

CASTELLANI ART MUSEUM  
NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

Lewiston, New York

**Owner / Client:** Niagara University**Area:** 23,000 square feet**Cost:** \$ 3.5 million

The gray Italian Marble clad museum, built in 1990, has been described as a kind of austere Greek temple, which pays homage to classical, historical design and proportion, but it does so in an understated, contemporary fashion. The twelve unadorned white marble columns highlight the main entry portico, which also serves as an outdoor sculpture display area. While the exterior of the building is designed to classically express its function as a home to world class artworks, the interior is intended to serve as a backdrop for their display.

The interior design features:

- a 2,100 sq. ft. interior, skylit sculpture court with a gleaming granite floor and a 20 foot high glass wall separating it from the main gallery.
- a 4,200 sq. ft. main gallery capable of displaying large paintings and artworks up to 20 ft. high.
- nine visitor oriented display areas surrounding the main gallery.
- art classroom space.
- custom designed art hanging system integrated into the wall design.
- neutral black and white color scheme to highlight displayed artwork.
- storage area with slide out rack system capable of storing a large number of paintings in a relatively small area.

The use of traditional exterior marble cladding in northern climates has historically experienced difficulties in maintaining stability under the stresses of freeze-thaw-moisture cycles. The Castellani Art Museum incorporates an innovative technique of integrating marble veneer with a stress relieving honeycomb core that allows the use of this classic material in severe climates without the adverse effects traditionally experienced.



*“Everybody loves the beautiful Castellani Art Museum... [it] is regarded as one of the gems of the Niagara University campus.”*

*Rev. Vincent J. O'Malley, C.M.  
Senior Assistant to the  
President, Niagara University*

