



Dear Freer House Members,

2019 has been another year of great progress for the Freer House – thanks to you, our loyal members and generous supporters! We look forward to your membership renewal for 2020!

Recent accomplishments include:

- Expansion of the garden project to the east side of the Freer House, front yard plaza
- First full year of the new courtyard garden
- Renewal of our Kresge and Erb Foundation, Detroit Arts Support grant
- Over 50 historic exterior wood windows & doors restored and repainted
- Replica of the Princess from the Land of Porcelain painting by Whistler installed in the former Peacock Room
- Sold out house tours (May) and public lecture program (November)

Consulate General of Japan in Detroit Honors The Freer House/WSU

As a thank you to the Freer House and Wayne State for hosting a tour and visit by the Consul General and Mrs. Nakagawa last Summer, representatives of WSU were invited by the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit for a special reception and dinner on December 10th at the Consulate residence in Bloomfield Hills.

Guests hosted by the Consulate included WSU President Wilson and Mrs. Wilson, the Directors of the Freer House and Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute, and leaders of the Yamasaki Legacy Project. At the dinner, Consul General Nakagawa emphasized the importance of the history of Charles L. Freer and the Freer House as well as the Yamasaki



L-R: William Colburn, Director, The Freer House; Freda Giblin, Yamasaki Legacy Project; Henry Guthard, Yamasaki Legacy Project; President M. Roy Wilson; Mrs. Nakagawa; Consul General Nakagawa; Jerry Herron, Yamasaki Legacy Project; Peter Lichtenberg, Director, Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute; Mrs. Jacqueline Wilson; Mayuko Chashiro, staff, Consulate General of Japan in Detroit.

designed buildings at Wayne State to the metro Detroit Japanese community. The Consul General praised and encouraged the continued preservation and

restoration of these important historic sites of Japanese and American cultural connections in Detroit.



Garden Project Grows!

With successful completion of the beautiful courtyard garden, 2019 saw the expansion of the garden project to include the east side, front staircase plaza of the Freer House. K.C. Runciman Landscapes, designers of the revitalized Freer House courtyard garden, was engaged to extend the plantings to the area east of the front door of the Freer House, facing Ferry Street. The historically influenced garden plantings now encompass the entire circumference of the Freer House in a unified design that reflects Freer's original combination of American and Asian plants, trees and shrubs. We are grateful to our many garden project donors for making this garden expansion possible!

Garden Maintenance Fund Launched



With the full period landscaping now installed, it is vital for the Freer House to raise funds to support the annual maintenance of the new garden and hardscape. K. C. Runciman Landscapes has been engaged to continue annual upkeep of the garden. A 2019 fundraising appeal to our founding supporters of the Garden Revitalization Project resulted in contributions of over \$5,000 toward our \$8,000 annual goal! Our thanks to all who contributed so generously. We are still seeking additional support to reach our garden maintenance fund goal for the 2020 season and welcome your donation! For information on how to contribute, visit the Freer House website or call Rose Foster at 313-664-2509.



Aimee Pelletier, K. C. Runciman Landscape watering newly installed front yard landscaping



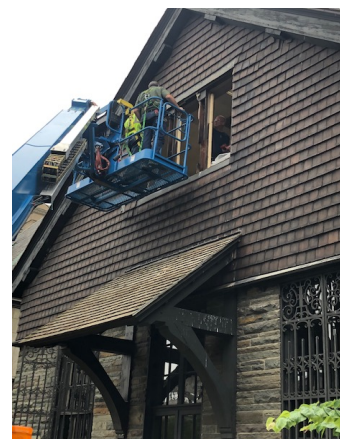
Terry Dunn, WSU Facilities Department repainting & restoring historic wood trim



Historic Wood Windows and Trim Restored

Wood windows and trim are extremely important elements of the unique architecture of the historic Freer House. Unfortunately, many of these windows and doors have suffered severe deterioration over the years due to deferred maintenance. Thanks to the Facilities Planning and Management Department, Wayne State University (FPM/WSU), over fifty exterior wood windows and doors have been expertly repaired and repainted this past year, helping to make the Freer House more resistant to harm from rain and severe weather. We

extend our sincere appreciation for the skills and hard work of the following FPM/WSU painters and carpenters: Terry Dunn, Steve Buchart, Kevin McDonald and supervisors Dave Jonas, William Kuffner, Tim Herr and Doug O'Brien. Additional thanks to Freer House member Doug Peters for his generous in-kind support.



Steve Buchart and Kevin Jonas, WSU Facilities Department making vital repairs to original wood windows

Local Foundation Support Renewed

Freer House operations and programs depend upon the support of our individual, institutional and foundation donors. We are extremely grateful to be included in the current award of Detroit Arts Support grants from the Kresge Foundation and Erb Family Foundation. In addition, the Freer House is deeply grateful to the Americana Foundation for its visionary support of the Freer House and our key projects in years past and up through the year 2019. We also thank our 300 plus members and donors for making the ongoing preservation of the Freer House and its public education programs possible!



Erb Family Foundation

The Americana Foundation



L-R: William Colburn, Director, Freer House; Hiroko Lancour, member, Freer House; Mayuko Chashiro, staff, Consulate of Japan; Consul General Tsutomu Nakagawa; Mrs. Chieko Nakagawa; Andrew Smutek, staff, Freer House; Peter Lichtenberg, Director, Merrill-Palmer Skillman Institute



L-R: Anna Sui; Eddy and Jeanette Sui

House Tours and Lecture Program – a ‘Sold Out’ Success!

Spring house tours and a Fall lecture program drew capacity crowds to the Freer House in 2019. Volunteers and docents welcomed over 150 visitors for guided tours of the house and gardens in May, attracting many first-time guests to explore the unique history and architecture of this Detroit landmark.

In November, a sold-out audience responded enthusiastically to a talk by author and scholar, Helen Tomlinson, PhD, about her fascinating new book, *West Meets East: Charles L. Freer, Trail-blazing Collector of Asian Art*, the first biography published on Freer in over 25 years! The response to Dr. Tomlinson’s work has been overwhelmingly positive and over 50 copies of her book were sold at the event, with Dr. Tomlinson generously donating half of the proceeds to the Freer House. This new Freer biography can be purchased at Freer House events or online at the author’s website, charlesfreer.com, or at other online and independent bookstores.



An attentive group of visitors listen to docent Michael Coleman (in blue) at May house & garden tours

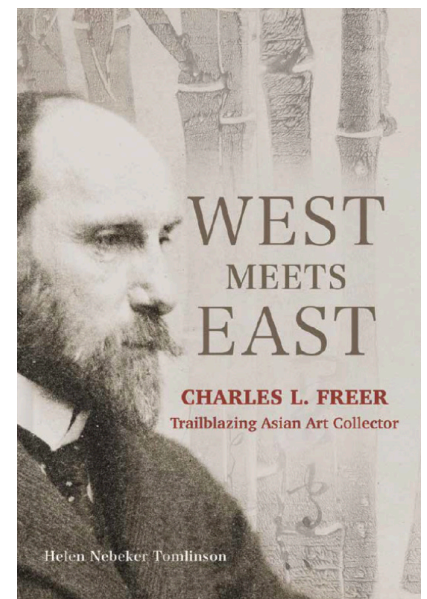
Special Guests Welcomed

In addition to welcoming the public at our regular tours and events, the Freer House was honored to receive visitors with an interest in the legacy of Freer and the history and architecture of this Detroit landmark. In 2019, special guests from Detroit and across the country included: internationally renowned fashion designer and Freer House supporter, Anna Sui and her family; the Consul General of Japan in Detroit, Mr. and Mrs. Nakagawa; staff and curators from the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian; Conservation Dept. staff from the Detroit Institute of Arts and staff from the National Park Service. The Freer House also hosted site visits and meetings for the staff and board members of Culture Source, The Ford House, The Parade Company, Erb Family Foundation, William Davidson Foundation, Illinois Landmarks Preservation Council, and the Consulate of the Republic of Korea, as well as tours for students from CCS, UM and WSU.



Author, Helen Tomlinson presenting her book talk *On Freer*

Cover of new Freer biography by Helen Tomlinson, PhD



Whistler Painting Replica Installed

A full-scale giclee reproduction of artist James McNeill Whistler's famous painting, *The Princess from the Land of Porcelain*, has been beautifully installed in its original location in the former Peacock Room. The replica is made possible by generous financial support from Freer House member, Dr. David Weinberg, with in-kind support from Doug Peters and kind permission from the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian. The DIA generously provided the services of its expert art installation team led by Davin Brainard to properly secure the large work to the wall. Additional thanks to Barbara Heller of the DIA for recommending the Peacock Room inspired blue-green paint color for the wall surfaces. The original painting was purchased by Freer in 1903 and hangs today in the Peacock Room at the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian. For more information and history of the Peacock Room visit: www.peacockroom.wayne.edu



Barbara Heller, DIA; Doug Peters, Freer House member;



Thank you Andrew!

After a rewarding 14 month period of employment as the Freer House Research Assistant, Andrew Smutek has left to prepare for graduate school and a future career in teaching social studies and history at the secondary level. The Freer House benefited from Andrew's dedication, intelligence and diverse skill set devoted to tackling everything from organizing exhibits and coordinating social media, to event planning and graciously welcoming a wide range of visitors, including Princess Akiko of Japan, within his first two weeks on the job! The Freer House staff, volunteers and members extend appreciation to Andrew for his hard work and wish him well in his future endeavors!

www.mpsi.wayne.edu/freer/index.php

<http://instagram.com/thefreerhouse>

www.facebook.com/FreerHouseMPSIWSU