

ARCHITECTURE

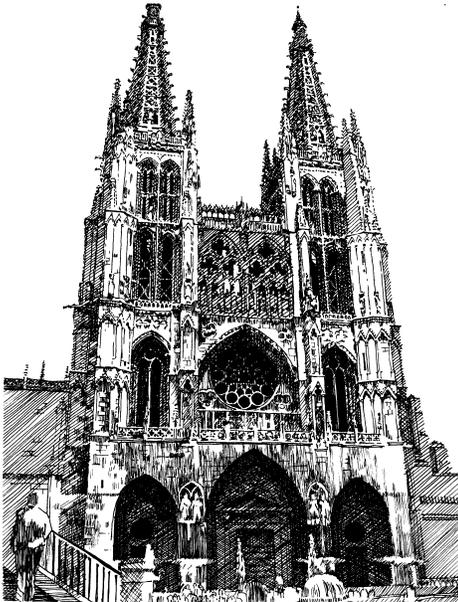
EHLINGER & ASSOCIATES

FOURTH QUARTER 1997



SEASONS GREETINGS

The staff of Ehlinger & Associates extends Seasons Greetings to all of our friends who receive the newsletter. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year.



BURGOS CATHEDRAL

Burgos Cathedral, this issue's limited edition signed print by Ladd P. Ehlinger, is the third largest cathedral in Spain after Seville and Toledo. It is an extraordinary example of a reinterpretation of French and German Flamboyant Gothic Architec-

ture into Spanish terms. The western facade towers echo those of Cologne, while the composition and proportions of the western facade mimics several French cathedrals such as Chartres. Construction began in 1221 with the laying of the foundation stone by Ferdinand III and was finally completed in 1457. Work on furnishings and decoration continued into the 16th century.

The province of Burgos is in the region of Castile and is sometimes known as the "Shield of Castile", being the capital in the old kingdom. The city stands in a shallow, windswept valley of the Rio Arlanzón. This is also the land of El Cid -- the colorful name for Rodrigo Díaz, the warrior hero whose legendary but ruthless exploits highlighted the history of Castile in the late 11th century. Díaz / El Cid supported various kings of Castile and assisted in the wars against the Moors in attempts to drive them out of Spain, which did not ultimately succeed until 1492. In this same year, Burgos relinquished its title as capital to Valladolid, but thereafter flourished as a commercial and artistic center. Burgos' most recent political involvement was as the founding city of the *Movimiento Nacional* in 1936 of General Franco, who in 1939 became the dictator head of government of Spain, ruling for many decades.

The exterior of the cathedral is a remarkable adaptation of the sloping terrain by shaping it into courts and cloisters that surround the entire edifice at different levels. The forecourt of the cathedral shown in the print is multilevel, with the view shown from an upper level. In fact, this forecourt reads as a depressed court that one goes down into to enter the cathedral. This is a very unusual forecourt treatment of a Gothic cathedral - most were without any forecourt or had grandiose ones but always on one level at the entrance level. Multiple stairs punctuate these changes of level and give one interesting views of the

components of the cathedral from varying vistas.

The plan of Burgos cathedral is typically Spanish in that it is irregular. The chapels about the perimeter are not symmetrical about the main axis of the plan, the largest chapel at the peak of the ambulatory, the Constable's Chapel (*Capilla del Condestable*), is irregular and asymmetrical. The cloister is not parallel to the church nor its sides to itself. The nave is shortened to almost no nave at all by locating the choir (*el coro*) west of the crossing of the transepts upon which the octagonal lantern (*el cimborio*) is located above the floor containing the funerary stones of El Cid and his wife Ximena.

Johan of Cologne was responsible for the west facade's openwork spires, pinnacles, crockets and balustrades. The north transept coronation door (*El Coronera Portal*) has jamb statues that are derived from their French Gothic heritage, but which have movement in the folds of the garments in the Plateresque style of Spain. The constable's chapel has a circlet of crocketed pinnacles above its octagonal lantern that is one of the outstanding features of the cathedral. It was designed by Simon of Cologne for Hernández de Velasco, Constable of Castile in 1482, in the Isabeline style. The constable and his wife are buried in the chapel. There is a door from the constable's chapel leading to the Sacristy where there is a painting of Mary Magdelene by Leonardo da Vinci.

A WRIGHT EXPERIENCE

By ROY J. GUDERIAN, AIA

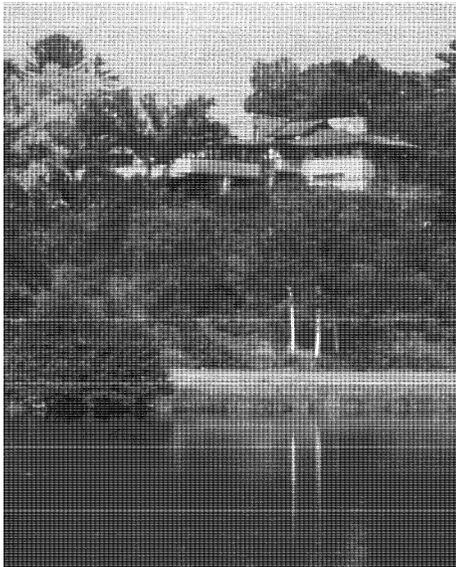
Having just returned from a reunion of Frank Lloyd Wright Apprentices at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona, my thoughts go back to an interview I had with Mr. Wright in May of 1958.

I had previously influenced a fellow architect, Joe Fryar, with whom I had worked at the Office of Planning and Con-

struction at Tulane University, to go to Taliesin.

Joe was traveling through New Orleans on the semi-annual move Mr. Wright made with the Fellowship from the winter camp at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona to his home and studio, Taliesin, in Spring Green, Wisconsin. (Taliesin is a Welsh word meaning shining brow. This relates to the way Mr. Wright built his home - the shining brow of the hill.)

My duties in the Office of Colbert, Lowry and Hess, completing the Construction documents for Lakeside Shopping Center, were now ending, and when Joe invited me to go with him to Wisconsin and "talk to the Old Man", it seemed like the right thing to do.



I had always admired Mr. Wright's work and while studying architecture at Tulane University, I used to solicit information from another student, Leonard Spangenberg, who had been at Taliesin and related stories of life and work under the tutelage of Frank Lloyd Wright.

We traveled to Wisconsin and Joe readily set up an interview for me with Mr. Wright. I was extremely impressed and he likewise was impressed that I knew so much about his work. He was completely relaxed and seemed as if he had all the time in the world to talk. The interview lasted for quite a while during which he accepted me into the Fellowship. I felt guilty for taking up so much of his time, but thinking about it in retrospect, this seems to be the hallmark of great people. Later he said to Gene Maselink, his secretary, "Well, what do you say about Roy,

Gene, coming to visit us all the way from New Orleans?"

After settling my affairs back home, I returned to Wisconsin and began a truly memorable experience.

Since I was already a Registered Architect, I was handy in the Studio and was able to work on some of the great buildings that Mr. Wright designed near the end of his life.

The fellowship, itself, was a unique way of life. The Taliesin estate consisted of several thousand acres of land and a number of buildings and we apprentices not only worked on architectural projects in the Studio, but were involved in all activities necessary to house, feed and maintain ourselves in a manner as self-supporting as possible. We farmed



the land, cooked the food, set and waited Dining Room tables, did the laundry, slopped the pigs, baled the hay, and constructed and maintained the buildings. Aside from revolving assignments of different work-related activities, we all had certain specialties we did more than others. Mine was trimming and laying quarried limestone. Mr. Wright's favorite outdoor job was grading the gravel roads.

Social activities were also part of our life. Saturday and Sunday evenings we had formal meals, either in Mr. Wright's Living Room or in the Theater. These were followed by entertainment by our Choral Group and Musical Ensemble, then a movie. Sunday mornings we had a formal breakfast, followed by a talk by Mr. Wright. He would begin by asking, "Well what do you boys want to talk about today?" (meaning boys and girls, since we were

coeducational). Sometimes one would suggest a subject, but more often there would be silence and he would simply begin to talk, always extremely interesting and thought provoking on many different subjects.

There were always renowned guests at our week-end affairs. Some of the guests included Carl Sandburg, Mike Todd and Elizabeth Taylor, Dr. Edward Teller, Adlai Stevenson, Ann Baxter (Mr. Wright's granddaughter), Claire Booth Luce, Margaret Truman, and the names go on.

Taliesin is still run with an apprentice set-up with its "Learn by doing" approach to studying architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright's archives are still housed there and are still available to the students. For

many years his widow, Olgivanna Lloyd Wright carried on and perpetuated the activities that they had jointly begun in 1932. Since her death, the senior members of the Fellowship, who have remained there over the years, continue to carry out the philosophy, the practice and the teaching of Organic Architecture.

Our reunions are now held every five years, staggered between Taliesin in Wisconsin and Taliesin West in Arizona. It's wonderful to return to these places that have meant so much! Fellow apprentices have become lifelong friends and as time goes on, it becomes increasingly meaningful to visit and enjoy each other's company and accomplishments. People that have shared a deep-seated philosophy and have worked together toward a common goal, remain close and always look forward to reunions.