

# FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND THE BUFFALO SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

## AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 20-22, 2017



## Welcome Information

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Conference	2
Parking and Public Transportation	2
Campus Map	2
Registration	3
Conference Schedule	3
Buffalo Arts and Crafts Tour Information	4
Tour Schedule	4
Alexis Fournier House	4
Speaker Bios and Abstracts	4
Special Thanks	9



## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This international conference will zero in on how and why the Buffalo region became the national capital for design, production and innovation in American Arts and Crafts. With the region's wealth of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings, The Roycroft Campus, Charles Rohlf's, The Larkin Company, Buffalo Pottery, The Arts and Crafts Shop, Stickley, Heintz Art Metal, Adelaide Robineau, Karl Kipp, Walrath Pottery and so many others, no other region of the country can claim the density of local production. In contrast to the British variant, many members of this Buffalo School of Arts and Crafts freely used the region's technological prowess to achieve a seamless melding of industrial techniques and handcrafted design, detail and quality—the signature of American Arts and Crafts. This conference will examine how and why.

### Friday Registration, Keynote and Reception:

Roycroft Campus, 40 S. Grove St  
East Aurora, NY 14052

Free transportation is available to and from the Roycroft Campus for those pre-registered for the conference.

### Saturday and Sunday Registration and Conference:

Edmund B. Hayes Hall, 4th floor Conference Room  
UB South Campus, Main St. and Kenmore Ave.

## PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Conference participants should park in the Townsend Lot on Friday during the reception. Busses will pick up pre-registered participants in front of Hayes Hall on Hayes Road to transport them to the Roycroft Inn for registration and the reception, starting at 4:30 pm. See conference schedule.

You can park in any lot on campus Saturday and Sunday.

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) offers public transportation throughout the Buffalo-Niagara region, including stops on campus. See NFTA routes and schedules at <http://metro.nfta.com/>

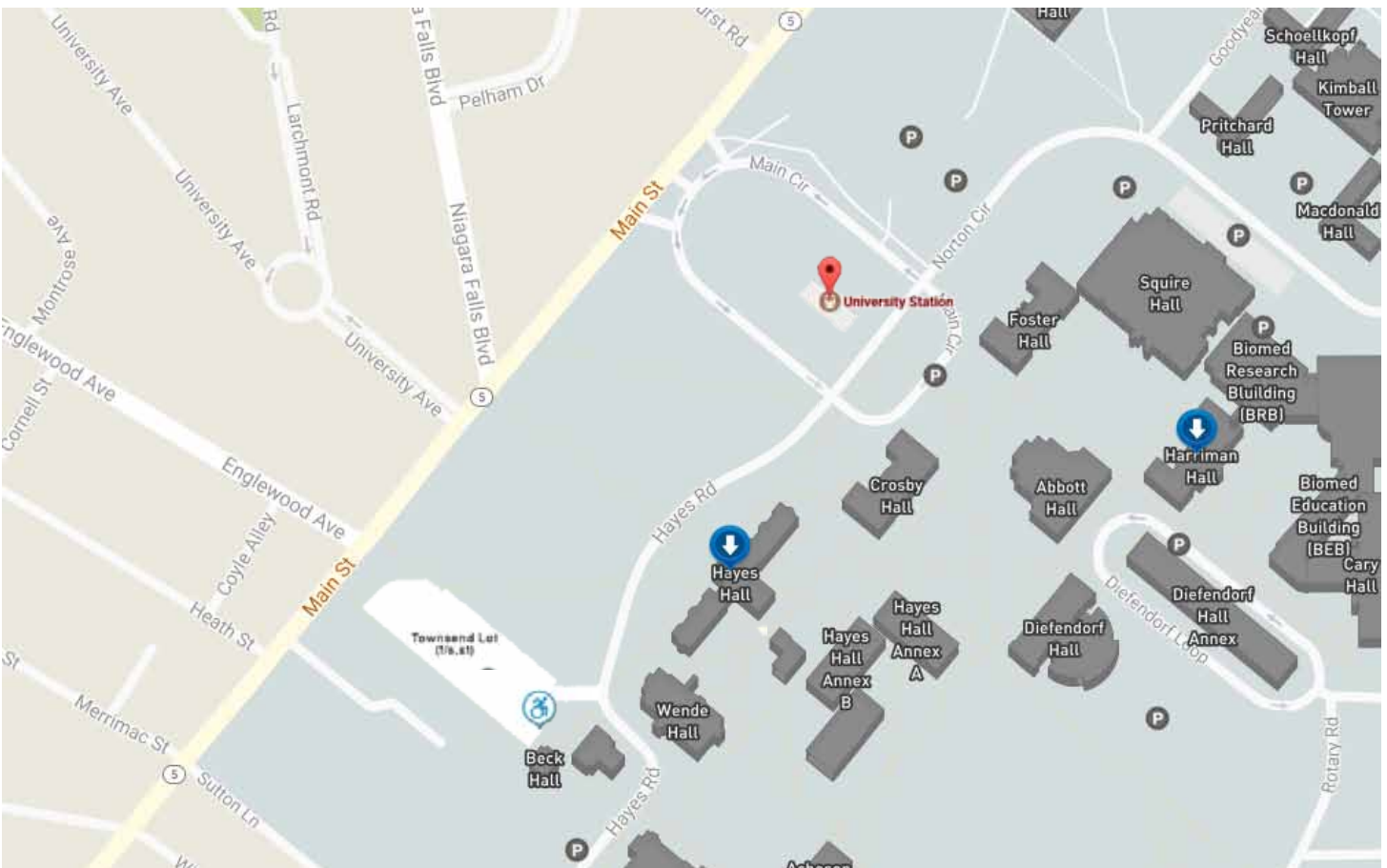
### South Campus Bus and Metro Rail Stops

University Rail Station  
Bailey Avenue / Michael Road intersection  
Bailey Avenue / Sherman Road intersection

## CAMPUS MAP

Interactive Campus Maps can be found here:

<http://www.buffalo.edu/home/visiting-ub/CampusMaps/maps.html>



## REGISTRATION

Registration will take place on Friday evening from 4 pm to 8 pm on the Roycroft Campus, in the the Power House, Assembly Room. On Saturday and Sunday, please register at Hayes Hall during conference hours. Please make sure to wear your name badges at all times during the conference.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY 10/20/17

4:30	Shuttle busses depart Hayes Hall for the Roycroft Inn at 4:30, 5, and 5:30. Return shuttles will depart following the keynote, at 8 pm and at 9 pm.
5:00-6:00	Registration at Roycroft Inn
6:00-7:00	Keynote: Jack Quinan Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building "In The Thought Of The World"
7:00-8:00	Reception: Roycroft Inn
9:00	Final return shuttle departs

1:15-2:00

John Murphy  
American Arts & Crafts: Socialist or Capitalist?

2:05-2:50

Thomas A. Guiler  
"Organized as a corporation, but work together as a Community": Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft and the Commercialization of the Arts and Crafts Utopia

2:50-3:10

Coffee Break

3:10-3:55

Cathleen A. Baker  
Roycrofter Dard Hunter: Bringing the Viennese Secession to American Arts & Crafts Design

4:00-4:45

Catherine W. Zipf  
"To the Best of Her Ability": Literature, Feminism, and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Western New York

4:50-5:35

Martin Wachadlo  
The Architecture of Esenwein & Johnson: Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau Expressions

### SATURDAY 10/21/17

9:00-9:30	Coffee and Registration at Hayes Hall
9:30-10:00	Introduction
10:00-10:45	Lisa Schrenk The Impact of Buffalo and the Martin Brothers on Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park Studio
10:50-11:35	Christine Schnaithmann The Larkin Administration Building's Resonance in the Development of German Modernism
11:50-1:00	Lunch, served at Harriman Hall During the catered lunch (vegetarian food provided), the noted Roycroft

### SUNDAY 10/22/17

9:00-9:30	Coffee at Hayes Hall
9:35-10:15	Bruce Austin Widescreen: Expanding the Research Agenda for Arts & Crafts
10:20-11:05	Bo Sullivan Decoding the Arts & Crafts Vignettes of the Birge Books, 1904-1918
11:10- 11:55	Henry Hull Producing an American Arts and Crafts: The Designs of the Heintz Art Metal Shop of Buffalo, New York

scholar and collector Boice Lydell will offer an illustrated tour of Roycroft's production pulled from his own collection, the finest in the world.

## BUFFALO ARTS AND CRAFTS TOUR

Our tour of the Buffalo Arts and Crafts landmarks will begin at 12:30 with the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Darwin D. Martin House where scholar, Jack Quinan will guide us through the home. Next we will view the exterior of the Wright designed Walter Davidson House and proceed to the Burchfield Penney Art Center for a self-guided tour of the exhibition, "Wright, Roycroft, Stickley and Rohlf's: Defining the Buffalo School Arts & Crafts Aesthetic." The tour will then proceed to a prime example of H.H. Richardson's Romanesque revival style at the former Buffalo Psychiatric Hospital and Olmstead Complex, newly minted the Hotel Henry. Following a tour of the facility, we will visit the exteriors of Wright's Heath House and Kleinhan's Music Hall designed by Eliel Saarinen. The tour will then visit Louis Sullivan's Guaranty Building where we will be able to view the terra cotta ornamented exterior and the interior of the lobby. We will end the tour at the Larkin Center for Commerce and their exhibition on the Larkin Soap Company.

**Registration for the tour is now full.**

## TOUR SCHEDULE

12:30 PM	Depart Hayes Hall
12:45 PM	Arrive at Martin House box lunch, guided tour with Jack Quinan
2:30 PM	Depart Martin House
2:45 PM	Walter Davidson House
3:00 PM	Arrive at H.H. Richardson-Olmstead Complex guided tour
3:30 PM	Walk to Burchfield Penny for self-guided tour
4:15 PM	Depart Burchfield Penny
4:25 PM	Heath House
4:30 PM	Kleinhan's Music Hall
4:45 PM	Guaranty Building
5:15 PM	Arrive at Larkin Center for Commerce for self guided tour
5:45 PM	Depart Larkin
6:15 PM	Arrive at Hayes Hall

## ALEXIS FOURNIER HOUSE

Noted Roycroft collector Boice Lydell has graciously offered to open the Alexis Fournier House at 46 Walnut Street in East Aurora, NY. The open house for conference participants will be on Friday and Saturday evening from 7-9 pm.

## BIOS AND ABSTRACTS

### Bruce Austin

Widescreen: Expanding the Research  
Agenda for Arts & Crafts

There's no shortage of discussion about objects as objects; likewise, over the past four decades, the broader subject has been parsed geographically (including my own Western NY exhibit) and by any number of social cohorts. But isn't there more? And what is it? Like Guback, the intention is not to scold for oversight or trivialize the enthusiast's (enthusiastic) approach. Instead, what I see as my talk is one that can use Buffalo-related subjects, and others, as a kind of springboard to suggest additional, less well-investigated but every bit as important avenues for research. In that sense, then, I think the talk should have an inspirational flavor and a directional tone that offers listeners possibilities and ideas and methods for conducting research on the Arts & Crafts Movement.

Bruce Austin is Director of RIT Press, the Institute's scholarly book publishing enterprise, and Professor in the School of Communication. He organized a series of international conferences about moving image preservation, access and use, "Fast Rewind: The Archaeology of Moving Images." He created the exhibition (and catalogue) "The American Arts & Crafts Movement in Western NY, 1900-1920" and, more recently, created a two-gallery exhibition, "Frans Wildenhain: Creative and Commercial American Ceramics at Mid-Century" and wrote the accompanying catalogue. Currently, he is organizing a three-day conference, "PhotoHistory/PhotoFuture," to take place in Rochester, NY in April 2018.

### Cathleen A. Baker

Roycrofter Dard Hunter: Bringing the Viennese Secession to American Arts & Crafts Design

Prior to Hunter's arrival in East Aurora, N.Y. in 1904, graphic design featured in the Roycroft publications tended to emulate that of the British Arts & Crafts, notably William Morris' Kelmscott Press, rooted in the Late Medieval/Early Renaissance. Within one year, Hunter, having the

full confidence of Hubbard, began to introduce Viennese Secessionist design ideas and over the next 5 years, Roycroft publications, as well as Roycroft-produced decorative arts in wood, metal, and glass, progressively became more avant garde. This design style persisted long after Hunter left graphic design in 1911 for a life-long career as a papermaking historian.

Dr. Cathleen A. Baker, a paper and book conservator with more than 45-years' experience, is author of numerous articles and books including *By His Own Labor: The Biography of Dard Hunter* (2000) and *From the Hand to the Machine. Nineteenth-Century American Paper and Mediums: Technologies, Materials, and Conservation* (2010). She has an MA in Art History from Syracuse University and MFA in Books Arts and a PhD in Communication Studies, both from the University of Alabama. She is Conservation Librarian Emerita at the University of Michigan Library. Cathy is also proprietor of the award-winning *The Legacy Press*, established in 1997, which specializes in publishing books about the printing, paper, and bookbinding arts.

### **Thomas A. Guiler**

“Organized as a corporation, but work together as a Community”: Elbert Hubbard’s Roycroft and the Commercialization of the Arts and Crafts Utopia

Elbert Hubbard believed in the redeeming efficacy and beauty of handcraftsmanship, preached the importance of worker dignity, and sought to provide a haven for artisans and craftspeople while creating an ideal factory on the Roycroft campus. But Hubbard was also the consummate businessman who stressed efficiency, demanded profitability, and deployed innovative marketing, sales, and management techniques to bring Roycroft-branded goods to the masses. For the Fra, these goals were not mutually exclusive; instead, they were the core of Roycroft, a place where Hubbard could advance his progressive agenda and become a cultural icon while accumulating profit—indeed, for him this was a total sensory masterpiece and one that came to commercialize the very idea of utopia in the American Arts and Crafts Movement.

Thomas A. Guiler is Manager and Instructor in Academic Programs at the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library in Wilmington, Delaware. Thomas received his Ph.D. in American History from Syracuse University where he wrote his dissertation on intentional communities in the Arts and Crafts Movement: Roycroft, Byrdcliffe, and Rose Valley. Thomas researches and teaches 19th and 20th century American cultural and social history and has particular interests in intentional communities, business, social protest, decorative arts, and the digital and public humanities. As a former Public Humanities Fellow for the New York Council for the Humanities, Thomas founded and continues to manage UpstateHistorical, an interactive website that brings

the rich history of Upstate New York to life by pinning key historic sites with text, photographs, audio, and video content to tell the story of a particular place, the people that lived there, and events at that location.

### **Henry Hull**

*Producing an American Arts and Crafts: The Designs of the Heintz Art Metal Shop of Buffalo, New York*  
Henry Hull is a researcher and project manager at Commonwealth Antiques & Appraisals, Inc. (CAAI) in Wicomico Church, Virginia. At CAAI, he specializes in nineteenth-century American furniture, American silver, and numismatics. Henry holds a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in architectural history from the University of Virginia ('16 & '17). His thesis examined antebellum architecture in the Northern Neck of Virginia. As a student, Henry worked as a researcher and exhibit developer for the Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society, where he published an article in the *Magazine of Albemarle County History* on antebellum banks of Albemarle County, Virginia. In addition to working at CAAI, Henry is currently working on several historic preservation projects in the Northern Neck of Virginia.

This proposal is for a paper that considers Otto Heintz’s Art Crafts Shop, later named the Heintz Art Metal Shop, as an important American producer of Arts and Crafts metalwork during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The Heintz Art Metal Shop is best known for their fine patinas and work with silver and bronze, however the company initially produced copper works that are reminiscent of a fellow Buffalo School of Arts and Crafts producer, Roycroft. Even these early pieces demonstrate Heintz’s interest in surfaces and finishes, which would later lead to the smooth patina surfaces that became the signature feature of the firm. Unlike Roycroft, Heintz and his business favored the aesthetics and simplified beauty of machine production instead of the integrated values of handicraft and social reform seen at Roycroft and in the career of English Arts and Crafts pioneer, William Morris. Heintz exemplifies the inherent contradictions in defining the Arts and Crafts movement, where the relationships between aesthetics, production methods, and social reform vary among makers.

Although the Heintz Art Metal Shop adopted a commercialist business model through machine production that defies many of the central tenets of the Arts and Crafts movement, the firm should still be considered an Arts and Crafts producer for aesthetic reasons. The firm borrowed from European and Japanese aesthetics and almost exclusively depicted natural forms or geometric motifs in silver appliqué. By no means an total “art for the masses,” most Heintz pieces were accessible to the middle class, due to their machine fabrication. Notwithstanding the limitations of only two primary materials, bronze and silver, Heintz’s production

lines had tremendous variation through patinas, designs, and objects. Many of Heintz's products, including desk sets, vases, lamps, and humidors are the same objects produced by other Arts and Crafts firms, such as Tiffany Studios, whose pieces were far more expensive. In this manner, the metalwork of Otto Heintz's business ventures demonstrates the demand for Arts and Crafts aesthetics by middle-class clientele, who appreciated the aesthetic beauty and relative affordability of Heintz pieces compared to other prominent American competitors.

## John Murphy

### American Arts & Crafts: Socialist or Capitalist?

In his landmark study, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (1981), T.J. Jackson Lears argued that the American Arts and Crafts movement "served both to revitalize and to transform modern bourgeois culture." While the English Arts and Crafts movement boasted outspoken socialists like William Morris, Walter Crane, and C.R. Ashbee, the American iteration gave ideological cover to a new, more virulent strain of capitalism. This conclusion is at odds with the self-professed loyalties of many craft leaders in the United States. In the December 1904 issue of *The Philistine*, for example, Elbert Hubbard declared, "I am a Socialist—a Fabian Socialist." Writing in *Comrade* magazine in 1903, John Spargo insisted, "We as Socialists welcome every evidence of the progress of the Arts and Crafts movement." Socialism—and social issues like the conflict between labor and capital—featured prominently in the pages of Arts and Crafts journals like *Handicraft* and *The Craftsman*, and inspired colonies like Roycroft, Rose Valley, and Byrdcliffe to attempt workshop communalism in opposition to urban, factory-based industrialism. Drawing on archival material from the Tamiment Library and Winterthur Library, this paper will challenge the view that the Arts and Crafts movement, in crossing the Atlantic from England to the United States, was swallowed by the hungry maw of American capitalism. This requires excavating the complexities and contradictions socialism in the United States at the turn-of-the-century, when a "socialist" might be a Marxist, anarchist, Christian Socialist, Single-Taxer, Simple Lifer, Bellamyite Nationalist, Populist, etc. I argue that the writings of Horace Traubel, John Spargo, Irene Sargent, Leonard D. Abbott and many others—as well as experiments in communal living at the Arts and Crafts colonies—offer vital counternarratives to the received wisdom that the American Arts and Crafts movement compromised the socialist commitments of its British counterpart.

John Murphy (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 2017) is Research Associate in the Department of American Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. He co-curated the exhibition *The Left Front: Radical Art in the "Red Decade," 1929-1940* at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art (Northwestern

University, 2014). He was a Henry Luce / ACLS Dissertation Fellow in American Art (2015-2016), and a Dissertation Fellow at Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library (spring 2014). His dissertation examines the art colony at Woodstock (NY), beginning with the founding of Byrdcliffe, an Arts and Crafts colony, in 1902. He has written essays and exhibition reviews for *Art in Print*, *Contemporaneity*, and the forthcoming exhibition catalogue *William Blake in the Age of Aquarius* (Princeton University Press, 2017).

## Jack Quinan

### Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building "In The Thought Of The World"

Textbooks on Modernism in architecture regularly include Wright's Larkin Administration Building (Buffalo, 1906) with early modern European buildings by members of the Secessionists, the Glasgow School, the Dutch Structural Rationalists, and the Deutsche Werkbund. In this presentation it will be shown that while the Larkin Building has much in common with H.P. Berlage's Amsterdam Exchange (1903), Peter Behrens's AEG Turbine Fabrik (1909) and Otto Wagner's Post Office Savings Bank in Vienna (1905) it was far more influential in the United States and in Europe owing to the purity of its abstraction, its numerous design innovations, its freedom from historical precedent, and – not the least – Wright's relentless promotion of the building over the remaining 53 years of his career.

Jack Quinan, PhD [University at Buffalo (SUNY) Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus] studied Art History at Dartmouth College and Brown University where he wrote a doctoral dissertation on the Nineteenth century American architect Asher Benjamin. After moving to Buffalo, NY, in 1975 he shifted his interests to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and to a long-term involvement in Wright's Darwin D. Martin House, of which he is senior curator emeritus and under which a \$60 million restoration is proceeding. In 1982 Quinan led a fund raising campaign to purchase the Wright-Martin Papers, possibly the most complete body of archival materials on a major work of architecture in history. In 1984 Quinan convened a conference that led to the formation of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, a national organization now based in Chicago. He also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Martin House Restoration Corporation. Quinan has published extensively on Wright, Asher Benjamin, H.H. Richardson, authenticity in historic preservation, and the Arts & Crafts Movement. Books include *Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building: Myth and Fact* with MIT Press in 1987, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House: Architecture as Portraiture* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2004) and has recently completed *Frank Lloyd Wright's Buffalo Venture*, a catalogue of Wright's twenty-four Buffalo-related buildings and projects. He is currently working on a study of Wright and phenomenology.

## **Christine Schnaithmann**

The Larkin Administration Building's Resonance in the Development of German Modernism

Christine Schnaithmann is about to finish her Ph.D. on Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Administration Building. She received her M.A. in Cultural History and Theory and Computer Science from Humboldt-Universität Berlin before she joined the Department of Cultural History and Theory as a research fellow and lecturer from 2008 to 2015. Currently, she is working as a program manager at the School of Design Thinking at the Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam. Additionally, she teaches among others at the Universidad de Buenos Aires and at the Hochschule Anhalt/Bauhaus Dessau. In her research and teaching, she focuses particularly on the history and theory of design and architecture from the mid-19th century onwards, with a strong emphasis on the broader contexts of European and American modernism, the history of knowledge, and the relations between material culture and information society.

## **Lisa Schrenk**

The Impact of Buffalo and the Martin Brothers on Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park Studio

In 1898 Frank Lloyd Wright escaped the modern business environment of the Chicago Loop and built his first independent office adjacent to his suburban home in Oak Park, Illinois. Here over the next decade he and his colleagues developed the prairie house, a new form of architecture that reflected the political, social and economic conditions of the United States, the character of the Midwest, ideas promoted by arts and crafts practitioners, and the architect's own explorations of geometry and nature.

Shortly after the turn of the last century, Wright formed close ties with the Martin brothers of Buffalo, designing projects for William Martin, including a new home in Oak Park and a factory building nearby in Chicago, and for Darwin Martin, most significantly, the Larkin Company Administration Building and a series of residences in Buffalo. These projects played an important role in the development of the Oak Park studio by offering Wright and his employees interesting opportunities to explore design concepts and building materials, while also providing revenue to support daily operations of the office. Fees generated from these commissions also helped pay for significant alterations to the studio building itself, including major remodelings in 1903 and 1904 when Wright made both exploratory and functional changes to his work place.

The Martin commissions resulted in one of the busiest eras of the Oak Park studio, leading Wright to hire additional staff. People like Marion Chamberlain, Andrew Willatzen,

and Charles White, for example, were initially hired to work on these projects. The increase in the number of employees resulted in greater divisions of duties for those in the office. Wright's numerous trips east to Buffalo also meant that architects like Walter Burley Griffin were given additional responsibilities in the office during their employer's absences.

This paper explores the important role of the Buffalo-related commissions on the development of the architecture and the daily operations of the Oak Park studio, as well as on Wright's growing reputation. It addresses the interactions between the Martin brothers and Wright, in which Darwin often found himself playing the role of mediator. It also sheds light on how the suburban office functioned by examining the different responsibilities the various studio employees undertook in realizing Wright's commissions, including drawing details, designing ornamental elements, producing working drawings, developing landscape plans, creating renderings, and managing and overseeing construction. Research for this well-illustrated paper began while employed as Education Director for the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation in Oak Park and has included extensive archival work. The main result of this investigation is an upcoming monograph on Wright's Oak Park studio to be published by the University of Chicago Press.

Dr. Lisa D. Schrenk holds a Ph. D. in Art History from the University of Texas, Austin, a Masters of Architectural History from the University of Virginia and a Bachelors of Arts from Macalester College. She is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Arizona. She was the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Educational Director from 1988-1992 and is expected to publish a book entitled *An Architectural Laboratory: The Oak Park Studio of Frank Lloyd Wright* through the University of Chicago Press in 2018, and has published and lectured widely on the topic and received numerous grants and awards.

## **Bo Sullivan**

Decoding the Arts & Crafts Vignettes of the Birge Books, 1904-1918

Published annually by M.H. Birge & Sons of Buffalo, N.Y. to promote their industry-leading wallpapers, the Birge Books consisted of stunning photographs of carefully constructed and thoughtfully decorated vignettes showing Birge papers in room contexts, complete with complementary interior treatments, woodwork, mantels, furniture, and decorative accessories - all representing the cutting-edge tastes of the time. However, the Birge Book vignettes are more than Rorschach tests for our contemporary ideas about how aspiring upper-middle-class and upper-class interiors might have been designed and decorated in their time - they also present a visual treasure hunt for historians, collectors

and scholars of the Arts & Crafts Movement interested in deconstructing these elaborate interior views, identifying furniture and accessories, and teasing out the possible relationships between Birge and the Buffalo-area firms that may have supplied them.

For 20 years, architectural historian Bo Sullivan was the senior designer and “old-house guru” at Rejuvenation Inc., America’s leading manufacturer of period-authentic reproduction lighting and a former a national mecca for salvage and restoration enthusiasts. Bo’s work there included assembling a research archive of thousands of period trade catalogs, books, photos, samples and other ephemera related to the American building arts from 1870 to 1970.

In 2009, Bo established Arcalus Period Design as a consulting resource for old house owners, preservationists, and design professionals. He then launched Bolling & Company in 2013 as the country’s singular source for rare original museum-quality antique American wallpapers printed between 1880 and 1915.

Bolling & Company places special emphasis on the work of M.H. Birge & Sons of Buffalo, N.Y. and Bo’s collection of wallpaper and research materials related to Birge is the largest in private hands.

### **Martin Wachadlo**

The Architecture of Esenwein & Johnson: Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau

A critical component of the Arts and Crafts movement was architectural design, and the firm of Esenwein & Johnson stood at the center of that movement in Buffalo. Like Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School, Esenwein & Johnson strove to develop a personal architectural expression for the modern age, which produced several Art Nouveau commercial buildings unique in America and a series of exceptional Arts and Crafts residential designs. This comprehensively illustrated and meticulously researched paper will explore the Arts and Crafts movement and its impact on the architecture of Esenwein & Johnson.

Esenwein & Johnson was one of the leading architectural firms in Buffalo in the early years of the twentieth century, whose impact on the built environment of the city was perhaps second only to that of Green & Wicks. The list of iconic local buildings designed by Esenwein & Johnson includes the Temple of Music at the Pan American Exposition, the Electric Building (site of the New Year’s Eve ball drop), Lafayette High School, City Honors High School, the Colonel Ward Pumping Station, and the Buffalo Museum of Science.

But Esenwein & Johnson sought to go beyond the

boundaries of traditional design and move towards a personal architectural vision. As the firm’s chief designer, partner James A. Johnson was disposed to innovation and excellence in design through a series of apprenticeships that included working for the local office of J. L. Silsbee, Frank Lloyd Wright’s first employer, followed by work under one of the leading designers from the office of H. H. Richardson, an icon of American architects. Johnson was involved in the major Arts and Crafts exhibition that was held in Buffalo in the spring of 1900, the first exposure many Buffalonians had to the movement, which included one of the earliest displays of “Mission” furniture. He was also an active member of the Buffalo Society of Artists, which served as the major conduit for the movement in the city.

This intimate exposure to the movement was manifest in a series of outstanding Arts and Crafts residential designs, which are among the most architecturally interesting houses in the city. Though other local firms produced Arts and Crafts houses (few as successfully), their openness to innovation led Esenwein & Johnson to go further and produce three Art Nouveau commercial buildings, giving architectural expression to design ideas that had inspired the furniture of Charles Rohlf, Harvey Ellis’s design contributions to Gustav Stickley, and much of the pottery of the Arts and Crafts era.

This paper will shed a critical new light on the progressive architecture of Esenwein & Johnson, among the most significant contributions to the Arts and Crafts movement in Buffalo.

### **Catherine W. Zipt**

“To the Best of Her Ability”: Literature, Feminism, and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Western New York

Western New York was ground zero to the first Women’s Rights Movement, which launched itself at Seneca Falls and issued its Declaration of the Rights of Women in 1848. Since that time, leaders in the area, who included Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary Ann M’Clintock and Jane Hunt, wrote extensively about women’s rights, embedding it in the culture of the area. It is no accident that Rochester is home to the Women’s Rights National Historic Park. To quote noted scholar John Stilgoe, “There was something in the water.”

Fifty years after the founding of the Women’s Right’s Movement, the Arts and Crafts Movement offered women a new way to fight for women’s rights: art production. The Arts and Crafts Movement’s ideology not only justified but actively encouraged them to break away from traditional roles and forge new identities. Nowhere was this relationship between Arts and Crafts and feminism stronger than in Western New York, where women who were already primed to be active about women’s rights found new opportunities



to advance their cause.

Three such women were Alice Hubbard, Adelaide Alsop Robineau, and Irene Sargent. Each found that working in the Arts and Crafts Movement offered them liberation from preconceived gender roles and, most importantly, gendered work responsibilities. Interestingly, while each woman was a key figure in Arts and Crafts production, all three wrote extensively, often subversively, and with a feminist agenda. Irene Sargent supported herself for a time as editor of Gustav Stickely's *The Craftsman* magazine. Adelaide Alsop Robineau published *Keramic Studio*, a magazine on ceramic production, for over 25 years. And, Alice Hubbard was author to numerous books, including *Woman's Work: Being an Inquiry and an Assumption*, published in 1908.

This presentation will explore the history and writings of these three women from the perspective of Western New York's longstanding tradition with Women's Rights and feminist literature.

Catherine W. Zipf, PhD, is an award winning architectural historian with expertise in historic preservation. She earned an AB from Harvard University and a MaH and PhD from the University of Virginia. Her research examines women's participation in American architectural history during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Zipf writes frequently for a range of print and online publications. She is a contributing author to the anthologies *Monuments to the Lost Cause* and *A Gendered Profession*, and has written scholarly articles for *Buildings and Landscapes*, *Radical Teacher*, and *The Journal of City, Culture and Architecture*. She also writes a monthly column for *The Providence Journal*.

Zipf's book, *Professional Pursuits: Women and the American Arts and Crafts Movement*, was named Outstanding Academic Book by Choice Magazine. She is currently writing her second book, *Making a Home of Her Own: Newport's Architectural Patronesses, 1850-1940*, while serving as the Executive Director of the Bristol Historical and Preservation Society.

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