

the living legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright

**TALIESIN
FELLOWS**

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 12, JULY 15, 2003

Taliesin Architects Reorganized

by CEO Jim Goulka,
Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

Doing architecture. Designing buildings. Improving the landscape by one's own creations. Satisfying client needs. That is what many people came to Taliesin to learn. Some were fortunate enough to learn directly from the master. Others learned at one remove from the architects who remained after 1959. But the point, for them, was to do architecture.

Mr. Wright was emphatic that for an architectural design, there can only be one vision, one person responsible. Assistants could help, of course—Mr. Wright clearly needed the superb assistance from the apprentices to accomplish the prodigious output of the 1950s—but, at the top, architecture is a solo act. Many of the alumni have cited this reason for departing Taliesin, most notably Edgar Tafel, as described in his book *Apprentice to Genius*.

After Mr. Wright's death, Taliesin Associated Architects completed Mr. Wright's projects and led the practice into the future. For many years, the firm was profitable and helped maintain the Foundation and School. Since the early 90's however, the firm has suffered; one or two major projects provided the major income, but required additional staffing to complete. Thus: they were not as profitable as they might have been. Still, they provided ample learning opportunities for the School's apprentices. In the more recent years, however, TA slowed considerably and the resulting borrowing from the Foundation created the risk that carrying the debt of a for-profit entity (TA) would endanger the Foundation's non-profit status.

The Architectural Practice Committee of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation board of trustees (comprised of the Board of Directors of TA) considered the problem carefully. Closing the firm was a definite option, but considered by one and all to be the worst option. Thus, an alternative was created and recommended: turn the firm name (TA) into the service entity (handling the billings and clerical tasks), with each architect then practicing architecture on his/her own – retaining the fees instead of plowing them back into the firm, and paying a percentage of the fees for infrastructure and the TA services (if they wished to use them). An initial one-year 'start up' phase is currently underway, with architects working hard to re-organize themselves, form partnerships and actively seek clients. The 11 resident, Senior Fellowship architects continue, without interruption, their residency, Fellowship status and benefits. They continue to provide the educational expertise that the School was founded upon. Apprentices continue to find guidance and inspiration and skills in their work with the architects.

Four pairs have chosen to practice together and the rest in independent practices. These are:

The announcement of Taliesin Architects reorganization, the inevitable outcome of market economy, has surprised and shaken the organic architectural community. In business since the death of Frank Lloyd Wright in 1959, the eleven architects who comprised the organization will now enter the field as private practitioners albeit continuing in residence at Taliesin and retaining access to the Taliesin archival creations of Wright as well as sharing in the continuing education programs of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. CEO Jim Goulka provides some details of the new arrangement.



Events:

Register now for participation in the Frank Lloyd Wright Conservancy Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA, September 3-7, 2003

The Conference theme: **Frank Lloyd Wright and Mid-century Modernism**. Tours to Wright sites in the Bay Area are included. Questions: 773-324-5600 or e-mail to preservaton@savewright.org.

letters . . .

Editor:

Received your latest, and quite nice newsletter on Thursday. It presents a fine cross-section of what is going on, and the "Dow" coverage was a thrill to read. I have always wanted to see Dow's residence but I never got close.

Earl Nisbet, Aptos CA

Editor:

Compliments on your last Newsletter, as well as your others. You do a real service for all of us.

Best,
Indira Bernston, Taliesin

Editor:

I finally found an e-mail address to attract your attention after having corresponded with your address in Scottsdale several times without success. Please notice that we had two children at Taliesin: Nicola Bingel-Hecht (1989) and Till Bingel. Your newsletter is always interesting and able to keep us in contact.

Angelika Bingel
Hamburg, Germany



FURTHERING THE PRINCIPLES OF FRANK LOYD WRIGHT

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editor's corner . . .

Bill Patrick



In the latest scheme of things the Taliesin architects now become truly fellows like the rest of us, at least in the sense of practicing as individuals. They remain special in their access to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright filed away in the archives and their opportunity to stay as residents at Taliesin.

They will continue as mentors to the current and future student apprentices, providing them the expertise and practical experience that will produce the enlightened—read organic—architects of the future. The placement of 98% of Taliesin graduates in the real workplace is a notable achievement and validates the school's role in the 'learning by doing' precept at the heart of Wright's intention.

In a sense, we welcome them to our venue and we see them as brothers in the cause now in some ways free to pursue architecture beyond the umbrella of Taliesin. Perhaps they will find this pursuit something of a hardship in some cases, but it represents an opportunity for individual achievement.

We look forward to publishing their designs as individuals and to evaluate their accomplishment in the continued expansion of the philosophy of Wright and organic architecture.

We trust they will join us in our mission.

Photo credits

Page 4 Malibu gathering, E. Wright
Tour photos, Kimball Thompson
Buehler photos, Tina Patrick
Page 6,7,8 All images, ©Milton Stricker
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Duncan residence, ©WASStorerMINDaLIVE
Frank Lloyd Wright Companion, S.407.2

In Passing . . .

Kaneji Domoto, 1913-2002

Kaneji (Kan) Domoto apprenticed at Taliesin in 1939 and began his career as architect and landscape architect in California. He came east to assist in the creation of the Japanese exhibit for the New York World's Fair following work for the San Francisco Treasure Island Fair. He made his home in New Rochelle, NY. Domoto died January 27, 2002.



He was born in Oakland California, the 8th of 11 children on November 5, 1913. At the family nursery, he learned to propagate camellias and peonies for which his nurseryman father had become famous. Domoto attended Stanford University studying science and physics, and played on the soccer team. He also studied landscape architecture at the University of California in Berkeley.

With the advent of WW2, Domoto was interned with his wife, Sally Fujii, in Amache, Colorado. At the end of the war, they moved to New Rochelle, NY



Domoto (right) with FLLW at the Usonia project (c. 1948)

Domoto had a long and productive career in architecture and landscape design. He designed several homes at the famous Frank Lloyd Wright Usonia homes development at Pleasantville, NY. He designed landscapes for residential and commercial projects, mainly in Westchester County but also in surrounding northeastern states. He became noted for his use of huge stones and rocks in his well-known Japanese-American gardens at the New York World's Fair Japanese Exhibit, in Berkeley, California, Jackson Park, Chicago, and Columbus, Ohio.

His career produced more than 700 projects, and Domoto received many awards for his work, including the Frederick Law Olmsted Award for his Jackson Park design. He donated many hours to local and national civic associations throughout his career.

His wife, Sally, died in 1978, and his second wife, Sylvia Schur, survives him. He leaves 4 children, 6 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter, 2 sisters, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Taliesin Architects Reorganized

continued from page one

David Elgin Dodge
J. Kimber, Architect, LLC (Jacqueline & Jaimie Kimber)
Montooth-Hamblen, Architecture and Design, LLC
(Charles Montooth & Floyd Hamblen)
Stephen M. Nemtin, Architect, LLC
Niji Architecture LLC (Gustad Irani & Yumi Doi,
associated with John Rattenbury)
O'Casey Design Studios LLC (Tom & Effi Casey)
Anthony Puttnam, Architect, LLC
Arnold Roy, Architect, LLC

Each will continue to work in the studios at Taliesin and Taliesin West as they have done in the past.

Predictably, the reaction to these changes has been mixed. Several architects are unhappy and have been quite vocal; others have rallied and have engaged wholeheartedly in the new endeavor. The younger members of the firm (5 of them) noted that the new program allows them to earn equity, plan for the future for themselves and their families (there are currently 4 children under the age of 6 at Taliesin) and take control of their professional destinies. Over the past several years, the Fellowship had steadily lost younger members due to their inability to do just this; thus we hope and expect this new methodology will provide the base for a continuing, vibrant Fellowship and community of architects for many years to come.

Fellow Dyson Honored

Architect Arthur Dyson, current Taliesin Fellows Board member and dean emeritus of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, was awarded a diploma from the International Academy of Architecture (IAA) as Professor of Architecture in a ceremony at the INTERARCH'2003 World Triennial of Architecture in Sofia, Bulgaria. The honor was "in recognition of Arthur Dyson's great achievements in the development of contemporary architecture." This prestigious "lifetime achievement" award was sponsored under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, and UNESCO.

Dyson was also one of the principal speakers for the "Leading Masters of World Contemporary Architecture," lectures held at the University of Architecture and Geodesy, Sofia, Bulgaria from May 18-21, 2003.

IAA President Georgi Stollov presented the diplomas. Additional diplomas were presented to Augustin Hernandez and Ricardo Legoretta of Mexico, Richard England from Malta, Manfredi Nicolett, from Italy, Kiyonori Kikutake of Japan, Alexander Kudrjatzev of Russia, and Santiago Calatrava from Spain.

Winners of this distinguished award from past years are Kenzo Tange, Fumihiko Maki, and Tadao Ando from Japan, Richard Rogers and Norman Foster from the UK, Jorn Utzon from Denmark, Renzo Piano from Italy, Oscar Niemeyer from Brazil, Mario Botta from Switzerland, and Arthur Erickson from Canada. Previous recipients from the United States are Antoine Predock, Helmut Jahn, Moshe Safdie, Kevin Roche, Richard Meyer, Frank Gehry, I.M. Pei, and Cesar Pelli.

The Birthday Celebrations

Taliesin Fellows celebrated the 136th birthday of Frank Lloyd Wright on June 8 with visits to Wright sites and meetings honoring the founder of organic architecture and the champion of "learning by doing". Both Taliesin and Taliesin West sponsored activities for the anniversary, and a number of Wright sites offered tours and served birthday cake to visitors for the occasion.

In California, Taliesin Fellows toured several Wright designed buildings including the Ennis House, now under restoration by Eric Wright, Louis Wiehle, and Christopher Carr, project architects for the work. The house sustained considerable damage from the Northridge earthquake and the replacement of deteriorating blockwork is critical. The tour included visits to the Lloyd Wright Taggart House in Griffith Park. Eric Wright, who is in the process of restoration of the building, provided recollections of the house from an earlier era. The Sheats-Goldstein house designed by John Lautner, one of Wright's most famous apprentices, was the final stop on the tour. Paul and Phyllis Bogart hosted the tour party at dinner at their residence where the ongoing and future concerns of the Taliesin Fellows was the topic of conversations.

On Sunday, the birthday celebration was held at the home of Eric and Mary Wright in Malibu where a symposium featured a presentation of photo-collage work by artist and photographer Elizabeth Gill Lui who is now preparing a new book which will explore organizing principles of Wright's work which originate or are inspired from patterns in nature. The program included a panel discussion with former apprentices Eric Wright, Louis Wiehle, Arthur Dyson, David Dodge, and Hannah Wear. The panel revealed many first-hand stories of Frank Lloyd Wright and his design process emanating from nature.



The panel at Malibu



Eric Wright details the status at Ennis House



Lloyd Wright's Taggart house c. 1924



Living room fireplace



John Lautner's Sheats-Goldstein house



The Buehler house and patio



Maynard and Katie Buehler

Northern California Fellows marked the date with a visit to the Maynard Buehler house in Orinda, CA where Katie Buehler regaled the visitors with a number of humorous tales of her relationship with Wright in the creation of their home. Following her discovery of the Wright-edited issue of the *Architectural Forum* in 1938 she wrote to entice Wright to be the architect for their project. After a long interval in which nothing developed, a telephone call announced, "Mrs. Buehler, this is your architect." This was followed with an invitation to Sunday morning breakfast at the St. Francis Hotel in a suite that impressed the new clients. The Buehlers were pleased to meet Wright in person, and soon became aware of the master's style when he demanded fresh flowers for the table from the closed hotel flower shop which bothered him no iota and demanded opening of the flower shop -- "You can't have breakfast without fresh flowers on the table!" This was followed by Wright reviewing the menu and choosing bacon and eggs, juice and toast for everyone present -- all at the Buehler's expense.

Wright made a site visit to their four and half wooded acres in the east bay, and produced the final design soon after. Katie Buehler recalled timidly inquiring about the small kitchen space hoping it might be enlarged, but characteristically Wright shrugged off the suggestion saying "I don't design down to my client's level!"

When a disastrous fire nearly destroyed the building some years later, it was rebuilt by the Buehlers to the original specifications but with a slightly larger kitchen space. Fellow Walter Olds supervised the reconstruction and additions.

The Buehlers have lived in the house since its original completion. The original 2400 sq. ft. building, Wright designed houses and enthusiastically express their appreciation for the design of their architectural gem. About 25 Fellows and guests enjoyed this special and personable visit to the Buehlers.

Suzi's View



Taliesin's academic year began with an exciting fall field trip to North Fork, California and a visit to alumnus Art Dyson's studio with a guided tour of his works in and around Fresno. He was graciously assisted by wife Audrey and Tony Walker, another alumnus, now in Art's employ. This trip proved so successful that the community of North Fork wishes to build a permanent studio-residence for a series of Taliesin graduates acting as ongoing participants in their community development process. Thanks to Art, the School has a great opportunity.

Work with the alumni had begun even before the field trip as potential clients from around the country called in to obtain the names of alumni architects in their vicinity. This is something which occurs on a regular basis and many references are supplied from the official alumni database.

My first task as "Director of Alumni Relations", was to facilitate the February Board meeting, which culminated with a wonderful party at Bruce Pfeiffer's house catered by Taliesin chef Randy with the assistance of apprentice and alumni volunteers. Dozens of former apprentices attended from the valley including Paolo Soleri and Ling Po.

One of the seasons greatest challenges was faculty and advisor recruitment. There are now more alumni on the core faculty than there are active Fellowship members in that group. Seventeen of the thirty-one architect advisors, essential to the success of the educational program, are alumni. And those architects who have been recruited from outside the "Organic Tradition" are friends recommended by alumni. This is an increasingly important aspect of the school's operation and will perhaps be the greatest legacy the alumni will provide to the Taliesin tradition.

Much work is being done at both Taliesins to provide dedicated living space for participating alumni. We are recruiting members of the full time teaching staff from the alumni. This is in addition to educational encounters arranged with vacationing members who stop by for a day or two and are invited to participate in the program.

Tim Wright, a grandson of FLLW, is currently conducting an architectural film festival at Taliesin. Jerry Morosco, '83, is spearheading an effort to develop extended internships in alumni offices. Please let me know if you are interested in providing internship or employment opportunities to graduates.

Next Winter Grattan Gill, '52, is coming to Arizona to participate as a member of our adjunct faculty, sharing his collection of slides and well developed history of Frank Lloyd Wright. If you are moving to Arizona or Wisconsin, even for a summer or winter season, let us know if you might participate in this program.

Another boon to our program comes from Curtis Besinger, 1939-75, posthumously, as his former teaching assistant, Scottsdale architect Jim Scalise, joins our faculty. Scalise, former Associate Dean of the ASU School of Architecture will be joining our faculty this summer with the specific mission of adapting the Besinger design course to the Box Project method of directed study.

Jay Pace and I were invited to dinner with Ling Po early this year, and we were able to facilitate his return to Taliesin as full time mentor in residence.

The pinnacle of my first year's experience as Director of Alumni Relations was attending the June 8 board meeting in Los Angeles, which included a fascinating architectural tour of Wright and Lautner sites, guided by Eric Wright, Louis Wiehle and Chris Carr, and a great buffet dinner at the home of Phyllis and Paul Bogart. This weekend was topped off with Mr.

Wright's Birthday celebration picnic at Mary and Eric Wright's "retreat in the clouds" overlooking Malibu.

I feel fortunate to be part of this living history and I look forward to our next meeting.

Your friend at Taliesin West, *Suzi Pace*

If you are seeking information about another alumnus or have any question related to the Fellows, please call me at Taliesin West 480- 860-2700 ext. 59.

alumni news

With "Suzi's View" we initiate reports from Director of Alumni Relations Suzi Pace at Taliesin. We will be receiving pertinent Alumni news about former apprentices and today's Taliesin.

The Oral History Project

Indira Berndtson, Administrator for Historic Studies at Taliesin, is eager to contact any former apprentice to add to the ongoing oral history archive at Taliesin. An interview can be conducted in person or over the telephone. The interviews will be placed in the FLLW Archives, and copies will be furnished to the interviewee for his/her personal use.

Please contact Indira Berndtson at iberndtson@franklloydwright.org or at 480-860-2700

A RETURN TO ORGANIC ART

DESIGN THROUGH NATURE ABSTRACTION

by Milton Stricker

- **Abstracting nature for art is beauty discovered.** I have found to my satisfaction that nature is the measure of beauty in art, architecture, and life - through nature abstraction an element of beauty can be extracted for art structure. The abstracted element becomes the DNA source code for inspiration, line, shape, form, and color as intended for art structure. In art we generally deal with two-dimensional shapes, in architecture we deal with three-dimensional form (mass), but the abstraction process is parallel for both. The process starts by abstracting a natural object into simple inspiring elements and then reversing the process by multiplying the elements into art structure. This is not a giant leap; it merely adapts the evolutionary theory of "natural selection."

A painter can express all that he wants with fruit or flowers. Edouard Monet - 1880

- The following case studies demonstrate a simple process of creating organic art through nature abstraction. The method is intended to assist students grasp a simple quick-start method for abstraction. Students are anxious to get into the computer classroom where the emphasis is on computer-generated graphics, but first it is essential that they understand the basics of drawing and abstraction. Einstein was a mathematical genius, but first he had to learn to add, subtract, multiply, and divide.
- Nature sketching and painting is traditionally done in the field, but it is a method that often discourages beginners. To simplify the learning curve the studies start with a photograph, or sketch of the object and the abstraction is then developed through a series of overlay tracings. With practice the overlay process will accelerate the student's ability and skills to create successful works of art. Art is multidimensional and individual, so the illustrated process can only guide us in our design considerations.

PAINTING STUDY 1 - BROADLEAF MAPLE - 1990



PHOTO



B & W ENLARGEMENT



LINE TRACING



FINAL PAINTING

- The Polaroid photograph of a broad leaf maple tree was taken outside of my office. The photo is first enlarged on a copier and then traced with a series of overlay tracings. What happens on the overlays is unpredictable and the suggestions are always a surprise to me. Once I sense, or visualize a suggestion, I begin to draw intuitively, and the visualization becomes the spirit for the continuing abstraction. With the first line or touch of paint, visualization is created. The visualization is then answered back with another line, or touch of paint; this push-pull process provides the creative energy to drive the abstraction process forward.

The endless passing of one element into new forms, the incessant metamorphosis, explains the rank which the imagination holds in our catalogue of mental powers.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

- Through a series of trial and error tracings the lines or touches of paint are simplified and analyzed, until the object becomes a beautiful abstraction of the object. The primary problem is to establish a balance of conscious artistic control over the creation of the subconscious visualization. This practice is sometimes called: "**plastic geometry**--Sullivan, "**automatic writing**--Pollack, and "**imagination giving natural pattern to structure**--Wright. However, I prefer to refer to this idea as "**nature abstraction**", that is, natural forms suggesting imagery, organisms, art, and architectural structure.

PAINTING STUDY 2 - VASE WITH VINE MAPLE - 1994



PHOTO



B & W ENLARGEMENT



LINE TRACING



FINAL PAINTING

- The photograph of a vase with fall maple leaves was taken in my living room, enlarged on a copier and then the significant lines developed through a series of overlay tracings. The final abstraction was then copied with a brown ink line and filled in with watercolor using a regular brush technique.
- As the series of overlays are developed visualization, suggestion, and the design element that I am searching for begins to generate within itself. As the abstraction progresses the images and elements that appear soon capture the spirit and rhythms for the final painting. This push-pull abstraction process is a way to see, visualize, sketch, and abstract - the only way I know to understand and produce art.

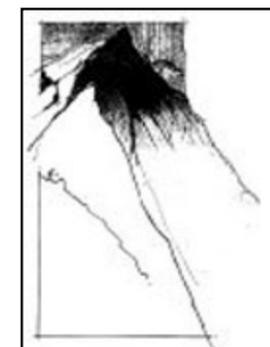
PAINTING STUDY 3 - MT. OLYMPUS - 1995



PHOTO



INK ENLARGEMENT



INK DRAWING

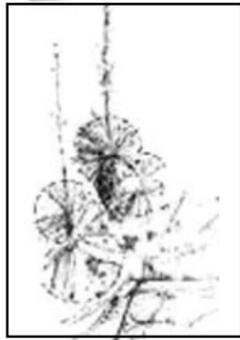


FINAL PAINTING

- The photograph of Mt. Olympus was taken during a mountain climb (author left center). The photo was enlarged and developed into a painting using the overlay tracing method. The heart of the abstraction process is the continuous flow of seeing, visualization, suggestion, pattern, and elements that are developed during the abstraction process.

- Abstraction provides the elemental form that contains both poetic logic and rational logic for the final work of art. These visionary elements are as intricate as any object in nature; therefore, the abstracted elements and the elements in the art structure have a common organic origin. As a result, the art structure becomes a multiple of the abstracted element with the element and the art formed from the same subjective and objective spirit.

PAINTING STUDY 4 - DESERT YUCCA - 1951



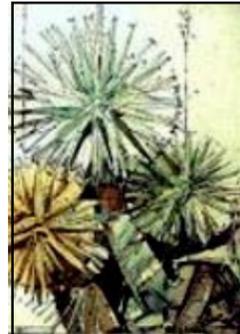
PENCIL SKETCH



INK STUDY



INK PAINTING



WATER COLOR

- The Yucca pencil sketch was selected from my Taliesin sketchbook and developed into the final watercolor painting through the overlay method.
- Wright's *Wasmuth Portfolio* inspired the Bauhaus School of architecture in Germany (1910) and his *Unity Temple* inspired the deStijl School of art in Holland (1917). The deStijl School used non-objective rectilinear shapes and primary colors, plus black and white for graphic design patterns (shades of Carnegie Tech - 1950). The Bauhaus gang found the two-dimensional deStijl patterns more modern looking than Wright's work and reinterpreted the idea as a three-dimensional kind of modern architecture. With Philip Johnson's evangelism the Bauhaus Style became accepted as American and International Modernism. The style ultimately failed during the '70's because of its limited natural, human, and objective design capacity. There is a lesson in all this for artists and architects.
- The goal in organic art is to obtain a balance between the recognizable and the abstract worlds of art form. These two theories are the building blocks of creative art and a meeting of the two directions can be accomplished by putting what is true in each of them in synchronized equilibrium.
- The Golden Mountain mural was designed for a retired couple. Their hillside home overlooks Puget Sound and the Olympic mountains. The central diamond reflects the footprint of their homehood, and the mountain ladder represents their endeavors. At right center two seagulls fly into the sunset.
- By pushing the mural design beyond figurative art, but short of total non-objective art, the design sustains equilibrium between the organic and inorganic. **This is the joy of organic art.**



THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN - 1994 - Wood Sculpture - 36x40

*The greatest poet is not he who has done the best;
it is he who suggests the most;
he, not all of whose meaning is at first obvious, and who
leaves you much to desire,
to explain, to study, much to complete in your turn. . .*

Walt Whitman

Applying the methodology of nature inspired abstraction into the realm of abstract art.

Milton Stricker has pursued the method of abstraction of nature as a basis for organic architectural design for all the years of his practice as an architect. He was apprenticed at Taliesin in 1951 and now lives and works in Seattle. Stricker is putting together a book of his essays on the abstraction process. He welcomes comment and inquiries on this and other essays in the series. His e-mail address is strickerm@msn.com. phone: 206/329-5277



The Final Resting Place

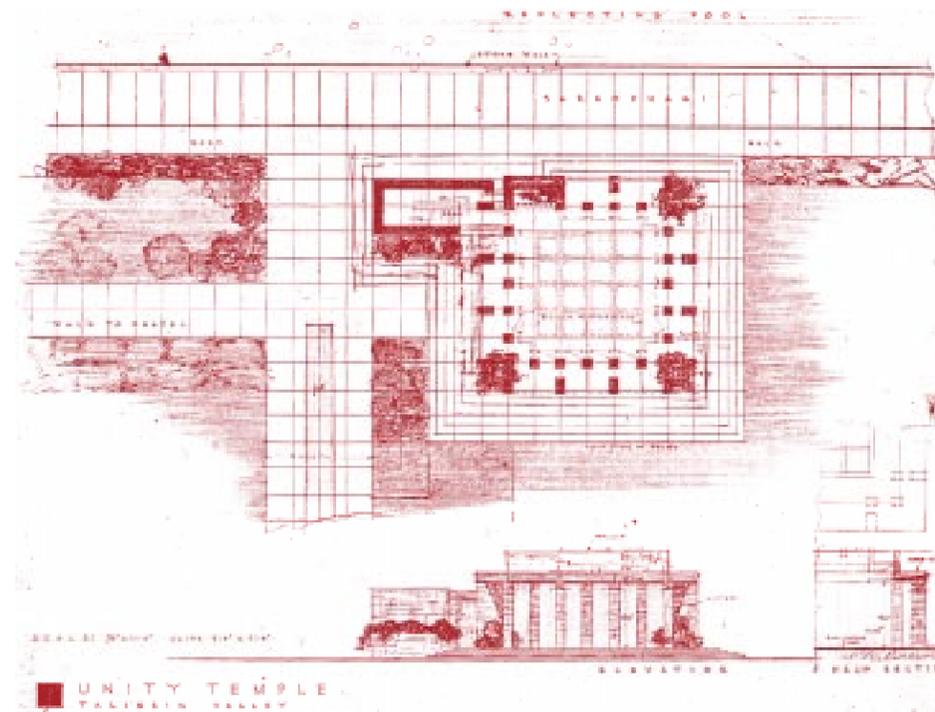
By John Ottenheimer

It was the Summer of 1958. Mr. Wright came into the drafting room as usual and asked me to lay out a clean sheet of drafting paper. He then worked quietly for a couple of hours. When he got up he said, "This morning the architect designed his own tomb." He then gave his drawing to Jack (Howe) and asked him to do a perspective rendering of it. The design of what amounts to a mini chapel is in some ways a curiosity. It is very simple, symmetric, square, unpretentious. What was interesting about it was that it was not just for himself, and his immediate family, but for any of the apprentices who might want to join him there. The location was to be west of the small Lloyd Jones chapel and graveyard across the valley from Taliesin. I don't recall his ever showing the design to anyone, even Mrs. Wright, nor was it displayed. It was just quietly filed in an appropriate place. It had been on his mind and he got it on paper--that is what counted. It happened to be less than a year until he passed away.

John Ottenheimer, apprenticed at Taliesin from 1953 to 1970, recalls a trenchant event during his stay and relates the design of one of the lesser known projects by Frank Lloyd Wright when he designed his own "tomb" one summer's day. It was intended for the Taliesin Lloyd Jones Chapel site, yet suggests elements of the plan for Taliesin West.

It was never built, and Wright's remains are interred somewhere at Taliesin West.

Ottenheimer lives in Freeland, Washington.



There was in a way a kind of echo in the idea of apprentices' graves marching in a line across the field. In the design drawings for Taliesin West he showed a series of megaliths stretching along the east-west axis of the camp all the way to the horizon to the east (or at least to the edge of the property). The large vertical sculptural desert rocks at the entrance red square and below the guest deck-bridge are in line with this axis. Another line of desert masonry piers was to proceed along the axis to the north up to the foot of the mountains. This was one of those things that was low priority and for which there was no time or money anyway, but nevertheless it remains part of the master's design for Taliesin.

Mrs. Wright never liked the idea as she said she thought it was too primitive, but I always liked the thought and the revelation of the primitive side of Mr. Wright's nature.

Organic Designs for Low(er)-cost housing

We have been searching for developments in organic approaches to low cost housing, as discussed in our April column.

All the answers are not in as of this writing, but Dwell magazine has announced the winner in their search for a housing idea, which could use prefabricated systems and which could produce a home for \$200,000. The winner's design will be built, and the project will be followed in the magazine.

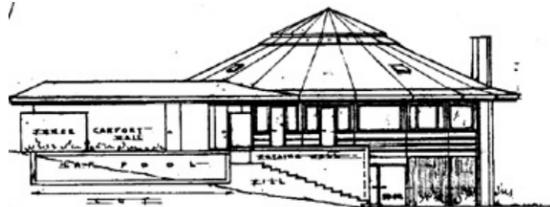
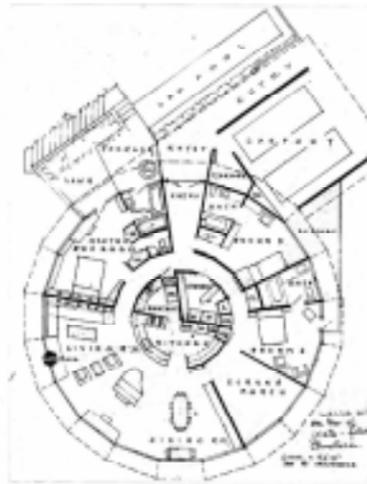
Unfortunately, from our viewpoint, none of the designs offered by the twelve selected competitors offers much in the way of organic architecture. The focus seems to be on a systems approach of prefabricated elements, which can be assembled in various configurations in the field. Expectedly, the solutions are all developed for level builder's pads, and the outcome is most often simply a rearrangement of boxes, a far cry from Wright's solutions which are seen in Storer's Frank Lloyd Wright Companion, and which provide plans that form from within and invariably give a sense of shelter with wide overhangs. Mies continues to reign.



Resolution 4: Architecture of New York City was named the first choice over 12 invited firms by Dwell Magazine for a design for a house to cost \$200,00. The project uses conventional wood framing but uses factory-built modular components in an effort to contain labor costs. It is being built on a North Carolina site.

Lois Gottlieb, Taliesin 1948-49, has developed a project using factory-built circular units by Deltec Homes in an attempt to relate the interior configuration to the circular structure.

Based on his original Usonian concept, Wright provided designs for prefabricated houses in 1956 for the Marshall Erdman company, which sold kits based on modular components selected by owners, and assembled on site. Pictured is the Duncan residence in Lisle, Illinois. Factory windows and other commercial elements were used. Cost in 1956 was \$47,000.



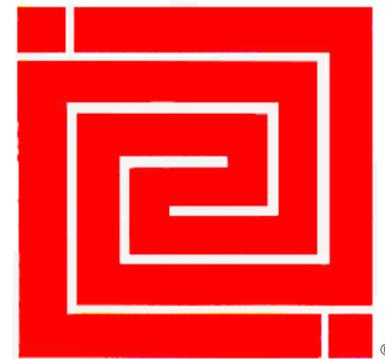
Several proponents of low cost housing have suggested that organic practitioners should be involved in this area, and have offered solutions using manufactured components. The solutions are compromised, however, by forcing the living space within a pre-determined envelope. This may fall short of a true inside-to-outside organic solution though the spaces are arranged radially to fit into the perimeter diameter which is the builder's dictate.

In another approach, we are awaiting plans for a Habitat house now under construction as designed by Floyd Hamblen, one of the Taliesin Architects, in Wisconsin. Habitat is a non-profit housing developer of houses for low income, and most designs and methods have been conventional in almost every respect with emphasis on familiar techniques where the future owners can aid the construction with their own "sweat equity." We shall be interested to see if Hamblen's solution addresses the goal from an organic point of view.

Stay tuned.

This Year at Taliesin

by Jay Pace, Associate Dean



This year will be remembered as the year major program changes that were made. The number of apprentices stayed the same--twenty-four, but almost everything else underwent some form of renewal.

We welcomed new Chief Executive Officer, Jim Goulka, as head of the foundation, school and preservation commission. Jim immediately, revised tuition policies, lent personal support to strong organizational revision requested by our Dean, Dr. John Wyatt, and Associate Dean, Jay Pace, in keeping with measures suggested by the NAAB (National Architectural Accreditation Board). Most of these adjustments had been anticipated in the long-range strategic plan of the Foundation and securing the full six year accreditation term as a result of the 2001-2002 accreditation review, provided added confidence to move ahead.

Requirements of the traditional "box project" were expanded to make it the backbone of a system of inquiry based "learning by doing" in which mentors act as consultants to assist apprentices in completing self-elected design projects. Twenty-four architect-advisors were recruited to assist apprentices in making these critical program choices. Self-assessment, self-direction, self-pacing (time-management) and production and review of "actual work" are the basis of a very flexible yet objective learning program.

In addition to drawings, models and electronic presentations, each apprentice is also encouraged to maintain a "personal portfolio" for use in obtaining work upon graduation. Although this working portfolio is not used as the basis of academic evaluation, it is considered an essential tool in the job search process. Due to strong studio and construction experience and good work habits, the employment rate of our graduates is among the highest with more than 98% finding employment immediately upon graduation.

For the first time, all apprentices were assigned personal workstations in the Atrium Studio during the winter months in Arizona. These places were in addition to those stations assigned by the Taliesin Architects for senior apprentices whose work demonstrated their ability to act as job captains managing apprentice teams engaged in research and production of actual projects. The "Senior Apprentices" (20% to 25% of the apprentice body) are assigned to the TA Studio Monday through Thursday under the guidance of Assistant Dean, Gustad Irani, and with direct instruction from sponsoring architect(s) utilizing their services. For trainee level apprentices, TA Studio work takes place each morning in the training studio, and sometimes elsewhere at the discretion of the sponsoring architect. The training program continues after lunch in studio and shop with assistance from faculty/consultants available as needed Monday through Thursday.

Fridays are reserved for field trips, design charettes, construction of shelters or work on special independent study projects, etc. followed by evening lectures from visiting Architects and scholars. There is also an apprentice sponsored public lecture series during the winter.

Each afternoon following business shop/studio hours but generally before dinner, time is reserved for study of a particular art form. The allied arts program provides all apprentices an opportunity to study the art forms of their

choice. Allied arts currently include pottery, photography, yoga, chorus, rendering, bagpipes, guitar, etc. Saturdays are for camp maintenance and Formal Evenings, and Sundays are generally free.

In addition to the expansion of the regular academic program the school also took part in two special projects with Montessori International. Participants enjoyed a weeklong design charette sponsored by the Community of North Fork, California, and President Goulka presented a discussion of Alternative Schools at the annual AIA convention in San Diego.

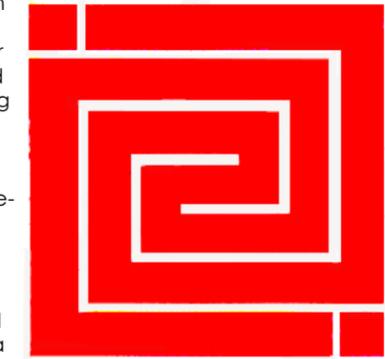
The measure of any program's success is its graduates. This year's graduates in both the Bachelors and Masters degree program more than compensated for the work of faculty, fellowship and the apprentices themselves. 2002-2003 has been a successful year with many changes though following the inspiration of the Wrights' lifetime dedication to educating young architects.

The above message was drafted as a report to the Education Committee of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Board, and has also been used by Gail Warden, of our Development office, in fundraising. But what does it mean to those of us who are former apprentices and dedicated supporters?

First, let me say that today's Taliesin apprenticeship is not the same that existed in your day or mine. But there are a few things, which never change. For example, "Good character" is still the crowning achievement of any education and seems to coincide remarkably often with outstanding professional achievement. To develop "good character" is the perpetual challenge facing all.

Apprenticeship is still based on total immersion in a self-sufficient community, and rotation of tasks, long intervals of work, study and experimentation have always made up the program. Add to this proven formula an ever-increasing degree of self-determination and you will see where today's program is headed. The idea of providing an "architect-advisor" for each apprentice has never been more important than it is now and accepting the increased levels of accountability which academic accreditation require has also proven to be a very beneficial refinement.

The challenge of integrating the wide range of subjects required for academic accreditation into the traditional "learning by doing" program of apprenticeship continues. We do not wish to see Taliesin slide into a series of conventional classroom exercises. The only time bells ring at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture is at mealtimes and we intend to keep it that way.



Complimentary and Expired

The Board of Directors, in an effort to gain support for the Newsletter and the projected revival of the Fellows Journal, has authorized this complimentary mailing of this issue of the Newsletter to all former apprentices and members whose addresses are known, and to current student apprentices at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture.

We apologize to those who have previously renewed and have inadvertently been omitted from previous mailings. We ask for your continuing participation in our mission.

If you are receiving this issue with a label marked expired, please renew with your check of \$50 (\$40 for former apprentices, \$25 students, foreign add \$12) payable to Taliesin Fellows at P.O. Box 5930, Scottsdale, AZ 85261.

Please send any inquiries or errors regarding your subscription/membership to the above address.

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Membership

Become a member of the Taliesin Fellows and support our on-going work of returning the two Taliesins to their original design as executed by Wright prior to his death in 1959, and in the cause of furthering organic architecture. Members will receive the Taliesin Fellows Newsletter, published quarterly, and *Journal of the Taliesin Fellows*. Annual membership dues are \$50-Friends of Fellows (open to all); \$40-Fellows (alumni of the FLLW School of Architecture, former apprentices, or affiliation with the Taliesin Fellowship) and \$25-Student (with proof of full-time status). Foreign subs add \$12. Send your check (on a U.S. bank) made payable to Taliesin Fellows, P.O. Box 5930, Scottsdale, AZ 85261-5930.

Fellows Directors Spring Meeting Report

The Taliesin Board of Directors met June 9 at the Paul and Phyllis Bogart residence in Beverly Hills following participation in the tours of Wright and other architectural sites in Los Angeles, and the celebration honoring Frank Lloyd Wright at Malibu.

The agenda covered the upcoming FLLW Conservancy meeting in San Francisco September 3-7 which will include a breakfast meeting of Fellows and Conservancy members. Board member Richard Hofmeister will present a talk to the conservancy group explaining the activities of the Taliesin Fellows with a view to expanding membership in the Fellows organization.

Board member Jerry Morosco presented a report on the development of a FLLW Foundation estate endowment program. The board elected to consider participation by recommending benefits directed to specific interests of the Fellows.

The revival of the JTF (*Journal of the Taliesin Fellows*) magazine was projected tentatively, despite an earlier announcement, for launch in December/January. Fundraising for the first issue of the Journal is being undertaken by directors Morosco and Bogart. The Journal is to be 32 pages; a staff and editor, including format are not yet designated.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled to follow the Conservancy conference in San Francisco on Thursday, September 4, 2003. Fellows members in the western states are being invited to attend the conservancy conference.

The board unanimously approved a proposal to create a record of former apprentices indicating their work on specific projects while at Taliesin.

NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 5930, Scottsdale, AZ 85261

