

You Dear Old Prima Donna: The Letters of Frank Lloyd Wright and Jens Jensen

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Abstract

The correspondence of Jens Jensen (1860–1951) and Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) reveals an important relationship in the history of landscape architecture and architecture. The collected letters, dated from 1912 to 1943, reflect a passionate difference of opinion regarding design, education and pedagogy, practice, lifestyle, moral values, and despite the contradictions, a mutual regard that was sustained by their animated conversation. This paper selects those letters of Jensen, Wright, and other players in their drama that illuminate the history of two unusual schools of design: Jensen’s Clearing in Door County, Wisconsin and Wright’s Taliesin Fellowship in Spring Green, Wisconsin and Scottsdale, Arizona. The reader may wonder, which Master called the other “Prima Donna?”

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