

# LAND MARK

RECENTLY DESIGNATED NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

**NEW PHILADELPHIA TOWN SITE** Three decades before the Civil War, New Philadelphia sat on the rolling farmland between the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, founded and laid out by Frank McWhorter, a slave who made enough money mining saltpeter to purchase his freedom, that of 15 family members, and 42 acres. He sold lots to African Americans as well as people of mixed race and European descent, who thrived raising crops and livestock in part because the place was at a crossroads near the two waterways. They persevered through violence between pro-slavers and abolitionists, but the town was abandoned after the railroad passed it by in 1869. Today, life in this early integrated community has been the focus of much study.

**MIAMI CIRCLE** In the center of the city for which it is named, the Miami Circle was discovered in 1998 when ground was being cleared for a condo. The site of a structure believed to be 1,700 to 2,000 years old—with 24 postholes dug into bedrock in a circular shape—touched off a flurry of debate in academia, government, and the media. A legal drama ensued with the bulldozers stopped at the last moment. Since its discovery, the circle—purchased by the state with the help of donors—has been intensely investigated, yielding artifacts and other evidence of native ceremonial practices, building techniques, and trade networks. The posts probably supported a large structure used by the Tequesta people, who likely encountered Ponce de León on his arrival in 1513.

**SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL** Located at Ganado Mission, on Arizona's Navajo reservation, the hospital—built by the Presbyterian Church—was the site of the nation's first accredited nursing program for Native American women. The program, established in 1930 by the church, helped bridge the gap between traditional healing practices and western medicine, drawing women from over 50 tribes. It was also a popular choice for students of Mexican, Inuit, Japanese, Filipino, and Chinese descent, an anomaly at a time when institutions did not offer such education to non-whites.

## *Christ Church Lutheran* >>

Eliel Saarinen's modernist masterwork, Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis, brought the modern form to a traditional venue with remarkable results.

"Through his adept use of materials, proportion, scale, and light . . . he created a building having great dramatic effect and architectural impact, yet one that also retained a human scale," the American Institute of Architects said in bestowing its 25-Year Award. Although the congregation wanted a Gothic Revival building, the rise in postwar construction costs led them to modern design, a pared-down style resonant with the Lutheran faith. But when Saarinen's name

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came up, there was doubt as to whether he would be either interested or affordable. The Finnish-born architect was a force in the modernist movement then in ascendance, with works both in Europe and the United States. His design for the Tribune Tower in Chicago—though never built—had great influence on the development of the skyscraper. He designed America's answer to Germany's Bauhaus—Michigan's Cranbrook Educational Community, also a national historic landmark—and served as president of its academy of art.

Despite his stature, Saarinen took on the project. Pastor William A. Buege recalls a meeting. "I asked [him] if it were possible in a materialistic age like ours to do something truly spiritual," Buege wrote. "He soon showed me." Christ Church Lutheran, completed in 1949, was a sensation, stark and spare yet warm and contemplative, a signature mix that made Saarinen stand out from other modernists. The American Institute of Architects called it a place of "serenity and repose." The severity of its crisp lines and broad, unadorned surfaces were tempered by an array of elements: light-colored brick in a variety of earth tones; the judicious use of curved walls; smooth, round columns; and teardrop-shaped lights. Natural light and an abundance of white pine and oak enhanced the effect. Saarinen went to great pains to ensure the quietude. He minimized parallel planes to avoid reverberation and covered sound-reflecting surfaces with acoustic material. The result was an intimacy and directness that departed sharply from the drafty, echoing churches of old. Saarinen died six months after the church was built. His son Eero—now a legend in his own right—designed a 1962 addition, maintaining his father's vision.







THE FRAGONARD ROOM/MICHAEL BODYCOMB

## << *Frick Collection*

Built by Pittsburgh steel magnate Henry Clay Frick between 1912 and 1914, the Frick Collection is a key example of the “art house museum” as well as one of the nation’s preeminent art institutions. Frick, like his contemporaries the Mellons, Vanderbilts, Morgans, and Rockefellers, looked to European art and culture as a way to mark one’s sophistication. His house—and its contiguous art reference library, a 1930s addition—were the product of “the first period of major art collecting in the United States, one of the defining activities of the Gilded Age elite,” says the national historic landmark nomination. Today it remains a telling legacy of the wealth amassed by American industrialists. Working with architects Carrere & Hastings, who designed the New York Public Library, Frick built the Beaux-Arts mansion on a stretch of Fifth Avenue known as Millionaire’s Row. Advised by experts, he built an unrivaled personal collection, living his final years surrounded by art objects, the house opening onto a private garden, a rarity along Fifth Avenue. Historian William Constable sheds light on the context of the time, writing on the emergence of the “Great Master Collection” toward the end of the 19th century: “The new houses built by gilded age collectors had to be furnished with commen-

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surate style, sophistication, and luxury to provide an appropriate place for the display of artwork and as an attempt to import cultural and social validity using long-established European sources.” In his will, Frick stipulated that the house become a museum. Architect John Russell Pope designed the library as part of this transition, his goal the smooth movement of visitors throughout, between old and new. As a result, says the landmark nomination, house and library “read as a seamless whole.”

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