

# The Ultimate Frank Lloyd Wright

The Introductory Screen, with its engaging fusion of visuals, narration, and music, treats the users to their money's worth in a multimedia experience which is informative, interactive, and entertaining. The Ultimate Frank Lloyd Wright CD-ROM is an excursion into the life, times and creative works of one of the heroes of modern architecture.

Although it is possible to get lost within the multiple paths of information offered in each section, navigation is fairly easy, and an online Help Manual quickly gives users the basic skills necessary to slow down and appreciate the richness of information available.

Despite the fact that the small written manual accompanying the CD suggests the "Modeling Wright" section as an ideal starting point, users will probably tire quickly of this section. The modeling is primitive at best, with little precise control over the final product. The tedious rendering time is only offset by the fun that users can have watching the anti-aliasing taking place! Use this section once or twice and move on to the real heart of the CD.

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the other

Time is best spent following the "Life and  
section from beginning to end and using  
sections as resource material. This section  
chronologically follows the career and

rich number  
of movies

accomplishments of Wright, accessing a  
of visuals, textual material, and QuickTime  
narrated by apprentices, observers and  
contemporaries.

“Wright Works” allows for searches of the architect’s designs by the chronology of the buildings or by the locations of the structures throughout the United States.

The map interface of the location search gives the user an immediate visual image of the impressive extent to which Wright’s architecture spread across the country. An additional category of “Decorative Arts and Furnishings” rounds off the material available directly in the section.

The “Tour” section of the disk contains three-dimensional walk-through models of three examples of Wright’s architecture. The quality of modeling is too primitive to be of much interest to anyone serious about Wright’s work. In fact, the CD walk-through of the Robie House bears only a superficial resemblance to my ‘real life’ experience of the house. In this section, the novelty soon wears off.

As one of the most original designers of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Wright’s approach of combining synthetic and natural materials in buildings that appeared to “organically grow” out of their environments is neatly summarized in the section on “Structural Elements.”

This section is a  
beautifully concise  
synopsis of Mr.  
Wright’s design  
sources, inspirations,  
fundamental theories  
and ‘building blocks’  
which will suffice as a  
quick guide to  
understanding the  
importance of not only  
the ‘Wrightian

approach,' but of  
architectural design  
theory in general.  
Even the novice will  
not be alienated by  
this section.

A vast amount of textual information is contained within the "Library" which houses seven books by or about the architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Any attempt to read the books on the computer screen, either in significant portions or in total, will serve only to reinforce the inappropriateness of such an activity on the computer. Read the books in book form! Use the CD "Library" section as an excellent index for sourcing and cross-referencing ideas, personalities, principles, and buildings.

The actual "Index" section contains an excellent, although somewhat dated, bibliography of material relevant to Frank Lloyd Wright, a listing of tour information including locations, dates, times and contact people for various buildings designed by the architect, as well as a comprehensive index of all of the information contained on the CD.

Although scholars and academics would find the CD-ROM to be of minimal use, this production is an almost sure-fire winner for students and the general public who find themselves fascinated with Wright's work.

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Available on CD-ROM for Macintosh (or Windows)  
Distributed by Microsoft (800) 426-9400 (206-882-8080)  
\$59.95/\$31 estimated street price.

viewing in ATPM is open to anyone, if you've got it, you can review it!  
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