

EVANSTON: A KINGDOM DIVIDED

EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

Christine: I get sad because people look at Chicago or tNew York. Maybe they look at new Orleans or Detroit, but very few people understand exactly how much in the center of all of these intersections Cincinnati was.[00:30:17] And that Evanston was part of that,

Deqah: Christine Anderson is a history professor at Xavier University. And for the past 12 years, she's been working with the Evanston community to preserve the music of King Records.

Vanessa: Even if you know nothing about Cincinnati, you probably have heard of King Records. Or at least you've heard the *songs* of King Records.

****JAMES BROWN TUNE****

Christine: Um, well, James Brown was the most famous, but he was really a latecomer to King, but Hank Ballard recorded, uh, the twist, um, at King.

Vanessa Quirk: Oh, yeah, that's a very famous song

****THE TWIST****

Vanessa: Deqah, do you know this song by Mickey & Sylvia. The song called "Love is Strange"?

Deqah: Love is Strange?

*****LOVE IS STRANGE*****

Deqah: Oh yeah.

Vanessa: Yeah, I love that song. So, that was recorded at King.

Deqah: Cool. Ok!

Christine: King records was one of the independent recording studios, uh, in the 1940s and fifties that gave birth to the new musical genre of rock and roll. And King was situated to do that because we had lots of migrants in Cincinnati, um, from the South, both white musicians who played country music and sang country music and African-American musicians who played gospel and rhythm and blues.

Vanessa: It all started thanks to a fellow named Syd Nathan.

Christine: ...who had a used record store on Central Avenue, right in the West End where there was a large African-American population. And over the Rhine that in the 1940s was mostly Appalachian people from both neighborhoods would come and buy records, and Sid got the idea to start recording.

Vanessa: In 1944, Sid rented a factory and ice warehouse in Evanston, a majority white neighborhood at the time, and he turned it into a studio. Then he did something pretty unusual for the time period.

Christine: He was one of one or two employers in the whole city of Cincinnati in the 1940s and fifties who hired, intentionally hired, a racially integrated labor force. The musicians, but also the people who pressed the records, packaged the records, who sent them out, um, were both white and black.[00:06:43] And you had to answer a question. Would you be willing to work with someone of a different color when you came to King? It really was very remarkable

Deqah: Sid Nathan hired African American musician, Henry Glover, as his artists and repertoire man — King's talent scout, essentially.

Vanessa: And Glover eventually became King's Vice President — which likely made him the first African-American to hold a Senior executive level position in any white owned company in Cincinnati's history.

Deqah: Nathan even hired Japanese Americans in the 1940s, at a time when anti-Japanese sentiment was at its peak in America.

Vanessa: Here's King Records' legendary Session Drummer, Mr. Philip Paul, and singer Otis Williams, describing Syd at a roundtable discussion in 2007.

Philip Paul: He was, uh, he was a little short guy, fat. He smoked a cigar, uh cigar juice dripped down his tie. And he was always in your face always. And, uh, he wanted excellence and, and that's what he strived for. He, uh, went out of his way to get the best musicians, the best technicians. And he didn't care about race. It was United Nations of music over there at King records. He didn't care about race. He just wanted the best. And he got the best.

[BEAT]

Vanessa: But as progressive as Sid Nathan was in some ways, in others he wasn't.

Deqah: According to Philip Paul, Otis Williams, and many of the other Black musicians at King, Sid exploited them.

Philip Paul: People were taking advantage of us. They took advantage of, so it came right.

Otis Williams: That's what I was saying. They got, they got us, they got us,

Philip Paul: Right. It was a lot of people. A lot of people think now I'm a wealthy man. You know, they hear my name, see my name in the newspaper. No. It's not like that.

Otis Williams: They took the money.

Philip Paul: We got robbed.

Otis Williams: They took your money. Didn't pay you. You had to go on the road and work.

Vanessa: King Musicians couldn't live off their records, and to make ends meet they often had to tour around the U.S., playing down South in segregated clubs, having to endure all kinds of indignities on the road.

Deqah: Or they got a job in the neighborhood. But, of course, they faced discrimination, even in Ohio.

Philip Paul: At that time, I'll tell you how tough it was. We would go into the studio and record and, uh, come out and go across the street and couldn't get a cup of coffee.

Deqah: Despite all the challenges inside and outside the studio, King musicians collaborated and created some epic music.

Vanessa: Music that, like the city of Cincinnati itself, brought different musical cultures into conversation.

DOTTIE MOORE TRACK

Deqah: Syd challenged musicians to cover songs in genres they'd never played before. He'd give an R&B artist an Appalachian song, say, or a bluegrass artist a doo wop song.

Vanessa: Philip Paul put down drum beats for country songs that — until that moment, had never even had a rhythm section.

Deqah: This cross-genre creativity totally worked. People bought these records...But for all the inventiveness, savvy, and talent at King - it never became a big name studio. Which isn't to take away from how influential it was.

Beverly: King records put American music on the map. I mean this little, this little place in this little town, actually changed the nature of music. It changed the nature of recording and it is something that we need to be very proud of.

Vanessa: That's Beverly Lamb, a long-time Evanston resident whose uncle was actually the postal worker who delivered King's Mail.

Deqah: Lots of folks in the community worked at or around King. In fact, the studio was a big jobs creator for the neighborhood.

Vanessa: Beyond providing jobs, King — with its, you know, undeniable cool factor — became a community landmark in Evanston. Especially as, in the 50s and 60s, as the neighborhood became progressively less White and more Black.

Christine: Now, I've, um, heard a story from an African-American woman who in the early sixties, when James Brown was first at King, And you know, that freeway wasn't there....and the long, long entrance ramp that was all a park. And she and her friends would walk over to King after school well, because who wouldn't, you know, maybe James Brown was there and little kids would dive through the dumpsters to find records that, uh, had been imperfectly pressed and take them home

Deqah: Mr. James Stallworth, Evanston's Community Council President, moved to the neighborhood in the 60s, and he remembers seeing one particular young kid hanging around King, one Bootsy Collins.

Mr. Stallworth: We could go by there, but actually we was, we knew as kids, we weren't supposed to be on that property.

Mr. Stallworth: Bootsy Collins would come and sit on the corner of, uh, Woodburn and Brewster and wait for some adult to come, you know, so he could go down there.

*****JAMES BROWN LIVE TRACK*****

Vanessa: A few years later, Bootsy would be playing back up in James Brown's band.

[BEAT]

Vanessa: As Bootsy's star was rising, King's was starting to fade. In 1968, Syd Nathan had a heart attack. And despite being a pretty, you know, controlling character of every other aspect of his recording studio, Nathan never actually owned the building itself. He only ever rented. So when he passed away, the company was sold, the building got new tenants, and by the following year no one was recording at King any more.

Deqah: To this day, King Records remains empty - and a bit of an eye sore.

Vanessa: How is it that one of the most important buildings in Rock & Roll history could be, essentially, abandoned? To understand why, you have to understand the story of the neighborhood that King Records calls home.

CREDITS

Deqah: Welcome to Urban Roots, the podcast that takes a deep dive into the little known stories from Urban history.

Vanessa: We're your hosts, I'm Vanessa Quirk

Deqah: And I'm Deqah Hussein-Wetzel. And welcome to the first episode of our three part series: Lost Voices of Cincinnati.

Vanessa: If you missed our prelude episode about Cincinnati's West End, then take a pause and check out that show first — 'cause it sets up some really important context for this series.

Deqah: In this episode, we're exploring the history of Evanston, which, as you'll soon find out, is rich with stories that go far beyond King Records.

Vanessa: We'll explore the ways that, over time, the neighborhood was divided and devastated.

Deqah: We'll talk to the people who are fighting hard to preserve its most precious landmarks — and bring the community back together.

[BEAT]

Veta Uddin: One thing I really love about the neighborhood is the history. Just the stories of what once was just what was here. Cause he could just picture in your mind, you just kinda, you know, and you have a bubble above your head, like, wow, that was here. This was there. And this was there. And I love to hear that because it's inspiring, you know, you want to bring back. What they once had because it's what people need in every neighborhood.

Vanessa: That's Veta Uddin, she's an Evanston resident and the Evanston Community Council's Beautification chair.

Deqah: Veta's been working to beautify Evanston for years now, and she's not afraid to get her hands dirty doing it. When I first met Veta, She was picking up trash along Montgomery Road.

Vanessa: We asked Veta what she knew about the Evanston of the 50s and 60s. And, while she wasn't alive then, she told us that

Veta Uddin: the elders, they talk about the sense of community and just how they loved the area and how beautiful it was, you know, homes. And the green spaces and the pools and the recreation and just the fellowship from what I've been told... Evanston had, a wealth of residents, businesses, green spaces, it was just, it was wonderful.

Deqah: Mr. Stallworth, who you heard at the top of the show, and Marye Ward, another member of the Evanston Community Council, remember the neighborhood as being a clean, safe place where, as a kid, you could just roam around and have fun.

Mr. Stallworth: Me and my cousin, we could only go from down by the dairy up to Clarion. And that was our range that we had to stay in, it was territory. So my uncle came out and whistled. We could hear it. We knew it was time to go home.

Mr. Stallworth: I remember when you could stand at white castle and look all the way up to Duck Creek. And I bet you couldn't find two pieces of paper on the street. It was just that just the way that peoples took care of their properties back then.

Marye: this area had gas lights and trees down every block. And like Mr. Stallworth said how the properties were kept. That's how Evanston looked before the expressway. So when we talk about it and go back and think of those memories, this was a totally different place to be. And you had like, anchors of families, like it was us. I can think of the Smiths, the wheels, the Charltons, there were groups and generations of people who actually lived in this community.

Marye: And we had a good time. I mean, from playing stick ball to collecting buckeyes to playing, just dirt ball, playing in mud. Um, it was a really great childhood.

Vanessa: And Evanston had a thriving business district, too.

Mr. Stallworth: It was all stores. Do you remember pop squatters being on the corner?

Marye: Yes, Yes.

Mr. Stallworth: On the other side, it was, you remember the cookie shop lady that did the cookies. She made cookies better than anybody in the world.

Vanessa: Here's Veta again.

Veta: Before that highway came in, Evanston was a very self-sustaining community. It had a lot of professionals here, teachers and social workers and doctors and bankers and such, and even had had a bank. It had a pharmacy, a lot of salons, nightclubs for entertainment, little delis, So barbershops was, you still have a few of those, lots of churches oh my goodness. I think they might've had maybe over 10 churches in this neighborhood.

ST. MARK'S - BEFORE

Deqah: But of all the churches in Evanston, St. Mark's was the most impressive.

[BELL TOWER SOUNDS]

Vanessa: It was designed in the early 1900s by the Architect Henry J. Schlacks, who founded the architecture school at Notre Dame.

Deqah: St. Mark's Catholic congregation requested that the church resemble two basilicas in Rome, and Schlacks *delivered*.

Vanessa: They imported building materials from Italy, and even made sure that the bricks were a lighter color, so they'd resemble the old stone churches of Rome.

Deqah: The design also featured a 130-foot bell tower, the kind of thing you could totally imagine dotting a Tuscan landscape.

Vanessa: In the end, St. Marks looked amazing - and cost about \$3.5 million in today's money.

Deqah: It opened in 1916, and at St. Mark's height in the mid-1950s, over 1200 families worshiped there regularly.

Vanessa: Fun fact — one of those families who worshiped there was the Kappelhoffs. A.k.a Doris Day's family. And Doris day has actually said she learned how to sing at St. Marks.

QUE SERA SERA

Deqah: Mr. Stallworth remembers just how busy St. Marks would be on Sundays.

Mr. Stallworth: It was exciting to sit on Sundays and see all these people leave from over there. It was. Thousands of people look like it was, would come to the service over...there was something going on all the time over there.

Vanessa: Marye Ward was just a kid at this time. And her first impressions of St. Mark's were more ... colorful .

Marye: So I would always walk past this place and I'd see these ladies and these long dresses, you know, they were kind of scary....were and what was going on. They were just these people and in my head, which I must say I had an imagination. I just figured they were like specters, who just, you know, protected the property. I did not know what nuns were until I got signed up to go to St. Mark's school.

Deqah: St. Mark's had a private Catholic school for elementary students. But Marye wasn't Catholic. The reasons her parents signed her up for St. Mark's, actually had nothing to do with religion at all.

Deqah: Why did your parents want you to go from the public school to the St. Marks?

Marye: For the education. It was, because, um, you know, there's a little thing called red lining that people don't really talk about a lot with education in African-American communities. So like, you know, you can build us a new school, but then you red line it, only these people can go. So that takes away from the experiences with the children learning, and some of the things that we can get in our schools. So, my parents were done with that. So the day that my mom walked me to St. Marks from our house, to sign me up, I'll never forget it. I remember what I was wearing. It was a blue dress with a giraffe on the front, and we walked up and we went into the school building and I saw those ladies in those black dresses. I watched them so carefully until I decided I wanted to be one of them. I thought it was the coolest thing. You had this job where you got to teach the kids. Then you had this house. It was like a clubhouse, you know, where y'all could go meet up and have lunch. And then you come back to the school and teach the kids. I didn't understand what nuns were...until I told my grandmother. Who absolutely had a fit. She said you can't be a nun because you're not Catholic. And I didn't know this. I was just caught up in what was going on. I thoroughly enjoyed going to St. Mark's.

Vanessa: It wasn't just the nun's lifestyle that attracted Marye as a kid. The building itself blew her away. The vaulted interior had these statues made from marble. There were Stained glass windows, and they would bathe the interior with colored light.

Marye: Um, I remember the first time I walked in St. Marks the church with all the patrimony. I was just in awe, just to see all these windows and these marble people and yeah. All this stuff going on.

Deqah: Everyone we talked to for this story, couldn't help but gush about how beautiful St. Mark's once was.

Vanessa: And how tragic it is to see this once-glorious building as it is today.

SAD TRUMPET MUSIC STARTS

[BEAT]

Deqah: What happened to Evanston in the 50s and 60s is very similar to what happened to its neighbor, Avondale, which we'll dive into in our next episode.

Vanessa: But To put it simply when the federal government began subsidizing mortgage loans for White people so they could buy suburban homes, a lot of White families did just that, they made the move to the 'burbs.

Deqah: As White people left, middle-class African American families moved in. Montgomery Road became the dividing line: White Families on one side, and Black families on the other.

Vanessa: in 1954, the first Black family crossed this unofficial boundary line. It was the family of an Episopalian Priest. Their church had been forced out of the West End and they had decided to relocate to Evanston.

Deqah: But pretty soon after they arrived, white neighbors **burned a cross on their yard** and tried to scare them out. Nevertheless, the family stayed. And Whites in the area soon fled, fast.

Vanessa: In 1950, Evanston had over 11,000 Whites. A decade later, the population dropped to just 3,500.

Deqah: On the flip side, the Black population went from only about 300 to over **10,000**.

Vanessa: But, predatory housing policies left a lot of Black families unable to keep or maintain their new homes. And the 60s set off a period of economic decline in the neighborhood.

Deqah: Then, in 1972, the Federal highway administration wanted to help those White suburbanites get to and from their new homes more quickly. So they built a new interstate, I-71.

[HIGHWAY SOUNDS]

Vanessa: And, they decided to have it roll right through the Black community of Evanston.

Deqah: They built it alongside St. Mark's, essentially cutting the neighborhood in half.

Vanessa: It's like the West End story all over again.

Deqah: Exactly, and all the residents we spoke to, Mr. James Stallworth, Ms. Beverly Lamb, Veta Uddin, and Marye Ward — they all remembered how the highway completely disrupted their neighborhood.

Veta: Um, but when the highway came in, it devastated the community oh so many businesses and homes were lost

Beverly: It broke the business district. The houses and the people who lived there were displaced. All the businesses on that side of the street, just, you know, left. if you go down, um, Montgomery, where, where you see the highway now, I mean, there were houses there. I just, I remember my grandmother there and my, uh, dad and uncle, and neighbors were just furious about it because they were never asked.

Veta: This is not something we wanted. We didn't have a choice in it, actually. I don't know if we even had a say, because lot of times when, you know, these kinds of major projects are going on, it's eminent domain, really we're going to do it, you know, move out the way we'll discuss all the after effects later.

Mr. Stallworth: I mean we had to move. I lost contact with lots of people that I knew. So it had a great impact on my life.

Marye Ward: So with them cutting off the streets, like I lost friends. I remember two guys specifically Kippy and Willie, I don't know what happened to 'em. It divided the neighborhood. So then it became like, I live at the bottom of Evanston. This is the top of Evanston. So it became very territorial.

Deqah: No matter where you walk around Evanston today, you can see how the highway completely changed this neighborhood — and not for the better.

[BEAT]

Carrie: Every single residential street along the highway is a dead end now where it would have connected. If you look at either like an aerial map of the neighborhood, you can really tell that there's just this cut right through the neighborhood.

Deqah: Carrie Rhodus is a historic preservationist and an Americorps volunteer with the Ohio history service corps.

Carrie: Another thing I find really interesting is that there's an on-ramp to get onto the highway right here, but there's not an off ramp. There's not a way to get into Evanston directly from the highway.

Deqah: Carrie's been working with the Evanston community for a few years, so I asked her to show me the neighborhood. We started on Montgomery Road, which used to be the heart of Evanston's business district.

Carrie: [00:00:46] Before the highway, there were really businesses all the way down Montgomery road, which have pretty much been torn down. I have a historic photo that shows this. East side of Montgomery road, just buildings all the way down businesses, all the way down, um, in what is now grassy lots and the recreation center.

Deqah: I was really struck by just how much history had been lost. Like Dunlop Flats, a green book site that had been a safe haven for African Americans. It had been demolished. Just days before I went to the neighborhood,

Carrie: It was a woman owned business. She owned the building, there were apartments and two storefronts. And she owned the building for like 40 years and operated it herself. And there was like a cafe there that was on in the travel book, uh, as a designated safe place.

Deqah: It's not the only recent loss.

Carrie: So just in the last year and a half, really they've lost if you count the church, five buildings right in this area where we're standing now.

Deqah: The real estate market is starting to heat up in Evanston. Which means more and more buildings are being torn down, so developers can make a profit on new builds. And, if action isn't taken soon, St. Mark's could be next.

Deqah: We're walking up to Saint marks. Oh, I guess go ahead and describe what we're seeing.

Carrie: Okay. Um, so we're looking at a very large, mostly brick building. Um, it's got a stone foundation, it's a light colored brick, a red clay tile, uh, roof and stained glass windows all the way down the side.

Deqah: This is so amazing...walking up to the front of this church. There's like one, two, three, four, five arched entry points that are like a Portico to this gorgeous building, but it's like a little arcade and there's these gorgeous Corinthian columns.

[BEAT]

Deqah: Although we couldn't get inside, Marye Ward, the Evanston council member who went to St. Mark's as a kid, told us how, inside, the building has slowly been **deteriorating**.

Vanessa: You see, As Evanston's population declined in the 60s and 70s, the schools and churches started to decline too. By 1979, St. Mark's school was the only elementary school left in the neighborhood. But, even still, in 2002, St. Mark's school closed its doors.

Deqah: St. Mark's Catholic congregation dwindled too. Each year, fewer and fewer people showed up for Sunday Mass, and less and less money went into the coffers.

Marye: I can remember the decline in stages, when the pews left and the folding chairs came and it was just like, okay, I can understand, you know, I'm going to tell myself it's for a remodeling purposes, but they'd sold the pews out of the church.

Vanessa: On July 25, 2010, St. Mark's held its last service.

Marye: When the last bit of congregation left, the patrimony left. So all those marble statues, the Baptistry, the marble bowl, where they baptized the kids, all that's been taken out and sold. There's one piece of patrimony that can't come out unless you tear the building down. They made it and when they made this, they made this building to last, but the things that could come out have come out, even pieces of the railing at the organ.

Marye: So now when you go in, um, you, you can still see the role stained glass window. And what's really sad is I can remember the sun coming through and shining down on the pews and like the sprinkle of color, but the window hasn't changed nor has the sun. But when the sprinkle of light comes down, it falls on dust. Um, just decaying material. Uh, it's a hole in the ceiling, there's leaks over like the, the 12 stages of the cross, because

[BEAT]

Marye: If you think of it as a person that you think of as a person that you knew young and just strong and, and full of vitality, now this person is on life support...and you can just, you can see the shadow of how the person used to be. That's how it is going into St. Marks.

Vanessa: Mr. Stallworth feels similarly.

Mr. Stallworth: Wow, that's all you can say, how they let it go. And even though I'm not a Catholic it's heartbreaking. Well, we got a big hole too.

Deqah: Oh, there's a hole in the building,

Marye: On the roof.

Deqah: Wow.

Deqah: Carrie told me that that hole is a BIG problem. It's right over the altar area, so every time it rains, snows, or the wind picks up, the interior gets even worse.

Vanessa: Marye Ward is part of a group of people called The Mark that is working to purchase the building so they can save it.

Marye: Because it will get to a point where it will make more sense to tear it down versus trying to save it. And we're, we're getting close to that. The more and more we procrastinate with this purchase, getting this building.

Deqah: The idea isn't just to preserve St. Mark's for its unique architecture, but to transform it into an active community space.

Marye: The whole purpose of Saint Mark himself. The apostle Mark was to go out and do the good works in the community. That building can be brought back to replicate our namesake Saint Mark. And I'm not talking about making everybody Catholic. I'm talking about having a space in a place where our peers and our children and our grandchildren and future folks that live in Evanston will be safe in the place to be proud of.

Vanessa: Because of that tall bell tower, St. Mark's is one of Evanston's most noticeable landmarks — you can see it even from the highway. And Mary imagines a future where St. Mark's signifies to all of Cincinnati, and the world that, hey, Evanston is here.

Deqah: Plus, St. Mark's location makes it the perfect place to bring the neighborhood back together. Here's how Beverly Lamb envisions it.

Beverly: I looked at it as the bridge between both sides, being like right in the middle, you know, you can have activities and things that would bring everybody together because of its location.

Vanessa: Marye Ward agrees.

[00:53:21] **Marye Ward:** This would be a space that people could come and use. There's nowhere around in our community, that you can really rent a space and say, have, I don't know, a thousand people attend a wedding. There is so many different things that we could do in that particular building. If it were ours,

Deqah: Unfortunately, however, The Mark is still far from certain that they will acquire this building - let alone collect the funds necessary to repair and restore this historic landmark.

Vanessa: It definitely won't be easy, but it is possible.

Deqah: Yeah, there is a pathway for preservation — and even transformation. **King Records** is proving it.

SISTERS OF RIGHTEOUS SONG

[BEAT]

Vanessa: For some strange reason, despite King's international acclaim among musicians, for a while there, people just didn't seem to be interested in preserving King. But, we were told, that's finally changing.

Kent: And it's a beautiful thing because all around the world, we're hearing about how even other record companies, you know, your Motown's or your stacks and individuals like that are wanting to help us because we have something that a lot of them didn't get a chance to keep. And that was the actual original building.

Deqah: That's Kent Butts.

Kent: I'm the chair of the King Records legacy committee. And, my father is one of the original doo-wop artists from King Records, Otis Williams.

Vanessa: We talked to Kent and his colleague Elliott Ruther, who are both working hard with legacy King artists and a whole host of other people to preserve King. They told us there have been attempts to do so in the past, but they've always fallen through. But Kent and Elliott believe that, **this time**, King will be brought back to life. Here's Elliott:

Elliott: And I would say that we're in a very different place than ever. It's never been so good. The momentum is tremendous.

Deqah: That Momentum is thanks to a lot of people's hard work over the past decade, especially by Ms. Anzora Atkins, the Evanston Community Council President before Mr. Stallworth.

Vanessa: In 2008 Ms. Atkins and others in the city were able to get a historic marker placed at King, and, in 2015, they got it designated as a local landmark.

Deqah: In 2018 the city of Cincinnati acquired King Records buildings, including the main studio. They did something called mothballing -- which is essentially stabilizing the building and getting it secure so it could be safely vacant.

Elliott: [00:49:42] Um, but it, but it is a tremendous difference truly for the city to acquire these buildings with the purpose of, preservation, you know, recognizing the, uh, The cultural heritage, the civil rights heritage.

Kent: We are blessed that we have a city that's so far has been backing us in the format of what we're in to go 100% forward.

Kent: That consists of a lot of different individuals from business people, musicians, the Evanston community. We, uh, have their president on our committee, so that gumbo together at present it's, what's working toward the movement of what we're going to do with the king building specifically.

Deqah: That Gumbo of people, including artists like Otis Williams, Phillip Paul, and Bootsy Collins and Evanston community members like Mr. James Stallworth — that's what Kent and Elliott believe will make this effort successful.

Elliott Ruther: You know, a regular topic is how the neighborhood will be able to engage in the building with the right kind of programming

BLACK & PROUD SONG

Elliott Ruther: We've worked with students and some professors at UC DAAP that have captured quite a bit of thoughts from the Evanston neighborhood when it comes to other ways to incorporate how these buildings can come to life, and make sure that that voice of the neighborhood is there...and how youth can be engaged in the king records history...whether it's, uh, James Brown's recording of 'Say It Loud', there are kids from the neighborhood. That are singing Black and proud.

That that's, that goes back to the, to, to the King history.

Deqah: Kent wants the building to preserve not just the musician's legacies, but all the people in the community that made King possible.

Kent: That's why it's so important for us that not just the artists, but those that pack the records, those that worked in there doing other jobs, secretarial or whatever, all of that is part of the history and the legacy of King records to include the community around it.

Vanessa: Whether King becomes a museum where you learn about its history. Or a recording studio, where Evanston residents can come make music. Or a neighborhood center, or all of the above, King *will* be a part of this community

Deqah: And hopefully, preserving King Records' history and legacy will just be the beginning of what's to come in Evanston.

Vanessa: With any luck, St. Marks will follow, and also become a community landmark where people can gather and feel a real sense of pride in their neighborhood.

Deqah: For a community like Evanston that has so many divisions, physical, social, and even psychological, preserving these buildings is not just about preserving Evanston's past. These buildings could be the way this community comes together and, *just maybe*, preserves its future.

Deqah: Thank you for listening to Urban Roots. We're hosted by me, Deqah Hussein-Wetzel and Vanessa Quirk.

Vanessa: We're edited by Connor Lynch and mixed by Tim Soarce. Our theme music is by Adaam James Levin-Areddy. Story editing by Max Miller.

Deqah: A big thank you to the folks in Cincinnati who made this episode possible: Christine Anderson, Andrea Gutmann-Fuentes, Carrie Rhodus, Mr. James Stallworth, Ms. Beverly Lamb, Veta Uddin, Marye Ward, Elliott Ruther, and Kent Butts.

Vanessa: Just so you all know we have an Instagram page! Deqah documents Cincinnati's historical buildings there, including some of the buildings we talked about in this show, so if that's your jam, you should follow us there at UrbanRootsCulture.

Deqah: If you'd like to know more about the topics we discussed today, then check out our website, where you can find blogposts that provide links and resources so you can dive deeper into the history we talked about.

Vanessa: If you'd like to know more about The Mark, then check out their website at <https://savestmark.com/>

Deqah: The Lost Voices of Cincinnati series was made possible by a Truth & Reconciliation grant from ArtsWave.

Vanessa: Thank you Arts Wave! We'd also like to thank Invest in Neighborhoods for their support. They're a not-for-profit that works with Cincinnati community councils to create inclusive, diverse, safe, fun and vibrant neighborhoods.

Deqah: To find out more about Invest in Neighborhoods and learn how you can get involved with your community council visit [invest in neighborhoods dot org](http://investinneighborhoods.org).

Vanessa: If you like Urban Roots, and would like to see more episodes from Deqah and me, please consider donating to our Fundly page, which you can find in our episode notes. Deqah, want to hit the good people with our tagline?

Deqah: Urban Roots - looking back so we can move forward.