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LIVING ARCHITECTURE...
ALIVE IN PITTSBURGH

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TALIESIN APPRENTICES: *Seven Decades of Organic Architecture*

*AIA Galleries
211 Ninth Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

June 18 - July 2

Students from Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and apprentices at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, Scottsdale, Arizona, are researching, designing, building, and installing an exhibition of the work of former Frank Lloyd Wright apprentices.

The exhibition, organized by the Taliesin Fellows, CMU, FLLWSA, and the American Institute of Architects Pittsburgh, will document

Frank Lloyd Wright with apprentices in 1938. From left, Gene Masselink, Benny Dombar, Edgar Tafel, and Jack Howe. Photo courtesy Frank Lloyd Wright Archives.

the careers, work, influences, and impact of the large group of apprentices who studied at Wright's architecture school. The exhibition reviews Wright's architectural training program, called the Taliesin Fellowship, from its founding in 1932 by Wright and his wife, through the transitions brought about by Wright's death, and later his widow's death, to the present day, with apprentices now earning degrees from the accredited Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. The exhibition will include a review of many of the traditions of the school including box projects, shelters, and the evolution of the Wright school's campuses. The box projects began in 1932 when apprentices presented Wright with examples of their designs in commemoration of Wright's birthday. The tradition continued through the years with apprentices designing elaborate boxes in which they placed their drawings to present to Wright. The exhibition will analyze the scope and nature of the projects, relate the box projects to events, buildings, and other projects, and examine presentation, media, and size.

The exhibition will also document the history of apprentice tents and shelters at Taliesin West over the decades, the continuing tradition of the tents, changing materials, the concept of the shelter as a "primitive hut"—the natural origin of all architecture, according to some theories—and the role the tents and shelters retain in the education of Taliesin apprentices.

Daily life including a chart of a typical day, week, and year in the life of apprentices will be included as well as a history of the annual pilgrimages between the two Taliesins.

Approximately ten to fifteen former apprentices will be selected for in-depth review. Carnegie Mellon students and apprentices from the

Ari Georges, now Director of Curriculum for the Frank Lloyd School of Architecture, displays the box he designed and built for the Box Project when he was an apprentice in 1987.

Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture will make the selections. Many of Wright's former apprentices are well-known architects including William Wesley Peters, John Howe, Herb Fritz, Paolo Soleri, John Lautner, Eric Lloyd Wright, Charles Montooth, Milton Strickler, Edgar Tafel, and Alden Dow.

The exhibit will analyze trends in the work of the fellows, examine any generational patterns in the architects' work, search for trends in uses of materials and structural systems, and present the results in relation to the evolution of architecture in general.

Along with the presentation of the content of the exhibition, the organizing group of students and apprentices is documenting the process of creating the exhibit. This documentation will include the production of the show with photos, video, and text, as a record of the process of collaboration between Carnegie Mellon University and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture.

Due to the distance between the two institutions, the group is experimenting with using the Internet as a virtual desktop and workplace.

Students are developing a joint Web site to collect the data for the exhibit.

The preparation of the exhibit is an element of a new architectural history course at Carnegie Mellon University, "Frank Lloyd Wright and His Taliesin Apprentices," offered by Professor Kai Gutschow. The Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture portion of the project is being coordinated by Ari Georges, Director of Curriculum.

Gutschow said the documentation of the production process will be included as an element of the exhibit, "as part of the legacy, as a sign of self-reflection by the school, and finally as a bridge between Taliesin and its colleagues in architecture education."

Following the showing at the AIA Galleries, the exhibition will move to the Hewlett Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University. For additional information call (412) 268-3877.

LIVING ARCHITECTURE
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C O L U M N S



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Taliesin Apprentices:

Seven Decades of Organic Architecture

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AIA GALLERY
211 NINTH STREET
PITTSBURGH,
PENNSYLVANIA

JUNE 18 - JULY 2



Frank Lloyd Wright with apprentices in 1938. From left, Gene Masselink, Benny Dombar, Edgar Tafel, and Jack Howe. Photo courtesy Frank Lloyd Wright Archives.

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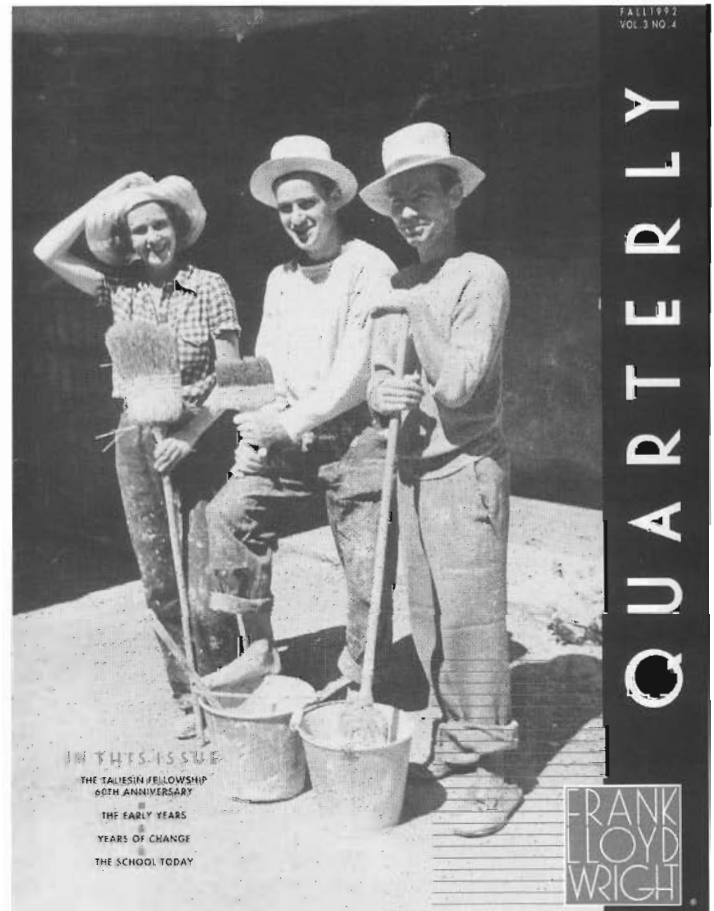
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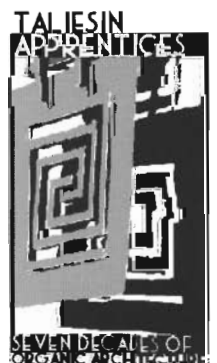
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Taliesin apprentices at work. Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly, Fall 1992. Photo from the Henry Schubart collection.

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Opening Friday, June 18, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Following the showing at the AIA Galleries, the exhibition will move to the Hewlett Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University in the fall. For additional information call (412) 268-7999.





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For more information, contact:

Petra Fallaux, Hewlett Gallery Coordinator: 268.3877

Public Relations Director, College of Fine Arts: 268.5765

TALIESIN APPRENTICES

Seven Decades of Organic Architecture

August 23 - September 10, 1999

The Hewlett Gallery presents 'Taliesin Apprentices: Seven Decades of Organic Architecture,' an exhibition researched, designed and built by students and apprentices of the Carnegie Mellon School of Architecture and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. The exhibition will run from August 23 through September 10, 1999. Come meet the professors, apprentices and students at a closing reception on Friday, September 10, from 5 to 7 p.m. Admission to the gallery and the reception is free.

'Taliesin Apprentices' examines the careers of some 1300 apprentices that lived and worked between 1932 and the present at Taliesin, the home and studio of the famous American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. It attempts to capture the dynamic spirit of Taliesin by focusing on the experiences, life and work of a diverse set of architects and artists.

Guided by Kai Gutschow, professor of architectural history at Carnegie Mellon, and Ari Georges, senior member of the Taliesin Fellowship and Director of Curriculum at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, seven Taliesin apprentices collaborated with ten undergraduate architectural students from Carnegie Mellon to produce the exhibit. A semester of preparatory work and sporadic communication via email and internet, and three weeks of intensive collaborative effort at Taliesin in Wisconsin and here in Pittsburgh produced the exhibit. By integrating the Carnegie Mellon students into the Fellowship life and working long hours on site in the gallery, the students and apprentices approached the true spirit of Taliesin's unified architectural and living experiment and its "learning by doing" approach to architectural education.

'Taliesin Apprentices' was made possible in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Taliesin Fellows, AIA Pittsburgh/Architrave, the Carnegie Mellon School of Architecture and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture.

The Hewlett Gallery is located on the main floor of the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University. Phone (412) 268-3618
Gallery Hours are Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Pittsburgh
Post-Gazette

Thursday,
June 24, 1999

INSIDE



Helmut Lotti



Tony Tye/Post-Gazette

Taliesin-trained Gerald Lee Morosco, outside his South Side home, says too many architects design buildings not to be beautiful, but to be noticed.

A blueprint for architects

Conference examines the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright and his hands-on way of teaching architecture

By Patricia Lowry
Post-Gazette Cultural Arts Critic

"A great architect," said Frank Lloyd Wright, "is not made by way of a brain nearly so much as he is made by way of a cultivated, enriched heart."

By the time he died at age 92 in 1959, the wizard of Taliesin had trained more than 700 apprentices, men and women who would go out into the world with hearts enriched by years of living and working together in the intensely creative, nurturing environment of the Taliesin Fellowship.

Since then, another 500 have passed through Taliesin, including Gerald Lee Morosco, who has the distinction of being the last apprentice to become a registered architect the old-fashioned way, by working at the elbow of practicing architects. Today, students at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture — a name adopted shortly after Wright's death — still are called apprentices and still learn by doing, but their progress is more formally monitored, and they receive a bachelor's or master's degree from what is now an accredited institution.

"Frank Lloyd Wright used to admonish his apprentices to learn to distinguish the curious from the beautiful," said Morosco, who believes too many architects today design buildings not to be beautiful, but to be noticed.

"I don't think that's a message that we teach by example or directive to young people as we train architects, but that, at its essence, is what Taliesin is all about."

The lessons of Taliesin extend beyond that, Morosco emphasizes, promoting beauty in all aspects of life: "How to serve a meal, wear a tuxedo, engage in conversation with people — that's what the Taliesin Fellowship was about."

Since moving here in 1986, Morosco, who lives and works on the South Side, has been Pittsburgh's bridge to Taliesin — never more

visibly than this year, when he paved the way for construction of a 1953 Frank Lloyd Wright apartment at the Pittsburgh Home and Garden Show and sparked this week's conference about Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship, with four related exhibits and a mini-film festival.

The three-day conference, "When Past Is Future: Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Legacy Continues ...," explores the architecture of former Taliesin apprentices as well as traditional and non-traditional approaches to architectural education. It



Lake Fong/Post-Gazette

Stacy Tetzlaff, left, and Kelsi Montgomery, architecture students at Carnegie Mellon University, prepare the "Seven Decades of Organic Architecture" exhibition at the AIA Gallery Downtown. The exhibit runs in conjunction with the conference, "When Past Is Future: Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Legacy Continues ..."

SEE TALIESIN, PAGE D-2

PG Home

PG News

Sports

Lifestyle

A&E

Photo Journal

AP Wire

Business

Classifieds

Web Extras

Weather

Health & Science

Search

PG Store

PG Delivery

Nation & World
SportsLocal News
Health & ScienceNeighborhoods
LifestyleBusiness & Technology
Opinion

A blueprint for architects

Conference examines the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright's method for teaching architecture

Thursday, June 24, 1999

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The three-day conference, "When Past Is Future: Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Legacy Continues ...," explores the architecture of former Taliesin apprentices as well as traditional and non-traditional approaches to architectural education. It opens this morning at 8:30 at the Pittsburgh Hilton & Towers.

About 200 people, including 60 present and former apprentices, are expected to attend the event, which is sponsored by Architrave, the charitable foundation of the Pittsburgh chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. The conference fee (lectures and symposium only) is \$125, or \$75 for students; there is no per lecture or daily rate.

The Taliesin events are part of this year's architectural tourism initiative, "Living Architecture ... Alive in Pittsburgh," designed to promote the city's architectural heritage by drawing a line from Henry Hobson Richardson to Frank Lloyd Wright. The line, of course, goes through Louis Sullivan, who adapted Richardson's Romanesque style to the skyscraper form. Wright worked in Sullivan's Chicago office.

"Richardson talked about 'living architecture,'" Morosco said, and was looking for an indigenous American style, themes that carried through Sullivan's work to Wright.

Richardson scholar James O'Gorman drove the point home repeatedly at a Carnegie Museum of Art lecture earlier this week, from Wright's very first drawing for Sullivan's office, "a Richardsonian pastiche by a neophyte architect" inspired by HHR's Glessner House in Chicago. As a mature architect, Wright continued to pay homage, periodically fusing what he called "the great Romanesque rock-faces of Richardson" with something completely his own.



Conferences often spawn exhibits, but in this case the opposite was true. The idea of bringing together present and former Taliesin fellows and interested others was born when Morosco noticed the physical similarities in two unrelated exhibits -- one put together in Wisconsin by Taliesin apprentices, the other by Carnegie Mellon architecture students here.

"There was an honesty in terms of the presentation of building materials, and they really used material to the limits of their function. There was nothing artificial or arbitrary about it," Morosco said. "They all used plywood and dimensional wood pieces, and they used fasteners and nuts and washers that not only expressed the method of attachment but

become design elements.

"I would have thought that students at CMU would have had nothing in common with students at Taliesin. It brought up all these questions as to why later, when they become practitioners, is their work so much different. When they're young and fresh, [CMU students] produce beautiful, simple work. Yet later when you see their work, it's got all kinds of other things going on. Somehow they lost the purity of that."

In the hope of opening a dialogue between CMU and Taliesin students, Morosco and other members of the architectural tourism committee conceived a joint, student-produced exhibit about the work of Taliesin fellows. He approached the university, which responded with what is thought to be its first-ever class on the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, taught last semester by adjunct assistant professor Kai Gutschow.

Throughout the semester, Gutschow and 10 of his students had kept in touch, via e-mail and postings on a Web site, with the seven Taliesin apprentices who volunteered for the project. On June 1, the Gutschow Ten began a two-week stay at Taliesin in Wisconsin, where the exhibit finally came together before traveling to Pittsburgh.

Installed at the AIA Gallery at 211 Ninth St., Downtown, "Taliesin Apprentices: Seven Decades of Organic Architecture" draws from the Taliesin and Frank Lloyd Wright archives, as well as from raw material gathered by Tobias Guggenheimer for his 1997 book on the work of former Taliesin apprentices. The result is an impressionistic view of the fullness of life at Taliesin, where apprentices garden, cook, eat and work together -- but live austere in individual tents in the desert, during winters spent at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Ariz. To a lesser degree, and with less depth, it focuses on the buildings of former apprentices like Fay Jones, Lloyd Wright, Eric Lloyd Wright (Wright's son and grandson), Morosco and many more.

A Taliesin tent, in canvas framed by copper tubing, hovers over the stairwell leading to the basement gallery, now filled with rows of light boxes and solid panels displaying photographs, original drawings and quotations. The structure is joined by copper tubing and unified by a low, Wrightian ceiling that runs diagonally through the space. Nothing is hung on the gallery walls.

"Taliesin is so rich and complex, and has so many layers," which students tried to communicate with the form of the exhibit, said Fred Prozzillo, a Philadelphia native and Taliesin apprentice who signed on because he wanted to learn more about his predecessors.

"You always hear about the Wrights and [Frank Lloyd Wright's] ideas, but I was able to learn about the people who helped Wright make Taliesin what it is. That was a lot of fun and very rewarding."

Prozzillo also wondered what it would be like to work with students from another school.

"It's been a great learning experience to see the different mind-sets of the students," Prozzillo said. "In the beginning, [the CMU students] were very motivated to get right in there and do their thing, very outcome-oriented. At Taliesin, we do a lot with the process, thinking about it and discussing the outcome."

Prozzillo is one of 25 apprentices from nine countries and, like most of today's fellows, he had a bachelor's degree (in American history) before

joining Taliesin. The \$9,600 he pays annually in tuition includes room and board, a bargain compared to traditional schools. But, as Prozzillo puts it, "We work to keep the place going."

With the exhibit, Prozzillo said, "We wanted to show that Taliesin is still alive and, like Wright's architecture, has changed and evolved through the years. It's not living in the past. It's moving forward."

"They can't just worship somebody who's been dead for 40 years," CMU's Gutschow said of the fellowship.

As an apprentice with Taliesin Architects, the firm that carries on Wright's commitment to organic architecture, Prozzillo is working on the design of a visitors' center for Taliesin West.

"The apprentice, hands-on approach fits with architecture," said Gutschow, who lamented that he sees his students for just over an hour each week, and that his subject -- the history of architecture -- is not well integrated with the curriculum.

Taliesin apprentices "experience a much more holistic world you can learn from," Gutschow said. "What my students found fascinating is that everything is tied back to making architects out of these people.


"The downside? It's very self motivated, and that's certainly not for everyone."



Gutschow and Taliesin fellows Ari Georges and Barbara Mickey will discuss the different approaches at a Saturday symposium.

Upstairs at the AIA Gallery is a small exhibit on the work of Taliesin Architects. The buildings of Taliesin fellows Peter Berndston and Cornelia Brierly are explored at the AAP Gallery, 937 Liberty Ave., while La Fond Galleries, 1711 E. Carson St., South Side, hosts paintings, sculpture and other works by Taliesin fellows Val M. Cox, Heloise Crista and Susan Jacobs Lockhart.

Thursday, June 24, 1999

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