

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Baltimore (City)
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC

LANDMARKS) *Type all entries - complete applicable sections)*

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Peale's Baltimore Museum

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
225 North Holliday Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
3rd

STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24      COUNTY: Baltimore      CODE: 510

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <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	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"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
City of Baltimore

STREET AND NUMBER:  
City Hall (St. Paul and Lexington Streets)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

STATE:  
Maryland

CODE:  
24

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
City Hall (St. Paul and Lexington Streets)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

STATE:  
Maryland

CODE:  
24

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
D.C.

CODE:  
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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 Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore, at 225 North Holliday Street occupies the first building erected as a museum in the United States. Rembrant Peale, the artist son of Charles Willson Peale, opened the museum on August 15, 1814.

Peale advertised in Baltimore in April, 1813, his intention to build a museum, and on August 15 of the following year, he inaugurated his new undertaking. Having no plan to follow, he erected a brick three-story house that had a two-story wing in back. Inside, the central hallway opened onto four small rooms on the first floor, in which were placed scientific and natural exhibits. A large drawing room occupied the second floor and the third floor held a painting gallery. Peale struggled to operate the museum for about eight years, but his creditors forced him to sell his interest in it to his brother, Reubens, in 1822. Reubens Peale continued the museum until 1829, when his creditors forced him to vacate the building.

The Museum underwent numerous alterations before becoming the Municipal Museum in 1931. It was used as the Baltimore City Hall from 1830 until 1875. At this time it was made into a Negro School and served this function until 1887. From that time until 1931 the building was occupied by the Water Board as well as several businesses.

In renewing the building for Museum use, the front wall was rebuilt, the original portico was reconstructed and the interior was almost completely reconstructed.

Today, the building is completely devoted to museum purposes. The two front rooms on the first floor have permanent exhibits that are associated with Rembrant Peale. Located in the rear wing are the offices of the curator. On the second floor are exhibition rooms used for portraits. The third floor at present is not used; located here is the central air conditioning unit situated behind standing partitions. An addition was made in the basement so as to accommodate museum records. Outside the museum in back is a small court with statues.

BOUNDARY INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION

The museum is located on the east side of North Holliday Street between a warehouse on the north side and a church across a small alley on the south. The building sits about halfway between East Saratoga Street and East Lexington Street. The Municipal Museum building is approximately 40 feet wide facing North Holliday Street, and about 50 feet long. The museum lot is circa 40 feet by 100 feet. The boundary line is contiguous with the property line as described above.

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**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <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 type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Peale's Baltimore Museum was the first building in the United States to be designed and erected expressly for museum use. Under the direction of its founder, builder and first operator, Rembrant Peale, and later his brother Reubens, the museum was opened to the public for 15 years. Having served a number of purposes in the interim, the building again became the Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore in 1931. Presently the museum houses both painting and permanent exhibits concerning Rembrant Peale, the Peale family and the history of Baltimore.

BIOGRAPHY

Rembrant Peale was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania on February 22, 1778. Charles Willson Peale, his father had evidently expected that his offspring should be artists for he named them all after the old masters, i.e. Rembrant, Reubens, Van Dyck, Raphael and Titian. With all this circumstance as events turned out only two of the five became artists.

Rembrant showed early signs of extraordinary talent. He "began to draw at the age of eight years and by the time he was thirteen he had painted a portrait of himself."<sup>1</sup>

Upon the retirement of Charles Willson Peale in 1796, Rembrant was given his father's seal of approval and the title of his success. However, this did not lead to instant success. Rembrant thereupon, ventured to Charleston, South Carolina, where he remained several years until 1801 at which time he journeyed to England to study with Benjamin West.

It was here in London that Rembrant Peale was confronted for the first time with the continental art form or "with good art".<sup>2</sup> Peale's heart was not strong and the climate in England was critically against his health, at this time Rembrant Peale decided to return to the United States and give up painting for agriculture. However, immediate success upon his return changed these plans.

After living in Boston some years, Peale moved to Baltimore in 1812. It was here in Baltimore that Peale opened the first building in

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cyclopedia of American Biography, James T. White and Company:  
New York, 5 vols., 1907.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		UTM	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

18.361100.4350200

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than one acre**

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

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Joseph S. Mendinghall, Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service**      DATE: **2/28/75**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1100 L. Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **D.C. 20240**      CODE: **11**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

Name (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) dated: **Dec. 24, 1965**

*Cornelius H. Lane* 9-4-75  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: *A. R. Hansen* 9/25/75

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

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America to be used solely as a museum and art gallery. Here Peale lived for nine years and painted a number of his most famous works including "The Ascent of Elijah," and "The Court of Death," which was painted on canvas measuring 24 by 13 feet, and it contained twenty-three lifesize figures. This work became one of Peale's most famous; it was placed on exhibition in every major city of the United States. From 1822 to 1829 Peale again returned north where he painted portraits in Philadelphia New York and Boston.

Peale once more returned to Europe where he exhibited his portrait of George Washington drawn to Peale's own exacting specifications of likeness. The portrait received raves of critics. Upon Peale's return, the portrait was purchased by the United States Government and now hangs in the Vice President's room in the Senate wing of the Capitol. Peale's works include; "The Court of Death," his most famous, "Song of the Shirt," "Errina," "Wine and Cake," and "Italian Peasant." Peale died on October 3, 1860.

<sup>1</sup>Cyclopedia of American Biography, James T. White and Company:  
New York, 1907, vol. 5., p. 320.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid