**RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION**

Current building name: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art  
Building address: 1430 Johnson Lane  
Ranking: Primary

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

Architectural style classification: Exotic with Postmodern addition  
Building plan (footprint shape): rectangular with central courtyard  
Number of stories: 3  
Foundation material(s): concrete  
Primary exterior wall material: brick veneer  
Secondary exterior wall material: cast concrete  
Roof configuration/type: flat  
Primary roof material: elastic membrane  
Primary window type: plate glass (addition)  
Primary window material: plate glass (addition)  
Decorative features and materials: decorative brickwork, cast concrete panels, columns, etc.; steel, bronze, and wrought iron doors by I. K. Tuerck; courtyard stone capitols and lunette panels by Richard Bock; brick diaper patterns and string courses; ceramic tile accents  
Landscape features: Interior PLC Courtyard, perennial foundation plantings, large *Quercus robur* (English Oaks) along front  
Comments: The original south facing windows are now internal. The Art Museum is difficult to categorize stylistically, as are Lawrence’s other buildings around the Memorial Quad though all share common aspects.

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

Date of construction: 1930  
Architect: Lawrence, Holford, Allyn, Bean  
Moved? (yes/no): No  
Date of move(s): N/A  
The University of Oregon’s Museum of Art was constructed in 1930 for the purpose of housing Gertrude Warner’s collection of Asian art and antiquities as well as the Condon fossil collection (now stored in the Museum of Natural History). Beginning in 1925, funds for the construction were raised by public subscription. Work was delayed and the design, originally a 3-winged plan, was changed due to the Great Crash of 1929. The building has been surrounded by controversy ever since its construction. Gertrude Warner initially refused to allow her collection to be housed in the new museum, citing security concerns. Other controversies have included cost over-runs, design disagreements (the original Lawrence plan was for 3 wings instead of 1), and the effects and benefits of the 2004 rehab and expansion work.

The Museum of Art was the work of Ellis Lawrence. Stylistically it is difficult to classify due to the various opinions and unique characteristics. Marion Dean Ross, the University of Oregon’s eminent architectural historian, noted Romanesque, Gothic, Islamic, Eclectic, and Modernistic influences. This survey follows the assessment given in the Lawrence Survey of 1989 with the classification of “Exotic.” Lawrence’s use of materials and modern mechanical systems was commented on favorably by Frank Lloyd Wright during that great architect’s visit to Eugene.

The magnificent English Oaks that front the building on the Memorial Quad were planted c.1940 and are defining landscape features for both the museum and the quadrangle. The front façade is an outstanding example of the use of decorative brick and cast stone to achieve rich textural effects, a device Lawrence employed to compensate for the windowless design of the original building. The highly skilled workmanship evident in the façade adds to the building’s significance. In spite of the historicism of the detailing, Lawrence was concerned with giving local relevance. Much of the detailing of the façade and courtyard show Oregon flora and fauna. The cloistered courtyard with its mosaics and pond is a beautiful counterpart to the dramatic entrance. I. K. Tuerck’s iron and bronze gates and oak doors are equally important defining characteristics and should be treated with great care. Richard Bock, U of O sculpture professor, worked as a concrete caster before his academic career and completed some of the cast stone work along with students.

The 2004 addition and remodel work provides state of the art curatorial facilities for the important Warner Collection. Unfortunately, it has damaged the building’s integrity, especially the interior transition between the entrance and the courtyard, by the removal of the twin marble staircases that flanked the entry lobby. The building additions have also affected the view from the courtyard. The Museum of Art was listed on the National Register in 1986 before the 2004 remodel. Although the addition is large (similar to Lawrence’s original plan) it does not affect the façade or the immediate view along the Memorial Quad’s central axis.

The Museum is ranked as primary, given its National Register status.

**HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS & SIGNIFICANCE**

Original use(s) or function(s): Art Museum
Current use(s) or function(s): Art Museum
Area(s) of significance: Education, Art, Architecture
Period of significance: 1930
Statement of Significance (use continuation sheet if necessary):

The University of Oregon’s Museum of Art was constructed in 1930 for the purpose of housing Gertrude Warner’s collection of Asian art and antiquities as well as the Condon fossil collection (now stored in the Museum of Natural History). Beginning in 1925, funds for the construction were raised by public subscription. Work was delayed and the design, originally a 3-winged plan, was changed due to the Great Crash of 1929. The building has been surrounded by controversy ever since its construction. Gertrude Warner initially refused to allow her collection to be housed in the new museum, citing security concerns. Other controversies have included cost over-runs, design disagreements (the original Lawrence plan was for 3 wings instead of 1), and the effects and benefits of the 2004 rehab and expansion work.

The Museum of Art was the work of Ellis Lawrence. Stylistically it is difficult to classify due to the various opinions and unique characteristics. Marion Dean Ross, the University of Oregon’s eminent architectural historian, noted Romanesque, Gothic, Islamic, Eclectic, and Modernistic influences. This survey follows the assessment given in the Lawrence Survey of 1989 with the classification of “Exotic.” Lawrence’s use of materials and modern mechanical systems was commented on favorably by Frank Lloyd Wright during that great architect’s visit to Eugene.

The magnificent English Oaks that front the building on the Memorial Quad were planted c.1940 and are defining landscape features for both the museum and the quadrangle. The front façade is an outstanding example of the use of decorative brick and cast stone to achieve rich textural effects, a device Lawrence employed to compensate for the windowless design of the original building. The highly skilled workmanship evident in the façade adds to the building’s significance. In spite of the historicism of the detailing, Lawrence was concerned with giving local relevance. Much of the detailing of the façade and courtyard show Oregon flora and fauna. The cloistered courtyard with its mosaics and pond is a beautiful counterpart to the dramatic entrance. I. K. Tuerck’s iron and bronze gates and oak doors are equally important defining characteristics and should be treated with great care. Richard Bock, U of O sculpture professor, worked as a concrete caster before his academic career and completed some of the cast stone work along with students.

The 2004 addition and remodel work provides state of the art curatorial facilities for the important Warner Collection. Unfortunately, it has damaged the building’s integrity, especially the interior transition between the entrance and the courtyard, by the removal of the twin marble staircases that flanked the entry lobby. The building additions have also affected the view from the courtyard. The Museum of Art was listed on the National Register in 1986 before the 2004 remodel. Although the addition is large (similar to Lawrence’s original plan) it does not affect the façade or the immediate view along the Memorial Quad’s central axis.

The Museum is ranked as primary, given its National Register status.

**NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT**

Historic Significance (check one): X High _ Medium _ Low _ Very Low or None
Integrity (check one): _ Excellent X Good _ Fair _ Poor
Condition (check one): X Excellent _ Good _ Fair _ Poor

Building designation: _ City Landmark X National Register _ National Historic Landmark _ Not listed

Preliminary National Register eligibility findings
Building is potentially eligible: _ Individually or _ As a contributing resource in a district only

If eligible individually, applicable criteria (check all that apply):

X A. Associated with significant events _ C. Distinctive architecturally
_ B. Associated with significant persons _ D. Archaeologically important

If applicable, building qualifies under NR Criterion Considerations: _ Yes _ No If yes, which apply:

Building is NOT eligible: _ Intact but lacks distinction or _ Altered/loss of integrity or _ Not 50 years old
DOCUMENTATION

Indicate resources consulted when researching this building (check all that apply):

- University archives
- Sanborn maps
- State Archives
- Local Historic Society
- Biographical encyclopedias

X UO Planning Office files

X Newspapers

_ Building permits

_ State Library

_ Personal interviews

_ Obituary indexes

_ SHPO files

_ State Historic Society

_ Historic photographs

Other ___ See below

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


Plans and Specifications for the Museum of Art, Eugene, OR: Facilities Services, University of Oregon.

National Register of Historic Places Nomination.


Journal & Magazine Articles [from Teague]


Newspaper Articles (Arranged by Date) [from Teague]


"Cash pledges for building exceed $7,000," Daily Emerald, 10/07/1925, 1.

"Club formed to raise art building funds," Daily Emerald, 10/21/1925, 3.


"Cornerstone of Fine Arts home to be laid in Fall," Daily Emerald, 05/28/1926, 1.

"Art Building to be memorial to Campbell. $160,000 structure to be dedicated Thursday.," Daily Emerald, 10/19/1926, 3.

"Memorial site dedicated to P.L. Campbell," Daily Emerald, 10/22/1926, 1.

"Student drive will support new memoir," Daily Emerald, 12/08/1926, 1.


"Barker sees early start on building," Daily Emerald, 01/31/1929, 1.

(See Continuation Sheet 1)

RECORDING INFORMATION

Researched: Jeremy Mauro, Shawn Lingo, February 2006
Recorded: Susan Johnson and University Planning Office, Summer 2006
Photo number or name: museum1bw.jpg
Building Name: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art

SITE PLAN

- English Oak
- Pyramidal English Oak
- English Oak
- American Beech
- Purple Leaf European Beech
- PLC Courtyard with "Indian Maiden Fawn" Phimster sculpture

PHOTOGRAPH
"Cornerstone of Fine Arts home to be laid in Fall," *Daily Emerald*, 05/28/1926, 1.
"Art Building to be memorial to Campbell. $160,000 structure to be dedicated Thursday.," *Daily Emerald*, 10/19/1926, 3.
"Student drive will support new memoir," *Daily Emerald*, 12/08/1926, 1.
"Barker sees early start on building," *Daily Emerald*, 01/31/1929, 1.
"Initial unit of Fine Arts Building will be masterpiece of architecture," *Daily Emerald*, 04/13/1929, 4.
"Arts museum to be ready this spring," *Daily Emerald*, 10/08/1929, 1.
"Campbell memorial cornerstone placed," *Daily Emerald*, 05/03/1930, 1.
"Prince Campbell art museum will soon be finished," *Daily Emerald*, 05/10/1930, 2.
"Bust of President Campbell arrives for memorial court," *Daily Emerald*, 10/30/1930, 1.
"Museum grounds to be embellished by 1930 class gift," *Daily Emerald*, 01/30/1932, 1.
"Drive planned for art museum," *Daily Emerald*, 03/12/1935, 1.
"Oregon's oriental art museum pattern of Japan's national building, ...Building (info. Disclosed in lecture by Jiro Harada)," *Daily Emerald*, 05/09/1951, 6.
Figure 1. Museum of Art rear elevation/2004 addition