

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
JUNE 27, 2016
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
NRD-2016-0035
1315 W. 9TH STREET
WEST LINE

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1950 house and garage apartment of unknown age.

ARCHITECTURE

The main house is a one-story, L-plan, cross-gabled frame house with a stone wainscot; large picture window in the projecting front gable; single and paired 2:2 windows otherwise. The garage apartment is a two-story, rectangular-plan, side-gabled frame building with three garage bays; single 6:6 fenestration.

RESEARCH

The house was built in 1950 by Walter S. Benson, Jr., who lived here with his wife, Frances, until around 1957. Walter S. Benson, Jr. was the assistant manager of his father's schoolbook publishing company, W.S. Benson & Company. The house was rented out to a salesman for Binswanger Glass Company in the late 1950s, and then around 1960, it was either owned or rented by Kelly Fearing, a very prominent artist and art professor at the University of Texas, who was recognized as a pioneer in the field of modernist art. Kelly Fearing lived here until around 1975. The house and the garage apartment have been rental properties since that time.

Kelly Fearing moved from this house to a house he built in West Lake Hills, which is still owned and occupied by his family members.

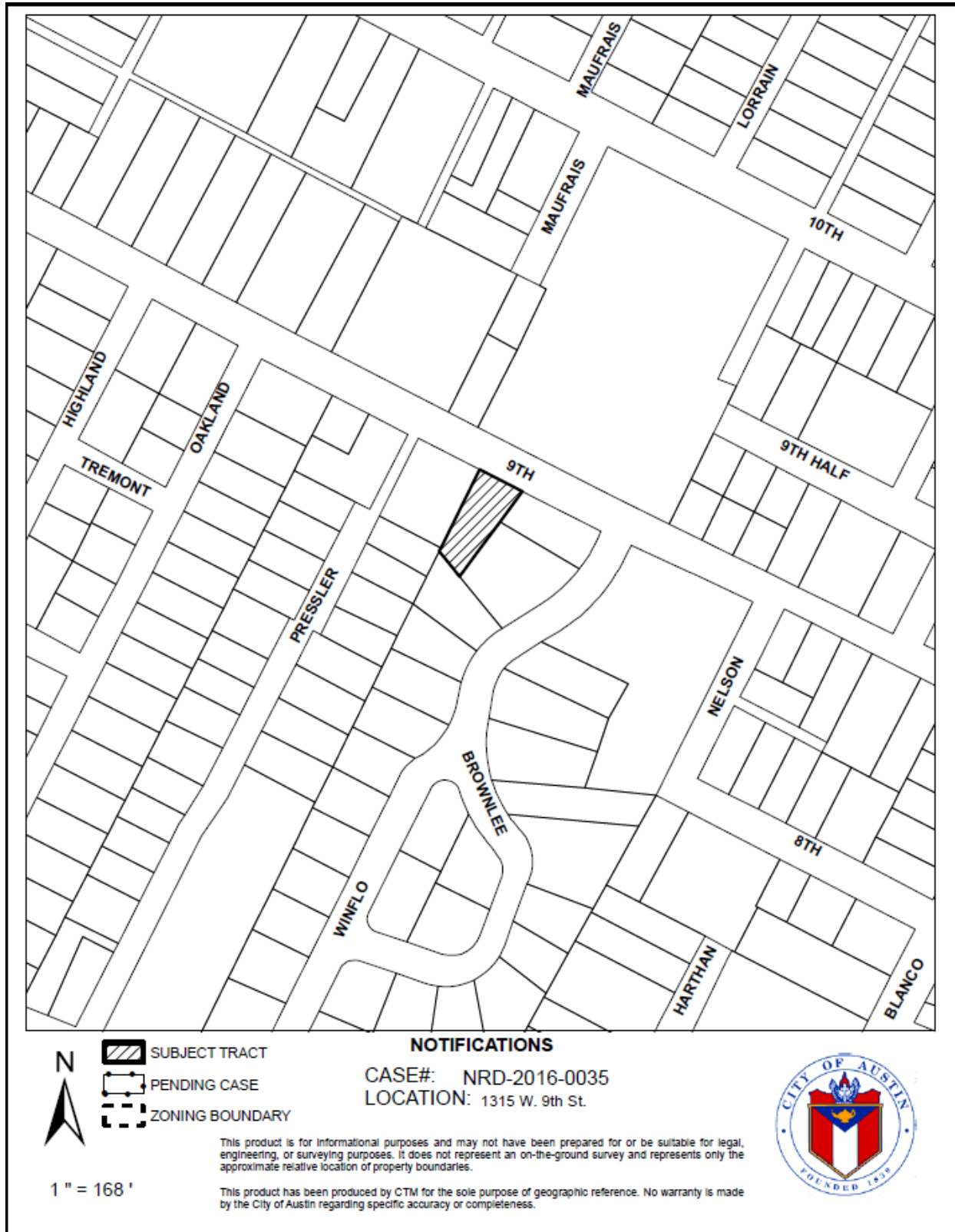
STAFF COMMENTS

Both the house and garage apartment are contributing structures to the West Line National Register Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the permits upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center, and upon the Commission's review of the new plans for this site. Staff recognized this house as the home of Kelly Fearing for 15 years, but Fearing built his later home in West Lake Hills, and it was while living at the West Lake Hills house that he did the majority of the work that led to his prominence and reputation in the art world. Fearing lived in West Lake Hills from 1975 until his death in 2011, and it seems that he was more comfortable in the hills west of Austin – before he moved into this house, he had lived in a house on Mount Bonnell Road.

LOCATION MAP



1315 W. 9th Street
ca. 1950



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 1315 W. 9th Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
May, 2016

1992	Marna M. Bennett, renter Vocational counselor B: Ron Polito, renter No occupation listed
1985-86	Sandra Yarne, renter Coordinator, Austin Community School (not listed in the alphabetical section of the directory) B: Marian E. Morse, renter Administrative assistant, University of Texas
1981	Sandra Weinstock, renter Student B: Marian E. Morse, renter Administrative secretary, University of Texas
1977	Sandra Weinstock, renter No occupation listed ½: Howard and Pat Paveglio, renters

Editorial artist, Austin American-Statesman

- 1973 Kelly Fearing, renter
Professor, University of Texas
½: Vacant
- 1968 Kelly Fearing, renter
Professor, University of Texas
½: Vacant
- 1962 Kelly Fearing, owner
Professor, University of Texas
½: Vacant
- 1959 Charles H. and Bernice C. Ferguson, renters
Salesman, Binswanger Glass Company, 116 Barton Springs Road.
½: Don G. and Patricia A. Jordan, renters
Draftsman, Acme Brick Company, 910 Lamar Boulevard
NOTE: Kelly Fearing is listed at 1301 Bentwood Road; he was an associate professor at the University of Texas.
NOTE: Walter S. and Frances Benson, Jr. are listed at 1618 Northumberland Road; he was the manager of W.S. Benson & Company, publishers, 109 E. 5th Street.
- 1955 Walter S. and Frances Benson, Jr., owners
Assistant manager, W.S. Benson & Company, publishers, 109 E. 5th Street.
½: Thelma Shepard, renter
Teacher, State School for the Blind
- 1952 Walter S. and Frances Benson, Jr., owners
Salesman, W.S. Benson Company, schoolbook publishers, 109 E. 5th Street.
½: Alice J. Hodel, renter
Secretary, Congress Avenue Baptist Church, 1511 S. Congress Avenue.
- 1949 The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: Walter S. and Frances Benson are listed at 1309 W. 9th Street; he was the assistant manager at W.S. Benson Company, schoolbook publishers, 109 E. 5th Street.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:**Walter S. and Frances Benson (ca. 1950 – ca. 1957)**

Walter S. Benson, Jr. appears in the 1940 U.S. Census as the 22-year old son of Walter S. and Florence Benson, who owned their home at 1304 West Lynn Street in Austin. Walter S. Benson, Jr. had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed. His father was an educational publisher.

Kelly Fearing (ca. 1960 – ca. 1975)**Kelly Fearing**

Kelly Fearing, a maverick of Texas modernist art who taught generations of artists during his four decades at the [University of Texas](#), died Sunday, the 13th of March, of congestive heart failure at his home in West Lake Hills at the age of 92. He was born in Fordyce, Arkansas to George David Fearing and Frankie Kelly Fearing on the 18th of October, 1918. After graduation high

school, he studied art at Louisiana Tech University, then later at Columbia University, from which he received his master's degree. From 1945-1947, he taught at Texas Wesleyan College. In 1947 he started his long term career at the University of Texas in the Department of Art and Art History, where he retired as professor emeritus in 1987. After his retirement, he continued to work as a professional artist. Fearing's work from his Fort Worth years is abstract, surrealistic and filled with allegory - all characteristics that would remain in his work over the decades. Dickson Reeder, a Fort Worth artist who worked for the same contractor, introduced Fearing to area artists and they became the center of the swirl of avant garde printers and painters. This group -- who introduced modernist ideas to Texas art -- later became known as the Fort Worth Circle, in which Kelly is one of the last artist of this group. More than 80 of his prints and drawings are in the Blanton Museum of Art's permanent collection. He was an inspiration to students, fellow professors, and fellow artists. He is survived by his nephew, Charles Smith of Dallas, Smith's wife, Gaylon, and their three children. The family would also like to thank the caregivers, Deborah, Sherry, Wiesye and Millisa for their loving care and dedicated support. Those who would like to honor Kelly Fearing can make contributions to the Kelly Fearing Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Art. For more information about making a gift, please contact Andrea Keene at (512) 471.9270 or email her at akeene@austin.utexas.edu. Contributions may be mailed to: The University of Texas at Austin, College of Fine Arts, Attn: Kelly Fearing Endowed Presidential Scholarship, 1 University Station D1400, Austin, Texas 78712-0340. A memorial celebration is planned for Saturday, the 23rd of April 2011 from five o'clock in the evening until seven o'clock in the evening at the Laguna Gloria Art Museum, 3809 West 35th Street, Austin.

Obituary of Kelly Fearing
Austin [American-Statesman](#), March 20, 2011

Prominent Artist and Art Educator Kelly Fearing Dies at 92 **March 15, 2011 – UT News**

Artist, art educator and University of Texas at Austin Professor Emeritus Kelly Fearing died on March 13 at his home in Austin, at the age of 92 due to congestive heart failure.

Fearing was a professor emeritus in university's [Department of Art and Art History](#). He taught at the university from 1947-87, and was presented the [College of Fine Arts'](#) E. William Doty Award in 2007, the college's highest honor recognizing him as an individual of distinction in his field who has demonstrated extraordinary interest in the college.

"Kelly Fearing was the quintessential Renaissance man," said College of Fine Arts Associate Dean Ken Hale. "He was an artist, an author and an educator. His talent was extraordinary. He worked in almost all traditional mediums and excelled in oil painting and collage. Fearing was very well educated in all of the arts and enthusiastically passed that knowledge on to literally thousands of students. The University of Texas and the state of Texas have benefited greatly from the creativity and generosity of Kelly Fearing. His passing is a loss for us all."

Born in Fordyce, Ark., Fearing was raised in Louisiana, studied art at Louisiana Tech University, earned a master's degree from Columbia University and went to Fort Worth during World War II to serve his country in a defense job. While being trained in graphic drafting for a company that was making bombers for the U.S. military, Fearing was introduced to other aspiring artists in the Fort Worth area. This group of avant-guard printmakers and artists became known as the Fort Worth Circle, and Fearing was one of its core members. Collectively, they were instrumental in introducing modernist ideas to Texas art.

After teaching at Texas Wesleyan College from 1945-47, he came to The University of Texas at Austin as the Ashbel Smith Professor in Art in 1947. He retired from the university in 1987 and continued to work as a professional artist. His art has been referred to as magical realist, mystical naturalist and Romantic surrealist.

As a pioneer in art education in America, Fearing founded The University of Texas Junior Art Project, the first visual arts outreach program of its kind in Texas. The program offered children

of all ages and from all economic backgrounds free, university-based instruction and exposure to the arts.

A memorial celebration of Kelly Fearing's life and art will be on Saturday, April 23, from 5-7 p.m. at the Laguna Gloria Art Museum, 3809 West 35th Street, Austin.

Kelly Fearing In memoriam



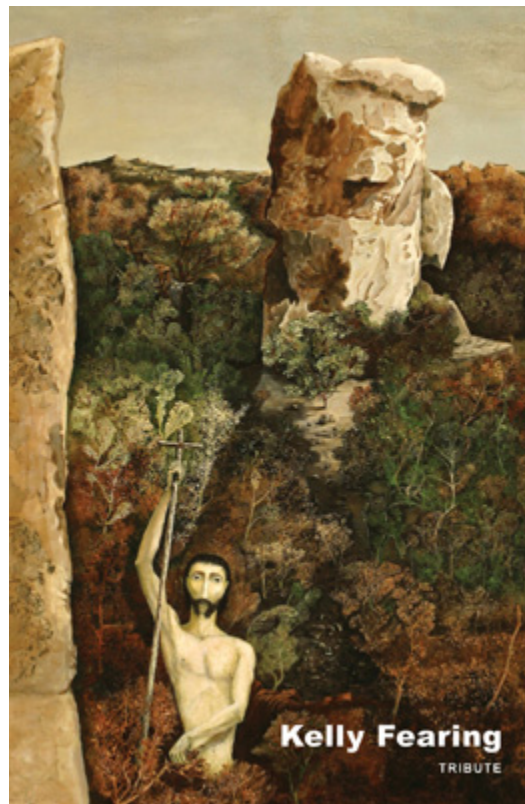
PHOTO BY SANDY CARSON

One of Austin's greatest artistic explorers has gone on to explore the undiscovered country. Kelly Fearing, who helped bring modernism to Texas in the 1940s and stayed on the vanguard of visual art in the state for almost seven decades, died at his home on March 13. The cause was congestive heart failure. He was 92. Little did the Arkansas native know that his move to Fort Worth in 1943 to work a job as a graphic artist for a firm building bombers would lead to his becoming such an influential figure in Lone Star art. But Fearing fell in with a group of artists – among them, Veronica Helfensteller, Bill Bomar, Blanche McVeigh, and Dickson Reeder – who sought to move beyond longhorns and bluebonnets, beyond regionalism altogether, and this Fort Worth Circle, as it was named years later, was responsible for some of the state's first homegrown abstract and surrealist art. That pioneering work eventually led to Fearing being hired to teach in the still-fledgling Department of Art & Art History at the University of Texas at Austin, where he joined a host of artists who were transforming the art scene in the state: painters Everett Spruce, William Lester, Ralph White, and Seymour Fogel; printmaker Constance Forsyth; and sculptor Charles Umlauf. Fearing stayed on the faculty for 40 years, during which time he co-wrote textbooks on art education and was "that teacher" for many students who went on to substantive careers as visual artists. And all the while, Fearing remained the restless explorer, experimenting with figuration, abstraction, color, and artistic processes in media ranging from graphite, charcoal, silver point, and paint to montage, collage,

and found objects. His artwork also served as a vehicle for exploring spirituality; his images of animals, saints, stones, and seas – Fearing was particularly drawn to water – and even his fields of color and abstracted shapes spoke to his ongoing search for the mystical. Not for nothing was the 2002 retrospective of his work at Flatbed World Headquarters titled "The Mystical World of Kelly Fearing." Through the years, Fearing racked up many honors that speak to his standing in the art world – the E. William Doty Award from the UT College of Fine Arts, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Center for the Advancement & Study of Early Texas Art, induction into the Austin Arts Hall of Fame, selection as the 2009 Texas Biennial Tribute Artist, and even a book of poems inspired by his work, *Boy Returning Water to the Sea: Koans for Kelly Fearing* – but arguably the greatest measure of his influence is that when the Austin Visual Arts Association instituted its own awards for outstanding artistry in the community, it named the award *after* him. A memorial celebration of Fearing's life and art will be held Saturday, April 23, 5-7pm, at the Austin Museum of Art – Laguna Gloria, 3809 W. 35th.

Austin Chronicle, March 25, 2011





Walter Benson

1315 West 9th St.

95

1

Parkview

Rock veneer and frame residence.

42909 1-9-50

\$6000.00

Mr. Armstrong

5

Building permit to Walter Benson for the construction of the house (1950)

WATER SERVICE PERMIT
Austin, Texas

C No. 6970

Received of WALTER BENSON Date 8-15-50

Address 1315 WEST 9th

Amount TIAENY AND N. 11.00 \$ 20.00

Plumber PORTER PLUMBING CO. Size of Tap 3/4"

Date of Connection 9-12-50

Size of Tap Made 3/4"

Size Service Made 3/4"

Size Main Tapped 6"

From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 75'

From W. Prop. Line to Curb Cock 24'

Location of Meter CURB

Type of Box LOW

Depth of Main in St. 3'

Depth of Service Line 2'

From Curb Cock to Tap on Main 20'

Checked by Engr. Dept. 82 OCT 4 1950

INDEXED

No.	Fittings	Size
1	Curb Cock	5/8"
1	Elbow	3/4" COP
1	St. Elbow	3/4" S.C.C.
1	Reducing	3/4" C.C.P.
22	Pipe	3/4" COP
	Lead Comp.	
	Nipples	
	Union	
	Plug	
1	Box	LOW
1	Lid	
	Valves	
	Job No.	W-323-502
	P. No.	11/2/50

(Plumbing out hand of 10.00 with no floor)

Water service permit to Walter Benson for this address (1950)

Residences of Kelly Fearing (from city directories)

2000 914 Calithea Road, West Lake Hills
Professor Emeritus, University of Texas

1992 914 Calithea Road, West Lake Hills
Professor Emeritus, University of Texas

No listings between 1976 and 1990 – the city directories did not cover West Lake Hills at that time.

1975 1315 W. 9th Street
Professor, University of Texas

1973 1315 W. 9th Street
Professor, University of Texas

1968 1315 W. 9th Street
Professor, University of Texas

1965 1315 W. 9th Street
Professor, University of Texas

1962 1315 W. 9th Street
Professor, University of Texas

1961 1910 Pearl Street
Associate professor, University of Texas

1960 1301 Bentwood Road
Associate professor, University of Texas

1959 1301 Bentwood Road
Associate professor, University of Texas

1957 1301 Bentwood Road
Assistant professor, University of Texas

1955 1301 Bentwood Road
Assistant professor, University of Texas

1954 RD 2, Box 530
Assistant professor, University of Texas

1953 Mount Bonnell Road (no number listed)
Assistant professor, University of Texas

1952 Mount Bonnell Road (no number listed)
Assistant professor, University of Texas

1949 1609 Congress Avenue
Instructor, University of Texas
Listed as William K. Fearing

1947 Professor Fearing is not listed in the city directories.



The ca. 1975 house built by Kelly Fearing on Calithea Road in West Lake Hills. He lived here until his death in 2011; it is still owned and occupied by family members.