

**THE JAMES AND MARIAN CUMMINS  
HOUSE IN OAKLAND: A HISTORY  
AND ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

*by Marian Corley*

The James and Marian Cummins House, located at the southwest corner of Brent and Argonne in the City of Oakland, is a one story frame Contemporary residential structure built in 1949, designed by local architect Gustel Kiewitt.

Dr. Kiewitt is nationally known for his commercial architecture due to his use of the lamella roof construction method which originated in Europe in the early 1900s and was introduced to the U.S. in 1925. The lamella roof utilizes a sectional timber, clear span, vaulted design which creates a latticework or honeycomb pattern to provide exceptional strength especially for large construction. The other advantage of the lamella form was its lightness and ease of construction. The pre-cut timber sections which are mitered on each end and curved on one edge, could be lifted into place and bolted together by two men without any heavy machinery.

Receiving degrees in both engineering and architecture, Kiewitt immigrated from Germany at age twenty-two in 1924 and was granted one of only twenty licenses from the Lamella Roof Syndicate in New York to build the roofs in the U.S. Edward Faust, then vice-president of Anheuser Busch, hired young Kiewitt in 1925 to design what he claimed to be the first U.S. example of this new construction method; a barn at his son's farm. Now part of St. Louis County's Faust Park in Chesterfield, MO., the lamella barn has been restored to its original glory.

The Faust Barn is presumed to be the prototype for the Arena which was built in 1929, its roof also designed by Kiewitt. This huge structure, very familiar to St. Louisans, though demolished in 1999, brought Kiewitt a national reputation. Kiewitt designed nearly every lamella roof throughout the Midwest from the late 1920s through the middle 1950s, including Ladue and Hillsboro Junior High Schools and Thomas Jefferson School in St. Louis, a picnic shelter in Jefferson city, and an American Legion post in Wellston, to name just a few. Prior to his death in 1964, Kiewitt was also consulted during the construction of the Houston Astrodome. Completed in 1965, the

dome construction was an adaptation of the lamella concept. The monumental engineering challenge to determine whether the structure could withstand occasional hurricane gusts of 165 miles per hour possible in the Houston area was met by Kiewitt's decision to have McDonnell Aircraft Company do wind tunnel tests on a 1/8-inch scale model of the structure.

Though Kiewitt is best known for his commercial work, he also designed several houses scattered throughout Ladue, Webster Groves, and Kirkwood, including the Cummins House in Oakland. Simple modern design was Kiewitt's signature in his residential architecture and he was an integral part of the Contemporary movement which locally became so popular in the 1940s. Kiewitt's first home design at 544 E. Adams in Kirkwood, constructed in 1933, was for renowned plant expert Edgar Denison, who published *Missouri Wildflowers*, a field guide for more than 1,880 flowering Missouri plants. To accommodate the huge need for housing after World War II, Dr. Kiewitt increased his residential work and conceived an inexpensive modular design to utilize abundant construction materials of that time such as marine plywood, which he used for both the interior and exterior walls of the houses. Since it is estimated that 75% of our built environment has been constructed since World War II, innovative architecture such as Kiewitt's modular design is significant.



*The Cummins House, 101 South Brent, Oakland, seen from Argonne*

The Cummins House is an exceptional example of Kiewitt's modular design. The only other known Kiewitt modular homes are located at 1525, 1521, and 1535 Grant Road, and only one of these structures retains most

of its original distinctive architectural features. The Grant Road homes, though similar in general construction, differ from the Cummins House in that they are built on slabs, do not integrate into the landscape in as interesting a manner, and lack the striking balcony and brick chimney features of the Cummins House.

The Cumminses, both artists, were interested in building a modern looking house with more architectural style than the ubiquitous post World War II tract houses could offer. Plans presented by other architects, when restricted by the Cummins' budget, were attractive but resulted in too small a house in which to raise a family. After seeing a friend's Kiewitt modular home at 2 Graybridge Lane (now demolished for new construction) the Cumminses hired Kiewitt to build their house. Kiewitt's modular design allowed the Cumminses to choose from various standardized design components to affordably customize their floor plan and desired architectural features.

The Contemporary style of the Cummins House is revealed by the low sloping front gabled roof, overhanging eaves with exposed roof beams, and an absence of traditional detailing. Integration of the house and landscape is particularly apparent on the north façade, as the house is built back into a hill, creating a walk-out basement level which opens onto a large flagstone patio hand-laid by Mr. Cummins. Terraced garden areas flank the east and west sides of the patio. A cantilevered balcony dominates the north facade, extending the length of the house and horizontally bisecting the basement and main floor levels. This important architectural feature of Kiewitt's modular design also serves as a functional means for installing screens and washing the main floor windows on the north façade, which are actually at a second story height from the ground. Unobtrusive metal pipe column supports under the balcony were installed in 1981 for stabilization. Reconstruction of the balcony deck was completed in 1997. The gable sides of the house face east and west. A single flat solid-wood door is located on the left side of the east facade as the front entrance. A red brick fireplace chimney with decorative open brickwork, an optional architectural feature selected by the Cumminses, is located on the right side of the front facade.

Kiewitt's signature modular window configuration is of a set of windows which reaches from floor to ceiling and spans most of the wall into which it is built. The set consists of three large wood frame fixed horizontal panes placed one atop the other. These large panes are flanked on either side by wood frame triple pane French doors. This window configuration appears on the east, south, and north facades, lighting both bedrooms and the living-dining room. The north facade features this configuration on the basement level as well as on the main floor level,

where the French doors open to the balcony from the living-dining room and one bedroom. The east facade places this window configuration between the chimney and the front door. The west facade has two sets of wood frame casement windows, replaced in 1981, which open from the bedrooms. Casement windows (still original) also flank both sides of the side entry door on the south facade, opening from the kitchen and bathroom. A small wood frame triple pane fixed window is situated to the left of the side door.



*Cummins House, entrance front on South Brent Avenue*

Kiewitt normally utilized the efficiency of an all-electric-powered Ingersol Unit for his modular homes, which compacted the plumbing, heating, and hot water components into a closet area neatly situated between the kitchen and the bathroom, with doors at either end of the closet, one opening to the outside and the other to the inside of the house. The Cumminses chose to revise this plan by installing an oil burning furnace at the basement level of their house. The closet space intended for the furnace, accessible from the exterior of the house, became a utility closet for gardening tools. The hot-water heater was originally installed as planned by Kiewitt but then moved to the basement in later years.

Kiewitt's standard Pullman-style kitchen design included upper and lower painted steel cabinets, a single drain-board porcelain sink, a twenty-four-inch four-burner electric stove, and a tiny twenty-four-by-thirty-six-inch electric refrigerator. The Cumminses chose to add six feet of space to the east face of the house. This extra footage allowed for a front entry hall, an enlarged living-room to include the brick fireplace (which cost an extra \$600.00), and an enlarged kitchen to accommodate a full size refrigerator, a double sided sink, kitchen eating space, and some additional cabinets in the spot where the tiny refrigerator was to have been.

In addition to previously mentioned repairs, the following rehab projects have been handled in a way to retain the architectural integrity of the original design: the original exterior siding of marine plywood stained a dark brown was sympathetically replaced with vertical panels of

natural cedar siding in 1969. A simple flat roofed carport supported by wood beams was attached to the south facade in 1969. It is quite possible that a carport was part of the original design but not constructed when the house was built, due to the Cummins' budget constraints. The houses on Grant Road do have similar carports which appear to be part of their original construction. Custom bronze colored aluminum storm windows and screens were installed 1980.

## LIZ O'BRIEN ON SAMUEL MARX

by Esley Hamilton

Samuel Marx (1885-1964) was born in Natchez, graduated from MIT, studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, and spent most of his creative life in Chicago. But St. Louis has a claim on him because of his work here for Morton D. May and Famous-Barr. Liz O'Brien's 2007 book *Ultramodern: Samuel Marx, Architect, Designer, Art Collector* is a sumptuous tribute to his achievement.

It follows the trend in recent years toward visually sumptuous (and expensive) books about architecture. This was probably initiated by works about the current stars of the profession, but it has been furthered by the high standards that Acanthus Press and Yale University Press in particular have applied to books about earlier times. *Ultramodern*, published by Pointed Leaf Press LLC of New York and printed in China, stands out even among these books because of the way it mixes new and old photos, color, sepia, and black & white, and sources of widely divergent quality, varying page layouts, some with borders and some without; and still manages to make them all look pretty good.

The content of the pictures – and the book is almost all pictures – the text of the introduction starts on page 26 – is so arresting that it makes their quality seem irrelevant. Samuel Marx was an architect and designer of glamorous furnishings and interiors that in their day were the ultimate in chic, and most of them retain their power. His design strategy was recently described by Gregory Cerio: “first, to provide luxurious one-of-a-kind custom furnishings made to exacting specifications and with the finest finishes and upholstery; and secondly to accommodate historicism within a modern framework.” Among the finishes Cerio enumerates (“What Modern Was: Mid-century Masters of Luxury,” *The Magazine Antiques*, May 2008, pp. 112-119) are crackle-glazed lacquer, parchment, reverse-applied silver leaf on glass, limed oak, bleached elm, and Lucite.

After Marx married Florene May Straus in 1937 – her second marriage, his third – another element appears in these pictures, especially in views of their own home in

Chicago: outstanding paintings and sculptures by the leading artists of the so-called School of Paris – Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Modigliani, Dufy, Brancusi, and Gabo among them. If many seem familiar, it's because the Marxes gave or bequeathed most of their collection to the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Metropolitan. Some of the paintings would seem to be too large and boldly colored to be comfortable in a domestic setting, but these photos show that the clean lines and natural neutral colors (rarely white) of Marx's interiors accommodated them beautifully.

O'Brien's book contrasts with others of its kind for another reason: when it comes to St. Louis, she knows what she's talking about. Her presentation of Marx's outstanding house in Ladue for Florene's nephew Morton D. May provides considerable detail. She notes, for instance, that the landscape of the nine-acre site was designed by Chicagoan Franz Lipp. She reports the recent demolition of the house and then goes on to show why it was such a loss to this community, as David Bonetti observed his July 27 *Post-Dispatch* coverage of the state of the preservation movement here. If O'Brien's book had appeared earlier, it might have influenced that outcome, as she makes a compelling case for Marx's achievement.



Samuel Marx, *The Morton D. May House*, formerly 2222 South Warson Road, Ladue

The connection with the May family involved Marx in the design of several department stores for the May Company, including the iconic one on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, now owned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. O'Brien includes an aerial photograph of the Clayton Famous-Barr, which opened in 1948. The curving building faces an 850-car parking lot, before the garage to the west and the basement extension to the east were built, and when the Pevely Fountain at the center of the now-vacant lot across Forsyth still attracted customers for ice cream. One question she doesn't answer is what role, if any, Marx had in the Southtown Famous-Barr, whose building permit lists P. John Hoener.

Although the May House is gone, you can still own an example of Samuel Marx's work. Liz O'Brien's shop at 800A Fifth Avenue in New York recently offered, among other items, a bleached mahogany pedestal dating from about 1940, just under a yard tall, for only \$17,500.

## MORE ON EAMES IN ST. LOUIS

Sharon Dolan of the St. Louis Public School Archives wants everybody to know that Charles Eames attended Farragut Elementary School at 4025 Sullivan Avenue and graduated in 1925 from Yeatman High School at 3616 North Garrison. Two years later Yeatman, an outstanding Ittner design from 1904, became the new Central High School after the tornado of 1927 destroyed the older school on North Grand.

Mary Jo Cannon wrote to say that Katherine Woermann Eames became house mother at the Women's Building at Washington University. "She had an apartment directly across from the Alpha Chi room (my group) so we had a good relationship with her. I just can't put her with someone as vibrant as Charles Eames appears to have been. I don't think she ever remarried. Her duties were minimal. The job provided an apartment which she maintained until she died, as I recall."

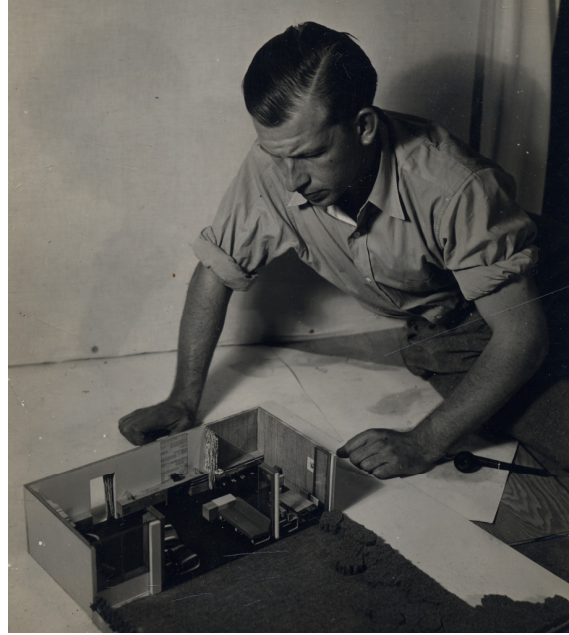
## MAJOR SAARINEN EXHIBITION AT KEMPER ART MUSEUM

When Finnish-born American architect Eero Saarinen died prematurely at age 51 in 1961, he had already become one of the most celebrated designers of the modern era. In the years following World War II, he produced a series of masterpieces of breathtaking individuality, including the 630-foot-tall, stainless steel St. Louis Gateway Arch (1948-64) along the Mississippi River, commemorating America's westward expansion; the TWA Terminal (1956-62) at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, where swooping concrete vaults thrilled travelers with the new glamour of worldwide flight; and "a Versailles in Industry" of aluminum and glass for General Motors (1948-56) near Detroit.

Deploying progressive construction techniques and a highly personal, exuberant, and often metaphorical aesthetic, Saarinen's work defied Modernist orthodoxies and gave iconic form to the postwar American ideal of an open-ended society of unbounded choice and diversity – an ideal that persists to this day. In his search for a richer and more varied modern architecture, Saarinen became one of the most prolific and controversial practitioners of his time, and one of the most influential.

In October 2006, the landmark exhibition "Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future" – the first major museum

retrospective ever mounted to explore this remarkable figure – began a four-year international tour of Europe and the United States with a viewing at the Kunsthalle Helsinki, where it marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum of Finnish Architecture.



*Eero Saarinen with a combined living-study-dining-room study model, created for Architectural Forum magazine, circa 1937, Courtesy Eero Saarinen Collection, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University*

Following its presentation in Helsinki, the exhibit has traveled to Oslo, Brussels, Detroit, Minneapolis, and the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. before arriving in St. Louis. Subsequently, the Guggenheim Museum in New York will host the exhibit before its final stop at Yale University in 2010, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Saarinen's birth.

The exhibit explores the architect's career from the 1930s through the early 1960s, when the last of Saarinen's buildings were completed posthumously by colleagues Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo. By surveying the architect's entire output, the exhibition provides the first opportunity to understand Saarinen's collective work in the larger context of postwar Modernism and as an articulation of the ambitions and values of a prosperous, technologically endowed, democratic society.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Andrew Blauvelt, co-curator of the exhibit at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, noted that Saarinen was on the cutting edge of technological innovation, being among the first to use mirror glass (at the Bell Labs in Holmdel, New Jersey) and Cor-Ten steel (at the John Deere office in Moline), for instance. But at the same time, his buildings fit their settings and the needs of their users for comfort, from the tulip chair to the conversation pit. The billowing forms of the TWA Terminal, the Ingalls Hockey Rink at Yale,

and Dulles Airport outside Washington, D.C. remained unparalleled until today's computer-generated architecture.

The exhibition surveys more than 50 built and proposed projects – including St. Louis' monumental Gateway Arch (1947-1965) – emphasizing both the stylistic plurality of his output and the collaborative nature of his practice. Among highlights will be never-before-seen sketches, working drawings, models, photographs, furnishings, films and other ephemera from various archives and private collections. A significant portion of the material presented has been loaned by Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, which became the largest repository of Saarinen material with the donation by Kevin Roche of the office archives in 2002. Yale students created digital animations specifically for the show.

A man of great individual talent who was, and still is, celebrated as a lone, heroic creator, Eero Saarinen was actually proud of his ability and willingness to collaborate with other architects, artists, engineers, and clients to achieve designs that harmonized with their contexts and atmospheres as “total expressions. . . dominated by a strong, simple concept.”



*TWA Terminal, John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York, circa 1962. Photographer Balthazar Korab, © Balthazar Korab Ltd.*

To illustrate how Saarinen's collaborative approach helped achieve his holistic design concept, “The Architect and his Milieu” – the smaller of the exhibition's two sections – will explore facets of the architect's complex network of friends, family, and colleagues. Film, press clippings, documents, and photographs by such masters as Ezra Stoller and Balthazar Korab will paint a portrait of a man in full command of the most sophisticated, me-

dia-savvy strategies of his age, and guided by a vision of modern life as a constant collaborative dialogue infused with clear purpose.

*Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future* is organized by the Finnish Cultural Institute, New York; the Museum of Finnish Architecture, Helsinki; and the National Building Museum, Washington D.C.; with support from the Yale University School of Architecture. The exhibition is curated by Donald Albrecht in conjunction with an international consortium of Finnish and American scholars. The global sponsor for the exhibition is ASSA ABLOY. Local supporters include the United States Steel Corporation and Knoll.

## MICHAEL ALLEN ON KWMU

SAH Chapter member Michael Allen is now a regular commentator on KWMU, 90.7 FM. Along with Tom Schlafly, Elaine Viets, and other friends of the Chapter, Michael can be heard once a month at 7:33 a.m. on the “Morning Edition” news show. Michael is assistant director of Landmarks Association and author of the Ecology of Absence website, as well as an occasional contributor to this newsletter. The November issue of *St. Louis Magazine* profiles Michael as number 51 of the 52 most powerful people in St. Louis – he's the “underdog, bowtie-wearing blogger” mentioned on page 12 and pictured with said bowtie on page 110.

Michael's previous radio commentaries can be found at <http://www.kwmu.org/programs/commentaries/archives.php?aid=50> Below we reprint a favorite, originally aired on October 10, 2008.

## ST. LOUIS' MARKET RECOVERY STARTS WITH HISTORIC BUILDINGS

*by Michael Allen*

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed into law a tax act that retroactively eliminated tax credits to investors in historic rehabilitation projects. The results were devastating to St. Louis. Companies that had been figuring out how to rehabilitate long-standing eyesores over the past decade suddenly shut down. New projects were scuttled and companies closed. St. Louis had figured out how to create an economy for its historic architecture, and all of a sudden that economy collapsed.

The next decade was a rough one for historic preservation. We lost a slew of great buildings, and came very close to losing others. Developers and city officials gave in to despair and called for removing supposedly unworkable buildings.

Tearing things down didn't help, and there was no real

momentum for massive new construction. St. Louis had cut its losses only to lose more. Developers actually became the leaders of a successful effort to secure a state historic rehabilitation tax credit in Missouri that has become the best in the nation. Suddenly, time ran backwards and the optimism killed in 1986 was back.

Until 2008, when even the relatively bubble-free St. Louis market has lost much of its momentum. Lending for large projects in January 2008 was at 10% of the rate in January 2007. January 2009 may be worse. We've seen the real estate boom-bust cycle repeat, and the temptation to demolish vacant historic buildings is rising.

Let's be smarter this time around. We have a great historic rehab tax credit, great buildings, imaginative and eager developers and invested city residents. The availability of financing is the problem, not the historic buildings that store wealth during tough times. Demolition of valuable buildings reinforces market pessimism. We'll pull through the current crisis quicker if we safeguard our historic buildings as future development opportunities.

## EDNA GRAVENHORST'S NEW BOOK

*Southwest Garden* is chapter member Edna Campos Gravenhorst's new title in Arcadia Press's Images of America series. This follows her 2005 book in this series, *Benton Park West*. Edna has organized the 127-page book as a series of four tours. Tour A lies between the Missouri Botanical Garden and Kingshighway, most of which was the original site of Henry Shaw's arboretum. Tour B moves from Kingshighway to Brannon below Southwest. Tour C might be considered the southern part of the Hill, from Columbia to Reber, and Tour D runs south from there to take in the state hospital and other historic institutions south of Arsenal to Scanlan. Edna has uncovered a wealth of photographic documentation for areas that have never been among the city's more celebrated, including many architectural views. New photos include some striking ones by professional photographer Derek Cadzow, a transplant from Maryland who lives in Benton Park West.



*The Bug Store, 447274 Shaw Avenue, built 1925 by Charles W. Hehmann. Photo by Derek Cadzow Photography*

## NEW ST. LOUIS WEBSITE ON MID-CENTURY MODERN

Michelle Kodner of University City recently launched a new website devoted to mid-century modern architecture in St. Louis. The one website has two different addresses: [www.ilovebernoudy.com](http://www.ilovebernoudy.com) and [www.midcenturymodernstlouis.com](http://www.midcenturymodernstlouis.com). The site features many recent photos of houses in the St. Louis area and includes sections on nationally and locally prominent architects, including Armstrong, Bernoudy, Eames, Mendelsohn, Murphy, Obata, Shank, and Saarinen. Sculpture of the era is featured in pages dealing with notable St. Louis sculptors Ernest Trova, Ruth Keller Schweiss, William Severson, and Saunders Schultz. Additional buildings are identified by style rather than architect. Several interesting neon signs are grouped under the heading "Googie." The site even includes a selection of popular recipes from that time (Ambrosia with Coconut; Velveeta Macaroni and Cheese). "Hot Links" has a rather comprehensive list of related sites, several of them managed by members of this chapter. As part of this site, Kodner has launched an almost daily blog, called the Mod Blog, with news of architecture, preservation, sculpture and decorative arts events of interest to herself and her readers. The Mod Blog can be accessed from the home page of the main site.

## A WEBSITE FOR THE CHAPTER: HELP NEEDED

Michelle Kodner, who has created the new website and blog discussed above, has generously offered to set up a website for this chapter. It would be a source for events and activities. It could also become a research source for the extensive information about St. Louis and Missouri architecture that members have uncovered over the past decade and more, most of which is not readily available elsewhere. A website can only be effective, however, if someone is able to keep it fresh and up to date. Our board would like to create a new board position for this purpose. Is anybody interested? Michelle uses Mac to create and manage her sites, and if we follow her lead, we shall need someone who understands and has access to a Macintosh computer. If you are a Mac person and might be interested in helping, please contact Michelle at [michelle@davidkodner.com](mailto:michelle@davidkodner.com). If you are interested but use a PC and are unfamiliar with Mac, please contact her anyway, because we might be able to create the website in that format if it is preferred by the membership. Michelle has given the chapter a wonderful opportunity to spread the word about St. Louis architecture; let's take advantage of it.

**Exhibition: “Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future”**

Friday, January 30 to Monday, April 27, 2009  
Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum,  
Off Skinker, near Forsyth, Washington University

See the accompanying article for more on this international traveling exhibition, which brings the whole range of Saarinen’s work to life. The Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum is open free to the public Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday 11-6, Friday 11-8, Saturday & Sunday: 11-6. Closed Tuesday.

**TOWER GROVE PARK LECTURE SERIES 2009**

The 20<sup>th</sup> year of these talks is a reminder of how St. Louis’s National Historic Landmark park has been so beautifully revived during that time under the leadership of John Karel and the Friends of Tower Grove Park. The lecture series is held in the comfortable surroundings of the Stupp Center, located inside the Grand Boulevard entrance to the park near the corner of Arsenal Street.

**Talk: “Mapping St. Louis in the Era of Henry Shaw”**  
Sunday, February 1, 3 p.m.

Emily Jaycox, head librarian of the Missouri Historical Society, speaks. St. Louis researchers have long benefited from Jaycox’s knowledge and resourcefulness.

**Talk: “The Transformation of the St. Louis Waterfront in the Nineteenth Century”**  
Sunday, March 8, 3 p.m.

Andrew Hurley, professor in the Department of History at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, will speak. Hurley is the author of *Common Fields: an Environmental History of St. Louis*, 1997, and *Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in the Postwar Consumer Culture*, 2001.

**Talk & Concert: “Insights into the Inspiration and Poignancy of the Music of the 1840s”**  
Sunday, April 5, 3 p.m.

For the second year, the Arianna String Quartet will combine a discussion of the era of Henry Shaw with a performance of music he knew. The Quartet, resident at the University of Missouri-St. Louis since 2000, consists of John McGrosso, David Gillham, Joanna Mar-doza, and Kurt Baldwin, recently acclaimed for their Beethoven performances.

**CONCLUDING EXHIBITIONS**

**“Birth of the Cool: California Art, Design, and Culture at Mid-century”**  
Ends January 5, 2009  
Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum

Headphones throughout the exhibit allow you to hear some of the jazz greats of the era, watch Roadrunner and Gerald McBoingboing cartoons, and see a clip from “North by Northwest.” Two short Eames films are also showing in the galleries. Furniture, paintings, decorative accessories, and even LP album covers evoke the high style of the fifties, when everybody seemed to have a cigarette in one hand and a cocktail glass in the other.

**InterActive: New Technologies in Contemporary Architecture**  
Ends January 24

The Sheldon Galleries, 3648 Washington Avenue

Some of the most innovative new architectural designs worldwide are featured, using new technologies such as video, LED lighting, and computer controlled sound.

**Michael Eastman: “Grandeur Saved: The Aiken-Rhett House”**  
Ends February 14

The Sheldon Galleries, 3648 Washington Avenue

A large and historic antebellum house in Charleston, South Carolina, photographed by one of St. Louis’s leading photographers prior to its current restoration.

**New Exhibition: “Symbols of Collective Memory: Missouri Courthouse Architecture**  
Friday, February 20 to Saturday, May 30, 2009  
The Sheldon Galleries, 3648 Washington Avenue

Missouri’s 114 counties have courthouse buildings representing every architectural period from the Greek Revival to the present. Some of the best are included in these photos. They were taken by Dennis Weiser for the book, *Missouri Courthouses*, published for the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation in 2007.

**Annual Gathering**  
Sunday, February 8, 2009, 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Save the date for this highlight of the year in architectural history, with the traditional characteristics of interesting location, good food, and scintillating company, and this time with streamlined computer-based presentations. More information to follow.

## THE KEY TO THE WAINWRIGHT TOMB



Quick thinking by architect and teacher Peter Smith resulted in this photograph of a little, and little-known, treasure by Louis Sullivan here in St. Louis. The original key to the Wainwright Tomb was designed with the same care as the rest of the building, employing the same distinctive ornament. Smith reports that the staff at Bellefontaine Cemetery usually use a conventional copy key when opening and closing the bronze grills, but this particular time, he happened to notice that they were using the original. He would like to find a display case for the key, so that the office could be sure that it is recognized as the masterwork in miniature that it is.

# News Letter

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