

Everything Connects



Mr. and Mrs. George R. Cooke's Garden at 391 Country Club Lane.
Photo Courtesy of Suki Fredericks

The famous quote by Cranbrook Art Academy alumnus and renowned designer, Charles Eames, “Eventually, everything connects: people, ideas, objects” is the title of an exhibition that recently opened at the Cranbrook Art Museum and runs through September 21, 2025. This quote applies equally well to the newly-announced Spirit of Detroit Public Art Initiative centering on one of the most prolific sculptors of the 20th Century, Marshall M. Fredericks.

Indeed, Fredericks is known both in America and abroad for sculptural creations -- including monumental figurative and animal sculptures, public memorials and fountains, and portraits -- that connect people, ideas and objects. Among his best-known Detroit works are the “Spirit of Detroit,” situated in front of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center in Detroit, the “Lion and Mouse”, previously located at Eastland Mall and the “Leaping Gazelle” fountain for the Levi L. Barbour Memorial Fountain on Belle Isle. The Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, on the campus of Saginaw Valley State University, has worked to preserve the legacy of this visionary artist.

In furtherance of its mission and its belief in collaboration and partnerships, the Museum announced on May 16, 2025, that it would make its presence – and that of Marshall M. Fredericks -- felt in Detroit. The site is Stanton Yards, a new hub of artmaking and creative learning, embedded in Detroit’s newest burgeoning arts district, “Little Village,” located in the East Village

neighborhood of Detroit. “Little Village” is an exciting new cultural corridor fostering an inclusive community centered around the arts. Here, the Museum envisions an interactive sculpture studio that will share the creative process of Marshall M. Fredericks, inviting visiting artists, students, and the public at large to co-create new artwork for their communities.

Jean Hudson and Mary Lubera attended the May 16th event, and had engaging conversations with both Suki Fredericks, daughter of Marshall M. Fredericks, and Megan McAdow, Director of the Marshall M. Fredericks Museum. What has come to light are many wonderful connections between Marshall M. Fredericks with gardens & parks, The Garden Club of Michigan, The Garden Club of America and to people and places in Grosse Pointe. These connections culminated in the idea of having a Garden Party to raise awareness of the Museum’s Spirit of Detroit Public Art Initiative.

Suki shared photos of her grandparents’, Mr. and Mrs. George R. Cooke’s gardens at 391 Country Club Lane (please see above), reflecting on the joy of exploring her family’s deep connections to Detroit’s social and artistic life from the 1930’s onward. She highlighted the enduring friendships and collaborations among her mother, Rosalind B. Cooke, her father, Marshall M. Fredericks, and their peers—many united through Cranbrook, the Detroit Artists Market, and especially The Garden Club of Michigan. Influenced by Grosse Pointe’s gardens, family friends like Thayer Hutchinson (later Mrs. William D. Laurie, Jr.) found inspiration and fellowship in these circles. Also, it should be noted that Brookgreen Gardens in South Carolina, celebrated for Marshall M. Fredericks’ sculptures, is the *On the Road with the GCA* featured destination for September 2025.

If you would like to learn more about the Museum’s Art Initiative and this new cultural corridor, we hope you will attend the Garden Party at the McLucas house designed by Alexander Girard, currently the home of Rob and Mary Lubera, at 55 Vendome Road in Grosse Pointe Farms, on August 22, 2025. Please call the Museum at 989-964-7125 with any questions or to RSVP. We hope to see you there!