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9 Things You Didn't Know About Frank Lloyd Wright

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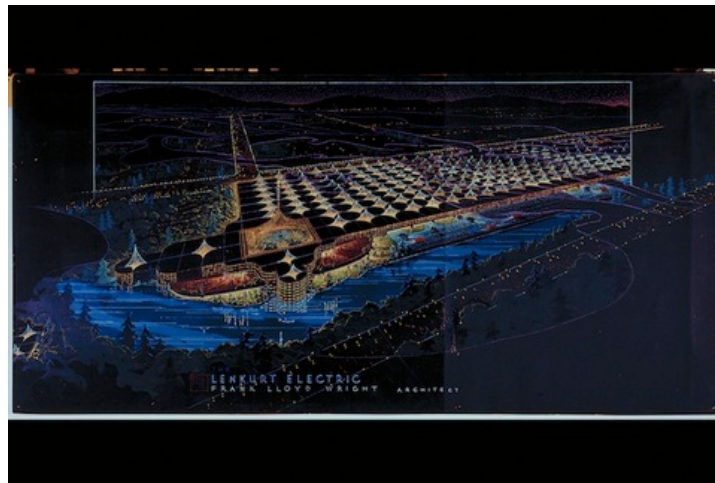
Dwell Says— He Conceived of a Gorgeous Headquarters for the Lenkurt Electric Company

While Wright displayed a keen understanding of the roles cars played in modern America and incorporated them into his designs, for his proposed corporate headquarters for the Lenkurt Electric Company in San Carlos, California, he surreptitiously swept them under the rug. By placing the car park underneath the building, he gained the space to create a sprawling structure that built upon ideas developed for the famous Johnson Administration Building in Racine, Wisconsin. This exceptional sketch depicts the structure at night, when a proposed grid of pyramidal skylights made from copper and glass resemble a luminous tent city. It's a glowing testament to modernity, fitting for a mid-century company that made microwaves and telephones.

Photo courtesy Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

“Early in life, I had to choose between honest arrogance and hypocritical humility. I chose the former, and have seen no reason to change.” It's possible Frank Lloyd Wright, the towering architectural virtuoso who can make as serious a claim as anyone to the title of America's most famous architect, might bristle at the concept of this article. After all, what's not to know about the man whose structures straddled waterfalls, spiraled around artworks like a nautilus, and advanced notions of profound importance and influence, such as organic structure and the fusion of nature and man-made materials?

While it's impossible to ignore a colossus, there's plenty of subtle ripples and threads left in his wake that may go unnoticed. Finding unknown footnotes to Wright's exceptional career proved a challenge, so Dwell consulted a group of Frank Lloyd Wright scholars—Scott Perkins (Director of Preservation at Fallingwater), Mary Roberts (Executive Director of the Martin House Restoration Corporation), Jeffery Herr (Curator at Hollyhock House) and Robert Fishman (Professor of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan)—to find out what they considered under-recognized aspects of the architect's life and work. Click through the slideshow to see nine examples of unfinished projects and proposals and facts that showcase the breadth of his talent and influence.



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