

563133

(Expires 5/31/2012)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Columbus Monument  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_  
name of related multiple property listing N/A

### Location

street & number Columbus Circle  not for publication  
city or town New York  vicinity  
state New York code NY county New York code 111 zip code 10023

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local  
Fogor Daniel Mudge Signature of certifying official/Title Date 9/20/2018  
DSUPD State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:  
X entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 11/20/2018

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | private          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | object      |

| Contributing | Noncontributing |              |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
|              |                 | buildings    |
|              |                 | sites        |
|              |                 | structures   |
| 1            |                 | objects      |
| 1            | 0               | <b>Total</b> |

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Monument  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Monument  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS /  
Beaux Arts  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

foundation: Granite, Brick  
walls: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof: \_\_\_\_\_  
other: Granite, Bronze, Marble  
\_\_\_\_\_

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

---

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Columbus Monument is a 76-foot rostral column erected in 1892 in Columbus Circle at the intersection of West 59th Street, Broadway, Eighth Avenue and Central Park West, at the southwest entrance to Central Park. Located at the center of a recently redesigned circular public park, the monument serves as the focal point of a busy traffic circle and a terminal vista along Broadway, formerly known as “the Boulevard.” The traffic circle, known as Columbus Circle, forms the intersection of West 59th Street, Broadway, Eighth Avenue and Central Park West in Manhattan; it was historically the southwest entrance to Central Park (at the Merchant’s Gate) and is the northern terminus of Eighth Avenue. The monument is surrounded by a mix of twentieth and twenty-first century residential and commercial buildings on the boundary of Manhattan’s Hell’s Kitchen and the Upper West Side neighborhoods adjacent to Central Park. The nomination boundary is drawn to include the monument itself, including the base, column, and sculpture. It does not include the circle surrounding the monument, which has been redesigned multiple times during the twentieth century and no longer reflects its late nineteenth century appearance.

---

**Narrative Description**

Rising to a height of 76 feet, the Columbus Monument consists of a 35-foot high granite pedestal/base, a 35-foot high granite rostral column, and a 12-foot, 9-inch-high Carrara marble figure of Christopher Columbus. The rostral column, a type of monument dating to ancient Rome, was historically employed to commemorate naval victories with the prows of captured ships prominently displayed on the column as a tribute to the victor: at the Columbus Monument, the prows are representative of Columbus’s trio of vessels, the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa María*, symbolizing Columbus’s voyages and the discovery of the new world.

A Baveno granite socle supports the pedestal that bears dedicatory inscriptions in both Italian and English along with two bronze panels in *basso-relievos* measuring ten feet by two feet depicting “the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa María sailing from Spain” and “Columbus putting ashore and giving thanks to God while natives peer from behind foliage.”<sup>1</sup> The 28-foot granite pedestal is crowned with a bronze cornice of anthemion and is ornamented with finely produced sculptural elements including the ten foot, four inch tall allegorical figure, “Genius of Discovery” sometimes also referred to as “Genius of Geography,” also carved by Italian sculptor Gaetano Russo in Carrara marble, portraying Columbus’ “astounding doctrine that the earth was round.”<sup>2</sup> On the reverse (north side) rests a bronze American bald eagle, guarding the arms of the United States of America and the Republic of Genoa.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Illustrations,” *The American Architect and Building News* 46, no. 988 (December 1, 1894): 95; Lake Maggiore-Official Tourism Gateway, “The Pink Granite of Baveno.” [http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en\\_US/26095.Poi.html](http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en_US/26095.Poi.html)

<sup>2</sup> “The Big Shaft in Place: Crowds Watch the Work on the Columbus Statue,” *New York Times*, October 10, 1892.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

The following inscription is carved into the west elevation of the pedestal and base:

[top, Italian inscription] A CRISTOFORO COLOMBO / 'CL' ITALIANI RESIDENTI IN AMERICA /  
IRRISO PRIMA / MINACCIATO DURANTE IL VIAGGIO / INCATENATO DOPO / SAPENDO ESSER  
GENEROSO QUANTO OPPRESSO / DONAVA UN MONDO AL MONDO /

[middle, Italian inscription] LA GIOIA E LA GLORIA / NON EBERO MAI PIU SOLENNE GRIDO / DI  
OUELLO CHE RISUONO IN VISTA / DELLA PRIMA ISOLA AMERICANA / TERRA! TERRA! /

NEL 12 OTTOBRE 1892 / QUARTO CENTENARIO / DELLA SCOPERTA D'AMERICA / A  
IMPERITURA MEMORIA /

[bottom, Italian inscription] PER INIZIATIVA / DEL PROGRESSO ITALO AMERICANO /  
IL PRIMO GIORNALE ITALIANO QUOTIDIANO / NECIT STATI UNITI, /  
CAV. CARLO BARSOTTI EDITORE E PROPRIETARIO / [not translated]

The east elevation of the pedestal and base features the English translation:

[top, English inscription] TO CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS / THE ITALIANS RESIDENT IN  
AMERICA, / SCOFFED AT BEFORE, / DURING THE VOYAGE, MENACED, / AFTER IT, CHAINED,  
/ AS GENEROUS AS OPPRESSED, / TO THE WORLD HE GAVE A WORLD. /

[bottom, English inscription] JOY AND GLORY / NEVER UTTERED A MORE THRILLING CALL /  
THAT WHICH RESOUNDED / FROM THE CONQUERED OCEAN / IN SIGHT OF THE FIRST  
AMERICAN ISLAND /LAND! LAND!

ON THE XII OF OCTOBER MDCCCXCII / THE FOURTH CENTENARY / OF THE DISCOVERY OF  
AMERICA / IN IMPERISHABLE REMEMBRANCE /

The 35-foot tall Baveno granite column bears three pairs of rostra representing Columbus's three sailing vessels, the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa María capped by an acroterion with egg and dart moulding that supports the Columbus statue mounted above. The column is further adorned with two bronze anchors and a dedicatory inscription in Italian in bronze lettering which translates to "To Christopher Columbus." It is capped by a 12-foot, nine inch Carrara marble figure of Christopher Columbus facing south. Columbus is depicted attired in an admiral's uniform of the fifteenth century carved by Gaetano Russo. The monument is in very good condition and has had little alteration since its installation in 1892.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Art \_\_\_\_\_
- Ethnic History (Italian American) \_\_\_\_\_
- Social History \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1892 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1892 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

Ethnic History: Italian \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Gaetano Russo (sculptor) \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance is 1892, the date when the Columbus Monument was erected in Columbus Circle.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

### Summary

The Columbus Monument is locally significant under **Criterion C** in the area of **art** as an outstanding example of a late nineteenth century public monument in New York City. The statue was designed by Italian sculptor Gaetano Russo (1852-?), born in Messina, Sicily, and educated at the *Accademia del Belle Arti di Roma*. Russo began his career in Turin and became well-known as a sculptor of allegorical figures and commemorative monuments in Italy; the Columbus statue is his only work in America. The Columbus statue incorporates figurative and classical motifs, Beaux-Arts sculpture, and American iconography into a monumental neoclassical composition of high quality materials and craftsmanship. The form and content of this work, which celebrates Italian nationalism and American patriotism, embody a number of ideas about civic pride, patriotism, nationalism and ethnic identity that informed American culture in the early twentieth century. Funds for the statue were raised by Carlo Barsotti, founder of *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, a very influential and long-lasting Italian-language daily newspaper. The Columbus statue is one of five statues dedicated to great Italians erected in New York City during the first three decades that *Il Progresso* was published. The others honor *Giuseppe Garibaldi* (Giovanni Turini, 1888, Washington Square); *Giovanni da Verrazzano* (Ettore Ximenes, 1909, rededicated in Battery Park, 2016; *Giuseppe Verdi* (Pasquale Civiletti, 1906, Verdi Square, NR listed); and *Dante Alighieri* (Ettore Ximenes, 1921, Lincoln Square, now Dante Park).

The monument is also locally significant under **Criterion A** in the area of **ethnic history** as a tangible manifestation of the presence of the large Italian American community in New York City in the late nineteenth century and as a representation of the dynamics of assimilation that characterized these immigrants lives. As Italian immigration to the United States increased during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, New York was among the cities that experienced a significant increase in its Italian immigrant population. However, the Italy that these immigrants left had remained a group of different, rivalrous states until it was united as a single country in 1861, and Italians continued to identify deeply with individual regions and cultures. They brought these strong cultural identities with them to the United States, often settling near others from the same regions and retaining deep divisions with those from different regions; rivalries were especially pronounced between those from north and south. Each regional group celebrated different holidays and saints' days marked with religious ceremonies, parades, and festivals. "Italian" culture itself was defined by its fragmentation. At the same time, all of them, along with other immigrant groups, faced strong prejudice and hostility based on their lower class status, their ethnicity, and their Catholic religion. As the Italians desired inclusion in the dominant American society, Italian American community leaders searched for a symbol that would help to unify the diverse groups, creating a national feeling that did not exist in Italy. They used the image of Columbus to create an Italian American ethnic identity that they believed would overcome prejudice and discrimination and promote assimilation. Columbus's ascribed identities as the "first immigrant," a Catholic, an Italian, and a general national hero made

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

him the ideal representation of Italian American heritage and a symbol of acceptance into the mainstream American culture.

The quadricentennial of Columbus's 1492 voyage provided an ideal opportunity for New York's Italian American leaders to redefine the image of New York's Italian American community publicly. After Congress decided in 1890 that the World's Columbian Exposition would be in Chicago rather than in New York City, a group of New York's Italian American societies and *Il Progresso* editor Carlo Barsotti worked together to bring about a Columbian celebration in the city in 1892 and to establish a grand monument to celebrate Columbus. The erection of the Columbus statue in the geographic center of New York City recognizes the power of these cultural leaders to mediate between immigrant groups and the larger society in their attempt to help Italian American immigrants gain status in American society. At the same time, the statue also represents an attempt to diminish local and regional Italian identities in favor of a cohesive Italian American identity. The statue of Columbus at Columbus Circle represents the complex cultural history of New York's Italian American immigrant community.

The statue is additionally locally significant under **Criterion A** in the area of **social history** for its ability to embody various sets of meanings imposed on the historical person of Christopher Columbus about the nature of American citizenship in order to advance the position that immigrants, in this case Italian Catholics, were good citizens. The historical figure of Christopher Columbus has proven to be pliable, and the Columbus tradition has been rewritten over time to serve a number of contrasting narratives. In this case, Italian American community groups embraced Columbus not only the first immigrant and a Catholic, but also as an Italian, in order to meet an acute need for a symbol to unite diverse Italians, overcome prejudice and discrimination, and help Italians gain inclusion in the dominant society. Erected as the high point of the five-day Columbian celebration, the Columbus Monument reflected the power of the growing Italian American community in New York City, its priorities, and its success in casting itself as American and patriotic. Today, the Columbus statue remains part of the ongoing current political conversation at the local and national levels about Columbus, Columbus Day, and Columbus monuments. These discussions highlight the monument's importance in light of shifting understandings of its artistic and historical merit.

### **Christopher Columbus**

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), an Italian explorer, completed four voyages across the Atlantic for Spain and is generally credited with initiating European colonization of the new world. He has been commonly accredited with the "discovery of America," despite the fact that he never set foot in North America but landed instead in the Bahamas and further explored Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and the Central and South American coasts. Scholars have held the historical Columbus to account because his actions led to the brutal treatment of native people and because his voyages precipitated a cascade of exploration and colonization in the western hemisphere that had a negative impact on indigenous populations. Nevertheless, Columbus has remained a central figure in the

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

United States national origin myth even after scholars have spent centuries debating his achievements (such as noting that he could not have “discovered” an inhabited space) and reinterpreting his motivations and actions.<sup>3</sup> The figure of Columbus has proven to be a complex and confounding symbol capable of embodying positive and negative myths and meanings related to patriotism, good citizenship, immigration, ethnic identity, colonization and genocide.

Historically, the origin myth has remained a powerful one that has been strategically rewritten by various groups over time in order to construct a collective memory that would meet their needs. For example, while Columbus is not widely remembered as a religious figure, his identity as Catholic has been widely used to fight prejudice against Catholic immigrants.<sup>4</sup> The Knights of Columbus (K of C), established in 1882, was the first group to appropriate Columbus for this purpose in response to nativist defamation against Irish Catholics. Since Columbus had been used to symbolize patriotism since the Revolutionary War, the K of C appended his Catholicism to the patriotic image of Columbus in order to advance the position that good Catholics were also good Americans, thus justifying according the rights and privileges of citizenship to Catholics.<sup>5</sup> As late as the first quarter of the twentieth century, as the Ku Klux Klan raged against the “New Catholic Menace,” the K of C staged massive parades of neat, well-dressed of Irish Catholics, thus offering a strong orderly patriotism to “dispel images of immoral unpatriotic Catholics.”<sup>6</sup>

For Italian Americans, Columbus was used to create a unifying Italian American identity in order to unite disparate populations, combat prejudice, and help Italian American immigrants gain status in American society. Like many of the other immigrant groups arriving in New York City during the nineteenth century, the Italians sought inclusion in American culture but faced discrimination and prejudice. However, Italians remained a regionally diverse, internally segregated group that remained loyal to the people, provinces and cultures of their homeland. There were particular divisions between the more elite northern Italians and those from southern Italy, who tended to be poorer and working class. Italian American civic groups sought to unify these immigrants towards common goals, substituting festivals honoring Columbus, for example, for those honoring individual saints and villages, believing that such unity offered a pathway toward citizenship, patriotism and economic achievement. By focusing on Columbus, leaders created an Italian American version of the origin story that added nationality to the definition of Columbus as the “ideal American.” Columbus was already the first immigrant and a Catholic; now he was also an Italian. Thus, Italian American immigrants could also be ideal American citizens as well.

One of the ways that Italian American activists succeeded in institutionalizing this image was by concentrating on two relatively permanent things: the erection of statues of Columbus and the

---

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Kubal, *Cultural Movements and Collective Memory: Christopher Columbus and the Rewriting of the National Origin Myth* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Kubal, 35-36.

<sup>5</sup> Kubal, 35-37.

<sup>6</sup> Kubal, 37.



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

institution of state holidays celebrating Columbus. It was especially important to them to secure public space and official public recognition.<sup>7</sup> The use of Columbus to create an Italian American identity among divisive immigrant groups had a positive effect in situations like that in Walla Walla, Washington, where a Columbus Day statue was dedicated in 1911. In this community, the Columbus tradition served to unite a divided community of northern and southern Italians and thus proved a catalyst to the community's later business successes. Likewise, in Pueblo, Colorado, an annual Columbus Day parade and banquet drew together an ethnic group that was fragmented not only by its different regions of origin but by a complicated settlement pattern necessitated by local flooding in 1921.<sup>8</sup>

However, the creation of the new Italian American image could also be used in a more complicated way. Several prominent Italian Americans, Angelo Noce, in California and Colorado, and Carlo Barsotti, in New York, were important leaders in the Italian American identity effort. Both owned newspapers and were involved with mutual aid societies. Both used their influence to help create a unified and powerful Italian American identity and worked to sponsor statues and holidays in their respective cities and states. However, the Italian American image they helped to create was also more strongly aligned with the white mainstream majority. Barsotti, for example, among those most influential in the erection of New York's Columbus Circle monument, was a northern Italian who also worked to expunge the working class cultural histories of the poorer, southern Italian immigrants, devaluing their street festivals, for example, or equating their dialects with ignorance. Barsotti raised money for the statue from the working class Italian immigrants and simultaneously then used the statue to create an Italian American cultural model that excluded their histories.<sup>9</sup> This adds additional cultural complexity to the meaning of the Columbus statue.

"A statue is just an object." But, as the Italian American leaders knew, if the statue is in a public place, "it can also be a symbol of political power."<sup>10</sup> In recent years, debates over public sculpture have become fraught with controversy, and some have called for the removal, reinterpretation, or even defacement of statues of Columbus based on his associations with genocide. In September 2017, another statue of Columbus, an 1892 bronze statue [erected 1894], located in Central Park north of the 65<sup>th</sup> Street transverse, was defaced with an application of red paint symbolizing blood to the statue's hands and the words "hate will not be tolerated" on the pedestal.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Kubal, 103-104.

<sup>8</sup> John Alexander Williams, "The Columbus Complex," in *Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian American Folklife in the West*, ed. David A. Taylor and John Alexander Williams (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1992), 204.

<sup>9</sup> Laura E. Ruberto and Joseph Sciorra, "Recontextualizing the Ocean Blue: Italian Americans and the Commemoration of Columbus," *Process: A Blog of American History*, October 4, 2017. <http://www.processhistory.org/recontextualizing-the-ocean-blue/>

<sup>10</sup> Kubal, 107.

<sup>11</sup> Sarah Maslin Nir and Jeffrey C. Mays, "Christopher Columbus Statue in Central Park is Vandalized," *New York Times*, 12 September 2017.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

The Columbus statue proposed for nomination carries many complex meanings and represents the stories of both cultural elites and immigrant outsiders. As historians Laura E. Ruberto and Joseph Sciorra have noted:

We cannot easily compare Columbus statues and monuments with those that glorify Confederates....Most Confederate Monuments were erected as part of Jim Crow and in opposition to the Civil Rights Movement. The proliferation of Columbus representations to a large degree occurred in a different context; namely the arrival and fraught assimilation of more than four million Italian immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century. The dynamics of symbol-building around Columbus for a once-marginalized and attacked immigrant community--whose descendants are now firmly placed in corporate boardrooms, the highest echelons of political power, and white suburbia--necessitate a nuanced discussion about class and race in the United States<sup>12</sup>

### **Columbus Statues and Holidays in the United States**

In the United States, the earliest commemorative marker dedicated to Columbus is a forty-four foot obelisk located in Herring Run Park in Baltimore, Maryland, that dates to 1792 and was moved to its current location in 1964.<sup>13</sup> The earliest statue of Christopher Columbus is believed to be a marble statue erected in Boston's Louisburg Square c. 1850; while not much is known about the statue's origins, there is evidence that the statue was "donated by Marquis Niccolo Reggio, an Italian businessman and consul in Boston for the Papal States, Spain, and the kingdoms of Sardinia and of the Two Sicilies."<sup>14</sup>

In 1866, the Italian Sharpshooters Association of New York was the first official Italian American group in the United States to sponsor a publicly organized ceremony honoring Columbus. The event, which included a parade, sharpshooting, dancing, and a banquet, was followed by similar events in other cities, including Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, San Francisco and New Orleans.<sup>15</sup> Between 1880 and 1910, coincident with a large jump in the Italian American populations of Philadelphia, San Francisco, Denver and New York City, Italian American civic and benevolent groups organized to help foster good citizenship, patriotism, and a path to success for these recent immigrants that was primarily focused on the promoting Columbus through celebrations, the erection of statues, and the proclamation of official holidays. Italian American groups successfully erected statues and created official holidays in Pennsylvania, California, Colorado and New York.

---

<sup>12</sup> Ruberto and Sciorra, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, "Conservation of Baltimore City's Monuments, Memorials, and Sculpture," City of Baltimore. <https://chap.baltimorecity.gov/monuments-and-conservation>; Peter van der Krogt, "Columbus Obelisk," Columbus Monuments Pages, <http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=CO&record=usmd03>

<sup>14</sup> Peter van der Krogt, "Columbus Statue at Louisburg Square," Columbus Monuments Pages, <http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=CO&record=usma12>

<sup>15</sup> Kubal, 110.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

Italian American events in San Francisco preceded mass immigration. There was an event for Italian sharpshooters in 1869, followed by public events in 1870, and 1885; the city's first holiday was in 1909. In Philadelphia, the first Italian American group mobilized to dedicate the tenth statue of Columbus in the nation in 1876. The largest pan ethnic Italian American benevolent society, the Columbian Federation, was established at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.<sup>16</sup>

Angelo Noce moved from San Francisco to Denver, Colorado, in 1885 and founded Colorado's first Italian language newspaper, *La Scalla*, in 1885. Pueblo, Colorado, had a statue in 1905, and Colorado became the first state to have an official state holiday in 1905. The largest Italian American pan ethnic organization in the United States, the Sons of Italy in America, was founded in 1905 in New York City. New York State's Columbus Day's holiday was proclaimed in 1909. Opponents argued that the Italians would just get into trouble on the holiday, and others wondered why all of New York had to take the day off just to please the Italians.<sup>17</sup>

Not all Columbus statues were promoted by Italian American cultural groups. New York's oldest statue of Columbus was commissioned in 1863, nearly thirty years before the nominated statue. Marshall Owen Roberts, who made his fortune building steamships, some of which he leased and sold to the United States government for the transportation of mail, was an avid art collector.<sup>18</sup> Roberts commissioned Emma Stebbins, an American sculptor who was living and working in Rome, for a life-sized marble statue of Columbus that was to be a gift to the City of New York for installation in Central Park "under a protective glass housing."<sup>19</sup> Completed in 1867, Stebbins's *Columbus* was presented by Roberts to the Board of Commissioners of Central Park who believed "[t]his statue is truly grand in its conception and beautiful in its execution—worthy, indeed, to occupy a prominent place in our Central Park."<sup>20</sup> In his letter of presentation, dated 20 February 1869, Roberts also recorded the following description:

Columbus is represented as standing upon the deck of a ship alone and at midnight, just before the land of the Western continent burst upon his view. His mutinous crew have all deserted him and are feasting below, while he—the intrepid discoverer with a firm grasp upon the rudder post, looks eagerly, anxiously forward, piercing the darkness with his eye of faith and with earnest prayers to heaven for success, waits for the dawning of the day which, coming at last, brings with it victory and repose.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Kubal, 106.

<sup>17</sup> Kubal, 112.

<sup>18</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park* (New York: January 1870), 55-56.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Milroy, "The Public Career of Emma Stebbins: Work in Marble," *Archives of American Art Journal* 33, no. 3 (1993): 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park* (New York: January 1870), 146.

<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth Milroy, "The Public Career of Emma Stebbins," 9.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

Roberts's intent for the marble to be installed "as soon as a suitable glass house has been provided to protect the marble from the weather" was never realized. <sup>22</sup> Years later, in 1920, its fate was recorded:

For years this really fine statue stood desolate, deserted, and forlorn in the abandoned McGowan's Pass Tavern in Central Park. When that building was demolished [c. 1915], it was removed to the old Armory, where at latest accounts it was seen utterly neglected and covered with dust and grime. It is a great pity that up to the present no effort has been made to give it a worthy location. If such is to be the fate of works of art which come into the possession of New York, there is little inducement to lead people of wealth to give statues for the ornamentation of the public parks of the metropolis.<sup>23</sup>

After being rediscovered in 1934, the statue was outfitted with a new limestone pedestal and placed in Columbus Park (formerly Mulberry Bend Park, renamed Columbus Park in 1911) in the Chinatown neighborhood of Manhattan. In 1971, Columbus was moved once again to its current location in Cadman Plaza, Brooklyn, in front of the New York State Supreme Court Building.<sup>24</sup>

The 1892 quadricentennial of Columbus's landing in the new world was a high point in Columbus commemoratives. A replica of a 1886 statue of Columbus by Jeronimo Suñol, a Spanish-born sculptor, which had been erected in the city of Madrid, was cast at the foundry of Federico Masriera in Barcelona and was to be erected in New York's Central Park. Unfortunately, due to a lack of sufficient funds, it was not erected until 1894 with "imposing ceremonies."<sup>25</sup>

Manhattan's fourth Columbus statue is "among the excellent statues which adorn the façade of the [Alexander Hamilton] United States Custom House [which] [t]o the student of history, as well as to the lover of art, these huge sculptures are a perpetual source of delight."<sup>26</sup> This interpretation of Columbus, modeled by Henry Lukeman (largely hidden from view due to its installation atop the cornice of the Custom House) is one of a set of twelve figures that represent the great seafaring nations.<sup>27</sup> In this installation, Columbus personifies the city of Genoa and early critics of the work remarked, "in pose and workmanship it is equal to the best portraiture of the great admiral. It may

<sup>22</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park* (New York: January 1870), 146.

<sup>23</sup> Frank Owen Payne, "Our Memorials of Columbus: The Many and Noteworthy Monuments that America has Erected in Honor of the Great Italian Who Discovered the New World," *Munsey's Magazine* 71, no. 1 (October 1920): 27.

<sup>24</sup> New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, "Columbus Park Monuments: Christopher Columbus." <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/columbus-park/monuments/298>; "Columbus on a Pedestal," *New York Times*, October 14, 1991. [It was this statue that was vandalized on September 2017.]

<sup>25</sup> Frank Owen Payne, "Our Memorials of Columbus: The Many and Noteworthy Monuments that America has Erected in Honor of the Great Italian Who Discovered the New World," *Munsey's Magazine* 71, no. 1 (October 1920), 27; New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, "Central Park: Christopher Columbus." <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/central-park/monuments/297>; Nestor Ponce de Leon, "The 'Discoverer of the New World' as represented in Portraits, Monuments, Statues, Medals and Paintings," (New York: N. Ponce de Leon, 1893) [http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/columbus\\_gallery/statues.html#newyork2](http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/columbus_gallery/statues.html#newyork2).

<sup>26</sup> Payne, "Our Memorials of Columbus," 28.

<sup>27</sup> Robert A.M. Stern et al., *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1987), 75.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

fitly be ranked with the works of Bartlett and Taft in Washington.”<sup>28</sup> Lukeman’s design “represented Genoa as Christopher Columbus with clean-shaven face, high forehead, and long, thin hair, holding the plumed helmet and long sword that identify him as duke of Veragua and admiral of the ocean.”<sup>29</sup>

*Munsey’s Magazine* pointed out in 1920 that, “it is the western hemisphere that has done most to honor the great navigator’s memory...[a]most every capital city from Cape Horn to the arctic circle can show one or more statues of Columbus...[o]nly Canada seems to have ignored him in so far as concerns the erection of public monuments.”<sup>30</sup> New York City had four statues (another would be erected in Queens in 1941), but it is Russo’s monument that *Munsey’s Magazine* singled out for recognition, noting (with an accompanying illustration entitled, “New York’s Most Conspicuous Monument of Columbus, which Stands in the Center of Columbus Circle”) that:

[e]ver since the establishment of Columbus Day as a holiday, this fine monument has been handsomely decorated on the 12th of October with symbolic floral emblems, while the Spanish and Italian citizens vie with the Knights of Columbus in thus honoring the man who more than any other was responsible for making the New World known to civilization.<sup>31</sup>

## Monuments

Erecting monuments to create *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) can be traced back to ancient cultures. This practice was adopted in the United States in the early years of the Republic’s existence. The years between the end of the Civil War and the 1930s, especially between 1876 and the beginning of World War I, saw a marked increase in the building of monuments and memorials in the United States. While the impulse to memorialize was boosted by the 1893 World Columbian Exposition and the ensuing City Beautiful Movement, historians have argued that it was driven by the period’s unsettled social, political, and economic environment. At the same time as it was growing in size, economic, and international power, the United States faced internal turmoil as it accommodated waves of new immigrants, dealt with the social, political and racial consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction, and local and political leaders worked to suppress dissent in the effort of establishing a single American identity that served their interests. Historian Dell Upton has argued that monuments established during this period:

...narrated a civic mythology, a particular view of American history and society that challenged the new realities of late-nineteenth-century America. They relied on the allegorizing and universalizing qualities inherent in monuments to portray an America in which conflicts and fissures were submerged in a civic unity characterized as progress. The monuments’ America was a unique, successful project to bring

<sup>28</sup> Frank Owen Payne, “Our Memorials of Columbus,” 28. Paul Bartlett’s *Columbus* can be seen in the Main Reading Room of the Library of Congress; Lorado Taft’s *Columbus Fountain* is outside Washington D.C.’s Union Station.

<sup>29</sup> Donald Martin Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces: Histories and Views of Public Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 331.

<sup>30</sup> Payne, 23.

<sup>31</sup> Payne, 25-27.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

enterprise, Christianity, and order to a vast, rich, barely occupied world that had been discovered, developed, populated, and further enriched by the individual efforts of Europeans and their descendants.<sup>32</sup>

In New York City, the movement was driven by the professionalization of public sculpture in addition to the revitalization of nationalistic sentiment and search for unity after the Civil War. Through the creation of new monuments, which was often closely associated with city planning, city leaders hoped to inspire civic and moral reform through the beautification and modification of the urban environment itself. The pace of monument-building increased after the construction of the Columbus Monument, which also inspired concern about the number of monuments created by foreign sculptors. In 1895, the same year the Fine Art Foundation was founded to advance the interests of professional sculptors, the *New York Times* heralded the growth of the movement: "Monumental art has taken a great bound forward in this city...[w]ithin the next two years the outlook is that at least a million dollars will be expended on monuments and statues of public men, everlasting lessons for the youth of coming generations."<sup>33</sup>

The Columbus Monument is one noteworthy example of the large-scale, public works of memorial architecture that were being executed for the City of New York in the early 1890s. The Washington Square Arch, designed by Stanford White to commemorate the centennial of George Washington's first inauguration in Lower Manhattan, was being erected almost contemporaneously at the foot of Fifth Avenue. Much like at Columbus Circle, the arch acts as a terminal vista for Fifth Avenue and it, too, is a modern derivation of an ancient Roman form, the triumphal arch. Following a successful fund-raising campaign headed by William Rhinelander Stewart, who lived nearby on Washington Square, the Washington Square arch replaced a temporary arch raised in 1887. Stanford White's triumphal arch, like Gaetano Russo's rostral column, was a gift to the city from private citizens; however, the Columbus Monument is distinctive in that it was largely funded by the immigrant community.

### **Italian Immigrants in New York City**

Italians were numerous among the waves of southern European immigrants who arrived in the United States around the turn of the century. The earliest Italian immigrants typically came from the northern provinces. The new government established by the 1861-70 unification of Italy was led primarily by wealthier northern citizens, who developed policies that were directly harmful to the southern Italian economy. As agricultural and employment opportunities and quality of life declined, southern Italians began immigrating to northern Europe and north Africa. During the 1870s, Italian

---

<sup>32</sup> Dell Upton, "Why Do Contemporary Monuments Talk So Much," in *Commemoration in America: Essays on Monuments, Memorialization, and Memory* eds. David Gobel and Daves Rossell (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 19-20.

<sup>33</sup> Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 45; Michele H. Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 3-7, 61.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

immigration to the United States began to grow substantially, and it ultimately peaked during the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>34</sup>

However, the Italy they left had remained a group of different, rivalrous states until it was united as a single country in 1871, and Italians continued to identify deeply with individual regions and cultures. They brought these strong cultural identities with them to the United States, often settling near others from the same regions and retaining deep divisions with others from different regions; rivalries were especially pronounced between those from north and south. Each Italian immigrant group celebrated different holidays and saint's days marked with religious ceremonies, parades, and festivals. "Italian" culture itself was defined by its fragmentation. At the same time, all of them, along with other immigrant groups, faced strong prejudice and hostility based on their lower class, their ethnicity, and their catholic religion. As the Italians desired inclusion in the dominant American society, community leaders searched for a symbol that would help to unify the diverse Italian groups, creating a national feeling that did not exist in Italy. They used the image of Columbus to create an Italian American ethnic identity that would help to overcome prejudice and discrimination. Columbus's ascribed identities as the "first immigrant," a Catholic, an Italian, and a general national hero made him the ideal representation of Italian American heritage.

### **Carlo Barsotti**

Carlo Barsotti (1850-1927) was born in Pisa and immigrated to the United States in 1872 at the age of 22. In 1879, he co-founded *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* newspaper, on the conviction "that the Italians of New York and the United States enthusiastically desire a newspaper in their own language which will excite and disseminate that culture and can better educate our character and foster our prosperity."<sup>35</sup> This newspaper was also intended to "to raise the national prestige and to refute the defamation with which detractors have tried to degrade our name."<sup>36</sup> Ultimately, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* became known as the first Italian daily newspaper in the United States, publishing news about Italy and the Italian community in the region and providing immigrants with an effective way of obtaining information about their home country and the tools needed to thrive and succeed in their new environment.<sup>37</sup> By 1910, *Il Progresso* had a daily circulation of between 90,000 and 100,000. The success of *Il Progresso* as a daily newspaper and the realization of the various commemorative campaigns it sponsored can be directly traced to the rise in Italian immigration to the United States

<sup>34</sup> Michael Caratzas, ed., "Sullivan-Thompson Historic District Designation Report," New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, December 13, 2016, 17.

<sup>35</sup> Carlo Barsotti, "To the Readers," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 13, 1880; Francesco Durante, ed., *Italoamerica: The Literature of the Great Migration, 1880-1943*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 17-19.

<sup>36</sup> Barsotti, "To the Readers," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 13, 1880

<sup>37</sup> Durante, ed., *Italoamerica*, 81; Peter G. Vellon, *A Great Conspiracy against Our Race: Italian Immigrant Newspapers and the Construction of Whiteness in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 22-24; Library of Congress, "About Il Progresso italo-americano. (New York [N.Y.] 1880-1989." <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030300/> Barsotti's co-founder was Vincenzo Polidori though Polidori was only associated with the paper during 1880, the initial year of publication.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

and, in particular, to New York City in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>38</sup> *Il Progresso* “was financed and endorsed by the so-called *prominenti* (bankers and professionals) ...[who] were fiercely (and paternalistically) patriotic” with the aim of better communicating issues of interest to the Italian American community and maintaining its sense of identity.<sup>39</sup>

During the first three decades that *Il Progresso* was published, Barsotti used his newspaper to raise funds for a total of five monuments dedicated to great Italians erected in New York City: *Giuseppe Garibaldi* (Giovanni Turini, 1888) in Washington Square; *Giovanni da Verrazzano* (Ettore Ximenes, 1909) in Battery Park, rededicated in new location in Battery Park, 2016; *Giuseppe Verdi* (Pasquale Civiletti, 1906) in Verdi Square (NR listed); *Dante Alighieri* (Ettore Ximenes, 1921) in Lincoln Square (renamed Dante Park); and *Christopher Columbus* (Gaetano Russo, 1892) in Columbus Circle.<sup>40</sup> While each was the work of an accomplished Italian sculptor, none seems to have received the attention lavished on the Columbus Monument. Similarly, the Columbus Monument occupies one of the most prominent locations along Broadway (and has the distinction of being placed in one of the few traffic circles) in Manhattan’s famous grid, making it highly visible to passersby. Located about a dozen blocks north on Broadway is Civiletti’s *Giuseppe Verdi*, which occupies a triangular lot wedged next to a major subway station.<sup>41</sup> Ximenes’s *Dante Alighieri* is obscured from view by overgrown trees in a small plot of ground at West 63 Street and Broadway.

However, despite his success, Barsotti himself was criticized by other Italian American leaders for his association with capitalists. He took a stand against organized unions and *Il Progresso* ran editorials criticizing laws intended to protect immigrant workers. Only a few months before the Columbus Circle statue was unveiled, a number of Italian American groups organized an event to denounce Barsotti, calling him a “private schemer.” He was also accused of taking credit away from the “committee of 100,” which was officially charged with organizing the celebration. The groups stated: “We want to honor Columbus and not a private schemer.”<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, Barsotti was still accorded an active role in the statue’s dedication ceremonies, and after the unveiling he continued his efforts to make Columbus Day a state holiday, which succeeded in 1909.

---

<sup>38</sup> Vellon, *A Great Conspiracy*, 22-24.

<sup>39</sup> Giorgio Bertellini, “Shipwrecked Spectators: Italy’s Immigrants at the Movies in New York, 1906-1916,” *The Velvet Light Trap* 44 (1999): 43.

<sup>40</sup> The Dante monument was installed to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the poet’s death. A second casting was made for an identical statue that was installed in Meridian Hill Park, Washington, D.C., 1921.

<sup>41</sup> The memorial to Verdi, occupies Verdi Square, formerly the northern part of Sherman Square and a designated New York City Scenic Landmark. According to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, “[t]he heroic size figure of Verdi in Carrara marble stands on a fifteen-foot high dark granite pedestal that is encircled by four life-size figures representing the leading characters from *Aida*, *Falstaff*, *Othello* and “*La Forza del Destino*.” New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, “Verdi Square,” January 28, 1975.

<sup>42</sup> Kubal, 110-111.



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

## **Columbus Monument**

After Congress decided in 1890 that the World's Columbian Exposition would be in Chicago rather than New York City, New York's Italian American cultural leaders (*prominenti*) and Barsotti championed a campaign to hold a five-day celebration in honor of the Columbian quadricentennial and to install a monument to Columbus.<sup>43</sup> This "nationalistic impetus was accompanied by the acknowledgement that the United States had become a permanent residence for many Italians."<sup>44</sup> On April 21, 1892, New York State passed a law directing New York City's mayor to appoint one hundred citizens to manage and plan the celebration. Soon after, Mayor Hugh L. Grant appointed a Columbus Committee of One Hundred, which included representatives of these Italian groups as well as other leaders, including Standard Oil Company founder John D. Rockefeller Sr. and former U.S. secretary of the navy William Whitney.<sup>45</sup>

The association of Italian American identity in the late nineteenth century with Christopher Columbus, the explorer who lived four hundred years before is noteworthy. Historian Thomas Schlereth noted that "Christopher Columbus has proven to be a malleable and durable American symbol. He has been interpreted and reinterpreted as we have constructed and reconstructed our own national character."<sup>46</sup> The significance of Columbus as an American icon in 1892 was fairly different from earlier interpretations of the historical figure: "Americans first discovered the discoverer during their quest for independence and nationhood; successive generations molded Columbus into a multipurpose American hero, a national symbol to be used variously in the quest for a collective identity."<sup>47</sup>

In particular, Columbus became an important symbol of identity for Italian Americans. For these immigrants, who were overwhelmingly Roman Catholics (and a religious minority in the American population), Columbus offered an alternative narrative of the genesis of America. To them, Columbus's discovery of America in 1492 not only predated the Anglo-Saxon Protestant chronicle of the landing of the *Mayflower* at Plymouth Rock in 1620 but "the historical Columbus proved that their religious belief was no impediment to their American citizenship."<sup>48</sup> In this they followed the lead of the Knights of Columbus, which was formed in 1882 to protect Irish Catholics against nativist attacks. The K of C was the first to use the historical persona of Columbus as a Catholic to advance the position that good Catholics were also good Americans.

Christopher Columbus was viewed by Italian immigrants as the first immigrant to America, even though Columbus was only a temporary visitor. Columbus Day became a public display of their

<sup>43</sup> Bertellini, "Shipwrecked Spectators," 43.

<sup>44</sup> Bertellini, "Shipwrecked Spectators," 43.

<sup>45</sup> David Mark Carletta, "The Triumph of American Spectacle: New York City's 1892 Columbian Celebration," *Material Culture* 40 (2008): 19-20.

<sup>46</sup> Thomas J. Schlereth, "Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism," *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (1992): 937.

<sup>47</sup> Schlereth, 937.

<sup>48</sup> Schlereth, 958.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

heritage much like celebrations of St. Patrick's Day, which began being consistently held in major eastern cities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were meaningful for earlier Irish immigrants to America.<sup>49</sup> Columbus "became an American ethnic saint in an era of unprecedented immigration...As citizens of a disestablished polity that had separated church and state but nonetheless fostered a national civil religion, such Americans now merged two faiths—Americanism and Catholicism—into a credo some called Columbianism."<sup>50</sup>

The Columbus Monument was a collective effort of "seventy Italian societies who have taken upon themselves the patriotic duty of erecting a monument to Christopher Columbus and fittingly celebrating the anniversary of his discovery of America in this city on Oct[ober] 12 next."<sup>51</sup> In their effort to establish a new, grand monument to Christopher Columbus, these groups worked deftly within the multifaceted symbolic paradigms that Columbus had come to represent. From the earliest stages through to completion, they based their calls for and celebration of the monument on a balance of Italian Nationalism and American Patriotism to appeal broadly to the Italian immigrant and mainstream communities. Planning for the Columbus Monument began in February 1889, when Barsotti began raising funds for the erection of a monument to coincide with the quadricentennial of Columbus's arrival at San Salvador Island in the Bahamas, or what was widely considered to be the "discovery of America."<sup>52</sup> The design for the Columbus Monument was undertaken with a great deal of deliberation by a committee as Barsotti inveigled Italy's King Umberto to appoint a committee to judge a competition.

Yet, it is noteworthy that it was commissioned at a time when diplomatic relations between the United States and the recently unified country of Italy (in 1861) were just being restored following the heinous lynching of eleven Italians by a mob in New Orleans on March 14, 1891. The incident sparked rumors of war and led to the temporary severing of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the departure of the Italian Minister Plenipotentiary, Baron Saverio Fava (1832-1913), from the United States.<sup>53</sup> In May of 1892, it was reported that Baron Fava "has, after a year's absence, returned to resume his Ministerial duties at Washington...[as] [t]he differences having been amicably adjusted, Baron Fava is sent back as proof of the kindly relations which the Italian Government wishes maintained between itself and the United States."<sup>54</sup> Upon his return, Baron Fava proclaimed, "[t]here is nothing but the kindest feelings on the part of King Umberto I and his subjects

<sup>49</sup> Kenneth Moss, "St. Patrick's Day Celebrations and the Formation of Irish-American Identity, 1845-1875," *Journal of Social History* 29 (1995): 125-148.

<sup>50</sup> Schlereth, 955.

<sup>51</sup> "Italy and the United States Once More in Full Harmony, and the Minister Glad to Resume his Diplomatic Duties," *New York Times*, May 16, 1892.

<sup>52</sup> Frederick Fried, *New York Civic Sculpture: A Pictorial Guide* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976), 69.

<sup>53</sup> "Chief Hennessy Avenged; Eleven of His Italian Assassins Lynched by a Mob. An Uprising of Indignant Citizens in New Orleans – The Prison Doors Forced and the Italian Murderers Shot Down," *The New York Times*, March 15, 1891; Christine DeLuca, "Getting the Story Straight: Press Coverage of Italian American Lynchings from 1856-1910," *Italian Americana* 21 no. 2 (2003): 212-221.

<sup>54</sup> "Italy and the United States Once More in Full Harmony, and the Minister Glad to Resume his Diplomatic Duties," *New York Times*, May 16, 1892.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

for the American people. Whatever differences may for a time have existed have passed away with us and our friendship is as strong as if it had never, by a most unfortunate circumstance, been interrupted.”<sup>55</sup> He further remarked, “[t]he King and his subjects have heard with pleasure of the movement on the part of Italian brethren in America to build a monument to Christopher Columbus.”<sup>56</sup> The monument symbolized the renewed goodwill and friendship between the two countries.

Contemporary reports regarding the Royal Commission noted that “[n]ine judges were appointed—three architects, three painters, and three sculptors, all eminent in their respective departments—and the competition was large and spirited.”<sup>57</sup> There was considerable interest in the new monument as the *New York Times* reported on 30 August 1891, almost a year before it was unveiled, that “[s]ome description has already been given of the statue itself, the newspapers having printed it, some of them illustrating it when the sculptor’s design was accepted.”<sup>58</sup> The *Times* especially pointed out that this was no ordinary monument but exhibited extraordinary artistic merit:

The Royal Commission, to whom has been submitted the inspection of the plans before their acceptance by Editor [Carlo] Barsotti, has pronounced the eagle to be one of the most beautiful pieces of sculpture produced in Italy for many years...[t]his is regarded as high praise, for the commission is composed of such artists as Sacconi, Ferrari, Salvini, Calderini, and Guido Monteverde.<sup>59</sup>

The Royal Art Committee awarded the commission to the Roman sculptor Gaetano Russo, whose designs clearly met and exceeded the highest standards in the areas of architecture, art, and sculpture.<sup>60</sup> Russo, born in Messina, Sicily, in 1852, was educated at the *Accademia del Belle Arti di Roma*. He began his career in Turin and became well-known as a sculptor of allegorical figures and commemorative monuments in Italy, being described as “a worthy performer of funerary monuments, including the monument to the poet “Felice Bisazza” in the Camposanto of Messina.”<sup>61</sup> Russo’s work is well represented in Italy; however, his only identifiable public installation in America is the Columbus Monument in New York City.<sup>62</sup>

Russo’s design for the Columbus Monument balanced traditional Roman forms, Beaux-Arts design, and patriotic language and imagery typical of American civic monuments. The Roman tradition of the

<sup>55</sup> “Italy and the United States Once More in Full Harmony,” *New York Times*.

<sup>56</sup> “Italy and the United States Once More in Full Harmony,” *New York Times*

<sup>57</sup> “Exhibition Notes,” *Scientific American* 66, no. 22 (May 28, 1892): 342.

<sup>58</sup> “The Statue of Columbus: How the Work with its Groups Will Look When Completed,” *New York Times*, August 30, 1891.

<sup>59</sup> “The Statue of Columbus: How the Work with Its Groups Will Look,” *New York Times*.

<sup>60</sup> John Tauranac, *Elegant New York: The Builders and Buildings: 1885-1915* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), 147.

<sup>61</sup> Vincenzo Vicario, *Gli Scultori Italiani dal Neoclassicismo al Liberty*, vol. 2 (Lodi: Il Pomerio, 1994), 928-929.

<sup>62</sup> “Gaetano Russo,” askART. [http://www.askart.com/artist\\_bio/Gaetano\\_Russo/11066965/Gaetano\\_Russo.aspx](http://www.askart.com/artist_bio/Gaetano_Russo/11066965/Gaetano_Russo.aspx) Some of Russo’s smaller works have recently been auctioned at Sotheby’s including a five-foot Carrara marble statue of “Judith, the Jewish heroine who bravely decapitated the Assyrian general, Holofernes.” Sotheby’s auctioned a life size marble sculpture by Gaetano Russo in April 2006; it sold for \$192,000.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

*columna rostrate* (rostral column), an ancient typology of honorific columns, forms the basis of Russo's design of a column on a series of pedestals.<sup>63</sup> Ancient Romans used the rostral column to commemorate a naval victory. *Rostra*, the prows of captured ships, are prominently displayed on the monument. One famous example is the *Columna Rostrata C. Duillii* ("Rostral Column of Gaius Duilius"), which celebrates the naval victory at the Battle of Mylae in 260 B.C. Russo's modern interpretation of the rostral column for the Columbus monument would have appealed to Italian sensibilities. Italian immigrants would have been familiar with the historical significance and iconography of the ancient monuments in their homeland. This monument type allowed for the incorporation of the bronze rostra of the *Niña*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria*, which represented Columbus's successful conquest of the sea and discovery of the new world. The utilization of these traditional Roman honorific and trochaic elements in a strict form on a New York City monument was not repeated until the construction of the Henry Hudson Memorial (Karl Bittner/Karl Gruppe and Babb, Cook & Welch, 1938), which shares similarities with the Column of Trajan in Rome.<sup>64</sup>

In addition, Russo's design for the monument incorporated two carved marble figures: the *Genius of Discovery/Genius of Geography* and Christopher Columbus. Both are typical of allegorical sculpture of the period, which was frequently integrated into Beaux-Arts architecture and design. The former, a winged and draped figure with a globe on a stand, depicts Columbus's discovery of new lands. Similarly, the figure of Columbus located at the top of the pedestal is depicted with a sense of historicism, in lush period garments, with rope at his feet to suggest his life as a sailor. Standing in a powerful pose, he looks outward to suggest exploration and adventure on the horizon. Finally, the design's incorporation of a bronze screeching eagle in flight and bronze reliefs blend American traditions and iconography into the monument. In addition to using traditional and allegorical elements of monument design to express its intended meaning, the incorporation of carvings in both English and Italian made it clear that this monument was designed by and for the Italian community to celebrate its chosen hero.

Russo waived the \$20,000 fee for his services; however, he charged the committee \$14,000 for materials, the cost of which was paid by individual subscriptions. A total of \$5,000 had been raised by the summer of 1890, and the group worked to raise additional funds through fairs and sales.<sup>65</sup> To further aid the fundraising efforts, Barsotti put Russo's ten-foot-high scale plaster model of the monument on display in a vacant storefront at Centre and Duane Streets in the Five Points Neighborhood.<sup>66</sup> This neighborhood, which had a long history of hosting hard-working immigrants, in particular large numbers of Italians who began arriving in the 1880s, worked well to promote the monument. Barsotti's efforts were apparently successful; work soon began on the monument.

---

<sup>63</sup> Reynolds, 341-343.

<sup>64</sup> Reynolds, 341-343; "Henry Hudson Park," New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/henry-hudson-park/>

<sup>65</sup> "In Memory of Columbus: A Description of the Monument to be Erected in this City," *New York Times*, July 20, 1890.

<sup>66</sup> John Tauranac, *Elegant New York: The Builders and Buildings 1885-1915* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), 147.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

### Site Selection and Groundbreaking

Well before Gaetano Russo had completed his work on the monument, New York City was preparing for its arrival in the new world. In early spring 1892, the Italian Committee on the Columbus Monument held a meeting, chaired by Carlo Barsotti, at the Italian Club, then located at 237 East 14 Street, to plan the events surrounding the installation and unveiling of the new monument.<sup>67</sup> The report also notes that the committee, also known as the executive committee, had yet to secure a location for the monument. They had “asked the Parks Commissioners to have the monument placed at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street, but the Commissioners have suggested that it be placed at Fifth Avenue and 110th Street instead.”<sup>68</sup> The committee’s first choice, Fifth Avenue and 59th Street, now known as Grand Army Plaza, is the site of the gilded equestrian of General William Tecumseh Sherman (Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Charles Follen McKim, 1903).<sup>69</sup> In 1893, the Fifty-Ninth Street site was also proposed for the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument, which caused equal consternation among the decision-makers in the parks commission; it was eventually erected at Riverside Park near West Eighty-Ninth Street in 1900.

The location which became Columbus Circle was originally known simply as “the Circle” and was an architectural element included in the original design for Central Park by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. Located on the park’s southwest corner, adjacent to the Merchant’s Gate, it is a terminal vista to one of the main entrances into the park. The Sanborn-Perris fire insurance map dated 1892 includes a well-defined “Grand Circle”; earlier map editions from 1857 show a simple triangular plot of ground formed by the intersection of West 59th Street, Broadway and Eighth Avenue. In 1869, the commissioners of the board for Central Park reported that the circle, or the “open circular place was...laid out” at this intersection specifically for the purpose “as a turnabout for horse-drawn vehicles,” presumably those vehicles being utilized on Central Park’s several scenic drives.

The area on the West Side of Central Park had been slow to develop, in spite of its close proximity to the park. In 1877, for example, the *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* pointed out that the neighborhood was not desirable, despite being close to the newly completed park with easy access to major transportation routes along Broadway. Nevertheless, the *Record and Guide* opined that nearby Columbus Circle was “laid out on far more magnificent scale than the Fifth Avenue Plaza” (Grand Army Plaza).

In 1890, there was an effort to stimulate residential development along the west side of Central Park. Robert A.M. Stern points out in *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age* that

---

<sup>67</sup> “The Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*, March 20, 1892.

<sup>68</sup> “The Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*.

<sup>69</sup> New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, “Grand Army Plaza,” July 23, 1974. In the Designation Report, the Grand Army Plaza is referred to as “one of the most dignified and famous open spaces in the City.” Interestingly, Saint-Gaudens received the contract for the Sherman equestrian in 1892, the year of the Columbus Monument’s dedication though the Sherman statue was not completed until 1903.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

such development would be aided by a change in the names of the avenues in close proximity to the park and the rotary that soon would be named "Columbus Circle." On 22 April 1890, Eighth Avenue became Central Park West with its southern terminus at Columbus Circle. The Columbus Monument was added to the neighborhood about two years later.

To amplify the Columbus Monument's patriotic appeal, Barsotti arranged to hold the groundbreaking ceremony at 8 o'clock in the morning on Independence Day, Monday, 04 July 1892. The festive ceremony was complete with "a band playing lively airs, leading several bodies of men in gay uniforms, with flags and banners flying" along with "120 Italian laborers with spades and picks [who] stood ready to break ground for the statue."<sup>70</sup> In his remarks specially prepared for the occasion, the vice-president of the monument committee, C.A. Barattoni declared

[t]he monument which will shortly be conveyed to these shores, the gift to the City of New-York from the Italians, has already been described and illustrated in the various metropolitan papers. The Royal Art Commission, appointed under the auspices of the Ministry of Fine Arts of Italy, at Rome, has pronounced it one of the finest products of the modern Italian sculptor's art, and we feel sure that, once erected on this square, a few months hence, owing to its intrinsic artistic merits, it will command the admiration of all art-loving Americans.

You may wonder why such large area of excavation is necessary. Let me remind you that the base of this monument measures 46 by 46 feet, the total height is 76 feet, and the aggregate weight about 300 tons. From these data you may be able to form an idea of its importance, and *en passant*, I will say that we certainly feel greatly indebted to the municipal authorities for having acceded to our wishes in granting us this beautiful spot for its erection, where it will hereafter remain an object of beauty and admiration.<sup>71</sup>

This "beautiful spot" adjacent to Central Park would provide a prominent setting for the monument in the tradition of the ancient Column of Trajan in Rome. The first "spadeful of earth" was turned by Carlo Barsotti and following the playing of the "hymns of the two countries," the "laborers, at a word from Signor del Genovese, who will have charge of the work, went at the ground in earnest until every foot of dirt within the circle had been overturned."<sup>72</sup>

### Shipment to America

Gaetano Russo's Columbus Monument was executed in Italy and then shipped to the United States in the late summer of 1892. Italian officials steeped its transportation in ceremony, both to honor Columbus and to reflect their esteem for the United States. King Umberto I of Italy offered his royal transport *Garigliano* to ship the monument.<sup>73</sup> The *Garigliano* at 170 feet long with a tonnage of 935

<sup>70</sup> "Foundation Work Begun: Ground Broken Yesterday for the Statue of Columbus," *New York Times*, July 5, 1892.

<sup>71</sup> "Foundation Work Begun," *New York Times*.

<sup>72</sup> "Foundation Work Begun," *New York Times*.

<sup>73</sup> United States House of Representatives, 52d Congress, 2d Session, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 5, 1892, Preceded by a*

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

was built in 1886 as a naval transport though she carried “an insignificant armament.”<sup>74</sup> The Italian cruiser, *Giovanni Bausan*, accompanied the *Garigliano*.<sup>75</sup> Reports identified her officers as Chevalier G. Ruggero, commander and “a nephew of the Italian liberator, [Giuseppe] Garibaldi...serving as a Lieutenant on board the ship. Her complement consists of seven officers and fifty-seven men.”<sup>76</sup>

The Minister Plenipotentiary of Italy to the United States, Baron Saverio Fava, acting in his official capacity, made arrangements for the completed monument to be shipped to New York duty free. In a letter dated 06 August 1892 to Secretary of State John W. Foster, Baron Fava wrote that the monument was expected to arrive later that month and that it was his hope to “[obtain] free entry of the monument, this not being a commercial matter, but a gift to the city of New York ... [and] to move the Department of Treasury to issue the necessary orders to the customs of New York for the landing free of duty of the monument.”<sup>77</sup>

By mid-August 1892, the *Garigliano*, accompanied by the *Giovanni Bausan*, was en route to New York, passing Gibraltar on Thursday, 15 August, on what was described as “pleasant voyage [with] fine weather all the way over.”<sup>78</sup> Two days later, on 17 August, Secretary of State John W. Foster wrote to Baron Saverio Fava:

I have the honor to state that the collector at New York has received instructions to admit the statue to free entry, and to extend all due courtesies to the *Garigliano*, her officers and crew. The Government of the United States highly appreciates the courteous action of the Italian Government in conveying this work of art to our shores on a vessel of the royal navy.<sup>79</sup>

## Arrival in New York

Late in the day on Sunday, 04 September, the *Garigliano* “dropped her anchor off the Quarantine station.”<sup>80</sup> Located at Staten Island, the quarantine station had been established to protect the city

---

*List of Papers, with an Analysis of their Contents, and Followed by an Alphabetical Index of Subjects.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), 352.

<sup>74</sup> United States House of Representatives, 52d Congress, 2d Session, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 5, 1892, Preceded by a List of Papers, with an Analysis of their Contents, and Followed by an Alphabetical Index of Subjects.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), 352.

<sup>75</sup> “History of Seven Days: A Chronicle of Important Events Culled from all Quarters of the Globe, touching upon the New of the Week in Politics, the Arts, Sciences, and Society,” *The Illustrated American* 11, no. 129 (August 6, 1892): 570.

<sup>76</sup> “The Columbus Statue Here,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1892.

<sup>77</sup> “The Columbus Statue Here,” *New York Times*.

<sup>78</sup> “The Columbus Statue Here,” *New York Times*.

<sup>79</sup> *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 5, 1892, Preceded by a List of Papers, with an Analysis of their Contents, and Followed by an Alphabetical Index of Subjects.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), 354.

<sup>80</sup> “The Columbus Statue Here,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1892.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

from the ravages and spread of cholera, one particularly harsh outbreak of which occurred in 1892.<sup>81</sup> However, when the *Garigliano* arrived, health officials were occupied at the quarantine hospitals at Hoffman and Swinburne Islands and the ship was not cleared until the following day.<sup>82</sup>

On Tuesday, 06 September:

the *Garigliano*, with a clean bill of health, and having on board the Columbus monument, the final destination of which is the circle at Fifty-ninth Street and Eighth Avenue...when she had cleared Quarantine, was met by members of the Columbus Monument Association and a delegation of prominent Italian residents, who had gone down the bay on a steamer specially chartered for the occasion.<sup>83</sup>

The *Garigliano*, with its officers, crew, and cargo, docked at Pier 14, at Cedar Street and West Street, near the current site of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan.<sup>84</sup> The monument would soon be transferred to its final destination via "floats, which [were] drawn by teams of twenty-four horses each, furnished by the Adams Express Company."<sup>85</sup>

The sculptor, Gaetano Russo, arrived in New York aboard the steamship *Fulda*, which had been released from quarantine on the afternoon of Sunday, 04 September. Upon his arrival in the city, Russo was "taken in charge by a special committee" of the Monument Association and entertained at dinner at Riccadonna's, a notable Table d'hôte restaurant, along with the officers of the *Garigliano*.<sup>86</sup> Earlier that afternoon, Russo was "taken to Central Park by [Carlos] Barsotti to look at the proposed site of the statue."<sup>87</sup> This was the first time that Russo had personally viewed the site of the monument's future installation. The *New York Times* duly recorded Russo's reaction, "[w]ith the site and its surroundings Signor Russo expressed himself as thoroughly delighted."<sup>88</sup>

### Cornerstone Laying Ceremony

As was the custom at the time when constructing important public buildings and monuments, the Columbus Monument Committee of One Hundred held a cornerstone laying ceremony on the

<sup>81</sup> "Outbreak of Cholera and Quarantine at New York Harbor 1892," *Harper's Weekly Journal of Civilization*, September 17, 1892; Howard Markel, *Quarantine! East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

<sup>82</sup> "Outbreak of Cholera," *Harpers*.

<sup>83</sup> "The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port on Board the Transport Garigliano," *New York Times*, September 6, 1892.

<sup>84</sup> Walter Scott Bromley, "Plate 1 [Map bounded by Liberty St., Maiden Lane, East River, Hudson River]" in *Atlas of the City of New York, Manhattan Island. From Actual Surveys and Official Plans* (New York: Walter Scott Bromley, 1891). Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, New York Public Library Digital Collections. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/a1ebc562-2b9f-5f02-e040-e00a18064811>

<sup>85</sup> "The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port," *New York Times*.

<sup>86</sup> "The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port," *New York Times*. Riccadonna's, which was located uptown, appears in "Table d'hôte," *King's Handbook of New York* (Boston: Moses King, 1892), 214; Gaetano Russo would later be honored at a banquet held at Webster Hall on 22 December 1892. See "Sculptor Russo Honored: Chief Guest at a Banquet of Italians and Americans," *New York Times*, December 23, 1892.

<sup>87</sup> "The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port," *New York Times*.

<sup>88</sup> "The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port," *New York Times*.



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

afternoon of Friday, 16 September 1892, following a grand parade on Fifth Avenue. The day before, the *New York Times* announced that “there will be a parade at 10 o’clock, after which the cornerstone will be placed in position by Mayor [Hugh J.] Grant.”<sup>89</sup> The *Times* later described the festivities: “[a]ll Little Italy swarmed out of Mulberry Bend and the streets south of Washington Square to see the great procession of the Italian societies march up the avenue and to Fifty-third [sic] Street and Eighth Avenue, where the cornerstone of the statue to Christopher Columbus was to be laid.”<sup>90</sup> While Fifth Avenue has long been the site of various parades, the *Times* pronounced this one was “something unusual for the avenue...[i]t was Italy’s day, and the dwellers along the avenue could only look and smile, and perhaps wish for a fraction of the sense of enjoyment and the enthusiasm displayed by these same Italians.”<sup>91</sup> Those participating in the parade were assembled at Union Square, and once the parade began, the spectacle included “[b]ands, carriages, societies on foot, floats, trucks with sections of the monument, and more bands, all succeeded each other with such rapidity and such a flashing of colors that it was bewildering.”<sup>92</sup>

The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, also reporting on the day’s events, included a detailed description of the parade that was “headed by a platoon of mounted police from the Thirty-second precinct. Following came Grand Marshal Dr. Rafael Asselta and his orderlies and aids on horseback.”<sup>93</sup> Dr. Asselta was a prominent Italian American doctor who was educated at the University of Naples, graduating in 1884. Shortly thereafter, he immigrated to New York, where he practiced until his death in 1909 at the age of 52.<sup>94</sup> the grand marshal, according to the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* were “Italian veterans’ societies, bands, Garibaldi guards, the National Society of the Guard of Columbus of New York, the Victor Emanuel guard and the statue for the Columbus monument, boxed and drawn on a float by eight horses. After these were more Italian societies, several floats, among them one gorgeous in gilt, and pictures relative to America’s discovery, attended by Italian tailors dressed as Indians: [Fifth Avenue] was jammed with crowds of spectators.”<sup>95</sup> The *New York Times* also reported that “the procession was three-quarters of an hour in passing a given point.”<sup>96</sup>

Following the parade, the cornerstone laying ceremony, which began at 2 o’clock, was presided over by local dignitaries, including the Archbishop of New York, Michael Corrigan, New York Park Commissioner Abraham B. Tappen and Commissioner of Charities Charles G.H. Wahle.<sup>97</sup> The ceremony was opened with speeches and “bands [that] played the Italian national air to the exclusion

<sup>89</sup> “Cornerstone to be Laid To-Day,” *New York Times*, September 16, 1892.

<sup>90</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*, September 17, 1892.

<sup>91</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*.

<sup>92</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*.

<sup>93</sup> “Sons of Italy in Line: Parade and Laying of the Columbus Monument in New York,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 16, 1892.

<sup>94</sup> Thomas L. Stedman, A.M., M.D., ed. *Medical Record* 76 (July 1, 1909-December 25, 1909), 109.

<sup>95</sup> “Sons of Italy in Line: Parade and Laying of the Columbus Monument in New York,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 16, 1892.

<sup>96</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*.

<sup>97</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

of all other airs.”<sup>98</sup> Barsotti delivered a brief eulogy of Columbus, followed by Commissioner Wahle, who delivered the keynote address. Following the performance of an “American air” by the band, the cornerstone was laid by Commissioner Tappen, who “acted in place of Mayor Grant, who was unavoidably absent.”<sup>99</sup>

Yet, even though Mayor Grant was not in attendance, the archives of the New-York Historical Society holds the small, silver trowel given to Mayor Hugh J. Grant to commemorate the occasion of the cornerstone laying ceremony. This remarkable artifact is exquisitely detailed and finely engraved, “Laying of the Corner Stone of the Monument to Christopher Columbus, New York, September 14th, 1892,” and on the reverse, “Presented to His Honor, Mayor Hugh Grant by the Executive Committee.”<sup>100</sup> This is the same trowel used at the ceremony.<sup>101</sup>

The ceremony drew national attention. The October 1<sup>st</sup> issue of *The Illustrated American* recounted, “[t]he laying of the corner-stone of the foundation on which the statue is to rest was attended with the usual imposing ceremonies” and illustrated its remarks with two rare photographs of the actual cornerstone and the crowd gathered to witness the ceremony itself.<sup>102</sup> But, perhaps more interesting is the historical and architectural context in which *The Illustrated American* placed the new monument:

The kind, gentle, and forgiving people of New York city, disregarding the lessons inhering in most of the sculptile [*sic*] monstrosities that now disfigure the parks and highways of the metropolis, recently granted permission to some members of the Italian colony in New York, to erect a statue of Christopher Columbus at the junction of Fifty-ninth street and Central Park.

A few days ago the eidolon of the discoverer arrived in this country from Italy, where it was modelled and cut in the studio of a very clever sculptor named Gaetano Russo. It would be unfair, of course, to criticize a work that has not yet been exposed to public view; but, judging from photographs seen, it is safe to assert that the statue which the Italian residents of New York are about to raise to the honor of the Genoese explorer will certainly beautify this part of the city.<sup>103</sup>

The report of the ceremony also included a portion of the address by Carlo Barsotti:

This glorification of Columbus in New York on this, the fourth century of his discovery, will tell you how and how much this monument is a token of solidarity and friendship to our adopted mother, so hospitable and merciful; this shaft, erected by the Italians here, is not simply an exquisite preeminent representation of historical thoughts and ideas, but it is, rather, before all and above all, a symbol of religion, human and universal; an altar

<sup>98</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid, *New York Times*.

<sup>99</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid, *New York Times*.

<sup>100</sup> New-York Historical Society “Museum Collections: Trowel.” <http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibit/trowel-2>

<sup>101</sup> “The Cornerstone is Laid,” *New York Times*.

<sup>102</sup> “In Honor of Columbus,” *The Illustrated American* 12, no. 137 (October 1, 1892): 263.

<sup>103</sup> “In Honor of Columbus,” *The Illustrated American*.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

which should be regarded with reverence by all, fortunate and unfortunate, who come here in quest of fortune or work for peace, and who find what they seek; for it was through this great Christopher Columbus—this genius forsaken by humanity—that this continent of America was brought into existence and discovered to civilization.<sup>104</sup>

The report also noted that Archbishop Corrigan and several clergy of the archdiocese participated in the ceremony along with the aforementioned commissioner of parks, Abraham B. Tappan [*sic*], and confirmed Mayor Grant's absence: "and the cornerstone was laid, in the absence of Mayor Grant, by Acting President of the Board of Aldermen Noonan."<sup>105</sup>

The event also was recorded in *Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1892*. This register, published annually covered prominent events in the life of the Nation, "embracing political, military, and ecclesiastical affairs; public documents; biography, statistics, commerce, finance, literature, science, agriculture, and mechanical industry," included the following notation: "September 16: New York: Parade of the Italian societies; corner stone of Columbus monument laid."<sup>106</sup>

It was customary to deposit mementos inside the cornerstone at the time of the cornerstone laying ceremony and Columbus monument is no exception. Although the stone was not dressed as is typical of cornerstones of this era, the items were not placed within a cavity in the stone itself, rather "[i]n the space beneath the stone were placed a bound volume of *Il Progresso*, copies of the daily papers of the current issue, and some coins."<sup>107</sup>

### **"Raising the Columbus Column"**

Within a few weeks of the cornerstone laying ceremony, workers were active at the soon-to-be-renamed Columbus Circle where, on Sunday, 09 October, the column was set on its pedestal and the monument was finally assembled in preparation for its unveiling later that week. On Monday, 10 October, the *New York Times* reported on the feat of engineering:

For many hours yesterday Italian workmen were busy at the site of the Columbus Statue, Fifty-ninth Street and Eighth Avenue. They strengthened the legs of the mighty shears that towered ninety feet into the air; they reinforced the tackle, put in big triple-pulley blocks, and rove a stout cable through them. Then they wound the cable around and about the shaft of the monument, lying prone on the ground, and inch by inch, foot by foot, raised it till it hung perpendicularly in the air. A little more work and it stood in its destined place. Then there arose a shout of satisfaction from all; for hundreds had gathered to see the work progress. And it was done in a masterly manner, as accurately

<sup>104</sup> "In Honor of Columbus," *The Illustrated American*.

<sup>105</sup> "In Honor of Columbus," *The Illustrated American*.

<sup>106</sup> D. Appleton, *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1892* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1893), 261.

<sup>107</sup> "The Cornerstone is Laid," *New York Times*.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

as mathematics and measures could make it, and without injury to any part of the base.<sup>108</sup>

The *Times* also provided another description of the monument's physical and artistic features, noting also the dignitaries that had assembled to watch the work. A series of three photographs documenting the event is housed in the archives of the Museum of the City of New York.<sup>109</sup>

### Dedication

In a Joint Resolution of Congress approved on 29 June 1892, it was resolved by the Senate and the House of Representatives, "[t]hat the President of the United States be authorized and directed to issue a proclamation recommending to the people the observance in all their localities of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, on the 21st of October, 1892, by public demonstrations and by suitable exercises in their schools and other places of assembly."<sup>110</sup>

President Benjamin Harrison, accordingly issued the proclamation encouraging Americans to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus's voyage with patriotic festivities, writing, "On that day let the people, so far as possible, cease from toil and devote themselves to such exercises as may best express honor to the discoverer and their appreciation of the great achievements of the four completed centuries of American life."<sup>111</sup>

In New York City, one such "public demonstration," was the dedication of the new Columbus Monument at the soon-to-be-renamed Columbus Circle in Manhattan.<sup>112</sup> The dedication, occurring only a few weeks after the cornerstone laying ceremony, drew equally large crowds to view the celebratory parade and the ceremonial unveiling of the monument. The *New York Times* heralded the "unveiling of the great Columbus monument" with the following account:

Amid the cheering of thousands of patriotic sons of Italy, Spain and America the Columbus Monument was dedicated yesterday at Eighth Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street. The ceremonies attending the unveiling of the statue were of an imposing character and were under the direction of the Columbus Monument Executive Committee.

<sup>108</sup> "The Big Shaft in Place: Crowds Watch the Work on the Columbus Statue," *New York Times*, October 10, 1892.

<sup>109</sup> "Raising of the Columbus Column," Museum of the City of New York Digital Collections.

<http://collections.mcny.org/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&VBID=24UAYWLUJIFBM&SMLS=1&RW=1435&RH=891>

<sup>110</sup> Benjamin Harrison, "Proclamation 335—400th Anniversary of the Discovery of America by Columbus, July 21, 1892," in *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* 13 (Washington: Bureau of National Literature, 1893), 5724; The American Presidency Project, "Benjamin Harrison." <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=71118>

<sup>111</sup> Harrison, "Proclamation."

<sup>112</sup> The discrepancy in the dates of the anniversary was explained by the Hon. John Boyd Thacher, a member of the Board of General Managers of the Exhibit of the State of New York at the World's Columbian Exposition as follows: "The celebration of the landing of Columbus, which we shall observe this year, will fix that event in the American mind, especially in the mind of Young America, indelibly. When we say that Columbus landed on October twelve, we refer to the old or Julian calendar and not the Gregorian calendar, adopted in 1582 and used throughout the Christian world except in Russia. If we are to be exact in commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Columbian discovery, our celebration must fall on the twenty-first of October, which corresponds, according to the Gregorian calendar, with the twelfth day of October of the Julian calendar." *Report of Board of General Managers of the Exhibit of the State of New York at the World's Columbian Exposition* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), 37.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

Representatives of the United States, of the State and City of New-York, and of Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal participated in the exercises.

The monument was unveiled by Annie Barsotti, the daughter of the President of the Columbus Monument Executive Committee. Stands for the accommodation of 10,000 people had been built around the monument in the shape of an amphitheater. They were filled to overflowing, and the throng extended out along the streets radiating from the Circle and reached far back into Central Park, while the housetops, the trees, the fences, and every point which the ingenuity of man could suggest as one of vantage were occupied by the venturesome sightseers.<sup>113</sup>

Similar to the pomp and circumstance of the earlier ceremonies surrounding the groundbreaking and the cornerstone laying, the unveiling ceremony was replete with the pageantry organized by the Italian American groups, taking place around “the veiled figure of Columbus outlined against the sky of hazy blue.”<sup>114</sup> It was the culmination of Carlo Barsotti’s vision, first conceived in 1889 and finally realized on that October afternoon.

Carlo Barsotti made his brief welcoming statement in Italian and introduced General James Grant Wilson, who officially received the monument on behalf of New York Governor Roswell P. Flower and New York City Mayor Hugh J. Grant.<sup>115</sup> Wilson pronounced, “We will ever fondly and carefully cherish this splendid gift, and may it ever stand as a monument of lasting friendship between Italy and the United States.”<sup>116</sup>

This sentiment was echoed when the Italian Minister Plenipotentiary, Baron Saverio Fava, addressed the crowd and, also speaking in Italian, presented the monument to the United States of America on behalf of the Italian government:

As for me, who for more than ten years have endeavored to cement the old and steadfast friendship existing between the two countries, I will only say that, by honoring the memory of her illustrious discoverer, America honors herself and Italy. Those who have added so much to the dignity of this celebration by raising in New-York a monument worthy of Italian art, numbering among them both the rich and the humble workman, have given a mark of vitality that is a sure omen of future prosperity.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>113</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*, October 13, 1892.

<sup>114</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*.

<sup>115</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*. General James Grant Wilson (1832-1914) “was an American editor, author, bookseller and publisher, who founded the *Chicago Record* in 1857, the first literary paper in that region. During the American Civil War, he served in the Union Army and became a brevet brigadier general in 1865. He settled in New York, where he edited biographies and histories, was a public speaker, and served as president of the Society of American Authors and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.” “James Grant Wilson,” Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Grant\\_Wilson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Grant_Wilson)

<sup>116</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*.

<sup>117</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

Jeremiah M. Ruck, secretary of agriculture, “formally accepted the statue on behalf of the United States government, giving utterance to the wish that there might be lasting friendship between Italy and this country.”<sup>118</sup> These sentiments were also expressed by Gen. Louis Palma di Cesnola in his keynote address. As reported by the *Times*, “di Cesnola...spoke in glowing and impassioned terms of the growing love existing between the sister nations, Italy and America,” adding that the monument “would stand in the ages to come, and would be as durable and lasting as the affection of Italy for America and America’s for Italy.”<sup>119</sup> He opened his remarks by opining that Columbus’s “true monument is this great land, its institutions, its prosperity, its blessing, its lessons of advance for all humanity,” and that Russo’s marble and granite tribute was given as a result of the Italian American’s “full and unfailing sense of their great and peculiar debt [to America].”<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, di Cesnola understood that this sentiment may not stand the test of time:

Yet it is fitting that we, Italian Americans, in justice to our own sense and to our own hearts, should erect and inaugurate this monument to-day. There are, too, ever those who will forget and grovel, if no care is given, by precept and visible memorial, to tell to coming generations the deeds and achievements of heroes of the past, and hand down to posterity our better inheritance.<sup>121</sup>

Barsotti’s daughter, Annie, held the spotlight when the Columbus monument was finally revealed to the public. Her “brief speech was well delivered, and was listened to with marked expressions of appreciation and approval by the diplomats who stood in a semi-circle around her with uncovered heads.”<sup>122</sup> She proudly proclaimed, “[i]n this solemn moment when the glorious statue of Christopher Columbus appears in all its majesty and beauty before the eyes of the people of New-York, I pray that God will grant two blessings—one for Italy, the mother of the great discoverer [and] one for America, the daughter of his genius, of his skill, of his perseverance.”<sup>123</sup> She continued, “as a child of Italian patronage and of American birth, I can ask nothing greater than this: God bless Italy! God bless America! And may the friendship between the two peoples and the two countries endure and resist time as the marble and bronze of this great and beautiful monument.”<sup>124</sup>

The dedication also attracted national attention and newspaper accounts from outside the metropolitan New York area included one particular description of the festivities published in the *Newburgh Daily Journal* (Newburgh, New York): “[o]ne could not dream of better weather, of brighter scenes of more numerous and joyous crowds, or a more attractive and soldierly body of men than New York witnessed today.”<sup>125</sup> Other national publications likewise included narratives and

<sup>118</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*.

<sup>119</sup> “The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument,” *New York Times*.

<sup>120</sup> Luigi Palma di Cesnola, “Address Delivered by Gen. L.P. DiCesnola, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, at the Unveiling of the Columbus Monument in the City of New York, October 12th, 1892,” (New York, 1892), 4.

<sup>121</sup> Cesnola, 5-6.

<sup>122</sup> Cesnola, 5-6.

<sup>123</sup> Cesnola, 5-

<sup>124</sup> Cesnola, 5-6.

<sup>125</sup> *Newburgh Daily Journal*, October 12, 1892.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

descriptions of the monument. According to *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia and Register of Important Events of the year 1893*:

A Columbus monument, by the Sicilian sculptor, Gaetano Russo, presented to New York by Italian citizens, was dedicated in the circle at the Eighth Avenue entrance to Central Park, in October, 1892. It consists of a tall column of gray granite, ornamented with the beaks of galleys in bronze, surmounted by a colossal statue of the discoverer in marble. Two reliefs in bronze, representing the departure of Columbus and his landing, decorate the pedestal, which sustains also a marble figure with a globe on one side, and a bronze eagle with the arms of New York [*sic*] and of Genoa on the other.<sup>126</sup>

Likewise, a contemporary report in *Scientific American* lauded "there will be no more beautiful and completely representational monument erected to the great discoverer on the four hundredth anniversary of his landing in the new world than the splendid gift of the Italians of New York to that city."<sup>127</sup> The *Decorator and Furnisher* further reported that the monument was given by the Italians "as a token of gratitude" for "hospitality and friendship."<sup>128</sup>

The *Illustrated American* newsmagazine provided extensive written and pictorial coverage of New York's Columbian Celebration in its October 1892 issues. In the October 15th edition, for example, the editors summed up the celebration, noting that the unveiling of the Columbus monument was its highlight: "after the military parade is over, the monument of Columbus is unveiled, and at night there is a grand pageant with twenty allegorical floats...the whole celebration closes with a banquet at the Lenox Lyceum."<sup>129</sup> An *Official Souvenir Programme [of the] New York Columbian Celebration, October 8th to 15th, 1892 In Commemoration of the Discovery of America* offered visitors the full schedule of events, advertisements and illustrations, including a photograph of the Columbus statue reprinted from *Harper's Weekly* and information on the "Unveiling of Columbus Monument."<sup>130</sup> The monument was clearly well received but perhaps its reception was best summed up by the *New York Times*, which opined, "[t]he statue of Columbus is a noble addition to New-York's many monuments."<sup>131</sup> Carlo Barsotti also lauded Russo's accomplishment at a banquet in December 1892; the *Times* included the following highlights from Barsotti's remarks in its report:

<sup>126</sup> D. Appleton, "Fine Arts in 1892-'93," *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1893, Embracing Political, Military, and Ecclesiastical Affairs; Public Documents; Biography, Statistics, Commerce, Finance, Literature, Science, Agriculture, and Mechanical Industry XVIII* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1894), 315.

Appleton mentions other notable works of fine art erected in New York in 1892 including "a life-size bronze statue of [John] Ericsson, by J.S. Hartley [that] was erected at the Battery New York, in April 1893;" "[t]he figure of Diana, by [Augustus] St. Gaudens, formerly on the tower of the Madison Square Garden, and later sent to Chicago to decorate the dome of the Agricultural Building at the World's Fair, has been replaced by another one of better proportion, only 13 feet high;" and "the Washington Memorial Arch is finished, excepting the four spadrils [*sic*], which are to be filled with sculptural figures of Victory, Peace, Fame, and another, by [Frederick] William MacMonnies."

<sup>127</sup> "The Eighth Avenue Plaza at the Entrance to Central Park," *Scientific American* 71, no. 13 (September 29, 1894): 200.

<sup>128</sup> M.F. Harman, "Art Notes," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 18, no. 4 (July 1891): 135.

<sup>129</sup> "New York's Columbian Celebration," *Illustrated American* (October 15, 1892): 323.

<sup>130</sup> *Official Souvenir Program [of the] New York Columbian Celebration* (New York: Bretano's, Union Square, 1892).

<sup>131</sup> "The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument," *New York Times*.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

The President of the Monument Committee, Carlo Barsotti, explained how, with 'much sympathy and some war,' the monument was begun and finished. He dwelt upon the fact that the Columbus Monument was the first in the history of the city which had been accepted by the city authorities before it had even reached the country. The high standing of Italy in the fine arts had alone made that possible, the speaker explained, and the announcement was received with uproarious applause.<sup>132</sup>

The Columbus Monument became a major tourist destination upon its completion. Writing in his *Handy Guide to New York City*, Ernest Ingersoll provided his readers with a detailed description of Central Park, including the following notation on the monument itself:

At Eighth Av. and 59th St. is another spacious entrance, in front of which there is a circular esplanade, styled the *Columbus Plaza* [sic]. In the center of this circle towers the lofty rostral column surmounted by a statue of Columbus—A Monument presented to the city by its Italian residents in 1892, in commemoration of the Columbian anniversary.<sup>133</sup>

The *Monumental News* stated, "the [Columbus] monument stands at the 8th avenue entrance to Central Park, and is said to be well located for a striking and harmonious effect."<sup>134</sup>

### Construction of the Traffic Circle

The circle, or rotary, as modern drivers understand it, was designed by William Phelps Eno in 1905 and was "first tried under special traffic regulation at Columbus Circle." By 1917, Eno's traffic circle accommodated 39,210 vehicle and 81,990 pedestrians per day.<sup>135</sup> Eno explained in his 1925 article for the *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law* that the object of this type of intersection was for "rotatory movement" in order to "prevent traffic in some of the intersecting streets being held up in order to allow the traffic in the other intersecting streets to proceed." While "[a]ll the intersecting traffic is kept in constant circulation...[a driver will proceed] until it comes to the street down which it wishes to continue." As the first traffic circle, Columbus Circle was a novel and important solution to the problem of traffic flow at the intersection of several major thoroughfares in New York City. In 1907, the concept was replicated at the Place de l'Étoile in Paris. Clearly, Columbus Circle is a notable example of American transportation infrastructure ingenuity.

Columbus Circle has had several alterations since the 1890s, the first major renovation beginning in 1900 when the new Inter-Borough Rapid Transit (IRT) subway was constructed directly beneath the monument. *The Engineering Record* published an illustration in July 1901 showing the "underpinning

<sup>132</sup> "Sculptor Russo Honored: Chief Guest at a Banquet of Italians and Americans," *New York Times*, December 23, 1892.

<sup>133</sup> Ernest Ingersoll, *Rand, McNally & Co.'s Handy Guide to New York City: Brooklyn, Staten Island and Other Districts Included in the Enlarged City*, 9th ed. (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., Publishers, 1900), 62.

<sup>134</sup> *The Monumental News: An Illustrated Monthly Monumental Art Journal* 4, no. 11 (November 1892): 421.

<sup>135</sup> These figures are from Henry Collins Brown, ed., *Valentine's Manual of the City of New York* (New York: Old Colony Press, 1917), 73. The manual states: "The most reliable figures in regard to street traffic are those given by the Traffic Division of the Police Department. These figures were registered on automatic counters by the traffic officers and represent traffic for 10 hours a day, not 24, namely from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m."



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

[of] the Columbus Monument, New York,” which stresses the extraordinary engineering involved in constructing a modern subway. The monument underwent a second underpinning in 1924 for the construction of the Independent Subway (IND) Eight Avenue Line.<sup>136</sup> Traffic patterns around Columbus Circle were severely altered due to development during the post-WWII era under Robert Moses’s Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, causing architectural critic Paul Goldberger to lament in 1979: “[Columbus Circle is] a chaotic jumble of streets that can be crossed in about 50 different ways—all of them wrong.”<sup>137</sup> Other alterations included the addition of water fountains, inspired by the famous water features of Rome, which were dedicated on Columbus Day in 1965; they are no longer extant. By the late 1990s, Columbus Circle was described as “a troubled site, and its civic prominence only magnifies its architectural incoherence. Stylistically chaotic, unable to control the flow of traffic that bumps and scrapes around its corroded perimeter, Columbus Circle is a monument to New York’s inability to bring distinction or even sanity to its most eminent locations.”<sup>138</sup> In 2005, the circle was revitalized under a \$20-million contract which restored the traffic circle and installed new fountains, plantings, and street furniture. These recent alterations reopened the monument to the public realm while improving traffic flow around one of New York City’s busiest intersections, thus restoring Eno’s vision of a functional and efficient rotary.

### **Later History of the Columbus Monument**

Over the years, the monument has been witness to a variety of civic and social activities including countless celebrations. In particular, it is the site of the annual wreath-laying ceremony held in connection with New York City’s official Columbus Day holiday celebrations and was often the terminus of the annual parade and the site of speeches by mayors and governors during the first half of the twentieth century.

The monument has also been associated with controversy. In the 1930s, before Mussolini’s 1935 invasion of Ethiopia, many of the Italian American political societies, including the Sons of Italy, supported the fascist cause, and Italian nationalism became entangled with Columbus Day, which also became an occasion to celebrate fascist Italy.<sup>139</sup> Generoso Pope, for example, a powerful businessman and influential newspaper owner in New York City, was among those who helped to create the Italian American connection to Columbus. However, Pope was also pro-Fascist. During the 1920s and 30s, Pope’s Italian language daily, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, was a vehicle for propaganda for the Italian dictator, and Pope led Columbus Day gatherings at Columbus Circle

---

<sup>136</sup> This was used as part of a series of subway car cards entitled “New York by Rehberger.” Gustav Rehberger was an artist who created a series of car cards for the New York Subways Advertising Company in 1948 about various New York Landmarks. Courtesy of the New York Transit Museum. <http://nytm.pastperfectonline.com/archive/2E43070C-ECDE-47AE-83C8-27402441564>

<sup>137</sup> Alterations to Columbus Circle during this period were in large part attributed to the construction of the New York Coliseum (Leon and Lionel Levy, architects) in 1954 on the west side of Columbus Circle; the Coliseum was demolished in 2000.

<sup>138</sup> Herbert Muschamp, “An Appraisal: Columbus Circle’s Changing Face, More than Geometry,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1994. <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/03/27/nyregion/an-appraisal-columbus-circle-s-changing-face-more-than-geometry.html?pagewanted=all&pagewanted=print>

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

where audience members made the fascist salute, while anti-fascist Italian Americans also counter-protested.<sup>140</sup>

In 2012 the Columbus Monument was the centerpiece of a modern art museum designed by Japanese artist, Tatzu Nishi. An 810-square-foot living room was constructed around the statue six stories above Columbus Circle, and Russo's marble figure of the explorer was displayed on a coffee table. The installation, "Discovering Columbus" was sponsored by the Public Art Fund as part of the monument's restoration.<sup>141</sup>

In 2017 a performance art protest was held on the site to "highlight the growing uncertainty felt by many young undocumented immigrants."<sup>142</sup> A Mayoral Advisory Commission published a report in January 2018 following a study of New York City owned public art, monuments, and historic markers. The Commission recommended that the Columbus Monument remain in place and that public dialogue be facilitated by commissioning new monuments, artworks, and public programming.<sup>143</sup> Today, the Columbus statue remains part of the ongoing current political conversation at the local and national levels about Columbus, Columbus Day, and Columbus monuments. These discussions highlight the monument's importance in light of shifting understandings of its artistic and historical merit.

---

<sup>139</sup> Kubal, 104-105.

<sup>140</sup> Ruberto and Sciorra, 3-4.

<sup>141</sup> Public Art Fund, "Tatzu Nishi: Discovering Columbus."

[https://www.publicartfund.org/view/exhibitions/5495\\_discovering\\_columbus/](https://www.publicartfund.org/view/exhibitions/5495_discovering_columbus/)

<sup>142</sup> "Protest in Columbus Circle Calls on Congress to Pass Dream Act," NY1 News (December 2, 2017 @5:51pm).

<http://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2017/12/02/protest-in-columbus-circle-calls-on-congress-to-pass-dream-act>

<sup>143</sup> Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers, "Report to the City of New York," January 2018, 28-31. <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/monuments/downloads/pdf/mac-monuments-report.pdf>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

---

9. Major Bibliographical References

---

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Appleton, D. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1892*. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1893): 261.
- D. Appleton. "Fine Arts in 1892-'93." *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1893* New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1894.
- Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation. "Conservation of Baltimore City's Monuments, Memorials, and Sculpture." City of Baltimore. <https://chap.baltimorecity.gov/monuments-and-conservation>
- Bertellini, Giorgio. "Shipwrecked Spectators: Italy's Immigrants at the Movies in New York, 1901-1916." *The Velvet Light Trap* 44 (Fall 1999): 39-53.
- Bogart, Michele E. "Maine Memorial and Pulitzer Fountain: A Study in Patronage and Process." *Winterthur Portfolio* 21, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 41-63.
- Bogart, Michele E. *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Bromley, Walter Scott. "Plate 1 [Map bounded by Liberty St., Maiden Lane, East River, Hudson River]" in *Atlas of the City of New York, Manhattan Island. From Actual Surveys and Official Plans* (New York: Walter Scott Bromley, 1891). Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, New York Public Library Digital Collections. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/a1ebc562-2b9f-5f02-e040-e00a18064811>
- Brown, Henry Collins. *Valentine's Manual of the City of New York*. (New York: Old Colony Press, 1917).
- Caratzas, Michael, ed. "Sullivan-Thompson Historic District Designation Report." New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, December 13, 2016.
- Carletta, David Mark. "The Triumph of American Spectacle: New York City's 1892 Columbian Celebration." *Material Culture* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 19-40.
- Connell, William J. "Who's Afraid of Columbus?" *Italian Americana* 31, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 136-147.
- DeLuca, Christine. "Getting the Story Straight: Press Coverage of Italian American Lynchings from 1856-1910." *Italian Americana* 21 no. 2 (2003): 212-221.
- DiCesnola, Gen. Luigi Palma. "Address Delivered by Gen. L.P. DiCesnola, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, at the Unveiling of the Columbus Monument in the City of New York, October 12th, 1892." New York, 1892.
- Durante, Francesco, ed. *Italoamericana: The Literature of the Great Migration, 1880-1943*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.
- Eno, William Phelps. "Street Traffic Legislation and Regulation in the United States of America." *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law, Third Series*, 7, no. 4 (1925): 238-247.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

“Exhibition Notes.” *Scientific American* 66, no. 22 (May 28, 1892): 342.

Fried, Frederick. *New York Civic Sculpture: A Pictorial Guide*. New York: Dover Publications, 1976.

“Gaetano Russo.” askART. [http://www.askart.com/artist\\_bio/Gaetano\\_Russo/11066965/Gaetano\\_Russo.aspx](http://www.askart.com/artist_bio/Gaetano_Russo/11066965/Gaetano_Russo.aspx)

Gobel, David W. and Daves Rossell, eds. *Commemoration in America: Essays on Monuments, Memorialization, and Memory*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013.

Harman, M.F. “Art Notes.” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 18, no. 4 (July 1891): 135.

Harrison, Benjamin. “Proclamation 335—400th Anniversary of the Discovery of America by Columbus, July 21, 1892,” in *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* 13. Washington: Bureau of National Literature, 1893.

“Henry Hudson Park,” New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/henry-hudson-park/>

Hoxie, Frederick E. “Discovering America: An Introduction.” *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (December 1992): 835-840.

“History of Seven Days: A Chronicle of Important Events Culled from all Quarters of the Globe, touching upon the News of the Week in Politics, the Arts, Sciences, and Society. *The Illustrated American* 11, no. 129 (August 6, 1892): 570.

“Illustrations.” *The American Architect and Building News* 46, no. 988 (December 1, 1894): 95.

“In Honor of Columbus.” *The Illustrated American* 12, no. 137 (October 1, 1892): 263.

Ingersoll, Ernest. *Rand, McNally & Co.’s Handy Guide to New York City: Brooklyn, Staten Island and Other Districts Included in the Enlarged City*. 9th ed. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. Publishers, 1900.

Kubal, Timothy. *Cultural Movements and Collective Memory: Christopher Columbus and the Rewriting of the National Origin Myth*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Lake Maggiore-Official Tourism Gateway. “The Pink Granite of Baveno.”

[http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en\\_US/26095,Poi.html](http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en_US/26095,Poi.html)

Library of Congress. “About Il Progresso italo-americano. (New York [N.Y.]) 1880-1989.”

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030300/>

Markel, Howard. *Quarantine! East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Mason, Randall. *The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers. “Report to the City of New York.”

January 2018. <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/monuments/downloads/pdf/mac-monuments-report.pdf>

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

Milroy, Elizabeth. "The Public Career of Emma Stebbins: Work in Marble." *Archives of American Art Journal* 33, no. 2 (1993): 2-12.

Morrone, Francis. "Statues and Civic Memory." *City Journal* (Summer 1999).

Moss, Kenneth. "St. Patricks Day Celebrations and the Formation of Irish-American Identity, 1845-1875." *Journal of Social History* 29 (1995): 125-148.

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. "Columbus Park Monuments: Christopher Columbus." <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/columbus-park/monuments/298>

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. "Central Park: Christopher Columbus." <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/central-park/monuments/297>

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. "Grand Army Plaza." July 23, 1974.

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. "Verdi Square." January 28, 1975.

New-York Historical Society. "Museum Collections: Trowel." <http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibit/trowel-2>

"New York's Columbian Celebration." *Illustrated American* (October 15, 1892): 323.

*Official Souvenir Program [of the] New York Columbian Celebration*. New York: Bretano's, Union Square, 1892.

"Outbreak of Cholera and Quarantine at New York Harbor 1892." *Harper's Weekly Journal of Civilization*, September 17, 1892.

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 5, 1892, Preceded by a List of Papers, with an Analysis of their Contents, and Followed by an Alphabetical Index of Subjects*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), 354.

Payne, Frank Owen. "Our Memorials of Columbus: The Many and Noteworthy Monuments that America Has Erected in Honor of the Great Italian Who Discovered the New World." *Munsey's Magazine* 71, no. 1 (October 1920): 23-31.

Ponce de Leon, Nestor. "The 'Discoverer of the New World' as represented in Portraits, Monuments, Statues, Medals and Paintings." New York: N. Ponce de Leon, 1893. [http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/columbus\\_gallery/statues.html#newyork2](http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/columbus_gallery/statues.html#newyork2).

Purcell, Sarah J. "Commemoration, Public Art, and the Changing Meaning of the Bunker Hill Monument." *The Public Historian* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 55-71.

"Raising of the Columbus Column." Museum of the City of New York Digital Collections. <http://collections.mcny.org/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&VBID=24UAYWLUJIFBM&SMLS=1&RW=1435&RH=891>

*Report of Board of General Managers of the Exhibit of the State of New York at the World's Columbian Exposition*. Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

- Reynolds, Donald Martin. *Monuments and Masterpieces: Histories and Views of Public Sculpture in New York City*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988.
- Ruberto, Laura E. and Joseph Sciorra. "Recontextualizing the Ocean Blue: Italian Americans and the Commemoration of Columbus." *Process: A Blog of American History*, October 4, 2017.  
<http://www.processhistory.org/recontextualizing-the-ocean-blue/>
- Rubbinaccio, Michael. *New York's Father is Murdered!: The Life and Death of Andrew Haswell Green*. Seattle: Pescara Publishing, 2012.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. "Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism." *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (December 1992): 937-968.
- Stedman, Thomas L., A.M., M.D., ed. *Medical Record* 76 (July 1, 1909-December 25, 1909): 109.
- Stern, Robert A.M., Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale. *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1987.
- Stern, Robert A.M., Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman. *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. New York: The Monacelli Press, 1999.
- "Table d'hôte." *King's Handbook of New York*. Boston: Moses King, 1892.
- Tauranac, John. *Elegant New York: The Builders and Buildings: 1885-1915*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1985.
- Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park*. New York: January 1870.
- The American Presidency Project. "Benjamin Harrison." <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=71118>
- "The Eighth Avenue Plaza at the Entrance to Central Park." *Scientific American* 71, no. 13 (September 29, 1894): 200.
- The Monumental News: An Illustrated Monthly Monumental Art Journal* 4, no. 11 (November 1892): 421.
- United States House of Representatives, 52d Congress, 2d Session. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 5, 1892, Preceded by a List of Papers, with an Analysis of their Contents, and Followed by an Alphabetical Index of Subjects*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893.
- Upton, Dell. "Why Do Contemporary Monuments Talk So Much?" In *Commemoration in America: Essays on Monuments, Memorialization, and Memory* eds. David Gobel and Daves Rossell. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2013.
- van der Krogt, Peter. "Alfresco sulla facciata del Palazzo di San Giorgio." Columbus Monuments Pages.  
<http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=CO&record=itli027>
- van der Krogt, Peter. "Chronology." Columbus Monuments Pages.  
<http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/chronologie.php?webpage=CO>

Columbus Monument

New York County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

van der Krogt, Peter. "Columbus Obelisk." Columbus Monuments Pages.

<http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=CO&record=usmd03>

van der Krogt, Peter. "Columbus Statue at Louisburg Square." Columbus Monuments Pages.

<http://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=CO&record=usma12>

Vellon, Peter G. *A Great Conspiracy against Our Race: Italian Immigrant Newspapers and the Construction of Whiteness in the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: New York University Press, 2014.

Vicario, Vincenzo. *Gli Scultori Italiani dal Neoclassicismo al Liberty*. Vol. 2. Lodi: Il Pomerio, 1994.

Williams, John Alexander. "The Columbus Complex." In *Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian American Folklife in the West*, edited by David A. Taylor and John Alexander Williams, 196-209. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1992.

*Newspaper Articles*

Barsotti, Carlo. "To the Readers." *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, December 13, 1880

Chen, Jackson. "Revisionist History at Play in Call to Remove Columbus Monument, Pol Says." dnainfo.com, August 22, 2017. <https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170822/columbus-circle/assemblymember-contests-speaker-request-remove-columbus-statue>

"Chief Hennessy Avenged; Eleven of His Italian Assassins Lynched by a Mob. An Uprising of Indignant Citizens in New Orleans – The Prison Doors Forced and the Italian Murderers Shot Down." *The New York Times*, March 15, 1891.

"Columbus on a Pedestal." *New York Times*, October 14, 1991.

"Cornerstone to be Laid To-Day." *New York Times*, September 16, 1892.

Editorial Board. *New York Times*, October 7, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/07/opinion/sunday/robert-e-lee-christopher-columbus-and-petain.html>

"Foundation Work Begun: Ground Broken Yesterday for the Statue of Columbus." *New York Times*, July 5, 1892.

"Italy and the United States Once More in Full Harmony, and the Minister Glad to Resume his Diplomatic Duties." *New York Times*, May 16, 1892.

"In Memory of Columbus: A Description of the Monument to be Erected in this City." *New York Times*, July 20, 1890.

Muschamp, Herbert. "An Appraisal: Columbus Circle's Changing Face, More than Geometry." *New York Times*, March 27, 1994. <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/03/27/nyregion/an-appraisal-columbus-circle-s-changing-face-more-than-geometry.html>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

*Newburgh Daily Journal*, October 12, 1892.

“Sculptor Russo Honored: Chief Guest at a Banquet of Italians and Americans.” *New York Times*, December 23, 1892.

“Sons of Italy in Line: Parade and Laying of the Columbus Monument in New York.” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 16, 1892.

“The Big Shaft in Place: Crowds Watch the Work on the Columbus Statue.” *New York Times*, October 10, 1892.

“The Columbus Monument.” *New York Times*, March 20, 1892.

“The Columbus Statue Here.” *New York Times*, September 5, 1892.

“The Columbus Statue: Safe in Port on Board the Transport Garigliano.” *New York Times*, September 6, 1892.

“The Cornerstone is Laid.” *New York Times*, September 17, 1892.

“The Statue of Columbus: How the Work with its Groups Will Look When Completed.” *New York Times*, August 30, 1891.

“The Voyager in Marble: Unveiling the Great Columbus Monument.” *New York Times*, October 13, 1892.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** .03 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

|   |                           |                              |                               |   |                           |                              |                               |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | <u>18</u><br>Zone         | <u>585924</u><br>Easting     | <u>4513509</u><br>Northing    | 3 | <u>          </u><br>Zone | <u>          </u><br>Easting | <u>          </u><br>Northing |
| 2 | <u>          </u><br>Zone | <u>          </u><br>Easting | <u>          </u><br>Northing | 4 | <u>          </u><br>Zone | <u>          </u><br>Easting | <u>          </u><br>Northing |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for the Columbus Monument is drawn to include only the monument itself and not the surrounding circular plaza. The plaza has been transformed multiple times since the statue's erection and no longer retains integrity to its historic appearance. When installed, the monument sat on a simple circular base within Columbus Circle. In 1905, the circle was transformed into the first documented traffic circle built in the United States. During the mid-twentieth century, the circle was converted into a non-circular road pattern, and a ring of fountains was installed around the base of the fountain in 1965. In 1998, the roadway surrounding the monument was returned to a circular pattern. Most recently, Columbus Circle underwent a \$20 million redesign by the Philadelphia firm of Olin Partnership in 2005. This redesign features a series of concentric rings around the monument, buffering the traffic and adding a series of fountains, paving, benches, and lights.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

Columbus Monument  
New York, New York Co., NY

Columbus Circle  
New York, NY 10019



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

Columbus Monument  
New York, New York Co., NY

Columbus Circle  
New York, NY 10019



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State

---

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Glen Umberger, Manager of Special Projects, edited and expanded by Jennifer Betsworth (NY SHPO)  
and by Kathleen LaFrank, National Register Coordinator (NY SHPO)

organization The New York Landmarks Conservancy date July 2018

street & number 1 Whitehall Street, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor telephone 212-995-5260

city or town New York state NY zip code 10004

e-mail glenumberger@nylandmarks.org

---

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

---

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Columbus Monument

City or Vicinity: New York

County: New York State: NY

Photographer: Glen Umberger

Date Photographed: September 21, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0001

Full view of south side of monument; camera facing north from intersection of Eighth Avenue and Columbus Circle.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0002

Full view of east side of monument; camera facing east from west side of Columbus Circle.

Columbus Monument

Name of Property

New York County, NY

County and State

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0003

Full view of monument showing north and east sides; camera facing southwest from Columbus Circle.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0004

Detail of pedestal of monument showing north and east sides; camera facing southeast from Columbus Circle.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0005

Detail of pedestal of monument showing south and west sides; camera facing northwest from Columbus Circle.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0006

Detail of south side of pedestal of monument with the "Genius of Geography" and bronze panel, "Columbus putting ashore and giving thanks to God while natives peer from behind foliage;" camera facing north.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0007

Detail of north side of pedestal of monument with the bronze American bald eagle and bronze panel, "the Niña, Pinta, and the Santa María sailing from Spain;" camera facing south.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0008

Detail, bronze American bald eagle holding in its talons the shields of the United States of America and the Republic of Genoa; camera facing south.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0009

Detail, north side of column with three bronze pairs of rostra (representing the Niña, Pinta, and the Santa María), bronze anchors, and bronze dedicatory to Christopher Columbus; camera facing north.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0010

Detail, Columbus statue atop column; camera facing southwardly.

NY\_New York\_Columbus Monument\_0011

Detail, west side of base of pedestal, dedicatory inscription (in Italian); camera facing west.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 1. "Columbus Circle, showing laying of cornerstone of Columbus Monument" (Paul MacGahan, September 16, 1892) Museum of the City of New York  
[http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/\[Columbus%20Circle,%20showing%20laying%20of%20cornerstone%20of%20Columbus%20Monument,\]-2F3XC5IWPHA1.html](http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/[Columbus%20Circle,%20showing%20laying%20of%20cornerstone%20of%20Columbus%20Monument,]-2F3XC5IWPHA1.html)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 2. "Raising of the Columbus Column" (October 9, 1892) Museum of the City of New York  
[http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/\[Raising%20of%20the%20Columbus%20Column.-2F3XC5IWPIOU.html](http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/[Raising%20of%20the%20Columbus%20Column.-2F3XC5IWPIOU.html)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 3. "Columbus Monument" (John S. Johnson, 1895) Museum of the City of New York  
[http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/\[Columbus%20Monument.\]-2F3XC5IWPK47.html](http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/[Columbus%20Monument.]-2F3XC5IWPK47.html)



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 4. "Columbus Circle-Intersection-Broadway-Eighth Avenue-Central Park W. West 59th Street"  
Base of Columbus Monument, in the Center of Columbus Circle, at the intersection of Broadway, Eighth Ave.,  
Central Park West and West 59th Street. Foreground shows work in progress for the I.R.T. Subway. William  
B. Parsons Collection.

(1901) The New York Public Library

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-3613-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99#/?rotate=90>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 5. "Columbus Monument, New York" (Detroit Photographic Co., c. 1910)  
The New York Public Library  
<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e0-cc7b-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 6. "Columbus Circle" (c. 1915) Museum of the City of New York  
[http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/\[Columbus%20Circle.\]-2F3XC5IWN0X5.html](http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/[Columbus%20Circle.]-2F3XC5IWN0X5.html)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 7. "Columbus Circle-Broadway-8th Avenue" (Ewing Galloway, 1924) The New York Public Library  
Columbus Circle, south side, west from and including Broadway, to, but not including Eighth Ave. The view  
also shows Broadway, east side, north from but not including West 55th to West 59th Streets, and also Eighth  
Ave, east side, north from but not including West 56th Street, to and including Columbus Circle. About 1924.  
<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-360b-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 8. "Columbus Circle and its environs" (Ewing Galloway, 1928) The New York Public Library  
An aerial view of Columbus Circle and environs and viewing southwestward from a point over Central Park.  
About 1928. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-35ff-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99#/?uid=510d47dd-35ff-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 9. "Columbus Day" (October 12, 1940) Museum of the City of New York  
With Senator James Meade, Lieutenant Governor Polleti, Gene Pope and Harry Hirschfield  
[http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/\[Columbus%20Day.\]-2F3XC5IWQ71X.html](http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/[Columbus%20Day.]-2F3XC5IWQ71X.html)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 10. Columbus Circle, aerial view (Meyer Liebowitz/*New York Times*, June 21, 1954)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 11. "New York Coliseum" (Samuel Herman Gottscho, April 21, 1956) Museum of the City of New York  
<http://collections.mcny.org/Collection/New%20York%20Coliseum-2F3XC5U9B74B.html>



Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 12. "AOL Time Warner Center Construction Pictures" (Wired New York, February 16, 2002)  
[http://www.wirednewyork.com/aol/images/aol\\_time\\_warner\\_center\\_cps\\_16feb02.jpg](http://www.wirednewyork.com/aol/images/aol_time_warner_center_cps_16feb02.jpg)

Columbus Monument  
Name of Property

New York County, NY  
County and State



Figure 13. Cast Silver and Wooden Trowel: "Laying of the Cornerstone of the Monument to Christopher Columbus, New York, September 14, 1892/Presented to His Honor, Mayor Hugh Grant, by the Executive Committee."





CRISTOFORO

CRISTOFORO COLOMBO

CRISTOFORO COLOMBO  
NATO NEL 1451 A GALLURIA (SARDEGNA)  
MORTO NEL 1506 A VOGHERA (LOMBARDIA)  
SCOPRI' IL NUOVO MONDO PER L'EUROPA  
NEL 1492

3918 Clean Air Hybrid Electric Bus



CRISTOFORO COLOMBO  
DI GENOVA MARINAI DI NATURA  
SCOPRI TORRE SPAGNA  
MARTINO DE BURGOS SUO  
SCOPRI BONAIRE  
SCOPRI BONAIRE  
SCOPRI BONAIRE

LA TORRE E LA CANTINA  
PER MEMORIA DEL MARINAI  
DI NATURA SCOPRI TORRE  
DELLA TENDA CHE AMARANO  
NELLA TENDA

LA TORRE E LA CANTINA  
PER MEMORIA DEL MARINAI  
DI NATURA SCOPRI TORRE  
DELLA TENDA CHE AMARANO  
NELLA TENDA



CRISTOFORO COLOMBO

GLI ITALIANI RESIDENTI IN AMERICA  
IRRESO PRIMA  
MINACCIATO DURANTE IL VIAGGIO  
INCATENATO DOPO  
SAPENDO ESSER CENEROSO QUANTO OPPRESSO  
DONAVA UN MONDO, AL MONDO.



LA GIOIA E LA GLORIA  
NON EBBERO MAI PIU' SOLENNE CRIDO  
DI QUELLO CHE RISUONO IN VISTA  
DELLA PRIMA ISOLA AMERICANA  
TERRA! TERRA!

NEL 12 OTTOBRE 1892  
QUARTO CENTENARIO  
DELLA SCOPERTA D'AMERICA  
A IMPERITURA MEMORIA

PER INIZIATIVA  
DEL PROGRESSO ITALO AMERICANO  
PRIMO GIORNALE ITALIANO QUOTIDIANO  
NEGLI STATI UNITI  
CARLO BARBETTI EDITORE PROPRIETARIO



TO  
**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS**

THE ITALIANS RESIDENT IN AMERICA,  
SCOFFED AT BEFORE,  
DURING THE VOYAGE, MENACED,  
AFTER IT, CHAINED,  
AS GENEROUS AS OPPRESSED,  
TO THE WORLD HE GAVE A WORLD.

JOY AND GLORY  
NEVER UTTERED A MORE THRILLING CALL  
THAN THAT WHICH RESOUNDED  
FROM THE CONQUERED OCEAN  
IN SIGHT OF THE FIRST AMERICAN ISLAND  
LAND! LAND!

ON THE XII OF OCTOBER MD  
THE FOURTH CENTENAR  
OF THE DISCOVERY OF AM  
IN IMPERISHABLE REMEMB



C. RUSSO  
INVENTO E SCOLPI









A

STOFORO COL





PER INIZIATIVA  
DEL PROGRESSO ITALO AMERICANO  
IL PRIMO GIORNALE ITALIANO QUOTIDIANO  
NEGLI STATI UNITI.  
CAV. CARLO BARSOZZI EDITORE E PROPRIETARIO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 10/9/2018      Date of Pending List: 10/25/2018      Date of 16th Day: 11/9/2018      Date of 45th Day: 11/23/2018      Date of Weekly List: 11/26/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      11/20/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Sarah Carroll  
Executive Director  
SCarroll@pc.nyc.gov

August 23, 2018

1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

212 669 7902 tel  
212 669 7797 fax

R. Daniel Mackay  
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Pebbles Island Resource Center  
P.O. Box 189  
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Re: Columbus Monument, located in Columbus Circle, Manhattan

Dear Deputy Commissioner Mackay:

I am writing on behalf of Vice Chair Frederick Bland in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of the Columbus Monument, located in Columbus Circle in Manhattan, for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The New York Landmarks Preservation Commission's Director of Research, Kate Lemos McHale, has reviewed the materials you submitted and has determined that the Columbus Monument appears to meet the criteria for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Carroll".

Sarah Carroll

cc: Kate Lemos McHale, Director of Research, Landmarks Preservation Commission



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

ROSE HARVEY  
Commissioner



3 October 2018

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following nomination, on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Columbus Monument, New York County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office