

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

14 WEST 49TH STREET, NEW YORK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOUSE BUILT OVER WATERFALL

The Museum of Modern Art, 14 West 49 Street, will open to the public on Tuesday, January 25, a small exhibition of twenty enlarged photographs and plans of Frank Lloyd Wright's most important recently completed work, on Bear Run, Pennsylvania. It is a large week-end house spectacularly cantilevered out over a rushing mountain stream. The stream forms a swimming pool partly under one end of the overhanging living-room terrace and flows under it to become a waterfall at the other end. The house illustrates Wright's particular genius for harmonizing a building with its natural setting--in this case a wild mountain ravine. The supporting walls are of the stone which forms the ravine; the concrete balconies continue the lines of the natural stone ledges. Oak trees grow through openings left for them in the concrete balconies and pergolas. The bedrock of the site is used as part of the construction: the foundation of the house, an anchor for beams and the hearth of the great living-room fireplace.

The ground floor is one huge living room except for the kitchen. In this living room the floor is of native split stone covered with deep white sheepskin rugs. The three sides of the room on the ravine are without any walls except windows. No glare enters, however, because of the thin concrete overhang that shades and shelters. Under the windows are built-in couches of sponge rubber, also covered with sheepskin. The bath and shower rooms upstairs are walled and floored in thick cork.

In this house Frank Lloyd Wright has again demonstrated his powerful romanticism without in any way sacrificing the fundamental principles of modern architecture, in which he has been a world leader for fifty years.

In the January 1938 issue of The Architectural Forum, Frank Lloyd Wright says of the house at Bear Run:

"This building is a late example of the inspiration of a site, the cooperation of an

"intelligent, appreciative client and the use of entirely masonry materials except for an interlining of redwood and asphalt beneath all flooring....

"The cantilever slabs here carry parapets and the beams. They may be seen clutching big boulders. But next time, I believe, parapets will carry the floors--or better still we will know enough to make the two work together as one, as I originally intended.

"This structure might serve to indicate that the sense of shelter--the sense of space where used with sound structural sense--has no limitations as to form except the materials used and the methods by which they are employed for what purpose. The ideas involved here are in no wise changed from those of early work. The materials and methods of construction come through them, here, as they may and will always come through everywhere. That is all. The effects you see in this house are not superficial effects."

Frank Lloyd Wright was born in Richland Center, Wisconsin, June 8, 1869; studied engineering for three years at the University of Wisconsin; then went to Chicago at the age of 18. He had not been in that city a year when he began work in the architectural office of Adler and Sullivan and became an enthusiastic disciple of Louis Sullivan, the father of the modern skyscraper. Wright began the practice of architecture for himself in 1894. Probably his most famous building is the Imperial Hotel in Tokio which he started in 1916 and finished in 1920. Of cantilever construction, it was the only large building to escape disaster in the great earthquake of Tokio in 1923. Taliesin, Wisconsin, is now his home and a unique school for young architects who come to him from all parts of the world. Wright is the author of many books and articles on modern architecture. Early in the 20th century his theories became more famous abroad than in this country and influenced young architects in Europe, who developed a style based on Wright's principles. This architecture has since become known as the International Style and in the guise of a European influence has returned to this country where it actually originated.