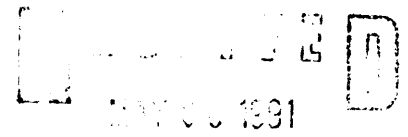


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Masonic Temple  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1805 Creswell Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Shreveport N/A vicinity  
state Louisiana code LA county Caddo code 017 zip code 71101

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Jonathan Fricker May 2, 1991  
Signature of certifying official Jonathan Fricker, Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Date  
Culture, Recreation and Tourism

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Melous Byer 6/10/91  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls brick

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---

roof tarother

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Shreveport's Masonic Temple (1937) is a two story, blond brick building in the Modernistic style. It is located on busy Creswell Street adjacent to an early twentieth century neighborhood. Despite a few alterations, the building retains its National Register eligibility.

The Masonic Temple was designed by Theodore Flaxman, who indicated that he was strongly influenced by the curvilinear buildings of European modernist Eric Mendelsohn. The facade is articulated using the twin staircases which ascend to the second floor. The two staircases are set in a monumental pair of quarter-rounded blocks which curve inward to flank the central entrance. These blocks are enlivened by horizontal brick bands and curving ribbon windows formed of glass blocks. The twin block composition is set off by a pair of single story side appendages which belie the two story building mass behind them. Other elevations of the building are unadorned as are the interiors.

The central entrance opens onto a wide hall which runs laterally through the building. Behind this are two large rooms of unequal size, the larger being a dining room with a stage and the smaller a ceremonial chamber with an anteroom. Two more ceremonial chambers, both with anterooms, are located on the second floor, along with a small lounge and a small meeting room.

Since construction the Masonic Temple has undergone minor interior alterations, including the lowering of most of the ceilings and the installation of exposed ductwork. In addition, the stage in the dining room has been walled off using light fiberboard. Exterior alterations include the addition of a small rear utility room and the replacement of the front entranceway and the large second story window above it. Most of these changes are minor. The only one which has impacted the building's architectural significance is the replacement of the second story window. Here, an opening which was once completely filled with glass blocks was replaced by an aluminum window system with a central pane containing a Masonic symbol. This change, though regrettable, has had only a modest effect and is overwhelmed by the building's dynamic facade articulation.

See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
architecture

Period of Significance  
1937

Significant Dates  
1937

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Architect: Theodore A. Flaxman  
Contractor: Werner Co.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Masonic Temple is of local significance in the area of architecture as a special component of Shreveport's important and impressive collection of historic twentieth century buildings.

Louisiana's third largest city was founded in the 1830s, and although noteworthy buildings survive from the Victorian era, it is in the twentieth century styles that Shreveport truly excels. Due to a major oil boom in the area, the city experienced explosive growth in the early twentieth century. As a result, the vast majority of the city's thousands of historic buildings date from this period. This prosperity is particularly evident in the numerous major commercial, public and institutional buildings from the late teens and particularly the '20s, not to mention the various "mansions" in the Fairfield area. Although the Depression years were obviously leaner, Shreveport excelled then in the various modern styles.

It is within the foregoing context that the Masonic Temple should be viewed. For the reasons noted above, Shreveport's overall identity as a significant cultural resource is dependent upon its historic twentieth century architecture. This is what makes Shreveport special. To a large extent this importance is established by approximately forty first-rank major buildings, of which the Masonic Temple is one. Among this group of stellar properties, the Masonic Temple is particularly important because of its very unusual form. While most of the other landmarks feature fairly conventional forms with applied architectural treatment, the Masonic Temple has a striking curvilinear design inspired by progressive European architecture of the period. Flaxman and fellow Shreveport architect, Sam Wiener, had journeyed to Europe in 1931 to see the new architecture of Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mendelsohn and others. They toured various buildings and met some of the architects, including Gropius and Mendelsohn. Flaxman indicated that he was overwhelmed by Mendelsohn's work and regarded the Masonic Temple as his own working-out of this obsession.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Building cornerstone.

Kingsley, Karen. "Modernism in Louisiana: A Decade of Progress, 1930-1940."  
1984, Tulane University School of Architecture, New Orleans, Louisiana.

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
  - previously listed in the National Register
  - previously determined eligible by the National Register
  - designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
  - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than an acre

UTM References

A 15 430340 3595260  
 Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated building occupies Lots 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and north 10' of Lots 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30, Noel Place Subdivision, City of Shreveport.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary lines follow the property lines of the parcel of land on which the building stands.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title National Register Staff  
 organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1991  
 street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160  
 city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

Owner: Masonic Building Company  
 1805 Creswell Street  
 Shreveport, LA 71104