

Case Study

THE CHURCH STUDIO: NO ERRORS IN THIS CLERICAL WORK

Tulsa, Oklahoma

A Home for Harmonious Congregation

The Church Studio in Tulsa, Oklahoma is an historic church turned into a home office, archive, and recording studio with a star-studded guest register. Built in 1915 as Grace Methodist Episcopal Church and converted by renowned local musician Leon Russell to The Church Studio (home of Shelter Records) in 1972, the historic creative workshop found itself in need of an upgrade to both preserve its past and create space for its future.



FUN FACT:

Effective Sept. 8, 2017, The Church Studio earned a designation to the National Register of Historic Places – the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.





Rebuilding The Church

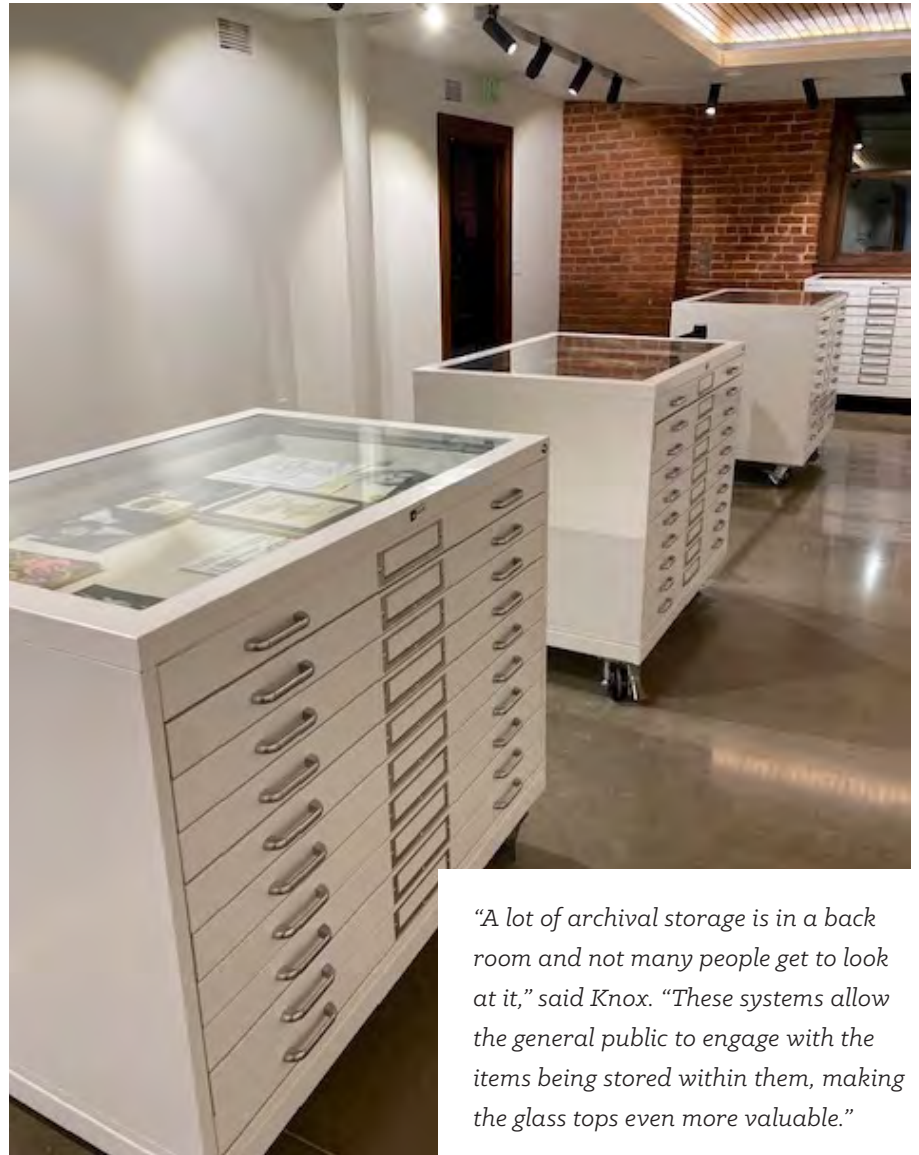
Broken down and boarded up, The Church Studio was purchased by philanthropist, music lover, and Leon Russell fan, Teresa Knox in 2016. Knox, a collector of all things music from a young age, knew the history and artifacts attained by music lovers like herself were too important to not share with the public. Her goal in purchasing the facility was to revive the space to not only operate as a functional recording space for artists of all musical concentrations, but also as a lasting memory for visitors of the professionals that set the tone for those to come. However, with limited knowledge of the best way to properly store, display, and preserve these items, she knew she needed help to ensure pieces could be viewed by future generations.

THE SOLUTION

Composing The Right Arrangement

Focusing on their mission to support the understanding, appreciation, and advancement of music, the studio's owners reached out to Steve Story of Southwest Solutions Group - their local Spacesaver representative - to provide support for the Archive project.

The studio's owners knew they needed a local partner that had the experience and reputation to help with getting the space to showroom quality and support it during unknown growth and changes to come. Knox said they found Story through the work he had done with local curators, as well as real-world, legitimate, and accredited projects such as the work Spacesaver did with The Smithsonian Museum.



"A lot of archival storage is in a back room and not many people get to look at it," said Knox. "These systems allow the general public to engage with the items being stored within them, making the glass tops even more valuable."

"I liked the fact that they (Spacesaver) had an Oklahoma presence. Steve really learned a lot about our project, and he loves music and truly understood the significance of our building," said Knox. "He would come and see us at a regular basis and was there throughout the whole process to help with any changes along the way."





Setting the Tone for Longevity

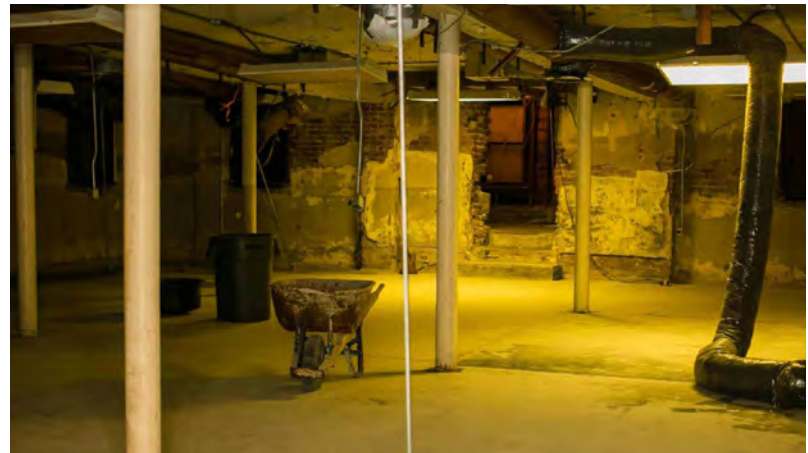
When Knox took ownership of The Church Studio, there was only one safe access point. All paths needed to be lit by flashlight, which is how the Studio's architect and Steve created the plan for what is now the remarkable showroom and display area within the Archive today.

Needing to find the optimal solutions to adequately pair with the tremendous space transformation and securely preserve and display the Archive's approximately 5,000-piece collection, Story delivered several stationary 920 Series Cabinets with visual doors and 424 Series Showcase Flat Files with glass top drawers on casters.

These versatile solutions not only allow staff to quickly and safely change out pieces and configure the space for the day's needs, but also provide fans, enthusiasts, and historians with an inside look at the church's history, Leon Russell, Shelter Records, and Tulsa Sound musicians; all in one convenient location and with minimal handling. Each cabinet is outfitted with drawers and shelves that ensure historic items are properly stored and preserved for generations to come.



424 Series Showcase Flat Files



BEFORE



A Space For You That's Just Your Style

THE RESULT

The aesthetic the systems brought to the space was a huge bonus. The cabinets offer flexibility to adjust the height of the shelves and drawers within the space and fit the room well.

The space now displays artifacts, albums, and other pieces of history from musicians and musical eras. Hundreds of artists have been on display in the museum over the years, many of which have also recorded in the studio space. Recording artists range from the local church group to tour musicians, to some of the highest grossing artists in history.



AFTER

920 Series Cabinets
with Visual Doors

Not only does the space hold memories for artists and those in the music industry, but it also can be configured to host parties, receptions, and even weddings.

