

FAQs

Explain the architectural character of the Johnson wax building with respect to innovation in architecture.

Often referred to as the Johnson Wax Building, its most identifiable element are the dendriform columns, the name used by Wright because of their tree like shape. Wright's ability to effortlessly incorporate the organic metaphor into his architecture is revealed in the building via a tall slender mushroom column that tapers to a base of a mere 9-inch diameter.

They rise 30 feet and terminate at the roof level as broad circular lily pads of concrete 18 1/2 feet wide. Wright's imagination led to creating these hollow cored columns that serve as storm water drains and which feature hinged bases with pin jointed bronze shoes.

The circular lily pads of concrete are woven together by a membrane of Pyrex glass tubing that illuminate spaces with natural light. The use of Pyrex glass tubing allowed for a lot of diffused light to enter the interior of the Johnson Wax Building. The large workspace is well lit with indirect light and very little glare, resulting in a work environment conducive for creativity. The exterior walls are non-load bearing and were constructed using red brick. Other materials used in the construction of the Johnson Wax Building included red Kasota sandstone and reinforced concrete with cold drawn mesh used for the reinforcement. He also designed over 200 different shapes of bricks that can be found in the building. The earthy colors he used including his signature Cherokee Red color were typical of Wright's work at the time. The mushroom columns and glass tubing ceiling formed a large workspace, nearly one half acre in size. The Great Room, as

it is referred to, is furnished with specific Wright designed pieces, two circular elevators, and a mezzanine. He truly provided a complete design for this building thoughtfully creating over 40 pieces of furniture. The elevators took on a birdcage like appearance providing a panoramic view of the Great Room traveling from the basement to the Penthouse level. The building is a bit like being in a forest. A low ceiling carport featuring shortened mushroom columns leads to the lobby. When you reach the Great Room the sky opens and you are surrounded by slender mushroom columns and light streams in from overhead.

There was quite a lot of discussion surrounding Wright's design of the building, specifically relating to the mushroom columns. The columns were expected by most to fail at providing the appropriate amount of strength to support the roof. In anticipation of this Wright had a test column constructed of which proved that the design could support over five times anything they would be asked to carry.

Wright provided almost utopian workspace, self-sufficient and a bit futuristic. The modern streamlined atmosphere was communicated through a consistent circular language; curved corner profiles, rounded shapes in furniture pieces, and use of Pyrex glass tubing extending beyond roofing materials for wall dividers and replacing conventional windows.

Frank Lloyd Wright was quoted in the Racine Times describing the SC Johnson Administration building as "simply and sincerely an interpretation of modern business conditions designed to be as inspiring to live in and work in as any cathedral ever was to worship in."

Explain the Fallingwater with reference to the context of the site.

Kaufmann Residence is a house designed in 1935 in rural southwestern Pennsylvania, 43 miles (69 km) southeast of Pittsburgh. The home was built partly over a waterfall.

The final working drawings were issued by Wright in March 1936 with work beginning on the bridge and main house in April 1936. Uncomfortable with what he saw as Wright's insufficient experience using reinforced concrete, Kaufmann had the architect's daring cantilever design reviewed by a firm of consulting engineers.

Fallingwater stands for its dynamism and integration with the striking natural surroundings.

Fallingwater has been described as an architectural tour de force of Wright's organic philosophy.

Wright's passion for Japanese architecture was strongly reflected in the design of Fallingwater, particularly in the importance of interpenetrating exterior and interior spaces and the strong emphasis placed on harmony between man and nature. Integration with the setting extends even to small details. For example, where glass meets stone walls there is no metal frame; rather, the glass and its horizontal dividers were run into a caulked recess in the stonework so that the stone walls appear uninterrupted by glazing.

Explain the guggenheim museum with respect to symbolism.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of New York While one of the plans had a hexagonal shape and level floors for the galleries, all the others had circular schemes and used a ramp continuing around the building.

Wright's original concept was called an inverted "ziggurat", because it resembled the steep steps on the ziggurats built in ancient Mesopotamia.

His design dispensed with the conventional approach to museum layout, in which visitors are led through a series of interconnected

rooms and forced to retrace their steps when exiting. Wright's plan was for the museum guests to ride to the top of the building by elevator, to descend at a leisurely pace along the gentle slope of the continuous ramp, and to view the atrium of the building as the last work of art. The open rotunda afforded viewers the unique possibility of seeing several bays of work on different levels simultaneously and even to interact with guests on other levels.

Wright ascribed a symbolic meaning to the building's shapes. He explained, "these geometric forms suggest certain human ideas, moods, sentiments – as for instance: the circle, infinity; the triangle, structural unity; the spiral, organic progress; the square, integrity."

What did FLW do and learn in his own house and studio? Explain with sketches.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Home & Studio in Oak Park, Illinois – is a microcosm of the prolific designer's ever-evolving architectural aesthetic. It's an expression of his early formative years, and through a series of additions, it embodies the changes that his philosophy and style underwent during the twenty year span (1889-1909) that he lived in the home. Unlike many of his later Prairie Style designs, the front door of the home is in the traditional place and easy to find as you approach the home.

A wrap-around front porch sits beneath the home's massive triangular gable while a tapered brick wall surrounds the entry and provides private outdoor space where the growing Wright family often gathered.

Upon entering the home, the home's main staircase spills into the entryway in front of you, as the living room beckons you to the left. The living room is actually the only room in the house that remains as it was in the original 1889 home.

Two generously-sized bay windows, provide ample natural light, as well as seating and storage beneath.

In the middle of the massively arcing ceiling is an equally massive skylight with four intricately-cut grille panels (below) that screen

the harsh mid-day sun. Wright had been experimenting with a multitude of new design ideas and the studio addition was a radical departure from the rest of the home's shingle style exterior. He used the studio addition as a testing ground for some of his early Prairie Style motifs that he would develop further in the coming years.

