

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

November 13, 2024

Honorable Sarah Carroll
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, Ninth Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Request for Evaluation for the Whitney Museum of American Art,
945 Madison Avenue as an Interior Landmark

Dear Chair Carroll,

The Landmarks Conservancy supports the Request for Evaluation by DOCOMOMO for designation of the Whitney Museum building as an interior landmark. While the Commission does have some regulation of this iconic building within the Upper East Side Historic District, the extraordinary interior is not protected. Expanded guidance from the Landmarks Commission would be beneficial as new owners prepare to make alterations for a new use at the building.

Marcel Breuer's 1966 Whitney Museum building is well-known as a masterpiece of the Modern style for its striking inverted ziggurat massing and monolithic stone façade, all stark departures from the neighboring brownstones and brick apartment houses.

The interior is also astonishing. It is an elegant composition of natural materials and minimal forms that is itself a work of art. And it has been a fine background for collections of painting and sculpture as diverse as those held by the Whitney, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Frick, which span centuries of artistic movements.

A restoration that focused on the interior received the Conservancy's Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award in 2017. At the time, we noted how the project celebrated Breuer's design intentions by preserving the authentic patina of aging natural materials and removing previous, unsuccessful interventions. Signature attributes such as concrete walls, bluestone floors, bronze fixtures, wood handrails, and the lighting array at the entry level were all restored.

Designation of the interior would ensure that these elements continue to align with Breuer's intent as the Whitney building evolves towards a new use.

Sincerely,



Peg Breen
President