



A New and Native Beauty

THE ART AND CRAFT OF GREENE & GREENE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Comprehensive Exhibition on Arts and Crafts Legends Greene & Greene to Begin National Tour at The Huntington

A “New and Native” Beauty: The Art and Craft of Greene & Greene
Oct. 18, 2008–Jan. 26, 2009

Press preview: Friday, Oct. 17, 10 a.m. to noon

SAN MARINO, Calif.—The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, in partnership with the Gamble House, USC, will present the most comprehensive exhibition ever undertaken on the work of Arts and Crafts architecture and design legends Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene. “A ‘New and Native’ Beauty: The Art and Craft of Greene & Greene” will be on view from Oct. 18, 2008, through Jan. 26, 2009, in the MaryLou and George Boone Gallery at The Huntington before traveling to the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. (March 13–June 7, 2009) and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (July 14–Oct. 18, 2009).

“This is a presentation whose time has come, and we’re absolutely thrilled to be a part of it,” says Jessica Todd Smith, Virginia Steele Scott Curator of American Art at The Huntington. “We’ve collaborated with our friends at the Gamble House in Pasadena for decades, watching the field ripen for this moment when we might launch a show of this scale and scope—an endeavor worthy of Charles and Henry Greene, who were true masters and whose influence is still felt a century after their time.”

Since 1988, The Huntington has housed the Greene & Greene Archives—a scholarly resource of the Gamble House comprising drawings, photographs, correspondence, and ephemera. The Huntington’s Virginia Steele Scott Gallery of American Art also includes works by the Greene brothers in a permanent installation organized with the Gamble House.

The precisely hewn residences and works of decorative art designed by the Greene brothers between 1906 and 1911, among them the exquisite Gamble House, which celebrates its centennial this year, have come to define the American Arts and Crafts movement.

“The Greene brothers created a new paradigm,” says Edward R. Bosley, James N. Gamble Director of the Gamble House and a co-curator of the exhibition. “They inspired their clients to go the extra mile to create a rarefied stratum of architecture.” Gamble House curator Anne Mallek co-curates the exhibition, which is drawn from collections at both The Huntington and Gamble House, as well as from more than 30 private and institutional lenders in the United States and abroad.

The exhibition is a chronological survey of the Greenses’ lives and careers over a nearly 90-year period. Representative objects from 25 of their commissions, including significant ex-

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Lantern, 1910, James A. Culbertson House, Pasadena, 1902–14. (Courtesy of Guardian Stewardship. Photograph courtesy of Sotheby’s, New York.)

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amples from the best-known period of their work will explore important points in the evolution of their unique design vocabulary. In all, the show will feature approximately 140 objects, including beautifully inlaid furniture, artfully executed metalwork, and rare architectural drawings and photographs. Works of decorative art, in some instances never before seen by the public, will include furnishings, light fixtures, and luminous stained glass.

Among the items on display will be the 1910 James Culbertson lantern, a signature Greene & Greene light fixture that fully captures the brothers' extraordinary designs for illumination; the Blacker House mahogany dining table (1909); and the Whitworth leaded-glass window (1918), an exceptional example of Henry Greene's work in glass design.

Photographs, drawings, and descriptions of 30 of the Greenes' major architectural commissions, which include the Gamble (1908), Blacker (1909), Robinson (1906), Tichenor (1905), and Cordelia Culbertson (1913) houses, will provide points of departure for interpreting the objects on display. Archival photographs will be accompanied by video footage showing house exteriors as they look today.

Major thematic influences on the Greenes' work also will be explored, such as the role that Japanese architecture, traditional wood joinery, and classical proportion played in shaping their design sensibilities. To this end, the exhibition will re-create part of the Arturo Bandini house designed in 1903 but now gone; and the re-creation of an exterior covered corridor will demonstrate how the brothers were simultaneously influenced by examples of Japanese design and Spanish colonial tradition.

As did their contemporary Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles and Henry Greene believed architecture to be no less than a design language for life, imbuing their houses and furnishings with an expressive sensitivity for geography, climate, landscape, and lifestyle.

"The Greenes were looking for ways to build in this environment that made sense to them," says Mallek. "This environment" was their new home of Pasadena, to which they came in 1893 after being raised in the Midwest and attending the Manual Training School in St. Louis and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston. Just founded, Pasadena was a sophisticated town that had become the state's preeminent resort for tourists from the East. The brothers established their practice and soon were designing homes for their monied clients, many transplants from the Midwest as well.

Some clients, such as lawyer-financier Henry Robinson and the Gamble family of the Procter and Gamble Co., commissioned Charles and Henry to design not just their homes, but the furniture and fixtures within as well. Today the Gamble House is unique in that it retains all of its original furnishings and fixtures designed by the architects. In all other cases, most or all of the decorative arts within have been dispersed around the globe, as Greene & Greene designs have soared in value on the collectors' market.

When the Gamble House opened to the public in 1966 (a gift from the family to the city of Pasadena in a joint agreement with USC's School of Architecture), Charles and Henry's work had largely been forgotten. But 1966 provided a pivotal moment for their legacy with the passing of the National Historic Preservation Act. Before then, a number of Greene & Greene buildings had been demolished. The act began to bear fruit in the 1970s as communities increasingly began to protect their architectural heritage.

Visitors to the exhibition may be reminded of a dark moment in historic preservation with the display of light fixtures and other objects from the Blacker House that now reside in private or institutional collections. In the 1980s the house was stripped of nearly all of its

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Greene & Greene designed fixtures, windows, and even its front door, prompting the city of Pasadena to enact an ordinance that restricts the dismantlement of historic residences, a rarity in the United States.

The title of the exhibition was inspired by the wording of a 1952 special citation from the American Institute of Architects honoring the Greens as formulators of a “new and native architecture.” Greene and Greene designs strongly influenced California’s architectural heritage, and their work is of international significance as well, inspiring countless architects and designers around the world through a legacy of extant structures, scholarly books, and articles.

“A ‘New and Native’ Beauty: The Art and Craft of Greene & Greene” is organized by the Gamble House, USC and The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, in cooperation with the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Major support for the exhibition comes from The Ahmanson Foundation, Ayrshire Foundation, The Henry Luce Foundation, Steven and Kelly McLeod Family Foundation, Joseph D. Messler, Jr., Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Resnick Family Foundation, Laura and Carlton Seaver, Wells Fargo, Windgate Charitable Foundation, and Margaret Winslow. Additional support was provided by Levin & Associates, Toshie and Frank Mosher, the Peter Norton Family Foundation, Ann Peppers Foundation, Melvin R. Seiden-Janine Luke Exhibition Fund, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and the Elsie De Wolfe Foundation.

Related Publication

The book *A “New and Native” Beauty: The Art and Craft of Greene & Greene* will be released in October 2008 to accompany the exhibition, featuring a foreword by architect Frank Gehry and essays addressing the Greens; their architecture; designs for works of decorative art in a variety of media; landscape designs; English, exotic, and native influences in their work; and the role of the clients in the development of their designs. Published by Merrell Publishers Ltd. and available at The Huntington’s Bookstore & More and at major booksellers for \$75, the 272-page clothbound book includes 170 color illustrations.

About The Huntington

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public. More information about The Huntington can be found online at www.huntington.org.

Visitor information

The Huntington is located at 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino, Calif., and is open to the public Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from noon to 4:30 p.m.; and Saturday, Sunday, and Monday holidays from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Summer hours (Memorial Day through Labor Day) are 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Closed Tuesdays and major holidays. **Admission on weekdays:** \$15 adults, \$12 seniors (65+), \$10 students (ages 12–18 or with full-time student I.D.), \$6 youth (ages 5–11), free for children under 5. Group rate \$11 per person for groups of 15 or more. Members are admitted free. **Admission on weekends and Monday holidays:** \$20 adults, \$15 seniors, \$10 students, \$6 youth, free for children under 5. Group rate \$14 per person for groups of 15 or more. Members are admitted free. Admission is free to all visitors on the first Thursday of each month with advance tickets. Information: 626-405-2100 or www.huntington.org.

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About The Gamble House

The Gamble House, a National Historic Landmark, is owned by the city of Pasadena and operated by the University of Southern California. More information can be found online at www.gamblehouse.org.

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