

MILWAUKEE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
TEMPORARY HISTORIC DESIGNATION PETITION

1. **Name of Property:** Marcus Center for the Performing Arts

Address of Property: 929 N Water Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202
Zip Code

2. **Name and Address of Owner**

Name: Milwaukee County as property owner and lessor, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts as lessee

Street Address: 929 N Water Street

City Milwaukee State: WI Zip Code: 53202

Daytime Telephone Number: Click here to enter text.
(Area Code)

Applicant (if different from owner) Jennifer Current, ASLA, Landscape Architect & Mark Debrauske, AIA, Architect

Street Address: JENNIFER CURRENT
1843 N 2^d ST.

MARK DEBRAUSKE
2955 S. WENTWORTH AVE
MILW 53207

City: Milwaukee State: WI Zip Code: Milw. WI 53212
Daytime Phone: 414-265-9265 / 414-539-3336 Evening Phone _____

*per call
1/18/2019*

*per
call
1/18/2019*

3. **Attachments**

The following information is enclosed:

- Exterior photographs or digital images (required)
- Copy of newspaper notice of demolition permit application
- Copy of Orders from the Department of Neighborhood Services
- Other (explain) parcel report, survey, article explaining significance, relevant images, article published in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel December 7, 2018 stating the project would begin in Spring 2019

4. **Legal Property Description**

Plat of Milwaukee in Secs (28-29-33)-7-22 Part (Blocks 48-49-53-VAC Strs & Alley & Lots 1 to 5 Incl Fischel's Subd) Lying Between E State St, E Kilbourn, Milwaukee River & N Water St, BID #21

5. Description of Structure

Number of stories: 3-5

Wall cladding (check each that apply)

Clapboard Brick Stucco Stone Wood Shingle
Terra Cotta Asphalt Siding Asbestos Tile Aluminum/Vinyl Siding Artificial Stone

Other: _____

Describe Outstanding Features:

This iconic Milwaukee structure was designed by Harry Weese and completed in 1969. At this time the arts were a sector that experienced substantial infrastructural growth with help from a Federal program known as Great Society. The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts is an excellent example of a substantial arts project constructed during this period. The building, originally known as the Milwaukee Center for the Performing Arts, exemplifies the Chicago architect's brand of Brutalism. This nationally recognized style propelled Weese to fame with his completion of the Washington, DC metro rail system just several years prior to the start of the Marcus Center. Construction on what became the Marcus Center began with Weese's blueprints dated June 1966. The design of the theater complex is notable for a couple reasons. First, although originally clad in Italian travertine marble (now limestone) instead of raw concrete this structure is widely regarded as one of the finest examples of Brutalist architecture and one of the enduring legacies of the Great Society. The arts complex is an excellent example of form following function with the foyer, auditorium, fly loft and flanking banks of elevators all clearly articulated from the outside. The Modernist design of the Marcus Center is seen in the arrangement of interlocking cubes and a geometric pattern of rectangles and diamonds. In 1994, the Marcus Center travertine was replaced with two different stones.

Dan Kiley had a great Architectonic sense – his ability to respond to architecture was one of his strongest attributes. In terms of the rise of Modernism, we see evidence of that in the actual physical makeup of Kiley's spaces. The modernist agenda calls for good design available to all (egalitarianism) and honesty and simplicity in the use of materials. These important markers of Modernism are explicitly evident in the design of this Grove – concrete, gravel, and trees. This is definitively simple materials used in elegant ways and accessible to the public.

Kiley's work on the Performing Arts Center is significant for many reasons. It is a masterful demonstration of the skill and vision that brought him international acclaim as a pioneer of Modernism in designed landscapes and as a recipient of the National Medal of Arts (1997), a rare achievement for a landscape architect.

6. Significance

Areas of Significance:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> music | |

Date Built: 1969, Addition 1992

Date(s) Altered (if applicable) Original: Harry Weese, Architect and Dan Kiley, Landscape Architect, Addition: Kahler Slater Torphy, Engberg Anderson Design Partnership

Builder/Architect: _____

Written Statement of Significance, including history of structure:
(continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

In 1965 landscape architect Dan Kiley and Chicago architect Harry Weese were working together on the design of an arts complex at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. The two men had just completed their work on the IBM Headquarters in Milwaukee. During this period of fruitful collaboration, Weese was also commissioned to design the Milwaukee Performing Arts Center (now the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts) at 929 East Water Street in Milwaukee, and he asked Kiley to join him on the project. This would be a continuation of a long-term working relationship that included the Rochester (New York) Institute of Technology, Reed College in Portland, Oregon, the First Baptist Church in Columbus, Indiana (now a National Historic Landmark), Grant Park in Chicago, Illinois, and Forest Park Community College in St. Louis, Missouri.

Construction on Milwaukee's new Performing Arts Center began in June 1966, with Kiley's design for the surrounding grounds well in hand by then. Kiley was known for the keen architectonic sense he brought to many projects, which, in this case, was matched by the special interest that Weese took in the landscape. The dialogue between the two practitioners, each at the top of his respective profession, is evident in the seamless dialogue between the landscape and the architecture. The facades of Weese's building were articulated in bold but simple planes of travertine. Kiley's landscape was equally bold in form and simple in materiality.

Please See Attached Documents for further information.

7. Major Bibliographical References

Please See Attached Documents for further information.

8. Form Prepared By:

Name: Jennifer Current, ASLA, Landscape Architect & Mark Debrauske, AIA, Architect Date: 1/15/2019

*per call
OK*

JENNIFER CURRENT
1843 N. 2nd ST.
MILW. WI 53212

MARK DEBRAUSKE
8955 S. WEST WORTH AVE.
MILW. WI 53207

Address: _____
City: Milwaukee State: WI Zip Code: _____

Telephone: 414-265-9265 / 414-539-3336

Email: jennifer@quorumarchitects.com mark.debrauske@tredogroup.com

*per call
OK*

Signature must be acknowledged by a notary

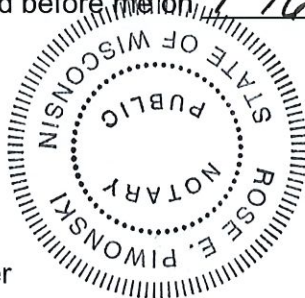
Signature of preparer/applicant: *[Handwritten Signature]*

State of Wisconsin

County of *Milwaukee*

This document was acknowledged before me on *1-16-2019* by *Rose E. Piwonski*

Rose E. Piwonski
Seal & Signature of notarial officer



My commission expires: *3-6-2020*

Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission
Office of the City Clerk
200 E. Wells Street Room B-4
Milwaukee, WI 53202
HPC@Milwaukee.gov

414-286-5722