

Schomburg Collection for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library

Individual Landmark

103 West 135th Street

Designation Date: February 3, 1981



Schomburg Collection for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library. Photo by Lorraine Colbert

Built as the West 135th Street Branch Library, the former Schomburg Collection building at 103 West 135th Street was designed in 1904 by the eminent firm of McKim, Mead & White. Small and dignified, the structure is one of the 11 elegant neo-classical buildings that the firm designed for the New York City Public Library system, under a generous grant from Andrew Carnegie.

Located in the heart of Harlem, the Library Branch became a center of black cultural events during the 1920s. The well-known Schomburg Collection on black history and culture, housed in the building, served as a magnet to countless intellectuals drawn to the area during the Harlem Renaissance. Distinguished by a fine architectural design, the building is also nationally significant as a cultural center, and a site where the documentation of the black experience was a long and important tradition.

[Read the full NYC LPC designation report here.](#)