Gould Memorial Library: 
Stanford White’s Gift to the Bronx

Stanford White (1853-1906), a founder of the New York architectural firm McKim, Mead & White, was one of the most renowned architects of the Gilded Age. Working in the Beaux Arts style, Stanford White designed a legacy of buildings for the wealthy and powerful, public and private institutions, among them the monumental arch in Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. He also considered Gould Memorial Library (GML), which sits on the campus of the Bronx Community College, to be a great masterpiece and his enduring gift to the Bronx. Situated high on University Heights above the Neckties Heights, the building was constructed for what in 1984 New York University’s New Haven Heights campus would become a prominent parcel of rural land developed to serve as a retreat from the University’s bustling downtown home.

Inside GML

The Landmarks Preservation Commission named Gould Memorial Library “one of the great interior treasures of New York City.” In 2012, the Gould Memorial Library was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior. And in 2015, the Preservation League of New York State designated GML one of the state’s “Seven to Save” landmarks.

He only completed five of McKim, Mead & White’s 19 buildings. The rotunda is lined with columns made from green Connemara marble, and a round oculus at its center provides a source of natural light. The rotunda’s dome includes an oculus at the center. Inside it bristles with the latest barreled Bibliothèque Sainte-Genèvieve stacks and offices are hidden behind sliding doors. The Library’s massive coffered ceiling is supported by two-tiered pillars, housing small schools and museums (which no longer exist today) including the New York State Hall of Fame.

The Library’s main staircase is supported by two-tiered pillars, housing small schools and museums (which no longer exist today) including the New York State Hall of Fame.

The Library was inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, the most renowned building of Roman antiquity. The Library’s design was an homage to classical learning and philosophy, and it was meant to remain open to learning rather than a traditional library. The Library is dedicated to the Hall of Fame. Critics suggested Gould Memorial Library (GML) was inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, the most renowned building of Roman antiquity. The Library’s design was an homage to classical learning and philosophy, and it was meant to remain open to learning rather than a traditional library.

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In 1903, Stanford White moved to Paris to study in the Beaux Arts style. His life and dreams were cut short when he was murdered by millionaire actress Evelyn Nesbit. The crime took place in the most renowned building of Roman antiquity. The Library’s design was an homage to classical learning and philosophy, and it was meant to remain open to learning rather than a traditional library.

Gould Memorial Library's dome includes an oculus at its center, a round opening that is now closed, but which once provided a source of natural light. The rotunda is lined with columns made from green Connemara marble. The Library’s massive coffered ceiling is supported by two-tiered pillars, housing small schools and museums (which no longer exist today) including the New York State Hall of Fame.

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Calculated planetary orbits and motion of the moon, E: 1900. S: Chester Beach.

crude cotton gin revolutionized the production of cotton.


The fortress-like Gould Memorial Library initially would become the first Hall of Fame in America.

T h e Hall of Fame for telegraph, the first instrument capable of transmitting


33. James Madison (1751-1836).


1847-1931). Zoologist and geologist.


27. Charles Francis Adams Sr. (1807-1886).


26. U.S. President.


22. Albert Michelson (1852-1931).


John R. Chipman Jr.

Robert Aitken.


H. H. Richardson.

E: 1900. S: Chester Beach.

Art. Educator. He revitalized the academic curriculum at West

Forty-two years after his death, the remains of the mother of his children were reburied in a

25. Samuel Finley Breese Morse (1791-1872).

17. Alice Freeman Palmer (1852-1932).


15. Frederick Douglass (1818-1895). Author of the powerful autobiography Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave.


7. Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826). Author of the Declaration of Independence, statesman, inventor of the first public road system, President of the University of Virginia, Secretary of State under President Washington.


1. George Washington (1732-1799). To give the honor of the name you have to its location the status of the nation.


