



CRANBROOK EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN

U.S. World Heritage Tentative List Application



In 2007 the Center for World Heritage Studies prepared an application for Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, to be considered for inclusion in the new U. S. Tentative List of World Heritage Sites being prepared by the National Park Service.* Cranbrook is one of the world's most comprehensively designed and crafted educational environments. Its building and landscape ensembles represent the universal impulse to employ art as a means of encouraging aesthetic, spiritual, and educational ideals, and the campus—as a whole—embodies the development of the social and artistic principles of the international Arts and Crafts movement within a living community. The realization of that vision resulted from the productive partnership between Cranbrook patron and founder George Booth (1864–1949) and Finnish-American architect Eliel Saarinen (1873–1950).

The Cranbrook campus includes four separate schools and two museums on more than 300 acres, approximately 20 miles northwest of Detroit. Much of the campus is the product of a collaborative design process that involved architects, artists, and craftsmen who contributed to Saarinen's concept of the campus as a “total work of art,” as resident designers and educators. The 22 buildings designed by Saarinen comprise the largest and most significant concentration of his buildings in the world.

The primary period of construction was 1908 to 1942, with 11 principal buildings added since that time. Saarinen designed the majority of the buildings at the Cranbrook School for boys, the Academy of Art, the Kingswood School for girls, and the Institute of Science. Cranbrook is also home to the largest collection of sculptures designed by Carl Milles outside the artist's native Sweden. An intensive program of conservation and restoration for buildings, landscapes, and decorative art has resulted in a high level of historic integrity and campus preservation. In 1989, Cranbrook was designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service.

The application was prepared by Center for World Heritage Studies (CWHs) Research Associate Nancy A. Miller and CWHs Research Fellow Carole S. Zellie and coordinated with Cranbrook staff.

*The U. S. World Heritage Tentative List is a list of properties that meet the eligibility criteria for nomination to the List of World Heritage Sites. The United States' Tentative List will serve as a guide for U. S. nominations during the next decade.

Postscript: Due to internal factors, Cranbrook Educational Community declined to submit the application prepared by CWHs to the National Park Service for review in 2007. However, the application may be submitted at a later date.

