

**83 DAFOE ROAD – JOHN A. RUSSELL BUILDING (ARCHITECTURE)
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA**

Smith, Carter, Katelnikoff (1959)



The University of Manitoba, founded in February 1877 as Western Canada's first university, but only to confer degrees. Actual teaching at the university did not begin until 1900, on a site on Broadway. This downtown campus expanded in the early decades of the 20th century, offering courses in, among others, Science, Arts, English and History. Expansion continued and in 1924, the University of Manitoba amalgamated with the Manitoba Agricultural College to create a new University of Manitoba, to be located at the Fort Garry Campus of the former Agricultural College. Slowly, the University abandoned the Broadway campus and by the 1950s it was all in Fort Garry.

In 1959, the School of Architecture moved to create its own modern facility, located west of the Administration Building and the other original and 1930s-era structures and named after its Dean, John A. Russell. Given the stature of the School, it was not surprising that the new building should be an excellent example of modern architecture – the International Style – and that one of the city's renowned newly formed architectural firms, Smith, Carter, Katelnikoff,

should be given the commission for its design. The low massing and verticality of the four identical façades are all elements of the style.

The two-storey structure with flat roof utilizes a steel frame and extruded aluminum, precast concrete and glass cladding. This cladding was replaced in 2005 although the exterior appearance has not changed significantly. The two longer façades, north and south, feature open entrance platforms accessed by wide sets of stairs.

On the interior the two entrances are connected by a wide hall with lecture room to the east and an interior courtyard, administrative offices and library to the west. The basement includes workshop space and the second floor features student studios and meeting areas. Wide terrazzo-clad stairs give access to all floors.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- The two-storey building with a concrete and steel structural system, rectangular in form with an open interior courtyard, its exterior walls cantilevered over its foundation and clad in a repetitive curtain wall glazing system with concrete spandrels on all exterior walls and with a flat roof, located on the north side of Dafoe Road with its main façades facing south onto Dafoe Road and north into an open area and other campus buildings, its west façade facing a parking lot and other campus buildings and its east façade facing other campus buildings; and
- The north and south façades with an expressed structural system of projecting concrete piers, their central entrances accessed from concrete and steel stairs with raised platform landings, the north landing with a sculpture and integrated sign.

Interior-

- Volume of space and original finishes of main floor open foyer, library, and auditorium (“Centre Space”)
- The arrangement of the main floor office wing;
- The arrangement of open studios on the second floor;
- Volume of space and original finishes of the second floor student lounge; and
- Volume of space and original finishes of the central staircase from the basement to the second floor.