

Cultural Daily

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The Wright Way – An Overture

Rick Meghiddo · Wednesday, July 5th, 2017

Why Wright now? What can a man born 150 years ago, tell to a young generation of architects likely to be responsible for the invention of the future? The following documentary is intended to emphasize the link between Wright's ideas and the needs of tomorrow.

At the time of his death, the world's population was three billion. Today it is 7.2 billion, likely to become ten billion by mid-century. We must confront sustainability, higher mix-use urban density, working space closer to dwellings, less dependence on the car, food production closer to home, flexible prefabrication and self-help.

During the last years of his life, when asked how he saw the future of architecture, Wright's answer was:

“[t]he future of architecture is the future of the human race. If civilization has a future, so will architecture. Democracy was never intended to be a mass production affair. A free life is not necessarily a free-for-all. It is nothing someone gives you. A free life is something you work out for yourself. Freedom is not conferred, must be worked out from self.”

There is no substitute for reading Wright's prolific writing while filtering “the Wright's Style” nostalgia from his principles. To take Wright's words literally would be as misleading as all dogmas are. Wright's principles of Organic Architecture can be understood and reinterpreted to match the needs of our time. Yet there is no alternative to walking through his spaces, to absorb them in their totality – fluidity, scale, light, views, and details.

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Here is my take:

1. Space is the fundamental component of the architecture. In a profound sense, it is mostly “interior space,” where streets and plazas are the interior spaces of a three-dimensional city.
2. Continuity, physical and spatial, is as essential for organic architecture as the relationship

between skin, muscles, bones, organs, blood, and nerves.

3. Nature implies not just the nature of a site, or the nature of materials, or the nature of production; it also means the nature of humans, both in their ergonomic and psychological dimensions.

4. Human scale is the only scale of architecture, and it should not be confused with “size.” Human scale defines the relation to purpose. Bernini’s Saint Peter’s square is at human scale, in spite of its size. Fascist architecture, whether governmental or corporate, is not.

5. Context is not only the relationship between a building and its surroundings; it is also a connection between a building and the culture within which it surges.

Flashback: we were recently graduated architects, influenced by our master teachers and mentors, Prof. Bruno Zevi and architect Luigi Pellegrin when we decided to come to the United States to experience Wright by ourselves. Together with our friend Viviana Campajola, we embarked on a “Wright pilgrimage” that took us through ninety-six of his works along more than twenty states.

Following are some samples of photographs we shot during our trip (click on the link.) They are presented here for the first time. After more than 40 years we remain amazed at seeing how much of Wright’s architecture withstood the passage of time. His works look as fresh today as when we visited them.



Let’s face it: the world won’t stop at ten billion. The order of “pragmatic idealism” remains unchanged, independently of scale, place or time: DREAM first, then PROGRAM and quantify, then DESIGN, and then BUILD.

SOME TIPS

For The Wright Way gallery of selected photos

by Ruth and Rick Meghiddo, [click here](#).

For a great PBS visual biography of

[Frank Lloyd Wright by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick Part 1](#)

[Frank Lloyd Wright by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick Part 2](#)

For [THE MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEW with Wright, 1957](#).

For Frank Lloyd Wright Collected Writings:

[Volume 1](#)

[Volume 2](#)

Volume 3

Volume 4

Volume 5

For one of the best books about Wright:

Frank Lloyd Wright by Neil Levine

For a link to MoMA's "Unpacking the Archive" exhibition click on photo bellow:



Wright 150th Birthday

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