

OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY

Ohio Historic Preservation Office
567 E. Hudson St. Columbus, Ohio 43211
614/297-2470



1. No.	2. County LOR	4. Present Name(s) Allen Memorial Art Museum		<input type="checkbox"/> Coded
3. Location of Negatives		5. Historic or Other Name(s) Allen Memorial Art Museum		
O.H.I.O. Resource				
Roll #	Exp. #	Facing		
Front 1	31A	W		
Rear 2	24A	S		
6. Specific Address or Location 91 North Main		17. Date(s) or Period 1917	17b. Alteration Date(s) 1998	30. Foundation Material Stone
6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number 09-00-086-101-053		18. Style or Design Renaissance Revival		31. Wall Construction Stone Bearing
7. City or Village Oberlin		18a. Style of Addition or Element(s) Romanesque Revival		32. Roof: Type Hip Pitch Moderate Material Clay Tile, Roman Tile
8. Site Plan with North Arrow		19. Architect or Engineer Cass Gilbert, New York		33. No. Bays Front 1 Side 2
		19a. Design Sources		34. Exterior Wall Material(s) Stone, Plain Ashlar, sawed
		20. Contractor or Builder		35. Plan Shape Rectangular
9. U.T.M. Reference		21. Building Type or Plan Other Building		36. Changes (Explain in #42) Additions, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction
Quadrangle Name		22. Original Use, if apparent College Museum/Exhibition Hall		37. Window Type(s) Other
Zone	Easting	Northing		38. Bldg. Dims. approx. 130 ft. X 124 ft.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		39. Endangered? No Explain: Recently restored
10. <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure		23. Present Use College Museum/Exhibition Hall		40. Chimney Placement 1 Off Center Within Roof Surface
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Object		24. Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private		41a. Distance from road
11. On National Register ? Yes		25. Owner's Name & Address, if known Oberlin College 135 West Lorain Street Oberlin OH 44074		41b. Frontage on road 124 ft.
12. N.R. Potential ?		26. Property Acreage		
13. Part of Estb Hist Dist? No		27. Other Surveys in Which Included McQuillin (75)		
15. Name of Established District (N.R. or Local) NR: Oberlin College thematic nomination		28. No. of Stories 2		
16. Thematic Association(s) Education: Private: Higher & Arts: Visual & Architect		29. Basement? Yes		
42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features Cass Gilbert drew heavily from Renaissance and Romanesque Revival Style when he designed this two-story, red and brown sandstone, building. It has symmetrical proportions and a red tile, hipped roof. Circular, red sandstone, incised carvings and glazed terra cotta sculptures, are along the bracketed cornice line. An entablature on the front façade reads: "The cause of art is the cause of the people." This carving is above seven double-vaulted arches on a front porch. The ceiling of this porch has a mosaic frieze; the tympanum above the entrance double doors has a glazed, terra cotta, relief sculpture of a woman and child. Niches along the exterior walls are filled with stone urns. Cast iron grillwork (by Samuel Yellin) also embellishes the exterior. The interior has a central (cont.)				
43. History and Significance When Cass Gilbert was appointed campus architect in 1911 he immediately began the task of laying out a plan for the campus. His plan was for a "series of unified facades on all sides of Tappan Square, connected by axial walkways at the four points of the compass." (Klukas and Wuellner) The plan would have tied all buildings to the appearance of Finney Memorial Chapel and brought down Peters Hall. Though the plan was never fully realized, this building was Gilbert's best stride toward the plan. The impetus for the building came from a recognition that the college had acquired a significant art collection. Dudley Peter Allen, a physician and 1875 college graduate, (cont.)				
44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (see #52) Allen Art Museum is at the southeast side of the intersection of two State Route, 511 and 58, and across Main Street from Tappan Square. These are busy thoroughfares for both in town and through town traffic.				
45. Sources of Information Lorain County Courthouse: Lorain County tax records. O.H.I.O. Resource Center: Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission Files; Klukas, Arnold W and Margarita J. Wuellner. "Beauty, Utility and Fitness;" <u>Cass Gilbert in Oberlin, Building Utopia: Oberlin Architecture 1833-1983</u> , Bulletin, Allen Art Museum, O.C. XLI, 1. 1983-84.. Blodgett, Geoffrey. <u>Oberlin Architecture College and Town: A Guide to its Social History</u> . Oberlin College, 1985.				
46. Prepared by M. Fedelchak-Harley; L. Previll				
47. Organization O.H.I.O. and H.P.C.				
48. Date Recorded 9-30-2000				
49. Revised by				
50a. Date Revised				
50b. Reviewed by				

51. Condition of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruin
<input type="checkbox"/> Good/Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Destroyed/Burned
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	Date _____

54. Farmstead Plan



52. Historic Outbuildings and Dependencies

Barn Type(s)

<input type="checkbox"/> Corn Crib or Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> Silo
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoke House	<input type="checkbox"/> Spring House	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice House
<input type="checkbox"/> Designed Landscape Features	<input type="checkbox"/> Privy	<input type="checkbox"/> Garage

53. Affiliated OAI Site Number(s) _____

OAI Completed? _____

Archaeological Feature:	Observed	Expected on Basis of Archival Research
Well	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Privy	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Cistern	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Foundation	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Structural Rubble	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Formal Trash Dump	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Other _____	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>

42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features (Continued from page 1)

sculpture court, with crystal orb chandelier and an unused chimney. This museum has had three major additions. A classroom and studio wing, in a style similar to the original building, was added to the rear. It is sandstone with a gable, red tile roof. An open atrium with a non-functioning fountain separates the Cass Gilbert section from this rear addition. A second recent addition utilizes sandstone and red marble set in an overlapping checkerboard veneer with a recessed entrance wing. The bulk of this addition was constructed of yellow brick with Post-modern elements, which quote Cass Gilbert's original building. This addition added gallery and classroom space to the museum. An outbuilding was constructed in 1983. It is from a design by Buckminster Fuller, and was built on an existing foundation. It consists of two eight-sided domes connected in the middle by a narrow hall. These domes are used as student exhibit space and darkrooms. Extensive restoration to the original building was completed in 1999.

43. History and Significance (Continued from page 1.)

admired Cass Gilbert's work, including Finney Memorial Chapel, and after his death his wife came forward with a gift for a new art museum (Blodgett). The building was constructed from 1914 to 1917; its design was the result of a collaboration of Gilbert, President King, and Clarence Ward, Professor of Art and the museum's first director. The museum was designed both to house and to display the college's art collection, and to provide an educational experience for college students. First students entered the galleries to experience the art, then they moved to the library and lecture spaces on the second floor, to learn about the art, and then onto the studios to create art (Kulas and Wuellner).

Two additions to the building have been completed since its construction. The first, designed by Clarence Ward was built by Oberlin contractor J. B. Annable, was completed in 1937 at the price of \$65,863.67 (Rice). It is an eastward extension of the building to the rear. The second, designed by postmodernist architect Robert Venturi and completed in 1977, is an extension to the south of classroom space.

This building is significant for its architect, its architecture, its embodiment of a pedagogic ideal, and for its representation of a grand plan for the entire campus. It was listed on the National Register as part of the Oberlin College thematic nomination in 1978. The Allen Art Building was listed by the City of Oberlin as an Oberlin City Landmark in November of 1997.