

FILE NO. 90-774

ORDINANCE NO. 20877

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DESIGNATING THE SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE AS A LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING CODE

Be it Ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut Street, a portion of Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 49 has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes of Article 10 of the City Planning Code and the standards set forth therein.

(a) Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the San Francisco Art Institute is hereby designated as a Landmark, this designation having been duly approved by Resolution No. 7569 of the City Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 90-77-4.

(b) Required Data. This designation is applicable only to that portion of Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 49 which is occupied by the portion of the San Francisco Art Institute which was built in 1926. The descriptions of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation; and of the particular features that should be preserved; as included in the said Resolution, are hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

RECOMMENDED

THOMAS M. O'CONNOR
CITY ATTORNEY

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

By Robert A. Kenealey
Deputy City Attorney

By Rai Y. Okamoto *MS*
Rai Y. Okamoto
Director of Planning

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LM # 25

Passed for Second Reading
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

MAY 23 1977

Ayes: Supervisors Barbagelata, Feinstein, Francois, Gonzales, ~~Kopp~~, Mendelsohn, Molinari, Nelder, Pelosi, Tamaras, von Beroldingen.

~~Noes: Supervisors~~

Absent: Supervisors ~~KOPP~~

 Clerk

90-77-4
File No.

JUN 9 1977
Approved

Read Second Time and Finally Passed
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

MAY 31 1977

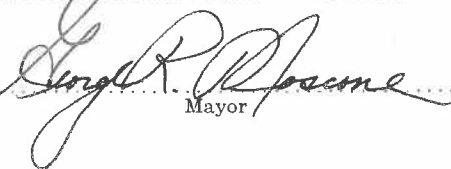
Ayes: Supervisors ~~Barbagelata~~, Feinstein, Francois, Gonzales, Kopp, ~~Mendelsohn~~, Molinari, Nelder, Pelosi, Tamaras, von Beroldingen.

~~Noes: Supervisors~~

Absent: Supervisors ~~BARBAGELATA~~ MENDELSON

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was finally passed by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

 Clerk

 Mayor

SAN FRANCISCO

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 7569

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the 1926 structure designed by Bakewell & Brown for the San Francisco Art Institute at 800 Chestnut Street as a Landmark pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of the City Planning Code was initiated by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on January 8, 1976, and said Advisory Board, after due consideration has recommended approval of this proposal; and

WHEREAS, The City Planning Commission, after due notice given, held public hearings on February 5, and October 7, 1976, to consider the proposed designation and the report of said Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, The Commission believes that the proposed Landmark has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value; and that the proposed designation would be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes and standards of the said Article 10;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, the proposal to designate the aforementioned structure of the San Francisco Art Institute at 800 Chestnut Street as a Landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the City Planning Code is hereby APPROVED, the precise location and boundaries of the Landmark site being those of the 1926 structure designed by Bakewell and Brown fronting on Chestnut Street, said structure being situated on Lot 1, in Assessor's Block 49;

Second, That the special character and special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of the said Landmark justifying its designation are set forth in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution No. 137 as adopted on January 8, 1976, which Resolution is incorporated herein and made a part thereof as though fully set forth;

Third, That the said Landmark should be preserved generally in all of its particular exterior features as existing on the date hereof and as described and depicted in the photographs, case report and other material on file in the Department of City Planning Docket LM76.1;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the proposal for designation, with a copy of this Resolution, to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Planning Commission at its regular meeting of October 7, 1976.

Robert H. Feldman

Robert H. Feldman
Acting Secretary

AYES: Bierman, Dearman, Pinn, Lau, Miller, Starbuck.

NOES: None

ABSENT: Rosenblatt

PASSED: October 7, 1976

OWNER: The Regents of the University of California

LOCATION: 800 Chestnut Street, northeast corner of Jones; the parcel is square with frontages of 275 feet on Chestnut, Jones and Francisco, Being Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 49.

HISTORY: Designed by the architectural firm of Bakewell and Brown, this building was erected for the San Francisco Art Association to house the California School of Fine Arts (now known as the San Francisco Art Institute). It was built in 1926, and dedicated January 15, 1927.

The San Francisco Art Association was organized in March of 1871 for the "promotion of Painting, Sculpture and Fine Arts akin thereto, the diffusion of a cultivated taste for art in the community at large, and the establishment of an Academy or School of Design."

The membership was drawn both from artist and lay groups. The first Board of Directors consisted of Juan B. Wandesforde, Samuel Marsden Brookes, Frederick Whympier, Edward Bosqui, William L. Marple, Benjamin P. Avery, Gideon J. Denny and Noah Brooks. Others that served on the Board during the early years of the Art Association were William Alvord, Andrew S. Halladie, Pietro Mezzara, Darius Odgen Mills, Thomas Hill, Joseph Charles Duncan (the father of Isadora), William C. Ralston, William Hahn, Julian Rix, Norton Bush, Jules Tavernier, Charles F. Crocker, William Keith and James D. Phelan.

During the first year of its existence, the Art Association met in the Museum Room of the Mercantile Library. Later it occupied quarters at 313 Pine Street and in 1876, moved to 430 Pine Street, sharing space with the Bohemian Club. Meanwhile the Art Association opened the California School of Design in 1874, making it the oldest art school west of the Mississippi and the fourth oldest in the nation.

Amelia Ransome Neville remembered the rooms "over the California Market, of all places, where art was pervaded with the aroma of fish and the sound of the butcher's cleaver was heard. Mingled with my memories of Private Views that opened Spring Exhibitions in the old rooms are scents of the Market."

Virgil Williams was hired as the school's first Director. He had previously been in charge of the gallery in Woodward's Gardens. When Williams died in 1886, Thomas Hill took charge of the school until a new Director could be found. In 1887, Emil Carlsen came out from New York to take the position, which he held until 1889. Raymond Yelland ran the school for a year, then Arthur Mathews was placed in charge. It was while teaching at the school that Mathews met Lucia Kleinmans, a student, who later became his wife. Mathews was Director until 1906.

HISTORY:
(Continued)

Other students during the school's early years were Fanny Osborne (later, Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson) and her daughter Isobel. The novelist Frank Norris, Matilda Lotz (who also studied in Paris with Rosa Bonheur), Christian Jorgensen, Ernest Peixotto and Theodore Wores attended the school during this period. When Oscar Wilde visited San Francisco in 1882, Wores painted his portrait.

The San Francisco Art Association was incorporated in 1889. After the death of Mark Hopkins in 1878, his widow married Edward F. Searles from Methuen, Massachusetts and moved east leaving empty the mansion at the top of Nob Hill. When the former Mrs. Hopkins died, Mr. Searles gave the mansion for the use of the Art Association, to be known as the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art. This transfer was made in February of 1893, by deed to the Regents of the University of California, "for the exclusive uses and purposes of instruction and illustration of Fine Arts, Music and Literature, or any of them, including the maintenance of galleries and reading rooms, and other suitable means of such instruction and illustration." In March of this same year, the move was made to the mansion.

The Canadian painter, Emily Carr, who was a student at this time, describes the move in her autobiography Growing Pains. Also attending at that time were painters James Swinnerton, Joseph Raphael, Xavier Martinez and sculptor Earl Cummings.

From 1895 to about 1897, a class in drawing for apprentice architects who were working in local architectural offices was conducted with Bernard Maybeck in charge. It seems likely that Willis Polk was one of the students of this class since he was the chairman of a committee of apprentices that petitioned for the class.

The fire of 1906 destroyed the mansion, gallery and the school rooms together with nearly all their contents: pictures, statuary, library, and school equipment.

In spite of the lack of funds, the Art Association managed to erect a building on the foundation of the ruined mansion and classes resumed in 1907, while much of the city still lay in ruins. Loring P. Rixford was the architect for this simple, frame building which was intended as a temporary structure. In 1910, Rixford designed a gallery addition built of steel and concrete to house the Emanuel Walter Collection of art work that was left to the Art Association.

With the opening of the School in 1907, Capt. Robert Howe Fletcher was appointed the director of the San Francisco Institute of Art, as it was then called, and Theodore Wores was hired as dean of the faculty, which position he held until 1913.

HISTORY:
(Continued)

Among the board members were John I. Walter, John Galen Howard and Charles Templeton Crocker. Some of the instructors during this time were Eugen Neuhaus, Earl Cummings, Pedro Lemos, Frank Van Sloun and Agatha Van Erp. It is said that Maurice Logan was the first student to enroll in the school after the fire.

The school's exhibition in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915 was awarded a gold and a silver medal for its excellence. Members of the faculty, ex-faculty and ex-students were well represented in the Exposition's art exhibit, many of them winning awards.

Faculty and students alone contributed some thirty works: thirteen murals and seventeen sculptures. Included were the murals of Antonio Sotomayer, Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli, Squire Knowles, Armin Hansen, Helen Forbes, Maynard Dixon, While Jacque Schnier, Michael Von Meyer, Clara Huntington, Adeline Kent, Frederick Olmsted, Helen Phillips and Haig Patigian exhibited sculptures.

After the Exposition, the Art Association maintained the Palace of Fine Arts building as a museum, opening May 1, 1916. J. Nilsen Laurvik, director of the museum, felt that "almost from its inception the Museum in the Palace of Fine Arts has taken its place as one of the most active cultural influences that San Francisco has ever had. It has become in a very real sense the center of the cultural activities of our city, a rallying-place for all the arts, a sort of forum where the exponents of the Seven Arts may meet and have their say on a basis of their common interest in Art...." The upkeep on the building forced the Art Association to abandon the structure in 1924. In 1925, the Forty-eighth Annual Exhibition of the Art Association was held in the newly opened California Palace of the Legion of Honor.

In 1920, the Art Association obtained the permission of Edward Searles to sell the property on Nob Hill. After several offers, it was finally agreed to accept \$350,000 for the lot. This sale was consummated in 1923. A search was then begun for a new site for the Art Association and the Chestnut Street property was purchased in 1924, for \$50,000, along with the gore at Francisco, Jones and Columbus, which was later sold. During this time, classes were held at 15 California Street in the Glenwood Building.

The firm of Bakewell and Brown was chosen to design the new building. Arthur Brown, Jr. was a member of the Board of Directors of the Art Association from at least 1919 through 1950, during which time he served as first vice-president in 1919, 1922 and 1927, and president of the Board in 1920-21, 1928-29 and 1937-39. The following resolution was adopted by the Board, March 14, 1935. "Resolved unanimously by the President and Board of Directors of the San Francisco Art Association that Arthur Brown, Jr. is eminently entitled to our gratitude and praise for his invaluable services in preparing for permanent exhibitions the galleries of the San Francisco Museum of Art.

HISTORY:
(Continued)

"They desire also, at this time, to express their high sense of appreciation for his inestimable contributions to the development and beauty of our City and to wish him long life and health to continue to shed lustre on the profession of architecture and to enjoy the honorable rewards of his genius, industry, and artistry."

It is possible that Willis Polk would have been the architect rather than Brown. On January 15, 1923, Polk submitted "a suggested scheme to provide a new and adequate building for the Art School. The Plan provides for the disposal of the present property and purchasing of the Tobin Lot on the southeast corner of California and Taylor Streets. To erect thereon a new fire-proof construction building meeting the present needs of the School with provision made for future growth. In connection therewith to build an apartment house containing ten apartments deluxe, the income from which, in excess of interest, sinking funds and other expenses will leave a fund of \$18,500 yearly which can be devoted to School purposes." The scheme contains a plot plan and a financial statement. Whatever possibilities the scheme held were terminated when the Tobin property was sold, and the following year, Willis Polk died.

The new building was erected in 1926 at a cost of about \$250,000, and formal dedication was held January 15, 1927.

James D. Phelan left a bequest of \$100,000 to the Art Association for the establishment of a museum at the California School of Fine Arts. However, this additional wing on the new building was not added, instead the money was used as a scholarship fund, following the dictates of the will. He also left his estate in Saratoga, Montalvo Villa, in trust to the Art Association. Phelan was a member of the Art Association from 1884 until his death in 1930. In 1885, at the age of 24, he was elected to the Board.

Conceived by the Art Association as a unit of the cultural group in the Civic Center, the San Francisco Museum of Art was opened in 1935, as a continuation of the Association's operation of the galleries in the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art and in the Palace of Fine Arts Museum. In later years, the Museum became an independent organization but retains a relationship of friendly cooperation.

In the 1920s, the revival of interest in mural painting quickly spread across the nation. As early as 1918, the California School of Fine Arts' catalogue stated: "Mural painting is fast coming to the front as the leading mode of expression of the painter's art and practice work in this important subject will be given advanced students." Instruction was offered until World War II, covering such techniques as fresco, lime-casein; egg, glue tempera; and wax emulsion.

Ray Boynton, who is said to have introduced mosaic in the 1920s "in a manner which met contemporary aesthetic criteria," (Jean Goodwin, "California Mosaics," Art for the Millions, edited by

