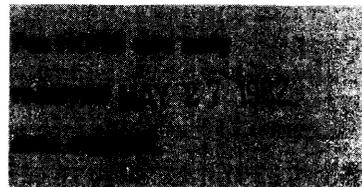


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic GARFIELD BUILDING

RECEIVED

and/or common GARFIELD BUILDING

FEB 02 1982

2. Location

OHP

street & number 403 West Eighth Street

n/a not for publication

city, town Los Angeles

n/a vicinity of

congressional district 25

state California

code 06

county Los Angeles

code 037

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input 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: |

4. Owner of Property

name Hendrimar Realty Corporation, N.

street & number 403 West Eighth Street

city, town Los Angeles

n/a vicinity of

state California 90014

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Los Angeles County Recorder

street & number 227 North Broadway

city, town Los Angeles

state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Los Angeles City
title Cultural Heritage Board has this property been determined eligible? yes no
Lobby only: Entrance structure:
date August 22, 1973 January 6, 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Cultural Affairs Department, Los Angeles City Hall

city, town Los Angeles

state California

①

7. Description

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved | date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Garfield Building is a 13-story retail store and office building with a 3-story penthouse structure on the roof. The ground floor covers an area 159'x57', the total height of the building is 191' and the enclosed area is approximately 102,000 square feet. The original design featured the lobby and ten retail stores on the ground floor with partitioned offices on the upper floors. The first three floors of the building are rectangular, while the upper ten floors form a shallow "U" to provide light into the offices. This configuration was a departure from the *Beaux Arts* tradition where the facade rose upward from the street in an unbroken line. The recessed plans of the upper story of the building are part of the attempt to create a more lively appearance by manipulating the facades. The frame of the building is reinforced concrete and the exterior is faced with cream-colored, glazed terracotta tiles. The use of surfaced patterned tiles is one of the distinctive design features of Los Angeles commercial architecture of the period - a direct influence of the *Paris Exhibition of 1925*.¹ The bands and panels of surface enrichment, with a combination of geometric and naturalistic details, liven the facades of the exterior and interior, in this early Los Angeles example of *Art Deco* design.

The urbane Eighth Street and Hill Street facades and the extraordinary lobby comprise the notable elements of the building. The Eighth Street facade features: the set-back above the third floor, a three-story loggia on the roof, an imposing two-story cast iron grille over the main entrances and bands of decorative glazed terra cotta tiles. While tiles above the third and tenth story windows and along the parapet serve to divide the composition of the facade into three sections, in a manner reminiscent of the *Beaux Arts* tradition, the vivacious quality of the decoration expresses the new interest in applied (surface) decoration, which was the essence of *Art Deco* design.

The decorative motifs include: birds, flowers, sunbursts, grape clusters, intertwining branches and traditional motifs such as the anthemion and palmette. Although only slightly stylized, they are executed in a manner that emphasizes the diagonal quality characteristic of *Art Deco* design. They exhibit an unusual juxtaposition of naturalistic and geometric details not commonly found in Los Angeles at that time.

The dramatic effect of the lobby is achieved through the contrasting marble veneer on the walls, the brightly polished "Benedict" nickel fittings, the florid bas-relief of the ceiling finished in gold leaf and the stylized "Gothic" chandeliers. The deep hues of the walls and floor highlighted by the gold and silver tones of the fittings and the ceiling treatment form an outstanding example of the unrestrained luxurious and sensual quality of the *ensemble*², which are the distinguishing characteristics of the early *Art Deco* design.

¹ - *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris was the acknowledged beginning of *Art Deco*. This short-lived, but important historical style was the "Athena" of the Jazz Age. For like the Classical Goddess who sprang instantaneously from the head of Zeus, *Art Deco* burst onto the world of fashion and high-style, full-blown in a conscientious attempt by France to recapture its lead in the design world - which it had been losing since World War I to the Bauhaus Movement. *Deco* is primarily a style of pure, unabashed flourish, opulence and surface decoration; it can be traced to the earlier influence of the 1909 Paris production of Diaghilev's *Les Ballets Russes*, which stunned the public with its sensual use of colors, sets, dance form and music in an exuberant and passionate display that was the talk of the design world at that time.

² - This is the French term of the period used for the interiors in the *Deco Style* to reflect the emphasis on the design totality of the *assemblage* of the surface treatments, furniture, accessories, furnishings and stylistic details.

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In the corridors on the upper floors, the marble veneer on the walls, the terrazzo floors and the wood door trim are still in place. The extravagant use of marble on the upper floors is indicative of the luxurious quality of the materials used so generously on this early Los Angeles *Art Deco* building.

Although the building is primarily intact, there have been some changes. On the exterior, the original cast-iron marquee and the storefronts were replaced in 1973. In the lobby, the cigar stand has been sealed off. On the upper floors, the doors and ceilings have been replaced.

On the whole, however, the building's significant features have survived in excellent condition and the few altered features are restorable, which is the intention of the present owner (especially the re-creation of the original, main entrance canopy).

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1929 **Builder/Architect** Claud Beelman, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

A. Brief Historic Background

Toward the end of the 1920s, when the building boom had engulfed the Los Angeles central district, the work of more forward-thinking architects turned away from the *Beaux Arts* tradition and Revivalism, which characterized that decade, and began to break with the past and to experiment with the modern idiom of the period. The sizeable number of transitional *Deco-Moderne*¹ buildings that were built in Los Angeles during the late Twenties and early Thirties is one of the noticeable architectural characteristics of the central city.

The Garfield Building designed by Claud Beelman (1884-1963) is a fine example of the fusion of features from three short-lived design styles of the early 20th Century to the periods between Wars (the earlier sensual fluidity of *L'Art Nouveau*, the subsequent geometry of *Art Deco* and the stripped classicism of the *Moderne*).

The Garfield Building was built by the Sun Realty Company, which developed numerous projects during this period in downtown Los Angeles. The Sun Realty Company building (now the Los Angeles Jewelry Center), also designed by Beelman, was completed at the same time as the Garfield Building.

In 1905, Beelman received the *Harvard Scholarship* from the Architectural League of America. Following his formal education, he worked in the Midwest and the South. Beelman arrived in Los Angeles in 1921 just at the building boom of the Twenties was gaining momentum. He obtained his license and soon went into partnership with Alexander Curlett (1880-1942), whose father, William Curlett (1845-1914), had already established a significant architectural practice in the city. Curlett and Beelman completed numerous commercial and public projects including the Elks Building, the Pershing Square Building and the Union Bank Building in Los Angeles, the Pacific Coast Club and the Security Trust and Savings Bank in Long Beach and the Pacific Southwest Bank in Pasadena. Their commercial buildings were designed in the traditional *Beaux Arts* style, still preferred at the time.

¹ - This is the editor's term for the transitional architectural examples of this Modern (or *Moderne*) period that exhibit an integration of features and ideas from *Art Deco* and *L'Art Nouveau* styles; (for further explanation, refer to the editor's historic restoration report for the *Pan Pacific Auditorium*, Los Angeles County, May 1980, pages 9-52). *Moderne*, (coined from the French, *L'Art Moderne*) is used here in the broad sense encompassing various stylistic experiments of the early 20th Century that arose in the search for new forms, viz., *L'Art Nouveau*, *Art Deco*, *Bauhaus*, *Streamline Moderne*, *Stripped Classic Moderne* and *Futuristic Moderne*, up to the beginning of Post War II and the emergence of the *International Style*.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached Bibliography

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .211 acres

Quadrangle name Hollywood, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

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|------|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

H

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|------|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification Lot "A" of Tract 9333, in the City of Los Angeles, county of Los Angeles, state of California, as per map recorded in Book 126, Page 77 of Maps, in the office of the County Recorder of said county.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county n/a code

state n/a code county n/a code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin Weil, Architectural Historian (research and contributing text); Edited and submitted by Raymond Girvigian, F.A.I.A./Historical Architec

organization Charles Kober Assoc., Architects Calif. Los Angeles, date January 1982

street & number 1414 Fair Oaks Avenue, P.O. Box 220 telephone 213/682-3848

city or town South Pasadena state California 91030

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *R. M. Olson*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 20, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

[Signature] National Register date 9/25/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____

Chief of _____

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Although Curlett and Beelman continued to be identified as partners until 1929, the plans for the Garfield Building (dated November 15, 1928) only carry Beelman's name. Whatever the legal circumstances of their partnership, it would appear that the two men were diverging in their design philosophies by 1928. Curlett continued to employ traditional architectural vocabulary in his projects while Beelman embarked on an excursion into the language of *Art Deco*. Of the three buildings completed by Beelman in 1929 - the Garfield Building, the Sun Realty Building and the Eastern Columbia Building - only the Garfield exemplifies the transition between the traditional *Beaux Arts* style of the late 19th and early 20th Century commercial buildings, which he designed with Curlett, and his flamboyant geometric *Art Deco* designs for the Eastern Columbia and the Sun Realty buildings.

Other notable designs in the Los Angeles area by Beelman after 1929 included the Thalberg Building at MGM Studios, the Willys-Overland auto plant, the Firestone Tire and Rubber Factory, the remodeling of Philharmonic Hall and the Hollywood Post Office carried out in conjunction with architects Allison and Allison.

B. Art Deco

This historical style which reached its zenith in the *Jazz Age* of the late Twenties, quickly faded in the next decade under the harsh economic reality of the *Depression Thirties* and the newly developing *Streamlined Age of Flight*. Its distinguishing characteristics were opulence, rich and novel use of colors and surface decorations, unusual juxtaposition of materials, design details - unrooted in the past - that combined the florid sensuality of *L'Art Nouveau* style of the previous decades with a new interest in *geometric abstractions*. The results of this sudden and brief stylistic trend are what we now term *Art Deco*. As mentioned under Section 7. (Description), ¹*Deco* can be directly traced to the 1925 *Paris Exposition*, whose roots can be traced, in turn, to the 1909 Paris production of *Les Ballets Russes*.

Art Deco was essentially a design movement of surface decorations, searching for new means of expression. It was doomed by the depressed economic conditions of the Thirties (which couldn't support the lavish use of ornament, the high cost of skilled artisans and quality materials intrinsic to *Art Deco*)² as well as the challenge from two other contemporary design movements - the *Streamline Age of Speed*, and (the eventual victor of both), the *Bauhaus Movement* of Germany - which developed into the *International Style* of Post War II.

¹ - C.F., Footnote No. 1, Section 7., page 1.

² - The notable exception to this were some movie "dream-palaces" still employing *Deco* in the early to mid-Thirties; the fewer theaters built during the later period of the Depression were designed in the simpler less expensive *Streamline Moderne* style of the late Thirties.

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C. Summary

The Garfield Building is significant for various reasons: 1) As one of the earlier examples of transitional *Art Deco* in Los Angeles;¹ 2) Designed by Claud Beelman, a prominent architect of the area, it appears to be his earliest experiment in the fusion of stylistic features from the *Beaux Arts* and *L'Art Nouveau* movement of the Turn-of-the-Century and the *Art Deco-Moderne* styles of the late Twenties and Thirties; 3) The building is an excellent example and source of study for early *Deco* details (especially at the lobby and in surface elements of the facade, for example); its exterior form still displays a somewhat classic tradition of restraint and a formal tri-partite design divided into a "base", a "shaft" of repeating floors and a "capitol" of an articulated parapet and penthouse - which were characteristics of his earlier designs.

D. Conclusion

Some of Beelman's early work survives today, among which the Garfield Building stands as one of his best preserved and significant as a transitional experiment in the new *Moderne Style of Art Deco*. It continues to enrich the urbanscape of Los Angeles and has materially contributed to its Twentieth Century architectural heritage.

¹ - The 1929 *Architectural Digest* (refer to Bibliography) indicates that A.T. Heinsbergen was a "muralist" on this building; Heinsbergen, who died in Los Angeles last year, was a nationally prominent artist-decorator of hundreds of buildings and theaters in the *Deco* style. In an earlier interview with this editor, he told of his visit to the Paris Exposition of 1925. On his return, he showed his films to the architects of Los Angeles which was a major influence on *Deco* design in the region.

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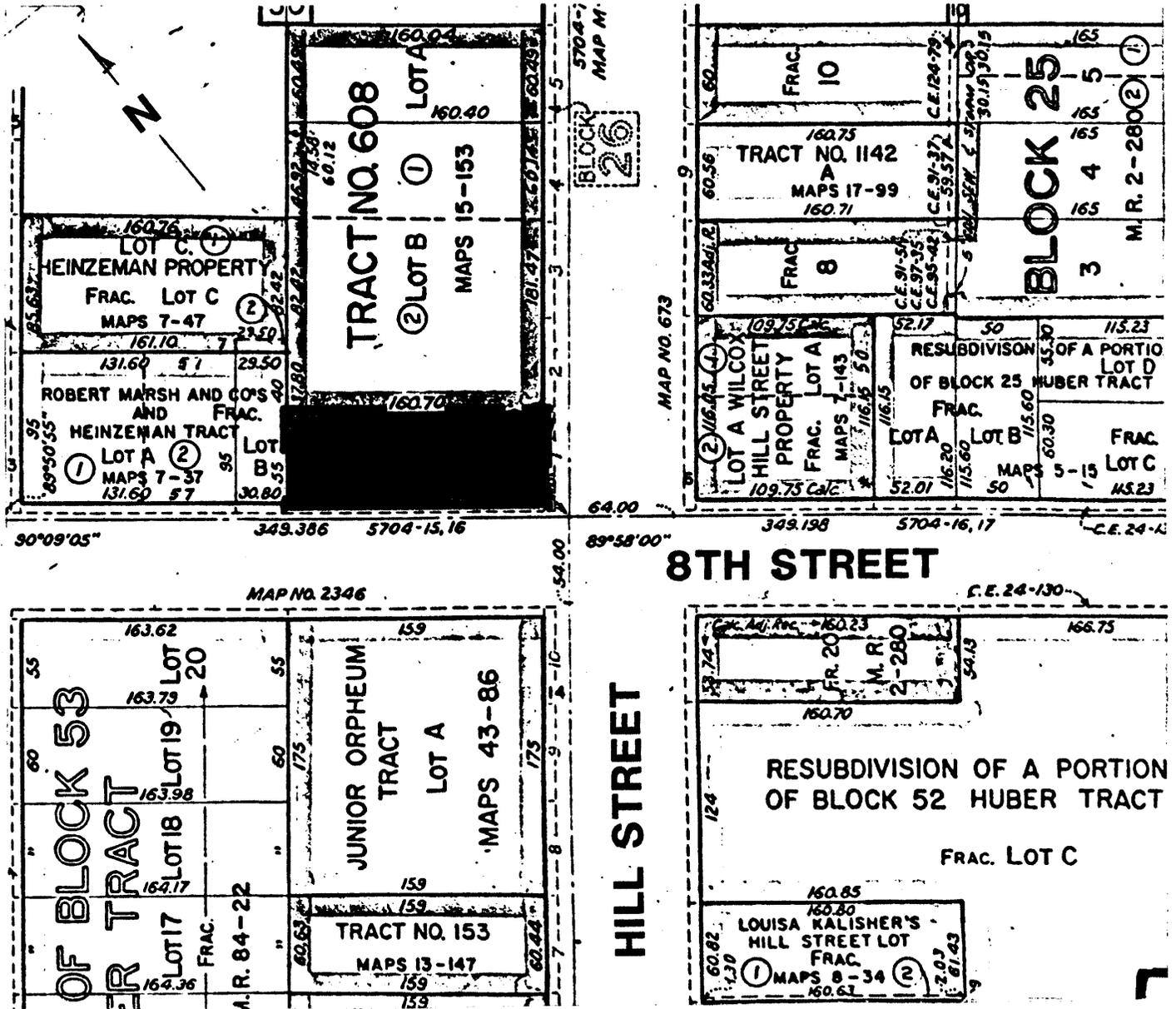
Bibliography

- _____. *Architectural Digest*, Volume 7, No. 3, 1929, page 136.
- _____. *Men of California, Western Personalities and Their Affiliations with Club Membership and Civic Associations*, Western Press Reporter, Inc., Los Angeles, 1926, page 227.
- _____. "Issued Licenses to Practice Architecture in California", *Southwest Building and Contractor*, September 9, 1921, page 12, column 3.
- _____. "Old Garfield Building Undergoing Restoration", *Los Angeles Times*, September 2, 1973, Part VI, page 16.
- _____. "Services for Architect Claud Beelman Set", *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 1963, Part II, page 6.
- _____. "Skyscraper to Rise Downtown", *Los Angeles Times*, December 16, 1928, Part V, page 1.

Gebhard, David and Robert Winter. *The Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California*. Peregrine Smith, Inc., Salt Lake City, 1977. p. 213.

Gleye Paul. *The Architecture of Los Angeles*, Rose Bud Books, 1981, page 121.

SITE MAP



GARFIELD BUILDING
 403 N. 8th ST.
 TRACT NO. 9333 LOT A