

William F. Campbell
Beauty is Local: Look Around You
Philadelphia Society Regional Meeting
Cincinnati, October 8, 2011

I am delighted to welcome you to Cincinnati. The nature of my talk obviously draws on the tribute to Christopher Wren, the architect of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London. "If you seek a monument, look around you" (Si monumentum requiris, circumspice).¹

My general theme is that beauty is grounded in the local and regional, even when it aspires to the universal. All we have to do is to look around.

I just returned from a trip on the Danube River. We had a Rumanian guide who quoted a Rumanian poet, Tudor Arghezi, "If you want to be universal, you must be Rumanian first."²

That which is local in the United States usually draws on and modifies European models. *America the Beautiful* is not a jingoist theme. We will see that America draws most heavily on Europe and Western Civilization, including Egypt, but occasionally going off the reservation to include Japan, China, and Africa.

Even for the Orient, the theme is local. Ralph Adams Cram in his book on Japanese art hoped that "those who in Japan still hoard the treasure of antiquity, not in the arts alone but in all that makes for righteousness and beauty and joy in life; in a word, Yamato Damashii."³ Although this phrase was later abused by Japanese nationalism, originally in Heian period, it meant to describe the indigenous Japanese 'spirit' or cultural values as opposed to the cultural values imported into the country through contact with Tang dynasty China.

But Europe itself is often inspired by America. David McCullough's new book, *The Greater Journey*, argues that the Americans who chose to go to Europe, more specifically, Paris, took a greater journey than those who followed Horace Greeley's

¹ Ralph Adams Cram is skeptical of Wren's work when he refers to the possibilities that Japan had to renew its traditional architecture after the 1923 earthquake and fire in Tokyo and Yokohama. It gave Japan the "abnormal opportunity for an excessive amount of new building that happened in the case of the great fire of London in the time of Charles II. There Christopher Wren, an engineer of defective ability with a flare for architecture of the theoretical sort, seized his first opportunity and made a great show of the Palladian Renaissance that otherwise might have remained a rather secondary manifestation of an alien art." *Impressions of Japanese Architecture and the allied arts*, New York: Dover Press, 1966, material inserted from the 1930 edition, work originally published in 1906.

² In spite of this wisdom, all the guides on these cruises are very pro-EU, but that is mainly because they don't have to go through customs in most places.

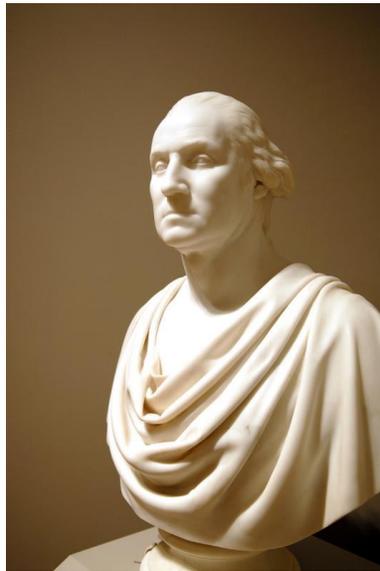
³ Cram, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

advice to, “Go West, young man.” The irony is that many in Paris went West to America for inspiration.

To take a look around Cincinnati, I will attempt to follow the historical sequence as far as possible. Thus we will see an art history that parallels the history of Cincinnati. This trip will not be a Whig Theory of Progress that culminates in abstract expressionism and modernist architecture such as Frank Gehry and Peter Eisenman. We will follow only as long as our guide is beauty. In fact, we will end up precisely where we are sitting now, in the Netherland Plaza Hotel.

America the Beautiful and George Washington

But why did we choose Cincinnati as a city to ruminate on the themes of beauty? Why should we not have chosen Washington, D.C.? (Cf. Appendix 1) Cincinnati was given its name by Arthur St. Clair, the good friend of George Washington, the first governor of the Northwest Ordinance (1787) and very active in the Society of the Cincinnati founded in 1783.



George Washington
Hiram Powers

George Washington was its first President General. He was thought of as the American counterpart to Cincinnatus, the Roman hero, who dropped his plow, restored order to the Republic, and when the danger had passed, went back to his farm. His farm is the beautiful estate of Mount Vernon, near Washington, DC.

George Washington acknowledged that, “It is of great importance to fix the taste of our country properly.” This bust of George Washington is by the most important American sculptor of the mid-nineteenth century, Hiram Powers, based in Cincinnati and well represented in both the Taft Museum and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

As early as 1824 he was impressed with a copy of a bust of George Washington by the French sculptor, Jean-Antoine Houdon.

His fascination with Washington led to his being commissioned in 1850 by the State of Louisiana to do a full-length sculptor (6-foot, 7 ½-inch) of George Washington which was to be the centerpiece of the Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge. The story of that piece which arrived in Baton Rouge in 1855 and took 5 years before it could be put in place is very interesting. During the Civil War before the fire of 1862, Beast Butler sent the statue of Washington to New York “to be held in trust for the people of Louisiana until they shall have returned to their senses.”

In 1865 Louisiana asked for it back, but instead it got sent to Washington, D.C., where it was displayed in the United States Patent Office. In March of 1871 the statue had been finally delivered to Louisiana, this time to the State Fair in New Orleans. Alas, it was in a wooden building that was destroyed by fire.

According to the *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* 19, no. 5646, Anonymous, (October 1, 1845), 2:4: “Cincinnati is deservedly proud of her Artists;...more broad rays of Genius have flashed from the altar there erected to the Graces, than can be boasted of by the proudest city of the New World...[Hiram] Powers alone, will immortalize Cincinnati, and the many of less fame who have there received the fostering care demanded by young and sensitive genius, will swell the measure of her glory.”

In Henry Tuckerman’s *Book of the Artists*, he outlines the substance of Powers’ contributions: “Genius is a vague term; but in reference to a man like this, it is perfectly intelligible. His force lies within the region of obvious and palpable results. It is clear, legible, and bold. It is the energy of a mind conscious of its endowments, not overwhelmed by them...His genius consists first in seizing the element, and next in harmoniously blending it with its kindred; thus, as it were, redeeming the fragmentary and perverted shapes of humanity to their primeval glory, by embodying in marble the type of Nature, as she would assert herself, if freed from the conventional blights and boundaries of custom and error. Thus the genius of Powers is singularly healthful...There is something in the whole career of this remarkable artists which strikes us as eminently American. His powers are of that sustained and effective character which accords with the spirit of our country.” Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, pp. 293-294.

How utterly opposite to the artistic impulses of the trendy modern artists! Grace perfects nature. In the modern world, the primeval glory of humanity is reduced to fragmentary and perverted shapes. Even though he lived most of his productive life in Florence, where he died, Powers could still be described as an eminently American artist who is in fundamental agreement with the spirit of our country.

There are two members of The Philadelphia Society whom I tried to cajole into making this speech. One is John Willson from Hillsdale College who has written a brilliant

monograph, *Arthur St. Clair and the Northwest Ordinance*, Hillsdale College Press, 1993. But, speaking of local, he was committed to coaching a football game in his local area.

Willson has argued that the Northwest Ordinance as implemented by St. Clair was designed to hold back chaos and allow the act of creation to go forward. Moving from a state of nature to civilization, cultivated cities would replace wild beasts, self-government would replace savagery, and beauty would be allowed to gradually enter the frontier. With British law and local self-rule—“conserving acts”—in Willson’s terminology, the wilderness could be tamed.

Mel Bradford has stressed the importance of pastoral myth for these early transplantations. But, he points out that the very soft or decadent pastoral of the Alexandrian Greek was not appropriate to the hard pastoral required by life on the frontier. Hard work, thrift, and military valor would be required in the early years to clear the land, fight the Indians, and plant the crops.

St. Clair’s vision incorporated large doses of New England Federalism. Towns, churches and schools—and no slavery—were the key elements. But, even here, the New England myth was one of transplantation and not creation *ex nihilo*.

The Western Reserve, the large tract of land, including Cleveland, near Lake Erie, was a Connecticut property. The emblem of Connecticut designed in 1656 for the New England towns of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield is an old vine with three bunches of grapes on which is inscribed with *Qui transtulit sustinet* (“He who transplants, preserves”). The Great Charter Oak of Hartford, 600 years old, hid the fundamental laws of Connecticut from its Royal Governor Sir Edmund Andros in 1687.⁴

Winthrop Sargeant, Secretary of the Territory for St. Clair, was an even more rigid Federalist from Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard in the early 1770s and would have experienced first hand the Liberty Trees of Boston. These *old* trees were based on Deacon Elliott’s elm. As Fischer notes, “Whatever the species, New England’s Liberty Trees were giants of old growth, deeply rooted in the soil of the New World.” (p. 23)

Fischer shrewdly shows the differences between these old craggy trees with their religious implications of Gothic cathedrals and the French young trees planted in symmetrical rows requiring bureaucratic administration. Religion was completely foreign to the French use of liberty trees during the French Revolution. Furthermore the Liberty Tree morphed into Equality Trees “decorated with masons’ levels...” (Fischer, p. 33)

⁴ The use of trees as symbols of political aspiration is brilliantly treated by David Hackett Fischer, *Liberty and Freedom: A Visual History of America’s Founding Ideas*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Boston’s Liberty Tree was transplanted to countless cities up and down the east coast: New England to Maryland’s Annapolis, and Charleston, South Carolina. Trees were commonly used in flags and coinage.

The transplantation process did not take very long and beauty started creeping through. As tangible evidence, the “Temples of the Republic,” the county courthouses, were based on the models of Rome and Greece. John Willson in his monograph provides splendid pictures of many of these structures.

I might further add the State Capitols, which dot our countryside. Being a local from Baton Rouge, I must add to the Roman and Greek models, the castellated Gothic model of our Old State Capitol to which I shall return.



Ralph Adams Cram gave a back-handed compliment to our Gothic State Capitol when he observed in 1930, in an interesting book on Japanese art, “Probably the same is true in the case of a palace for the housing of Parliament with its full compliment of political parties and blocs, responsible ministries and legislative committees, log-rolling ‘pork-barrels’ and multitudinous unnecessary laws, and all the other rather futile paraphernalia of representative government. We in the United States smiles at our one ‘Gothic’ state capitol, even at the Medieval Miracle of Parliament Houses in London, recognizing their impropriety, while conversely we bow in admiration before so modern a creation as the Nebraska Capitol.” (p. 229)



Nebraska State Capitol
1922-1932
Bertram Goodhue

Cram wrote this before Huey Long could create his own imitation of Nebraska, completed in two years, started in 1930 and finished in the same year as Nebraska, 1932. It is, of course, 450 feet and taller than the Nebraska State Capitol, only 400 feet:



Louisiana State Capitol
1930-1932

Beauty in the Ohio region also had another source. Ironically, Arthur St. Clair was fired by Thomas Jefferson in 1802 and left Ohio because of the incursions of the Southern myth that competed with the National myth of St. Clair. Jefferson's beautiful architectural work at Monticello and the University of Virginia also drew upon the Palladian style adopted by Christopher Wren in his remodeling of London after the Fire.

John Willson tells the story of the alternative visions of Thomas Worthington and his allies who represented the Virginia model. Thomas Worthington (1773-1827) was sixth governor of Ohio and one of the state's first United States Senators. At first, the Virginia model substituted for slavery massive amounts of land that allowed the gentlemen leisure time for hunting and politics.

In Worthington's case it even spilled over into the finest house in the West, ironically Federal style, with formal gardens. His house, Adena, sits west of Chillicothe, Ohio, originally on 2,000 acres about 80 miles from Cincinnati.⁵ It was built by Benjamin

⁵ In Chillicothe, the Ross County Courthouse of 1855 is also worth exploring. In 1800, the capital of the Northwest Territory was moved to Chillicothe, the present county seat. Chillicothe also served as the first capital of the State of Ohio from 1803 until 1816, except for an interval from late 1809 to 1812 when the state legislature met in Zanesville. In 1817, the state capital moved 40 miles north of Chillicothe to Columbus, the state's present capital city, because it was more centrally located.

Latrobe in 1806-1807 which is appropriate when you consider that Latrobe was the architect of the U.S. Capitol under President Jefferson.



His house exemplified the hopes of the *Chillicothe Supporter*, 1817: “Looking only a few years through the vista of futurity what a sublime spectacle presents itself! Wilderness, once the chosen residence of solitude and savageness, converted into populous cities, smiling villages, beautiful farms and plantations!”⁶

Although St. Clair had appointed them, Worthington and his allies went too far later when they tried to repeal the anti-slavery provisions of the Northwest Ordinance. One suspects that John Willson would have approved of the Worthington-Virginia model if it had not dipped into the slavery question. Here was truly local self-government. Willson reminds us that both St. Clair and Alexander Hamilton were Scots who lacked loyalty to local American culture. They were Federalists and not anti-Federalists.

Before we leave George Washington, we should note that the other missing Philadelphia Society member who should be here is Bill Allen who has done magnificent work on both George Washington and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Harriet Beecher Stowe's house is right here in Cincinnati. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* certainly evokes the power of fiction and the literary imagination to influence public policies--even if Lincoln slightly exaggerated when he met her in 1862: “So you are the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war!”

Also extremely appropriate to Cincinnati is Robert Duncanson's painting of “Uncle Tom and Little Eva.” 1853 (Detroit Institute of Arts).

⁶ Quoted in Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, p. 23.



In preparation for this talk, I received the following email from Bill Allen, which makes the Harriet Beecher Stowe and George Washington connection: “As for Stowe, the main reference, as I have said, is to the portrait of Washington in Tom's cabin. Of course, there is not an actual portrait, but only a literary description. Its significance, therefore, lies primarily in its role within the novel to establish the ideal which is the conceit or ground of the dramatic account. The thing is, Tom's cabin is the ‘work of his own hands,’ as its landscaping is the work of Aunt Chloe's (Mrs. Tom) hands. That this portrait of self-governing sufficiency is highlighted by the portrait of George Washington assimilates the ideal of the novel to the ideal that Washington represented. He spoke so often in biblical trope of ‘every man under his own vine and fig tree,’ that we have no trouble drawing the vine encircled cabin into the realm that Washington had in mind. I have laid much of this out in my *Rethinking Uncle Tom* of two years ago. Naturally, the ideal picture was disrupted by the realities of slavery, eventuating in Tom's sale south. But Stowe saves the ideal as an immaterial ideal, when in a passing reference she denominates the slovenly hovel in which Legree beats Tom to death as Tom's ‘cabin.’ That move lifts our view from the comforting material reflection at the opening of the novel to the reflection that one's cabin is rather one's self-governing soul. Tom, a man of great of physical and moral strength triumphs in the end because his moral strength is more determinative of his worth and influence in this world than the external signs of sufficiency.”

The Harriet Beecher Stowe House is operated as an historical and cultural site, focusing on her authorship of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She had spent nearly twenty years in Cincinnati and wrote her book in 1851-1852 shortly after leaving Cincinnati. The site also includes a look into the family, friends, and colleagues of the Beecher-Stowe family, Lane Seminary, and the abolitionist, women's rights and Underground Railroad movements in which these historical figures participated in the 1830's to 1860's, as well as African-American history related to these movements

The house was home to Harriet Beecher Stowe prior to her marriage and to her father, Rev. Lyman Beecher, and his large family, a prolific group of religious leaders, educators, writers, and antislavery and women's rights advocates. The Beecher family includes Harriet's sister, Catherine Beecher, an early female educator and writer who helped found numerous high schools and colleges for women; brother Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, a leader of the women's suffrage movement and considered by some to be the most eloquent minister of his time; General James Beecher, a Civil War general who commanded the first African-American troops in the Union Army recruited from the South; and sister Isabella Beecher Hooker, a women's rights advocate.

Recall that the fugitive abolitionists from the Lane Seminary debate went up to found Oberlin College where my daughter, Elizabeth Corey and her husband, David, graduated.

Both Powers and Duncanson are well-represented in The Taft Museum which is very close to our hotel and can be visited this afternoon. The Museum itself was originally a private house constructed by Martin Baum in 1820. It is a Greek Revival villa, Palladian style Federal architecture.



It was later purchased by the most important patron of the arts in Cincinnati, Nicholas Longworth. This is another sculpture by Hiram Powers in the Cincinnati Art Museum. He was a great patron of both Powers and Duncanson.



Nicholas Longworth, Sculpted by Hiram Powers
Cincinnati Museum of Art

Bill Allen has pointed out that Powers did many American statesmen, including Benjamin Franklin, John C. Calhoun, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, and Daniel Webster. Bill added, “Just imagine the conversation that could arise from such a line up.” This is subject of previous Philadelphia Society meetings, and, I am sure will be again in the future in one guise or another!

The Taft Museum also has in its foyer the eight beautiful landscape murals (c. 1850) by Robert Duncanson (1821-1872). He was commissioned by Nicholas Longworth, a great patron of the arts, to do these murals for his private residence, Belmont, before it became the Taft Museum. In 1850 Longworth described Duncanson as “one of our most promising painters” and “a man of great industry and worth.”

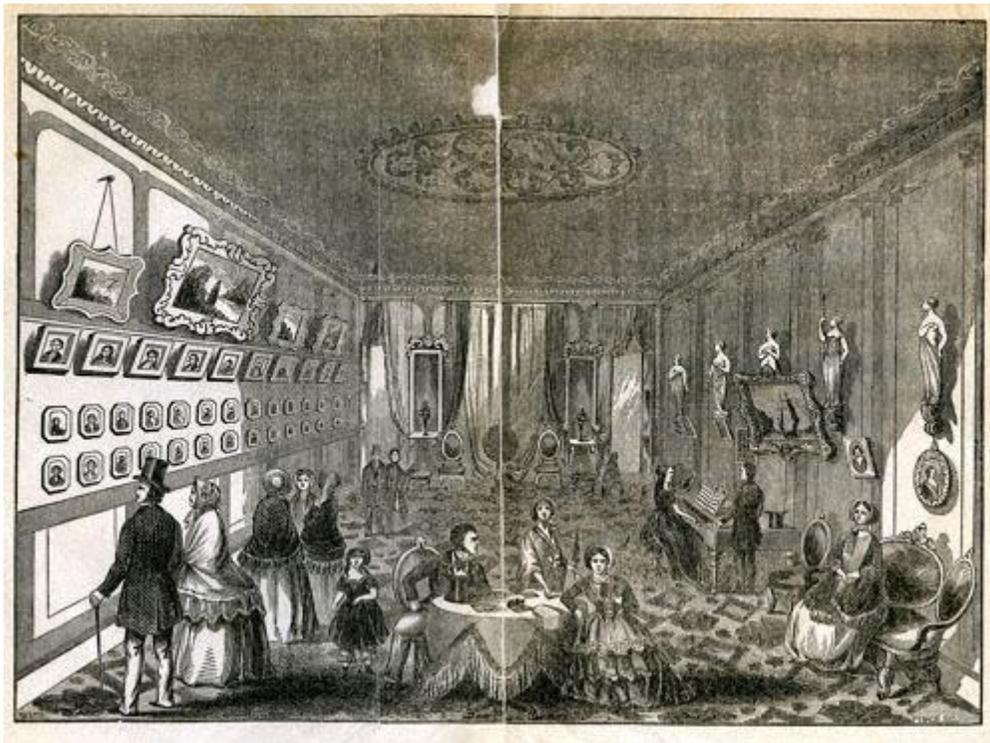


Robert Duncanson Mural, Taft Museum

Duncanson descended from an emancipated Virginia slave, Charles Duncanson, who moved north to Fayette, New York, prior to 1790 to escape the slave system. Charles's son, John Dean, and his wife, Lucy, raised a family of seven children, including Robert. The family eventually moved to Monroe, Michigan, where Robert apprenticed in the family trades of house painting and carpentry.

Yearning to be an artist, Duncanson moved to Cincinnati in 1840, determined to break into the exclusively Caucasian art community. He taught himself art by painting portraits and copying prints. He also studied the style of the Hudson River school of painting, which had been established as early as 1825 when William Cullen Bryant and other poets called on artists to paint the wilderness as a symbol of the American nation.

Duncanson did several portraits of Abolitionists and probably worked for James Presley Ball. James Presley Ball was a black photographer and entrepreneur in Cincinnati. "In 1851, Ball again opened a gallery in Cincinnati, later moving it to another downtown location in 1853 and expanding it to include nine employees. 'Ball's Great Daguerrian Gallery of the West' quickly became one of the most well known galleries in the United States, and was featured in a wood engraving in Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion, April 1, 1854."



Ball's Great Daguerrian Gallery of the West, 1854-1855
Cincinnati Historical Society Library

Although Duncanson's son urged him to be more outright African American in his works, Duncanson wrote to his son, "I have no color on the brain; all I have on the brain is paint."

They produced a huge 600-yard-long mural titled "Mammoth Pictorial Tour of the United States Comprising Views of the African Slave Trade; of Northern and Southern Cities; of Cotton and Sugar Plantations; of the Mississippi, Ohio and Susquehanna Rivers, Niagara Falls & C." The text was published in 1855 in Cincinnati.

Cincinnati is in fact the missing link between the Hudson River School of New York and what we know as Western Art in the middle 19th century. Of course, these landscapes are still the most popular form of American art for the general public. It is striking that a recent study of American taste in painting showed that almost uniformly the Hudson River School was the most influential, even if the American public could not identify it by name.

Trees are the true heroes of Hudson River art, as Cole wrote "they are like men...they exhibit striking peculiarities, and sometimes grand originality." The trees of the American landscape have a primitive quality that sets them apart from Europe, and their autumnal color "surpasses all the world in gorgeousness."



Thomas Cole
Lake with Dead Trees (1825)
Oberlin College

Thomas Cole believed that landscape paintings were "those scenes of solitude from which the hand of nature has never been lifted, affect the mind with a more deep toned emotion than aught which the hand of man has touched. Amid them the consequent associations are of God the creator - they are his undefiled works, and the mind is cast into the contemplation of eternal things."

Asher B. Durand stated a similar point of view in his 1855 *Letters on Landscape Painting*: “it is by reverent attention to the realized forms of Nature alone, that Art is enabled by its delegated power to reproduce some measure of the profound and elevated emotions which the contemplation of the visible works of God awaken.”⁷

A contemporary critic James Jackson Jarvis explained this attention to detail as the desire of the artists to equate Truth and Beauty. “Art should exhibit a scientific correctness in every particular, and as a unity, be expressive of the general principle at the center of being. In this manner feeling and reason are reconciled, and a complete and harmonious whole is obtain. In the degree that this union obtains in art its works become efficacious, because embodying, under the garb of beauty, the most of truth.”

Thomas Worthington Whittredge, (1820-1910) was another painter working in the Cincinnati area influenced by Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School. In fact he claimed that the term, Hudson River School, was an attack on the *provincialism* of anything west of New York. It was a term of criticism rather than approval. If this be provincialism, make the most of it.

Whittredge’s “Trout Fishing in the Adirondacks” is a quiet scene where a fisherman near the stream’s edge contemplates the quiet scene. The trees create cathedral-like arches that give the illusion of a nature chapel.

<http://www.huntermuseum.org/gallery/11/whittredge/trout-fishing-in-the-adirondacks>

Nicholas Longworth was one of his patrons and sent him to Europe to formally study. While in Dusseldorf, he befriended the German born painters, Emanuel Leutze and Albert Bierstadt, who carried the Hudson River tradition to the far West. Whittredge’s art is primarily western landscapes and scenes.

<http://www.huntermuseum.org/learn/connect/essays/42/>

Compare these views to the Modern Art vogue of “transgressing boundaries.” It’s a new orthodoxy to *épater la bourgeoisie* and revel in decadence, but when all boundaries are transgressed, when all transparencies are seen through, what lies at the bottom of all this? Seldom after shock, do we get awe!

Nicholas Longworth was also the patron of Worthington Whittredge whose paintings were primarily western landscapes and scenes. He sent him to Europe to formally study. While in Dusseldorf, he befriended the German born painters, Emanuel Leutze and Albert Bierstadt, who carried the Hudson River tradition to the far West.

The Cincinnati Art Museum is the beneficiary of the Procter & Gamble Collection of Ohio based painters. They transmitted the patronage of the early men of business in the 19th century to the present generation.

⁷ If you happen to be in the state of New York, don’t miss the Duncanson exhibit in the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, Catskill, New York, May 1-October 30, 2011: *Robert Duncanson: “The Spiritual Striving of the Freedmen’s Sons.”*



P&G Logo⁸ until 1985

James Bowman in a recent article on the recent fracas over the Martin Luther King Monument in Washington, makes the basic point that “All culture begins with commemoration of the past and honor rendered to the dead.”⁹ We have been reminded of the same insight by Catesby Leigh, one of our afternoon speakers, in his important article, “Building More Value into the World We Build.”¹⁰

One of the outstanding gems of Cincinnati architectural accomplishments is Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum, just a few minutes from downtown Cincinnati. The Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce lists it among the city's outstanding attractions proudly quoting the praise of an artist who once said, “Only a place with a heart and soul could make for its dead a more magnificent park than any which exists for the living.”

A course in architectural history could be constructed by using the tombs and monuments in this cemetery alone.

“In the 1830's and 1840's, Cincinnatians were saddened by the recurrence of the cholera epidemic. The crowded and sometimes unkempt appearance of many of the small church cemeteries in the basin area offered little comfort to bereaved families. Many of the leaders in the professional and industrial enterprises of the city expressed their concern over the lack of proper interment facilities.

⁸ The P&G Logo was thought to be a symbol of Satanism by some Amway employees and P&G won a \$19.25 settlement in 2007.

⁹ James Bowman, “Monuments to Lost Meaning,” *The American Spectator*, October 2011, p. 76.

¹⁰ Catesby Leigh, “Building More Value Into the World We Build,” *Modern Age*, Fall, 2007, part of a Symposium, “In Defense of Beauty.” He also draws attention to the provocative piece by Joseph Bottum, “Death and Politics,” *First Things* (June/July, 2007).

Resulting from this concern, members of the Cincinnati Horticultural Society formed a cemetery association in 1844. They endeavored to find a location suitable for creating a picturesque park like institution, a rural cemetery, contiguous to the city yet remote enough not to be disturbed by expansion. They sought to acquire enough land to be used for funerary purposes into the indefinite future, which could be embellished with shrubbery, flowers, trees, walks, and rural ornaments. These men traveled throughout the United States and Europe visiting cemeteries of outstanding reputation and beauty as they planned a cemetery that would equal the famed beauty of Pere-Lachaise in Paris, and various outstanding cemeteries on the East Coast of the United States.

On December 1, 1844 Salmon Chase and others prepared the Articles of Incorporation. Chase lobbied with legislators, persuading them to grant a charter for a non-profit nondenominational corporation, which was granted by a special act on January 21, 1845. At the consecration ceremony the founders publicly proclaimed their hope that the natural setting would be a contemplative atmosphere conducive to consolation, commemoration, and education. The first interment was made September 1, 1845.

Let's begin our tour with the people we already know, Hiram Powers and Nicholas Longworth. Powers designed the Obelisk for the Longworth memorial. The obelisk was modeled after those appearing in Egypt, Greece and Rome. A blue marble sphinx, also derived from Egypt, memorializes Matthew and Ann Lawler.



The Fleischmann Mausoleum (1913) that sits near Geyser Lake is modeled after a Greek Doric Temple.



Fleischmann Mausoleum (1913)

The Norman Chapel (1880), designed by Samuel Hannaford, is in the Romanesque style with some Byzantine motifs.



Norman Chapel (1880)
Samuel Hannaford

Samuel Hannaford blessed Cincinnati with other Romanesque monuments. He had been inspired by H.H. Richardson who had built a massive Chamber of Commerce building (1885-1887) in the Romanesque style. Unfortunately, a kitchen grease fire gutted it in 1911.



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CINCINNATI
Chamber of Commerce Building
H.H. Richardson

But the Richardson Romanesque style influenced Samuel Hannaford's Cincinnati City Hall, built between 1887-93. It was praised fulsomely in the 1893 dedication booklet: "Unless one has been privileged to visit her (Cincinnati) sights, to participate in her business and to live in her suburbs, one can hardly understand the love which each citizen has for his Queen (City of the West) and it is just that love which makes Cincinnati what she is; which has given her the opportunity for becoming great...which has last of all given her a city hall of which every citizen on the community is today speaking with pride."



Cincinnati City Hall
H.H. Richardson, 1887-1893

Another architectural gem by Samuel Hannaford is the Music Hall, built in 1878.



Music Hall
Samuel Hannaford, 1878

Clara Longworth, the daughter of the elder Nicholas Longworth, and brother of the House Majority leader, Nicholas Longworth, later became the Countess of Chambrun. She makes the important point that it is not the size of a city that is really important, but “the continuity of its values and traditions. It resides even more especially still in the will of her citizens to collaborate for her best interests and see to it that material progress keeps pace with intellectual aspiration.” (John Clubbe, *Cincinnati Observed: Architecture and History*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992, p. 249)

The Midwest is dotted with these large structures constructed in the latter half of the 19th century. My alma mater, DePauw University, celebrates Meharry Hall (East College).



Meharry Hall
DePauw University
1871-1875

Central Hall at Hillsdale College is also in what is sometimes called, Second Empire style.



Central Hall
Hillsdale College

To return to the cemetery, one can make the transition from Romanesque to Gothic architecture. The cemetery is festooned with numerous Gothic structures. The Dexter Mausoleum located in section 20 of Spring Grove Cemetery is a private, family mausoleum, often mistaken for one of Spring Grove's three chapels. Edmund Dexter was an English immigrant - a "whiskey baron." His mausoleum was intended to resemble a Gothic Revival "funerary monument." Designed in 1869, it boasts the only two symmetrical buttresses in Cincinnati.



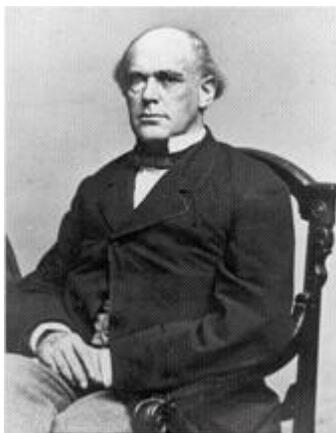
Dexter Mausoleum
Spring Grove Cemetery

The Reflection Pool is also an extremely lovely place for contemplation:



Reflection Pool
Spring Grove Cemetery

Salmon P. Chase was buried in this cemetery. He was the Founder of the Cincinnati Law School, a prominent anti-slavery advocate. In 1855 became the first Republican Governor of Ohio. Lincoln named him Secretary of the Treasury, and he had the enormous task of financing the Civil War. He founded the Internal Revenue Service and created the National Banking System. He was also appointed as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and he conducted two of the most spectacular trials in history - the treason trial of Jefferson Davis and the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson. He died in 1873.



Also buried in this cemetery was Charles West, the Founder of the Cincinnati Art Museum. The allegorical figures flanking his monument represent the four major constituents of the fine arts: theatre, music, dance, and literature.



Charles West
Founder of the Cincinnati Art Museum

In the 20th century Cincinnati formed the Board of Park Commissioners in 1906. By the next year they'd laid the foundation of today's Cincinnati Parks with the 1907 plan, "A Park System for the City of Cincinnati," designed by George Kessler (1862-1923), a landscape architect and native of Germany.

Kessler had guided many of the locations throughout the country, including Indianapolis. Kessler guided the Park Commission for six years until 1915. A good portion of the system had been surveyed and constructed by then. The city hired Kessler once again in the 1920s. He was in town, supervising construction of a new belt road, when he died in 1923. The new belt road was named Kessler Boulevard in his honor.

Guided under the tutelage of the popular "City Beautiful Movement" of the time, Kessler's work matured from strictly landscape design to city planning and urban development.

Simply take a look at what's around you in this hotel. Let's start with the gift shops where you will come across a Rookwood Pottery store. Rookwood Pottery was a major producer of pottery and is associated with the *Art Nouveau* style initiated with the store created by Siegfried Bing (1875-1920) in Paris in 1880.

Bing looked upon America as a model, a wake-up call to European lethargy. His American models were Rookwood and Louis Comfort Tiffany.

The Cincinnati pottery was founded in 1880 by Marie Longworth Nichols (1847-1939) and was active from 1880 to 1941. It won the Grand Prix at the 1900 Paris World's Fair. The local Cincinnati Arts Museum has quite a good collection of its work.

Here is a beautiful example of Rookwood Pottery:



One of the more famous potters associated with Rookwood was a Japanese artist by the name of Kataro Shirayamadani. The beauty of Japanese art was appreciated both by Rookwood and also Ralph Adams Cram, the great architect and friend of Albert J. Nock.



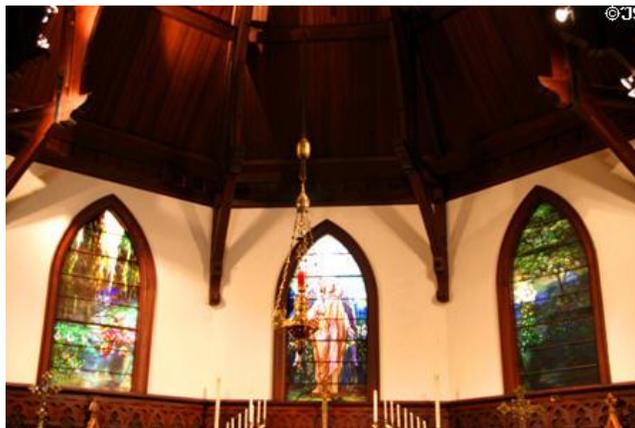
Louis Comfort Tiffany is well represented in Cincinnati.

In Cincinnati, the Taft Museum recently had an exhibition of seven rediscovered Tiffany Windows, 8-foot-high stained-glass lancet windows, representing seven angels and the seven cities described in the Book of Revelation.



Philip Bess would be interested in noting that they were originally designed in the late 1890s for a Swedenborgian Church of the New Jerusalem at the corner of Oak Street and Winslow Avenue. The church was demolished in 1964 to make for Interstate 71, and parishioners saved the windows, storing them in various locations throughout Ohio. In 1991, they were purchased for the Swedenborgian church at Temonos, near Philadelphia. In ancient Greece, *Temonos* is a sacred space reserved for worshipping the gods.

Tiffany also ties together my own city of Baton Rouge and Cincinnati. In Baton Rouge, St. James Episcopal Church, a neo-Gothic structure of the late 1800s is adorned with beautiful Tiffany windows. One of the windows shows the arrival of the New Jerusalem.



St. James Episcopal Church
Baton Rouge
Tiffany Windows

Now let's examine the hotel itself. The Netherland Plaza is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the country.



Art Deco refers to the style connected with the 1920s and 1930s. The term *art deco* derives from the title of a major Paris design exhibition held in 1925, *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts).

Art Deco was decorative and dedicated to the graceful and beautiful. The Acorn Gallery is typical.



It is striking how similar the chandelier is to The Chrysler Building in New York City (1930), another classical example of Art Deco.



The Netherland Plaza hotel is part of the Carew Tower, which was one of the models for the Empire State Building in New York City.



Another example of Art Deco in Cincinnati is the lovely Krohn Conservatory in Eden Park. Built in 1933 it contains a rain forest and a desert, as well as 3,500 species.



Here is a picture of the rain forest:



From Eden Park, you have beautiful views of the Ohio River:



Let me conclude with a quote from Richard Weaver in his essay, “The Southern Tradition.” He stated, “Convincing cases have been made to show that all great art is provincial in the sense of reflecting a place, a time, and a *Zeitgeist*. Quite a number of spokesmen have pleaded with the South *not* to give up her provincialism.”¹¹

¹¹ There are similar reflections from Henry Watterson, long-time editor of the *Louisville Courier Journal* and Stark Young; also reflections on Texas and Charleston etc. *The Southern Essays of Richard M. Weaver*, ed. George M. Curtis, III, and James J. Thompson, Jr., Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1987.

Appendix I: Why We Are Meeting in Cincinnati and not in Washington, DC

Why has The Philadelphia Society never met in Washington, D.C. as a matter of principle? Yes, we have flanked it with meetings in Alexandria and Arlington in the great Commonwealth of Virginia and one meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, the home of H.L. Mencken.

This year we are meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, October 7-8, 2011. Our theme is *America the Beautiful*. One would think that such a topic would lend itself to Washington, D.C.

No less an anti-federalist conservative than Mel Bradford has paid his homage to the beauty of the nation's capital. "The Federal District of Columbia, both in its formal character as a capital and also in its self-conscious attempt at a certain visual splendor, is, for every visitor from the somewhat sovereign states, a reminder that the analogy of ancient Rome had a formative effect upon those who conceived and designed it as their one strictly national place. What our fathers called Washington City is thus, at one and the same time, a symbol of their common political aspirations and a specification of the continuity of those objectives with what they knew of the Roman experience. So are we all informed with the testimony of the eye, however we construe the documentary evidence of original confederation. So say the great monuments, the memorials, the many public building and the seat of government itself. So the statuary placed at the very center of the Capitol of the United States. And much, much more." Mel Bradford, "A Teaching for Republicans: Roman History and the Nation's First Identity,"¹²

The reason is not the seductiveness of its beauty but the seductiveness of power. As our distinguished member, Stan Evans, has observed, "Too many conservatives come to Washington thinking that it is a cesspool and wind up thinking it is a hot tub."

Some in the 19th century held a similar view. Although there is great debate about the origins of the phrase, "Go West, young man, go west," it is usually attributed to Horace Greeley in one form or another. My favorite rendition is, "Washington is not a place to live in. The rents are high, the food is bad, the dust is disgusting and the morals are deplorable. Go West, young man, go West and grow up with the country."

¹² Mel Bradford, *A Better Guide than Reason*, 1979, p. 3. There is an irony for Mel which he probably knew quite well. Most of the monuments in Washington are pro-Union Civil War Memorials. A recent article by Michael Bishop in the January 8, 2011, *Wall Street Journal* draws attention to the Grant monument, "A Great Bronze Tarnished by Neglect": <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703909904576051772292330568.html?KEYWORDS=a+great+bronze>. Also, the books he mentions should be consulted, Kathryn A. Jacob, *Testament to union : Civil War monuments in Washington, D.C* Johns Hopkins and James M. Goode's *The outdoor sculpture of Washington, D.C. A comprehensive historical guide*. All this, of course, preceded the Maoist style monument to Martin Luther King by a Chinese sculptor. James Bowman's article, "Monuments to Lost Meaning" *The American Spectator*, October 2011 is a good discussion of the significance of this monument.

Although the rents are high and the morals still deplorable, the food has improved and the dust is no longer so evident. But, still, for conservatives, Washington is a great place to visit, but we don't want you to live there.

Therefore, we are moving West to Cincinnati to ruminate on beauty. There are other seats of government throughout this beautiful land that are more important than our nation's capital.

Appendix II: Beyond Beauty

We will not even make it to Frank Gehry's Vontz Center for Molecular Studies or Peter Eisenman's 1996 Aronoff Center for Design and Art, University of Cincinnati. .



Frank Gehry, Vontz Center for Molecular Studies
3125 Eden Avenue



Peter Eisenman, 1996
Aronoff Center for Design and Art
University of Cincinnati