

Please join us April 14 for
the Gathering of the Guilds.
See pages 3 and 5 for more information.

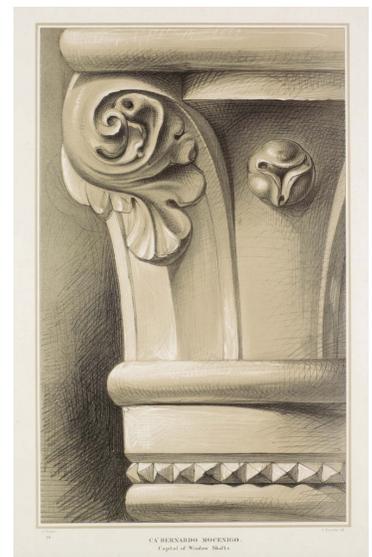
JOHN RUSKIN AT 200: FORERUNNER OF THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT

By Jeff Icenhower

Scratch the surface of many of the key influencers of the Arts and Crafts movement, and you will find the observation, "...influenced by John Ruskin." Born 200 years ago (February 8, 1819) Ruskin was known for his work as an art and architecture critic, and as a social commentator in the mid to late 1800s. Much of what he did provided foundational material for those now identified with Arts and Crafts. Ruskin entered Christ Church, Oxford in the fall of 1836, graduating in 1842 (after recovering from a health scare that prevented him from taking his exams in 1840). He was publishing already as an undergraduate, and ultimately his books and papers comprised 39 volumes when collected. Through these, he impacted the aesthetics of Arts and Crafts design, the moral and social ideals that drove the Arts and Crafts movement, and Victorian England's landscape in general.

Perhaps his greatest influence on the Arts and Crafts Movement came from the three-volume work *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853). In the chapter titled "The Nature of Gothic," Ruskin expressed his admiration

of Gothic architecture. He particularly pointed out the freedom allowed the stoneworkers in creating much of the decoration, admiring the result and its implication of freedom of expression. Believing that mechanization was dehumanizing, Ruskin said:



You must make either a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions.

This mindset ultimately found its way into the emphasis on handmade items in the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. This chapter was so important to William Morris it provided, "a central plank in ... Morris' beliefs." In 1892, Morris' Kelmscott Press reprinted the chapter as a stand-alone publication. In the preface,

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John Ruskin (cont.)

John Ruskin's photo from the National Portrait Gallery. Taken by William Downey, 1863.

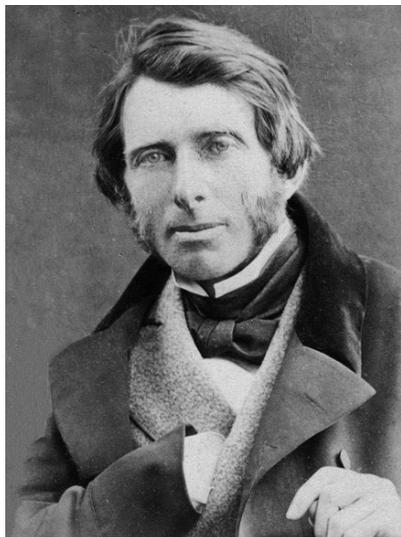


Image on page one: John Ruskin "Architecture of Venice, Capital of Window Shafts" 1887

Morris stated, "To my mind, and I believe to some others, it is one of the most important things written by the author, and in future days will be considered as one of the very few necessary and inevitable utterances of the century."

In *Modern Painters*, a four-volume work written begun in 1843 and completed in 1856, Ruskin established himself as a preeminent art critic of his time. He controversially argued that modern landscape painters – and in particular J. M. W. Turner – were superior to the so-called "Old Masters" of the post-Renaissance period. Ruskin maintained that, unlike Turner, Old Masters such as Poussin, Claude, and Salvator Rosa favored pictorial *convention*, and not "truth to nature". Then he confused matters with the explanation that he meant "moral as well as material truth". This focus on nature echoes through all of Ruskin's work.

Using his influence as an art critic, Ruskin supported the group of Oxford artists who joined together in 1848 as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The name refers to their desire to return to the emphasis on nature rather than the mechanistic approach adopted by painters after Raphael. Ruskin "praised its devotion to nature and rejection of conventional methods of composition." The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in turn put its stamp on Arts and Crafts design through the friendship and business partnership with William Morris of several of the members, including the artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

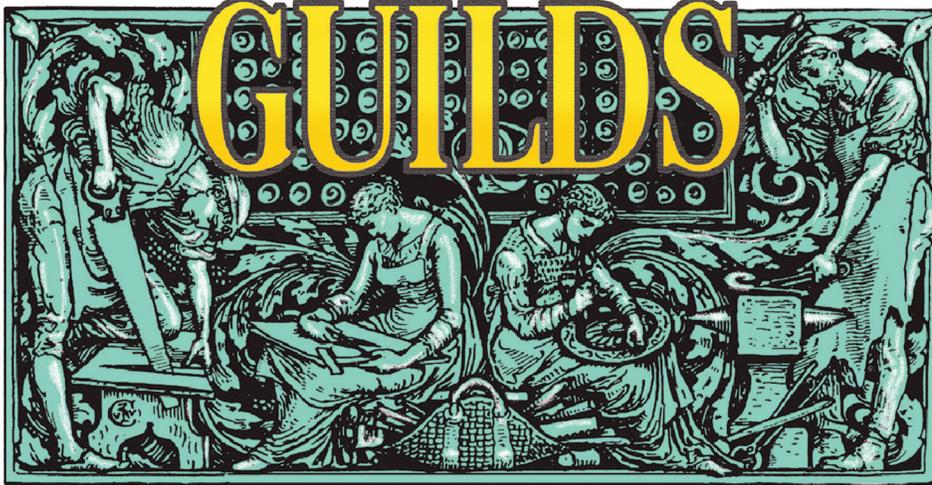
In the late 1850's Ruskin turned his attention more and more to address social issues. This led to the publication of *Unto This Last* in 1860, a highly influential book of essays on economics. His concerns included the negative impact of industrial capitalism in general, and division of labor in particular, which separated the worker from his product. Elsewhere he wrote of the unfortunate separation of the workman and the master:

We want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers and miserable workers. Now it is only by labour that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labour can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity.

Unto This Last went further than the critique of division of labor, to envision the ideal community. A decade later The Guild of St. George was founded (at first as 'St. George's Fund') as Ruskin's attempt at actually creating a communitarian protest to 19th-century industrialism. He hoped to show that people could live in harmony with the environment, using traditional rural handicrafts. Although the community was short-lived, the Guild of St. George exists to this day as a charitable education trust. It also maintains a museum containing "art, minerals, books, medieval manuscripts, architectural casts, coins and other precious and beautiful objects."

Behind his art criticism and closely linked social criticism was a man who was a product of his time. He was an only child of wealthy and protective parents (they moved to Oxford to be near him while he attended university). He was sure of his opinions and was articulate enough to make a case for them. Although a champion of workingmen, he believed, paradoxically, in a very Victorian, hierarchical ordering of society (he himself was 'Master' of the Guild of St. George). Ruskin was a vocal proponent of those who shared his views – and a fierce adversary to those who did not. And his ideas provided food for thought for many original drivers of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The Colorado Arts and Crafts Society Presents
A GATHERING OF THE



**TO BE HELD IN DOWNTOWN GOLDEN, COLORADO
APRIL 14, 2019 10AM-4PM**

As the Victorian era waned at the end of the 19th century, a new decorative arts aesthetic, the Arts and Crafts Movement, emerged in England and America. Soon after our State's founding in 1876, the Movement came to the United States, and to Colorado.

By 1898 in Denver, a group of enlightened artists, craftsmen and women had started the Denver Artists' Club, whose members included artist Henry Read and socialite Elizabeth Spaulding. Five years after this group was founded, they added another branch called the Art Crafts Department. Writing in the Denver Post, Read said, "Due to the rise in America of the philosophies of Ruskin, William Morris, Charles Wagner and Leo Tolstoy, and that art after all is Man's expression of joy in his work. They should honor this expression with annual exhibitions of this art craftsmanship."

This was perhaps the real beginning of the movement in Colorado and The Colorado Arts & Crafts Society continues in this spirit still today by hosting our annual Gathering of the Guilds.

The Gathering of the Guilds Show & Sale is just around the corner and we invite you to come and join us on Sunday, April 14, 2019 from 10am to 4pm. This year the Gathering of the Guilds will be held in the heart of downtown Golden, **at the American Mountaineering Center located at 710 10th Street, Golden, CO 80439.** (See page 5 for more information about the venue).

This popular event is the only place where local guilds and artisans inspired by the Arts & Crafts Movement can come together to celebrate their craft. Exhibitors will include a wonderful collection of professional artists, metalsmiths, potters, woodworkers and weavers selling their handcrafted items in the following categories: Art, Antiques, Book Binding, Calligraphy, Ceramics, Distilling, Fiber, Furniture, Glass, Jewelry, Paper, and Textiles. There will be demonstrations and presentations throughout the day.

More information can be found at www.colorarts-crafts.org/events.htm. General Admission is \$5. Mark your calendars and we hope to see you in Golden on the 14th of April.



Julia Morgan: California's Force Majeure (II)



Julia Morgan (c. 1904)

By Cynthia Shaw

From 1903-10, Julia Morgan was busy designing a bell tower, library and infirmary for Mills College, a private, all-women's college in Oakland. To this day, El Campanil, the 72', red-roofed Mission Revival tower constructed in 1904 of undisguised reinforced concrete, is the campus's best known landmark attesting to the (then) 32-year-old architect's ingenious engineering skills.



After her miraculous restoration of the quake-ravaged shell of the Fairmount Hotel in 1907, Julia's reputation continued to soar. And yet, she still had to endure comments such as the one from a (female!) reporter speculating on the refurbished lobby: "How you must have reveled in this chance to squeeze dry the loveliest tubes in the whole world of color".

Her response: "I don't think you understand just what my work here has been. The decorative part was done by a New York firm. (Mine) has all been structural."

Next, she was hired to remodel reigning architect Willis Polk's Merchants Exchange Building, a 15-story "skyscraper" built just before (and damaged by)



San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 (area bounded by Jackson, Mason, Embarcadero and Pine Streets)

the earthquake. After adding maritime murals, marble Ionic columns, a coffered ceiling and vaulted skylights to the interior, Julia liked the improvements so much that she relocated her existing office to its 13th floor! While best known at the time for her campus and commercial works, she also had a small but growing residential practice, heavily influenced by a wave of innovative design aesthetics that had washed over San Francisco and its environs c. 1900.

With its affordable land, temperate climate and indigenous beauty, the Bay Area was already attracting scores of new settlers. The local population growth was further fueled by the expansion of the University of California's Berkeley (Cal) campus and the establishment of John Muir's Sierra Club, which sparked a passion for the conservation of Northern California's natural resources. Together, these conditions cultivated a unique architectural revolution christened the First Bay Tradition.

Inspired by the Arts and Crafts fervor that had already swept across America in the late 1880s, the guiding principles of this new movement were first delineated in *The Simple Home*, written in 1904 by Charles Keeler (Bernard Maybeck's earliest client). Its signature designs shared four common characteristics: the utilization of local materials, the combination of historic motifs with modern construction methods, the integration of structures with their surroundings, and execution of an original building that fulfilled the specific needs of both the client and community.

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Bernard Maybeck and his star pupil both played key roles in the development of this inaugural style. Julia, whose portfolio already included works in the Beaux Arts, Period Revival and Prairie styles, first captured the essence of the First Bay Tradition in her ecclesiastical designs for St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley (1908-16). Her application of Arts & Crafts, Celtic and Gothic details to the vernacular materials and scale of the Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary and Sunday School educational wing masterfully blended all the key ingredients within an indigenous redwood exterior. Now used transformed as the Berkeley Playhouse, Morgan considered it her best Craftsman work.



St. John's Presbyterian Church, exterior, circa 1916 (left), interior (above)

(To be continued in our Summer Newsletter)



A History of Mountaineering in Colorado

On April 14, 2019 CACS is honored to host our annual Gathering of the Guilds at the American Mountaineering Center in Golden, CO from 10am to 4pm. CACS is excited to partner with an organization that has such a deep Colorado history and we wanted to share part of their story.

On April 26, 1912, a dedicated group of service-minded, outdoor oriented people gathered in Denver to form the Colorado Mountain Club (CMC). James Grafton Rogers, a Denver attorney who would be integral to the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park, was the first President of the Club. The CMC's very first trip was to Denver's Cheesman Park, now in the heart of the capital city. On May 30, 1912, the Club conducted its first official mountain trip, a hike to the top of South Boulder Peak.

From 25 charter members united in their love of the mountains, the Club rapidly grew to 200 members

barely a year later. Charter members included Enos Mills, whose efforts were influential in establishing Rocky Mountain National Park; Roger Toll, who held the prestigious positions of superintendent at Yellowstone, Rocky Mountain, and Mount Rainier National Parks; and Carl Blaurock, who along with William Ervin was the first to climb all of Colorado's known 14,000-foot peaks.

In 1974 the Club purchased its first permanent home on West Alameda Avenue in Denver. In 1993 the CMC elected to partner with the American Alpine Club to found the American Mountaineering Center in Golden, Colorado. The building houses the largest mountaineering library in the Western Hemisphere and the nation's only museum dedicated to mountaineering history.

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CO Mountaineering (cont.)

Imagine the efforts required to hike in Colorado at the time of the CMC's founding in 1912. The Club's archives reveal a fascinating story of that era in the form of written accounts and photographs. Maps of nearly one hundred years ago showed precious detail. Transportation was certainly less convenient and reliable. Clothing of the time commonly consisted of cotton and wool, high hobnail boots and long skirts for women. Heavy wool blankets were used rather than lightweight sleeping bags. Rain-soaked gear and blistered feet were part of the experience. But still those early challenges cannot mask the smiling faces in the photos of the CMC's earliest pioneers.

CMC volunteers have influenced environmental issues since 1921, when the CMC spoke out against a proposed national policy that threatened National Parks. In another early effort, the Club was instrumental in helping to establish Rocky Mountain National Park. Over the years the Club has continued to tackle tough environmental issues, both large and small. These efforts have led to numerous successes, including planting trees in the 1940s and 1950s, opposing construction of more dams, supporting the federal Wilderness Act of 1964, and influencing policies on open space, timber sales, and water diversions.

American Alpine Club Library

The Henry S. Hall Jr. American Alpine Club (AAC) Library is an internationally known resource on alpinism, climbing, and mountain regions and cultures located at the American Mountaineering Center in Golden. Established in 1916, it is one of the oldest alpine research facilities in the United States, and the

largest outside of Europe. A circulating collection of nearly 20,000 books and videos devoted to mountaineering and rock climbing is available for members to borrow. Rare and non-circulating collections include the AAC archives, John M. Boyle Himalayan Library, manuscript collections, photographs, and rare books dating back to the 16th century.

Boasting nearly 600 journals and over 500 videos and DVDs, the American Alpine Club Library has special strengths in American and foreign guidebooks, Mount Everest and the Himalayas, the Alps, and mountaineering history. The library serves members dispersed around the world, with the mission to provide excellent service and efficient access to the collection to AAC members, the media, and others, wherever they may be. Visit their website at: americanalpineclub.org/library

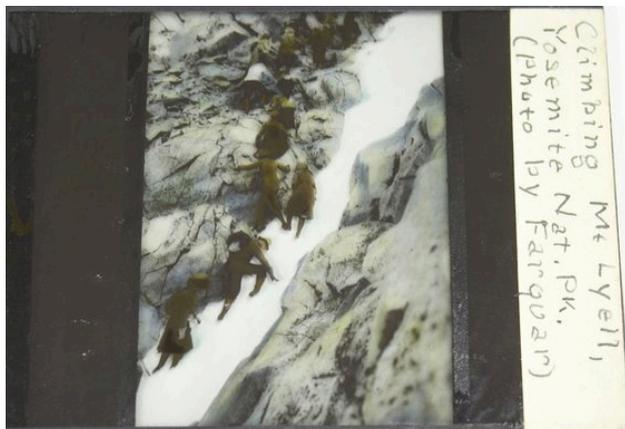
American Mountaineering Museum

Nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains in Golden, Colorado, the Bradford Washburn American Mountaineering Museum opened its doors in February 2008 as America's first and only museum dedicated to the heroism, technology, culture and spirit of mountaineering.

From the storied history of the 10th Mountain Division to the daring first ascent of Mt. Everest, learn about Mountaineering's exciting history and meet larger-than-life figures and modern day heroes who have brought the challenge to where it is today. This one-of-a-kind facility will allow visitors to live the ascent of the world's most inspiring mountains through educational displays, interactive exhibits, breathtaking photos and climbers' personal stories. Jump a crevasse, hang out in a port-a-ledge and find your route up Mt. Everest!

Join the Museum for monthly Thirsty Third Thursday events and sPEAKER Series. Check the website (www.mountaineeringmuseum.org) for all upcoming special events and exhibits.

The museum and the library are not open on Sundays, so they won't be available on our Gathering of the Guilds date, but we hope you can come back and visit them both another time to learn all about Colorado mountaineering and a wealth of information and history housed in our own backyard of people-climbing mountains through the ages.



*A magic lantern slide from the collection.
Caption reads: Climbing Mt. Lyell, Yosemite Nat. Pk.
(Photo by [Francis P.] Farquar). c. 1920*

**MODERN BUNGALOW MAKERS SERIES:
JEFF ICENHOWER, LEATHERWORKING**

Sunday March 24, 2019
2-4 PM

Modern Bungalow
2594 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver

Come learn about leatherworking techniques with Jeff Icenhower of Mission West Wood and Leather, and shop one-of-a-kind leather art! Jeff is an artist and aficionado, in love with the aesthetic of the Arts and Crafts movement and inspired by the Roycrofters. He's also a board member of the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society.

Jeff will be giving a presentation on leather art, followed by a demonstration of his techniques for working leather into the beautiful pieces featured at Modern Bungalow.

RSVP online:
[facebook.com/ModernBungalow/events](https://www.facebook.com/ModernBungalow/events)

2019 MOTAWI TRUNK SHOW

Saturday April 13, 2019
12-3 PM

Modern Bungalow
2594 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver

Motawi Tileworks is back with one-of-a-kind features and special tiles from the vault!

Shop an exclusive collection for one day only, and hear a talk by Nawal Motawi.

Based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Motawi is a group of 40 craftspeople who create distinctive American art tiles as individual works of art and for installations in homes and public places.

The company was founded in 1992 by Nawal Motawi, who started making tiles in her garage and selling them at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. The company now makes tiles in a 12,900 square foot studio; and sells them in over 300 stores across the United States.

RSVP online:
[facebook.com/ModernBungalow/events](https://www.facebook.com/ModernBungalow/events)



Arts & Crafts style... we have it all. Hand-crafted American furniture, tiles, lighting, rugs, pottery and the perfect accents to fit almost any space and any budget. We specialize in the authentic furnishings to make it a classic!

www.ModernBungalow.com
2594 South Colorado Blvd., Denver, CO 80222
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The Arts & Crafts Messenger, the newsletter of the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, is published quarterly for the society's members as part of their membership contribution. Send comments to polly@distantpeakproductions.com. All articles are ©2019 the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, with rights reverting to the authors after publication.

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www.coloarts-crafts.org
900 Colorow Road
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WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE ALL THE FUN?

GIVE A FRIEND THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP TO THE COLORADO ARTS AND CRAFTS SOCIETY

Make a special gift of the growing enthusiasm, activism and educational opportunities offered by the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society. Our members are always the first to learn about our special events, such as our annual Winter Symposium and Gathering of the Guilds, plus neighborhood walking tours and field trips to significant Arts and Crafts sites. Plus, as members they'll receive discounted or free admission to all CACS events, and our quarterly newsletter. Give a gift today!

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send it along to your friend:

This is your ticket
To a world of
Beauty and Delight



A Year's
Membership
in the Colorado
Arts and Crafts
Society!