1. NAME
   HISTORIC: The Brooklyn Museum
   AND/OR COMMON: The Brooklyn Museum

2. LOCATION
   STREET & NUMBER: Intersection with Washington Avenue
   CITY, TOWN: Brooklyn
   VICINITY OF: 16th - Elizabeth Holtzman
   STATE: New York
   CODE: 36
   COUNTY: Kings
   CODE: 047

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY: X BUILDING(S)
   OWNERSHIP: X PRIVATE
   STATUS: X OCCUPIED
   ACCESSIBLE: X YES: RESTRICTED
   PRESENT USE: X MUSEUM

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   NAME: Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences
   STREET & NUMBER: Eastern Parkway and Washington Avenue
   CITY, TOWN: Brooklyn
   VICINITY OF: New York
   STATE: New York

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: City Register’s Office
   STREET & NUMBER: Municipal Building
   CITY, TOWN: Brooklyn
   STATE: New York

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, LP-0155
   DATE: March 15, 1966
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
   CITY, TOWN: New York
   STATE: New York
The Brooklyn Museum stands on the south side of Eastern Parkway northeast of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, at the north end of Prospect Park. Grand Army Plaza and the Park Slope residential district are located west of the museum, and the Botanical Garden is adjacent on the south.

The museum's architects originally conceived of the building as an immense square divided into four quadrants with four inner courts surrounded by galleries. Of this plan only the north side and the northeast quadrant have been constructed, forming an L-shaped structure which occupies four and a half acres. Constructed of Indiana Limestone, the building is 510' in length, and stands four and a half stories in height.

The main portion of the neo-classical structure is the north side, along Eastern Parkway. The long horizontal mass of this facade is balanced by projecting pavilions located in the center and at the ends of the facade. The central pavilion constitutes the dominant feature of the composition because of its greater projection, the dome which rises above it, and its Ionic hexastyle portico. The portico's pediment is decorated by elaborate architectural elements including sculptured figures in the tympanum, and the shell and anthemion cresting. The end pavilions project less prominently from the main wall plane, and rise only a little higher than the walls of the basic horizontal mass. A pair of engaged Ionic columns mark these pavilions. The bays which intervene between the pavilions are articulated by pilasters which rise from the structure's raised basement to a full classical entablature. The walls extend above the entablature and are decorated by cresting and by twenty heroic-sized sculptured figures which stand on low pedestal blocks above each pilaster and engaged columns. Simple classical architraves surround each window. The sculpture which ornaments the facade and the names carved in the frieze represent aspects of knowledge.

The east elevation consists of seven bays and a corner pavilion. The wall treatment repeats the architectural motifs of the east elevation except that low pilasters were substituted for statuary above the cornice of the main wall.
Deviating from the original scheme, the rear (south side) of the building was finished off with plain masonry walls pierced by a few windows. The interior of the building contains numerous galleries, but only one of the four courts envisioned in the original scheme. Known as the auditorium Court, this room is an interpretation of the small cloister at the Church of Santa Maria della Pace (1504) in Rome.

The only significant alteration of the main facade was the removal in 1937 of the portico stairway by the Works Progress Administration. The sculptured figures at the front entrance, installed in 1963, were carved in 1916 by Daniel Chester French for the entrance to the Manhattan Bridge. The firm of Brown, Lawford and Forbes added a projection at the rear of the structure to accommodate a stairwell and an entrance from the parking lot. A new addition to the rear has been planned by the firm of Prentice, Chan, and Ohlhausen. Within the museum, installation of additional gallery space has at least partially concealed the colonnades which separated the central rotunda from the galleries which lay to the east and west.
The Brooklyn Museum, significant architecturally as an example of the American neo-classical style and historically as an important cultural institution, was built between 1895 and 1906 according to the design of McKim, Mead, and White. Although only a portion of the grandiose architectural scheme originally conceived by the architects, the museum building is an expression of the civic pride and cultural sophistication of Brooklyn at the turn of the century. The museum's architectural significance is enhanced by exterior statuary and sculptural decoration by Daniel Chester French.

In 1823 one hundred residents of the community of Brooklyn formed the Apprentice's Library which, although short-lived, was reorganized in 1843 as the Brooklyn Institute. Formed for the purpose of "enlarging the knowledge in literature, science and art," the organization received a large endowment from Augustus Graham, a wealthy Brooklyn distiller.

The community which the Institute served grew into a significant urban center during the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly after the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883. An influx of wealthy merchants and professionals heightened the cultural aspirations of the community and expanded the needs of the Institute. In 1890 the organization founded the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, and three years later a grandiose architectural scheme for a new museum facility was devised for the Institute by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White.

Financed by the City of Brooklyn and subsequently the City of New York, construction began in 1895 at the northern most end of Prospect Park. The west wing was completed in 1897, the central pavilion in 1904, and the east wing in 1906. The immense square edifice conceived by the architects was never completed. The structure which did result however constitutes the completed north or street side of the design and is in itself a significant architectural achievement. Monumental in scale, the museum building is an articulate American expression of neo-classical design of the late.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5 acres

UTM REFERENCES


C [1 8] 5[-40] B [0 2 X] 4[-7 0] E [1 8 X] 0[-4] ZONE EASTING NORTING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY with information supplied by: Betty Esequelle

NAME / TITLE Elizabeth K. Ralph /

ORGANIZATION NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

305 Broadway, New York, New York

STREET & NUMBER Agency Bldg. #1, Empire State Plaza

TELEPHONE 518-474-0479

CITY OR TOWN Albany,

STATE New York

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL XXX

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

DATE 11/29/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTACH: Keeper of the National Register

DATE 8/22/77
The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, Kings County

CONTINUATION SHEET  Significance  ITEM NUMBER  #8  PAGE 2

nineteenth century. It is an excellent example of McKim, Mead, and White's work in this style.

With the construction of the limestone facility on Eastern Parkway, the Institute began redirecting its efforts away from a generalist educational institution toward a museum specializing in the fine arts. This change was completed during the 1930's. Continuing to serve the cultural needs of Brooklyn, the Institute today uses its structure to house its offices, to exhibit its well regarded collections, and to present a variety of educational, theatrical, and musical programs. A significant contribution to the visual environment, the Brooklyn Museum is an important part of Brooklyn's physical and cultural identity.


Constructed portion shown in red

THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM
KINGS CO. N.Y.
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Property of the National Register

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway at Washington Avenue
Brooklyn, New York County

Photo credit: NYC Landmarks - 1968
Neg. filed at: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, 305 Broadway, NY, NY

Looking at the north facade.

Kings Co.

DEC 8 1976

#10(2)

AUG 22 1977

Brooklyn Museum
570 N.Y.C. Landmarks Preservation Commission
305 Broadway, N.Y., N.Y.

Kings Co.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

AUG 22 1977

Brooklyn Museum
Kings County, N.Y.

Auditorium, Court, 1903
Dear Ms. Ralph:

The Brooklyn Museum photo of the front facade is an accurate and up to date. There have been no alterations or changes to the building. I have recently visited the building and find this to be true.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Brunetto
Landmarks Specialist

DPB:cg
**ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

**STATE** NEW YORK

**Date Entered** AUG 22 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn Museum</td>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kings County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Also Notified**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hon. Jacob K. Javits</th>
<th>State Historic Preservation Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Daniel P. Moynihan</td>
<td>Mr. Orin Lehman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Leo C. Zefertetti</td>
<td>Commissioner, Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Director, North Atlantic Region</td>
<td>Agency Building #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empire State Plaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Albany, New York 12238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

880 Mottej 8–26–77
NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER:  Brooklyn Museum

LOCATION:  Eastern Parkway and Washington Ave.

OWNERS OF PROPERTY:  (Circle)  PRIVATE  STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)  FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):  NPS

NPS REGION:  (CIRCLE) N.Atlantic MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

FEATURES:

INTERIOR  EXTERIOR  ENVIRONS

- Substantially intact-1
- Substantially intact-2
- Substantially intact-3
- Substantially intact-4
- Substantially intact-5
- Substantially intact-6
- Substantially intact-7
- Substantially intact-8
- Substantially intact-9
- unknown - 4
- unknown - 5
- unknown - 6
- unknown - 7
- unknown - 8
- unknown - 9
- not applicable - 0

CONDITION:
- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- ALTERED
- ALtered
- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED
- Reconstructed
- Unexposed
- Excavated
- Unexcavated

ACCESS:
- Yes-restricted
- Yes-unrestricted
- No access
- Unknown

historic district?

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?
- YES
- NO

IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?
- YES
- NO

IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE:
- YES
- NO

Saved?
- YES
- NO

FUNCTION(S):  (use vocabulary words)

then- museum

now- museum

SIGNIFICANCE:

Claims

"first" YES  NO  "oldest" YES  NO  "only" YES  NO

ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE  ART  COMMERCE  COMMUNICATIONS

CONSERVATION  ECONOMICS  EDUCATION  ENGINEERING

EXPLORATION  INDUSTRY  INVENTION  LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

LAW/Gov't/politics  LITERATURE  MILITARY  MUSIC

PHILOSOPHY  POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  RELIGION  SCIENCE

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  TRANSPORTATION  OTHER (SPECIFY)

ENTERTAINMENT  HEALTH  RECREATION  SETTLEMENT

SOCIO/CULTURAL  URBAN & COMMUN

PLANNING
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Neo-Classical Revival

architect/builder: McKim, Mead & White

landscape/garden designer:

interior decorator:

engineer: Dekmar

artist/artisan: sculpture by Daniel Chester French

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES: personal

(label role & appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES: DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1895-1906

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS: 1937. patio stairs removed by WPA

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S): 1945-1916 sculpture by Daniel Chester French

SOURCE: (OF NOMINATION) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE: (to nearest tenth of an acre) 5

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

Built to accommodate the Brooklyn Institute of Arts & Sciences; only portion of original architectural design built by 1906. an expression of community civic pride and cultural sophistication at turn of century.
### National Register Data Sheet

**Name as it appears on federal register:**
Brooklyn Museum

**Location street & number:**
Easton Parkway at Wood Av, Brooklyn

**City/town:**
Brooklyn

**Vicinity of:**
Not specified

**State:**
NY

**County:**
Kings

**Administrator:**
Not specified

**Existing Surveys:**
Not specified

**DFHSHDHAER:**
Not specified

**Source of Nomination:**
Not specified

**Within National Register Historic District?**
Yes

**Within National Historic Landmark?**
No

**Acreage:**
5 acres

**Condition:**
- Altered
- Unaltered
- Moved
- Original site
- Unaltered, moved
- Unknown

**Features:**
- Substantially intact
- Not intact
- Unknown

**Architectural style(s):**
Neoclassical Revival

**Architect:**
Mellon, Mead & White

**Master builder:**
Not specified

**Engineer:**
Not specified

**Art:**
Not specified

**Builder/contractor:**
Not specified

**Names: Architect/garden designer:**
Mellon, Mead & White

**Artist:**
Not specified

**Master builder:**
Not specified

**Builder/contractor:**
Not specified

**Events:**
1843 organization of community cultural organization; 1890 Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences founded

**Institutional:**
Not specified

**National Register Write-Up:**
Built to accommodate the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1890, the Brooklyn Museum was constructed between 1895-1906, an expression of the civic pride and cultural sophistication of the borough of Brooklyn at the turn of the century. It is the partial materialization of a monumental architectural design devised for the Institute by the architectural firm of Mellon, Mead & White.