

Lori Aument

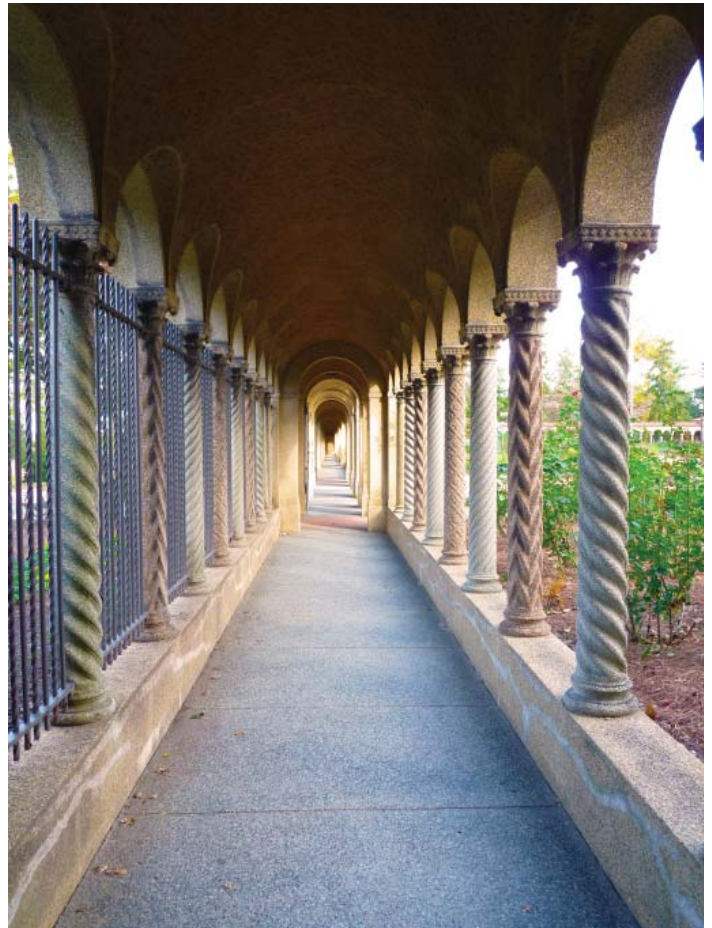
Architectural Conservator and Independent Consultant, L.R. Aument, LLC

Biography

Lori Aument is a building conservator with an interest in combining historical research and building material treatments to gain a greater understanding of our past and to guide effective stewardship for its future. Her current interests include preservation of our Civil Rights heritage, championing preservation in community revitalization, and the varying international conservation approaches at Khmer sites in Cambodia. She received a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania and established her independent consulting firm in 2012.

John Earley: Innovations in Concrete as Surface

John J. Earley (1881-1945) was a concrete innovator working during the early twentieth century when the physical and structural properties of reinforced concrete and the relationships between its various components were not completely understood. Contemporary engineering studies focused on improving the strength of concrete through proportioning. At the same time, the architectural community debated the most appropriate and aesthetically pleasing expression for this new architectural material. This discussion took place within the larger context of maintaining honesty of form in architecture. John J. Earley, and the craftsmen at the Earley Studio, continuously applied creative solutions to the problem of creating color, texture, and form in honest, artistic, and durable concrete work. Color and texture emerged from the concrete itself as the exposed aggregates were controlled and manipulated through the use of step-graded aggregate in the concrete mix. Complexities of form increased through succeeding work as the Studio gained an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the role of water and structural possibilities of concrete. The finishes and forms developed directly from a desire to utilize the essential qualities of concrete. Above all, the concrete work attests to the sense of artistry which John Earley brought to each of his projects. The restoration of Earley's work requires an understanding of the arc of his pioneering career as well as a similar commitment to experimentation, artistry, craftsmanship, and durability.



John J. Earley's precast and cast-in-place concrete cloister at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, Washington, DC. Photo credit: Lori Aument