

Thomas Jefferson MONTICELLO

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World Heritage Site — *Celebrating 25 Years*



Monticello and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1978

25 years ago, Monticello and the University of Virginia's Academical Village were together named a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**

THOMAS JEFFERSON, third president, philosopher, scientist, historian, and author of the Declaration of the Independence, helped establish the foundations of self-government and individual freedom we know today. Jefferson's words—the Declaration and his more than 19,000 letters—and his architecture—including Monticello and the University of Virginia—provide a lens for scholars and visitors today to view the beginnings of early America.



In December 1987, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee recognized the significance of Jefferson's architecture and its importance for future generations. During its 11th session in 1987, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee met for five days in Paris, France, to examine more than 60 prospective World Heritage Sites.

Delegates considered each site and took account of the recommendations of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union of the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). At the end of

the meeting the committee announced the inclusion of 41 cultural and natural properties on the World Heritage List—among them was the world's longest human-made structure—the Great Wall of China; the ancient Acropolis in Athens, Greece; the city of Venice and its lagoon; the Roman City of Bath in the United Kingdom; and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and the University of Virginia's Academical Village.

The World Heritage Sites were chosen because they “represent a masterpiece of human creative genius” and “exhibit an important interchange of human values.” Monticello is the only U.S. presidential and private home on the UNESCO World

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Heritage List. The designation’s “Statement of Significance” details Thomas Jefferson’s architectural ingenuity and use of neo-classical elements in creating both Monticello and the University of Virginia. The committee also took note of how Jefferson’s architecture symbolizes the ideals of the enlightenment and the awareness of Monticello’s natural surroundings in its construction.

A self-taught architect, Jefferson referred to Monticello as his “essay in architecture,” and construction continued on the mountaintop for forty years. The final product is a unique blend of beauty and function that combines the best elements of the ancient and old worlds with a fresh American perspective.

In 1782, the Marquis de Chastellux visited the “first” Monticello and wrote a brief description of it for his *Travels in North America*:

My object in giving these details is not to describe the house, but to prove that it resembles none of the others seen in this country; so that it may be said that Mr. Jefferson is the first American who has consulted the Fine Arts to know how he should shelter himself from the weather.

Jefferson designed Monticello after ancient and Renaissance models, and in particular after the work of Italian architect Andrea Palladio. In location—a frontier mountaintop—and in design—a Renaissance villa—Monticello was intentionally a far cry from the other American homes of its day.

“On the world’s stage, Monticello symbolizes how, in the same way, Jefferson took Enlightenment ideals about the rights of man and crafted them into a New World order introducing self-government, liberty and human equality. As the creator of both Monticello and the Declaration of Independence, he introduced world-changing ideas which have given hope to people everywhere,” said Leslie Greene Bowman, President and CEO of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. “It’s no coincidence that every year on Independence Day, we recognize Jefferson’s authorship of our nation’s birth certificate and naturalize a class of new citizens, very thoughtfully, on the steps of Monticello.”

About the University of Virginia

Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1819. He considered the founding of the University to be one of his greatest achievements and what he called “the Hobby of my old age.”

Jefferson designed the Academical Village, a terraced green space surrounded by residential and academic buildings, gardens, and the majestic center-point—the Rotunda. The most recognizable symbol of the University, the Rotunda stands at the north end of the Lawn and is half the height and width of the Pantheon in Rome, which was the primary inspiration for the building.

Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1819. His Academical Village along with Monticello were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. Photo by Garth Anderson



World Heritage Site – Celebrating 25 Years

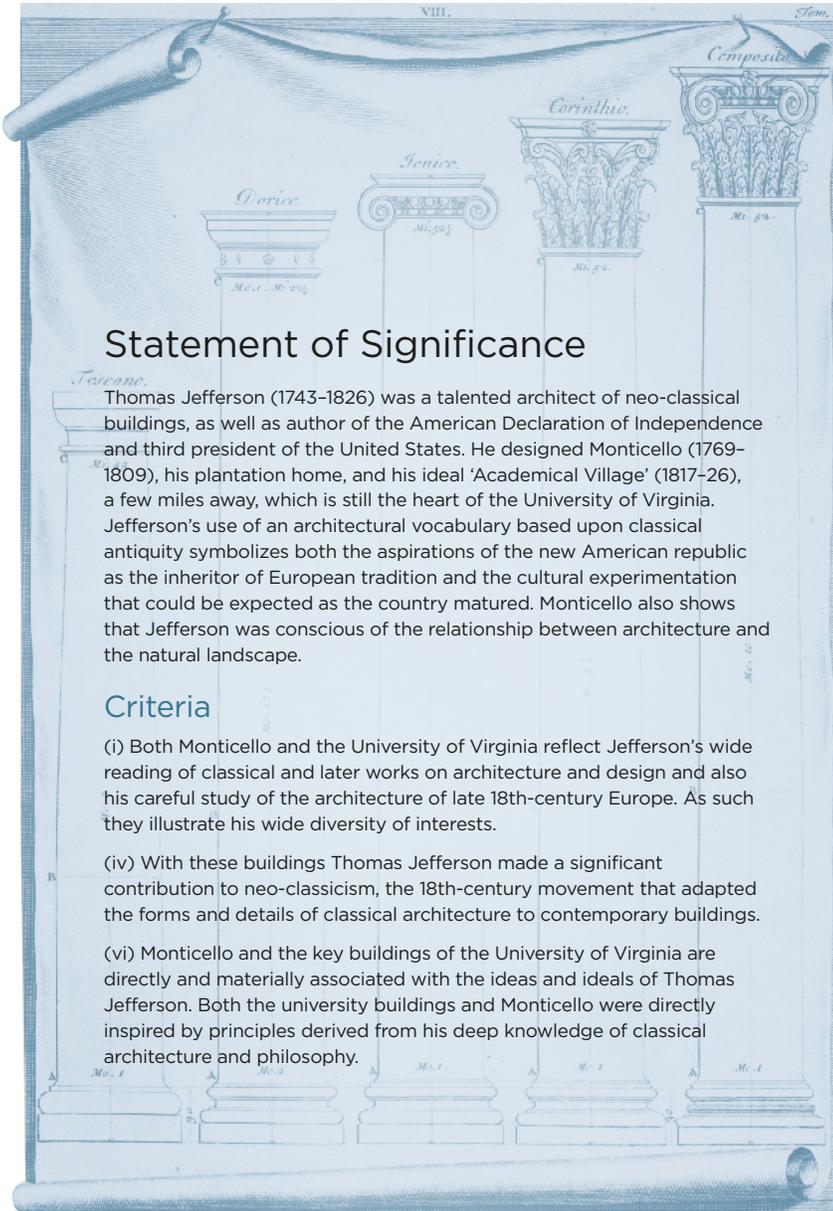
**WE'RE ROLLING BACK TO
 1987 TICKET PRICES OF \$5!**

Celebrate 25 YEARS!

December 7, 2012, marks the 25th anniversary of Monticello's inclusion in the World Heritage List. This year also marks the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, which established the World Heritage List. Join us for a very special week—December 7-11, 2012, when general admission will be rolled back to 1987 prices—five dollars!



Learn more about the designation, and submit your Monticello memories, on our website at www.monticello.org/UNESCO



Statement of Significance

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was a talented architect of neo-classical buildings, as well as author of the American Declaration of Independence and third president of the United States. He designed Monticello (1769–1809), his plantation home, and his ideal 'Academical Village' (1817–26), a few miles away, which is still the heart of the University of Virginia. Jefferson's use of an architectural vocabulary based upon classical antiquity symbolizes both the aspirations of the new American republic as the inheritor of European tradition and the cultural experimentation that could be expected as the country matured. Monticello also shows that Jefferson was conscious of the relationship between architecture and the natural landscape.

Criteria

- (i) Both Monticello and the University of Virginia reflect Jefferson's wide reading of classical and later works on architecture and design and also his careful study of the architecture of late 18th-century Europe. As such they illustrate his wide diversity of interests.
- (iv) With these buildings Thomas Jefferson made a significant contribution to neo-classicism, the 18th-century movement that adapted the forms and details of classical architecture to contemporary buildings.
- (vi) Monticello and the key buildings of the University of Virginia are directly and materially associated with the ideas and ideals of Thomas Jefferson. Both the university buildings and Monticello were directly inspired by principles derived from his deep knowledge of classical architecture and philosophy.