



© Pedro E. Guerrero

Frank Lloyd Wright

1 8 6 7 - 1 9 5 9

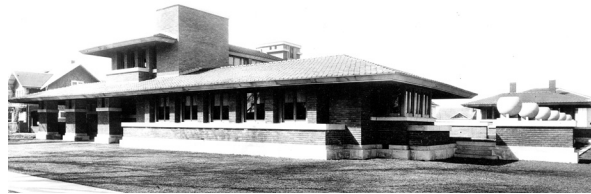
“Nature is a good teacher. I am a child of hers, and apart from her precepts I cannot flourish. I cannot work as well as she, perhaps, but at least can shape my work to synthesize with what seems beautiful to me in hers.”

Dean Jackson Powell



Dr. Jackson O. Powell (1921-1987) served as dean of education at WSU from 1950 to 1966 and is credited to have the vision to bring Frank Lloyd Wright to Wichita for the design of the Juvenile Cultural Center. His desire for a visionary architecture for learning was posed in a letter to then university President Corbin.

“Experimentation may begin with the actual design of such a (education) facility,” he said. “We hope that specific solutions to problems raised and solved (in the design of this facility) will affect school architecture in this geographic region.”



© Local History Section, Wichita Public Library

Allen-Lambe House

Designed in 1916 and completed in 1918, The Allen-Lambe House at 255 N. Roosevelt in Wichita is the only other constructed Frank Lloyd Wright design in Kansas. The Allen-Lambe house is open for tours by appointment, 316-687-1027.

Corbin by the Numbers

- 26,296 square feet of enclosed space
- 14,656 square feet of covered outdoor space
- 22,888 square feet of uncovered terraces and balconies
- 63,840 square feet of gross area
- Construction Cost \$1,000,000

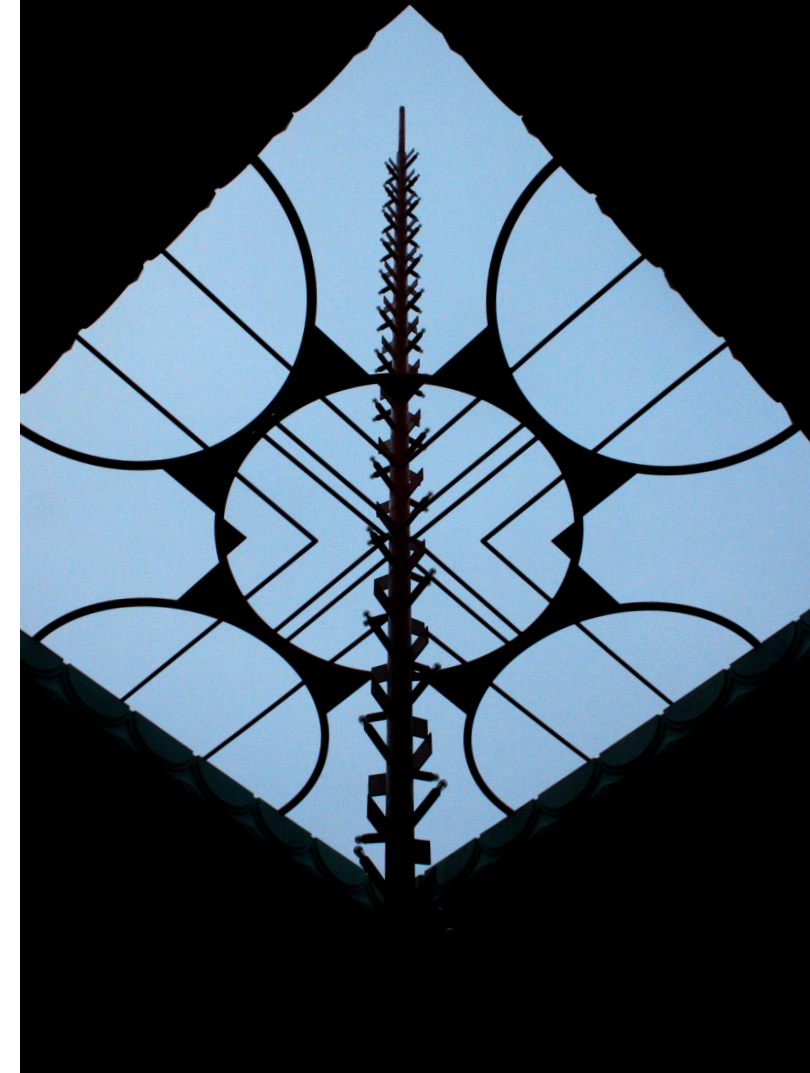


Corbin Education Center is located on the campus of Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas.



Research: Craig A. Rhodes, WDM Architects, Wichita, KS.

Wichita State University



Corbin Education Center Frank Lloyd Wright

Frank Lloyd Wright

Corbin Education Center

Originally named the Juvenile Cultural Center, Corbin is one of two buildings originally designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the University. The second building, an elementary education facility, was never built. Upon dedication of the building in 1964, the building was named in honor of the then President of the University of Wichita, Harry F. Corbin.

Conceived in 1957-1958, the busiest time in Wright's career, the composition borrows heavily from Wright's designs of the Central Post and Telegraph Building for Baghdad, Iraq. That building was never built.



Exploring Corbin the Wright Way

The building was never intended to be approached from the west, but rather from the south, giving one ample time to begin to consider the architecture before entering the building. Entry is designed to be intricate, so one is embraced by the building long before one has crossed the threshold between indoors and out. Wright takes you almost indoors, to almost outdoors again before finally bringing you indoors to the foyer. Once in a classroom or office, you find yourself almost outdoors again. This was a favorite design tool of Wright's.

Courtyard: Heart of Reflection

For Wright, the primary purpose of the exterior space is to "propel one's spirit into the landscape." At Corbin, the courtyard serves to create an entire indoor and outdoor composition, while connecting it to the earth, the sky, and the landscape. The water feature is placed in the center of the composition, in defiance to the best classic design traditions of making the center of the space an axis on which one must walk.

Spires Reach to the Sky

At 60 feet above the floor, the spires at Corbin form a "Staccato Counterpoint to the breadth of the Land" and serve to join the building with the earth and the sky. The ornamental steelwork of the spires becomes like a flower, illustrating a key point in Wright's architecture.

"His buildings are like plants that grow from within and come up from the ground and into the light."

Mirrors of Nature

Reinforcing his efforts to dissolve the distinction between indoors and out, Wright did not consider the large glass panels as "windows" but rather as "Light Screens." The horizontal detailing of the brick reinforces the prairie landscape on which Corbin is built, and serves as a reminder of Wright's life-long romance with the horizontal line.

Architecture as "Frozen Music"

Frank Lloyd Wright considered his architecture as "Frozen Music," and every element associated with the building was considered a "note" in the entire composition, including the furniture. Taliesin Associated Architects, Frank Lloyd Wright's successor firm, designed most of the original furnishings for Corbin.

