GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

 New Designation
 X

 Amendment of a previous designation

 Please summarize any amendment(s)

Address: 21 Dupont Circle NW, Washington, DC 20036

Square and lot number(s): <u>Square 115, Lot 82</u> Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission: <u>ANC 2B</u>

Date of Construction: <u>1971</u> Date of major alteration(s): _____ Architect(s): <u>Hartman-Cox Architects</u> Architectural style(s): <u>MODERN MOVEMENT: Modernist</u> Original use: <u>COMMERCE/TRADE: office building</u> Present use: <u>COMMERCE/TRADE: office building</u>

Property owner(s): <u>ATU Dupont Circle, LLC</u> Legal address of property owner: <u>10000 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20903</u>

NAME OF APPLICANT(S): DC Preservation League

If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.

Address/Telephone of applicant(s): <u>DC Preservation League</u>, <u>1328 Florida Avenue NW</u>, <u>2nd Floor</u>, <u>Washington</u>, <u>DC 20009</u>, (202) <u>783-5144</u>

Name and title of authorized representative: <u>Rebecca Miller, Executive Director, DC Preservation</u> League

Signature of applicant representative:	Rebeccuryfller	Date: January 24, 2025

Name and telephone of author of application: <u>DC Preservation League</u>, (202) 783-5144

Date received ______ H.P.O. staff _____

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name: <u>I</u>	Euram Building
Other names/site n	number: <u>21 Dupont Circle</u>
Name of related m	nultiple property listing:

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

2. Location

 Street & number: _21 Dupont Circle NW

 City or town: _Washington
 State: _DC
 County:

 Not For Publication: ______
 Vicinity: ______

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

______statewide _____local Applicable National Register Criteria:

<u>A</u> <u>B</u> <u>C</u> <u>D</u>

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle)	Washington, DC
lame of Property	County and State
In my opinion, the property meets of criteria.	does not meet the National Register
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:) ______

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.) Private:

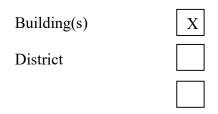
Public – Local

Public – State

Public	– Federal
I uone	1 cuciai

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)



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Euram Building (21 Dupont	Circle)	
Name of Property		
Site		
Structure		
Object		

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u> 1 </u>		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>

6. Function or Use Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.) COMMERCE/TRADE: office building

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.) COMMERCE/TRADE: office building United States Department of the Interior National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NPS Form 10-900 OMB Control No. 1024-0018

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

7. Description

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

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.) Principal exterior materials of the property: <u>brick, concrete, glass</u>

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Euram (21 Dupont Circle) Building is a trapezoidal, 8-story, brick, glass and concrete Modernist office building situated on a wedge-shaped lot between 19th Street NW and New Hampshire Avenue NW facing Dupont Circle from the southwest. The east and west elevations feature strongly horizontal, alternating tiers of glass windows and concrete girders, framed by massive brick piers. The northern elevation, facing Dupont Circle, features a large, angled opening to the interior courtyard, which is a significant element of the building and its site plan. While the top two floors span the façade with ribbon windows and concrete girders, the middle floors do not extend across the central opening. Designed by the Washington firm of Hartman-Cox Architects, the building has a commanding architectural presence that is distinctly Modernist, and yet it clearly relates to other buildings on Dupont Circle, including the adjacent Dupont Circle Building has a high degree of historic integrity and appears virtually unchanged on its exterior from the time of its construction in 1971.

Narrative Description

The Euram (21 Dupont Circle) Building is a trapezoidal, 8-story, brick, glass and concrete Modernist office building situated on a wedge-shaped lot between 19th Street NW and New Hampshire Avenue NW facing Dupont Circle from the southwest. The apex of the trapezoid directly faces the circle and is broken, resulting in a tightly constrained horseshoe plan for the building, with a narrow courtyard in the center. The broken apex is bridged at both the top and bottom, creating an irregular façade facing the circle. At the top of the building, the eighth floor crosses the façade, the only floor to stretch across the entire length of the façade. Above a base of post-tensioned concrete girders, a ribbon of half-inch thick, clear, plate-glass windows crosses the façade, surmounted by another band of concrete girders. The girders are in sets of two, each set pierced by the ends of eight concrete cross beams that continue the length of the building. The openings created by the row of crossbeams appears as a row of clerestory windows from the interior office space. The crossbeams are visible on the exterior running along the concrete soffit beneath the overhang of the top floor. (Photos 3 and 4)

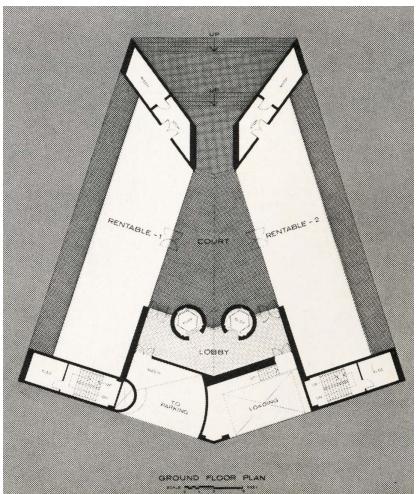


Figure 1: Ground floor plan (Architectural Forum, May 1972, 34).

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Below the top floor tier, a recessed tier (the seventh floor) crosses the façade on another base of post-tensioned concrete girders, with exposed crossbeams in between, the ends of which form six small piers between the two girders. Two large, triangular piers, sheathed in red brick and standing the full height of the building, support the weight of the building at its northern corners, forming sharp edges that point toward the circle. The inner sides of the piers are angled toward the interior of the building, drawing visitors toward the inner courtyard. The brick facing on these inner surfaces extends inward beyond the piers themselves and is pierced by single windows at four levels (the third through sixth floors), marking the northernmost extent of the office spaces on each side of the building on those four floors. Below them, at the second-floor level, another row of windows and concrete girders cross over the main entrance, recessed even further than the set on the seventh floor. The two pairs of concrete girders at this level are each separated by just four small piers (ends of crossbeams) because this tier is much narrower than those higher up. At street level, two sets of four concrete stairs lead from the sidewalk up to the main entrance, funneling visitors to the narrow passage that leads into the central courtyard. (Photos 4 and 5).

The west elevation, along 19th Street NW, and the east elevation, along New Hampshire Avenue NW, are identical. These elevations display a Modernist aesthetic with their clean lines and flat surfaces. Each is divided into eight, 80-foot, solid ribbons of half-inch thick, clear, plate-glass windows. Individual window panels abut one another to form continuous horizontal ribbons. The ribbons of windows alternate with pairs of concrete girders. Each pair of girders is separated by 16 evenly spaces concrete piers (ends of crossbeams), giving the appearance of slots in the concrete. These crossbeams travel perpendicular to the façade, part way across the building, generally terminating at the central courtyard, except for those on the top and bottom floors. The slots between the ends of the crossbeams appear as "clerestory" windows from the interior office spaces. The topmost concrete girder is slightly taller than the lower ones. The pattern of windows and concrete is broken only on the first (ground) floor, where the ribbon of windows is deeply recessed. Beneath the windows, a canted panel of grey stone extends from the bottom of the recessed windows out to the edge of the building at the sidewalk. A stainless-steel railing runs lengthwise across this sloping surface. The concrete overhang above the windows includes a recessed, beamed soffit matching the other concrete soffits beneath the top two floors and the soffits that line the central courtyard. The entire facade on both sides is framed by massive piers sheathed in brick. These piers provide the structural support for the building, just as they appear. They also contain ductwork and other mechanical and electrical system components. At the northern end of the building, these piers also frame the main entrance facade. At the southern end, they blend in seamlessly with the brick-sheathed rear elevation (Photos 2, 6, and 8).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property

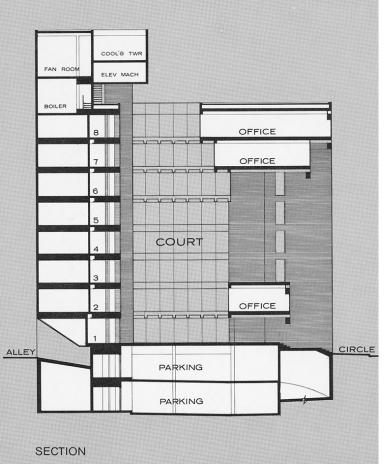


Figure 2: Section of the Euram Building as seen from the east (Hartman-Cox Architects).

Central Courtyard

At the center of the building is a full-height, eight-story, courtyard or atrium. Although not open to the sky, this interior courtyard and the walls framing it are a critical, contributing part of the building's design. Visitors access the central courtyard by proceeding up the staircase facing Dupont Circle and through a narrow and nondescript 10-foot-wide, 9-foot-tall entrance portal or "throat," which leads to the 86-foot-tall open courtyard. Metal gates are used to secure the entrance portal during nonbusiness hours. The floor of the courtyard is grey stone, laid in a diamond pattern, and the ceiling is beamed concrete, painted white. The white concrete crossbeams that pass through the building from the east and west, as described above, partially extend into the courtyard, supporting office spaces that are cantilevered over the courtyard. Inside the atrium on the ground floor, beyond the slanted brick walls of the entrance, are offices separated from the atrium by full-height glass walls. Glass doors on each side of the atrium provide access to these ground-floor spaces. The shape of the atrium is trapezoidal, matching that of the building as a whole. At the rear of the atrium stand two massive brick-sheathed cylinders that extend the full height of the building. These cylinders contain hexagonal elevator shafts.

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From the center of the atrium, glass-walled offices on upper floors are clearly visible and are cantilevered to varying degrees. The second and eighth floors are cantilevered the furthest, with the seventh and sixth proportionally less so. The third through fifth floors are not cantilevered. The varying intrusions of these floors on the central space creates a feeling of intimacy that counterbalances the look of the giant brick elevator towers. Like the ground floor, these office spaces feature floor-to-ceiling glass walls. (Photos 11 and 12)

The building's rear elevation faces a service alley running between New Hampshire Avenue and 19th Street. The rear elevation is of solid brick with no decorative elements and is divided in halves that are angled so that they are perpendicular with both New Hampshire Avenue and 19th Street. A seven-tier bay of recessed coves is centered in each of the angled halves of the rear elevation. Concrete girders cross these vertical coves, appearing to continue the girders that terminate on the east and west façades. At the center of the rear façade, a vertical ribbon of windows stands as an almost hidden counterpoint to the horizontal bands of windows on the east and west façades. The narrow tier of windows is angled—adding another type of differentiation from the horizontal window ribbons—and individual windows are again separated by concrete girders. At alley level, on the west side, is an entrance to a two-level underground parking garage beneath the building and, on the east side, a rear pedestrian entrance. A bricked penthouse for mechanical systems rises at the rear on the rooftop. (Photos 13, 14).

The Euram Building displays a very high degree of integrity. No noticeable alterations have been made to the exterior of the building since it was constructed in 1971.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.)

X

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.) ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance <u>1971</u>

Significant Dates <u>1971</u>

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder Architect: Hartman-Cox Architects Builder: Maritime Company

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

The Euram Building is significant under District of Columbia Criteria D through F and similar National Register Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style, and method of construction. From the time of its construction until the present day, the building has been praised repeatedly and consistently as an exceptional example of architectural grace and style applied with outstanding results to a subject (an office building meeting DC height restrictions) that has so often resulted in boxy, unimaginative structures. Its original owners, the Euram Corporation, specifically requested a landmark architectural creation and gave architects George Hartman and Warren Cox free reign to create an exceptional building. The Euram Building stands as a unique example of a Modernist structure tempered with early Post-Modernist touches, such as the brick cladding that softens the building's stark lines. Architectural critic Benjamin Forgey has called the building "a dramatic and workable piece of architectural sculpture." Its entrance he termed "a piece of willfully sculpted space on a grand scale," leading into "one of the most remarkable interior courts I can think of-not an airy, open space but an awesomely powerful enclosure." Forgey's assessment, penned at the time the building was finished in 1971, remains valid. Five years later, the AIA Journal revisited the Euram, declaring that "nearly five years after completion, [it] retains its capacity to startle." In Buildings of the District of Columbia, highly respected architectural historians Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee note that Hartman and Cox's "numerous innovative office and mixed-use buildings have broken stereotyped molds while respecting and enhancing the historical context of their neighborhoods and of the city as a whole." They cite the Euram Building as among the most notable of the firm's achievements, stating that the building "represents an embryonic return to contextualism in its response to the materials and color contrasts of Mihran Mesrobian's Dupont Circle Building of 1931," which stands just to the east of the Euram Building.¹

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

Dupont Circle Site Context and History

The Dupont Circle area remained undeveloped farmland until the 1870s. Extensive infrastructure improvements undertaken by the Board of Public Works of the Territory of the District of Columbia in the early 1870s prepared the way for residential development. Streets were laid out and marshy land was eliminated by burying a tributary of Rock Creek, called Slash Run, that meandered through the area. In 1873, DC Governor Alexander Shepherd built his mansion just to the south, at Connecticut Avenue and K Street NW. His house, part of a distinguished row of grand townhouses designed by architect Adolf Cluss, signaled the potential for a new fashionable district to develop in the area northwest of the White House. At the same time, Cluss designed

¹ Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 57, 320-1.

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another grand mansion—the first house built directly on Dupont Circle—for wealthy Nevada Senator William Morris Stewart. And the following year, the British Legation opened the city's first custom-built diplomatic mission building, a grand, Second-Empire mansion, a block south of the circle at Connecticut Avenue and N Street NW. With these pathfinders in place, the Dupont Circle neighborhood became highly fashionable, and soon other large mansions were constructed on lots around the circle and on adjoining streets.²

Along with these landmark mansions, many distinguished townhouses were also constructed in the 1880s and 1890s, filling in much of the streetscape. In about 1879, two attached townhouses were built on the wedge-shaped lot facing Dupont Circle, where the Euram Building would later be constructed. Both apparently were constructed by builder/architect Robert I. Fleming. (See Map 3). Of the two houses, the western one, which bordered New Hampshire Avenue, was owned by Rev. John A. Aspinwall, rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church. Born in New York in 1840, Aspinwall was in Washington by the early 1880s and became rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church from 1891 to 1902. During that time, he oversaw the construction of the historic church building, at 18th and Church Streets NW, which was completed in 1893 and destroyed by arson in 1970. Numbered 17 Dupont Circle, Aspinwall's house had an unusual, angled entrance facing the circle. Sizable additions to the rear of the house, along New Hampshire Avenue, were completed in the 1890s. Aspinwall remained in the house until his death in 1913, and the house remained standing at this location until it was demolished around 1970 for construction of the Euram Building.³



Figure 3: View south from Dupont Circle, circa 1909. In the center are the adjoining Aspinwall and Manley houses, which would be replaced by the Euram Building in 1971. (Courtesy DC History Center).

² Linda Wheeler, "Dupont Circle: Fashionable In-Town Address," in *Washington at Home*, 2nd ed., ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 179-81; Stephen A. Hansen, *A History of Dupont Circle: Center of High Society in the Capital*, (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2014), 19-58.

³ "Rev. John A Aspinwall Died at Noon Today," *Star*, Feb. 13, 1913, 2.

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The house adjoining on the east had its entrance on 19th Street and was numbered 1344 19th Street NW. Fleming built this house for Commander Henry DeHaven Manley (1839-1893) of the U.S. Navy. Manley graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis in 1860 and participated in the famous sea battle of the ironclads between the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia in 1862. It's not clear how long he resided at his Dupont Circle residence. The 1887 Hopkins Real Estate Atlas indicates that the owner at that point was his wife, Harriet "Hattie" Manley. Born Harriet Jane Early in Lynchburg, Virginia, Hattie had married Commander Manley in 1874. She likely remained in the house after he died in 1893.

By 1914, the 19th Street house had been purchased by Dr. James F. Mitchell (1871-1961), who was referred to as the "dean" of Washington surgeons. Born in Baltimore, Mitchell was a member of the first graduating class of Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1897 and came to DC in 1903. He served as professor of clinical surgery at George Washington University Medical School from 1919 until his retirement in 1947. Mitchell and his second wife, Madge Ritchey Mitchell, lived the rest of their lives in their Dupont Circle mansion, remaining there long after the neighborhood went into decline as a residential enclave in the 1950s and '60s. After Mitchell died in 1961, his widow, Madge, remained alone in the mansion. Sadly, she was murdered by an intruder as she lay in bed one night in 1966. An article in the *Washington Post* notes the crime occurred in Mrs. Mitchell's "yellow stucco landmark home" on Dupont Circle. The violent event may have been key to freeing up the long-held property for sale, enabling its redevelopment as the Euram Building a few years later.⁴



Figure 4: Looking west towards the Manley-Mitchell House, which appears on the left in this photo from July 1962. (Courtesy DC History Center).

⁴ Gerald Grant, "Dr. Mitchell, Surgeon, Dead," *Post*, May 5, 1961, D10; Alfred E. Lewis, "Prominent Surgeon's Widow Slain," *Post*, Jan. 5, 1966, A1.

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Wealthy homeowners began moving away from the Dupont Circle neighborhood to points further north and west, especially in the years after World War I. Commercial establishments began filling storefronts along Connecticut Avenue, taking the places of residents who had left or perhaps now lived on upper floors. Some residential buildings were replaced by purpose-built commercial structures, but these were generally low-scale, single- or two-story buildings. A turning point came in 1931, the year that the British Embassy left its Connecticut Avenue home for a much larger complex on Massachusetts Avenue. That same year, the first large, commercial building, the Dupont Circle Building, was built on the south side of Dupont Circle, in the segment between Connecticut Avenue and 19th Street NW.⁵

The Dupont Circle Building set the stage for future large-scale commercial buildings on Dupont Circle. Originally built in 1926 as a one-story commercial building that replaced a large mansion, the building was expanded in 1931 with an 11-story addition on top, designed by architect Mihran Mesrobian. Called the Dupont Circle Hotel Apartments when it was constructed in 1931, the 12-story building was described as "tower[ing] and dominat[ing] every structure in the Dupont Circle area." Though rich with surface decoration, the building was boxy in its massing and set a new precedent for constructing large buildings on Dupont Circle.⁶



Figure 5: The Dupont Circle Building, designed by Mihran Mesrobian and completed in 1931 (J. DeFerrari).

⁵ Kim Prothro Williams, *Dupont Circle Historic District (Amendment and Boundary Increase) National Register Nomination*, Washington, DC: Jun. 2005, Sec. 8, 5-11.

⁶ "Hotel Apartments At Circle Finished." Post, Apr. 10, 1932, R4.

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In the late 1940s, when the Connecticut Avenue underpass was constructed, the circle was rezoned for greater commercial development and with a higher height limit (110 instead of 90 feet). These changes incentivized developers to replace historic mansions with higher density buildings. For example, the eight-story Dupont Plaza Hotel replaced the old Leiter Mansion on the north side of the circle in 1949. The large office building at 1 Dupont Circle, across New Hampshire Avenue from the Euram Building, went up in 1969. And in 1974, three years after the Euram, 11 Dupont Circle, a nine-story office condominium on the northeast side of the circle, was completed.⁷

Construction and Critical Reception

The Euram Corporation, an investment firm associated with Italy's largest bank, Istituto Mobiliare Italiano, acquired the Dupont Circle site between 19th Street and New Hampshire Avenue in about 1968. That year the company commissioned Hartman-Cox Architects to design for that site "a better than average building that would contribute something to the city." The architects had the rare good fortune to be given virtual *carte blanche* by their client to build a notable building at a prominent location.⁸

Construction started in March 1970. At the time, Paul Richard, the *Washington Post*'s art critic, marveled at the building's innovative design, calling it "an office building unlike any built in Washington before." Dismissing typical DC office buildings as stacks of concrete slabs held up by numerous columns, Richard noted the Euram Building's open courtyard design and the fact that the floors were held up by supports at the corners of the building, with no columns in between. Richard noted the engineering excellence of the post-tensioned concrete beams that carried the building on Dupont Circle. As construction progressed, another *Post* article in January 1971 predicted the building would take its place with Edward Durell Stone's National Geographic Society building at 1145 17th Street NW (now a DC and National Register historic landmark), Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon's Forest Industries Building at 1619 Massachusetts Avenue NW, and a few others, as aesthetically notable contemporary downtown office buildings.⁹

Advertised as "a building years ahead of its time, a building that is certain to set the standard for others in the '70s," the Euram Building was completed in October 1971.¹⁰ It immediately received high praise for its exceptional design. Benjamin Forgey, architectural critic for the *Washington Star*, was bowled over. "It is rare to come upon a new office building that is truly designed, and rarer still to find one that is designed with boldness, originality, and tact," he wrote, calling the building "a dramatic and workable piece of architectural sculpture." Forgey noted the clean horizontal lines of the alternating concrete beams and window ribbons on the east and west sides of the building and how they contrast with the verticality of the sharp-edged,

⁷ Williams, Sec. 8, 9; "Swank Hotel Dupont Plaza Rapidly Nearing Completion," Post, May 8, 1949, R3.

⁸ Hartman-Cox: Selected and Current Works, (Mulgrave, Australia: Images Publishing Group, 1994), 32.

⁹ Paul Richard, "Building a Hollow Building," *Post*, Mar. 13, 1970, B1; John B. Williams, "New Building With an Open Courtyard," *Post*, Jan. 9, 1971, E1.

¹⁰ Advertisement, *Star*, Jan. 17, 1971, R-20.

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brick-covered piers at the corners. "The armature of the building is clearly expressed in the façades," he noted.

In contrast to the side elevations, Forgey found the façade facing Dupont Circle to be "a piece of willfully sculpted space on a grand scale." While the entrance itself is nondescript, Forgey stated that it leads into "one of the most remarkable interior courts I can think of—not an airy, open space but an awesomely powerful enclosure." While not calling the design Post-Modern, Forgey noted the "rejection of strict Miesian, Bauhuas dogmas about how office buildings should look and why they should look that way." A key element for him in this iconoclastic approach was the pair of "stunning" brick cylinders at the far end of the interior court containing hexagonal elevator shafts. "A lot of risks taken here, and the experience of the space proves them justified. Truly remarkable." Forgey also pointed out that the use of brick nicely softened the impact of the hard surfaces, and that coming out flush with the building line allowed the structure to attain full permissible density while still accommodating the innovative courtyard. He concluded, "As do all really good buildings, this one stands as a permanent piece of architectural criticism, and what it critiques so profoundly is the mindless, needless mediocrity of most contemporary office buildings.... It's a spectacular experience."¹¹

Following Forgey's appreciation, *Washington Post* architectural critic Wolf Von Eckardt published his own critique, entitled "Touch of Greatness." Von Eckardt praised two recent Hartman-Cox projects, the Euram Building and the Mount Vernon College Chapel at 2100 Foxhall Road NW. Von Eckardt called visiting the Euram Building an "exciting experience" and, like Forgey, focused on how the architects had inventively made the most of an awkward site. While he did not approve of the flat east and west elevations with their multiple glass, concrete, and brick elements, which he considered "busy and distracting," Von Eckardt wrote that "these complaints are forgotten" upon passing through the "majestic, wide-open portal of an entrance" into the inner court, a space where architecture "reveals itself as an art that can grip and move you." Von Eckardt concluded that the two Hartman-Cox projects represented "an articulate synthesis of the best in contemporary architecture."¹²

Both Forgey and Von Eckardt mentioned that nationally recognized architect Kevin Roche had previously designed a somewhat similar structure for an adjacent lot on Dupont Circle. This design likely had an influence on Hartman and Cox as they envisioned the Euram Building. The Roche project, for the National Center for Higher Education, was for a larger, but similarly shaped trapezoidal lot at 1 Dupont Circle, across New Hampshire Avenue from the Euram Building site. Roche proposed a horseshoe-shaped seven-story building with a sharp-edged cut and narrow opening facing Dupont Circle leading to an enclosed inner court, much like the Euram Building. Roche's building was larger and was all glass, but, like the Euram Building, it featured bands on its side elevations that emphasized horizontality. Roche's design was never

¹¹ Benjamin Forgey, "Special Kind of Office Building," *Star*, Oct 12, 1971, A-14.

¹² Wolf Von Eckardt, "Cityscape: Touch of Greatness," *Post*, Oct. 23, 1971, E1.

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Name of Property County and State built. Instead, a much blander office building, designed by Vlastimil Koubek, was constructed on the site in 1969.¹³

The Euram Building won a biennial award for excellence in architecture from the Washington Board of Trade in November 1971, a significant recognition. It also won an honor award from the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1972. The building also contributed significantly to the Hartman-Cox firm's receiving the first Louis Sullivan Award for Architecture in 1972. The award cited the firm's "distinctive, functional and beautiful buildings in masonry which enhance the visual unity of their neighborhoods."¹⁴

Writing in Architectural Forum in May 1972, Peter Blake—a noted architect, critic, and the magazine's editor-in-chief—was struck with the Euram Building's innovative and creative use of its constrained site, which, as Forgey and Von Eckardt had observed, was so unusual for a contemporary office building. The "eight-story brick, concrete and glass kaleidoscope" was fascinating because it "violates just about every rule-of-thumb that office builders have long considered inviolate," Blake wrote. Like Forgey and Von Eckardt, Blake acknowledged the important role that the Euram Corporation had played in making such an innovative building possible. In particular, Giovanni Zoccoli, the firm's Washington director, was committed to making the building something special. Blake even felt that the building had a "curiously Italian" quality; it was "the kind of solid office palazzo that you might enter, through a portal, from a dignified avenue in Milan or Rome; and, having entered, come upon a paved and sunny courtyard in the center." Instead of windowed offices crowding the corners and Dupont Circle frontage of the building, the corners were structural piers, and most of the Dupont Circle facade was open, except for the upper two floors. Blake felt that the slotted concrete bands alternating between the glass window ribbons on the east and west façades were an "ingenious, almost tongue-in-cheek response" to the requirements of the DC building code, which required at least three feet of fire-resistant construction between glazed openings. All in all, Blake felt that the building succeeded because "the client and his architects cared enough to make their city better."¹⁵

Continued Critical Recognition

In the half century since it was completed, the Euram Building has consistently been positively appraised by architectural critics, just as it was when it was first built. It has continued to draw attention long after less significant structures would have been ignored and forgotten. Five years after it opened, the *AIA Journal* revisited the Euram, declaring that "nearly five years after completion, [it] retains its capacity to startle." Critics Donald Canty and Andrea O. Dean interviewed the architects as well as office workers who had spent time in the building. "The

¹³ Eeva-Lisa Pelkonen, *Kevin Roche: Architecture As Environment*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 162; Vincent Scully, "Thruway and Crystal Palace: The Symbolic Design of Roche and Dinkeloo," *Architectural Forum*, March 1974, 23.

¹⁴ Myra MacPherson, "Awards for Excellence in Architecture," *Post*, Nov. 18, 1971, C1; *Hartman-Cox: Selected and Current Works*, 246; "Hartman-Cox Wins First Sullivan Award, Praised For Preserving Visual Unity," *AIA Journal*, Oct. 1972, 56.

¹⁵ Peter Blake, "Opening In The Wedge," Architectural Forum, May 1972, 32-5.

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Name of Property building was massed in relation to its urban obligations," said architect George Hartman. "Its geometry mirrors the radial design of the circle. It maintains the axes of the circle and reinforces the edge." The central courtyard remained the building's "single most dramatic element." The glassy office spaces surrounding the court, architect Warren Cox explained, were driven by the feeling that "people like to look out. So we wanted to make the spaces as narrow as possible," with views on either side—to the exterior or to the central courtyard. Cox added that "the purpose of all that space is bravado. We need more commodity and delight in architecture."

Workers interviewed by Canty and Dean had varying reactions to the open office space, which had been fully occupied since the building opened. Some enjoyed looking across at offices on the other side of the building, while others drew their blinds to maintain privacy. Notably, all of them seemed to appreciate the fact that they were in an architecturally distinguished building. A partner in a law firm told them, "It's very important to me that the building is esthetically pleasing. It's a joy to come to the office. I appreciate the carefulness of detail." Canty and Dean concluded that it "took a special boldness" on the part of the architects and their client to "get this much bravura" from a relatively small building. The Euram Building clearly retained its architectural excellence.¹⁶

Another article in the *Washington Star* in October 1978 included the Euram Building with several others as exceptional spaces that enhanced office workers' productivity. "It's almost mysterious how the light works—I have a sense of being outside while I'm at my desk," a Euram Corporation secretary said. "It's so airy here that even when lots of people are around, it feels serene and spacious," another observed. "Sometimes I lose my sense of direction in here," another worker stated. "It's really quite pleasant." The architectural allure of the Euram Building clearly continued to impress and beguile those who spent time in it.¹⁷

In 1994, as part of a retrospective assessment of the works of George Hartman and Warren Cox, Benjamin Forgey remarked that the Euram Building "is still today a splendid, if brooding, presence on Dupont Circle's south side." Forgey put the office building in its place within the Hartman-Cox oeuvre as a modernist homage to Louis Kahn and "the whole range of forcefully abstract, geometrical buildings Kahn helped to inspire." Twenty-three years after its construction, Forgey clearly saw the building as an enduring landmark. "It's big and tall and strong and it opens to a surprising, almost surrealistic courtyard—a refreshing contrast to the thin kind of modernism then current [in 1971] here," Forgey declared.¹⁸

The Euram Building consistently has been noted as exemplary in guidebooks on District of Columbia architecture. The American Institute of Architects' *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.*, is widely recognized as an indispensable handbook on local architecture and has gone through six editions since it first appeared in 1965. The Euram Building first appeared in the second edition, published in 1974, which called it "the most original addition to the Dupont Circle area since the end of the first decade of the twentieth century." Similar language

¹⁶ Donald Canty and Andrea O. Dean, "Evaluation: A Small Office Building Asserts Itself, but with Respect," *AIA Journal*, Sep. 1976, 22-4.

¹⁷ David W. Jacobson, "Office Interiors That Work," *Washington Star Home-Life Magazine*, Oct. 15, 1978, 10-13.

¹⁸ Benjamin Forgey, "Rhythm and Blueprints: Three Men Who've Shaped the City," *Post*, Aug. 14, 1994, G1.

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Name of Property appeared in the third (1994) edition. The fourth (2006) and subsequent (2012, 2022) editions, edited by G. Martin Moeller, Jr., further commented that the "principal façades neatly express the essential structural scheme, thanks in large part to the bands of floor-to-ceiling, mullion-less windows, which allow the bridge-like concrete beams to read clearly."¹⁹

The building was also praised in Claudia D. and George W. Kousoulas' *Contemporary Architecture in Washington, D.C.*, published in 1995 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Preservation Press. The Kousoulases reiterated many of the observations previously made about the unusual constraints of the wedge-shaped site, the architects' choice of a Modernist idiom, and the influence of the Italian client. They conclude that "the architects have used common materials—glass and brick—in a subtle yet interesting way to create a unique building."²⁰

In their 2009 survey, *Modernism in the District of Columbia*, Robinson & Associates marveled that "At the time, the Euram Building resembled no other in the District and broke every rule of Washington office building design that had been established over the previous two decades," reiterating the features pointed out by previous critics, including the extraordinary central courtyard that was "carefully designed to flood the interior with light and provide a variety of rentable space that had views of the interior courtyard as well as 19th Street, New Hampshire Avenue, and Dupont Circle."²¹

Perhaps the most prestigious guidebook to D.C. architecture is *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, by Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, a volume in the Society of Architectural Historians' distinguished *Buildings of the United States* series. Scott and Lee cite the Euram Building as among the most notable of Hartman and Cox's achievements, stating that the building "represents an embryonic return to contextualism in its response to the materials and color contrasts of Mihran Mesrobian's Dupont Circle Building of 1931," which stands just to the east of the Euram Building.²²

Architectural Context: Modernism in D.C.

Washington, DC, at first embraced Modernism slowly and cautiously, but, by the late 1960s, it had become the city's accepted architectural style for commercial, governmental, civic, and institutional buildings.

¹⁹ Warren J. Cox, Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Francis D. Lethbridge, and David R. Rosenthal, *A Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.*, 2nd ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), 122; Christopher Weeks, *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.*, 3rd ed., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 167; G. Martin Moeller, Jr., *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.*, 4th ed., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 246; 5th ed., (2012), 204; 6th ed., (2022), 274.

²⁰ Claudia D. Kousoulas and George W. Kousoulas, *Contemporary Architecture in Washington, D.C.*, (New York: The Preservation Press, 1995), 147.

²¹ Robinson & Associates, *DC Modern: A Context for Modernism in the District of Columbia, 1945-1976*, (Washington, DC, 2009), 106.

²² Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 320-1.

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Modernist commercial architecture came to Washington on the eve of World War II with William Lescaze's Longfellow Building at 1741 Rhode Island Avenue NW. The Longfellow Building, completed less than 10 years after Lescaze and George Howe's groundbreaking Philadelphia Savings Fund Society (PSFS) Building in Philadelphia first attracted attention before it existed as more than an architectural rendering. A pillarless skin of white plaster-coated brick covered its concealed network of steel and concrete framing. Bold ribbons of steel casement windows were divided by white bands of masonry on its north and south façades and set behind tiers of balconies on the east.²³ Its architecture evoked comment even during construction. A *Washington Post* columnist noted that "an average of ten passersby a day stop in to ask the superintendent what [the balconies] are for."²⁴ The answer was that they were important functional elements of Lescaze's modernist design. As the June 1941 *Architectural Forum* explained, "the balconies are not horizontal decorations, but sunshades, an architectural solution to the problems posed by summer air conditioning."²⁵ The strongly horizontal, ribbonwindow precedent set by the Longfellow Building would be reflected in the design of the Euram Building, which would rise just a few blocks to the north.

Despite a wave of post-war construction, in December 1949 *Washington Star* real estate columnist Robert J. Lewis observed, "Notably absent among new office buildings is any extremely modern architectural treatment, thus leaving the Longfellow building...in somewhat lonely majesty as just about the only large office building in Washington of strikingly "advanced" design, so far as exterior treatment is concerned.²⁶



Figure 6: The Longfellow Building as it originally appeared in the 1940s. Modernist ribbon windows like these also appear on the Euram Building. (Source: Library of Congress).

²³ "Planned for Connecticut Av Corner," Washington Daily News, May 18, 1940, 14

²⁴ "About the Town with Dudley Harmon," *Washington Post*, Dec 6, 1940: 20.

²⁵ "Longfellow Building, Washington, DC," Architectural Forum, June 1940, 396.

²⁶ Robert J. Lewis. "Big Volume of Office-Building Construction Now Under Way in Washington Area," *Evening Star*, April 16, 1949, B1. Robert J. Lewis. "Million Square Feet of Postwar Office Space Due Here by 1951," *Star*, Dec. 10, 1949, B1.

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Lewis' column needed an asterisk. Two Modernist office buildings under permit, if not construction, at this time were the National-Register-listed Wire Building (1000 Vermont Avenue NW, 1949-50) and the World Center Building (16th and K Streets NW, 1950). With 1001 Connecticut Avenue (1952), these buildings presented a common International Style form, "clad in limestone with either bluntly punched or strikingly horizontal ribbon windows."²⁷ The horizontal ribbon-window precedent set by the Longfellow Building and continued in these other mid-century buildings would continue in the design of the Euram Building.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the District's office buildings both proliferated and redistributed as they continued to evolve in function and style. This was the by-product of such social and economic trends as the great expansion of government functions that began during the New Deal and wartime and continued through the Cold War decades. A related force was the growing scale of collaboration between government agencies and private firms, as well as nonprofit organizations seeking to influence legislation and policy, organizations such as trade and professional associations, unions, lobbying, and public relations firms, consultants, and the government relations arms of corporations with extensive federal contracts, as well as law and financial firms wielding increasing power and importance in a capital city. These trends would shape the former residential area just northwest of the White House, between Farragut Square and Dupont Circle.

As the Robinson Associates' Modernism in Washington notes, the 1950s witnessed:

A pent-up demand for new downtown office space. As a result, builders, searching for available space, began to push development west, and the foundations of a new downtown were established. This new construction would greatly alter the neighborhoods around the White House and Dupont Circle....

As corporations competed for downtown space, the construction of office buildings grew...steadily and was concentrated in the district bounded by Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New Hampshire Avenues, NW. By the early 1960s, the *Washington Post* was reporting an unprecedented office building boom in the approximate half-mile radius enveloping the area around 16th and K Streets.²⁸

Architecturally, the wave of new office buildings pushed beyond the International Style which characterized many early Modernist buildings. Like the Longfellow Building, such structures commonly exhibited what *Modernism in Washington* termed "large, box-shaped forms, the complete absence of ornamentation, smooth wall surfaces, expansive windows, [and] flat roofs, as well as a "skeletal construction of steel or reinforced concrete," and "horizontality and rectilinearity"—characteristics that also apply to the Euram Building.²⁹ As Modernism evolved, its scope expanded to incorporate diverse materials and stylistic attributes. Examples of such Modernist substyles include *Brutalism, Expressionism,* and *Formalism.*

²⁷ Robinson & Associates. *DC Modern: A Context for Modernism in the District of Columbia, 1945-1976*, https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/DC%20Modern%20Historic%20Conte xt%20Study.pdf

²⁸ Robinson & Associates, 38, 60.

²⁹ Ibid, 60.

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Among the new office buildings cited in *Modernism in Washin*gton is B'nai B'rith International Headquarters (1957) at 1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW, just two blocks off the Connecticut Avenue corridor and one block from the Longfellow Building. Designed by Washington architects Corning & Moore, the office building was constructed as the headquarters of an international service organization rather than as rental space.

Unlike more symmetrical earlier buildings, the B'nai B'rith Headquarters presents contrasting forms, planes, and materials. Although a north-south third wing was added in 1974, it was originally configured with an eight-story section running east-west facing 17th Street and a nine-story tower section at its east end that protruded north toward Rhode Island Avenue. A rectangular, single-story roofed section, which faces west, sheltered the front entrance and plaza, as well as pedestrians passing to and from the sidewalk.³⁰

The east-west section's original north façade was a curtain wall whose aluminum grid framed each three-paned light in its floor's window ribbon and separated it from the rows of green spandrels above and below.³¹ Its south façade, which faces the historic Sumner School across an alley, is unadorned brick, punctuated with rows of ribbon windows. The tower section's street-facing façades are windowless and faced in the same patterned white brick as the east-west section's west-facing façade.

Another notable contemporary structure was the Bender Building (1959-60) at 1120 Connecticut Avenue NW. This 12-story building with approximately 255,000 square feet of rentable space was known by the Connecticut Avenue address of the narrower wing containing its main entrance. Its main section ran north and east from the corner of 18th and L streets NW on the opposite side of the square.³² Erected by its owner, the Blake Construction Company, as a speculative venture in rental office space, its early lessees were a cross-section of firms and organizations likely to have business with government agencies. They included industrial corporations such as Gulf Oil and General Telephone & Electronics, international carriers like Air France and United Airlines, the American Bakery and Confectionary Workers International Union, and the American Bar Association, as well as the fashionable Paul Young's Restaurant. Its top floor housed Time, Incorporated's Washington Bureau.³³

The Bender Building was designed by Berla & Abel, pioneering architects of such early Modernist apartment houses as the Governor Shepard (1938), and incorporated variations on more conventional Modernist styles. Its Connecticut Avenue façade included an entrance and exit for a garage with parking for 200 cars as well as several storefronts. ³⁴Above a second-floor window row, a setback rose from the third to the twelfth floor which bore three columns of

³⁰ Zachary Burt. *Historic Property Documentation Final Report: B'nai B'rith Building, Washington, DC* (May 1, 2020) (Unpublished) gives information on the historic configuration of the building.

³¹ Low Country Digital Library, "B'nai B'rith Building, Washington, D.C.",

https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/lcdl:63896; "B'nai B'rith Building Completed," *Post*, Nov. 2, 1957, C5. ³² "Bender Plans \$9 Million Downtown Building," *Post*; Jun 14, 1958; C2.

³³ S. Oliver Goodman "Bender Building to be City's Biggest," Post, Feb 27, 1960; C18.

³⁴ Ibid.

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aluminum-framed, three-window ribbons between which was a row of blue-green tile spandrels. Although its fenestration has a similar pattern, the more expansive 18th and L street façades substituted concrete screens and a garage entrance for storefronts and its upper two levels were set back from the lower floors.



Figure 7: The Bender Building, as seen from 18th and L Streets NW. (J. DeFerrari).

At the end of the 1950s, there was an estimated 10 to 12 million square feet of privately-owned office space to be had in the "new downtown" (west of 16th Street NW), with 1.5 million more square feet projected to be added in 1960 alone. Modernism in its various strains continued to be a style of choice for commercial buildings through the 1960s and early 1970s.

The Forest Industries Building (1961) at 1619 Massachusetts Avenue NW was a modernist Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon design acclaimed as a "new downtown landmark" and recognized with architectural awards within a year of its completion. Above its ground floor, continuous rows of deep-seated windows spanned its L-shaped exterior. Unconventionally for a modernist building, the stone-in-concrete building was accented with highlights that included "unusual redwood window frame trim," as well as redwood strips that concealed the air conditioning unit and formed slatted tubs of shrubs and flowers near its entrance. Its "paneling, ceiling, flooring, cabinetry, and partitioning" totaled more than 100,000 board feet from 19 assorted species of wood.³⁵ The building's cycle of awards included a 1961 Office of the Year Award of Merit from *Administrative Management* magazine, an AIA Potomac Valley Chapter award in 1962, and a Board of Trade architectural award in 1964.

³⁵ John B. Willmann. "19 Woods in Forest Home," Washington Post, Nov 18, 1961; B1

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While the Forest Industries Building was far from the last Modernist office structure to receive design awards, its construction came with widespread acknowledgement that "the unprecedented growth and redevelopment of the west end of Washington's downtown... had resulted in dozens of largely unremarkable buildings constructed as speculative real estate investments."³⁶ The Modernism context study notes that one early salvo was fired by Francis Donald Lethbridge, architect of the Forest Industries Building, who in 1964 told a building industry convention that many recent office buildings were "fat, graceless forms clad in storebought suits."³⁷ Over the next decade Lethbridge's perception crystalized even more sharply, and in 1974 he slammed downtown Washington as

both monotonous and distracting: monotonous, because many of the newer buildings are wrapped, like packages, in an overall pattern of windows and spandrels; distracting, because there seems to be no limit to the number of unsuitable patterns that can be placed in juxtaposition to one another.³⁸

Architectural Context: The Transition from Modernism to Post-Modernism

During the last half of the 1960s, critics and architects felt increasingly constrained by the perceived orthodoxies of Modernism. In Washington and elsewhere, a revolution was brewing, with Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) as its early manifesto. As cultural critic Jurgen Habermas has written, the postwar world had grown disillusioned with Modernism's promise that "the arts and sciences would further not only the control of the forces of nature but also the understanding of self and the world, moral progress, justice in social institutions and even human happiness."³⁹ Venturi argued that Modernist architecture's application of strict rationalist and functionalist principles to the built environment had not advanced these "extravagant expectations."⁴⁰ It had therefore become empty and formulaic, a catechistic exercise whose commandments and prescriptions produced simplistic buildings of monotonous design. He contrasted modernism's sterility with the "complexities and contradictions" of a city's strata of buildings from different eras and argued that architecture should be a "both-and" rather than an "either-or." Besides being designed objects, buildings should create spatial and temporal contexts and be place-makers that respond to neighborhood and public customs.

Architects and theorists who questioned the Modernist dictum that architecture be stripped of ornament and historic reference were creating the style that came to known as "Post-Modernism." Post-Modernism is characterized by its individualism and openness to historical forms, allusions, and symbolism. Its inclusion of such elements could be ironic or wry; historic elements might be directly "quoted" or might appear in outsize or highly abstracted form. As

³⁹ Jurgen Habermas, "The Project of Enlightenment" in Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib, ed.
 Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity. (Boston: MIT Press, 1997). 45.
 ⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁶ Robinson & Associates, *Modernism in Washington* (Brochure), 12.

³⁷ Jean M. White. "Buildings Here Called 'Graceless'" Washington Post; Sep. 19, 1963; D22.

³⁸ Modernism in Washington, op. cit.

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Name of Property County and State Venturi noted, this employment of historic forms and elements as signs and symbols creates a dialogue between architect and viewer:

If the architect uses convention unconventionally, if he organizes familiar things in an unfamiliar way, he is changing their contexts, and he can use even cliché to gain a fresh effect. Familiar things seen in an unfamiliar context become perceptually new as well as old.⁴¹

An important element of Post-Modernism is thus "contextualism," relating projects to their surroundings by incorporating existing buildings, parts of buildings, elements of familiar architecture, or materials common to their environment. The goal is not to blend into the fabric through imitation, but to create a dialogue in which the new design simultaneously evokes and influences perceptions about its surrounding environment. Although it is not necessarily an objective, Contextualism creates the possibility of capturing historic architectural elements through a double-refraction when it references a surrounding environment whose buildings incorporate such elements.

A few notable Post-Modern buildings, including Philadelphia's Robert Venturi-John Rauch Guild House apartment building (1960-63) and Venturi's Vanna Venturi House (1964), were constructed before the publication of Venturi's seminal book. However, it essentially took a decade or more for the Post-Modern movement's theoretical writings to be translated into a wave of significant structures.

The Architects: Hartman-Cox Associates

Although its founders shared a professional background in Modernism, Hartman-Cox Associates became the leading force in establishing contextualism and Post-Modernism in Washington. Warren J. Cox (b. 1935) was born in New York City but moved with his family to Washington, DC, at the age of four. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in Architecture from Yale University, the latter in 1961. While at the Yale Architectural School, Cox edited the architectural review *Perspecta*, received the Henry Adams Prize, and spent two summers working for the BBPR architectural firm in Milan. Cox was strongly influenced by BBPR principal Ernesto Rogers (1909-1969), who had founded the "neo-liberty" movement aimed at injecting Modernist architecture with tradition and local atmosphere. After a year as Technology Editor of *Architectural Forum* magazine, he moved to Washington and became a designer at Keyes, Lethbridge and Condon (KLC), the pre-eminent Modernist architectural firm in the city at that time.

George Hartman (b. 1936) was born at Fort Hancock, New Jersey and earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in Architecture from Princeton University.⁴² After participating in a university archaeological excavation in Italy, in 1960 he joined KLC as a designer and project manager. In 1964, he left KLC to start his own practice, teach, and participate in professional

⁴¹ Robert Venturi, Complexity and Contradiction (1966; reprint, New York, 1977), 43.

⁴² https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/4260/.

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Name of Property activities that included serving as Director of the Washington, DC, Metropolitan AIA Chapter in 1969-1971. In 1965, Cox resigned from KLC to join him in founding Hartman-Cox Architects (HCA).

At HCA's founding in 1965, Post-Modernism had already appeared in Washington in the form of Philip Johnson's Pre-Columbian Museum at Dunbarton Oaks (1963). However, Washington did not fully accept Post-Modernism for nearly a decade. Although Hartman and Cox's architectural training had imbued them with Modernist principles and ideology, both became increasingly sensitized to the legacies of Washington's built environment. They went on to produce works in a range of styles that both celebrated and called into question Modernist principles. However, although the evolution of its work defines the development of Post-Modernism in the city, HCA's signature Post-Modern Classicism did not spring fully formed in its early work. Over its first decade and a half, the firm gravitated towards historical reference, a journey concurrent with the rise of Washington's historic preservation movement.

Warren Cox has summarized the early evolution of Washington Post-Modernism and his firm's journey toward what would be called "Postmodern Classicism":

It is a basic tenant of Modernism that one shall not utilize historic design elements, motifs, or concepts. Each new building shall be free from such references. This has, of course, produced its own very easily recognized design characteristics and principles.

However, after World War II when major new, stylistically modern buildings began to be built in existing urban areas and across historic campuses composed largely, if not entirely, of buildings in traditional, historic architectural styles, it became evident that the stylistic juxtapositions could be discordant and problematic.

Given this situation, a number of architectural firms, including Hartman-Cox Architects, started introducing historic architectural elements back into their work when confronted with the problems of accommodating and enhancing a demanding context.⁴³

While their firm designed several private residences in its early days, it gravitated toward large commercial and institutional buildings that were pleasing to clients and respectful of their historical context, thus "relegitimiz[ing] the use of historical imagery and style, those elements supposedly buried in the dustbins of history."⁴⁴

In 1966, HCA created a master plan for the Mount Vernon College Campus in Northwest Washington, followed by a design for the campus chapel. The chapel is a modernist building which presents early signs of the sensitivity to context that would become an HCA hallmark. Although it is built into the bank of a steep ravine whose slope is traced by its three-and-a-halfstory roof of tiered clerestory window panels, its street side façade projects only a single story

⁴³ Warren Cox, "The Folger Shakespeare Library New Reading Room, Post-Modernism, and 'The Washington School," (unpublished memorandum).

⁴⁴ Richard Guy Wilson, Introduction to *Hartman-Cox: Selected and Current Works*, (Mulgrave, Australia: The Images Publishing Group, 1994), 7.

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Name of Property above the ravine's bank and harmonizes with the surrounding residential neighborhood. The chapel's glass altar wall integrates the light-filled interior with its wooded surroundings. While it is abstract and "Modernist" in style, the forms of its campus-side windows evoke those of the surrounding classical revival buildings, while its interior's boldly defined window grid and soaring trusses express its structure in the manner of cathedral vaults. The chapel was soon followed by other campus projects, including a dormitory and gatehouse.

Hartman-Cox and the Design of the Euram Building

In 1968, Hartman-Cox began work on one of its signature commissions: the Euram Building, the firm's first major commercial success. The Euram Building's boldly angular façade of red brick and concrete with both horizontal and vertical bands of clear glass is indisputably "modern." However, it also established a subtle but definite contextual relationship with neighbors that represent an array of earlier styles.

As *Hartman-Cox: Selected Works* notes, the Euram Building's "massing, scale, colors, and materials" resonate with "the red brick and concrete elevations" of the Art Moderne-accented Dupont Circle Building next door, while its "re-entrant façade and bridge over the entrance come from Stanford White's Washington Club across the Circle."⁴⁵

As architectural historians Pamela Scott and Antoinette Lee have noted of the Dupont Circle Building, "Within the confines of a regular window placement, [architect Mihran] Mesrobian avoided both monotony and anonymity by creating varied spatial fields in five distinct horizontal and ten alternating vertical zones" through skillful manipulation of red brick and white limestone.⁴⁶

The Euram Building's contextual relationship with the Dupont Circle Building depends more on abstract evocations than direct quotations of architectural elements. Architectural critic Benjamin Forgey noted that Hartman and Cox had seemingly "sheath[ed] their structure in red bricks in direct homage to the Dupont Circle Building" though in fact the architects had shifted from concrete to brick for cost reasons and then discovered that "they liked the change, liked the way it blended with its neighbor and reflected a traditional Washington theme."⁴⁷

The two buildings' triangular lots on either side of 19th Street each narrow to a blunted point on Dupont Circle. The Euram Building's form evokes that of the Dupont Circle Building, as both taper from a wide southeast façade to a narrow northwest façade that faces the circle.⁴⁸ However,

⁴⁵ Hartman-Cox: The Master Architect Series, 32.

⁴⁶ https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/DC-01-DU01.

⁴⁷ Benjamin Forgey. "Return of An Old Glory," *Washington Post;* Nov 14, 1987; D1.

⁴⁸ A photograph in the collection of the Library of Congress indicates that, circa 1931-1935, the northwest façade was extended by a protruding single-story addition which tapered to an end facing Dupont Circle. Starting before World War II, the building underwent major alterations, and there is insufficient information to establish whether this extension was still in place when the Euram Building was constructed. For many years, the northwest façade's first floor has terminated in a doorless limestone plane separated from the stories above the second floor by several cornices.

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Name of Property County and State although the Euram Building's footprint suggests its neighbor's, it is not identical. While the Dupont Circle Building's rear façade abuts the straight side of another building, the Euram Building's follows an alley and divides into angled sections at its centerline.

Fenestration is an important element of the building's contextuality. The Dupont Circle Building's windows run the lengths of Connecticut Avenue and 19th Street in long rows, a horizontality that the Euram Building's parallel window ribbons convey through association. The Euram Building's northeast façade also evokes that of the Dupont Circle Building without replicating its elements. Except for a blank section at the seventh story, two parallel columns of single windows climb the Dupont Circle Building's façade from its third to its tenth floor. The inwardly-curing walls of the Euram Building's northwest façade abstractly suggest this verticality, as each bears a column of four single window apertures, which are separated by the opening to the interior courtyard rather than a limestone pilaster.

The Euram Building's northeast façade also references that of the Patterson House across Dupont Circle at the intersection of P Street. Built to the design of Stanford White in 1903, the Patterson House's white marble and limestone façade is set back from the street behind a semicircular carriage drive. Two projecting wings, connected by a loggia on the second floor and a balcony on the third, reach toward the circle. The Patterson House is "re-entrant" because its wings join the front façade at inward angles. The Euram building's northeast façade references these angles with walls that slant inward on either side of the entrance to the interior court. The Euram Building likewise evokes the Patterson House's loggia and balcony with a patterned white concrete bridge above its entrance

Warren Cox has classified both the Mount Vernon College Chapel and the Euram Building as "Midcentury Modern" buildings. However, he notes that, although "our very early buildings of the late 1960s can be generally characterized as diagrammatic, planar, and abstract modern…, looking to the future, … these buildings take cues from their surrounding buildings."⁴⁹ The Mount Vernon College Chapel had made references to a unified collection of classical revival campus buildings. The Euram Building established a relationship with a more complex cityscape of notable buildings in diverse styles.

Subsequent Hartman-Cox Projects

Even after the Euram Building was completed, Modernist steel and glass towers and reinforced concrete buildings, such as 1050 Connecticut Avenue NW (1983), 1400 K St NW (1982), 1 Thomas Circle, National Place (1984), and the re-skinned National Press Building (1985) remained characteristic of much downtown office construction. However, Hartman-Cox's subsequent works would further establish contextualism and related Post-Modernism as the city's dominant style for commercial and institutional structures into the 21st century.

⁴⁹ Warren Cox, "From the Drawing Board," in *Hartman-Cox Architects: Selected and Current Works*, (Mulgrave, Australia: The Images Publishing Group, 2009), 223.

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In 1974, Hartman-Cox continued its exploration of contextualism with the National Permanent Building at 1775 Pennsylvania Avenue NW. This office building expressed its structure through a boldly Modernist exterior grid of white concrete columns and beams offset by recessed dark glass window panels. Cox has provided Franco Albini's Rinacente Department Store as an influence for boldly presented ductwork that diminishes as it ascends.⁵⁰ However, eminent architectural historian Richard Guy Wilson has noted that, in addition to asserting structure, the "inclined roof with diagonal ducts, the concrete columns and perforated trusses with recessed windows are all abstractions" of Alfred B. Mullett's Old Executive Office Building one block away.⁵¹ This marriage of Modernism and historical reference carried a doubly delicious irony in that Mullett's building had once been vilified for the allegedly frothy excess of its "forest of columns," which Hartman-Cox evoked without employing classical orders.

While detractors sniffed that the firm strayed from true Modernism and had no distinctive visual style to call its own, Hartman and Cox increasingly were convinced that their historically sensitive designs were the right answer for many Washington, DC, projects. A turning point came with the Folger Shakespeare Library project, which began in 1976 and called specifically for a contemporary, contextually sensitive addition to the landmark building. As Warren Cox has noted, the Folger addition is Post-Modern because it incorporates both classical motifs and Modernist elements:

While the new Bond Reading Room addition at the Folger Shakespeare Library obviously falls into the more subdued Washington mode of Post-Modernism, it is clearly representative of Post-Modern Classicism, but with certain other overtones. The classical references are obvious but given its simple geometries, unadorned surfaces, slot windows and exposed exoskeleton, it has a certain number of "Modern" references. It can therefore be considered an attempt to amalgamate Neo- Classicism and Modernism, as well.⁵²

After the Folger, Hartman-Cox's work celebrated and called into question Modernist principles, while "relegitimiz[ing] the use of historical imagery and style – those elements supposedly buried in the dustbins of history"⁵³ Historic contextualism in new designs is evident in such major commissions as 1001 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (1986); the Georgetown University Law Center Library at 600 New Jersey Avenue NW (1989); Market Square at 8th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW (1990); the One Franklin Square office building at 1301 K Street NW (1990); 800 North Capitol Street NW (1991); 1501 M Street NW (1991); 1021 K Street NW (1992); and Lincoln Square at 555 11th Street NW (2001). More explicitly preservation-focused projects include the Apex Building at 7th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW (1986); the Summer School Complex at 17th and M Streets NW (1986); the addition to the Kennedy-Warren Apartments on Connecticut Avenue NW (2004), major enhancements to the National Archives (2004), the National Museum of American Art and National Portrait Gallery (2006), the Concert Hall at the Kennedy Center (2002), and the Old Patent Office Building (2006).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Wilson, "Introduction," 12.

⁵² Cox, Folger Shakespeare Library New Reading Room memorandum, op. cit.

⁵³ Wilson, "Introduction," 7.

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Warren Cox has cited One Franklin Square (1990), Penn Plaza (1990), and 800 North Capitol Street (1991) as particular examples of what he calls Post-Modern Historicism. *Hartman-Cox: The Master Architect Series* describes One Franklin Square as a monumentally scaled building that integrates over a million square feet of space into the downtown Washington core. It avoids dominating Franklin Square, the L'Enfant Plan park it faces, through organized set-back bays and protruding towers that evoke the massing of Jules Henri de Sibour's nearby Hamilton Hotel (1922). Its entrance bay suggests the façade of the neighboring Almas Temple, a "Moorish Revival" fantasy dating to 1926.⁵⁴

Sumner Square (1983-86) similarly integrates a pair of red brick Victorian era school buildings with a seemingly incompatible glass-walled eleven story tower. The design achieves coherence with neither conflict nor homogenization by treating the project as a composition in a landscape.

Hartman-Cox's works have been seen as the core of a unique movement dedicated to historic contextualism. Indeed, it was in a 1994 profile of Hartman-Cox that Benjamin Forgey coined the name "Washington School" for this quieter, more responsive and interactive style of architecture. He enumerated the Washington School's "basic tenets" as:

- The best buildings contribute to an overall sense of place; good architecture and good urban design are interdependent.
- A new building's design—its form, scale, materials, rhythms—should be largely determined by its site and surroundings.
- Consequently, an architect should be willing to use traditional historical styles and motifs in the design of new buildings.⁵⁵

Warren Cox has further defined Washington School buildings as "restrained, referential to their surroundings and are, often, as much urban design as individual works of architecture."⁵⁶

Today, as HCA's early major buildings begin to pass the 50-year mark, many, including the Euram Building, remain intact. The cardinal exception is the National Permanent Building, which lost historic integrity through a 2013 roofline alteration and partial reskinning. HCA has won over 100 awards for architectural excellence, including the Louis Sullivan Prize for work in Masonry, six AIA National Honor Awards, and the AIA Architectural Firm Award in 1988. Architectural historian Pamela Scott has summarized that Hartman and Cox's contribution as "a wide range of consistently excellent buildings to Washington and its suburban areas. Their numerous innovative office and mixed-use buildings have broken stereotyped molds while respecting and enhancing the historical context of their neighborhoods and of the city as a whole."⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Hartman-Cox: The Master Architect Series, 184-187.

⁵⁵ Benjamin Forgey. "Rhythm and Blueprints," Washington Post, Aug 14, 1994; G1.

⁵⁶ Cox, Folger Shakespeare Library New Reading Room memorandum, op. cit.

⁵⁷ Scott and Lee, 57.

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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

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Washington, DC Name of Property County and State _____ previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark _____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # **Primary location of additional data:** State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository: Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property <u>0.17 acres</u>

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Datum if other than WGS84: (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places) 1. Latitude: 38.908907	 Longitude: -77.043755
2. Latitude:	Longitude:
3. Latitude:	Longitude:
4. Latitude:	Longitude:

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Or **UTM References** Datum (indicated on USGS map): NAD 1983 NAD 1927 or 1. Zone: Easting: Northing: 2. Zone: Easting: Northing: 3. Zone: Easting: Northing: 4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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

The Euram Building's boundaries correspond with Lot 82 within Square 115. The office building is situated on a wedge-shaped lot between 19th Street NW and New Hampshire Avenue NW facing Dupont Circle from the southwest.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries, corresponding with Lot 82 within Square 115, neatly encompass the Euram Building at 21 Dupont Circle.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: <u>D. Peter Sefton and John DeFerrari (DCPL Trustees)</u>, Zachary Burt (DCPL Staff) organization: <u>DC Preservation League</u> street & number: <u>1328 Florida Avenue NW, 2nd Floor</u> city or town: <u>Washington state</u>: <u>DC</u> zip code: <u>20009</u> e-mail: <u>info@dcpreservation.org</u> telephone: <u>(202) 783-5144</u>_____ date: <u>January 24, 2025</u>_____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Washington, DC County and State

Washington, DC County and State

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

Photographs

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

Photo Log

	DESCRIPTION	FACING	PHOTOGRAPHER	DATE
1	Historic photos of the façade of the Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) in daylight	S	Unknown	Undated
2	and at night Fast elevation	W	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
3	Façade (north elevation) and east elevation, seen from Dupont Circle	SW	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
4	Façade (north elevation) and west elevation, seen from Dupont Circle	SE	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
5	Detail of façade (north elevation)	S	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
6	West Elevation	Е	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
7	East elevation and partial view of south elevation facing alley	NW	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
8	Detail of ground level, west elevation	SE	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
9	Historic photo of upper levels of interior courtyard, facing south	S	Unknown	Undated
10	Central courtyard as seen from the main entrance facing south	S	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
11	View of cylindrical elevator towers and upper floors from the interior courtyard, facing south	S	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
12	Alternate view of cylindrical elevator towers and upper floors from the interior courtyard, facing south	S	J. DeFerrari	07/2024
13	Partial view of south elevation facing west	W	D.P. Sefton	07/2024

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle)			Washington, DC		
Name of Property				County and State	
14	Partial view of south elevation from alley, facing north	Ν	J. DeFerrari	07/2024	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

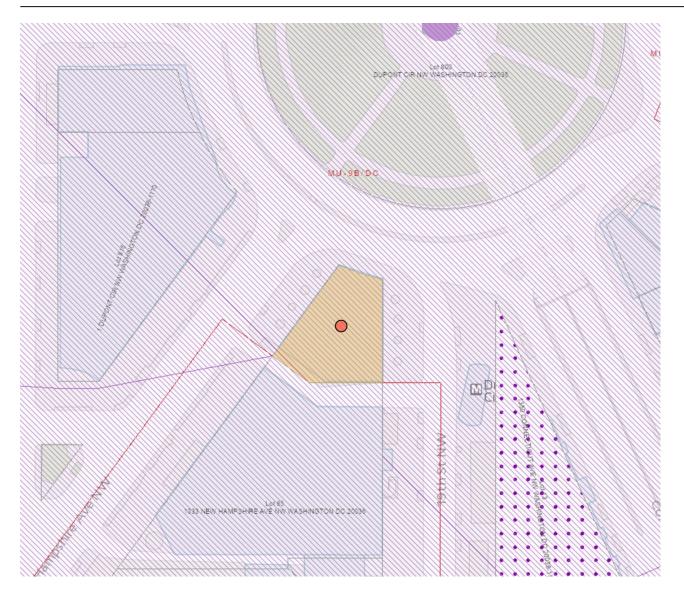
Tier 1 - 60-100 hours Tier 2 - 120 hours Tier 3 - 230 hours Tier 4 - 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle)
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Washington, DC
County and State

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Map 1: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) boundaries (DC PropertyQuest).

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number <u>Maps</u> Page 2

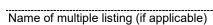


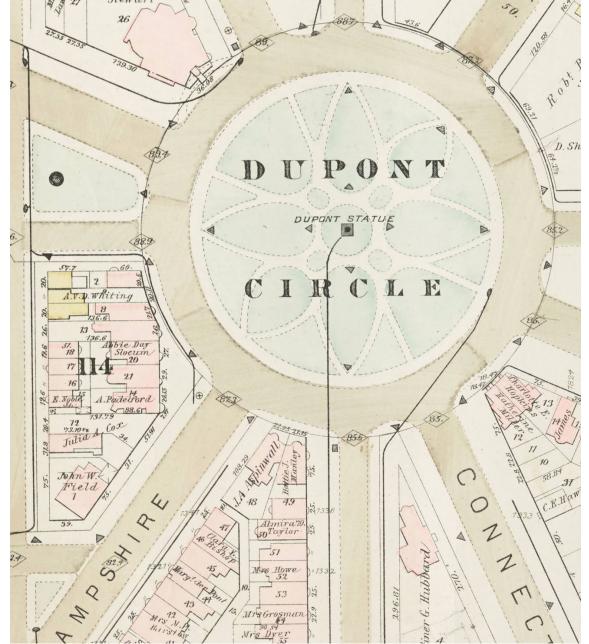
Map 2: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) overhead view (Google Maps).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle)
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Washington, DC
County and State

Section number <u>Maps</u> Page <u>3</u>





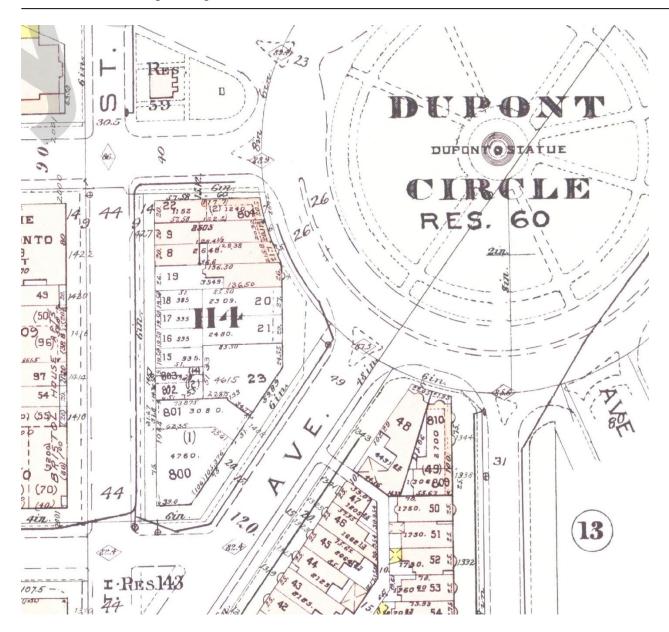
Map 3: Excerpt from Griffith M. Hopkins, *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Washington, District of Columbia*, (1887), Plate 4, showing the Aspinwall and Manley houses on the lots now occupied by the Euram Building. (Library of Congress).

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Map 4: Excerpt from G.W. Baist, *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Washington, District of Columbia*, 1965, Vol. I, Plan 6, showing the Aspinwall and Manley houses still extant, both having been extended to fill their lots. (DC Office of the Surveyor).

Section number <u>Maps</u> Page <u>4</u>

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Photo 1: Historic photos of the façade of the Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) in daylight and at night (Source: Hartman-Cox Architects).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Photo 2: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), east elevation (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Section number <u>Photos</u> Page <u>3</u>

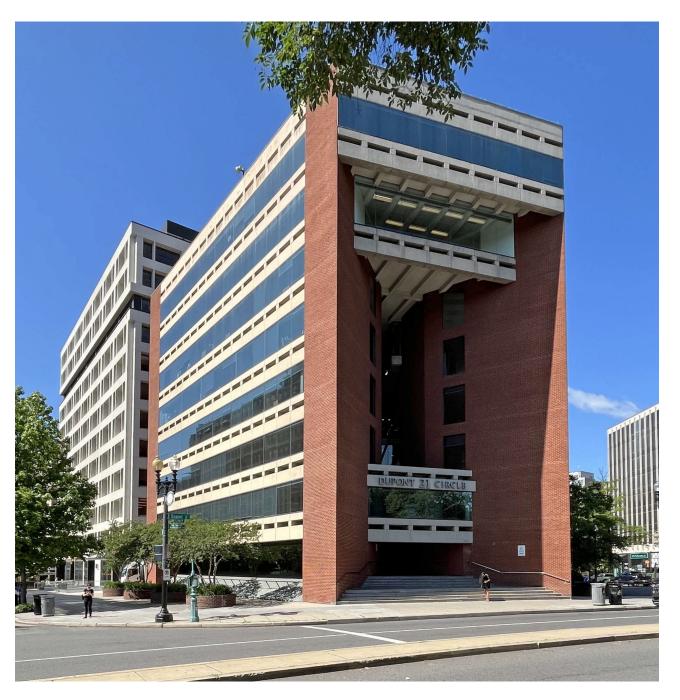


Photo 3: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), façade (north elevation) and east elevation, seen from Dupont Circle (J. DeFerrari).

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Photo 4: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), façade (north elevation) and west elevation, seen from Dupont Circle (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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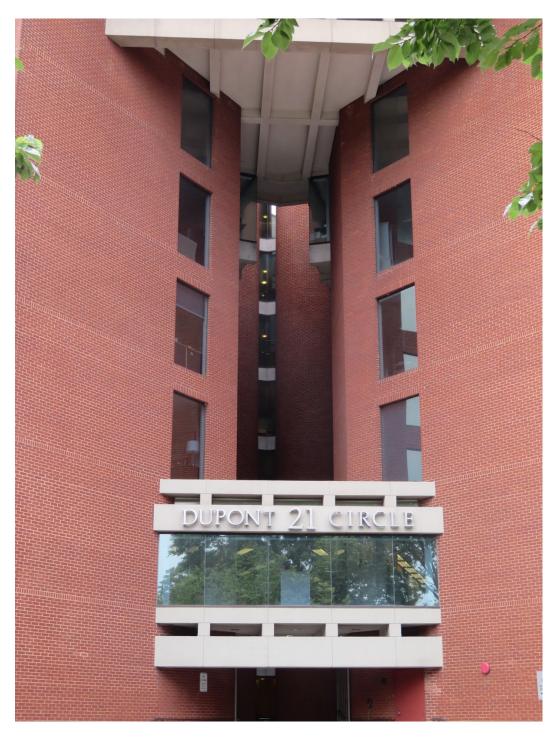


Photo 5: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), detail of façade (north elevation) (J. DeFerrari).

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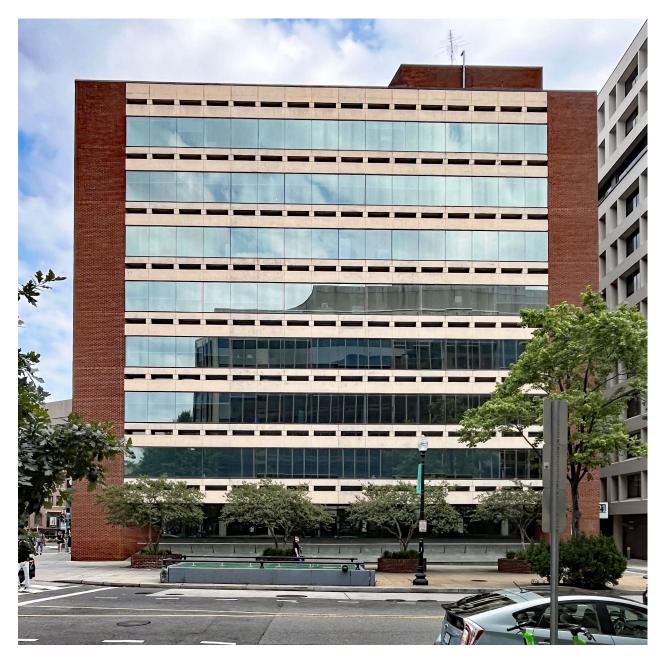


Photo 6: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), west elevation (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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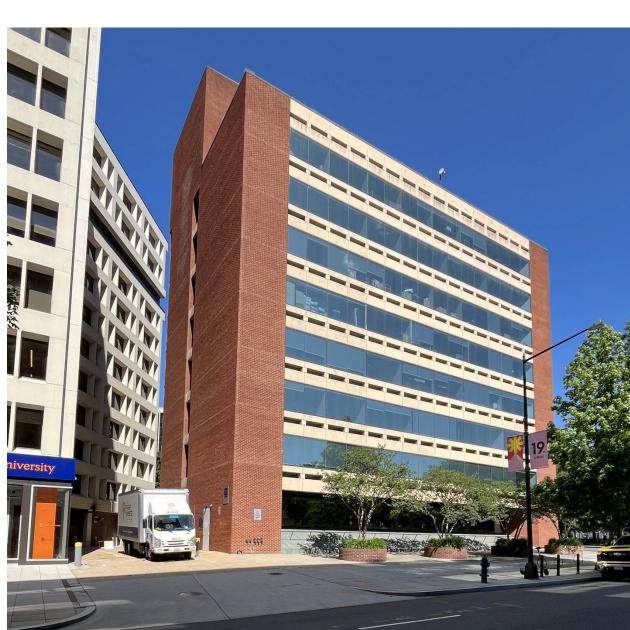


Photo 7: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), east elevation and partial view of south elevation facing alley (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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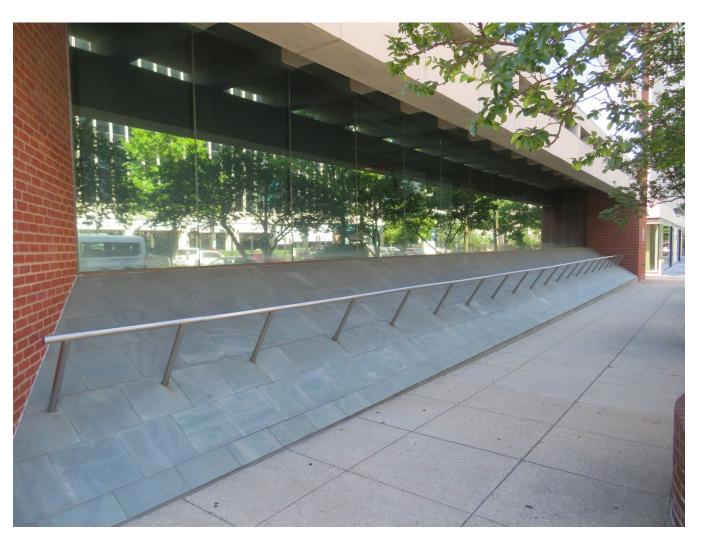


Photo 8: Detail of ground level, west elevation (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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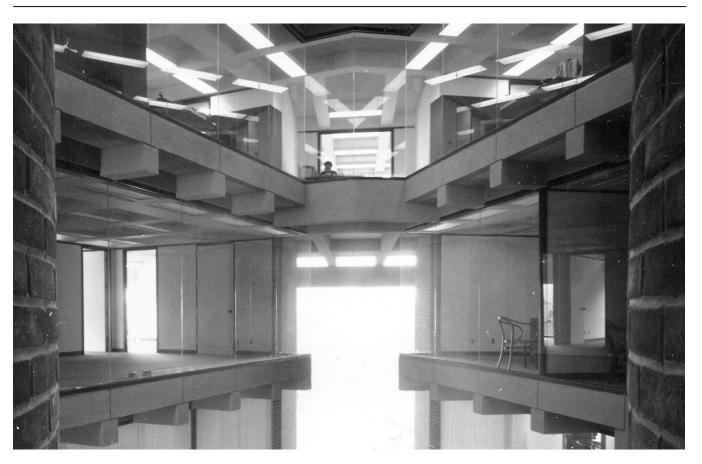


Photo 9: Historic photo of upper levels of interior courtyard, facing south (Hartman-Cox Architects).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Section number Photos Page 10

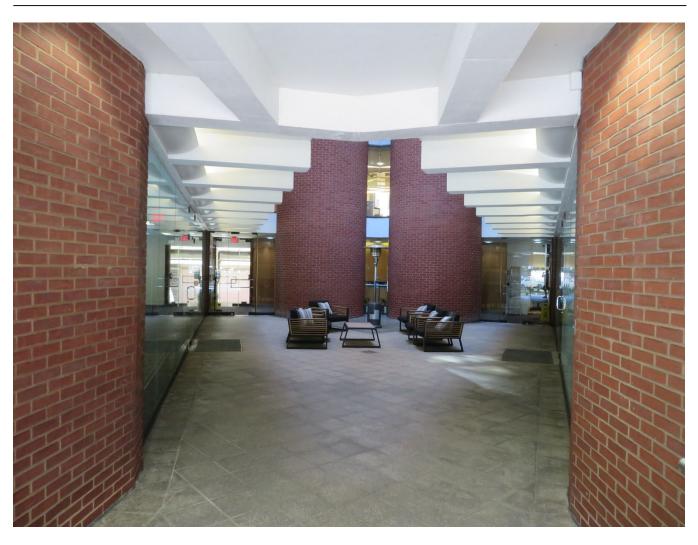


Photo 10: Central courtyard as seen from the main entrance facing south (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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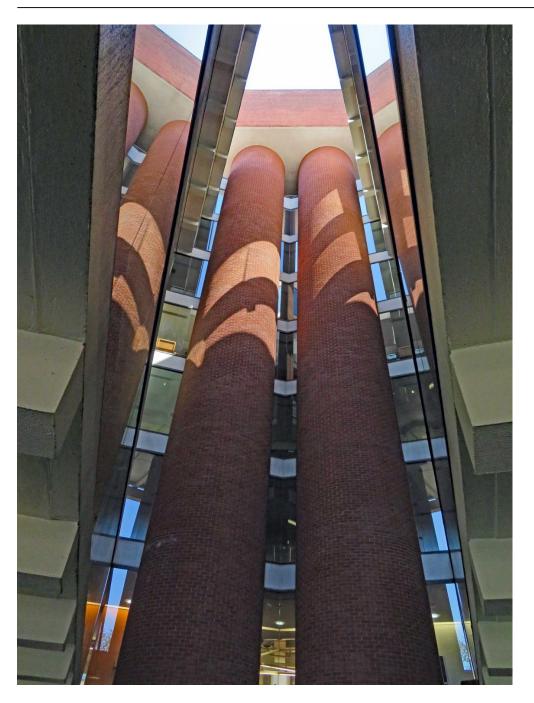


Photo 11: View of cylindrical elevator towers and upper floors from the interior courtyard, facing south. (J. DeFerrari).

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Photo 12: Alternate view of cylindrical elevator towers and upper floors from the interior courtyard, facing south. (J. DeFerrari).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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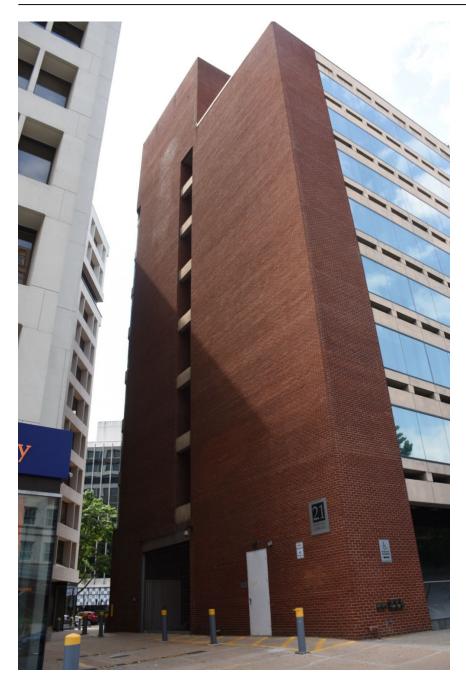


Photo 13: Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle), partial view of south elevation facing west (D.P. Sefton).

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Euram Building (21 Dupont Circle) Name of Property Washington, DC County and State

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Photo 14: Partial view of south elevation from alley, facing north (J. DeFerrari).