



“The Mosse Humanities Building: An Unfortunate History & Future”

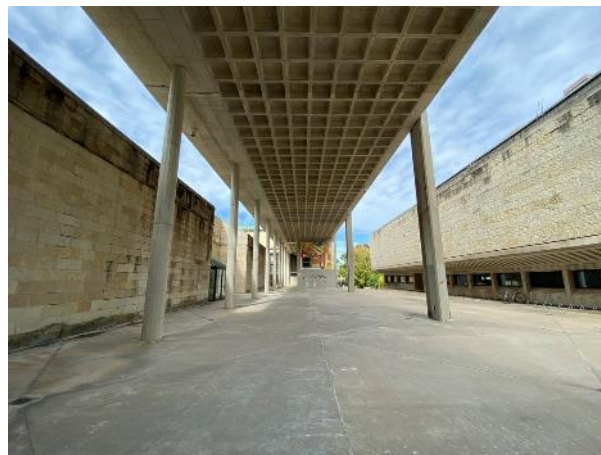
Badger Talks LIVE – April 20, 2021

UW-Madison Facilities Planning & Management
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Quick Overview

- History of the Mosse Humanities Building
- The Architecture of Harry Weese
- Brutalist Architecture of the 1960s
- Current condition of Mosse Humanities: The Good, The Bad & the Ugly
- The Future of the Mosse Humanities Building
- Who was George L. Mosse?



History of the Mosse Humanities Building

- Late 1950s - History, Art & Music needed new space on campus
 - History was in Bascom Hall
 - Art was in the Education Building and in a Quonset hut to the north
 - Music was in a cramped Music Hall
- Design competition in 1962 for “Lower Campus”, east of N. Park Streety
- Designed by Harry Weese & Associates, Chicago, IL in 1963-1965; designer of the Washington, DC subway system and other mid-century modern buildings
- Defined one large, mega-structure building for all 3 units
- Initial 1963 design was estimated at \$15M, but considered too high and reduced \$10M after being deferred at least once in the state capital budget process
- Building scope continued to grow and grow in detailed design
- Final plans approved by the Regents in August 1965, but with concerns about a tight labor market & conflicts with other buildings continued budget issues
- Project bids received in March 1965, with all bad news...
 - Bids came in +\$2M over budget
 - “Value engineering” ensued to cut costs
 - All design team and details were removed including carpeting in offices and plastering of bare concrete walls
 - Interior courtyard landscaping was totally removed
 - Construction worker strikes and material shortages were seen, delaying the project
- Construction finally started on a stripped-down version in 1966 and was finished in late 1969
- In January 1969, the Regents called it a “*stark, graceless and unadorned building*” observing the progress of the building complex.
- Dedicated in November 1969, nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, as a part of the Bascom Hill district.

Photo: UW-Madison Archives: S14925

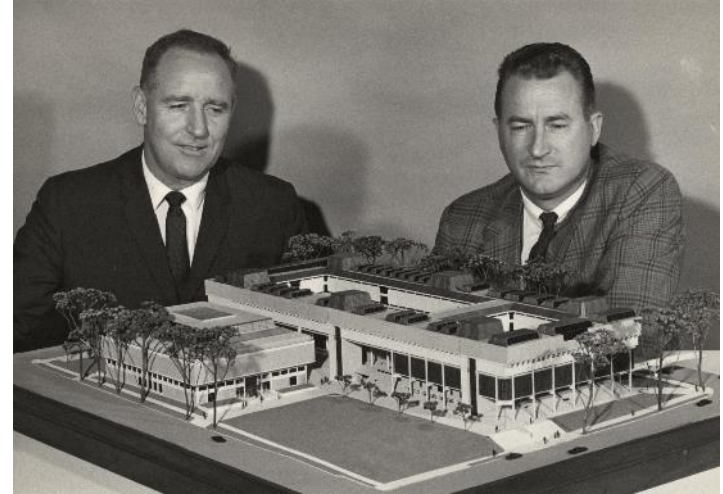


Photo: UW-Madison Archives: S09757



The Architecture of Harry Weese & “Brutalist” Architecture

- Harry Weese was a well-known American architect (1915-1998) from Chicago
- Worked at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and then started his own firm in 1947 w/classmate Benjamin Baldwin
- Famous for his rail stations systems design and projects in Washington, DC, Miami, Los Angeles, Dallas & Buffalo
- The Washington, DC Metro system won an AIA award in 2007 as the only brutalist-style design among the 150 “America’s Favorite Architecture”
- Weese’s firm advocated for historic preservation projects in Chicago including restoration of the Adler & Sullivan Auditorium, Daniel Burnham’s Field Museum of Natural History, and Orchestra Hall
- Brutalist Architecture emerged in the 1950s as a reaction against the “nostalgia” being created in the 1940s post-war architecture, and early post-modernism
- Characterized by bare building materials, and exposed structural elements over decorative design
- Exposed concrete, brick & stone, monochrome color palette with a focus on steel and glass
- Popular in 1960s for university projects, declining quickly in the 1970s
- Derived from the French “*béton brut*” or raw concrete



Metropolitan Correctional Ctr
Chicago, IL



Harry Weese

Photo credit: Weese Family

Photo credit: LIFE Magazine



Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist, 1968
Chicago, IL



Washington, DC Metro Station, 1967

Other “Brutalist” Architecture of the Time Period



Le Corbusier's “Unite d'Habitation”, 1940s (left) and “La Cite Radieuse”, 1952 (right), Marseille, France



Carpenter Center for Visual Arts, Harvard University, 1963
Designed by: Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, aka “Le Corbusier”



Northwestern University Library, by Walter Netsch, SOM, Chicago, 1966

Le Corbusier 5 Points of Architecture (from *Vers une architecture*, 1923)

1. Pilotis (columns)
2. Ribbon Windows (horizontal glazing)
3. Roof Gardens
4. Free Ground Plan
5. Free Façade (asymmetry)

Other “Brutalist” Architecture of the Time Period: Mosse In Context



Kane Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, 1969



Rudolph Hall, Yale University by Paul Rudolph, 1963



University of Massachusetts – Dartmouth, 1963-1970 Designed by: Paul Rudolph

Other “Brutalist” Architecture of the Time Period: Mosse In Context



Geisel Library, University of California-San Diego, 1970
William Pereira Associates, Chicago, IL



Boston City Hall, Boston, MA
Designed by Kallmann, McKinnell Knowles (Boston, MA), 1968



Community College of Rhode Island, “Unistructure Design” Knight Campus
Perkins & Will, 1968, Chicago, IL



Habitat 67, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Designed by Moshe Safdi, 1967

Current Conditions at the Mosse Humanities Building



Current Conditions at the Mosse Humanities Building

The “good” ...

- A “building within a building”, an art-piece unto itself
- Designed to be a modern interpretation of the Wisconsin Historical Society Museum
- A sort-of neo-classic take on modernism
- Large public open spaces, neo-classical in style
- “Brutalist architecture” or “post-brutalism”?
- Designed at the same time with the privately gift-funded, yet complimenting Elvehjem Arts Center could give us hints as to what Humanities could have been like with full funding



Photo: UW-Madison Archives: S03076



Photo: UW-Madison Archives: 1971: S02498



2020, Google Maps View



Photo credit: Foursquare: Lucas. G.

A modern-day concert in the courtyard at Mosse



Photo: UW-Madison Archives, S02624

August 1964, Architectural Model

Current Conditions at the Mosse Humanities Building

The “bad”...

- 2016 INSPEC engineering report = \$22M exterior repairs to meet envelope code requirements
 - Uninsulated metal panels & structural concrete members
 - Uninsulated concrete floor panels
 - Single-pane exterior glass windows
 - Broken radiant heating system, embedded in concrete
 - Doors & egress hardware is degraded & deteriorated
 - Poor deck drainage leads to leaking roofs & interiors
 - Roofing, flashing and decks need replacement
 - Exterior handrails and railings do not meet ADA or code
 - Elevators need replacement, 45 years old
 - Restrooms are not code compliant or ADA accessible throughout the building
- Poor acoustics from day 1; had to be retrofitted soon after it opened
- Lack of human scale and human comfort
- Quality of spaces with little daylight
- Confusing layout as a “building within a building”
- Hard to adapt or reuse to meet modern pedagogy due to the rigid design
- Significant energy-use; designed before Energy Crisis
- Lack of transparency/openness
- Program segregation, per original design makes it very hard to reprogram & reuse



2013 Ceiling Collapse over outdoor deck



Crowded lecture halls w/o adequate room for technology



Crowded, low ceiling, dark classrooms

Photo credit: Foursquare: Chase H.

Photo credit: Foursquare: Jill Q.

Current Conditions at the Mosse Humanities Building

The “ugly” ...



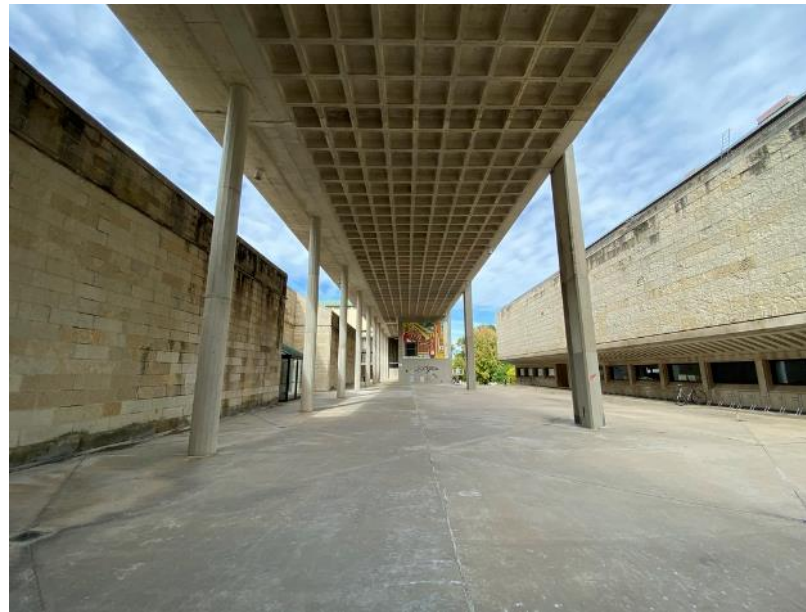
Photo credit: UW Madison Communications



Photo: UW-Madison Archives: Diana Wilmar, 1978; S11590



Photo: UW-Madison Archives: S115981



The Future of the Mosse Humanities Building & Site

Enabling Projects for Mosse Removal in 2029

- 1) 2021-23 L&S Academic Building (key priority)
- 2) 2023-25 Frances Street Parking Facility (at Lot 91, east of the Kohl Center)
- 3) 2023-25 Studio Labs Addition to Art Lofts
- 4) 2023-25 Move Extension Offices and removal of 432 N. Lake Street
- 5) 2025-27 Music Academic Addition to Hamel Music Center
- 6) 2027-29 Removal of Mosse Humanities Building



Photo credit: Hope Karnopp, The Daily Cardinal

UW System Interim President Tommy Thompson and UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank toured the Mosse Humanities Building, which they said is not suited to student learning. (April 12, 2021)

L&S Academic Building Advance Plan



Image credit: Flad Architects

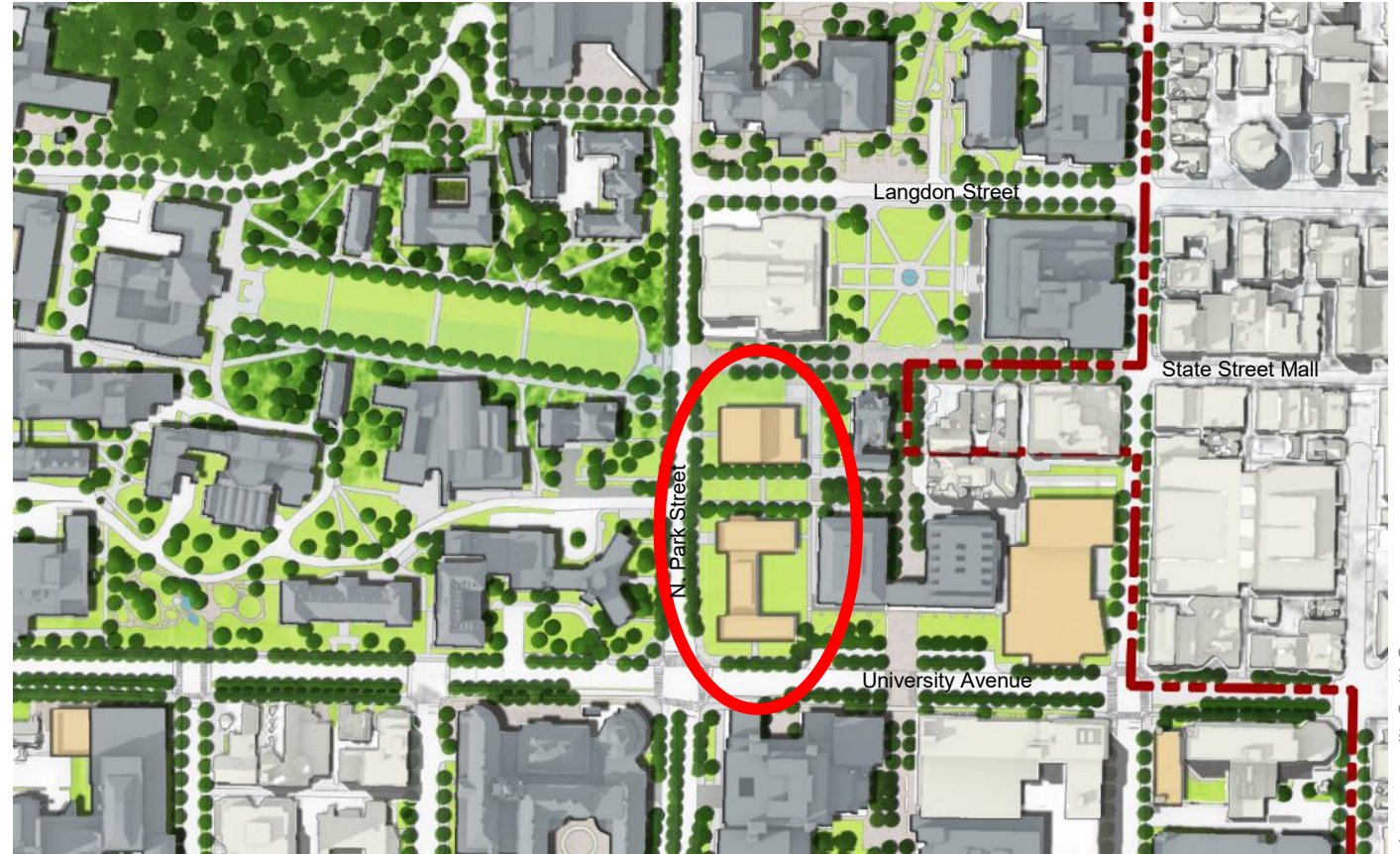
Enabling Projects Schedule - DRAFT



The Future of the Mosse Humanities Building & Site

2015 Campus Master Plan

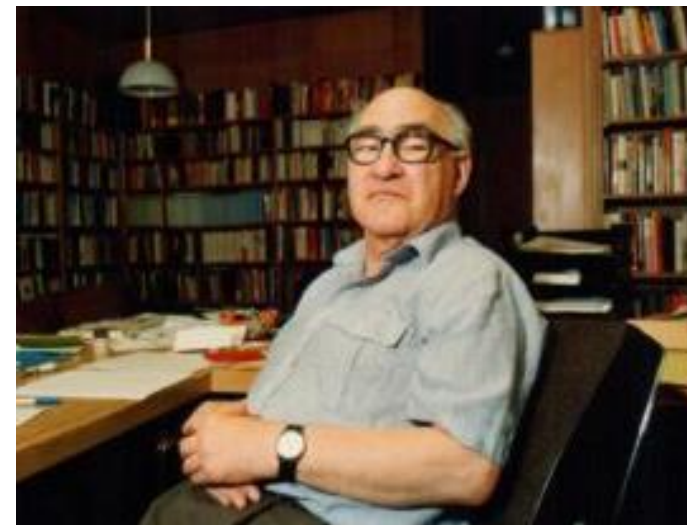
- Recommends two separate academic or research buildings with underground parking under the complex for up to 450 spaces to serve the east campus & Bascom Hill areas
- Extended greenspace, pedestrian corridor connecting to Lathrop Drive to the west and Chazen, Hamel to east
- May be a site for a Public-Private Partnership (P3) project
- Future site use and schedule to be determined



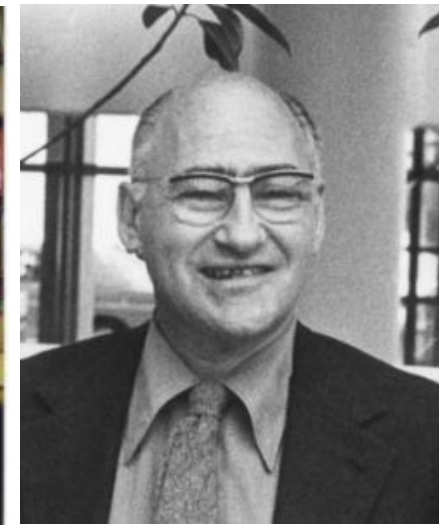
2015 UW-Madison Campus Master Plan

Who was George Mosse?

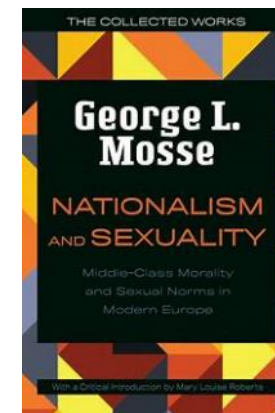
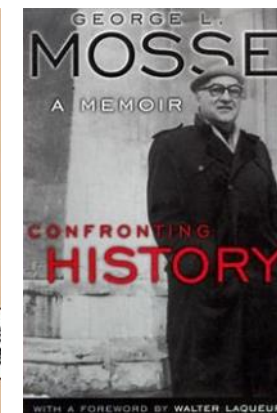
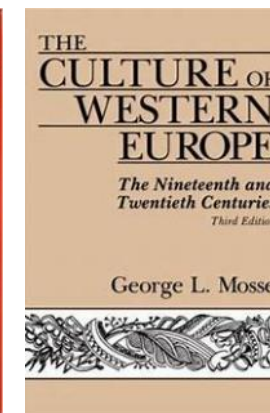
- Born in 1918 in Berlin, Germany
- Jewish emigre from Nazi Germany in 1939 to USA, via Switzerland, England and
- Professor of History at the University of Iowa, University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Attended Cambridge University, England
- Bachelor's degree, Haverford College, 1941
- PhD, Harvard University, 1946
- Moved to UW-Madison in 1955, lecturing on modern history, and became a well-loved, legendary professor where he taught for +30 yrs.
- 1st scholar in residence at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC
- George L. Mosse Program in History, UW-Madison and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem
- George L. Mosse Humanities Building, named in 2000
- Best known as an authority of Nazi Germany, he wrote several books on western culture, Germans & the Jews, Nazi culture, German politics, Fascism and eventually writings on modern male masculinity as a gay man.
- Mosse died on January 31, 1999 at the age of 80 in Madison, WI.



1993



1980



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News Herald

Even George L. Mosse didn't like the Humanities Building

Mosse was known to be one of the leading historians of the 20th century

by GERALD PORTER • Oct 14, 2015

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