

# Frank Lloyd Wright & Modern Architecture

CMU, Arch 48-441 (Lecture)  
Spring 2003, M/W/F 11:30-12:20, CFA 206a

Prof. Kai Gutschow  
Email: gutschow@andrew.cmu.edu  
Off. Hr: M/F 12:30-1:30pm & by appt. in MM307

(7/16/07)

## Syllabus S'03:

"Frank Lloyd Wright & Modern Architecture" is an architectural history course that investigates the career and legacy of the famous American architect Frank Lloyd Wright within the context of modern architecture. We will attempt to understand the great variety of work and ideas produced by Wright over seven decades, as well as the context which stimulated and fed off of his designs.

We will focus on issues including: 1) Wright's buildings and projects; 2) the concept of organic architecture; 3) the historical and intellectual climate that gave rise to FLW's work, including the work of Richardson and Sullivan, the Shingle Style and International Style, Japanese and European modern architecture; 4) investigations of Wright's progressive clients, innovative use of building materials, changing design theories, invented building systems, radical social & political theories, broad urban experiments, and publishing prowess; 5) the influences Wright had on modern architecture worldwide, especially the tremendous influence he had in America through his own buildings, writings and lectures, as well as some 1200 disciples he trained through his Taliesin Fellowship.

The work for the course falls into three primary parallel-running categories: 1) Attendance and readings for M/W lectures on F.L. Wright's work; 2) Readings, discussions, student presentations and films about the architectural context of modern architecture; 3) a focused research paper comparing one building by FLW to any other modern building; two mid-terms to test your knowledge and retention of course material.

## Objectives:

- To familiarize FLW's major architect'l work, built & unbuilt
- To understand FLW's philosophy of "organic architecture"
- To understand the architectural and intellectual context of FLW's work and time, especially parallel developments in modern arch.
- To develop skills of critical thinking, quality research, and clear communication through a variety of writing & reading projects.

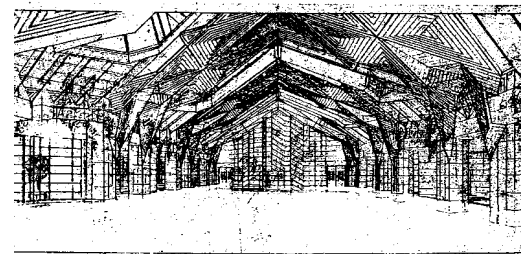
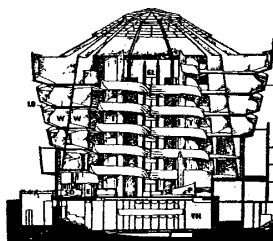
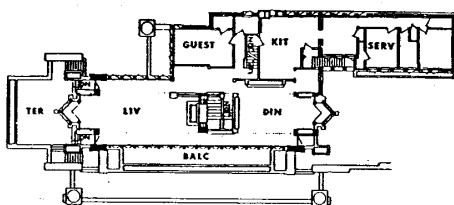
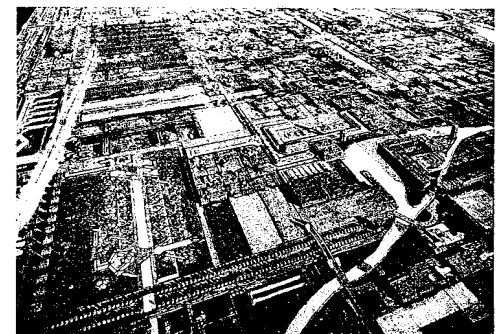
## Required Texts:

- Brooks, H. Allen, ed. Writings on Wright (MIT 1991) \$14.00
- Conrads, Ulrich, ed. Prames & manifestows on 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Architetcure )MIT 1970) \$

- Barnet, Sylvan. Short Guide to Writing About Art 7<sup>th</sup> ed.

Optional:

- McCarter, Robert. Frank Lloyd Wright (Phaidon, 1999) \$19.95  
\*\* Good as textbook & study guide for pictures!
- Levine, Neil. The Architecture of FLW (Princeton 1996) \$49.95
- FLW, An Autobiography 2nd ed. (Barnes & Noble 1943, 1998)



**The Work: Assignments / Requirements / Grading**

As with most things in life, you'll only get as much out of this class as you put into it. I have not structured the assignments as busy work, as simple tests of your knowledge, or as mere requirements for course credit. Rather, they are intended to be vehicles to structure your own learning experience. Your efforts should fall into three categories:

1) **Seminar Attendance, Participation & Presentations** (33%): the most important elements in this course are the class meetings, to be held M/W/F 11:30-12:20, in CFA 206a. The classes will consist of slide lectures, student presentations, discussions, and (possibly) field trips. Learning is not a passive activity: come to class awake, prepared to listen, to discuss ideas, to share your knowledge and research, to ask questions, and to help me and your classmates learn more about "FLW & Modern Architecture." Classes are the best place to pick up information, discuss ideas and questions interactively, and demonstrate your own skills and knowledge. Attendance will be taken each class, and active participation in all activities is required.

**Presentations:** in addition to active participation in class discussions, each student will be required to give TWO short organized presentations on the modern architectural context of FLW, usually on an important ARCHITECT and his/her career or important buildings or ideas and how they relate to FLW. These presentations are intended to help offset my lectures and to provide each student with opportunities to share their expertise with the class, and to help promote student discussions.

Prepare a brief 10-minute illustrated POWERPOINT or SLIDE PRESENTATION about your architect. Presentations should be made from notes (not read word for word). Each presentation should be accompanied by a one-page, double-sided HANDOUT for the whole class (25 people) including 1) your name(s), name-date-place of the building(s), client, other facts; 2) some plans, sections, elevations; 3) views of the buildings; 4) brief statement of significance, interesting facts, etc.; 5) a short bibliography for further research. Sign up for presentations on a first-come basis.

2) **Midterms** (33%): There will be two one-hour mid-term exams in the class on Fri. Feb. 28 and Fri. Apr. 25 covering the class and reading material up to that date. It may include slide ID's, slide comparisons, and short answer questions. There will be no final exam.

3) **Comparative Research Project** (33%): A major skill developed in college is the ability to carry out a research project. A research project is a multi-step, multi-level process that involves thinking up an interesting thesis/question, finding useful information, sifting out the irrelevant information, formulating an argument, drafting it up, and polishing it into a final piece of clear, persuasive communication that is reinforced by keyed illustrations, properly formatted notes, and an annotated bibliography.

This semester you will be asked to write a provocative COMPARISON between a Frank Lloyd Wright designed building and any other interesting building to bring out themes and issues common to both or different in both that interest you. The work for the research project will be divided into discrete sub-sections in order to help you produce a first rate project as follows:

**3a)** Pick a FLW BUILDING that interests you, and a COMPARATIVE BUILDING which might provide a provocative and interesting comparison to highlight specific themes and issues about the FLW building and its foil. Make an appointment to discuss and OK your topic with me (during office hours or by appointment) in order to insure a viable topic as soon as possible, but definitely BEFORE Fri. Jan. 24. There will also be an in-class help-session on picking a topic on Fri. Jan. 17. Then fill out a topic proposal form including a summary of your topic, some of the themes to be discussed, and some books that will be important, due Wed. Jan. 29. Revise and re-submit Fri. Feb. 7.

**3b)** Do extensive RESEARCH about your buildings, ask good questions about your buildings and the themes you hope to explore in depth, and develop an interesting, original thesis idea. You may want to write your paper on a topic related to your class presentation(s). Remember, you are writing a provocative research paper and NOT a simple report or description. There is no way you

can write everything there is to know about any topic in 10-12 pages or a small exhibit; you can, however, write perceptively about one aspect of a subject. When framing your comparison, think about what specifically you want to learn about the subject you have picked.

**3c)** Write a two-Page PROPOSAL: Prepare a two-page, type-written proposal, including a summary of the comparison, some of the questions you hope to answer as well as the argument you will make, along with a title, and an annotated bibliography of at least ten (10) sources you expect to use that includes at least one primary source, and one journal article. The proposal gives me further opportunity to help direct your research effort, and will be due Mon. Feb. 17.

**3d)** REVISE the two-page Proposal: An amended, updated, REVISED more complete version with introduction will be due Wed. Mar. 5.

**3e)** Write the PAPER: Do more research as needed, then write a 10-12 page comparative term paper on your topic, OR design an small exhibit, due Mon. Apr. 7. The paper must be complete, the paper of proper length, the exhibit fully worked out as to objects to be exhibited and wail texts. It must be neatly presented, formatted correctly, and contain a fully developed thesis/argument. I will be grading these AS IF they were the final projects-if you are satisfied with your grade, you are done for the semester. This will give me an opportunity to give you substantive feedback on your thesis, the evidence, the conclusion, and your writing skills.

In addition to the required text Barnett, Sylvan. Short Guide to Writing About Art 7th ed.(2002), there will be several handouts as well as an in-class workshop on the formatting and finishing of a term paper: Please pay close attention to the structure and formatting of your project in order to create as powerful a message as possible for the reader/visitor.

**3f)** Prepare FINAL Project: If you choose to revise or re-write your comparison paper, the FINAL paper or exhibit design will be due Fri. May 2. the last day of class.

### Policies:

1. Attendance is required, and will be part of your class participation grade. Everyone is allowed up to three absences, no matter what the excuse. After that your attendance grade will start to diminish by one full letter grade for each additional three absences, no matter what the excuse. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for every class to determine precisely who is absent. Official University policy states that students who miss more than three classes per semester can receive a failing grade for the whole course. Email me well BEFORE a class if you know you can't make it, especially if there is an assignment due.

2. Lateness: If you know your work is going to be late, come talk to me. It's always better to keep me informed of conflicts than to ignore or run away from the problem. Grades for late work will be lowered by one full letter grade per week or part thereof (i.e. 1-7 days late = 1 full letter grade off; 8-14 days = 2 grades...). NO work will be accepted after May 4, 2001 without prior approval.

3. Grading: You must complete ALL the assignments in order to receive a passing grade for the course. According to university policy, I will grade on the following scale: A = superlative - excellent; B = very good; C = satisfactory; D = passing; F = failing. Your semester grade will be broken down as follows: Attendance, Participation & Presentation (33%) + two midterms (33%) + Comparative Research Project (33%) = 100%

4. Special Needs. Students with any documented medical or learning conditions that require special classroom or testing accommodations should see me as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate arrangements.

5. Plagiarism. Our objective is to develop your own research, analytical, and writing skills. Make sure that your ideas and your words are your own or that acknowledgments are made to your factual and intellectual debts. Plagiarism is a serious offence and it will not be excused for any reason; students found guilty of cheating may receive a failing grade for the course and be referred to the University for further action.

The University policy states "Students at Carnegie Mellon are engaged in preparation for professional activity of the highest standards. . . In any presentation, creative, artistic, or research, it is the ethical responsibility of each student to identify the conceptual sources of the work submitted. Failure to do so is dishonest and is the basis for a charge of cheating or plagiarism, which is subject to disciplinary action. . . Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, failure to indicate the source with quotation marks or footnotes where appropriate if any of the following are reproduced in the work submitted by a student: 1. A phrase, written or musical. 2. A graphic element. 3. A proof. 4. Specific language. 5. An *idea* [emphasis added] derived from the work, published or unpublished, of another person."<sup>1</sup>

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

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<sup>1</sup> Carnegie Mellon Undergraduate Catalog. "University Policies," 34.

**Schedule of Seminar Topics, Assignments, Deadlines, Bibliography****Abbreviations:** \* = Most important reading!! Pay particular attention!**ER** = E-Reserve Reader (paper copy available as well at reserve desk)**T** = Required textbookAutobiography = FLW, An Autobiography 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (NY: 1943) (Rsv.720.8 W94 )FLWCW = FLW Collected Writings 5 vols. (Rsv: 720.8 W94WCO VOLS. 1 - 5)Curtis = W. Curtis, Modern Architecture since 1900 3rd ed. (1996)**Note: This schedule is subject to change. See handouts for changes.****Week 1**

- Mon. Jan. 13 Course Intro., Expectations, Assignments, Blackboard  
*Overview Readings:*  
**ER:** T. Hines, "Review Essay" JSAH 54:4 (Dec. 1995): 467-476  
**ER:** H.A. Brooks, "FLW," Encyclopedia of World Art (1967) pp.857-869.  
*Other Optional FLW Career Overviews:*  
 -- V. Scully, FLW (1960) pp.11-32  
 -- L. Roth, Concise History of Amer. Arch. pp.200-211, 254-262, 292-294  
 -- P. Sprague, "FLW" Dictionary of Art, vol.33  
 -- W. Curtis, Modern Architecture since 1900 3rd ed. (1996) Chs.7,18  
 -- K. Frampton, Modern Architecture 3rd ed. (1992) Chs.3,21  
 -- Video: Ken Burns, "FLW" (1998, at Hunt Library)
- Wed. Jan. 15 Search for an American Style  
*Readings:*  
**ER:** V. Scully, "American Houses, Thomas Jefferson to FLW" in The Rise of an American Architecture ed. E.J. Kaufmann (1970): 163-190ff.
- Fri. Jan. 17 Term Paper Workshop #1 -- Questions, Topics & Library Research

**Week 2**

- Mon. Jan. 20 The Domestic Suburb  
*Readings:*  
 \* **ER:** G. Wright, "Victorian Suburbs and the Cult of Domesticity," Building the Dream (1981) Ch.6=pp.96-113
- Wed. Jan. 22 FLW Youth, Training  
*Readings:*  
 \* **ER:** W. Cronon, "Inconstant Unity" in T. Riley, FLW (1994), pp.8-31  
**T:** Writings on Wright (1981) pp.23-27 (O. Wright)  
*Optional:*  
 -- Autobiography pp.3-140, 263-271
- Fri. Jan. 24 Sullivan & American Architects  
*Presentations #1,2:* Sullivan, Burnham  
 \* **ER:** L. Sullivan, in Kindergarten Chats (NY: Dover, 1979) 42-49, 187-190.  
 Includes essays: "Function & Form I," () pp. 42-49; "Function & Form II," ()  
 "Growth & Decay," "Ornament in Architecture," () pp. 187-190  
**ER:** FLW, "Louis Sullivan" (1924) in FLWCW vol.1 pp.193-201

**Week 3**

- Mon. Jan. 27 FLW Early Houses (FLW Home & Studio, Bootlegs, Winslow)  
*Readings:*  
 \* **ER:** FLW, "Art & Craft of the Machine," (1901) in FLWCW vol.1, pp.58-69; in Kaufmann & Raeburn, eds. FLW Writings & Buildings (1960) pp.55-73

**T:** Writings on Wright pp.103-113 (R.C. Spencer, H. Monrow)

*Suggested:*

-- N. Levine, Arch. of FLW (1996), pp.1-30

*Optional:*

-- Autobiography pp.141-150

Wed. Jan. 29

Prairie Houses I

**DUE:** Research Project Topic Forms

*Readings:*

**ER:** FLW in Ladies Home Journal (1901/07) in FLWCW vol.1 pp.73-77, 81-83  
Includes essays: "A Home in A Prairie Town," (1901) pp.73-75; "A Small House with `Lots of Room in it'," (1901) pp.76-77; "A Fireproof House for \$5,000," (1907) pp.81-83.

**ER:** G. Wright, "FLW & Domestic Landscape," in Riley, FLW, pp.80-95.

Fri. Jan. 31

Fin-de-Siecle Europe: National Romanticism, Art Nouveau, Secession

*Presentations #3,4:* Horta, Hoffmann

*Optional:*

-- Curtis, Ch.3 = pp.53-66

#### Week 4

Mon. Feb. 3

Prairie Houses II

*Readings:*

\* **ER:** FLW, "Cardboard House" (from Mod. Arch., 1931), in FLWCW vol.2 pp.53-59; also in FLW Writings & Buildings pp.37-55

\* **ER:** FLW, "In the Cause of Architecture," (1908) in FLWCW vol.1, pp.84-100

Wed. Feb. 5

Prairie Houses III

*Readings:*

\* **ER:** W. Jordy, "The Organic Ideal, FLW's Robie House," in Jordy, American Buildings and their Architects vol.4 (1972) Ch.3 = pp.180-216.

**T:** Writings on Wright pp.33-50 (E.R. Streich, F.C. Robie), 83-92 (White), 155-193 (R. Banham, R.C. McCormac, H.A. Brooks, N.K. Smith)

Fri. Feb. 7

Modern Europe: Wagner, Loos, Werkbund

*Presentations #5,6:* Wagner, Loos

*Optional:*

-- Curtis, Ch.3 = pp.66-71

#### Week 5

Mon. Feb. 10

Concrete & Technology (Larkin, Unity, Midway Gardens)

*Readings:*

\* **ER:** Frampton, "Modernization and Mediation," in Riley, FLW, excerpt pp.58-67

**T:** Writings on Wright pp.115-117 (R. Sturgis)

*Optional:*

-- Autobiography p.151-161, 175-184, 190-192

Wed. Feb. 12

Wright in Europe

*Readings:*

**ER:** FLW, "Ausgefuehrte Bauten" (1910) in FLWCW vol.1, pp.101-115; also in FLW Writings & Buildings pp.84-106

\* **ER:** A. Alofsin, ed. FLW: Europe and Beyond (1999), Ch.1 = pp.1-23

*Optional:*

-- Autobiography pp.161-167

- Fri. Feb. 14 Pre-War European Avant-Garde  
*Presentation #7,8:* Behrens, Perret  
*Readings:*  
 \* **T:** Writings on Wright pp.119-145 (Schuyler, Anon., Mies, Berlage, Oud, Wils)  
*Optional:*  
 -- Curtis, Ch.4 = pp.

### Week 6

- Mon. Feb. 17 Taliesin East & Prairie School (Taliesin 1,2,3, Griffen, Purcell, Elmslie)  
**DUE:** 2pp. Research Project proposal & annotated biblio.  
*Readings:*  
**ER:** T. Riley, "Landscapes of FLW" in Riley, FLW, pp.96-107  
*Suggested:*  
 \* -- Levine, Arch. of FLW Ch.4  
*Optional:*  
 -- Autobiography pp.167-175, 184-190, 259-263, 272-299, 368-377

- Wed. Feb. 19 Pittsburgh: Secession, Prairie School, Craftsman Style  
*Readings:*  
 \* **ER:** G. Wright, "The Progressive Housewife and the Bungalow," Building the Dream (1981) Ch.9 = pp.158-176  
**ER:** M. Aurand, "Prairie School Architecture in Pittsburgh," Pgh. History 78:1 (Spring 1995): 4-20

- Fri. Feb. 21 American Modern  
*Presentation #9,10:* Greene & Greene, I. Gill  
*Optional:*  
 -- Curtis, ?

### Week 7

- Mon. Feb. 24 Japan (Imperial)  
*Readings:*  
**T:** Writings on Wright pp.1-18 (Ashbee, Mendelsohn, Woollcott, Anon.)  
*Suggested:*  
 -- Levine, Arch. of FLW Ch.5.  
*Optional:*  
 -- Autobiography pp.193-252, 300-316, 521-560

- Wed. Feb. 26 California & Textile Blocks (Hollyhock, Ennis-Brown, R. Lloyd Jones House)  
 \* **ER:** Frampton, "Modernization and Mediation," in Riley, FLW, excerpt pp.67-71

### Fri. Feb. 28 MID-TERM #1

### Week 8

- Mon. Mar. 3 Utopian Projects: Resorts & Skyscrapers  
**DUE:** Revised 2pp. Research Paper Proposal  
*Readings:*  
 \* **ER:** M. Hearn, "A Japanese Inspiration for FLW's Rigid-Core High-Rise Structures," JSAH 50:1 (Mar. 1991): 68-71  
*Suggested:*  
 -- McCarter, FLW, Ch.9

*Optional:*

-- Autobiography pp.252-259

Wed. Mar. 5 (Optional) Term Paper Workshop #2 -- Structure & Formatting

Fri. Mar. 7 **No Class – Mid-Semester Break**

### Week 9

Mon. Mar. 10 F.L. Wright School of Architecture  
**DUE:** Revised pp. Introduction & Research Paper Proposal & Bibliography  
*Presentations #11, 12:* Bauhaus vs. Taliesin; Ecole & CMU vs. Taliesin  
*Readings:*  
**T:** Writings on Wright pp.93-101 (Tafel)  
**ER:** FLW, "The Hillside Home School," (1931) in FLWCW vol.3, pp.39-49  
 \* **ER:** D.L. Johnson, "Apprenticeship," in FLW vs. America (1990) Ch.5=pp.45-64  
**ER:** R. Twombly, "Organic Living: FLW's Taliesin Fellowship and G. Gurdjeff's  
 Inst. for the Harmonious Dev. of Man," Wisconsin Mag. of History 58:2  
 (Winter 1974-5): 126-139  
**ER:** H. Saalman, "Arch'l Education at Carnegie Tech, 1905-1977"  
 – "FLW to Open a Bookless School" NY Times Aug. 19, 1932 (Handout)

Wed. Mar. 12 Depression, War, Peace: the Cultural Context

Fri. Mar. 14 **No Class – Fieldtrip makeup**

### Week 10

Mon. Mar. 17 Broadacre City & Urbanism in the Great Depression  
*Readings:*  
**ER:** FLW, excerpt from "The New Frontier," in FLWCW vol.4, pp.60-65  
**ER:** FLW, The Living City (1958) skim entire book; and read closely in FLWCW  
 vol 5, pp.272-276, 335-338 ; also in FLW Writings & Buildings pp.255-272  
**T:** Writings on Wright 195-206 (March)

Wed. Mar. 19 Fallingwater & European Modernism

*Readings:*

\* **ER:** Alofsin, "FLW & Modernism," in Riley FLW, pp.32-57

**T:** Writings on Wright pp.69-72 (Kaufmann)

Fri. Mar. 21 Pre-WWII European Avant-Garde – Corbu, Mies, Aalto

*Optional:*

– Skim Curtis, Chs.15,16,18

– Browse U. Conrads, Programs & Manifestoes on 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Architecture

Mar. 24-28 **No Classes – Spring Break**

### Week 11

Mon. Mar. 31 **No Class – Work on papers !**

Wed. Apr. 2 Usonian Houses (Hillside, Jacobs House, Hanna House, Pope-Leighy)

*Readings:*

**T:** Writings on Wright pp.51-68, 75-81 (Pope, Chadwick, Leighy, Afflek, Hanna)

\* **ER:** J. Burns, "Usonian Houses: FLW's Vision of Affordable Housing" in

Yesterday's houses of Tomorrow ed. H.W. Jandl (1991) (728.0973 J33Y)  
 -- FLW, Natural House (1954) skim book, esp. "Usonian I", "Usonian II" (Res. 728.08 W94N); also as FLWCW vol.5 pp.77-127 (Reserve).

Fri. Apr. 4 Post-War Suburbanism  
*Presentations #13,14: Case Study Houses; Levittown*  
*Optional:*  
 – G. Wright, "The New Suburban Expansion and the American Dream," in Building the Dream (1981) Ch.13=pp.240-261

**Week 12**

Mon. Apr. 7 Johnson Wax & Guggenheim  
**DUE:** Complete 10-12pp. Term Paper  
*Readings:*  
 -- Frampton, "Modernization and Mediation," in Riley, FLW, excerpt, pp.71-77  
*Suggested:*  
 -- Levine, Arch. of FLW, Ch.10, OR: W. Jordy, "The encompassing Environment of Free-Form Architecture," in Jordy, American Buildings and their Architects, vol. 5 (= The Impact of European Modernism in the mid-twentieth Century) (1972) pp.279-360

Wed. Apr. 9 Expressionism (Streamlined, Scharoun, Aalto, Saarinen)  
*Presentation #15: Post-war Corbu*  
*Optional:*  
 – Curtis, Chs. 23,24

Fri. Apr. 11 **No Class – Spring Carnival**

**Week 13**

Mon. Apr. 14 FLW's Taliesin West & Late Projects  
*Readings:*  
 \* -- N. Levine, Arch. of FLW Ch.9

Wed. Apr. 16 The New Monumentality  
*Presentation #16: Kahn*  
*Suggested:*  
 – Curtis, Ch.28

Fri. Apr. 18 The Architecture of Democracy (TAC, SOM, Saarinen)  
*Presentation #17: Postwar Mies*  
*Reading:*  
 – Curtis, Ch.22

**Week 14**

Mon. Apr. 21 FLW's Pittsburgh Plans & Late Projects  
*Optional:*  
 – R. Cleary, "Kaufmann, Wright & Pittsburgh," in Merchant prince & Master Builder (1999) Ch.3 = pp.53-66.

Wed. Apr. 23 High Tech (Metabolism, Archigram, Fuller)  
*Presentation #18: Tange*  
*Optional:*  
 – Curtis, Ch.29



Fri. Apr. 25      **MID-TERM #2**

**Week 15**

Mon. Apr. 28      Regional Modernisms  
*Presentations #19,20:* Schindler+Neutra (3 people), Niemeyer  
*Optional:*  
    – Curtis, Chs. 21,27

Wed. Apr. 30      FLW Disciples & Offspring  
*Presentations #21,22:* Goff, Lautner

Fri. May 2        FLW Legacy  
    **DUE:** Final Term Papers