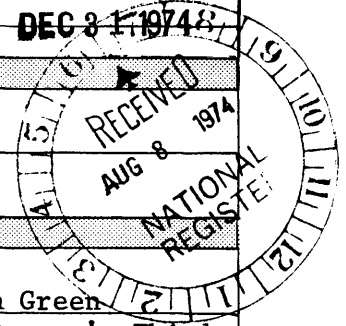


**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oregon
COUNTY:	Multnomah
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	DEC 31 1974



**1. NAME**

COMMON: Portland Art Museum

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 1219 SW Park Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Portland CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Representative Edith Green Oregon's Third Congressional District

STATE: Oregon CODE: 97201 COUNTY: Multnomah CODE: 051

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Portland Art Association

STREET AND NUMBER: 1219 SW 4th Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Portland STATE: Oregon CODE: 97201 CODE: 41

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Multnomah County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: 1021 SW 4th Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Portland STATE: Oregon CODE: 97201 CODE: 41

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Parks and Recreation Section

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Building

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon CODE: 97310 CODE: 41

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Oregon

COUNTY: Multnomah

ENTRY NUMBER: DEC 31 1974

DATE: DEC 31 1974

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Portland Art Museum occupies a full block and a portion of a closed street fronting on the South Park Blocks in downtown Portland. The building originally incorporated portions of the old Ladd School, purchased by the Portland Art Association in 1931. Two wings were constructed from designs by Pietro Belluschi of A. E. Doyle and Associate in 1932 and 1938. In the Ayer Wing, the first to be constructed, are the entrance, sculpture court and galleries. The Hirsch, or second Wing provided two floors of additional gallery space. The recently completed and most extensive addition, known as the Madison Street Wing, houses an auditorium and new facilities for the Museum Art School. It too was designed by Belluschi.

The following are excerpts quoted directly from Marion Dean Ross, "The Museum Building As a Work of Art," Notes on the Collections of the Portland Art Museum, Number 7 (1967).

The Ayer Wing (1932), facing east, occupying the entire frontage on the Park Blocks.

*The facade on the Park Blocks, seen in elevation, presents a dignified and calmly composed design of five principal divisions symmetrically balanced about the triple entrance.*

*While this five bay composition is essentially traditional, the detail is not. Surviving studies show that historical forms were at least considered, but in the end the derivative character was eliminated until only the symmetrical grouping of the masses remained to give a hint of the evolution of the design. The materials are fine and well used. There are no extraneous ornaments. The orange-red brick is admirably accented by the travertine moldings of the door and window frames and of the base course and crowning band. The detail is used in traditional positions but with a quite unusual form. The travertine band at the top of the wall can hardly be described as an entablature though it is in the place an entablature would have had in a classical design. It is interesting that the architect, in the process of eliminating historical features, reduced the topmost member to a narrow molding rather than replacing the cornice with a wide over-hanging slab which might have well happened in the period. The elegant frames of the triple doors are repeated in long windows in the north and south ends of the building.*

*The interior of the Ayer Wing was designed to be part of a larger structure which had it been built in time, would probably have had a strongly marked central axis. As it was, it contained a spacious lobby with a*  
(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

2. Location

The Portland Art Museum is in the NE 1/4, Sec. 4, T. 1S., R. 1E, of the Willamette Meridian, Multnomah County, Oregon, in Portland, original plot, Block 223, Assessors Map #3128.

7. Description

*larger and a smaller gallery on each side to the north and south. The plan was repeated on the second floor. A large opening opposite the entrance gave access to a hall for the display of casts which was contrived in part from the structure built on the foundations of the old Ladd School. The new galleries were very simply treated with a minimum of architectural detail. This detail for the most part followed sound customary practice, ultimately derived from the forms of classical moldings. The entrance lobby offered the opportunity for somewhat more elaboration. While the detail is generally unobtrusive, patterns such as those in the ceiling and in the door grilles betray a more dated character than almost anything else in the design. In general, great care was taken to have the ventilation and lighting of the galleries up-to-date and appropriate for their intended use. The most important feature of the interior was the lighting of the upper picture galleries. This, obviously a matter of the utmost importance in the design of picture galleries, was here studied with particular care so that the walls would be amply and evenly lighted with a minimum of glare on the picture surfaces. All the notices about the new building in the architectural and museum journals called attention to the excellence of this feature. To achieve this Mr. Belluschi introduced a system of four-sided monitors cantilevered over the center of the galleries instead of the more customary skylights. These monitors provide an admirable source of light and incidentally add a feature of spatial interest to the rectangular rooms. It was noted at the time that this was the first use of monitor lighting in a*

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PORTLAND ART MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

7. Description

*a museum in the United States, and it was certainly uncommon in Europe though Sir John Soane had used a somewhat similar feature in his Dulwich Gallery in 1811-14. The monitors rise above the roof line and are not hidden by a parapet on the exterior. However, due to their location over the center of the galleries they do not count as an important feature in the usual view of the building although their forms are carefully related to the mass of the building below. In elevation drawings they can be seen as frankly designed glass-sided boxes.*

The Hirsch Wing (1938), running along the south side of the block to Tenth Avenue.

*Only five years after the construction of the Ayer Wing, the Museum was fortunate in receiving funds to build a considerable addition. For the Hirsch Wing, opened in 1938, the architect was again Pietro Belluschi; the firm was still nominally A. E. Doyle and Associate. Though the first section had been planned to have additions, the actual form they would take undoubtedly had to wait until funds became available. The generous Hirsch gift made possible an addition approximately doubling the exhibition space of the museum.*

*The exterior of the Hirsch Wing running along the south side of the block to Tenth Avenue harmoniously continued the general character of the main facade. The elegant vertical proportions of the end windows in the Ayer Wing were used throughout the ground floor of the new construction thus eliminating the somewhat dated character of the horizontal windows. The new wing included two unusual features. One was a large sculpture court which replaced the temporary hall where the collection of casts had been displayed. Opening into both stories and rising above the ceiling height of the second floor galleries, this room became partially the focal point of*

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(Number all entries)

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

7. Description

*the Museum with dramatic views into it from both levels.*

*The Sculpture Court with its large, symmetrically placed north skylight, served to extend the balanced spatial composition of the Park Front and at the same time to form an approach to the new galleries asymmetrically located to the southwest of the Ayer Wing. Very ingeniously it belongs spatially to both the Ayer and Hirsch Wings. The symmetrical formality of the Ayer Wing which might have become too rigid and conventional was thus given an organic unity with the new construction. From this point onward the museum building could grow to fill the entire block ... without the necessity of following an axial pattern ...*

*Through openings framed by vertical travertine slabs, the other unusual feature of the Hirsch Wing could be seen from the Sculpture Court. This was a small enclosed court, open to the sky, which was planned for the display of sculpture in an intimate but outdoor setting. From the point of view of the plan, this outdoor court served to articulate the space and differentiate the large masses of the two gallery wings. From the outside, along Jefferson Street, it not only served to articulate the facade, but it gave a tantalizing and slightly mysterious suggestion to the exterior, suggesting to the passerby the need to explore the interior. As an exhibition space this little court was beautifully adapted for the display of moderately scaled pieces of sculpture. It was simply but very elegantly detailed. Henry-Russell Hitchcock writing in an article which appeared in California Arts and Architecture for December 1940, said, ". . . the little exterior court with its cantilevered travertine slab roof around the edge recalls the purity and richness of Mies van der Rohe's finest work."*

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Oregon	
COUNTY	Multnomah	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		DEC 31 1974

(Number all entries)

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

7. Description

*This was high praise indeed from one of the leading historians of modern architecture. This court has now been converted into an indoor gallery (used at first as a Members' Room), not entirely to the advantage of the architecture.*

*The galleries in the Hirsch Wing, while not displaying the unusual features of the great Sculpture Court or little outdoor court, were designed with the same care for lighting and ventilation that had characterized the earlier ones in the Ayer Wing. The tall windows in the ground floor galleries were an improvement over the horizontal strips in elegance and dignity if not in actual lighting. Monitors were again successfully used over the upper galleries. The corridor on both floors was also adapted for exhibition purposes. On the ground floor it had to be illuminated by artificial light, but on the second floor light from a north angled skylight was cleverly diffused and filtered onto the walls through a screen of metal fins.*



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

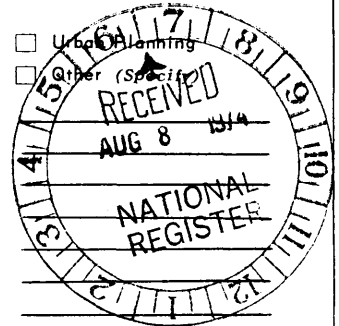
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art          | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Portland Art Museum was the first of nationally prominent Pacific Northwest architect Pietro Belluschi's buildings to come to national attention. In particular, his use of monitor lighting in the upper galleries was hailed as a novel and appropriate solution to the problem of providing good light without glare. The museum and another Belluschi building, The Finley Mortuary of 1937, were included in a 1938 list of the 100 best buildings done in the United States in the preceding 20 years.

Pietro Belluschi was born in Italy in 1899. Following his graduation from the University of Rome in 1922, he immigrated to America and continued his studies at Cornell. In 1927 he joined the office of the prominent Portland architect A. E. Doyle and quickly rose to the position of chief designer. Following the death of Doyle in 1928 he assumed leadership of the firm, changing the name to A. E. Doyle and Associate in 1933, and Pietro Belluschi in 1943.

During the Thirties and Forties, Belluschi's work, especially residences and churches, began to show the development of an increasingly regional character, which has since become known as the Northwest Style. It is characterized by low mansing and ample roofs with a combination of hip and gable and broken slopes. The spacial sense of architecture is combined with materials, especially timber and natural colors of the Pacific Northwest. Some faint Japanese influence may be felt, but by and large it is based on regional vernacular building forms and techniques.

The International style Equitable Building in Portland, completed in 1948, firmly cemented Belluschi's reputation as a versatile designer of material importance. He left Oregon in 1951 to become Dean of the School of Architecture and planning at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards.

The design of the Portland Art Museum has stood the test of time and changing tastes. Over forty years after its construction, it continues to stand with easy dignity, and is expected to grace Portland's Park Blocks for some time to come.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Ross, Marion Dean, "The Museum Building as a Work of Art," Notes on the Collections of the Portland Art Museum, Number 7 (1967). Prepared as an insert with the Annual Report of the Portland Art Association 1966-1967.

Ross, Marion Dean, "The Attainment and Restraint of Pietro Belluschi," AIA Journal, July, 1972.

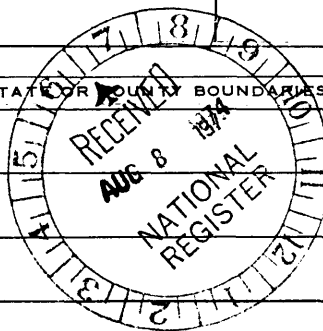
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES									
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds			
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	N45°	30'	59"	W122°	40'	56"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



UTM  
10/524810  
5040160  
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Paul B. Hartwig, Park Historian and D. W. Powers III, Temporary Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Parks and Recreation Section DATE: July 18, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Division

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon 97310 CODE: 41

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

[Signature]

Title State Parks Superintendent

Date August 2, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date DEC 3 1 1974

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date DEC 3 1 1974