The Fort Wayne Museum of Art

Thesis - 1979
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The Fort Wayne Museum of Art
Preface

The following book is the compilation of all pertinent information generated by my thesis project, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art. The work in this book was accomplished from September, 1978 to May, 1979. The work was under the direction of my thesis critic, Professor John Wyman, with additional assistance provided by Professors Sonny Palmer and Bruce Meyer, all of the College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.

The book is organized under two sections. The first section consists of the 'pure' design aspects of the project along with the final solution. The book's second part consists of the program and its addenda.

The table of contents for the design section is on page 1, while the program's contents page proceeds page 1 in the second half.
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Abstract

The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is presently in need of a new facility. This project grew out of that interest for a new museum and the challenge of designing an environment for the arts.

The site chosen was owned by the Fort Wayne Fine Arts Foundation and is located in downtown Fort Wayne. It is currently a parking lot serving Louis Kahn's Performing Arts Center.

After a study of Fort Wayne's present and future art museum needs, a study of museum examples, a review of the current literature on art museums, and many interviews, the program was completed. The program, enclosed at the end of this book, called for a facility of approximately 62,000 square feet.

This building would include about 50% of its space in gallery / exhibition, 20% in work / storage, facilities for lecture and instruction, staff offices, a member's lounge, a public cafeteria, and a giftshop.

The top priority affecting the design would be visitor education and the maximizing of excitement about the art and the building. This must be accomplished while simplifying their circulation and orientation difficulties present in other museums. Other priorities would include a high degree of visibility that is inherent at this site and the strong interface of this building with Kahn's Performing Arts Center as an art complex.

I believe that the design development and final design demonstrate that concern for those priorities.
Consistent Goals

1. Galleries facing onto major central court.

2. Sculpture area facing Main Street and Lafayette Street intersection.

3. Exterior eating space between the new Fort Wayne Museum of Art and Fine Arts Center.

4. Work / storage area in rear near existing loading dock.

5. Public areas grouped near main entry.

6. Majority of gallery space on second level.

Design Development

CONCEPT 1

* Three circulation entry patterns.

* Multistory parking garage located directly north of railroad elevation.

* Pinwheel gallery layout around court.

* Varying gallery sizes.
Plan, front view, and rear view of site model.
Concept 1 - First Floor
Concept 1 - Second Floor

CONCEPT 2 - Midterm First Quarter

* Majority of parking now underground.

* Abandonment of circular to triangular central court form.

* Equally strong front and rear entry.

* Massing too large for human scale.

- Pedestrian circulation under elevation at midblock still present.

- Museum doesn't shut off loading dock.

- Street edge massing not consistent with the area.
Concept 2 - Second Floor
Concept 2 - Plan and front view
CONCEPT 3

* Literal entry arrow led to entry hall and triangular court.
* Abandonment of strong second entry.
* Triangular thrust element present on Southeast corner;
  + Strong symmetrical elements.
  + Work area buffers loading dock area;
  - Point of arrow provides no focus.
Concept 3 - First Floor
CONCEPT 4

* Flipping of central triangular court to provide better focus.

* Exterior modulation of galley form.

+ Secondary rear exit explored.

+ Exploration of natural light into galleries.

- Too chaotic in form and massing.
Concept 4 - First Floor
Concept 4 – Second Floor
Concept 4 - Plan and front view.
Note - Triangular portion on SE corner of model fell off during photos.
CONCEPT 5 - First Quarter Final

* Attempt to clean-up form with geometric studies.

* Too strong of entry element without buffer element.

* Shift of triangular thrust portion to create sculpture terrace on east side.

+ Organic front drive highlights Fine Arts Center and Museum of Art.

- Exterior eating space on west side still alley-like.

+ Permanent gallery farthest from storage area.

- Exterior massing does not reflect importance of central court.
Concept 5 - Study of Geometry
Concept 5 - Plans and Zoning Presentation
Concept 5 - Circulation Plan and plan view
Concept 5 - Front and rear view

CONCEPT 6

* Buffer space created for entry.
* Better exterior eating space.
+ Application of preliminary structural bays to design.
- Poor first - second floor circulation joint.
+ Exploration of secondary rear entry.
Concept 6 - First Floor
Concept 6 - Second Floor

CONCEPT I - Midterm Second Quarter

* Use of ramps for gallery circulation.
* Final structural grid applied to design.
* Natural light introduced into gallery.
+ Massing of central court better expressed on exterior.
+ Circular stair pulled from building mass.
Concept 7 - Plan and front view
Concept 7 – Rear view

Final Design

The following seven pages are reductions of the final presentation drawings concluded at the end of second quarter. The originals are 30" by 42", ink on vellum.
Overall view - Looking north.
Overall view - Looking southwest
Entry plaza from Freimann Park
Exterior eating area

Link to Fine Arts Center
Front elevation & Exterior of lobby
Rear sculpture area
View toward entry and orientation
View toward restrooms and entry
View back toward entry
View of ramp to Gallery 2, 3, & 4.
View of ramp down to Gallery 1 & 2, and up to Gallery 4 & 5.
Views toward entry on second level, Office side & Permanent collection.
View from entry toward galleries

View of entry lobby from front doors
Conclusion

The priorities that I established at the beginning of my thesis year were accomplished with varying degrees of evaluation success. That varying degree of success depended upon the actual attainability of those goals. For instance, the educational success of the art museum is very difficult to evaluate. The success of my art museum as a welcome place for all classes of people was a point discussed at a critique. While a factory worker, wood feel comfortable in a wood-sided museum, a lifetime member may desire a marble veneer building. It is this balance between design extremes that I believe that I have attained.

I am very pleased with the form and massing of my building. It makes a statement in a bold, yet restrained way. I am concerned with my building's relation to Lou Kahn's building. That point again brings up the issue of whether the contrast approach is as successful as the complimentary approach. While the Fort Wayne Museum of Art differs in geometry and materials on its exterior, the massing and level of exterior detail compliment the Fine Arts Center.

Overall, I am very pleased with my thesis project and my years work. If the choice was given as to a new project selection, I would again choose an art museum. There are enough parameters present with more than an adequate number of design options.

The scope of the Fort Wayne Museum of Art has changed very little as is reflected in the program's addenda, page 91. The actual area of the building exceeded the programmed area. More space was added for general display and gathering. Estimated total area is 70,000 square feet.
a building program for the Fort Wayne Museum of Art
a building program
for the
Fort Wayne
Museum of Art
1202 West Wayne Street
Fort Wayne, Indiana

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Introduction

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Background & History

The Fort Wayne Art School was organized in 1888 by J. Ottis Adams. In 1950, the Museum of Art opened as a teaching tool for the school. In 1952, the Museum entered their present building on West Wayne Street. They occupy the former Mossman mansion donated in 1949. It is a Victorian mansion built in 1905 - 1906 designed by Marshall Mahurin. (See Figure 1)

Fig. 1.: Present Building

A reorganization which subdivided the Museum of Art and the School of Fine Arts under the direction of the board of the Art Institute occurred December 12, 1972. On July 1, 1976, the School of Fine Arts merged with Indiana University in Fort Wayne. The Museum of Art Management Committee voted unanimously on April 14, 1977 to combine resources in designing and planning a joint facility with the Allen County Historical Society. Since that date the Historical Society has plans for the occupying of the remodeled City Hall (dedicated 1893); therefore, eliminating this joint venture.
Scope of Program

This program will include all needed pre-design data for the Fort Wayne Museum of Art which will include all essential facilities for that new structure.

Participants

I have gathered the following information from many reference sources. (See Appendix) I have conducted interviews, been involved in meetings, and have visited art museums around the country. Individual listings of the meetings and visits with their dates are listed in the Appendix/Addenda.

This project has been completed under the direction of Professors John Wyman, Sonny Palmer, Bruce Meyer, and various outside critics in the College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.
Goals & Priorities

The first goal of a new Museum for Fort Wayne is that it must be an educational tool for all groups of people in the city and the area. The Fort Wayne Museum of Art in a new facility would desire to change from its present status of a small ratio of travelling exhibitions to a large permanent collection into a smaller ratio of permanent to travelling exhibitions. Director Krushenick would desire a very progressive, educational museum.

The second priority of the present Management Committee is for the swiftest completion of a new building. Money has recently been invested in the present building just to protect its contents, e.g. fixing the roof, purchasing air conditioners, etc.; therefore, the necessity for a new facility without the investment of a further capital in the existing building is essential.

Cost is the third priority in this list. Since it must be admitted that no museum is a money-making proposition, original cost must be kept to a minimum.
Organizational Data

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The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is located in the Mossman mansion, a two and a half story Victorian mansion with a full basement. 450 square feet of vault space is located in a different structure. The basement area contains workrooms and storage. The first floor contains two exhibition areas, a gift shop, information desk, coat rack, current events in the museum area, and a staff workroom. (See Figure 2.)

![Diagram](image)

**Fig. 2.: First Floor-No Scale**

The second level is reached by an open stair and contains three other gallery rooms with three administrative offices on the interior of the gallery rooms and two public restrooms. (See Figure 3.)

The attic is also used as storage with the enclosed rear yard serving as a sculpture garden. The former carriage house has recently been converted into a children's wing.
Fig. 3.: Second Floor - No Scale

Personnel Growth

At present, there are three full-time (Director, assistant director, registrar/librarian) and three part-time employees. The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is presently a small scale operation with only occasional national exhibitions mainly due to its inadequate exhibition space. Director Krushenick is confident that he can draw large scale art exhibitions to the museum due to his personal contacts. With a new facility of 60,000 square feet, Director Krushenick's recommendations are as follows:

Director - He is the sole person on the museum staff that is answerable to the Board of the Museum of Art. He is responsible for carrying out the existing policy of the Museum and carrying out these policies through his administration. He is also responsible for the growth, preservation, and the study of the collections and the development of the exhibitions and other programs to make them meaningful to the public. He must also be a public relations
man to the general public, to the museum members, and to his staff.

Secretary to the Director - This person will handle daily office support tasks for the director.

Administrative Assistant - This person's duties include supervising the functional aspects that provide for security, all aspects of plant operation and maintenance, personnel matters, procurements and contracts, communications, public service, and the like. This position may also include some money handling matters under the direction of a finance officer for the Board of the Art Museum.

Secretary to the Administrative Assistant

Curator of Painting and Sculpture - This person will hopefully be a scholarly and research-matter expert. He will study, identify, and arrange the collection, suggest acquisitions, originate exhibition ideas and carry them out, do research, write catalogs and other publications, represent the Museum in the scholarly world and will be held responsible for the protection, preservation, and conservation of the paintings and sculpture of the Museum.

Assistant to the Curator of Painting and Sculpture - This position may perhaps be a temporary, part-time, summer help, or even an art student interested in the curatorial profession.

Curator of Graphic Arts - This curator would handle the other visual art forms including printing, silk-screening, engraving, photography, etc.

Assistant to the Curator of Graphic Arts

Curator of Decorative Arts - This curator would control silver, glass, tapestry, furniture, etc.
Assistant to the Curator of Decorative Arts

Curator of Education - This position must maintain a close link to the public, providing the formal and informal teaching programs of the museum. His responsibilities may include actual instruction, in-service instruction for docents and volunteers, formal lecture series, film programs, and the organization of tours, television shows, and circulating exhibits for the schools.

Assistant to the Curator of Education

Preparator - This person will prepare the exhibits for display. With the designs from the curators, the preparator will actually build any needed display items. A knowledge of carpentry and electricity would be needed.

Librarian / Registrar - This person would be in charge of accessioning and cataloging objects and maintaining proper records of them. He would be responsible for overseeing the packing, unpacking, moving and storing of the objects, and providing for their transportation and insurance.

Librarian / Registrar Assistant

Crating Builder - This job would entail the building and repairing any needed crates that are necessary for the shipping of art works.

Audio - Visual Technician - This person would be responsible for the technical aspects in the museum in regards to presentations and lectures.

Maintenance Personnel

Security Personnel

The personnel structure for the above employees is shown in Figure 4.
Fig. 4.: Personnel Structure

The minimum personnel desired with a combination or elimination of roles in a new facility would be:

Full-time:  Director  
Administrative Assistant  
Secretary to Dir. & Admin. Asst.  
Curator (All art forms)  
Curator of Education  
Curator's Assistant  
Librarian / Registrar

Part-time:  Curator (All art forms)  
(2) Curator's Assistants  
Maintenance  
Security

Temporary: (Used only for arrival and departures of exhibits)  
Preparator  
Librarian / Registrar Asst.  
Crating Builder  
Audio Technician

User Activities

Provisions for the handicapped must be made in all areas. Visitors to the existing museum numbered 30,000 yearly.
The areas that would be needed in the new 60,000 square feet facility for the Fort Wayne Museum of Art would include:

**Public Areas:**
- **Galleries:** For display of all forms of all media, both permanent and travelling exhibits.
- **Lecture Area:** Movable seating for 150 - 299 possible.
- **Studio / Workrooms:** For educational and instuctional classes.
- **Gift Shop & Book Sales:** Art oriented.
- **Sale's & Rental Gallery:**
- **Public Cafeteria / Lounge:** Seating for approximately 100.
- **Orientation Center:** Tour & information.
- **Checkroom:** For coats, packages, and cameras.
- **Public Restrooms**
- **Conference Rooms:** Possible combination with lecture.
- **Membership Facilities:** For museum members only — Lounge, conference, and private gallery.
- **Membership Restaurant:** For members only.

**Employee Areas:**
- **Office Space for Employees:** See previous section on personnel.
- **Curator's Shops:** Very small — most curatorial work to be done by travelling curators.
- **Design Studio / Shop:** For exhibit preparation.
- **Printing Facilities:** Small scale operation - Large scale jobs to be farmed out.
- **Conference / Boardroom**
- **Employee Restrooms / Lounge:** Possible shower facilities.
- **Docent Training Area**
- **Library:** Basic reference material only for staff use.
- **Outer vault:** For protection of crated materials.
- **Center vault and Storage:** For protection of uncrated art & preliminary registration.
Employee Areas Continued:

Inner Vault: For protection of records and valuable materials.

Loading Dock: 1 dock for the shipping and receiving of art objects and support equipment.

Process Flow

Exhibition or object received through loading dock facilities and placed in outer vault where uncrating can occur. Registration and storage, if needed, occurs in the center vault with the initial inspection and any necessary repairs occurring in the curator's shop. The design studio under the supervision of the preparator and the curators will plan and construct any needed articles for the exhibitions. The partial or unobtrusive closure of a section or total gallery area is essential in the establishment of a new exhibit and the preservation of visitor circulation through the total museum environment.
Space Requirements

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Gallery Areas 23
Work Environment 23
Work Spaces 24
Lecture Environment 26
Lecture Spaces 27
Office Environment 28
Office Spaces 28
Other Spaces 30
**Gallery Space Reqs.**

Due to the wide variety of art objects in regards to size, scale, and necessary environment, no exact space requirements for a gallery can be given. Adequate area must be planned so that the viewer may move to, from, around, and perhaps even into the art objects.

Vertical planes, normally flat, can be used for a great majority of the art objects. Figure 5 shows the many options for the display of vertical art objects.

![Diagram of options for vertical display]

A. Directly on wall  
B. Hinged panels  
C. Mounting boards  
D. Mounting screens  
E. Side wall supported  
F. Uprights between floor & ceiling  
G. Suspended on wires

**Fig. 5: Options for vertical display**

Freestanding areas must be allowed for such art forms as sculpture, furniture design, and total room environments. Glass enclosed display cases are required for some objects in an art museum. They afford added security, protection, and the precise control of
of atmospheric conditions. They also allow the object to be placed at the proper viewing angle and height. Care must be taken so that the viewer doesn't receive glare from the glass. (See Figure 6.)

A. Opposite a window

B. In front of a window

C. Lighted cases facing each other

D. Under overhead lighting

Fig. 6.: Proper Display Technique.

Viewer movement through the gallery exhibition areas is vital in the success of the Fort Wayne Museum of Art. Care must be taken that a clear and logical path be suggested to the viewer without being confining, monotonous, or unending. (See Figure 7 on next page.)

The visitor to the Museum of Art must not be restricted in his choice of movements. Care should be taken that the person with a limited knowledge or interest in a certain area be allowed to leave a section of the exhibit area quickly, while an expert or lover of a particular area of art may examine and view the total exhibit. (See Figure 8 on next page.)
Fig. 7.: Viewer Movement Patterns

A., B., C., Three Different Art Exhibits
1. Elementary Level
2. Intermediate Level
3. Expert Level

Fig. 8.: Detail of Viewer Movement
The shaping of the gallery spaces is also important. By varying the dimensions, the relation of height and width, the placement of doors and windows, and the color and type of flooring, walls and lighting, a spontaneous and unconscious stimulus to attention is created. (See Figure 9)

Fig. 9: Various Shapes of Galleries

Without knowing the scale of the artwork that may be present in the gallery area, approximate viewing distances may be determined by the fact
that distinct vision occupies a visual cone of 40° both above and below the horizontal and to each side of center. (See Figure 10)

![Figure 10: Normal Cone of Vision](image)

The three diagrams that are shown in Figure 11 below show the size of the square that can be inscribed within the base of a 40° cone depending on the distance between the eye and the picture plane.

![Figure 11: Required Viewing Distance](image)

Provisions for the fastening of artwork to the floor, wall, and ceiling must be made without any permanent damage to any of the three planes.