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BOOK REVIEWS

Richard Longstreth, ed. *Frank Lloyd Wright: Preservation, Design, and Adding to Iconic Buildings*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2014, 304 pp., hardcover, \$50.00, ISBN: 978-0813935430.

Steven M. Reiss. *Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2014, 216 pp., cloth, \$35.00, ISBN: 978-0813934976.

The vast majority of Frank Lloyd Wright's buildings are inhabited and therefore continuously used, abused, and altered because of the exigencies of the moment, budgetary necessities, and changes over time in function and in the ways we live and work. As Richard Longstreth notes in his introduction to *Frank Lloyd Wright: Preservation, Design, and Adding to Iconic Buildings*, a volume of essays largely taken from presentations at the 2010 annual meeting of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy in Cincinnati, Ohio, "like the work of any architect or builder, that which Wright designed is never frozen in time." Change is the historical condition. Wright himself was not averse to altering his work. Most changes, however, have been done by others, and not always successfully—which immediately raises the question, what constitutes a successful intervention? To this, Longstreth, and the book, responds, "it depends." The ambiguity of the answer is realistic if initially unsatisfying, for there is no universal prescription for the many works (at least 265 still standing), with their diverse uses, locations, owners, and conditions. Most useful, and indeed, central to the purpose of the book, are the discussions contained in the eleven case studies that explore the thinking, expectations, and intentions behind these examples of "modifications," "additions," and "subtractions," as the book's major parts are labeled.

The first two essays in this volume, by Richard Longstreth and de Teel Patterson Tiller, examine the history and merits of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. While this has been an ongoing debate, especially around modern architecture, offering the familiar arguments represents a lost opportunity to provide the reader with a broader examination of the history of interventions in Wright's work.

Most of these have been presented at previous annual meetings of the FLW Building Conservancy, an organization that has been deeply engaged with conservation

and stewardship of Wright-designed sites since its founding in Buffalo in 1984. Not referencing over thirty years of important contributions by the Conservancy to our understanding of Wright and the challenges of conserving his work, and by architects and preservationists such as Donald Kalek, Virginia Kazor, Gunny Harboe, Jonathan Lipman, John Thorpe, Jack Quinan, Carla Lind, John Tilton, Robert Silman, Eric Lloyd Wright, and the many others who have been thinking about the issues raised in the book and then acting on the buildings, deprives the current essays of valuable context. It would also have been useful to include an essay from the organizers of the conference from which these papers were taken, discussing how and why the selections were made and the other projects that might have been included. Conference proceedings can constitute a scattershot approach to a topic; introductory essays that provide key missing information are essential.

The remaining essays, however, are rich in information, provocative in the questions they pose, and valuable as an indication of the range of concerns raised by the preservation of Wright's work and legacy. Sidney K. Robinson presents a rich and engaging story of Wright's modifications to Taliesin in its early years, linking events and intentions to the built results. A close reading of the architect's ideas and experiences helps us understand the transformation of Wright's Wisconsin home from a complex with separate realms of work and domestic life into a place that, by the 1930s, "tangled private and public, professional and personal, civic and family dimensions." A similarly close look at the history of the adjacent Hillside Home School complex over a period of some sixty years by Anne Biebel and Mary Keiran Murphy includes an interesting account of Wright's apparent manipulation in the 1910s of photographic and other documentation in order to alter the perceived context for his work there—eliminating images of the existing buildings and of the physical

connections between them and his own work. Like the previous essay, perhaps the most important contribution of the story of Hillside is its connecting of the design and physical transformation of the site to Wright's own history, although the essay only scratches the surface of the turmoil surrounding his return to Wisconsin in 1922 while explaining his subsequent attempts to rehabilitate and find a new use for the school buildings, which had been abandoned since 1915.

Abandonment is even more of a bittersweet component in Mark Hertzberg's clear and detailed retelling of the difficult construction, occupancy, vacating, and partial re-opening of the 1950 Johnson Wax Company laboratory tower addition to Wright's administration building from 1939. Particularly interesting is the discussion of various proposals for keeping the building open and functional in the face of blinding glare from the large wraparound windows, significant leaks from storms, and swaying on windy days, which at the upper levels made it impossible to obtain accurate readings from samples and machines. But the most serious problems were the open plan and single exit stair. The building had to be evacuated due to a gas leak in 1964, which made it clear that fumes could spread easily throughout the tower; the single stair, built under a variance to a tight thirty-inch width, both contributed to the spread of the fumes and was easily blocked in the event of an emergency. The tower would sit empty from 1981 until 2014, when two floors of the tower were opened for public tours.

Dale Gyure, author of an excellent book on Florida Southern College, here provides a brief history of the institution, examining the motivations of the architects and campus officers who succeeded Wright and undermined the original design intention and character of Wright's largest single built commission. Tellingly, Gyure urges reconstructing the original landscape—orange groves—as the best chance today to recapture the place Wright envisioned.

Neil Levine's sharply critical analysis of the Guggenheim addition by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates is a welcome antidote to those who proclaimed it as facilitating a needed restoration, arguing that the restoration, mostly implemented at a later date, was more sop than prime directive. The essay also reveals the corrosive power

that professional alliances (and deliberate falsehoods) had on the public discourse, as myriad modern architects and museum directors lined up to support the proposals. I might quibble with Levine's low opinion of the value of the geometric analysis done by Gwathmey—Wright's work yields some heuristic results when examined in that manner—but this analysis hardly justifies the scale of the addition, or the judgment Levine quotes from Gwathmey, "our building . . . ultimately enriches Frank Lloyd Wright's original masterpiece." More disturbingly, Levine points out how the architectural press joined in lauding a restoration that was, in fact, far from being one. He ends by implying that the lack of respect for Wright in the mainstream of US architectural practice and writing is at least a contributing reason why such a monumental addition was ever proposed and built. For a certain generation, that lack of respect was certainly true, even if it is less common today.

Two cases of foreign "starchitect" additions, one built and one unbuilt, are the subject of essays by Scott Perkins (Zaha Hadid's intended arts center for the Price Tower in Bartlesville), and Eric Jackson-Forsberg (Toshiko Mori's compelling visitor center for the Darwin Martin House in Buffalo). These frame a discussion of The Kubala Washatko Architects' thoughtful addition to the First Unitarian Society Meeting House in Madison. After the depressing account of the irreversible changes wrought on the Guggenheim, these three essays demonstrate that it is possible to produce additions that are respectful of Wright's vision, protective of the sites' integrity, while clearly of another time and by a different hand, responsive to current needs, and visionary in their own right (pun intended). Interestingly, and a bit provocatively, the Madison project story credits Christopher Alexander's work on pattern language almost as much as it does Wright. The addition's ultimate coherence as a work of architecture belies the intense collaborative process involving the congregation.

The Mori-designed visitors pavilion has not been universally loved, it should be noted. But Jackson-Forsberg makes a compelling case for it, with which this reviewer agrees. The pavilion demonstrates the power of an architectural dialogue across time, and does so from a location physically removed from the Wright original.

The Japanese architect's work also illuminates and gains legitimacy from that country's stylistic and philosophical influences on Wright.

In the final essay in the section on additions, Lynda Waggoner opens up the discussion more broadly, describing a project still in the planning stages: visitor housing at Fallingwater. To be set in a field a half mile from the iconic house, this project—the result of a design competition won with an exciting scheme by Patkau Architects for cottages buried in rolling berms—was more about vision and mission than impacts on physical fabric, although it posits a useful expansion of the concept of integrity to both the larger site and the nature of the activities in and around a monument. Since the essay was written, startling construction bids forced a change in direction—to an expansion of an existing building, albeit one still far removed from Fallingwater.

The final section of the book, labeled “Subtractions,” sounds as if it might be more incendiary than its opening case study of the fairly traditional, though commendable, restoration of Graycliff, the 1928 lakeside summer retreat designed for Darwin and Isabelle Martin and now operating as a house museum. The history of the site is one of constant changes, often unfortunate. The essay details Graycliff's creation, alterations, and imminent loss, and then the efforts required to save and restore the house and its setting.

The final essay poses a fascinating question: What does it mean when context changes? The Westcott House was originally built on a fault line, as the chapter title, “Between Two Springfields,” states. It fronted a street of mansions, but backed up to a district of modest worker housing. Thomas Templeton Taylor describes how Wright addressed this condition sympathetically, while noting that the solution was rendered moot in 2010 when the Westcott House owners tore down the small adjacent dwellings that had their own interesting history, attractive design, and significance for Springfield history.

This final case study is a necessary reminder of the inordinate impact Frank Lloyd Wright can have on wider preservation concerns. To many, it seems obvious that Wright's genius is the reason for any work involving one of his sites. But the tension between a Wright-centric approach with a heavy emphasis on advocacy and a

broader lens that seeks to place his work in context, and to acknowledge other forces, people, and events involved in the creation of his (or any) work, is still underexamined. (At least one other unpublished presentation from the conference addressed this as well.)

In his introduction, Richard Longstreth regrets the relative paucity of substantive single-site monographs in Wright studies that seek to achieve through depth what other works (such as the one being reviewed) hope to achieve through breadth. In this context, he is kind enough to acknowledge this reviewer's work, but another recent book with a deep focus on a single site is *Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House*, by Steven M. Reiss. This is both a substantial update of a 1964 volume issued by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a serious work of scholarship by the author, an architect and former docent at the home who had the chance to work on a manuscript with the original owner, Loren Pope, before his death. The book is a well-written account of a fascinating story about the only twice-moved Wright building, from original conception to present day. Besides its thorough account of the building's design, construction, and inhabitation, the book is especially useful as a case study from an important period in the US preservation movement, the 1960s. This was when the house was moved for the first time because of a proposed interstate highway, a complex process that ended up deeply involving Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall as the building became an exemplar of the need for the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, and 1969 environmental legislation, still to be enacted. It also demonstrated the value of a vibrant National Trust as a steward of historic properties and the power of Wright's name in attracting continuing news coverage of the threat to the house. Also interesting, and somewhat provocative, is the description of the reconstruction of the house on a new site in 1996, which famously involved rotating the building to its original orientation. Less known details of that project include the decision to reduce the home's dimensions by a quarter inch to ensure a good fit on its new foundations. The extensive collection of documents in the volume include many wonderful images, such as a view of the living room without its Wright-designed built-ins and freestanding pieces, furnished nonetheless in Pope family Queen Anne.

Wright studies continue to grow in sophistication as well as become increasingly useful as a lens for understanding issues associated with the conservation of modern architecture. The best examples combine the personal memories and idiosyncratic voices that marked early Wright scholarship with new perspectives and

context. Both of the volumes reviewed here are worthy additions to the canon.

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John Schofield, ed. *Who Needs Experts? Counter-mapping Cultural Heritage*. Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014, 260 pp., black-and-white maps and photographs, hardcover, \$149.95, ISBN: 978-1409439349.

When I attended the Sixth World Archaeological Congress in Dublin in 2008, there were loud, contentious sessions about the pending decisions on the routing of the M3 motorway near the Hill of Tara. That rich archaeological landscape in eastern Ireland was about to be forever ruined, claimed one side, which included archaeologists, heritage professionals, and citizens. The M3 was a necessary transportation artery, and all due diligence had been done to find the best route for it, claimed the other side, also comprised of archaeologists, heritage professionals, and citizens. I left Dublin confused and unconvinced by either argument.

So I was intrigued to read a chapter on the Tara controversy in the collection of essays in *Who Needs Experts?*, edited by John Schofield. In the chapter called “*Who Would Believe Experts?*” Tadhg O’Keeffe interrogates the discourses of archaeologists and interest groups in two heritage disputes in Ireland, including Tara. From a nonactivist perspective, he analyzes the variety of legal, ethical, historical, and practical issues that can get in the way of building consensus when heritage and development clash. O’Keeffe’s chapter explains why the question in the title is fitting. Others do as well. Dominic Walker, for example, discusses what happened when a heritage “expert” failed to consult interested local constituencies at a World Heritage Site in the UK. In another chapter, Mats Burström describes the clash of professional and community perspectives regarding preservation of a Nazi festival site in Germany.

Overall, the book focuses on the many people involved in heritage issues. The collection of case studies and examples, mostly from Europe and the UK, explores the importance of developing practices that involve sharing expertise, listening to community values and voices, and understanding the depth of feelings that often accompany issues related to heritage.

Many of the chapters were first presented at a 2010 Theoretical Archaeology Group session inspired by the 2005 Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. A stated goal of the book is to share ideas that can be implemented to create social benefit for present and future communities, while perhaps realigning the foundations of cultural heritage. Editor Schofield lays out the arguments that heritage is everywhere, heritage is for everyone, and we are all heritage experts. I share the idea that a full range of views should be represented in heritage discourse, so was excited to begin reading the chapters. However, it soon became more of a chore than I had expected, for several reasons. First, many of the chapters are written in typically dense and specialized academic style, such that the nonprofessionals, who had just been included in the “We are all heritage experts” declaration, would be unlikely to persevere through them, much less see themselves represented in them. Second, most of the chapters are written for European experts, who don’t need definitions of the Faro Convention or what “grade II listed status” means (this was a good reminder for me as a US-based scholar