

City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common  
Madison Art Center

(2) Historic (if applicable)  
Lincoln School

II. Location

(1) Street Address  
(714) 720 East Gorham Street

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)  
Fourth Ald. District

III. Classification

(1) Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)  
Building

(2) Zoning District  
R5

(3) Present Use  
Art Center

IV. Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Name(s)  
City of Madison, Wisconsin

(2) Street Address  
(714) 720 East Gorham Street

(3) Telephone Number  
257-0158

V. Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Parcel Number  
0709-132-1502-0

(2) Legal Description  
Block 138, Unsubdivided

VI. Condition of Property

(1) Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)  
Excellent

(2) Altered or Unaltered?  
Minimal Alterations - Exterior  
Somewhat Altered - Interior

(3) Moved or Original Site?  
Original Site

(4) Wall Construction  
Brick-probably wall bearing.

(5) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the present and original physical construction and appearance (limit 500 words).

City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

**VI. (5) Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance:**

The Lincoln School has a large rectangular plan rising 2-1/2 stories above the grade on its south or main facade. An appendage occurs at about the mid-point of both the east and west elevation, almost square in plan, and rising the full height of the building enclosing the stair towers providing the vertical access within the building. On the south facade of each of these appendages is a smaller almost cubical extension but one story in height, facing to the street, creating an entrance vestibule directly into the stair tower.

Materials for the building are a cream yellow brick with white terra cotta or stone trim, as the case may be. Brick work is laid up with joints raked in both the horizontal and vertical directions providing a very distinct emphasis upon each individual brick. The color of the mortar, too, is darker, creating an emphasis upon the brick pattern. A horizontal emphasis is given to the building by a stone sill that connects all of the windows on each facade approximately 1/2 story above grade, and the main facade has windows extending almost from end to end. The windows are separated by brock pilasters extending from the sill to a terra cotta belt course completely surrounding the building. Both the terra cotta belt course and the terra cotta capitals at the top of each brick pilaster are executed in a foliated design. Other foliated designs in terra cotta appear in medallions set between the cornice and the belt course on the south facade and in a similar location on the east and west facade of the stair towers. A magnificent terra cotta tympanum is located above each of the main entrances surrounding an eagle above a plaque bearing the name of the school, also in terra cotta. The design of the tympanum with the eagle and the pilaster capitals is also found in the work of George Grant Elmslie at the Merchants Bank of Winona, Minnesota.

An English basement row of windows is located beneath the continuous sill of the first floor windows.

A continuous terra cotta coping surrounds the entire building in a pattern that appears as a series of dentils much simpler in pattern than the other ornamentation on the building.

The exterior of the building remains in good condition today, with very little change except that the plaque containing the name, Lincoln School, has been covered with one bearing the inscription "Madison Art Center". A piece of modern sculpture defaces the fine brick facade adjoining the west entrance to the building. Some modifications have taken place inside the building to adapt it to its present use for the Madison Arts Center. None of these, however, have destroyed original spaces within the building and the opportunity remains to crea-

ively adapt this building to another community or municipal use.

**City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)**

**VII. Significance**

<p><b>(1) Original Owner</b> City of Madison, Wisconsin</p>	<p><b>(2) Original Use</b> School Building</p>
<p><b>(3) Architect or Builder</b> Claude and Starck, Architects *</p>	<p><b>(4) Architectural Style</b> Prairie School - Sullivanesque Ornament</p>
<p><b>(5) Date of Construction</b> 1915*</p>	<p><b>(6) Indigenous Materials Used</b> None of distinction</p>
<p><b>(7) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the significance of the nominated property and its conformance to the designation criteria of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01), limit of 500 words.</b></p>	

**VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used**

1. "A Partial List of Buildings both Public and Private designed by Claude and Starck, Architects, Madison, Wisconsin", published privately about 1920.
2. Orr, Gordon D., Jr., "Prairie Architecture in Madison, Wisconsin; Influences, Forms and Form-Givers", unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1971.
3. -----, "Louis W. Claude; Madison Architect of the Prairie School", manuscript in possession of the Prairie School Review, scheduled for 1979 publication.
4. -----
5. "The Western Architect" - Vol. XXI, No. 1, January 1915
6. -----
7. -----
8. -----

**IX. Form Prepared By:**

<p><b>(1) Name and Title</b>      Gordon D. Orr, Jr., AIA.</p>	
<p><b>(2) Organization Represented (if any)</b> Landmarks Commission and Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board</p>	
<p><b>(3) Address</b> 2729 Mason Street, Madison, 53605</p>	<p><b>(4) Telephone Number</b> 263-3000</p>
<p><b>(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared</b> 8/78</p>	

\* From Building Permit, dated April 1, 1915.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

**VII.(7) Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:**

The Lincoln School is an important Madison building in that it embodies distinguishing characteristics of Prairie School Architecture in a public educational building and it is the work of an architectural firm with an important regional influence.

While the school building is essentially a rectangular form, it achieves a horizontal expression through the use of continuous terra-cotta ornamentation above the window heads of the second floor and at the cornice. On the facades, and particularly the south facade facing East Gorham Street, and additional horizontal emphasis has been provided through a stone sill course at the level of the first floor. In these ways the principal attributes of a horizontal composition are achieved in this building.

The building's relationship with the Prairie School is further developed through the use of foliated terra cotta ornamentation. These details occur at the capital on each of the brick pilasters separating the windows on all facades. Additional superb terra cotta ornamentation is found in the eagle gracing the tympanum over the two main entrances.

The firm of Claude and Starck produced a series of schools whose plan elements bear a similarity to each other. Generally, entrances are found at either end of the main facade, facing in the same direction as the facade. The long major wall is broken into three horizontal elements. An English basement row of windows is located beneath the continuous sill of the first floor windows, thus creating a base for the composition. The first and second floors are linked by continuous vertical brick pilasters rising from the sill of the first floor window to the head of the second floor windows. These pilasters terminate in capitals that supported a continuous belt surrounding the building of either terra-cotta or stone as the case might be. The remaining portion of the elevation is a continuous horizontal band from the top of the second floor window heads to the cornice. Thus a three part elevational scheme of base, shaft and capital was developed in keeping with Louis Sullivan's concept of a classically developed composition. This design is found in schools at Argyle, Mount Horeb and Monroe, and a slightly modified version in Evansville. None of these schools, however, exhibits the richness of terra-cotta ornamentation as does the Lincoln School in Madison or did the Lincoln School in Monroe. A tragic fire forced the demolition of the similarly high quality high school in Monroe by Claude and Starck leaving Madison's Lincoln School as the sole survivor of a rich composition in public school design.

Precedence for the ornamentation was illustrated in the Western Architect issues of January 1913 and January 15, wherein

the work of the firm of Purcell and Elmslie was illustrated and attention called to the Merchants Bani of Winona, Minnesota. This building built some two years before the Lincoln School shows terra-cotta capitals and a terra-cotta tympanum over the main entrance containing an eagle identical to that of the Lincoln School. Sketches indicate that the original designs were undoubtedly the work of George Grant Elmslie, a close friend of Louis W. Claude. An autographed issue of the Western Architect containing this design design remained in the possession of Louis Claude indicating his ready access and knowledge of these terra-cotta designs. The cost of creating clay models and moulds undoubtedly prompted Claude to seek the use of these designs in his own architectural composition for the Lincoln School rather than have the school board bear the cost of creating a new design. Whether this was with or without the permission of Elmslie is not known, however, their continuing friendship would indicate that it was with permission. Thus, the Lincoln School stands as the best known surviving example of the firm of Claude and Starck of a public High School Building incorporating a Sullivanesque form of terra-cotta ornamentation with a clear statement of Prairie School principles. Bani

The fact that Claude and Starck designed schools in cities other than Madison and that in their area of small library design, a specialty of theirs, their work spread to Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, and even the state of Washington, indicates that their influence was regional.

Louis W. Claude (1868-1951) was born in Baraboo, Wisconsin, educated in the local public schools, attended the University of Wisconsin as a special civil engineering student under the tutelage of Allan D. Conover, for whom he worked while a student. He left in 1891 for experience in the Chicago offices of Adler and Sullivan, D. H. Burnham and Company, and Schlacks and Otteheimer. Claude returned to Madison, accepted a short term appointment on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin and established his own architectural practice about 1894. Edward F. Starck (1868-1947) was born in Milwaukee, moved to Madison and graduated from high school there. He obtained his experience in the offices of Edward Townsend Mix in Milwaukee, Handy and Cady of Chicago, and D. R. Jones in Madison. He joined Louis W. Claude in an architectural partnership about 1896 which lasted until 1929.

Personal relationships existed between Louis Claude, Frank Lloyd Wright and George Elmslie, that remained far beyond the years when they worked with each other in Chicago. Certainly the opportunity to discuss their architectural ideas in the office of Louis H. Sullivan may have prompted Claude to continue expressing Sullivan's ideas as he did in the Lincoln School.