



# CASS GILBERT SOCIETY

*Organized to preserve the work of Minnesota's most important architect.*

## WHO BUILT THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL?

Join the Cass Gilbert Society on **Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 7 p.m.**, at the University Club, 420 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul. Randy Croce will share findings from a year-long research project on the workers and contractors involved in the construction of the Minnesota State Capitol from 1896 to 1907. Croce will relate the stories of several of the individuals he and his fellow researchers uncovered, including the six men who lost their lives during the construction. He will also talk about safety standards, rates of pay and working conditions for the builders of the period, accompanied by archival and contemporary photographs.

The project, **Who Built the Capitol?**, was funded by the Minnesota Historical Society, Education Minnesota Foundation, the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, and the Center for Human Resources and Labor Studies at the University of Minnesota. Croce is a video producer and labor history instructor at the Labor Education Service, University of Minnesota. He will be joined by his fellow researchers, Dave Riehle, local labor historian; John Sielaff, retired member of the Carpenters' union, who has been researching the organization's history; and Victoria Woodcock, librarian and historian. The team examined records at the Minnesota Historical Society and other archives, as well as the dues and minutes books of labor unions. They also interviewed the descendants of several workers, as well as historians, construction workers, quarry managers and architects. The group is embarking on the next phase of the project, a video documentary on the building of the Capitol.

Croce has authored two articles based on the group's work: "State Capitol's stunning beauty came at a terrible cost,"

[http://www.workdayminnesota.org/index.php?news\\_6\\_4855](http://www.workdayminnesota.org/index.php?news_6_4855), and

"State Capitol history comes alive for middle school students,"

[http://www.workdayminnesota.org/index.php?news\\_6\\_4754](http://www.workdayminnesota.org/index.php?news_6_4754)

Admission to the talk is free to members and students and is \$5.00 for non-members.



*Photo: Minnesota Historical Society*

### Save the Dates!

November 15, 2011

**The Restoration of Waterbury City Hall.** A talk by Ted Lentz, AIA, at the University Club

December 4, 2011

**A Fundraiser for the Cass Gilbert Society.** Holiday Reception at the historic Freeman House with a special appearance by Cass Gilbert as portrayed by Alan Johnson.

## TOURS OF INTEREST

Friends of the Cass Gilbert Society in the Twin Cities area may want to participate in the biannual **Ramsey Hill House Tour: An Evening of Elegance**, Thursday, September 22, 2011, 5 to 9 p.m.

Visit eight historic homes in the Ramsey Hill neighborhood along and near Summit Avenue between Dale Street and the Cathedral of Saint Paul. The candlelight tour includes musical entertainment at three of the houses and wine and refreshments at two of the houses. Two houses on the tour were designed by Clarence Johnston, Sr., and one by Emmanuel Masqueray. Both were associates of Cass Gilbert in various enterprises.

Tickets are \$30 in advance or \$40 on the day of the event. For more information: [www.ramseyhill.org](http://www.ramseyhill.org).

The **9th Annual OpenHouseNewYork (OHNY) Weekend** is October 15 and 16, 2011. On those days visitors can tour nearly 200 sites of architecture and design significance throughout the five boroughs of New York City, including many that are normally closed to the public. Weekend events also include 150 tours, talks, performances, family activities, and workshops that explore New York City by foot, bus, and bicycle.

Several Cass Gilbert buildings have been included in previous years. For more information and an up-to-date listing closer to the event date, visit [www.ohny.org](http://www.ohny.org).

The success of OpenHouseNewYork has led to the establishment of similar events in several other cities in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Architectural photographer **Carol Highsmith** was interviewed on C-Span about *Carol Highsmith's America*, her project to photograph architecture and landscapes in all 50 states, following in the path of pioneering documentary photographer Frances Benjamin Johnston. Carol has already photographed many of the buildings of Cass Gilbert and was part of the Cass Gilbert study tour to Cuba in January 2010. All of her photographs are being donated to the Library of Congress. View the interview at: <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/299632-1>  
For more on Carol at the Library of Congress see: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/highsm/>



*Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building. Photo: Carol Highsmith 2007*



*Detroit Institute of Arts, architect Paul Philippe Cret*

## CASS GILBERT AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES IN DETROIT

Members of the Cass Gilbert Society will visit **Detroit October 21-23, 2011**, to see Gilbert's works as well as visit other buildings by several of his contemporaries.

The **Detroit Public Library** is Gilbert's major public building in that city. Commissioned in 1913, it was not begun until 1917 and finally completed in 1921. A restrained Beaux-Arts design, it is also notable for an impressive group of murals depicting events in city history that were painted by the Detroit-born artist Gari Melchers and attributes of the arts by New York artist Edwin H. Blashfield. Blashfield had previously worked with Gilbert on several major commissions. The library was expanded in 1960-1963 to designs by Cass Gilbert, Jr., and Francis J. Keally.



*Detroit Public Library, architect Cass Gilbert*

The **James Scott Memorial Fountain** is located at the west end of Belle Isle Park in the narrows of the Detroit River between the United States and Canada. Gilbert won the competition for the fountain in 1914, but it was not built until 1921-1925. In addition to the multi-tiered marble fountain, the design incorporates terraced steps leading to the river and a bronze statue of Scott, executed by Herbert Adams.

The tour will visit the library and the fountain on Saturday, October 22.

On Friday afternoon, October 21, tour participants will have the opportunity to visit the **Detroit Institute of Arts**, located across Woodward Avenue from the library. Designed by Philadelphia architect Paul Philippe Cret (1876-1945), the Institute of Arts was built in 1923-1927. The arched facade and the use of marble to create a restrained Beaux-Arts Classical design were intended to complement the library. The French-born and Beaux-Arts trained Cret was the head of the department of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania for over 30 years. During the approximately 25 years that Cret's career overlapped with that of Gilbert, they sometimes competed for the same public building commissions. A mural in the Institute by Diego Rivera depicts *Detroit Industry* (1932-1933).

On Saturday afternoon, the tour will go to **Cranbrook**, the arts and design school in Bloomfield Hills, a Detroit suburb, that integrated all aspects of the arts. Founded by George Gough Booth and Ellen Scripps Booth, the school greatly expanded under the leadership of Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen (1873-1950), beginning in the 1920s. Saarinen not only designed many of the campus buildings, he also set up an architecture and design program that trained many renowned modern architects and designers, among them his son Eero Saarinen and Ray and Charles Eames.

Two Frank Lloyd Wright houses will conclude the tour. The group will visit the **Gregor and Elizabeth Affleck House**, also in Bloomfield Hills, on Saturday afternoon. Built in 1940-1941, it is an innovative and early Usonian house, built into a hillside on several levels. The cantilevered upper level incorporates the living room-dining room space.

On Sunday morning, October 23, the group will visit the **Dorothy Turkel House** in Detroit. Built in 1955-1956, this is a large Usonian Automatic house, executed with an innovative use of precast concrete blocks joined with steel reinforcing rods. Wright hoped that the owners of Usonian Automatic houses would be able to construct the houses themselves. The current owners have recently restored the house, complete with furnishings.

If you have not received the tour schedule by email, please contact Carolyn Nayematsu at 651-699-7407, or email her at [nayem001@umn.edu](mailto:nayem001@umn.edu)

CASS GILBERT SOCIETY, INC.  
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Place  
Stamp  
Here

**Our Mission**

To preserve our cultural heritage through advancing scholarship in and appreciation of Cass Gilbert's influence on American architecture.

The Cass Gilbert Society, Inc., is a non-profit tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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*James Scott Memorial Fountain, Belle Isle Park, architect Cass Gilbert*

Have you renewed your Cass Gilbert Society membership for 2011?

Your membership expiration date is on your mailing label.

You will find a membership form at the Cass Gilbert Society website, [www.cassgilbertsociety.org](http://www.cassgilbertsociety.org), which you may mail to the address listed above.

## Tour Details

### Lodging:

Hotel – Inn on Ferry \$129.00 + tax etc (this is the Cass Gilbert group rate). Onsite parking and continental breakfast are included in the price. The Inn has 40 unique rooms and is just steps from the library and the Institute of Arts. It is located in the East Ferry Street Historic District of Midtown Detroit.

The Cass Gilbert Society has reserved 10 rooms; the reservation deadline is September 23, 2011. Trip participants must make their own reservations. Call **313-871-6000** to reserve your room—state that you are with the Cass Gilbert Society in St. Paul, MN.

Late reservations might get the group rate if rooms are available.

### Transportation to Detroit

Each participant is responsible for making his/her travel arrangements to and from Detroit, including to and from the Detroit airport.

### Summary of Tour Costs:

The tour is estimated to cost \$185 per participant. The final cost will depend on the number of participants and cars available.

The final cost will include Saturday's lunch and dinner, the Frank Lloyd Wright house tours, the Cranbrook tour, honorariums, transportation within the Detroit area, and other incidentals.

### Eligibility

This tour is open to all Cass Gilbert Society members with current (2011) membership. If you want to join the tour and are not a member, you may print out a membership form at [www.cassgilbertsociety.com](http://www.cassgilbertsociety.com) and return the form along with your tour reservation. The individual membership rate is \$25 per year.

### Deadline for Tour Registration

October 1, 2011

### To Sign up:

First step: Please let Carolyn Nayematsu know that you are sending in your registration form and payment (the form and check payable to the Cass Gilbert Society are mailed to the Cass Gilbert Society mailbox).

Her phone number is 651-699-7407 or email her at [nayem001@umn.edu](mailto:nayem001@umn.edu)

Second step: Please send in the registration form that follows with your payment.

**Cass Gilbert Society Trip to Detroit  
October 21-23, 2011**

**Registration Form**

Name(s) of Participants \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Will you have a car available while in Detroit? \_\_\_\_\_

Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated arrival time \_\_\_\_\_

Where are you staying? \_\_\_\_\_

Payment: \$185 x \_\_\_\_ participants = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and payment to the Cass Gilbert Society,  
P.O. Box 4066, Saint Paul, MN 55104. The deadline is October 1, 2011.