

# AN ARCHITECT AND HIS DREAM



## FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND MONONA TERRACE

Architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) sat at his drafting table and looked at his drawings for a project called Monona Terrace. He had designed hundreds of buildings in his lifetime... but this one was unusual. Government officials disagreed about the building. Construction was stalled for years because the building plans were not approved. And yet Wright believed that the people of Madison, his hometown, would eventually build Monona Terrace to add a special building to an already beautiful city.

He remembered fondly his boyhood years in Madison, which included spending many hours racing iceboats with his friends on the local lakes. A favorite indoor activity was playing with Froebel (froy-ble) blocks. He received them from his mother at age 9. Young Frank was inspired by the shapes of the blocks and began to see that geometry was everywhere in the world around him.

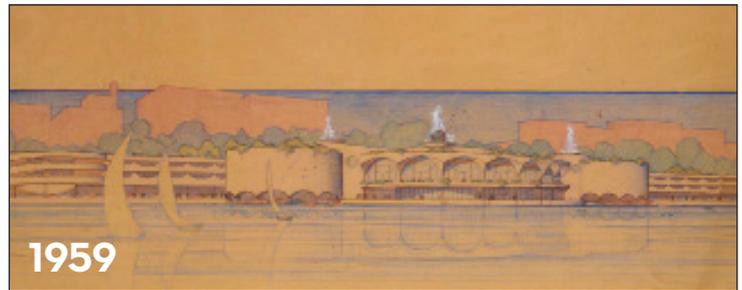
Frank Lloyd Wright went on to become a famous architect who used unusual shapes in his buildings. He called his approach organic because he designed structures to blend into their surroundings. He chose materials, shapes, colors, and textures so that they appeared to grow out of the ground. Wright also found ways to make buildings feel open and free, with fewer walls inside and larger views of the outdoors. He believed that architecture could make our lives better.

Wright worked on over 1000 building designs and often created all of the parts inside, like furniture, fabric and stained glass windows. He even gave one of his clients a doghouse! Unfortunately, Wright would not see Monona Terrace happen in his lifetime. In 1957, state lawmakers passed a bill that said no buildings over 20 feet tall could be constructed on the Lake Monona lakeshore. He died just two years later.

But that's not the end of the story... City leaders became interested in the project again in the 1980's. They hired one of Wright's former students, Anthony Puttnam, to use the architect's exterior plans to design a convention center. Frank Lloyd Wright was right that the citizens of Madison would eventually build Monona Terrace, what he called his "dream civic center". In 1997, nearly 60 years later, his dream was realized!



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