GREENE & GREENE

Image:



American architects Charles Sumner Greene (1868-1957) and his brother Henry Mather Greene ((1870-1954) were born in post-Civil War Ohio, where they received their first technical training in wood- and metalworking at the Cincinatti Technical Institute. They were enrolled for further study at MIT in Cambridge MA, then a typical Beaux Arts school. After spending several years in apprenticeships at various Boston architectural firms, the brothers relocated to Pasadena CA in 1893 in order to be with their family. Traveling across the continent by train, they visited the fabled Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where they view examples of Japanese traditional craftsmanship that were to deeply affect their later designs. While the inital projects of their joint practice in Pasadena were traditional, their Gamble House of 1908 demonstrated mastery of a wholly new style. This "Stick" style evolved largely from the California bungalow form, while incorporating elements of Arts & Crafts and Far Eastern design. The Greenes' passion for detail and insistence on quality of materials and production resulted in a distinctive and original series of houses now seen as masterpieces of style. The brothers oversaw every aspect of design including joinery, surfaces and finishes, interior fixtures and furnishings, most of which were produced brothers Peter and John Hall, the Greenes' principal contractor and master cabinetmaker. The pegged or tenoned joints, exposed beaming and mixed tones of highly-polished exotic hardwoods imbues their interiors with a warmth and strength usually associated with much older buildings, while the assertion of integrity resulting from the externalized structural elements recalls both Arts & Crafts theory and antique Japanese forms. Today, their Blacker, Culou, and Thorsen Houses are considered leading examples of their work, while the Gamble House has itself become a museum to its' creators, and Greene & Greene-designed furniture and objects are avidly sought by countless collectors, preservationists, and institutions.

Country of origin:

United States

Life Span:

1868-1957

Link to Modernism Items:

- Charles & Henry Greene

Select One:

Designer

General Tags:

- California modern
- Stick style
- Pasadena
- MIT
- architecture