



# • Connecticut Ceramics Study Circle •

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## Terracotta Art: Ornamental Terracotta on Iconic New York Buildings, 1870-1940

*Speaker:* **Francis Morrone**, Architectural Historian, Lecturer, Assistant Professor, New School, New York, NY

**Monday, January 12, 2015, 1:15 pm Lecture and Tea**

The Bruce Museum  
One Museum Drive, Greenwich, Connecticut



Photo by *The Squirrels* as part of the Commons: *Wikis Take Manhattan* project on October 4, 2008.



**Woolworth Building**  
completed 1913,  
233 Broadway  
New York, New York

On Monday, January 12, 2015, Francis Morrone will take us on an armchair tour of “Ornamental Terracotta on Iconic New York Buildings.” Long before Manhattan became the repository for Modernist steel-and-glass skyscrapers, New York's cutting-edge buildings were ornamented and clad with terracotta tiles and sculptural decorations. Exuding colorful warmth, the early office buildings were a synthesis of beauty, engineering, and skilled labor. The illustrated lecture will highlight some of these architectural treasures including the four-story Brooklyn Historical Society (1881), designed by George B. Post who used unglazed terracotta as exterior cladding from the nearby Perth Amboy Terracotta Company. Engineered to withstand New York's climate, terracotta held up well and lent itself to this exuberant style. By the late 1890's, terracotta producers offered polychrome and white to dazzling effect. The architect Cass Gilbert used large-scale polychrome terracotta ornament on his New York buildings, like the Woolworth Building. Gilbert clad this 60-story office building in glazed light cream terracotta, accented by polychrome neo-Gothic ornament from the Queens-based Atlantic Terracotta Company. The lecture continues with the vogue for incorporating art tiles into building facades of 1910-1920s.

**Francis Morrone** is an educator, writer and lecturer. He teaches architectural and urban history at New York University, where he received the university's Excellence in Teaching Award. The author of eleven books, including *Guide to New York City Urban Landscapes*, Morrone writes articles on architecture for the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, the *New Criterion*. He leads architectural walking tours, and in 2011 *Travel + Leisure* named him one of the thirteen best tour guides in the world. In 2012, the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art presented him with the Arthur Ross Award.

The lecture at the Bruce Museum will begin at 1:15 pm with tea to follow. Admission for non-CCSC members is \$25. For reservations and information visit: [www.ctceramicscircle.org](http://www.ctceramicscircle.org) or call (203) 531-6831.