

Initiatives

in Art and Culture

The Arts and Crafts Movement Detroit and Environs

25th ANNUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 1, 2023



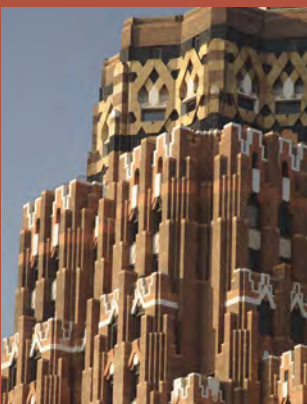
William Kapp for Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, *The Players Playhouse*, 1925. Photo: Heather Jowett, courtesy The Players.



Mary Chase Perry at Pewabic Pottery in Brush Park Stable Studio, 1903 – 1907. Photo: <https://www.pewabic.org/blogs/news/celebrating-co-founder-mary-chase-perry-stratton>.



Eliel Saarinen, *Art Museum and Library at the Cranbrook Academy of Art*, 1926 – 1939; Carl Milles, *Fountain Pool With Sculptures*, 1938. Photo: James Haefner via Michigan State Preservation Office.



Wirt C. Rowland for Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, *Union Trust (now Guardian) Building*, 1929. Photo: Ewolf, courtesy James W. Tottis.



Lancelot Sukert, *Scarab Club, Second-floor Lounge*, 1928. Photo: Courtesy Scarab Club.

The Arts and Crafts Movement Detroit and Environs

Detroit was an important center for the Arts & Crafts Movement in the United States. Pewabic, a major Arts & Crafts pottery, was founded in Detroit in 1903 by Mary Chase Perry Stratton and Horace James Caulkins where it continues to operate to this day. The Movement in Detroit and its environs had strong ties to England: George Booth, a Canadian immigrant of English ancestry, founded the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts (DSAC) in 1906. Profoundly influenced by William Morris's philosophy that all arts receive equal recognition, Booth brought this philosophy to the founding, with Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen, of the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1925. There, students would learn in keeping with practices of the English Arts & Crafts movement where artists would teach using their own work as examples. Architect Albert Kahn, who left an indelible mark on the built environment of Detroit was another founder of the DSAC.



Mary Chase Stratton for Pewabic Pottery, *Jar*, cast stoneware clay, 9½ x 7". Gift of George Gough Booth and Ellen Scripps Booth through The Cranbrook Foundation. Photo: R. H. Hensleigh and Tim Thayer, courtesy Cranbrook Art Museum.

The city's wealth, generated largely by manufacturing—not least, by the burgeoning automotive industry beginning in the early 1900s—made possible major commissions from architects such as Kahn and Wirt C. Rowland of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls. Work in the Arts & Crafts idiom by Samuel Yellin, E.F. Caldwell, and Pewabic, to cite but three, are often central features of Detroit architecture that might appear to be at odds with the Movement's essence but nonetheless share attributes central to its tenets, such as cohesiveness.



Albert Kahn, *Detroit Athletic Club*, 1915. Photo: Bnoshoj (GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2).

The powerful spirit of the Movement flourishes in institutions such as Pewabic and Cranbrook, as well as SmithGroup (the successor firm to Smith, Hinchman & Grylls), and in new undertakings to be considered in a future exploration of the city.

IAC thanks the Conference sponsors (as of September 11, 2023): Barbara Fuldner, The Felicia Fund, The Marie + John Zimmermann Fund, *American Fine Art Magazine*, The Edsel and Eleanor Ford House, SmithGroup, *The Magazine Antiques*, Cranbrook, Pewabic, and The Players. IAC is grateful to Heritage Auctions for its sponsorship of the opening session at the Detroit Athletic Club and to Bulova for its sponsorship of the evening session at the Scarab Club.

The Conference is dedicated to
Thomas F. Bird (March 30, 1940 – December 26, 2022).

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Wednesday, September 27

Formal sessions take place at the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC), 241 Madison Street, Detroit, MI.

8:45 – 9:30 a.m. **Registration and coffee in the Georgian Room of the Detroit Athletic Club** (Albert Kahn, 1915).

9:45 – 2:00 p.m. **Visit the DAC.**

9:45 – 10:00 a.m. **Welcome and introduction.** Lisa Koenigsberg, Founder and President, IAC.

10:00 – 11:00 a.m. **Overview and tour of the DAC and its art collection,** led by Mike Crane, Collections Curator, Detroit Athletic Club.

The DAC was founded in 1887 as a sporting club with facilities for track and field, baseball, football, and other sports north of its current site. The club lacked social facilities, however, and club leadership decided in 1913 to construct a clubhouse at 241 Madison Street. It commissioned Albert Kahn, Detroit's leading architect, to design the structure. Kahn modeled the club on Rome's Borghese and Farnese Palaces. While the former was Kahn's primary source, the latter inspired the large windows on the building's fourth floor.

11:00 – 12:00 p.m. *Keynote lecture*

Motown: Factories, Skyscrapers, and the Arts & Crafts. Richard Guy Wilson, architectural historian and Commonwealth Professor Emeritus in Architectural History at the University of Virginia.

12:00 – 1:00 p.m. **Brunch** (advanced purchase required; attendees to be sent instructions upon registration)

1:00 – 2:00 p.m. *Afternoon talk*

Towers of Light: The Union Trust and Penobscot Buildings. Jim Tottis, Museum Consultant.

2:00 p.m. **Walk to the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts,** 350 Madison St., Detroit, MI.

2:20 – 3:10 p.m. **Tour the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts** (William Kapp of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, 1928) led by **Vince Paul**, President & Artistic Director.

Originally called the Wilson Theatre (after Matilda Dodge Wilson who funded its construction), the building's Art Deco façade features, at the parapet, coral and green Pewabic tile, and terracotta theatrical masks. The interior was originally in the Spanish Renaissance style. The Music Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

3:10 p.m. **Walk to The Fox Theatre Detroit,** 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI.

3:25 – 4:25 p.m. **Tour The Fox Theatre Detroit** (C. Howard Crane, 1928; fully restored 1988).

Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1989, The Fox Theatre Detroit is an intact movie palace that seats over 5,000, with an interior reflecting Persian, Indian, and East Asian influences. It is one of five Fox Theatres built in the late 1920s by William Fox, founder of the Fox Theatres and Fox Film Corporation.

4:25 p.m. **Walk to the Penobscot Building** (645 Griswold St.) **and the Guardian Building** (500 Griswold St.).

4:40 – 6:30 p.m. **Tour the Penobscot Building and the Guardian Building** (both by Wirt C. Rowland of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, 1928 and 1929, respectively), led by **Jim Tottis** with a reception hosted by SmithGroup.



Wirt C. Rowland for Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, *Greater Penobscot Building*, 1928. Photo: courtesy James W. Tottis.

Late 1920s Detroit saw more steel rising skyward than any other city apart from New York. Among the most significant buildings in the American Vertical Style rising during those years were the Penobscot and Union Trust (now Guardian) buildings. These iconic Detroit towers were both designed by Wirt Rowland of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls (now SmithGroup).

When it opened in 1928, the Greater Penobscot Building was the tallest building in Detroit and the fourth tallest in the country. The H-shape building rises with a series of setbacks inspired by the rapids on the Penobscot River and is surmounted by a red neon orb, designed and fabricated by the Claude Neon Company. Rowland's deep interest in Gothic architecture influenced his Expressionist masterpiece, the Union Trust Building, in which an abstracted plan of a Gothic cathedral, in which an apse, nave, altar screen, crypt, and bell tower form the design elements of the structure. In general, he abandoned sculptural decoration, preferring instead to use the bulk of the building as the overall design element. Further, eschewing traditional building materials of the day, the bulk of the facades are sheathed in orange brick, pierced periodically by polychrome tiles. The number and variety of tiles required four firms: Atlantic Terracotta, Flint Faience, Pewabic Pottery, and Rookwood. When the building opened in early 1929, metallic gold tiles crowned the north tower which supported eight oscillating searchlights that bathed Detroit's night sky in red, amber, magenta, and green.

6:30 p.m.

Return (on your own) to the Hilton Garden Inn and the Siren Hotel.

Thursday, September 28

9:00 a.m.

Buses depart the Hilton Garden Inn for Pewabic Pottery.

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Tour Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI, led by **Steve McBride**, Executive Director.

Pewabic Pottery was founded in 1903 by Mary Chase Perry (later Stratton), an artist and educator, and Horace J. Caulkins, a dental supplier and kiln manufacturer. Pewabic became a leader of the Arts & Crafts Movement in Detroit during a time that was both a golden age for handcrafted pottery and tile and an industrial boom that accompanied the birth of the automotive industry.

11:00 a.m.

Buses depart Pewabic Pottery for The Players.

11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Visit The Players, 3321 E. Jefferson, Detroit, MI.

The Players, an amateur gentlemen's theatrical club, while founded in 1911 would only find a permanent home in 1925 with the construction of the Playhouse (William Kapp of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls). Designed in the Florentine Renaissance style and constructed entirely of cinderblock (a then-new building material), the building includes a four-story stage with trap doors, state-of-the-art digital lighting, and a sound booth, as well as dressing rooms, a lobby bar, and formal meeting room.

Corrado Parducci sculpted the gargoyles on the front façade as well as the large urns flanking the main stage, while Paul Honoré painted the six Art Deco murals on tapestry depicting a troupe of wandering troubadours that hang in the Great Hall.

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Luncheon at The Players (advanced purchase required and recommended since there are no practical options in the vicinity; attendees to be sent instructions upon registration)

1:30 p.m.

Buses depart The Players for the David Whitney Mansion.



Gordon W. Lloyd, *David Whitney Mansion*, staircase, 1894. Photo: courtesy The Whitney.

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Tour the David Whitney Mansion (Gordon W. Lloyd, 1894), led by The Whitney Historians.

The Mansion was commissioned by lumber baron David Whitney Jr., one of the wealthiest men in Detroit in the late 19th century, and designed by G.W. Lloyd in the Romanesque Revival style. Constructed using rose-colored South Dakota jasper, its 22,000 square feet contain 52 rooms (including 10 bathrooms) and feature stained-glass windows by Tiffany Studios.

3:00 p.m.

Walk to the Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth Street, Detroit, MI.

3:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Visit the Scarab Club.

The Scarab Club was founded in 1907 by marine painter Robert Hopkin as an informal social club for artists and art lovers. Known originally as The Hopkin Club, it was renamed the Scarab Club in 1913. The current clubhouse, designed in the Arts & Crafts style by club member Lancelot Sukert (1928), features a Pewabic mosaic above the door that includes the Scarab Club logo. Signing the ceiling beams of the lounge became a ceremonial honor, with signatories including artists John Sloan, Diego Rivera, and Marcel Duchamp, among others.

3:30 – 5:00 p.m. *Afternoon talks*

3:30 – 4:15 p.m.

Minoru Yamasaki : A Search for Serenity Through Architecture. John Gallagher, journalist and author.

4:20 – 4:40 p.m.

Bulova and Frank Lloyd Wright: Shaping a Legacy in Time. Lana V. Aledort, Director of Merchandising, Bulova & Donell Hutson, Design Director, Bulova, Accutron and Caravelle brands, Citizen Watch America.

4:45 – 5:00 p.m.

The Scarab Club: An Introduction. Kathryn Dimond, Executive Director, The Scarab Club.

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Reception, book-signing, and tour of the Scarab Club

6:00 p.m.

Buses return to the Hilton Garden Inn and the Siren Hotel.

Friday, September 29

9:00 a.m.

Meet at the Scarab Club.

9:15 – 10:15 a.m.

Morning talk

Celebrating the Knowledge and Enjoyment of Art: The American Arts & Crafts Movement at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Jim Tottis.

10:15 a.m.

Walk to the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA).

10:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.

Tour the DIA.

Founded in 1885, the museum was originally located on Jefferson Avenue, moving in 1927 to its current site on Woodward Ave., a Beaux Arts structure designed by Paul Cret. Two wings were added in the 1960s and 1970s, and an eight-year renovation and expansion program was completed in 2007. Covering 658,000 square feet, the museum includes more than 100 galleries, a 1,150-seat auditorium, a 380-seat lecture/recital hall, an art reference library, and a state-of-the-art conservation services laboratory.

12:20 p.m.

Walk to the Scarab Club.

12:30 p.m.

Buses depart the Scarab Club for Ford House, 1100 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Shores, MI.

1:00 p.m.

Buses arrive at Ford House.

1:10 – 6:30 p.m.

An unforgettable afternoon at Ford House (Albert Kahn, 1928; partial redecoration by Walter Dorwin Teague, 1930s and Polly Jessup, 1950s; gardens by Jens Jensen, 1926 – 1932).

In conceiving the house, Kahn was inspired by English Cotswold-style cottages, and the original interiors followed classic Western European models. In the 1930s, however, Edsel hired Walter Dorwin Teague, a famed industrial designer and Ford Motor Company collaborator, to redecorate four rooms in a sleek, Machine-Age aesthetic. In the 1950s after Edsel's death, Eleanor hired her friend and interior



Albert Kahn, *Edsel and Eleanor Ford House*, 1928. Photo: courtesy Ford House.

decorator Polly Jessup to design spaces that would reflect her personal taste and highlight her collection of antique furniture and fine art.

To realize their vision for the grounds of the estate, the Fords hired Jens Jensen whose naturalistic approach to the property seamlessly combined woodlands, meadows, and wetlands.

In 2016, Ford House was honored as a National Historic Landmark, in recognition of the design work of Jensen, in collaboration with the vision of Edsel and Eleanor Ford and architect Albert Kahn.

- 1:10 – 2:00 p.m. **Luncheon in the Lake Shore Room** with remarks on legacy, stewardship, and restoration by **Rodrigo Manriquez**, Head, SmithGroup Midwest Cultural Studio, **Benjamin Grobe**, Architect, SmithGroup, and **Alivia Stalaker**, Design Architect, SmithGroup (advanced purchase required and recommended since there are no practical options in the vicinity; attendees to be sent instructions upon registration)
- 2:00 p.m. **Welcome and introduction.** Mark Heppner, Ford House President & CEO.
- 2:05 – 3:55 p.m. *Afternoon talks and book-signing in the Lake Shore Room*
Albert Kahn's Global Impact. Michael H. Hodges, author, *Building the Modern World: Albert Kahn in Detroit*, formerly, Fine Arts Writer, *The Detroit News*.
The Metalwork of Edward F. Caldwell and Co. Meg Caldwell, historian, consultant, appraiser, and private dealer in the field of 19th-century American and European decorative arts.
- 4:15 – 5:40 p.m. **Tour Ford House.**
- 5:45 – 6:15 p.m. **Champagne toast at the Pool & Lagoon**
- 6:30 p.m. **Buses depart for the Hilton Garden Inn.**

Saturday, September 30

- 8:45 a.m. **Buses depart the Hilton Garden Inn for Cranbrook.**
- 9:45 a.m. **Arrival at Cranbrook**
- 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. *Morning talks in deSalle Auditorium*
- 10:00 – 10:10 a.m. **Welcome and introduction.** Lisa Koenigsberg.
- 10:10 – 11:30 a.m. **Perspectives on Cranbrook**
Gregory Wittkopp, Center Director
Kevin Adkisson, Center Curator
Nina Blomfield, Center Marie Zimmermann Decorative Arts Trust Collections Fellow
- 11:30 am. **Bus transport to Christ Church Cranbrook**

11:50 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. **Tour Christ Church Cranbrook.**

Designed by Oscar Murray of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Associates and consecrated on September 29, 1928, Christ Church Cranbrook is considered one of the most important achievements of the American Arts & Crafts Movement. The Gothic Revival church is rich in architectural detail and full of historic paintings, tapestries, and other appointments by world-renowned artists and craftsmen including work by woodcarver John Kirchmayer and silversmith Arthur Nevill Kirk, stained glass designs by G. Owen Bonawit, sculptures on the exterior buttresses by Lee Lawrie, and a large fresco at the front of the church by Katherine McEwen.

12:40 p.m. **Bus transport to Cranbrook Campus Dining Hall**

1:00 – 1:40 p.m. **Luncheon at Cranbrook Campus Dining Hall** (advanced purchase required and recommended since there are no practical options in the vicinity; attendees to be sent instructions upon registration)

1:40 – 5:15 p.m. **Tour Saarinen House, Cranbrook Archives and Collections Wing, Kingswood School, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Smith House.**

Saarinen House is Eliel Saarinen's Art Deco masterwork and the jewel of Cranbrook's architectural treasures. Designed in the late 1920s and located at the heart of Cranbrook Academy of Art, from 1930 through 1950 Saarinen House served as the home and studio of the Finnish-American designer Eliel Saarinen—Cranbrook's first resident architect and the Art Academy's first president and the head of the Architecture Department—and Loja Saarinen—the Academy's first head of the Weaving Department and director of Studio Loja Saarinen. The extraordinary interior, now impeccably restored, features Saarinen's original furnishings, including Eliel's delicately veneered furniture and Loja's sumptuous textiles, as well as decorative designs by their daughter Pipsan Saarinen Swanson and early furniture designs by their son, Eero Saarinen.



Eliel Saarinen. *Fireplace*, 1929, manufactured by Pewabic Pottery and installed in Saarinen House. Also pictured: *Saarinen House Rugs*, *Wall Hanging*, and *Bench Ryijy* designed by Eliel and Loja Saarinen and woven by Studio Loja Saarinen, 1929 – 1931; *Saarinen House Furniture* designed by Eliel Saarinen and fabricated by Tor Berglund, 1929 – 1931; and peacock andirons. Photo: James Haefner, courtesy Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research.

Cranbrook Archives is the primary research center for the documentation and study of Cranbrook Educational Community's remarkable history. The Archives holds the papers of members of the Booth, Scripps, and Saarinen families; the records of Christ Church Cranbrook and ancillary organizations affiliated with Cranbrook; as well as the personal papers of faculty, staff, alumni, and other individuals who have been associated with the community since its founding in 1904.

Considered the American masterpiece of Finnish-American architect Eliel Saarinen, **Kingswood School** presented a fresh new model for modern academic architecture when it opened in the fall of 1931. The entire Saarinen family was involved in the

Eliel Saarinen, *Kingswood School for Girls*, 1931. Photo: courtesy Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research.



design of the school: Eliel served as architect; Loja led the design and production of handwoven rugs, window treatments, and upholstery; their daughter Pipsan Saarinen Swanson coordinated paint colors, decorative stenciling, and hand-painted ornament; and their son Eero Saarinen designed furniture and sculptural fittings throughout the building. Originally a school for girls, the building is now part of the coeducational Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School, and rarely opened for public tours.

School teachers Sara Stein Smith and Melvyn Maxwell Smith, undeterred by their modest salaries and guided by a shared love of architecture, met Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin in 1941 and commissioned a custom home. Completed in 1950, the **Smith House** in Bloomfield Township is an excellent example of Wright's Usonian ideal, which aimed to build quality houses for the American middle class. The home was donated to Cranbrook filled with the Smith's extensive art collection made by local and national artists.

5:15 p.m.

Bus transport back to Cranbrook House

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Reception at Cranbrook House

7:30 p.m.

Buses depart for the Hilton Garden Inn.

9:45 a.m.

Buses depart the Hilton Garden Inn for Woodlawn Cemetery.

Sunday, October 1

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

Tour Woodlawn Cemetery.

11:15 a.m.

Buses depart Woodlawn for Anita's Kitchen, 22651 Woodward Ave., Ferndale, MI.

11:30 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.

Luncheon (on your own) at Anita's Kitchen (advanced purchase required; attendees to be sent instructions upon registration)

1:00 p.m.

Buses depart Anita's Kitchen for Belle Isle.

1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Tour Belle Isle Aquarium.

3:00 p.m.

Buses return to the Hilton Garden Inn.

Registration

To register on-line: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/25th-annual-arts-and-crafts-conference-in-detroit-and-environs-tickets-528630918307>

By phone: Using American Express®, Visa® Card, Discover®, or MasterCard® call (646) 485-1952.

Fee: The conference fee is \$975 with single-day registration options available. The rate for full-time students is \$250 (with ID).

Withdrawal and refunds: We will apply a partial credit towards registration in a future conference if you need to cancel prior to 30 days before the start of the Conference. No refunds will be made after August 28, 2023. Notice of withdrawal must be made in writing to: Initiatives in Art and Culture, 333 East 57th St., Suite 13B, New York, NY 10022 or to the Program Office via e-mail at info@artinitiatives.com, or call (646) 485-1952.

Conference location: The conference starts at The Detroit Athletic Club, 241 Madison Street, Detroit, MI 48226 with other events and sessions taking place throughout Detroit and its environs.

The preferred conference hotels are The Siren, 1509 Broadway St, Detroit, MI 48226 and the Hilton Garden Inn Detroit Downtown, 351 Gratiot Ave, Detroit, MI 48226.