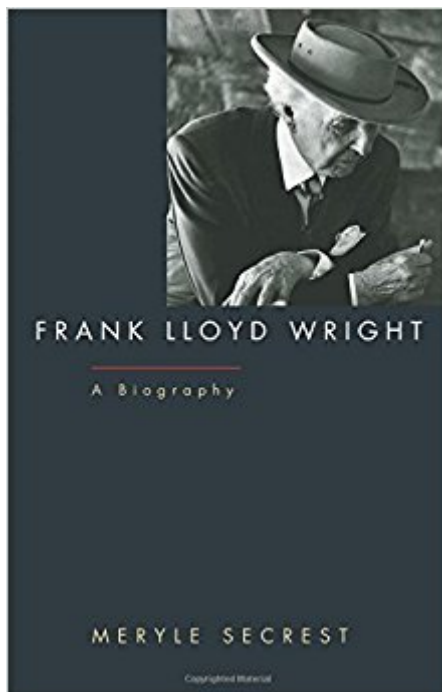


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Frank Lloyd Wright: A Biography



Synopsis

Meryle Secrest's *Frank Lloyd Wright: A Biography* focuses on Wright's family history, personal adventures, and colorful friends and family. Secrest had unprecedented access to an archive of over one hundred thousand of Wright's letters, photographs, drawings, and books. She also interviewed surviving devotees, students, and relatives. The result is an explicit portrait of both the genius architect and the provocative con-man. "Secrest seizes the themes most evocative of certain of our cultural myths, forging them into a coherent and emotionally plausible narrative." *New Republic* "An engaging narrative." *New York Times Book Review* "The real triumph of this biography . . . is the link it makes between Frank Lloyd Wright's personal life and his architecture." *The Economist* "Secrest's achievement is to etch Wright's character in sharp relief. . . . [She] presents Wright in his every guise." -Blair Kamin, *Chicago Tribune* "An extremely engaging profile." *The Philadelphia Inquirer* "A spellbinding portrait." *Library Journal* "The best [biography] so far, a huge and definitive accumulation of fact." *Time*

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Customer Reviews

In this superb, subtle, demythologizing biography of Wright (1869-1959), we meet a shrewd yet gullible architect who fostered a view of himself as a misunderstood, embattled genius, a narcissist who unconsciously courted catastrophe while blaming the vengeful hand of fate as he overcame accidents, bankruptcy, lawsuits and hounding by his morphine-addicted second wife. Drawing on a trove of letters, Secrest (*Salvador Dali*) traces Wright's "secret conviction of worthlessness" to the

contradictory influences of his freethinking, erratic Welsh mother and his jealous, spendthrift father, a New England minister. She discusses the dynamics of the architect's three marriages, recounts his clashes with Louis Sullivan and Lewis Mumford, and digs beneath his "quasi-mystical Celtic beliefs" to pinpoint the multiple influences on his fervent quest for an organic architecture. A definitive portrait of a mercurial titan. Photos. BOMC and QPB alternates. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Wright remains for many historians America's preeminent architect; although he died over 30 years ago, the force of his personality and the strength of his reputation endure untarnished. Several excellent biographies on Wright have appeared since his death, most notably Robert C. Twombly's *Frank Lloyd Wright* (LJ 2/15/73) and Brendan Gill's *Many Masks* (LJ 11/15/87). Secret's book joins this select company and more than manages to hold its own: It is a spellbinding portrait of this complex, often contradictory architect. Drawing on the massive archives of the Wright Memorial Foundation, Secret writes with authority and compassion about Wright's long and turbulent career. Her exhaustive scholarship provides fresh insights into Wright's personality, making this biography essential reading for anyone with an interest in American architecture. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 5/1/92; see also the review of *Frank Lloyd Wright's Collected Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 175.--Ed.- H. Ward Jandl, National Park Svce., Washington, D.C. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The best Bio on Frank I have read. (Gill's *Many Masks* comes in second because, in my view, it presents a less convincing explanation of his character.) What is exceptional and the result of new research by Secret is the family history, especially his Welsh ancestry. The Author presents a credible explanation of Frank's personality by identifying similar traits in the family. As an architect I find it refreshing to read an account of Wright void of architectural critique; one which focuses on his life history, friends and associates. I still find it hard to form a clear picture of his personality despite the long and consistent accounts by the various authors. In archival film he comes across as a more moderate and humble human being. However if it is humble you want stay away from his autobiography. If it is humble you want then don't read the autobiography.

Very compelling book that relates the life of Frank Lloyd Wright as a master of innovative architecture. It reveals his personal flaws and his genius. It was amazing how out of adversity, he always managed to come out on top. He was a very eccentric personality, a man truly ahead of his

time. I really loved this book.

This is the story of a man who produced a group of the most significant buildings in the twentieth century, Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect. It is not the complete story of who he was and what he did but Meryle Secrest has opened the records and begun revealing, in a very easy to read biography, the people, events and talents that allowed him to play the part of a great architect who was an artist, builder, author, lover of music, beauty and women. With all the theatricality of marital and financial troubles in the life that's presented by Secrest it's not surprising that his grand daughter Anne Baxter received an Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role. Laurels to Meryle Secrest for this personal history of Frank Lloyd Wright's life. May those who follow her do as well in adding to our knowledge of this great person.

I am about halfway through this book and must say it is quite good. The beginning of the book is too detailed about Mr Wright's family history, but it may be necessary to understand how his life story developed. If you are like me I wanted to read about his architecture and some of the famous buildings like Fallingwater. The story is really developing at the halfway point. If you are interested in FLW then I think this will be a good read.

FLW is certainly the great man of architecture in the USA, but as a human being he had few redeeming qualities. He charmed his way through life, unable to ever live within his means. Who needs two grand pianos? How many Buddhas do you have to have? He lived life on a grand scale because he acquainted it with a necessity for a happy life. He was a driven man. I think Meryle Secrest recounts all this and more in her wonderful biography.

INCREDIBLE VERY DETAILED INFORMATION - I WAS AMAZED.

Fascinating story about the artistic genius and personality flaws of one of America's renowned architects.

Good purchase

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