United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

Other names/site number Sheldon Museum of Art

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & Number 12th and R Street

City or town Lincoln State Nebraska County Lancaster

Not for publication [] Vicinity []

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: **[] national [x] statewide [] local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: **[] A [] B [x] C [] D**

SHPO/Director

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official **Date**

Title **State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain):

Signature of Keeper **Date of Action**

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Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- [] Private
- [] Public-local
- [x] Public-state
- [] Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box)

- [x] Building(s)
- [] District
- [] Site
- [] Structure
- [] Object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		Buildings
1		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum, sculpture garden

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum, sculpture garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)
MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: travertine marble, GLASS

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Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
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Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery is located on the downtown campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The Sheldon was designed and built for the express use as a museum of art and associated sculpture garden to house the more than 12,000 works of American Art and sculpture attained through the University of Nebraska Art collection as well as the collection of the Sheldon Art Association, formerly known as the Hayden Art Club, founded in 1888.

The Sheldon is a work of master architect Philip Johnson and reflects the era of Modern architecture with New Formalism styling. The temple form of the building with massive arched façade clad with travertine marble, reflects the classical influence of past styles that Johnson was noted for. A sculpture garden located on the south side of the building ties the building to the outdoor landscape and with the rest of the campus.

In an essay by Henry Russell Hitchcock, a noted architectural historian and friend of Philip Johnson, he documented the reflections of the stylistic elements of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery as follows:

> *Byzantine, or perhaps Islamic, in the pendentives of the ceiling of the sculpture hall; Late Gothic, or possibly Rococo, in the flattened freehand curves of the arches and the concavity of the sides of the diagonally projecting piers; and, finally something Hellenic in the purity of the honey-colored oblong of the building seen against the sky and the reversed entasis of the vertical elements throughout. Indeed under strong sunlight one can almost see the entire exterior as fluted like a Doric column, with flutes of enormous width, while the rather contrary effect of night-lighting on the exterior suggests a range of deep niches running across the length of the facades.*[1]

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

Site

The Gallery sits within a Sculpture Garden that wraps around the south and west sides of the building. More than 30 monumental sculptures are located within the garden and include works by Jacques Lipchitz, Claes Oldenburg and others. The garden is characterized by perpendicular rectilinear concrete planes of various levels that begin on a higher plane than the surrounding landscape, and digress into the ground, creating a hierarchy of increasingly intimate spaces with high concrete walls for display of the art and sculpture.

Form

The seemingly modest simple rectilinear building is characterized by slender simple columns and pilasters, creating a regular rhythm of wall and void. The building contains nine equal bays on the east

[1] Henry Russell Hitchcock, An Essay by Henry Russell Hitchcock, Northampton, Massachusetts, December 1963, www.sheldonartmuseum.org accessed 2-8-2013.

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and west faces and six on each of the north and south sides. The floors of the two story building are not articulated on the exterior, presenting a one story aesthetic which belies the scale of the building. It is at once monumental and small. The proportion and composition harkens Classical design with pilasters and columns supporting a simple entablature from a plinth raised in the landscape. The voids between the pilasters are flat walls that accentuate the shallow pilasters and provide a clarity and simplicity of intent. The top of the wall contains a simple flat fascia that is at the same plane of the pilasters as to not overhang, but still provide inset wall planes. Subtle curves are a purposeful reaction against the rectilinear Modern models of the day. The inset portico bays at the entry are topped with domes on pendentives, with disks suspended under the domes.

Materials

The materials of the Sheldon Museum of Art is Italian travertine with the middle three bays of the east and west sides set back and glazed from floor to ceiling, giving the building a pavilion aesthetic where the interior space is one with the exterior. A clear view through the building is afforded that allows a view of the monumental staircase in the Great Hall to be seen from without. The slender pilasters dividing the bays are concave chamfered curves coming to a point. The pieces of Travertine for the exterior were precisely cut and numbered at the quarry and assembled on-site to such a degree of precision that they are clipped together with no mortar. The ceiling disks of the porticos on the exterior and as well as through the Great Hall are covered with gold leaf to contrast with the cool white of the stone. The sides of the pilasters are lit from below, which accentuates the depth of the niches at night.

Interior

The Grand Hall on the main floor provides the primary exhibit space for the sculpture collection. The open space encompasses the entire two story open height running east/west with the monumental staircase providing access to the north/south second floor galleries. Gold leaf ceiling disks provide an ethereal mood to the cool marble surfaces in the main space. Full height windows at both east and west walls connect the interior of the building with the campus landscape around.

The second story of the interior plan is divided into two halves providing for separate and unique exhibit spaces. The permanent collection hangs in the south gallery and rotating exhibits hang in north gallery space. These spaces are joined by a bridge accessed by the monumental double staircase. Each gallery has an interior wall punctuated by a window-like opening which provides views from the second floor galleries to the sculpture hall below and open vistas from each end of the building. Because the gallery spaces are essentially closed rooms, these window openings provide a sense of connection with the rest of the building and open feeling in a confined space. These vistas and the openness to the rest of the building is further punctuated by the large glass doors leading into each gallery.

The north gallery was designed for rotating and temporary exhibits and has slightly different treatments than the south permanent collection gallery. The north gallery walls are covered with painted canvas so the color can be changed to accommodate new exhibits. Rather than installing moving walls as was common for museums during the period, flexibility for changing exhibits was

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acquired by lighting strips in the ceiling to allow for appropriate lighting arrangements for different installations, as well as the canvas covered walls.

The permanent gallery (second floor south gallery) is a reflection of the north gallery except that all features are fixed because the gallery was designed to house the permanent collection. Because the permanent collection has a 20th century American art focus, the architect designed the room to support the exhibit of that art. The design approach may have been different if the collection varied, however Johnson believed the arrangement of six galleries allowed the visitor to flow through the space and experience each room individually. Each gallery is a formal and simple rectangular space.

Integrity

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery retains a high degree of historic integrity. Its location, setting, feeling, and association remain intact from its date of construction. The setting of the building was deliberately chosen by Philip Johnson so that it was not on axis to the street and sidewalk grid system. The intent of the architect was that direct access to the building should always be accessed from the peripheral sides and not directly from the grid. This approach served to maximize the qualities of his design. The sculpture garden at the south side of the building ties into the integrity of feeling and association unifying the building with the landscape of the University of Nebraska campus.

The workmanship, design, and materials remain a direct link to Philip Johnson's vision for the building. The workmanship evident in the travertine façade shows the high quality of the craftsmanship the masons in Italy possessed. The arches were carved and fit on site at the quarries in Italy before being sent and assembled on the building site.

The University of Nebraska continues its stewardship of this building by retaining its integrity and restricting additions or alterations to the exterior of the building. Only two significant alterations have been made to the building since construction. The first included new railings on the open interior grand stair to comply with safety codes. A simple metal rail was installed and its simple and slight profile maintains the sense of a grand open space. The second alteration occurred when the massive two story windows at the east and west facades were replaced. The original windows were a single span of glass encompassing the entire two story height. As these windows failed and began to lose their structural and insulative integrity, new units were installed. Although the new windows are not a single span of glass like the original, the new divided spans terminate at appropriate horizontal spaces to meet the intent of the original design, and do not adversely affect the historic integrity of the building.

Vocabulary

Although the language of the composition of the building harkens to Classical precedence, the result is wholly Modern. The columns do not have capitals or bases. They are inverted with a ridge on the vertical face and are concave rather than convex, affording a slender and delicate aesthetic. The material and shape are Classical in composition but not form, strictly speaking.

The building was designed in the period of Johnson's career when he was questioning the purity and simplicity of steel and glass modernism of the day. The design is a combination of Modern sensibilities

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with romantic humanist design of the previous century. The influence of 19th century masters such as Sir John Soane, immortalized by his use of shallow and delicate domes and economy of material expressed in the structure are evident. The Infused Romanticism is a way to break free from the constraints of Modern architecture. The edges are softened and sculptural but direct. The effect is one of elegance without competing with the work within or sculptures without.

Johnson exclaimed regarding the Sheldon building that "It seems I cannot but be Classically inspired: symmetry, order, clarity above all". "Johnson," Perspecta 7 (1961), p3.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ____ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ____ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- x **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ____ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ____ **A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ____ **B** Removed from its original location.
- ____ **C** A birthplace or a grave.
- ____ **D** A cemetery.
- ____ **E** A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ____ **F** A commemorative property.
- ____ **G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1963

Significant Dates
1963

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Philip Johnson

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery is significant at the state level under Criterion C for its architectural merit as well as the work of master architect Philip Johnson. The building was completed in 1963 in the era of modern architecture with inspirations from classical periods resulting in the New Formalism.

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style. The building has an associated sculpture garden completed at the same time. The Sheldon is located on the campus of the University of Nebraska Lincoln, the state's land grant university founded in 1869.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Sheldon Museum of Art houses the collections from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Art collection begun in 1929, and the Sheldon Art Association collection founded in 1888. The Sheldon Art Association collection began as the Haydon Art Club named for Benjamin Robert Haydon, a British painter. The club organized annual art exhibitions around Lincoln with the goal of bringing in works from a variety of artists from across the country. The group also provided funds to support art education at the university. The club was reorganized and incorporated in the early 1900s as the Nebraska Art Association. These collections focus on American art of the 19th and 20th centuries with nearly 12,000 holdings. Also associated with the museum is a sculpture garden located on the south side of the building.

The Nebraska Art Association (NAA) was not only a club of members who appreciated art in all its form, but the group also collected and acquired numerous pieces of art which eventually became the core of the Sheldon's renowned collection of American art. As the collection grew, the pieces were exhibited in various buildings around campus with no permanent storage appropriate for the caliber of art represented in the collection. [2] Pressure for a new building, dedicated to art, was paramount as the collection grew throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

Mary Frances Sheldon and her brother Adams Bromley Sheldon, the namesakes of the building, donated their estate to the university for the express purposes of building an art museum on campus designed by a renowned internationally known architect. Their funds were further enhanced when Adams increased that gift with a donation of 40% of his estate. Rather than host a design competition, invitations to noted architects were sent out and Philip Johnson was selected to design a signature landmark for the University and the notable art collection. Johnson designed the modern building with inspirations from the past in its temple form of New Formalism.

Philip Johnson

Philip Johnson was born on July 8, 1906 in Cleveland, Ohio. Born into a wealthy family where his father was a lawyer and diplomat under the Woodrow Wilson administration, Johnson grew up traveling the world. He was instilled with a strong interest in history and art throughout his upbringing and was able to live his life immersed in these fields. His own personal fortune was established at an early age with the gift of AlCoA (Aluminum Company of America) stock which gave him financial independence and wealth at a very early age. Johnson left home in 1923 to attend Harvard University and study philosophy and classics. After graduating Harvard he embarked on an extensive European trip with friend and noted architectural historian Henry Russell Hitchcock.

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[2] Sheldon Museum of Art, Sheldon Art Association are new names, Office of University Communications, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, press release, March 7, 2008

Johnson made two lasting and influential friendships during the 1920s. Henry Russell Hitchcock was his European travel companion, and a noted architectural historian whose works on modern architecture cemented his stellar reputation in the field. Albert Barr was introduced to Johnson through his sister who attended Wellesley College where Barr was teaching. Barr became the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and brought both Johnson and Hitchcock in to complete the pivotal exhibit, *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition* in 1932. [3]

During Johnson's and Hitchcock's visit to Europe after graduating Harvard, they studied architectural landmarks through many countries. It was during this trip that they gained an appreciation for the new modern movement of architectural design evident in the Bauhaus school. Epic personalities such as Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe were dictating the new built environment. Johnson derived a lifelong inspiration from the classic monumental buildings he visited such as Chartres Cathedral in France, the Parthenon in Greece, and Italian Renaissance designs. Hitchcock's field was certainly more singularly in the realm of architectural history, and while Johnson believed that there was no person more knowledgeable in the movements of the past than Hitchcock, Johnson's own appreciation of the past built environment and early monuments influenced his embrace of the present and future.

It was during their trip through Europe that Johnson and Hitchcock coined the term International Style. When they returned to New York, Alfred Barr hosted the *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition* at MOMA in 1932 that was curated by Johnson and Hitchcock. This exhibit is credited with introducing the modern movements already established in Europe to the United States as well as coining the term International Style. Johnson stayed on at MOMA to become its director of the Department of Architecture and Design. Johnson retained professional ties with MOMA throughout his career either as an employee or as a designer for spaces such as the landscape for the sculpture garden. The *Modern Architecture: International Style* was not the only influential exhibit curated by Johnson. He followed this with an exhibit of everyday objects used in technology and machine age called *Objects 1900-Today* and *Machine Art* in 1933 and 1934. These exhibits elevated the design of simple industrial objects, such as a propeller, to the world of fine art.[4]

Johnson was not content with his role in the world of art, collecting, and exhibits. His appreciation of design and architecture inspired him to return to school. He began his architecture studies at Harvard in 1940 at the age of 34, feeling like an old man compared to the other students in his studies.[5] Walter Gropius was associated with the Bauhaus movement and International Style in Europe before coming to the United States to head the architecture department at Harvard University. Johnson studied under both Gropius and Marcel Breuer at Harvard. Johnson was open about his preference for the style and design aesthetic of Breuer and Mies van der Rohe over Gropius. He firmly believed the functionality of the architecture at Harvard and of Gropius went too far to ignore and discount the value of aesthetics in design especially as it related to systems such as plumbing, heating/ventilating and cooling systems. These divergent opinions bolstered Johnson's belief that aesthetics should

[3] Hillary Lewis and Richard Payne, The Architecture of Philip Johnson, Bulfinch Press, New York, 2002
[4] Ibid
[5] Hillary Lewis, Geske Lecture, February 5, 2013, Sheldon Museum of Art

always trump function. He believed that architecture was so much like art that he stated, "Architecture is sculpture that is inhabited."[6]

Johsnon's first major design during his tenure at Harvard was in 1942 with his personal residence on Ash Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This was his first effort combining the International Style with his own design aesthetic incorporating the influences of the past. He took this design further yet with his Glass House in 1949. The Glass House built in New Canaan, Connecticut was designed to combine all elements of the landscape with the building design. The Glass House was often compared to Mies' Farnsworth House which was built some ten years later in 1951; however the Glass House site incorporated a complex of buildings and pavilions through time as well as significant landscape and sculpture details. Although Mies and Johnson were friends, Mies did not approve of the Glass House because he believed Johnson was embracing post-modern influences based on the classics, thus making the Glass House a true departure from the style Mies and Johnson utilized. Mies went so far as refusing to spend the night at the residence.[7]

However, their friendship endured and Johnson continued to utilize his inspiration from the classics to embrace a form often identified as New Formalism within the modern and post-modern movements. Johnson believed that the procession of the physical act of moving through his buildings was an important feature of his design. This baseline allowed Johnson to bring a holistic approach to not only the design and aesthetics of a building, but the landscape and surrounding setting as well. His resulting designs tended toward formality. He believed that unlike much modern architecture where form was meant to follow function such as in the Bauhaus movement, his commissions were focused on form as art. In fact Johnson believed that it did not matter so much if a room was practically usable, such as where to place wall pendants in a bedroom, as long as the form was perfection. [8]

Johnson's body of work is expansive and his commissions include houses, museums, landscapes, skyscrapers and educational buildings. His work in Houston, Texas with developer Gerald D. Hines is considered groundbreaking and it changed the skyline of the city. His deviation from the standard box for a skyscraper redefined the built environment of the city with the completion of Pennzoil Place in 1976. The AT&T building (1984) in New York City is credited with reestablishing the stone clad skyscraper and its singular Chippendale Highboy designed cornice line caused a great stir among architectural critics. No doubt it served Johnson's purpose of a noted, unique, and landmark design and though the design was both criticized and lauded, Johnson believed that the attention was all that mattered. He stated in his conversations with Hilary Lewis in her book *Philip Johnson: The Architect in His Own Words* published in 1994 that as long as his name was spelled right, the opinion did not matter.[9]

[6] Hillary Lewis and John O'Connor, Philip Johnson: The Architect in His Own Words, 1994, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. New York.
[7] Lewis, The Architecture of Philip Johnson
[8] Lewis and O'Connor, Philip Johnson: The Architect in His Own Words
[9] Ibid.

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Johnson practiced architecture until the end of his life in 2005 at the age of 98. He dabbled in Deconstructivism in his later career with his Chapel of St. Basils (1997) at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. Johnson was committed to the beliefs of Greek philosopher Heraclitus who stated that the only constant in life was change. Johnson was always looking toward something new and different and felt he was at his most creative after he turned 70. He was not only a skilled designer and art collector he became a pop culture icon. He was friends with noted artists such as Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg, movers and shakers in the political world, and powerful investors.

Johnson's design of the Sheldon incorporated all his beliefs including the strong experiential feeling of the procession through the building, the use of beautiful aesthetic materials such as the travertine marble façade, and classical influences in the temple form of the building. The Sheldon is a Lincoln landmark and a noted museum design in Johnson's portfolio. The building is significant under Criterion C for its architectural merit as a work of Modern design incorporating elements of post modern classicism and New Formalism. It is a contributing museum work of master architect Philip Johnson.

Modern Architecture

Modern Architecture is a movement and style primarily classified through simplicity in design and clarity of forms while eliminating unnecessary details as seen in previous architectural styles. Often the visual expression of structure with simple cladding physically expressed the style, as well as the turn away from ornamented facades designed to mask the utility of the construction and engineering. Brutal honesty in the function and materials of a building often referred to as "truth to materials" was expressed through using and exposing the true nature of construction materials rather than covering them to provide surface ornamentation as most previous architectural movements manifested themselves in the built environment. The Modern architecture movement broadly encompasses a variety of styles and schools of design. Though the infancy of the modern movement can be traced to technological and social changes around the turn of the twentieth century, the movement flourished in the United States after World War II when corporate entities, universities, museums and noted architects alike adopted modernism as their preferred style.

Technological advances in mass produced building materials and the drive for simplicity, form, and line in architecture provided a baseline for many notable modern design. By the 1920s, three major European figures in modern architecture were well established adopting form, function, and industrial technology. These three figures, Le Corbusier in France, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (Mies) and Walter Gropius in Germany established the inspiration and basis for many American architects including Philip Johnson who knew these architects well, and established long standing friendships with them. Johnson is credited with dubbing their style as the International Style. His friendship with Mies would endure and include design partnerships on significant buildings. However, Johnson's relationship with Gropius was not as cordial. At this same time in America, Frank Lloyd Wright was making his mark on the built environment with his unique interpretation of modern architecture and design. Early acceptance of and exposure to modern design for the American audience is punctuated by the 1932 modern architecture exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City (MOMA). This exhibit was curated by Philip Johnson and his close friend and architectural historian Henry Russell Hitchcock. Both men traveled extensively in Europe, saw the activity of the Bauhaus movement in Germany as well as other

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modern European design, and collated the experience into the International Exhibition of Modern Architecture at MOMA. They coined the phrase International Style in this exhibit and brought cutting edge European design activity and awareness to the United States.

Many important modern European designers and architects came to the United States and established schools of practice at major American universities in Chicago at the Illinois Institute of Technology, andat the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Mies van der Rohe came to the United States in 1937 with help from his friend Philip Johnson. Johnson furnished his New York apartment with Mies' Barcelona furniture, much of which was designed for the World Exposition in Barcelona, Spain in 1929 thus the name of the notable chair (Barcelona chair). Johnson secured Mies his first commission in America for a residence in Wyoming, which was never built. However in 1938 Mies became the director of the Architecture Department at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, and his career in America soared. His design of the campus plan for the school epitomized modern architecture and International Style with steel and glass buildings arranged in a modular system to organize the campus. Mies believed that modern architecture was more than just a machine function and that it should be usable within a broad range of functions with unique and individual large volumes that could be subdivided by movable walls and screens. This method was often used in modern museum buildings to accommodate art installations and corporate and educational buildings to allow for maximum flexibility of the interior volume.[10]

Mies continued to design significant buildings in the International Style on the American landscape including the Lake Shore Drive apartments (1948-51) in Chicago and the Seagram Building (1954-58) in New York, designed by Mies with Philip Johnson designing interior spaces. The International Style became one of the most prevalent styles in the modern movement. Though classical order through shapes and planes retained its importance in International design, the desire to break from tradition and look at buildings in a new point of view dominated. The use of simple geometric lines and modern materials such as glass facades, steel, and concrete were evident in the notable buildings in this style[11]. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill designed the Sears Tower, now known as the Willis Tower (1973) as well as the John Hancock Building (1968) which are both easily identifiable in the Chicago skyline. The Hancock Building, with its tapered shape and exposed massive x-shaped cross beams emphasizing the functional and visible structure of the building, and the Sears Tower (now Willis Tower), currently the tallest building in the United States, both exemplify the style.

As the modernist era progressed, the commitment to visible structure and simplistic form gave way to slightly softer facades and flowing lines. Nowhere is this more evident than in Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal at Kennedy airport in New York completed in 1962. Saarinen created a building in which function followed the form, and the form elicited the feeling of flight. The smooth exterior wall surfaces are often likened to a clam shell shape, but the movement in the form unquestionably evokes the movement of flight. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill designed the Beinecke Rare Book Library on the campus of Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut between 1960 and 1963. This marble clad

[10] Leland M. Roth, A Concise History of American Architecture, Harper and Row, New York, 1979 280-90
[11] Ibid 128

building diffused light into the main space where another glass box housed the books. It is often described as a jewel box within a jewel box.[12] Over time, though these simple stark lines were not universally appealing and drew critics that a basic box would become stylistically boring.

Incorporating classical elements into the typical box, ever present in much of the modern movement, resulted in a style within the movement often referred to as New Formalism. Philip Johnson's buildings of the period from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s are highly reflective of this style within the modern movement. Noted architectural historian Marcus Whiffen defines New Formalism as, "typically self-contained, free-standing blocks, with strictly symmetrical elevations." [13] Buildings are often defined by smooth wall surfaces in a variety of materials including natural resources such as stone and man-made synthetic materials. The New Formalism was starkly different from the modernism of International Style because it often employed a variety of column and arch supports, which tended to be fully interpreted encompassing entire facades. While the arch or column form is entirely absent from other modern examples, the presence of the soft curves appearing in a variety of shapes, sizes and scales constituted the overarching motif within the style. Still very little applied ornament is present, with smooth varied surfaces, structural shapes of the arch and column, and patterned screening materials providing visual interest. Philip Johnson utilized inspiration from classicism in his buildings and structures from this period, and reflected on the basics of architecture through his unique interpretation. New Formalism tended to admire and reflect past movements such as Neo-Classical revival while appreciating the stronger vertical and horizontal lines of the International Style, but definitely leaving it behind. Whiffen identifies Johnson in his opinion, as the most interesting architect of the New Formalism. Johnson regularly called on classical styles throughout his designs as is evident in the vestibule of the Kneses Tifereth Israel Synagogue at Port Chester, New York (1956) which reflects the form of Robert Adam and the use of ceiling vaulting reminiscent of English architect Sir John Soane. His inspiration for the Sheldon Museum of Art along with the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art at Forth Worth, Texas (1961)is often credited to the Berlin Museum (1824-1828) a classical façade incorporating arches and symmetry. Johnson's own lake pavilion at the site of the Glass House is a clear reflection of his design for the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, appearing as a simple shell of the building represented in Lincoln. Whiffen expands on Johnson's use of inspiration from past styles and previous works classifying him as an "architectural historian's architect, not an architect's architect."[14] Rather than updating past styles Johnson set out to apply his own reflections on those styles.

Buildings of the New Formalism tend to be free standing block types that tend to reflect a temple, as the Sheldon does. The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery designed by Philip Johnson, one of the leaders of the modern movement in America, exemplifies the stylistic features of the New Formalism as described above through its simple lines, monumental arch and column façade, and smooth travertine cladding.

[12] Ibid 305
[13] Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture since 1780MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 1992 261.
[14] Ibid 263

Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**

9. Major Bibliographic References

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_____. *Sheldon Museum of Art, Sheldon Art Association are New Names*, Office of University Communications, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, press release, March 7, 2008

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other (Name of repository)

_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one | USGS Quadrangle Lincoln, NE

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

056

Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

1. Latitude _____ Longitude _____
2. Latitude _____ Longitude _____
3. Latitude _____ Longitude _____
4. Latitude _____ Longitude _____

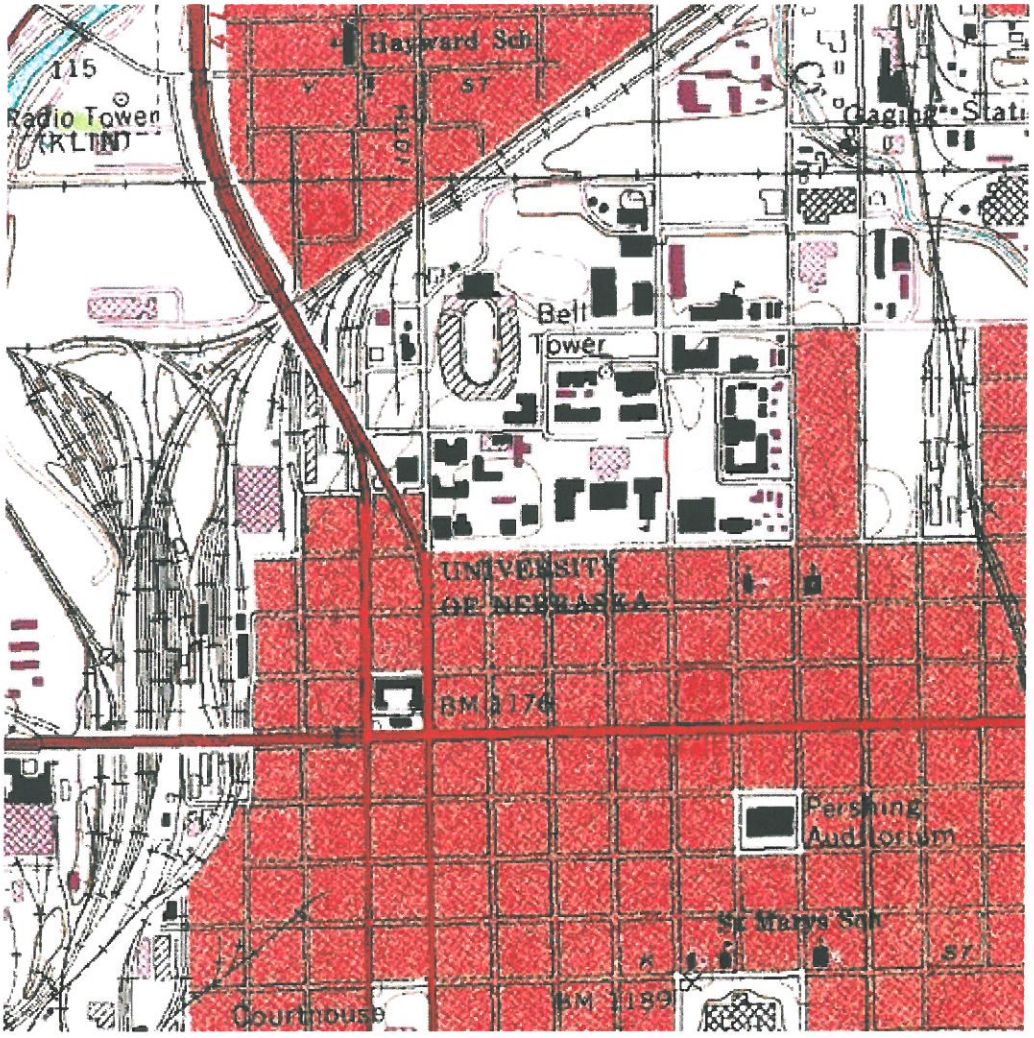
OR

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): NAD83

___ NAD 1927 or x NAD 1983

1. Zone 14 Easting 693597 Northing 4521033
2. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____
3. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____
4. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____



057

Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery is located on the city campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The building boundaries include the footprint of the building itself, the exterior access stairs and the sculpture garden located immediately adjacent and south of the building. No additional land is included with this nomination.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery is significant under criterion C for its architectural merit as a work of modern architecture and as the work of master architect Philip Johnson. The building is located on the campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Because of its architectural merit and its individual significance the boundaries selected include the footprint of the building only as well as its associated sculpture garden with no additional University land.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Melissa Dirr Gengler and Greg Munn
organization HRG, Inc. and BVH Architects date April 2013
street & number 442 South 28th Street telephone 402-770-5877
city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68510
email Melissa@hrg-nebraska.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property **Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery**
City or Vicinity Lincoln County Lancaster State Nebraska
Photographer Greg Munn Date Photographed 4-1-2013

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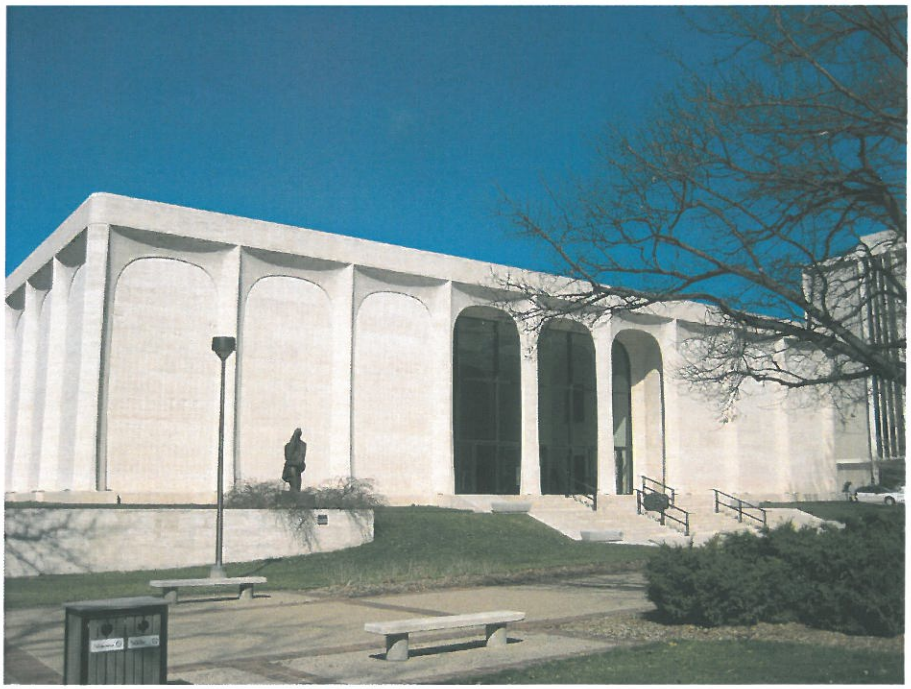
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1.View of south façade, camera facing north



2. View of main (east) façade, camera facing northwest

059

3. View of main (east) façade, camera facing west

4. View of sculpture garden, camera facing west

5. Detail of main east entrance and stairs, camera facing west

6. View of southeast façade, camera facing northwest

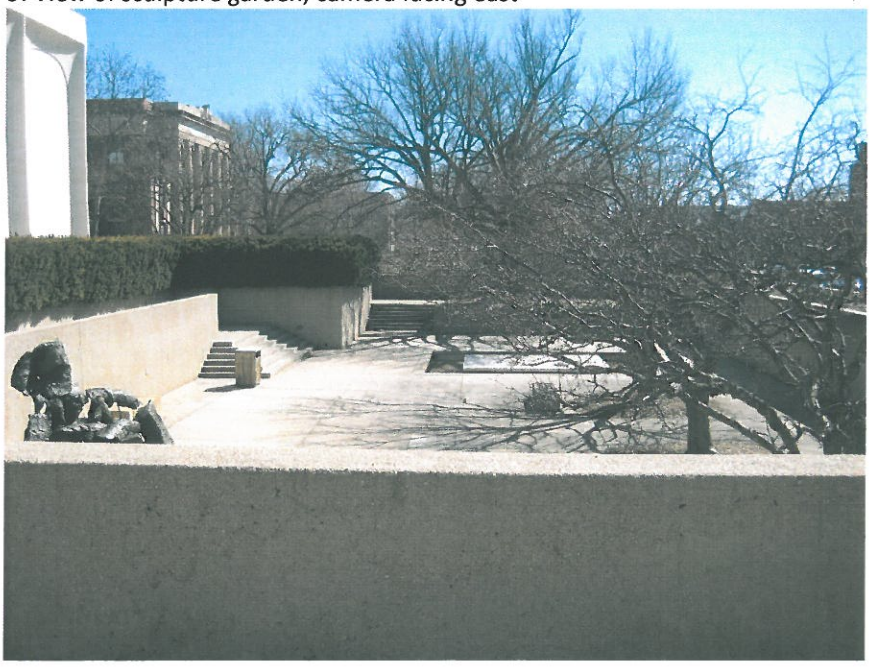
061

7. View of north façade, camera facing south

8. View of west façade, camera facing east

062

9. View of sculpture garden, camera facing east



10. View of sculpture garden, camera facing east

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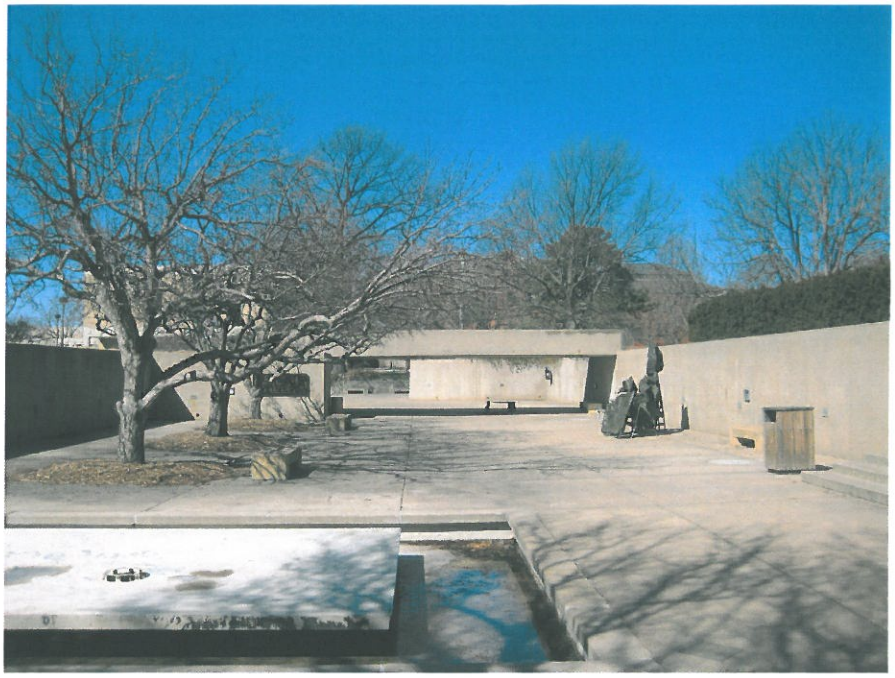
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery | Lancaster County, NE
Name of Property | **County and State**



11. View of sculpture garden, camera facing west

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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