 2" pipe columns. The roof is framed with 1" pipe and standard pipe fittings. A framework of pipes and "tee"s run from the building to the columns. There are no supporting brackets or ties. The roof is galvanized metal without guttering. The balcony railing is 1-1/2" pipe attached to the supporting columns with reducing pipe "tee"s. The balusters are 1"x 1/4" bar stock, bend in tight corners and welded together. They are welded to 1" x 1/4" bar stock at their tops and 1" x 1/2" channel irons at the bottoms. This frame is then connected between the columns.
  6. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: The first floor door to the store is recessed with show windows on both sides. The door is double and has a solid plate glass light. Very large transoms are above the doorways and show windows on the first floor. The doorway to the upper floors is to the right of the storefront and has a solid plate glass window. The door on the second floor is centered between the windows. It has no voussior, merely an angle support for the bricks.
    - b. Windows: The second floor has one-over-one double-hung sash windows.
  7. Roof: Flat with built-up roofing.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans: The first floor consists of one rectangular store space. Second floor was being demolished and therefore inaccessible.

2. Stairways: Exterior stairway is located to the right of the storefront and opens directly onto the street.
3. Flooring: First floor is concrete. Second floor is wood. The floor of the entryway is of terrazzo.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces south and is one block west to the Gutierrez Building, HABS No. FL-263.
2. Historical landscape design: The building is situated on a sidewalk with black and white hexagonal concrete tiles in unusual design.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interviews:

Leibovitz, Manuel, June 25, 1973

Leib, Walter, son of Manuel Leibovitz, Summer 1973

Pizzo, Tony, local historian for Tampa, Florida, July 25, 1973

B. Bibliography:

Tax records, Tax Assessor's Office, Hillsborough County Courthouse, Tampa, Florida.

Title Records, Chelsea Title and Guaranty Company, Tampa, Florida.

Prepared by:

L. Glenn Westfall,  
Historian  
and

Donald W. Barnes, Jr.,  
Architect

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Summer 1973

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was made possible by the National Park Service, the Florida Bicentennial Commission and the City of Tampa. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1973 at the HABS Field Office, Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Florida, by Professor Donald W. Barnes, Jr. (Architect, North Carolina State University), Field Supervisor; L Glenn Westfall (Hillsborough Community College), Historian; and four student architects: Steven E. Bauer (University of Kansas); Weldon E. Cunningham (University of Texas); Daniel L. Jacoby (Cornell University); and Amy Weinstein (University of Pennsylvania). The written documentation was edited in 1982 by Susan McCown, a HABS historian in the Washington, D. C. office, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. Walter Smalling, Jr. took the photographs in 1979.