NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium Complex

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 5203 Cass Avenue [ ] not for publication

city or town Detroit [ ] vicinity

state Michigan code MI county Wayne code 163 zip code 48202

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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

x **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**

Brian D [illegible] 3/15/11
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

MI SHPO
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 or 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:)

Patrick Andrus 5/3/2011
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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	
2		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
3	0	**Total**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education/college

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education/college

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

International Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: concrete
walls: Steel, glass, pre-cast concrete, Travertine marble
roof: Asphalt
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Prentis Building and Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium form a two-building complex on the Wayne State University campus that was designed by Minoru Yamasaki and built in the 1962-64 period. The buildings were designed to relate closely to one another both in terms of their functions and in architectural and spatial terms. The Prentis Building, housing the School of Business Administration, is a rectangular three-story building with its broad front facing Cass Avenue. The building's two upper stories project outward beyond the recessed ground floor, the broad front and rear upper portions supported on square columns that become dividers between banks of windows in the upper stories. The building has a buff-colored travertine marble base with columns sheathed in cast concrete panels. Cast concrete panels and narrow windows face the upper two stories of the structure. The ground floor of the Prentis Building contains a broad off-center walkthrough passage that permits a straight-on view of DeRoy's front façade from Cass Avenue. DeRoy Auditorium is a windowless building, almost square in plan, and it has a flat roof with a projecting roofline. It is faced with cast concrete panels that are formed into Gothic arches below the roofline. The arches begin at the base of the building and project at right angles from the wall planes to create an effect like Gothic tracery. The cast concrete panels were originally white, but have grayed over time. The DeRoy Auditorium is surrounded by a reflecting pool on all sides. There are entrances to the building at the east and west sides of the building, accessed over small bridges.

Narrative Description

The Prentis Building and Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium stand adjacent to one another on the Wayne State University campus that extends westward from Cass Avenue. Cass Avenue is a busy four-lane north-south street in Detroit. The Prentis Building is sited on Cass Avenue, directly across from the rear entrance to the Detroit Public Library's Main Branch. Directly to the west of the Prentis Building stands DeRoy Auditorium, constructed in tandem with the Prentis Building, and connected to the Prentis Building via an underground tunnel. Less than thirty yards separate the two buildings. To the south of it is a large International Style classroom structure, State Hall, designed by Suren Pilafian (1948, and an addition in 1957). The campus surrounding the Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium features trees, lawn, and concrete walkways of Gullen Mall and the fountain court – considered the center of campus – nearby. To the northwest is Pilafian's Purdy Library (1953) and to the north is the William C. Rands House (1913) at 5229 Cass Avenue, used by the business school as an annex. Two other Yamasaki-designed buildings on campus, the McGregor Conference Center and the Education Building, are located a short distance away, but out of sight of Prentis and DeRoy, on the Wayne State campus.

Meyer and Anna Prentis Building

The Meyer and Anna Prentis Building stands close to Cass Avenue and stands forward from the early twentieth-century home to the north, and forward from State Hall to the south. The Prentis Building is a three story steel-frame International Style structure that is rectangular in shape and has a flat roof. It is built with thin support columns holding up the two upper stories. A wide walk-through at the building's ground level frames a view of DeRoy Auditorium from Cass Avenue. The off-center walk-through divides the first floor into north and south sections. At the north side, a first-floor study hall is enclosed with floor-to-ceiling glass sheets. The Prentis Building is faced in buff-colored travertine marble on the first story and cast concrete panels on the second and third stories. The cast concrete panels allow for deeply inset narrow windows similar to those used by the architect, Minoru Yamasaki, on the Education Building located elsewhere on the campus. The columns supporting the structure are clad in cast concrete flecked with white marble chips. Each terminates in a finial with projecting central and slightly lower recessed side sections.

The Prentis Building has the typical International Style form of a box set on a base that is recessed back from the front of the box form above. On the long sides of the building, freestanding square-plan columns outlining the building's ground story with its recessed facades transition into piers in the upper-story facades. The Cass Avenue façade contains a

polished area of travertine marble stating "Prentis Building: Meyer and Anna Prentis" in recognition of those to whom the building is dedicated. The cast concrete panels allow for deeply inset narrow windows. The horizontal cast concrete spandrels each incorporates a flat, elongated central horizontal "butterfly" form framed by pieces above and below that slant inward toward the center.

There are five floor-to-ceiling windows on the southern façade's first story, with an emergency exit glass door between the second and third from the east corner. There are two floor-to-ceiling windows on the western façade of the southern half of the building's first story. On the northern side of the building is a study hall for the Business School. The study hall is a story-and-a-half tall and there is a mezzanine in the study hall's northern half. The floor-to-ceiling glass windows are supported by aluminum window surrounds.

The walk-through passage of the Prentis Building provides a view corridor leading directly to the entrance of the DeRoy Auditorium. This leads the eye to see a broader prospect of the Wayne State University Campus. The Prentis Building's walkway is offset a bit toward the south end of the structure. Within the walkway area is a double glass entrance door leading to the administrative offices contained in the southern portion of the building. In the center of the walkway are planters and a bench. The pavement surrounding the Prentis Building is plain concrete. The north side of the walkway area is enclosed in floor-to-ceiling glass. On the north side of the first floor are two double glass doors accessible from the walkway. This entrance leads to a double-turned staircase leading to the lower level of the Prentis Building. There are separate portraits of Meyer and Anna Prentis hanging above the stairs.

The second and third stories of the Prentis Building are occupied by staff offices. The basement level contains classroom spaces, lockers and restrooms of the School of Business Administration. At the basement level, a hallway tunnel connects to the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium.

Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium

The Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium is a two-story windowless steel-frame building that is almost square in plan. The façades are clad in tall, narrow gray cast-concrete panels overlaid with raised ribs. From the ground level, the ribs between the panels rise into Gothic arches just under the building eave. The building has a flat roof with broadly projecting eaves that create strong shadows. Most striking about the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium is that it is completely surrounded by a reflecting pool approximately three feet deep. The reflecting pool has a width of approximately twenty-two feet. The building is accessed via bridges – one from the eastern side to the main entrance and another from the rear entrance to the west – and also via an underground tunnel from the Meyer and Anna Prentis Building to the east. A main auditorium on the first level seats 400, while a lower auditorium in the basement seats 300. There is an oval-shaped marble plaque centered over the middle entrance door that reads "Helen L. DeRoy Hall."

The exterior of the DeRoy Auditorium is sheathed in cast concrete panels that are fabricated with tiny white marble chips on the surface. Although the marble chips remain white, the gray color of the concrete base dominates. The building was originally white in color, but it has discolored to gray over the years. The Gothic arches and inverse panels of the building's exterior give a shadow and depth to the features. The ribs forming Gothic arches project at right angles to the wall plane. They are about four inches in depth and two wide at the base, but the depth gradually increases toward the top. At the heads of the pointed arches the ribs project almost two feet. The ribs rise along the outer edges of each vertical concrete panel, but begin to curve inward from a point at about half height, the two ribs edging each panel almost coming together to form a sharply pointed arch in the center before curving back outward to the panel's upper corners, where they touch on either side the adjacent panel's outward curving strip to form a true pointed arch. The effect, like Gothic tracery, is carried around all four sides of this jewel box-like structure.

The sidewalk slabs on the bridges to the auditorium contain a white marble chip aggregate. This differentiates the building entrance from the surrounding concrete sidewalk slabs. Graduated concrete steps allow pedestrian access to the reflecting pool on the north and south sides of the DeRoy Auditorium. At the north side a concrete plaza was built to accommodate planters and benches at the reflecting pool's edge. On the west and east sides, the entrance to the auditorium is accessed by a bridge lined with a white cast iron railing featuring balusters bearing a Gothic arch motif – reflecting the theme of the building's exterior. Sometime after 2000 white metal fences were added at the eastern and western walls of the reflecting pool where planters line the pool walls. The planters are filled with junipers, ornamental plum trees, and ornamental grasses. Today the reflecting pools are not filled with water and stand in disrepair, but plans for rehabilitation are under discussion.

The auditorium appears to have seven individual doorway openings in the eastern façade, but upon closer inspection, the three central doorways function and two on either side are false, and simply act as large windows. The seven openings have segmental-arch heads with narrow projecting strip caps. A short entrance lobby allows for access to the auditorium below via a travertine marble staircase at the south end of the lobby. Stainless steel staircase railings reflect the Gothic motif of the building's exterior design. Three white globe chandeliers hang in the center of the lobby. A stainless steel plaque above the staircase of the lobby reads:

> This building is presented to Wayne State University by the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation in honor of its founder and donor Helen L. DeRoy, May 1964

Through four large interior doors, the first floor auditorium is reached. The doors are over-scaled, veneered in teak and crescent shaped at the top. Teak door surrounds reflect the crescent shape of the doors. The first-floor auditorium features 400 plastic molded seats that have replaced the original seats. The seats are arranged in three sections – divided by two aisles. The auditorium rakes down to a raised stage for the speaker, which is backed by a large white projection screen. The sides of the auditorium are lined with sound-absorbing panels. At the ceiling cove, a decorative Gothic arch pattern is repeated at the termini of pairs of sound panels. This is the same Gothic arch pattern used on the building exterior and in the staircases. There is a projection booth at the back of the auditorium that is accessed by a staircase from the north side of the lobby entrance. The projection booth is flush with the rear auditorium wall. There are two exits at the western end of the auditorium on the stage that lead to a rear lobby and staircase to the lower auditorium. The rear lobby – inside the western entrance – is accessed from a bridge that leads toward Wayne State University's Gullen Mall. The rear lobby entrance also fools the eye with seven identical-looking doorways: upon closer inspection, only two openings are doors and the remaining five are glass windows.

The basement auditorium contains 300 plastic molded seats, with attached desks, that have replaced the original seats. The seats are also arranged in three sections with two aisles. The auditorium rakes down to a raised platform for the speaker, and there is a large white projection screen behind the speaker. The side walls are plastered, and the rear wall is paneled in wood veneer strips with sound-proofing fabric behind. The basement auditorium connects to the underground tunnel, a hallway, which connects to the classrooms in the Meyer and Anna Prentis Building. Restrooms are located outside of the basement auditorium.

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 grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [x] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1962-1964

Significant Dates

1964

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Minoru Yamasaki

Period of Significance (justification)

1962-1964 are the years of construction of the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium and the Meyer and Anna Prentis Building.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Prentis Building and Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium on Wayne State University's campus were constructed at the same time in 1962-64. Both were designed by architect Minoru Yamasaki, FAIA, of Yamasaki and Associates. Both buildings were partly financed by philanthropic donations from private donors, the Prentis Building, from a donation by Meyer and Anna Prentis, and the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium from a donation made by the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation. The DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Building possess exceptional significance under national register criterion C at the national level of significance as works of nationally prominent architect Minoru Yamasaki that reflect that critical period in Yamasaki's career in the late 1950's and early 60's when he was experimenting with ornament and the effects of light and shadow as well as using pools and gardens to soften the urban character in reaction to standard International Style architecture. These designs of Yamasaki's followed round the world trips he made that included visits to the Taj Mahal and Japan as well as Europe's great Gothic cathedrals. All four Wayne State University buildings by Yamasaki – the DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Building as well as the McGregor Conference Center and the Education Building – completed in the 1956-64 period, are nationally important because of their places in Yamasaki's evolution as an architect.

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

Wayne State University

The early history of Wayne State University in Detroit is an account of originally unrelated schools that were united in 1933 into a single institution, Wayne University, under the control of the Detroit Board of Education. The oldest of these predecessor schools, the Detroit Medical College, was founded in 1868; today's Wayne State University takes its founding date, 1868, from the establishment of this school. The new Wayne University also included the Detroit Normal Training School, the forerunner of the College of Education, established in 1881, and the Detroit Junior College, founded in 1917. Offering a two-year program in general education, the latter developed into the College of Liberal Arts. The name Wayne University was taken from Wayne County, and ultimately from Revolutionary War era General Anthony Wayne.[1]

Wayne University established itself in the building now known as "Old Main," originally Detroit Central High School, located on Cass Avenue at Warren Avenue, one block off Woodward Avenue in a central part of the city north of downtown now known as the Cultural Center. In 1956 Wayne University was transferred to the state and became Wayne State University.

Wayne State and Minoru Yamasaki

In 1957 Wayne State University hired Yamasaki, Leinweber & Associates to develop a new campus master plan. Completed the following year, the new plan responded to the university's explosive growth in undergraduate students, and consequent lack of classroom space, in the post-war years. The campus occupied converted commercial buildings dotted along the grid of city streets near Old Main.

Yamasaki's plan included closing off streets in the area, including Second Avenue, and creating a campus of new academic buildings along a series of pedestrian-oriented courts. Yamasaki described the campus he planned thus:

> In the super block, there will be no autos, no city traffic and confusion. A walk from one building to another will be a series of delightful surprises. Each court will be different – one paved, one grassy; one with a fountain and statues and another with trees.[2]

Wayne State adopted the Yamasaki plan although in practice it was never realized to the extent Yamasaki envisioned. In addition to the master plan, the architect planned four buildings for the university, the McGregor Memorial Conference

[1] www.wayne.edu/profiles/timeline.php
[2] Boyd, Robert, *The Detroit Free Press,* "He Dreams of Beautifying Decaying Area Near WSU," May 30, 1958.

Center (1957-58), College of Education Building (1960), and the Prentis Building and adjoining Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium (1962-64).

Meyer and Anna Prentis Building

The Prentis Building, the home of the Business School, and DeRoy Auditorium, which provided auditorium space for the Business School and other Wayne State programs, were designed and built as a unified, functionally related complex. Yamasaki's work on both began in the late 1950's. The building for the Business School was to be located on Cass Avenue directly across from the then new rear entrance to the Detroit Public Library. The site was then occupied by Wayne State's War Memorial Mall, completed in late 1956, and featured newly planted trees on a lawn and a memorial plaque honoring those who perished in service to their country. The director of the Detroit Public Library, Ralph Ulveling, was irritated with the plan for the Business School on this site. Ulveling stated that the architects who designed the Cass Avenue addition to the Detroit Public Library did their work based on their belief that the University would retain the mall permanently. The construction of the Business School would destroy the intended visual and spatial integration of the two institutions. Ulveling eventually reluctantly conceded that the University may have had little choice but to use its land more intensively.[3]

Yamasaki designed the Business School using materials similar to the second building he designed on campus – the College of Education building – cast concrete panels flecked with white marble aggregate, framing narrow windows. The difference in the Business School building was that it provided an open court walkway through its center to allow access to the Detroit Public Library to the east, and the DeRoy Auditorium to the west. On the northern end of the building was the glass-framed study hall for the business students. The building contained a total of 65,000 square feet of classrooms and the total cost was $2.3 million. The philanthropy of Meyer L. and Anna Prentis supported the construction of the business school.[4] When the building opened, it was called University Hall. The opening day was January 28, 1964, and a program was held at the Community Arts Auditorium for 2,500 alumni. Ralph Currier Davis, educator, author, and researcher from Ohio State University, was given an honorary degree at the event.

At three stories tall, the School of Business Administration's building was designed to stand out as a modern structure on Cass Avenue. To the north stood an early twentieth-century private home that Wayne State purchased for office space. The contrast made a progressive and futuristic statement. The School of Business Administration was designed to connect to the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium, and they were planned and executed together. The two buildings are connected via an underground tunnel. And because most of the Business School classrooms were in the basement, one *Detroit News* article called them "underwater" classrooms[5] due to the fact that the DeRoy Auditorium was surrounded by a reflecting pool. In actuality, two classrooms *are* located under the reflecting pool.

Wayne State's Business School was first organized in the fall of 1946 and in October of that year Walter C. Folley, director of training and education with the Ford Motor Company, was named dean. Dean Folley retired in May of 1964. The initial enrollment included only 459 undergraduates. In 1964, at the opening of the Prentis Building, the total had grown to more than 1,400 students with 429 graduate students and a faculty of fifty-five. The School of Business Administration went on to become one of Wayne State University's most successful schools.

A year and a half after opening, on June 23 1965, University Hall was renamed the Meyer and Anna Prentis Building in a dedication ceremony. University President Clarence B. Hilberry presented Meyer Prentis with the Distinguished Service Award, and Prentis spoke about the development of the Business School.[6] He stated,

> Some twenty years ago I had the pleasure of serving on the Businessmen's Advisory Committee which helped to plan the School of Business Administration in what was then known simply as Wayne University. In this capacity and in my subsequent interest in the progress of the school, I became highly impressed with the contribution that

[3] Hyde, Charles K., Master's Thesis, *The Physical Development History of the Campus of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan,* 1993, pp. 200.
[4] Volz, William H., *Wayne State University School of Business Administration Alumni Magazine,* "Forty-Six Years in the Business School Business," Spring, 1992.
[5] Salsinger, Harry, *The Detroit News*, "WSU Opens Business School Bldg." January 29, 1964.
[6] *Wayne State Alumni News,* "U. Honors Meyer Prentis," July 14, 1965.

> Wayne was making to the city of Detroit and to the state of Michigan, in educating the many fine students who were to become leaders in banking, commerce and industry.[7]

The ceremony coincided with the Prentises' fifty-first wedding anniversary, and Rabbi Richard Hertz of Temple Beth El also spoke. The Wayne State University School of Business has been located in the Meyer and Anna Prentis Building since its opening in 1964.

Meyer Leon Prentis

Meyer Leon Prensky (1886-1970) was born in Lithuania, and immigrated with his parents to St. Louis, Missouri, at the age of two. Meyer Prensky went to grade and high schools in St. Louis, and then to Jones Commercial College where he specialized in accounting, finance and commercial law. He first worked for a large mercantile firm, and then in 1904 he entered the employ of the Laclede Gas Light Company and rose rapidly in the accounting and finance departments. His boss at the Laclede Gas Light Company, C. A. McGee, left the firm to become the controller for the newly formed General Motors Corporation. He recruited Meyer to come to Detroit. Meyer arrived in Detroit in 1911 and took the job as General Motors' chief accountant.[8] He was elected treasurer of General Motors in 1919 while it operated under founder William C. Durant.

In 1924 Meyer changed his last name from Prensky to Prentis. Meyer married Anna Sylvia Steinberg (1891–1975) on June 28, 1914, after meeting her while she worked as a secretary at General Motors. The couple had four daughters, and lived at 1905 Balmoral Street in the Palmer Woods subdivision of Detroit for almost their entire marriage.[9]

As treasurer of General Motors, Meyer Prentis represented the company's interests in the financial world. He originated and set up an annual review of the condition of all banks in which General Motors had accounts and ranked the banks on the basis of liquidity and capital. In 1942 Prentis negotiated a one billion dollar "V" loan (victory loan) bank credit to set up GM's war production. This was the largest line of credit arranged in the war production program. He was responsible for the methods and practices used in GM's banking for its accounts in more than 600 banks in the United States. As treasurer of General Motors during the 1920's, 30's, and 40's he saw the rise of the company to become the largest corporation in the world. After forty years of service, Prentis retired as GM's treasurer in 1951.[10]

A founder of the United Foundation of Greater Detroit, Meyer Prentis served as its first board secretary. He spent much of his retirement working to raise funds for the United Fund for Detroit and throughout the country. Additionally, Meyer Prentis was an early leader of the Jewish Welfare Federation, and Prentis' donations to charitable projects resulted in the Prentis Manor, later called the Jewish Home for the Aged, in Southfield, and the Anna and Meyer Prentis Jewish Federation Apartments in Oak Park. Meyer Prentis was a 32nd Degree Mason and a Shriner. He was a trustee, member of the board of directors and president of the Citizens Research Council of Michigan. He was also a trustee of Congregation Beth El. Most significant to Wayne State University was that Meyer Prentis helped create Wayne State's School of Business Administration in 1945 when he began serving on the Businessmen's Advisory Committee. The philanthropy of Meyer and Anna Prentis supported the construction of the new School of Business building (1964). Meyer Prentis died in 1970 on his 84th birthday at his home on Balmoral, after a long battle with cancer.[11]

Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium

The new Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium was also designed by Minoru Yamasaki. Built at a cost of approximately $600,000, it was constructed by the firm of Darin & Armstrong. The auditorium was designed to harmonize with the neighboring Prentis Building. It was designed as a windowless building because it was an auditorium which required darkness for lectures with slide presentations and movies. The building was completely surrounded by a dramatic reflecting pool. The Helen L. DeRoy lecture hall featured an upper level auditorium seating 400, and a lower auditorium seating 300. It was

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[7] Prentis, Meyer L., speech, June 28, 1965, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
[8] Golden Jr., Harry, *The Detroit Free Press*, "UF Worker Gives Talent – And Spirit," September 11, 1960.
[9] *Detroit News*, "Former GM Treasurer Prentis Honored by 300" June 24, 1964.
[10] General Motors Corporation press release, Monday, August 6, 1951.
[11] *Detroit Free Press*, "Meyer Prentis, Long GM Treasurer" July 16, 1970.

connected to the Prentis Building by an underground tunnel on the eastern end. Although DeRoy was constructed as an adjunct to the business school, it has always served the Wayne State community more broadly as a lecture hall.

In 1959, while he was working on the DeRoy Auditorium, Yamasaki received the commission for a major project – the United States Science Pavilion at the Century 21 Exposition in Seattle, popularly known as the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Today the building is called the Pacific Science Center. The brilliant white complex was designed as exhibition space, and consisted of six rectangular, connected nearly windowless building masses of varying heights and sizes, clustered in a U-shape around an open courtyard. These structures are where Yamasaki developed his Gothic arch theme. In Seattle, as in the DeRoy Auditorium, the buildings are constructed in a limited palette of narrow, precast repeating concrete Gothic arches. Yamasaki nicknamed the pointed arch motif the "space gothic" arch for the Seattle project. On the arched panels, the arched ribs extended two feet beyond the parapet, creating a delicate appearance.[12] In the DeRoy Auditorium, as in the United States Science Pavilion, the precast structural elements themselves are the vehicle through which the ornament is expressed. This Gothic arch façade was used by Yamasaki for the DeRoy Auditorium after it met with acclaim and success in the United States Science Pavilion.

DeRoy Auditorium was partly financed by a gift from the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation. Initial contact between Wayne State and the foundation took place probably in 1958, and by early January 1959 preliminary plans for the structure, already named for Helen L. DeRoy, had been prepared. The formal offer by the foundation of $300,000 toward the estimated $600,000 construction cost plus another $23,000 toward the architect's fees was made by letter dated March 7, 1961. Construction of DeRoy began at the same time as for the Prentis Building, with a groundbreaking for both buildings on August 1, 1962.

The site chosen for the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium was once occupied by the Williams house at 441 Merrick Street. Michigan governor G. Mennen Williams was born in the large Arts & Crafts style house on February 23, 1911. Once part of the affluent neighborhood around Central High School, the Williams family moved to Grosse Pointe in 1924, and the residence in turn housed the Detroit Historical Museum and Wayne's School of Social Work. The house was torn down in 1956.

The Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium opened on March 3, 1964. The first lecture was titled "The Supreme Court, Religion and the Schools" given by New York attorney Kenneth Greenawalt and Prof. Philip Kurkland of the University of Chicago Law School. They were part of a series titled "Lectures on Religion and the Public Order," sponsored by the Council on Religious Advisors and the Council of Religious Organizations.

Aaron and Helen DeRoy

Aaron DeRoy (1880–1935) was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and graduated from the medical school of the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in dentistry. He married Helen Lowentritt (1882–1977), who was from the small town of Oil City, Pennsylvania. Helen became a wealthy young woman when her father earned a fortune in the oil industry. Aaron's career choice of dentistry changed to reflect his enthusiasm for the new automotive industry. He first retailed electric automobiles, and later gasoline engine automobiles. As a distributor for Studebaker he made a sizeable fortune, and in about 1922, he considered retirement. Both he and Mrs. DeRoy disliked Pittsburgh, and decided to move. They took up residence in the Whittier Hotel in Detroit in 1923 and, instead of retiring, founded the Aaron DeRoy Motor Car Company, which distributed Hudson-Essex automobiles. His company served as the middle man between the Hudson Motor Car Company and the Hudson-Essex dealers.[13]

Aaron DeRoy donated to many charities and was a founder of the Detroit Zoo. Among his gifts to the zoo were two giraffes, for which he paid $10,000. Aaron's great passion was sailing, and he expressed a desire to build a ship and sail the world. He named his yacht the *Yoreda* (A. DeRoy spelled backward). He had earlier purchased Horace Dodge's racing motorboat *Delphine VI* so that Detroit could be represented in the Gold Cup race. Naturally Aaron was a member of many yacht clubs: the Detroit Yacht Club, Bayview Yacht Club, International Yacht and Country Club of Amherstberg, Ontario, Chicago Yacht Club, Cadillac Yacht Club of Detroit, and the Croatan Country Club of Virginia Beach, Virginia.

[12] Nicholson Kovalchick Architects, Pacific Science Center, Seattle Historic Landmark Nomination, February 26, 2010.
[13] Interview with Mrs. Helen DeRoy, December 19, 1963.

The DeRoys soon came to love Detroit and considered it their permanent home. Although they never had children, the couple funded many children's charitable organizations. Helen DeRoy served as director of the Fresh Air Society which operated a camp in Brighton, Michigan, and of Council Camp for young women, an agency of the National Council of Jewish Women. Aaron DeRoy was appointed treasurer of the Allied Jewish Campaign of Detroit in April of 1930. The Allied Jewish Campaign's fundraising goal was $305,000 – not a simple feat at the beginning of the Depression years. The funds would be used for foreign relief and reconstruction and the purchase of a site and planning for a Jewish Center in Detroit.[14] This was a goal that Helen DeRoy was able to fulfill after her husband's death.

Aaron DeRoy was also on the board of directors of the Union Trust Company and the Michigan Industrial Bank. He was a member of the Downtown Club, the Standard Club of Chicago and the Friars of New York City. He was a Scottish Rite Mason and a Shriner, enjoyed hunting and fishing and owned a hunting lodge on Jumbo Island in Georgian Bay.[15]

Aaron DeRoy died in an automobile accident in 1935 near Hartsville, South Carolina, as he was on his way to attend yacht races with well-known speed boat racer Gar Wood in Miami, Florida.[16] Meyer L. Prentis was a pallbearer at his funeral, and it was attended by many of the top Detroit industrialists: Israel Himelhoch of the Himelhoch & Brother's Co. retail store, Charles Sorensen, Ford Motor Company vice president, Richard H. Webber, president of the J. L. Hudson Company and many automotive dealers as well. Over 2,000 people attended his funeral and the Detroit-area Hudson and Terraplane dealerships were closed for the day in his honor.[17]

Helen assumed full responsibility for the operation of the DeRoy Motor Car Company and his other financial operations. She sold the firm in the early 1940's, and after that time, established and directed the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation. Her philanthropy was generous. In 1939 she donated funding for greatly expanding the Jewish Community Center located on Woodward Avenue at Holbrook Street in Detroit with a new three-story front section facing Woodward. Designed by architect Charles N. Agree, it provided new recreational, social, and educational quarters for youth and adult activities for the city's growing Jewish community. This donation fulfilled the project her husband had begun with his fundraising for the Allied Jewish Campaign in 1930. As a result of the gift the enlarged facility acquired the name Aaron DeRoy Memorial Jewish Community Center (it is now the Considine Little Rock Family Center).

Aaron and Helen DeRoy's philanthropy was part of a broad pattern of giving for local causes, especially ones related to the metropolitan Detroit area's Jewish community. Many of the Jewish philanthropists such as the Prentises and the DeRoys were the first of their family to get a college education. They appreciated the value of college education to their success, and wanted to give back to the community. The Helen DeRoy Foundation's gift for DeRoy Auditorium was part of a broader pattern of gifting by Helen DeRoy through the Helen DeRoy Foundation into the 1970's. In the early 1970's the foundation donated $500,000 for the construction of the Helen L. DeRoy Apartments. When built in 1973, the apartment building was the tallest building on Wayne State's campus. It was designed by Howard Sims & Associates and housed nearly 350 residents. In the late 1970's, a wing of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle was named in honor of Helen DeRoy after she made a large donation to sustain that museum. She also donated to fund the Helen L. DeRoy Residence Hall at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, and for the construction of a theater at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. The Helen L. DeRoy Foundation established a number of scholarships for deserving students in a number of universities. Helen DeRoy lived to the age of 95 and spent her time as a philanthropist and in traveling. She remained a member of many organizations including the Detroit Historical Society, the Camp Tamarack Fresh Air Society, the Jewish Community Council and Hadassah, and was also a member of the Detroit Yacht Club and the Great Lakes Club and Temple Beth El.

Minoru Yamasaki

The Prentis Hall and DeRoy Auditorium at Wayne State University are the work of master architect Minoru Yamasaki during the early part of his career as an independent architect. Yamasaki (1912-86) was a first-generation Japanese American (or Nisei) born in Seattle, Washington. He gained early recognition for his innovative domed design for the Lambert-St. Louis Airport Terminal (1956) – predating Eero Saarinen's famous TWA Terminal (1962) – for which he won

[14] "DeRoy Named in Fund Drive," *Detroit News*, April 20, 1930.
[15] *Detroit Free Press,* January 29, 1934.
[16] "Aaron DeRoy Is Killed As Auto Upsets on Way to Yacht Races in Miami," *Detroit Free Press,* March 2, 1935.
[17] "Leaders and Workers Pay Final Tribute to DeRoy," *Detroit News*, March 6, 1935.

the American Institute of Architects First Honor Award, the first of four such honors during his career. At Wayne State Yamasaki first designed the McGregor Conference Center and the Education Building, and also the master plan of 1958. Subsequent commissions for the U. S. Science Pavilion for the Seattle World's Fair (1962), and the Michigan Consolidated Company Gas Building in Detroit (1962) earned Yamasaki international acclaim on par with contemporaries such as Phillip Johnson, I. M. Pei, and Edward Durell Stone.

Early Life and Career

Minoru Yamasaki was the son of Japanese parents who met and married in Seattle. His father came from a well-to-do rice-farming family from the west coast of the island of Honshu, but as he was not the eldest son, by Japanese custom he was not to inherit the farm. Instead he followed another brother to Seattle to seek his fortune. His mother was the eldest of twelve children whose father had established a successful tailoring business in Seattle. He recalled in his autobiography that "American ways remained foreign to (my parents) because of language difficulties and the strong racial prejudice that existed on the West Coast against Orientals at that time."[18]

When he was in high school, one of his mother's brothers visited. The uncle, Koken Ito, who had graduated in architecture from the University of California with some help from Minoru's father, was on his way to Chicago for employment, and briefly stopped in Seattle on the way to visit her family. While there, Koken Ito unrolled some architectural drawings from university coursework, and as Yamasaki recalled, "I almost exploded with excitement when I saw them. Right then and there I decided to become an architect...Prior to this I had been barely conscious of art in painting, sculpture or architecture..."[19]

Yamasaki studied architecture at the University of Washington, spending his summers working at an Alaska cannery to pay his tuition. He graduated in 1934 and moved to New York to seek employment. Unable to find a steady job, he went on to start his master's degree in architecture at New York University. Yamasaki then worked for Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, the firm most famous for the Empire State Building (completed in 1931). At this firm he was employed from late 1936 to 1943 preparing working drawings – during this time, he stated, he learned valuable lessons in construction methods, budgets, timelines and production of large projects. Much of Yamasaki's work while at Shreve, Lamb & Harmon during World War II involved defense contracts. As a Japanese-American, Yamasaki was investigated by the military after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, but nothing came of it. His first large project as project manager was a 50 million dollar contract to design and build from scratch the Sampson Naval Training Station on Lake Seneca, New York. This was a two-year project, but each building was on an extremely tight schedule, and the project involved many different building types including barracks, a large garage, a multi-faith chapel, and more.

Yamasaki married Teruko (Teri) Hirashiki in 1941. That same year, the day after the U. S. declared war on Japan following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Yamasaki's father was fired from his job, so Yamasaki invited his parents to live with him, his wife, and his brother, in their one-bedroom apartment, to avoid his parents being sent to one of the Japanese relocation centers. Yamasaki and his wife had three children, Carol, Taro and Kim. Although he divorced in 1961, and remarried twice, he married his first wife Teri again in 1969.

Mid Career

After 1943 Yamasaki was hired by Wallace K. Harrison of Harrison & Fouilhoux in New York. This was the firm most noted for their work as the design team for Rockefeller Center in 1940. Yamasaki worked there for about a year, and through the middle and late 1940's worked for a variety of firms, including Raymond Loewy's influential industrial design firm and a brief project-based architectural partnership with architect and product designer George Nelson (who was noted for many mid-century Herman Miller furniture designs).

Yamasaki joined the Detroit firm of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls as head of design in 1945. An important commission that came in during those years was for an annex to the Federal Reserve Branch Bank in Detroit. The "annex," really a much larger building that dwarfed the original branch bank next door, became downtown Detroit's first major post-war building and first major International Style building. In 1949 he and two other former Smith, Hinchman & Grylls employees established their own firm, Leinweber, Yamasaki & Hellmuth, with offices in Detroit and St. Louis.

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[18] Yamasaki, Minoru, *A Life in Architecture,* Art Media Resources, New York, NYU, 1979.
[19] Ibid.

One of the first large projects Yamasaki headed was the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project (1950) for the city of St. Louis, consisting of an enormous fifty-seven-acre site with thirty-three eleven-story housing towers containing over 2800 apartments. The buildings were arranged as a series of freestanding, mid-rise, spare International Style blocks, set in a large park-like green space without the grid of city streets, to open up generous ground space for parking and recreational green space – the kind of scheme championed by Le Corbusier in his work. Yamasaki's design included skip-stop elevators, communal hallways with common services on certain floors, and other elements pioneered by Le Corbusier in his projects, which were intended to provide residents with opportunities for walking, interaction, and the same social intercourse traditionally occurring on a city street. The project was completed in 1955, and praised as a model of urban renewal and public housing. Within years, plagued by a variety of problems, including funding, maintenance, crime and arguably modernist architectural design issues as well, Pruitt-Igoe fell into decay. In 1972 the entire complex was demolished. While the reasons for its demise remain fodder for architecture, sociology and political theorists, the project was frequently used thereafter as the classic textbook example of the failure of postwar public housing projects.

In 1951 the firm received the commission to design the Lambert-St. Louis Municipal Air Terminal, the first work for which Yamasaki received critical acclaim. Because no contemporary airport terminals Yamasaki toured provided a satisfactory expression of the excitement of air travel, departure and arrival, the architect turned to the great central space at New York's Grand Central Terminal (Reed & Stem, 1903) for inspiration. The design consisted of three connected pairs of intersecting thin-shell concrete barrel vaults with copper roofing, with the intent that more vaults could be added as necessary to expand the airport in the future. The design had few detractors and won the AIA First Honor Award.

To accommodate construction of the terminal, the firm opened a St. Louis office. Ongoing frustrating issues during construction, compounded by repeated commuting back and forth between Detroit and St. Louis, caused Yamasaki such stress that he was diagnosed with bleeding stomach ulcers in December 1953. Doctors removed two thirds of his stomach and he was hospitalized for two months for recovery. With this experience, Yamasaki resolved to simplify his life. He and the firm partners agreed to go separate ways, closing the St. Louis office after the completion of the terminal in 1956. Yamasaki and Joseph Leinweber formed the partnership of Yamasaki, Leinweber & Associates in Detroit and George Hellmuth went on to form Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum with Gyo Obata and George Kassabaum in St. Louis (today known as HOK, one of the largest and most successful architectural firms in the world).[20]

Shortly after the establishment of Yamasaki & Leinweber, the firm received a commission for the U. S. Consulate in Kobe, Japan. Still recovering from his illness, Yamasaki traveled to Japan three times for the project, and studied the architecture and gardens of Japan. He was struck by the traditional architecture of the Katsura Palace, surrounded by gardens, and said he "was overwhelmed by the serenity that can be achieved by enhancing nature." He decided that, "serenity could be an important contribution to our environment."[21]

After traveling to Japan, Yamasaki continued to travel around the world. In his travels he studied the architecture of Paris, Milan, Venice, Pisa, and Rome in Europe, New Delhi, Chandigarh, and Agra in India and Bangkok and Hong Kong in southeast Asia. Yamasaki was struck by the traditional architecture of these places. He found the architecture of Venice and Pisa to be quiet and reflective, and noted these two cities' historically close connection to the contemplative East. In the Gothic architecture of Europe he noted that the flow of the structure did not preclude the use of detail and ornament. In the new Indian city of Chandigarh, he was amazed that the beautiful Taj Mahal continued to reveal more layers of exquisite detail the closer one came to it, where Le Corbusier's buildings appeared "magnificent" from a distance but looked "brutally crude" upon closer inspection."[22]

With several decades worth of Modernist architecture filling cities by the 1960s, Yamasaki began to see much of this architecture as bland, inadequate and monotonous, except in the hands of only the most talented architects such as Mies van der Rohe. Expressing structure remained very important, along with function, economy and order, Yamasaki said, but "My premise is that delight and reflection are ingredients which must be added...Sunlight and shadow, form, ornament, the element of surprise are little-explored fields, barely understood by today's architects." These were exactly the qualities he found most alluring in the historic architecture of Japan, India and Europe. He spoke of "the joy of surprise – the experience of moving from a barren street through a narrow opening in a high wall to find a quiet court with a lovely garden and still water or to tiptoe through mystery and dimness of a Buddhist temple and come upon a court of raked white gravel

[20] Nicholson Kovalchick Architects, "Pacific Science Center, Seattle Historic Landmark Nomination," February 26, 2010, pp. 31.
[21] Yamasaki, Ibid.
[22] *Time*, "Road to Xanadu," January 18, 1963, p. 4.

dazzling in the sunlight; or to walk a narrow street in Rome and suddenly face an open square with graceful splashing fountains."[23]

During construction of the McGregor Conference Center in 1957, Yamasaki severed his partnership with Joseph Leinweber and formed Yamasaki and Associates. Yamasaki's work in Detroit during his first few years as an independent practitioner included what is now called the Yamasaki Building for the Detroit Society for Arts and Crafts (now called the College for Creative Studies), constructed in 1957-58, the American Concrete Institute Building (1958), former Reynolds Metals Building (1959), and the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company (MichCon) Building (1960-63), in addition to the master planning work and a total of four buildings at Wayne State University.

The four buildings at Wayne State University – the McGregor Memorial Conference Center (1959), the Education Building (1960), and the Prentis Building (1962-64) and DeRoy Auditorium (1962-64) – make up a significant part of Wayne State's campus. In addition to many campus buildings designed by architect Suren Pilafian, Yamasaki was the architect who made the greatest impact on the campus during the 20th century. The four buildings Yamasaki designed differed from the Bauhaus modernist architectural style of Pilafian's buildings. Yamasaki's buildings on campus had decorative features that appealed to people and yet differed dramatically from the turn-of-the-century architecture in the surrounding streets.

Yamasaki's four buildings at Wayne State University are also significant to the architect's work in Michigan. The buildings all bear a resemblance to each other, and all use white precast, prefabricated concrete, demonstrating Yamasaki's ongoing experimentation of the material in different contexts. When Yamasaki created the master plan for Wayne State, he wanted it to consist of multiple "islands of urban delight," little pockets of peace and tranquility designed to offset the busy urban location. The reflecting pool at DeRoy Auditorium best demonstrates this design concept. Yamasaki initially promoted the use of a variety of architects designing Wayne's campus buildings so it would not have a unified look. With his four campus buildings he had an opportunity to create four unique structures, and still experiment with precast concrete in different contexts.

Career Peak

The Detroit buildings, including Prentis and DeRoy, launched Yamasaki's international career. Other prominent creative projects followed, including the Dhahran Air Terminal in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (1959-1961), the Pacific Science Center in Seattle, Washington, built for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair (1960-62), and the Oberlin Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College, Ohio (1963). His Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles (1966), built as part of Welton Becket's master plan for the new Century City development, is a nineteen-story 800-room hotel on a six-acre site. It was listed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "11 Most Endangered" list for 2009.

In later years, Yamasaki would continue to build an impressive portfolio of projects and was regarded as an architect who could capably deliver a project on time and on budget. Some of his work began to take on the aspect of Modernism sometimes called "New Formalism," such as the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company Building in Minneapolis (1961-64) and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Affairs at Princeton University (1965), in Princeton, New Jersey.[24]

In 1963 Yamasaki was at the peak of his career, with his firm's commission for the World Trade Center in New York City (1962-1973) landing him on the cover of *Time* magazine. Yamasaki was one of only about a dozen architects to receive this distinction. For the World Trade Center project, Yamasaki's firm was selected over a highly distinguished group of competitors, including Walter Gropius' The Architects Collaborative, Welton Becket and Associates, and Philip Johnson. In the 1963 *Time* profile, Gropius ("godfather of the Bauhaus School") praised Yamasaki as "a highly talented man, full of ideas," while Wallace Harrison, head of the design teams for such modernist icons as the United Nations Headquarters and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, hailed Yamasaki's "fine sense of plan, of scale and of what human beings need in a building."[25] The World Trade Center's twin towers were the tallest office buildings in the world at the time at 110 stories tall. The twin towers shared the characteristics of his work on other buildings such as the MichCon Building in Detroit: load-bearing exterior walls (rather than curtain walls), extreme verticality of expression enhanced by the use of very narrow windows and a Vierendeel-truss-based structure, and other architectural details.[26]

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[23] *Time*, "Road to Xanadu," January 18, 1963, p. 4.
[24] Nicholson Kovalchick Architects, "Pacific Science Center, Seattle Historic Landmark Nomination," February 26, 2010, pp. 31-32.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Buhler, Mike, Los Angeles Conservancy, Letter to Mr. Jimmy C. Liao, City Planner, EIR Unit, August 13, 2009.

Despite his professional success, Yamasaki's life was tainted by prejudice like so many other Japanese-Americans of his generation. Growing up in the Seattle area he was subjected to numerous incidents of hostility and discrimination. The day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Yamasaki's father lost a shoe store job he had for over twenty years. His parents moved into Minoru's New York apartment in order to avoid being sent to a West Coast resettlement camp. The experience had a lasting effect on Yamasaki; years later, he told an interviewer, "Our people had to sell everything for 10 cents to 15 cents on the dollar. The people who bought their businesses and houses knew they had them over a barrel."[27] When his Detroit-based practice became successful, Yamasaki looked to buy or rent a house in the affluent suburbs of Grosse Pointe, Bloomfield Hills or Birmingham before realizing that he was excluded from these locations due to his ethnicity.[28]

In a career spanning three decades, Yamasaki and his Michigan-based firm designed over 250 buildings throughout the United States and internationally. Minoru Yamasaki died in 1986, and his firm continued until closing the doors in 2010. With the destruction of the World Trade Center by an act of terrorism in 2001, the work of Minoru Yamasaki has come again into popular awareness.

Yamasaki's Wayne State Buildings in Context

After World War II, American architects were heavily influenced by the Modernist movement, and as they entered the post-war urban building boom, the sheer number of buildings built in the 1950's and 1960's sometimes resulted in average designs driven by a "pragmatic utilitarianism" rather than the more nuanced designs of Mies van der Rohe or Corbusier. In metro Detroit, Modernism had been growing in popularity among architects since the 1940s with designers and educators such as Eero Saarinen, Alden Dow, and the designers at Cranbrook. Yamasaki's work differed from the strict Modernists', and he worked to differentiate himself by combining modern systems with historical forms.

The Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Building are key buildings in Yamasaki's first generation of work after his world trips, beginning with the McGregor Conference Center. These buildings demonstrate his exploring the use of structure as ornament and the introduction of historical forms like arches and columns – combining modern architecture and historical elements. They continue the use of precast concrete modules that he used in the U. S. Science Pavilion and Education Building. Also, the Prentis Building signals the beginning of a flirtation with the temple form that would appear with more publicity in the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Building (Minneapolis, 1964) and the Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (Princeton University, 1965).[29]

Minoru Yamasaki spoke of his design philosophy at the time of the construction of DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Building in the *Time* magazine's cover story, "Art: The Road to Xanadu," in 1963. Yamasaki stated, "The need for ornamentation and texture in our times was deeply impressed on me." Yamasaki went on to say that function, economy and order in contemporary architecture was no longer enough. His philosophy incorporated "The joy of surprise — the experience of moving from a barren street through a narrow opening in a high wall to find a quiet court with a lovely garden and still water." It is quite apparent that in the buildings at Wayne State University, Yamasaki was exploring all of those key components to his architectural vision.

The Wayne State buildings, especially the Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Building, were important to the development of modern architecture in Detroit in the early 1960's because Yamasaki was clearly the most famous architect in Detroit when they were constructed. At that time, Detroit was considered a hotbed of modernist design because it was home to Eero Saarinen, Cranbrook and Yamasaki's practice. Yamasaki had just received the commission for the U. S. Science Pavilion at the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, which received major international publicity. In January of 1963 when he made the cover of *Time* magazine for being awarded the much-publicized World Trade Center commission, he was given international stature once again. The DeRoy Auditorium and Prentis Hall are significant because Yamasaki was one of the most famous architects in the country at the time they were designed. They reflect his changing his style and expanding his range, and they are significant to the development of Wayne State University, which was one of Yamasaki's largest projects.[30]

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Gyure, Dale Allen, "Minoru Yamasaki," biography, p. 3.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Gyure, Dale Allen, PhD., Lawrence Technological University, Southfield, Michigan.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

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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:

__x__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 About two acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	329620	4691350	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

A rectangular parcel with 225 foot frontage on west line of Cass Avenue and extending west 325 feet, centered on UTM reference.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Includes Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium and the associated terraces and pool.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Binno Savage, Senior Project Manager
organization AKT Peerless Environmental & Energy Services date December 23, 2010
street & number 22715 Orchard Lake Road telephone 248-615-1333
city or town Farmington state MI zip code 48336
e-mail rebecca.binno.savage@aktpeerless.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium Complex

Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium Complex
Name of Property

Wayne, Michigan
County and State

City or Vicinity: Detroit

County: Wayne State: Michigan

Photographer: M. J. Murwaka

Date Photographed: various

Location of Original Digital Files: 22725 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington, MI 48336

Paper and Ink: Kodak Professional Paper and Epson Ultra chrome inks

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 11
Photo #1 An aerial view looking northwest toward Prentis Building and Cass Avenue
(Wayne State University campus in immediate background, Fisher Tower in background
Date of photo: 4-6-2004
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0001

2 of 11
Photo #2 DeRoy Auditorium north and west façades
Date of photo: 5-13-2003
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0002

3 of 11
Photo #3 DeRoy Auditorium east (front) facade
Date of photo: 8-16-2008
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0003

4 of 11
Photo #4 Looking west at DeRoy Auditorium's eastern facade from the Prentis Building underpass
Date of photo: 10-6-2006
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0004

5 of 11
Photo #5 Interior of DeRoy Auditorium's first floor
Date of photo: 12-13-2010
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0005

6 of 11
Photo #6 Camera looking northeast at Prentis Building's west and south facades
Date of photo: 10-6-2006
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0006

7 of 11
Photo #7 Prentis Building west façade, pool surrounding DeRoy in foreground
Date of photo: 6-22-2005
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0007

8 of 11
Photo #8 Looking west at the Prentis Building's eastern facade from the Detroit Public Library grounds
Date of photo: 10-6-2006
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0008

9 of 11

Photo #9 Looking west at the Prentis Building's eastern facade from the Detroit Public Library (winter)
Date of photo: 12-9-2005
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0009

10 of 11
Photo #10 Interior of Prentis Building's north end first floor study hall.
Date of photo: 12-8-2010
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_0010

11 of 11
Photo #11 Looking southeast at DeRoy Auditorium's west and north facades, and the Prentis Building's western facade.
Date of photo: 12-10-2010
MI_WayneCounty_DeRoyPrentisHistoricDistrict_00011

Property Owner:

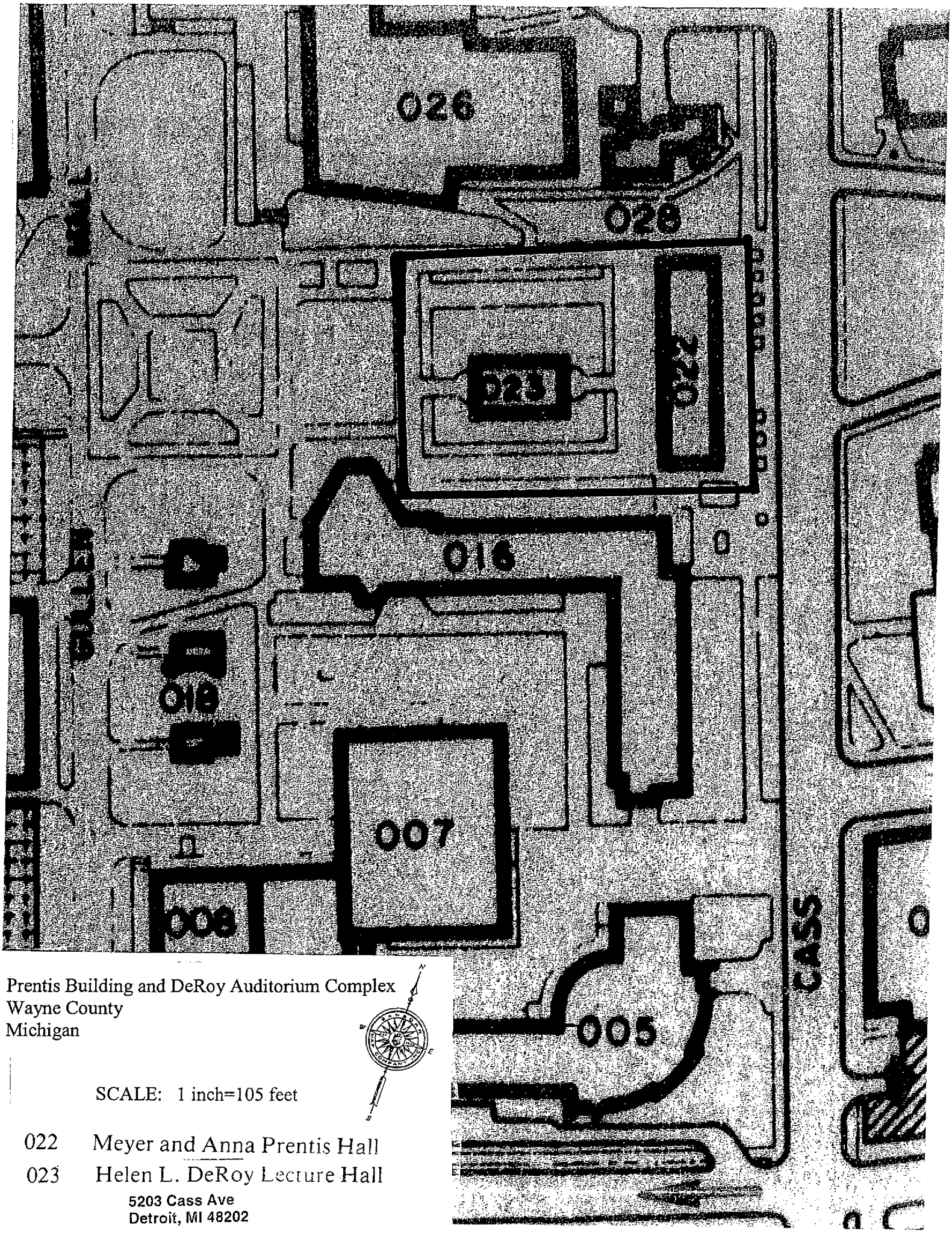
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Freda Giblin, Director of Inter-Institutional Initiatives, Wayne State University

street & number 5057 Woodward Avenue, room 6305.2 telephone (313) 577-3448

city or town Detroit state MI zip code 48202

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 18 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.



Prentis Building and DeRoy Auditorium Complex
Wayne County
Michigan

SCALE: 1 inch=105 feet

022 Meyer and Anna Prentis Hall

023 Helen L. DeRoy Lecture Hall

5203 Cass Ave
Detroit, MI 48202

DeRoy Auditorium

HELEN L.
DE ROY
HALL

HELEN L.
DE ROY
HALL

EXIT
EXIT

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Career Planning and Placement
Presents:

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY