



Frank Lloyd Wright's Buffalo Venture: From the Larkin Building to Broadacre City: A Catalogue of Buildings and Projects

Jack Quinan

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The 24 buildings and projects featured include not only the Darwin D. Martin House and the Larkin Administration Building but also the William R. Heath House, Graycliff, the Darwin D. Martin Summer House, Gas Station for the Harris Oil Company, the Martin Family Blue Sky Mausoleum, and the Walter V. Davidson Wayside Market, as well as nearly 20 projects discussed but not developed.

Over a quarter of a century, Frank Lloyd Wright provided the city of Buffalo with a series of remarkable designs. These houses, commercial buildings, and unbuilt projects, devised between 1903 and 1929, link the architect's early Prairie period to his magnificent reaction to Modernism, exemplified by Fallingwater and the Johnson Wax Building. To convey this story, author Jack Quinan introduces a cast of characters linked by their association with the Larkin Company, the client that first drew Wright to New York State. Not long after sketches for a Larkin Administration Building had arrived in Buffalo, commissions for grand houses were whistling from Buffalo to Wright's studio in Oak Park, Illinois. An intimate bond united the architect and Darwin D. Martin, Wright's most fervent supporter at the Larkin Company. A reliable patron and close friend, Martin steered crucial jobs Wright's way and afforded him generous loans. The Buffalo venture extended beyond the city limits, as clients from Buffalo moved, expanded their domestic vision to summer homes, or took on farflung projects. When the fortunes of the Larkin Company—and its executives—ebbed, Wright focused on new fields, in Arizona, California, and farther from home. But the traces of the Buffalo years may be seen in much of his subsequent work. Drawing on materials from archives in California, Arizona, Washington, D.C., and New York, interviews conducted over several decades, and previous studies, State University of New York at Buffalo distinguished service professor Jack Quinan brings to light one of the most significant periods of Wright's long career. With more than 125 historical and contemporary photographs and architectural plans and drawings, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Buffalo Venture* chronicles a little appreciated chapter in architectural history.

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