

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Teresa's Academy Music & Arts Building

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 5600 Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Kansas City [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095 zip code 64113

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 [] nationally
[] statewide [X] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date 12 October 2007

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[] entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined not eligible for the
National Register.

[] removed from the
National Register

[] other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

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5. Classification
Ownership of Property
Category of Property
Number of Resources within Property
 Contributing Noncontributing

[X] private

[X] building(s)

[] public-local

[] district

[] public-State

[] site

[] public-Federal

[] structure

[] object

1 0 buildings

0 0 sites

0 0 structures

0 0 objects

1 0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use
Historic Function

Education/school

Recreation and Culture/auditorium

Current Functions

Education/school

Recreation and Culture/auditorium

7. Description
Architectural Classification
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Classical Revival

Materials

foundation stone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other stone

concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

☐ **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.

☒ **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

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.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of SignificanceArchitecture

Periods of Significance1909

Significant Dates1909

Significant Person(s)N/A

Cultural AffiliationN/A

Architect/BuilderWilder & Wight (Wilder, Edward T.; and Wight, Thomas)/
Hollinger Construction Co.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☒ Other:

Name of repository: Landmarks Commission of KC, MO; St
Teresa's Academy; Catholic Diocese of Kansas City; Western
Historical Manuscript Collection, UMKC

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10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre**UTM References**A. Zone Easting Northing
15 362390 4320860

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Victoria D. Vargas / Principal Investigatororganization Dycus & Vargas Investigations, LLC date January 3, 2000street & number P.O. Box 10148 telephone (816) 931-7319city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64171-0148**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**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.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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**St. Teresa's Academy Music & Arts Building
Jackson County, Missouri**

Description

St. Teresa's Academy's Music & Arts Building is Neo-Classic in style and three-stories in height, with a basement and sub-basement, and an additional attic story on the west wing. The building is impressive, large-scale, and clearly the work of a master. The exterior walls are red brick with limestone details, and colossal brick pilasters are symmetrically arranged on the flat front and curved rear of the building. The roof is flat with an outer parapet wall and has a small art glass skylight dome.

The building is situated on the western portion of the St. Teresa's Academy campus within the Country Club Division of midtown Kansas City, Missouri. The building fronts east onto the campus, facing onto the central courtyard. The auditorium (rear) entrance to the building faces west onto Wyandotte Street and has a semi-circular drive that provides vehicle access from the street to the auditorium entrance. Since its construction in 1909, the Music & Arts Building has been in continuous use as an educational building for St. Teresa's Academy. It is in excellent condition and has only received those modifications necessary for its continued use as an educational facility, such as upgraded lighting, covering of the stained glass dome due to leakage, and exterior door replacements. The exterior of the building retains excellent integrity in terms of architectural feeling and association.

The Music & Arts Building has a somewhat unusual plan: a long rectangular façade with a connecting semi-circular wing on the rear, similar to a "T" plan with the semi-circular component constituting the leg of the "T." The rectangular portion of the plan, hereafter referred to as the east wing, measures 151 feet in width and 57 feet in length, excluding the exterior front entrance stairs. The semi-circular, rear portion of the building, hereafter referred to as the west wing, measures 85 feet in length and 100 feet in width. The total length of the building, including both the east and west wings, measures 155 feet (east to west), with the exterior front entrance stairs comprising 13 feet of that total.

The Building Exterior

The building is situated on an eastward inclining slope. Due to this incline, only a portion of the basement-story is visible from the front (east) side of the building, while it is fully visible from the rear (west side). The building has a load-bearing reinforced concrete and steel I-beam superstructure. The exterior walls are clad in red brick, while the interior walls are structural clay tile covered with plaster. The building is constructed on a limestone stem wall foundation that is not visible from the exterior of the building. All of the original windows are still present on the entire building. Several historic photos of the building exterior and interior are provided, which show the building as it appeared in its early history (Figures 1-4). Given the unusual plan of the building, the exteriors of the east and west wings are described separately below.

The East Wing Exterior

The front (east side) of the building has symmetrically placed windows and a center entrance. The façade is eleven bays wide and three stories tall. The three central bays step out slightly from the wall plane and

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are further accented by four colossal brick pilasters. The façade is framed with a similar pilaster at each corner.

Just above ground level are eight pairs of short, hinged windows with wooden sashes and limestone sills, permitting light into the basement-story. Above the basement level is a smooth limestone water table that completely encircles both wings of the building. A formal limestone entrance staircase leads from the front sidewalk up into the front entrance of the building. The staircase is 15 feet across and 13 feet deep. There are eight limestone stairs ending on an entry landing, flanked by a brick pedestal wall topped with cut limestone. Both pedestal walls, equal in height to the entrance landing, support single standing lighting fixtures. Two black iron hand railings have been added to the staircase in recent years for safety.

The entryway has a limestone panel trim with a simple raised border. Above the door surround is a limestone entablature with a simple architrave, a frieze decorated with dentils, and a plain cornice. The cornice is supported a modillion at each end and is topped with a limestone cross, approximately one foot in height. The double front doors are now plate glass aluminum frame doors with a fixed plate glass transom. The original doors were wood paneled double doors with fixed glass upper panels and a decorative, wood sash, fixed transom. The doors appear to have been replaced several times over the years, with the most recent doors installed during the late 1980s.

On either side of the front doors is a plain brick colossal pilaster, which extends three stories to the entablature. The pilasters have flattened Tuscan capitals and bases. There is a carved limestone corner stone at the base of the southern of these two pilasters, which reads "DEO ADVVANTE NON TIMENDVM – MCMIX" (With the help of God, we need not fear – 1909). The pilasters are each flanked on the outside by paired 6/1 double hung, wood-sash windows with a narrow dividing mullion. Extending across the paired windows is a cut limestone, double keystone lintel. Beneath is a plain limestone slip sill. Moving outward from these windows, is a set of two overlapping pilasters. The innermost pilaster of each pair is placed slightly forward of and overlapping the other pilaster. Beyond these pilasters are four more sets of paired windows like those described above. Another pilaster is placed at each corner of the front side of the building.

Modification of the front exterior consists primarily of replacement of the front doors and lighting fixtures. Originally, the lighting fixture on each pedestal was a tall fluted iron pole topped with four glass light globes, each mounted on a separate decorated iron arm (Figure 1). These fixtures were replaced circa 1945 with three feet tall, Art-Deco, multi-paned lighting fixtures with verdigris metalwork.

The second-story of the front (east) side of the building is the same as the first-story, except for an additional set of paired windows above the entrance. There are a total of eleven symmetrically placed pairs of windows across this level. The third-story has somewhat shorter double-hung windows, although they are the same in number, placement, and style as the others. There are no keystone lintels above these windows, but they have plain limestone slip sills. Above the colossal pilasters is an entablature, consisting of a simple limestone architrave beneath a plain brick frieze with limestone panels centered above each pilaster, and a simple limestone cornice with a dentil band. Above the entablature is a brick parapet wall,

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topped with plain limestone coping. Centered on the parapet wall is a carved limestone inscription stone, which reads "MVSIC AND ART."



Figure 1: Detail of the Front of the Music & Arts Building, c1941
View to the Northwest. Photo courtesy of St. Teresa's Academy.

The south side has three bays, each with a pair of basement level, single-paned, hinged windows placed below the limestone water table surrounding the building. The south façade is framed with a colossal brick pilaster at each corner. Double wood French doors, each with six panes, is centered at the first floor level. According to the original plans, these doors were designed without stairs or a ramp to provide access to the ground surface. There is no indication on the exterior wall that ground access to these doors was ever constructed. A matching set of these doors, since replaced with a large window, was originally on the north side of the building. These doors, when open, may have provided a breezeway for the first-story main corridor. Above the double doors on the south side of the building is a fixed twelve-pane transom window with a narrow dividing mullion, separating six panes to each side. The transom is surmounted with a limestone keystone lintel. To either side of the doors are paired double-hung windows, the same design as those on the east side of the building. Three such window pairs also occur on the second and third stories on this south face, but they lack the keystone lintels. In addition, there is a small, hinged, rectangular window with a wood sash, positioned between the third-story center and westernmost windows.

The north side of the east wing is positioned on a steep western down-grade, which is interrupted by a rough limestone retaining wall, resulting in three fully visible stories on the eastern portion of the wall, while the full basement level and sub-basement entrance is fully exposed on the western portion. Like the south side of the east wing, the north side has three bays and the façade is framed with a colossal brick

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pilaster at each corner. A set of hollow-core metal doors on the eastern side of the exposed sub-basement floor level provides a service entrance. These were installed in the 1960s, replacing a single wood panel door with a single-paned glass upper panel. This entrance is surrounded by a concrete platform above, concrete wall to the west, and the limestone retaining wall to the east, providing a covered service tunnel. The retaining wall is original, but the concrete platform and east wall of the service entrance tunnel were added in the early 1960s. The latter form part of a stairway that leads from the ground surface at the sub-basement level up to the ground-story. The original platform and stairs were constructed of wood. What is now the western cement wall of the tunnel was originally a limestone half wall with wooden posts to support the landing platform. These were all replaced due to deterioration.

A basement level entrance, reached by the stairs described above, is located directly above the sub-basement entrance. Currently, the basement entrance has a single metal panel door with a plate glass upper panel. Above the door is a fixed plate glass transom. Originally, this entrance had a wood panel door with a fixed glass upper panel and fixed glass transom with a wood sash. These also appear to have been replaced in the 1960s at the time of the other renovations to this side of the building. To the west of this entrance are two 6/1 double hung wood sash windows with limestone slip sills. Beneath the easternmost of these windows is the old metal coal chute. To the east of the retaining wall, just above ground level, are two small, basement-story, hinged windows with plate glass and wood sashes.

Above the water table and directly above the basement-story entrance on the north wall, is a large, six-pane, fixed window in an aluminum frame. It replaces the wood sash French doors previously noted, the matching pair of which is still present on the south side of the building. Above the large window is a limestone double-keystone lintel. The original architectural plans indicate a decorative, carved limestone, door surround for the French doors, which is not currently present on the building. There are no indications of remodeling or modification around the door, which suggests that the door surround was never installed.

Each bay of the second and third-stories of the north wall has a pair of 6/1 double-hung windows with limestone slip sills, the same as described for the east façade. The second-story windows have double-keystone lintels, but they are absent above the third-story windows. A small hinged, single pane window also occurs at the third-story, between the westernmost and center windows, mirroring its placement on the south façade.

The semi-circular west wing is not as wide as the rectangular east wing; it is inset 25 feet from each end of the east wing's rear (west) wall. The east wing's west wall sections, exposed at either side of the west wing, mirror one another in their architectural features and placement. The exception is a sub-basement entrance with a metal panel door, present on the northernmost section of the wall, but lacking on the southern side. Both of the east wing's west wall sections have two bays. The basement level has two 6/1 double-hung windows. The first story has a single paired set of 6/1 double-hung windows with a double-keystone lintel, and the second and third stories each have two 6/1 double-hung windows. The second story windows have simple limestone lintels and the third story windows are without lintels. All these windows have limestone slip sills.

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The West Wing Exterior

The outwardly curved, semi-circular west wing façade has thirteen bays and four stories (three stories and an attic story), a basement, and sub-basement. The entire basement-story of the west wing is exposed by the westward declining grade. The original doors to the centered, basement-level, auditorium entrance have been replaced with aluminum panel doors with single fixed-glass upper panels. Surmounting the doors is a limestone keystone lintel, above which is a carved limestone plaque reading, "AUDITORIUM." Thirteen symmetrically placed, 6/1 double-hung, wood sash windows with limestone slip sills flank each side of the auditorium entrance, running around the curved sides of the rear half.

There are ten pairs of symmetrically placed, colossal, brick pilasters placed around the semi-circular west wing. Their bases are positioned at the top of the water table and they terminate just above the third-story. Between each pilaster in the pair there is a 6/1 double-hung window with a double-keystone lintel and a slip sill. This window is present in this placement on all three stories. Between the pairs of pilasters are two such windows, also occurring on all three stories. Above each of the pilasters at the attic-story is a small, single-pane, hinged window with a wooden sash.

The Building Interior and Roof

The interior of the Music & Arts Building is described in this section, beginning with the sub-basement and working upwards, floor by floor, to the rooftop. Consistent with the descriptive narrative for the building exterior the interiors of the east and west wings are described separately. Changes to the interior, discussed in detail below, include remodeling of the first floor student's dining room, no longer in use, into a student's chapel, removal of glass partitions that created classrooms on the ground-floor mezzanine to create a dining area, the combination of several small rooms to form classroom space, and the addition of connecting modern theater style seats in the auditorium.

The entire building was outfitted for electricity during its construction. However, because electricity had not yet been run out to this part of town when construction commenced, gas was also accommodated for lighting, cooking, and heat. However, the Sisters were successful in having electricity run to the building before it was completed and were, therefore, able to use the electric lights and the elevator when they first moved in.

The East Wing

There are three floors, a basement, and a sub-basement in the rectangular east wing. The floor plan for all floors except the sub-basement, consists of a central corridor running north and south, turning westward where the west wing meets the east wing. Double swinging, wood panel doors lead into the west wing. North and south stairwells provide access to all floors and are placed just inside of the swinging doors (east wing side) on the interior side of the corridor. The stairs and landings are polished marble, while the handrails and squared newel posts are oak, and the simple squared balusters are iron. Illuminating each of

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the upper landings is a square nine-paned skylight with green and amber art glass. In addition, modern suspended globular lighting fixtures have been added at each landing. At either end of the main corridor on the basement, first, and third floors are rooms; the corridor does not extend to the south or north face of the building. On the second floor, the corridor extends to the north face of the building, with rooms placed to either side. To the east of the main corridor (on the front side of the building) are classrooms and administrative offices. To accommodate added central air conditioning and heating vent work, a dropped acoustical tile ceiling was added to both the second and third floors, running the length of the main corridor. The frame for the dropped ceiling is a thin lightweight aluminum.

The basement main corridor has the original finished concrete floor, but it was covered with vinyl Desco flooring in the 1960s. The main corridors on the first through third floors have one-inch white porcelain tile with a burgundy step-fret tile border. Due to breakage and wear from heavy traffic, the original first floor tile was replaced in 1998 with 1-inch porcelain tile, consistent with the style of the original tiled corridors on the second and third floors. Foot-high, polished limestone, base paneling runs along the base of the corridor walls.

Most classrooms and offices retain the original oak flooring, but some have been covered in institutional wall-to-wall carpeting. Institutional fluorescent lighting was added to most classrooms and offices in the late 1950s, some of which was replaced with new fixtures over the past ten years. Blackboards were replaced with modern versions several times over the years, most recently in the late 1980s. All the interior doors in the both wings of the building, except the swinging doors leading into the west wing, are oak panel doors with a plate glass upper panel, above which is a hinged single-pane glass transom with oak trim. Simple oak detailing, such as interior window sashes, baseboards, and doorframes, is present in all the rooms unless otherwise noted.

The Sub-Basement. The sub-basement level of the building consists of a north and south running tunnel, situated between the limestone stem wall foundations of the east wing. This tunnel is currently used for storage. Elevator machinery is housed in a small limestone walled chamber on the west side of the tunnel. The elevator machinery and car, installed when the building was constructed, are still in place and functional. The elevator shaft is constructed of mortared limestone block. The elevator car is typical of its time period with modestly ornamented brass sidebars and a side-folding grate door. The sidebars are currently covered with plywood due to building safety code regulations. The elevator shaft is positioned to the south side of the northern stair well landing and the elevator car is accessed through a hinged wood panel door on each floor.

The Basement. A non-mechanical two-lane bowling alley is located on the eastern side of the main corridor on the basement level. It was installed at the time of the building's construction and is still operational. The room is long and narrow and runs three-quarters the length of the front half of the building. The floors are oak and the lanes are maple, which have recently been refinished and restored.

At the far southern end of the main corridor were the original student's locker rooms and baths, extending across the southern face of the east wing. The northwestern portion was renovated with new fixtures,

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fluorescent lighting, and metal lockers, and is currently in use. The southwestern portion was combined with the remaining original bathroom space and the southernmost classroom on the east side of the corridor, to form an L-shaped classroom, which extends across the end of the corridor. This renovation work was conducted in the 1960s.

At the opposite end of the basement corridor lie the original kitchens, pantry, and storeroom. In 1988 all the appliances were removed from the kitchen and the room has since been used as storage for the Drama Club. The other rooms now house telephone and computer cables and equipment. Between these rooms and the bowling alley is a small room originally used as the Sister's dining room. It was outfitted with modern toilets and sinks in the 1980s and is now the men's restroom.

The First Floor. The first floor has a central entry vestibule on the front side of the building, bisecting the eastern blocks of rooms, which leads from the front entry doors to the central corridor. There are two offices, one placed on either side of the vestibule, with doors opening onto it, as well as onto the central corridor. The northern of these two offices was originally a parlor.

At the northern end of the first floor main corridor is the student chapel. The chapel was moved here from the third floor in 1988 and replaces the original student dining room. The changes to the room are superficial, involving the addition of an altar, pews, and a freestanding stained glass blind, which is placed just inside the door to allow privacy for those worshipping in the chapel.

On the east side of the main corridor, between the chapel and the office (the old parlor) is the old visitor's room, which is now used as a classroom. At the south end of the main corridor lies the choir room, which, according to early school records (unknown author, n.d.), has always been used as such, contrary to the original architectural plans, which indicate the room as a library. Between the choir room and the office on the south side of the vestibule, lies another classroom, which has been used as such since the building was constructed.

The Second Floor. The original architectural plans indicate student dormitory rooms to the east of the main corridor on the second floor. However, early school records (unknown author, n.d.) indicate that there have always been five classrooms along this side of the building. An early photograph of the central classroom, Room 227, is shown in Figure 2. The main corridor is lined on the west side with metal lockers, which were installed in the 1960s.

At either end of the corridor, on the western side, were the original bathrooms. The fixtures have been removed from the northern bathroom and the room is now used as a classroom. The northern half of the southern bathroom was updated in the 1960s with new bathroom fixtures. The southern half of this room was combined with a classroom opposite it to the east of the corridor, forming an L-shaped classroom, spanning the southern end of this floor.

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Figure 2: Second Floor Classroom (circa 1915), Room 227, East Wing of Music & Arts Building
View Looking South. Photo courtesy of St. Teresa's Academy.

The Third Floor. The third floor also appears to have been constructed with some alterations to the original plans. The plans indicate a long narrow Painting and Exhibition Room occupying the south half of the eastern room block. The plans indicate a dividing hall, bisecting the eastern rooms, between this room and another room on the east side, labeled on the plans as the Art Room. Beyond the Art Room, to the north, is another smaller room labeled on the plans as a China Painting Room. Inspection of the building and early historic photographs indicates that the Painting and Exhibition Room was instead built as a classroom with a west entrance onto the main corridor. The small hall between it and the "Art Room" was apparently not built. Instead, the "Art Room" was given the full length of both the side hall and the original Art Room and was used as the original student chapel. In 1988 the chapel was relocated onto the north end of the first floor. The original chapel and adjacent classroom were repartitioned to form five equally long classrooms extending along the eastern side of the main corridor. The remodeling, seen from the central corridor, is consistent in feel and style as the rest of the building and is not an obvious modification. Wood lockers, originally installed on the west wall of the third floor main corridor, were removed early in the building's history and replaced with a seven panel long Classical plaster frieze.

At either end of the main corridor on the west side of the hall, are the original bathrooms. They have tile floors of the same design and colors as the tile described for the main corridors, polished limestone toilet stalls and changing room dividers, porcelain toilets and sinks, claw foot bathtubs, and a tiled shower stall. They are currently unused and under repair, but the original fixtures are still present.

The West Wing

The semi-circular west wing of the Music & Arts Building has a fairly consistent floor plan for the first through third floors. An egg-shaped auditorium, located in the center of the wing, extends upward through all three floors. Underneath the auditorium, in the basement, is an egg-shaped gymnasium and encircling

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mezzanine. A gallery hall, located on each of the first through third floors, encircles the auditorium and is lined to the outside with sixteen small rooms. These rooms, originally used as dormitory rooms and offices, are now used as storage and office space. The fourth floor differs somewhat from the other floors in this wing and is described in detail below.

The west wing is consistent in details and style with the east wing. Unless otherwise noted, the gallery hall floors are the same tile and design as described for the east wing, as are the doors, transoms, and wood trim in the rooms. The rooms positioned along the gallery hall on the first through third floors have wood floors, some of which have been covered in institutional wall-to-wall carpeting. Fluorescent light fixtures were added throughout most rooms and areas of the west wing in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The Basement. The basement floor of the west wing houses the original, egg-shaped gymnasium and mezzanine. The oak gym floor has recently been refinished and restored. The mezzanine originally housed classrooms, divided by glass partition walls. In the late 1950s the partition walls were removed to create a dining area that encircles and overlooks the gymnasium. The gymnasium is also used as a dining area. In the 1960s the concrete mezzanine floor was covered with vinyl Desco flooring. An original set of cement stairs with iron pipe railings is located on both sides of the east end of the mezzanine to provide access down to the gym floor.

The edge of the mezzanine is encircled with original iron pipe, waist-high hand railings. Ten squared concrete encased I-beam support columns are symmetrically placed around the inner edge of the mezzanine to which the hand railings are attached. Massive steel structural support I-beams are exposed on the ceiling of the room. Smaller concrete encased I-beams, in-line with the edge of the mezzanine, encircle the ceiling and abut the columns.

There is a vestibule with polished marble flooring at the westernmost end of the room, which connects to the auditorium entrance/exit at the rear of the building. A staircase on the north side of the vestibule leads upward to the auditorium. The stairs are polished marble, the handrails and newel posts oak, and the balusters are brass. All appear to be original.

The First Floor. The first floor of the west wing houses the floor level of the egg-shaped auditorium. The auditorium design, extremely innovative for its time, was considered by its designers to be nearly perfect in terms of acoustics (*Kansas City Star*, Sept. 18, 1910). Few other examples of this type of auditorium design are known in the U.S. and, during the early years, the auditorium was a regular tourist destination in Kansas City.

An arcade surrounds the auditorium, opening onto the first and second floors. The large auditorium is entered from the west and the floor slopes downward toward the stage, located at the east end. Two gently sloping aisles divide the stepped seating rows into a large center section and two flanking and narrower sections. The original finished concrete floor is still exposed on the stepped seating rows, but has been covered with carpeting on the aisles, as well as on the area in front of the stage. The original audience seating consisted of freestanding wooden chairs, which have been replaced with upholstered fixed seating,

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such as used in modern movie theaters. These seats have replaced several times through the years when they became worn. The original three-globe sconce lighting fixtures, one attached on the auditorium side of each column of the arcade, are still in use. In recent years, audio speakers for the auditorium's sound system have been added above the sconces on several of the columns.

The ceiling of the auditorium, the upper curve of the "egg," has an art glass centerpiece. It has fifty-one stained glass skylights, arranged in a circular grid pattern. Each of the skylights contains anywhere from three to twenty-five panes of amber and green art glass. The art glass 'dome' began leaking during the 1980s and preservation-oriented remodeling took place on the roof to protect it from further leakage. This remodeling is described in further detail below.

The stage opening is arched and the stage curves outward. The stage floor retains its original oak flooring and foot lights. The stage back is red brick. The stage wings house original industrial steel staircases that provide access up to the green rooms, which are on level with the second story. The cement-floored catwalk, called the 'scene shifters gallery' on the original plans, is arranged in a horseshoe shape around the rear of the stage at the third floor level. The catwalk is accessed from doors opening onto the gallery hall on the third floor.

Decorated iron waist-high railings span the first-floor openings to the auditorium. There are twenty-three rooms placed around the gallery hall, lining the outside walls. These were originally used as music rooms and a few of them are currently in use, serving as offices for faculty.

The Second and Third Floors. The second floor has sixteen rooms lining the outside wall. These were originally private rooms for boarding students and are currently used as offices. Opposite from the rooms, overlooking the auditorium, is waist-high, metal pipe, hand-railing at each arched opening of the arcade. The floor plan for the third floor of the west wing is the same as that described for the second floor. The third floor rooms were also originally student rooms for boarders and are now unused, except for occasional storage.

The Fourth Floor. Converse to the lower floors, the fourth floor hallway is positioned next to the outside wall and the rooms positioned on the inside. The rooms were the private quarters for the resident nuns from the time the building was constructed in 1909 until the late 1970s, when the nuns moved off campus. Each room is simply appointed with small closets, pine floors and trim, and a double hung window opening onto the Light Court, which surrounds the top exterior of the art glass dome and its copper and glass superstructure. The doors and transoms are the same on the nun's rooms as those used elsewhere in the building.

Bathrooms are located at each end of the eastern terminus of the west wing and a storeroom is located between them. Skylights illuminate all three of these rooms, consisting of art glass in the bathrooms, and clear glass in the storage room. The bathrooms are appointed much as those on the third floor of the east wing, but they are smaller in scale. Next to the southern bathroom, on the outside wall, is a mounted, porcelain water fountain. Small, inset, single-paned, hinged windows line the curved outside wall, just

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above floor level. The fourth floor is now used for occasional storage. No modifications have been made to the nuns' rooms and they remain essentially in their original state.

The Roof. The top exterior of the egg-shaped auditorium with its art glass skylights creates a small dome on the otherwise flat roof of the building. The dome is located in a sunken "Light Court" in the center of the west wing roof that is level with the fourth floor of the west wing. The Light Court is lower in elevation than the rest of the surrounding flat roofline. The dome is covered by an original structure resembling a conservatory or greenhouse, with large, reinforced panes of security glass set in copper frames and hinged to allow ventilation. A metal door on this structure allows access to the art glass skylights of the dome and to the crossing steel I-beam trusses that are integral to the building's construction. One-inch diameter steel rod struts suspend and support the art glass panels from the I-beams.

As mentioned above, the dome began leaking in the 1980s. The necessary restoration and repair of the leaking art glass skylight dome and surmounting glass and copper structure was prohibitively expensive. However, the school board had a strong desire to preserve the original features. In the mid-1980s, after weighing several options, the board decided to protect the historic features and stop the leakage by enclosing the Light Court. Given the location of the dome and its relation to the rest of the roof line, a covering was designed that serves to protect the features and stop the leaking, but does not detract from the visible historic character of the building.

The interior Light Court walls are the exterior walls of the nuns' dormitory. The roof level of the Light Court is, consequently, substantially lower than the rest of the roofline. Therefore, erecting the walls of the protective metal covering on top of the Light Court walls, extended their height another six feet (Figure 5). This permits complete clearance of the highest portions of the glass and copper superstructure covering the art glass dome. The new covering is constructed of corrugated steel sheeting over a steel superstructure with a central peak to provide water runoff. Since the art glass skylights no longer receive natural light, large floodlights mounted on the interior steel support beams of the new covering structure backlight the art glass dome.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation state that, "[d]eteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced" (Weeks and Grimmer 1995:62). Although the preference expressed in the Standards is to restore damaged significant features of historic buildings, preservation of the features is the primary goal. Given the prohibitive cost to restore the leaking dome, St. Teresa's Academy chose to protect the features by covering them. In doing so, they arrested further deterioration of these features and preserved them *in situ*. The chosen method, construction of a metal structure to cover the features, constitutes an *addition* in the terminology of the Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards clearly state that, "[n]ew additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired" (Weeks and Grimmer 1995:62). The metal covering installed over the dome complies with the Standards, as it was designed to be easily removed without damage or permanent modification to the building.

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Even prior to being covered, the dome was not visible from the ground surface (Figures 3 and 4). Therefore, the added metal structure did not change the exterior view by covering a feature once visible from the ground. In addition, the new covering is partially visible from only certain ground vantage points, due to the central position of the dome on the west wing roof and to the waist-high, surrounding outer parapet walls. Given its relative unobtrusiveness and its dark brown color that matches the brick on the building exterior, the covering does not detract from the architectural character and feel of the building. It completely preserves the stained glass dome and glass and copper surmounting structure until such time when they may be restored.

In early 1999 the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office approved the addition of Sprint cellular phone panel antennas to the roof of the Music & Arts Building, stating that their proposed placement on the steel dome covering would not affect the architectural integrity of the historically significant building. The antennas are mounted on the sides of the new dome covering, are painted the same dark brown as the metal siding, and do not extend above the top of the structure. Additional switching equipment placed on the roof, well away from the parapet roof edges is, consequently, not visible from the ground.

Summary

Several modifications to the Music & Arts Building have occurred over the years to allow for the continued use of the building as an educational facility and to facilitate needed changes in room use. The building exterior, however, has received only minor noticeable modification. Lampposts positioned outside the building's east entrance were replaced circa 1945 with Art Deco lighting fixtures. The east entrance doors were replaced with metal and glass institutional doors several times over the years, most recently in the 1980s. Other entrance doors to the building were replaced in the 1960s with institutional metal versions. A deteriorated basement-level entrance landing and stairs on the north side of the east wing were also replaced with concrete versions during this time. In 1988 the metal covering was constructed over the art glass skylight dome and superstructure. None of these changes detract from the historical feel and character of the building.

Changes to the interior of the building occurred in a series of events, beginning in the late 1950s. At this time fluorescent lighting was added to many rooms of the school, chalkboards were replaced in most classrooms, and glass and wood classroom partition walls on the basement level gym mezzanine were removed. In the 1960s vinyl Desco flooring was laid on the basement-level's main corridor in the east wing and on the mezzanine surrounding the gymnasium in the west wing. The basement-level in the east wing also received remodeling of the old student's locker rooms and baths. A portion of the bathroom was updated with new fixtures and the rest of the original room was walled off and combined with a small room across the hall to the east to form an L-shaped classroom, extending across the southern end of the main corridor. These same remodeling changes were undertaken at the southern end of the second floor of the east wing. The old bathroom located at the northern end of the east wing's second floor was remodeled for use as a classroom. Fixed audience seating was also added to the auditorium in the 1960s, replacing freestanding chairs.

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In 1988 the student chapel was moved from the third floor to the first floor of the east wing. The new chapel replaced the old dining room. The old chapel room was converted for classroom use. Central heat and air was added to the building at this time and dropped acoustical tile ceilings were installed on the second and third floor main corridor's to accommodate the vent work.

The alterations to the Music & Arts Building through the years were necessary to allow for the continued use of the building for education purposes. The alterations have a minimal visual impact on the significant interior and exterior features of the building and the historic architectural feel and character of the building are retained. The building has been continuously used for educational purposes by St. Teresa's Academy since its construction in 1909. It is well maintained and in excellent condition.

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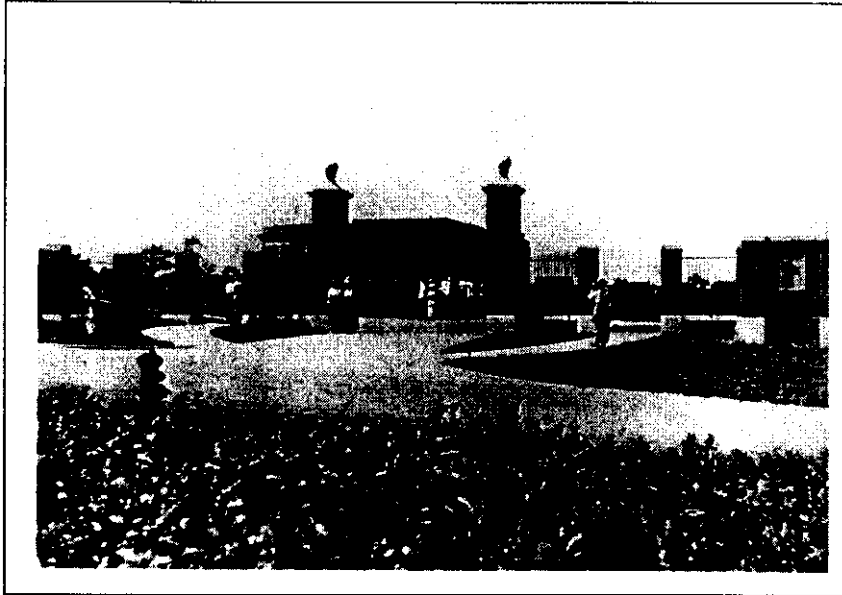


Figure 3: The Music & Arts Building as Seen from 57th Street, 1910
View to the Northwest. Photo courtesy of St. Teresa's Academy

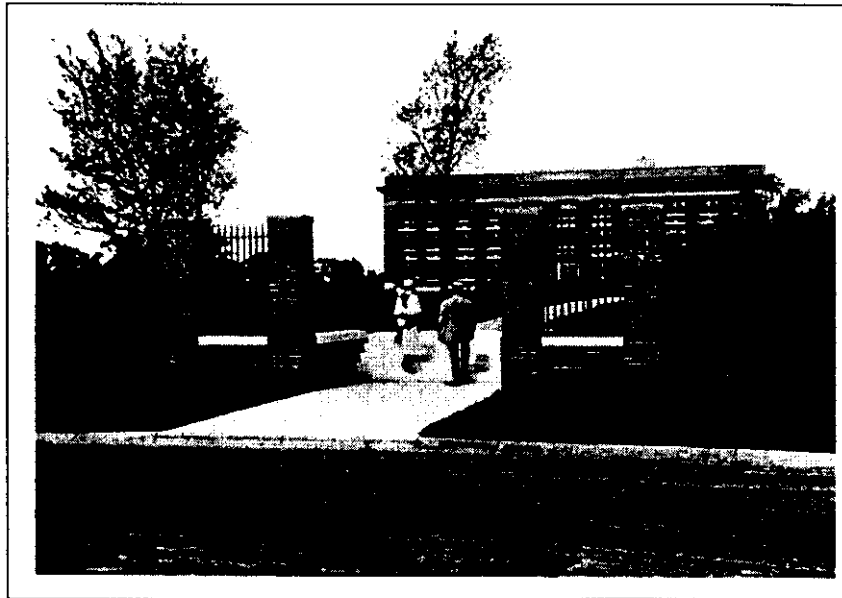


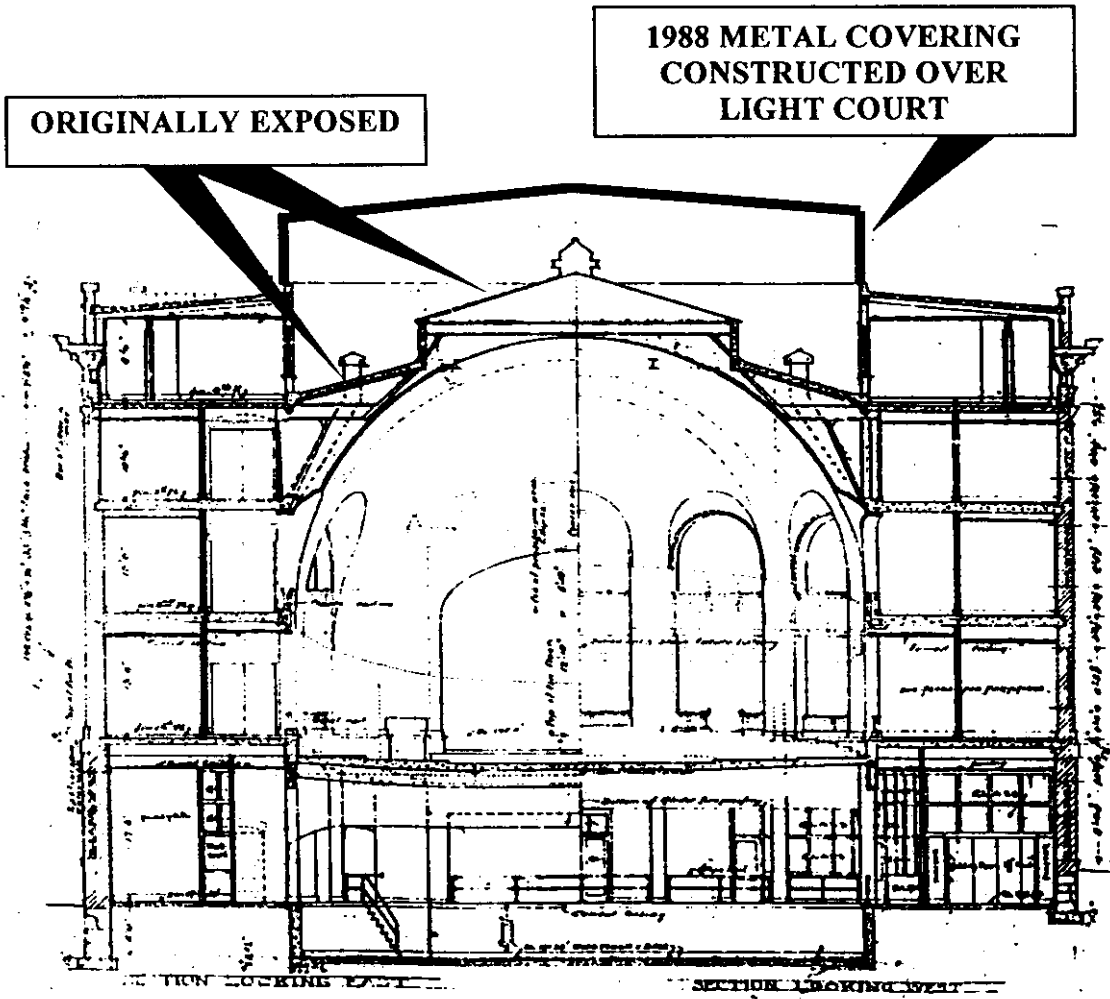
Figure 4: The Music & Arts Building as Seen from Main Street, c1925. View to the West-Southwest.
(Note: The small structure on top of the roof is the top housing for the elevator.)

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**FIGURE 5: DETAIL OF ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL SECTION
ADAPTED TO INDICATE THE PLACEMENT OF 1988 METAL
ADDITION OVER LIGHT COURT**

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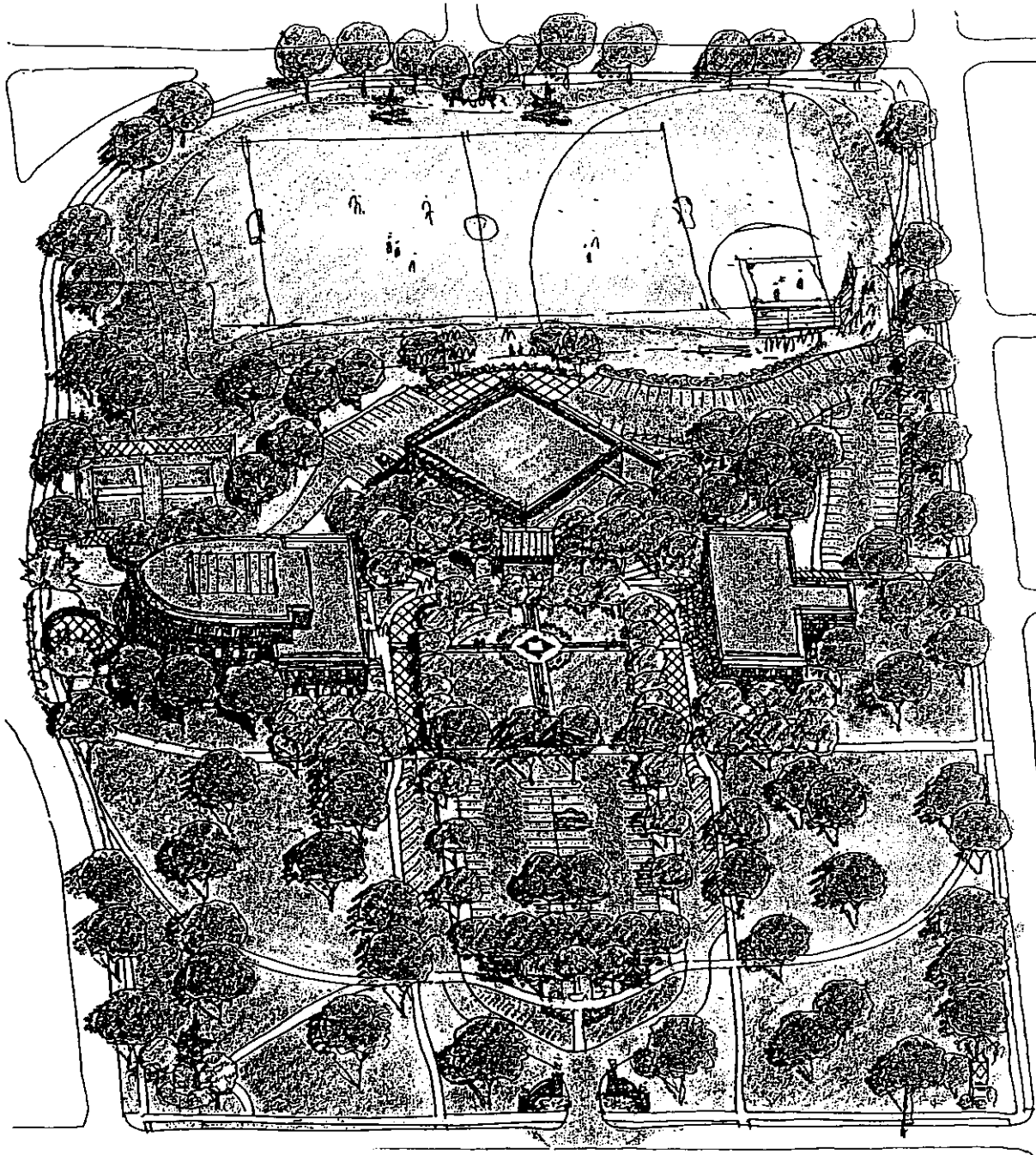


Figure 6: St. Teresa's Academy Site Plan (Mackey Mitchell Zahner Associates, Architects and Planners, 1998)

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Statement of Significance

The St. Teresa's Academy Music and Arts Building, 5600 Main Street, Kansas City, Missouri, built in 1909, is locally significant under National Register Criterion C for Architecture. As a religious property that derives its significance from its architectural distinction, the building is eligible for the National Register under Criteria Consideration A. The building is an excellent early example of a Neo-Classic design by Wilder & Wight, masters in this style who were influential in its growth in Kansas City. Several of the Kansas City buildings designed by the firm are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The period of significance for the building is 1909, the date of its construction, which is concurrent with the Neo-Classical Revival occurring in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century. The Music & Arts Building has been continuously used as an educational building for St. Teresa's Academy since its construction, is well preserved, carefully maintained, and retains integrity in its architectural feel and character.

Wilder & Wight, Architects

Wilder & Wight, later Wight & Wight, was one of the most prestigious architectural firms in Kansas City during the first half of the twentieth-century. They were major exponents of Neo-classicism and strongly influenced the growth of this style in Kansas City architecture (Ehrlich 1992:88). The Music & Arts Building was designed by them in 1908-1909, early in their Kansas City careers.

The Sisters purchased land for the new St. Teresa's Academy campus in the Country Club District through J.C. Nichols, who advised the Sisters to hire the relatively new firm, Wilder & Wight, to design the buildings for the new campus (Pearson and Pearson 1994:45). Wilder & Wight were commissioned in 1908 to design three buildings for the academy, an Administration Building, a Science Building, and the Music & Arts Building, but due to budgetary constraints, only the Music & Arts Building was built at that time (O'Neill 1923:25). With construction completed in 1909, the school began operating at its new location in 1910 (*Kansas City Star* Sept. 18, 1910; *Kansas City Times* Nov. 30, 1910). The Music & Arts Building included all facilities needed for the school, such as administrative offices, classrooms, a gymnasium, an auditorium, dormitories, a kitchen, and a chapel, until additional buildings could be afforded (O'Neill 1925:23). Wilder & Wight's philosophy was that their designs should "achieve all the beauty possible in a building without losing an inch of space or any functional value" (*Kansas City Times* Oct. 30, 1947). This is clearly evidenced in the Music & Arts Building's functional floor plans and efficient use of space, combined with beautiful interior and exterior architectural styling.

Wilder & Wight was formed in 1904 when Thomas Wight came to Kansas City and went into partnership with his friend, architect Edward T. Wilder (*Kansas City Star* April 26, 1931). Prior to this, Thomas Wight spent twelve years at the highly regarded New York architectural firm McKim, Mead, and White, first as an office boy, and the last ten years as a draftsman and architecture student (*Kansas City Star* Sept.

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7, 1949). He also spent a year at the American Academy in Rome, pursuing studies of European architecture (Ehrlich 1992:63, Landmarks Commission of Kansas City 1989:47).

Edward Wilder studied architectural history and design at Cornell University. After graduation he went to work for Jenny & Mundie, a Chicago architectural firm. Subsequently, he worked for McKim, Mead, and White in New York, where he and Thomas Wight met and became friends (Baxter 1925:23).

Thomas Wight's younger brother, William, trained at Canadian schools and architectural studios before following his brother in 1900 to McKim, Mead, and White to work as a draftsman (Landmarks Commission of Kansas City 1989:47; Withey and Withey 1956:658). He spent a year studying architecture in Europe before moving to Kansas City in 1911 to join his brother, Thomas, at Wilder & Wight (*Kansas City Times* Oct. 30, 1947). Following Edward Wilder's retirement in 1912, the firm was renamed Wight & Wight in 1916 (Ehrlich 1992:63). Wight & Wight remained active until 1947, when William succumbed to a heart attack (Landmarks Commission of Kansas City 1989:48). Thomas survived his younger brother by two years, passing away in 1949 (*Kansas City Star* Sept. 7, 1949).

The previous association of all three Wilder & Wight partners with McKim, Mead, and White clearly influenced their work; their preferences for designing large public and semi-public buildings and Neo-classicism are a logical outgrowth of that association. McKim, Mead, and White were largely responsible for the Neo-Classic Revival in the United States (Roth 1983). McKim, considered the idealist of McKim, Mead, and White, was trained at the famed Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris (Roth 1993:564-565). Although McKim was trained in the Beaux Arts style, his own designs, and those of his partners, evolved into a more restrained, conservative application of classical design, for which the firm became famous (Roth 1983).

Wilder and the Wight brothers showed a great affinity for Neo-Classicism, working almost exclusively in this tradition. Their work in this style was contemporary with the Neo-classical Revival (1900-1920) in the United States. They continued to work in this style, however, even after other architects had turned to the experimental styles of the modernists. This commitment to conservative, classical principals of symmetry and style was noted in Thomas Wight's obituary in the *Kansas City Star* (Oct. 8, 1949):

In a period when American architecture generally was tending more and more to experimentation, Mr. Wight and his brother, the late W.D. Wight, remained imbued with the classical spirit, but not as mere heavy-handed imitators of the past. It was the good fortune of Greater Kansas City that Tom Wight came here just as the ponderous Romanesque era was drawing to a close. To many of our later public structures he was able to impart a lightness of touch and a feeling for symmetry that had been conspicuously lacking theretofore. Even the most enthusiastic supporters of the new functionalism in architecture admired the creative use to which he put basic Greek forms....

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Thomas Wight, commenting earlier on their use of classical design for the Nelson-Atkins Fine Arts Museum, built in 1933, said, "[w]e are building the museum on classic principles because they have been proved by centuries. A distinctly American principle appropriate for such a building may be developed, but, so far, everything of that kind is experimental. One doesn't experiment with 2 ½ million dollars" (*Kansas City Star* April 26, 1931). Wilder & Wight's commitment to a conservative Neo-classicism for large public buildings resulted in impressive, timeless buildings that have withstood changing architectural tastes through the years.

Many of the notable monumental buildings built in Kansas City between 1904 and the mid-1900s were designed by Wilder & Wight (later Wight & Wight), including The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (1933), the Kansas City Life Insurance Building (1923), the First National Bank (1906), the Jackson County Courthouse (1934), the City Hall (1937), the Federal Courts Building (1939), and the Police Headquarters Building, among others (Ehrlich 1992:104, 109). Three Kansas City buildings designed by Wilder & Wight (later Wight & Wight) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Live Stock Exchange, built in 1910; the George Nettleton Home, built in 1917; and the Jackson County Courthouse, built in 1934. The Music & Arts Building was built prior to these buildings, a few years after the firm was founded in 1904.

The firm's Neo-Classic designs permeated Kansas City public architecture well into the 1940s. A later work, however, shows a rare movement away from Neo-classicism in their Gothic-influenced design for Southeast High School, built in 1936 (Ehrlich 1992:109, Landmarks Commission of Kansas City 1989:48). The Southeast High School design is an interesting contrast to the Neo-classicism of the Music & Arts Building that Wilder & Wight designed early in their careers. The Music & Arts Building is one of the few school buildings they designed, and one of only two they designed in the Neo-Classic style, the hallmark of the great majority of their work.

Historical Background of St. Teresa's Academy Music & Arts Building

St. Teresa's Academy, incorporated in 1867, is believed to be the oldest educational institution in Kansas City (Coleman 1992:582). Founded in 1859 by Father Bernard Donnelly, the first resident Catholic priest in Kansas City, it was initially a children's parochial school located at Twelfth and Washington Streets in Quality Hill. However, Protestants and Catholics alike urged the proper education and training for young women in a convent school. This motivated Father Donnelly to request six teachers from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet to form the new school's staff (O'Neill 1925:10).

Initially, the school provided both primary and secondary curriculum. The school was incorporated in 1867 as St. Teresa's Academy for Young Ladies, accepting both day students and boarders. The initial enrollment of 140 included students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including French, Irish, American, German, and Spanish (Pinkerton n.d.). Although a Catholic institution, the school accepted other denominations

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Around the turn of the century, the deterioration of the building and the surrounding neighborhood required moving the school to a new location. City noise and traffic became distracting for the students and strong gates were necessary to keep undesirables off the school grounds (Coleman 1992:584). The growth of Kansas City to the south and east had moved the choice residential section away from the newly dubbed "West Side," leaving St. Teresa's on Quality Hill in the midst of boarding houses (Pinkerton n.d.). The Sisters were able to obtain a 20-acre tract of land farther south for the relocation of St. Teresa's Academy. The eventual sale of the Quality Hill property allowed most of the outstanding debt on the new school to be retired (O'Neill 1925:31).

The Sisters' purchase of the 20 acres for \$40,000 in cash was crucial to J.C. Nichols' plans for developing the Country Club District. The landowners resisted selling the land Nichols needed unless he provided cash for at least a portion of the sale, which he was not financially able to do at the time. The cash proceeds from the sale to the sisters for the 20-acre parcel allowed Nichols to negotiate a delayed payment for the purchase of the parcel he needed to complete the Country Club District (Pearson and Pearson 1994:45; Worley 1990:72-74). The parcel the sisters purchased for the academy is bordered on the east by Main St., on the west by Wyandotte St., on the north by 55th Street, and on the south by 57th Street.

J.C. Nichols aided the sisters in selecting an architectural firm to design their new campus. Wilder and Wight, considered the premier architectural firm in Kansas City at the time, were commissioned to design three of the seven buildings planned to house the school. The Mercantile Trust Company in St. Louis financed the initial construction. However, the bank's directors doubted the requested \$300,000 was sufficient to build the three buildings as initially planned (Coleman 1992:584). The plans were revised for a single structure, the Music and Arts Building, to accommodate all school functions until the construction of other buildings became feasible, which the directors approved. The Music and Arts Building was constructed in 1909, with classes commencing in September of the following year (*Kansas City Star* Sept. 18, 1910; *Kansas City Times* Nov. 30, 1910). Construction of the Donnelly Building, the second Academy structure, was not undertaken until 1940. A Multipurpose Building was built on the north side of the courtyard in 1982, and updated playing fields, and a refurbished tennis courts were also added at that time.

As the planned Country Club District was still undeveloped, a portion of the loan proceeds was used to bring electric service to the site and defray the exorbitant monthly electric bills. Similarly, bringing street

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car service to the campus required the sisters to pay most of the cost to extend the Country Club line from 51st Street to 56th Street and to construct a shelter at the 56th Street stop (Coleman 1992:585; O'Neill 1925:25).

St. Teresa's Academy was reincorporated as a degree granting college upon the move to their new facilities. The Academy is believed to be the first Catholic school with this affiliation (Coleman 1992:584). The college outgrew the campus and relocated farther south in 1962 as Avila College. This allowed St. Teresa's to both expand its secondary education program to provide more college preparatory courses and to admit more secondary students than before. Today St. Teresa's continues to provide secondary education for girls and is still considered one of the most prestigious private schools in Kansas City. Since its construction in 1909, the Music & Arts Building has continuously been used as an educational facility for St. Teresa's Academy for Young Women.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning 518 feet north of the northeast corner of the Wyandotte Street and 57th Street intersection, proceed east 195 feet. Then proceed north 195 feet. Then proceed west 195 feet to the curb of Wyandotte Street. Then proceed south 195 feet to the point of origin.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the Music & Arts Building and several other related features. A semi-circular drive on the west of the building is included, for it provides vehicle access from Wyandotte Street to the auditorium entrance. The property includes a sidewalk that curves around the southern end of the building, leading from the promenade, which encircles the inner courtyard of the campus, to the west side of the Music & Arts Building. A service drive, related to the northern service entrance of the building, is included, as is the ground level landing in front of the east entrance stairs, leading onto the central promenade. The nominated property, including the sidewalk, landing, semi-circular drive, service drive, and the Music & Arts Building, comprises a coherent whole, distinct in historic and current use and function from the rest of the St. Teresa's Academy campus.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **St. Teresa's Academy Music & Arts Building**

City or Vicinity: **Kansas City**

County: **Jackson County**

State: **MO**

Photographer: **Don Dycus**

Date

Photographed: **Nov., 1999**

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

- 1 of 20. View to W, E elevation.
- 2 of 20. View to W, E elevation.
- 3 of 20. View to W-SW, detail of E façade.
- 4 of 20. View to NW, S and E facades.
- 5 of 20. View to N, S elevation.
- 6 of 20. View to E of W elevation.
- 7 of 20. View to S, detail of N façade.
- 8 of 20. View to S, basement level, main corridor, E wing.
- 9 of 20. View to NW, gymnasium and mezzanine, basement, W wing.
- 10 of 20. View to S, E wing, first floor, main corridor.
- 11 of 20. View to E, first floor, W wing, auditorium stage.
- 12 of 20. View to NW, W wing, 1st and 2nd floor, auditorium, arcade and gallery halls.
- 13 of 20. View to S, E wing, 2nd floor, main corridor.
- 14 of 20. View to N, E wing, 3rd floor, main corridor with classical frieze.
- 15 of 20. View to SE, W wing, 3rd floor, gallery hall.
- 16 of 20. View to NE, W wing, 4th floor, gallery hall.
- 17 of 20. View to E, E wing, 4th floor, N stairwell landing looking down onto 3rd floor main corridor.
- 18 of 20. View to W of covered light court and original structure over art glass skylight dome.
- 19 of 20. View to W of art glass skylight dome exterior and original safety glass and copper over structure.
- 20 of 20. View to W, roof – recent metal covering for dome showing in background.









































