



Frank Lloyd Wright and Ralph Waldo Emerson

Transforming the American Mind

AYAD RAHMANI

Frank Lloyd Wright and Ralph Waldo Emerson: Transforming the American Mind is an interdisciplinary volume of literary and cultural scholarship that examines the link between two pivotal intellectual and artistic figures. It probes the degree to which the transcendentalist author influenced the architect's campaign against dominant strains of American thought. Inspired by Emerson's writings on the need to align exterior expression with interior self, Wright believed that architecture was not first and foremost a matter of accommodating spatial needs, but a tool to restore intellectual and artistic freedom, too often lost in the process of modernization.

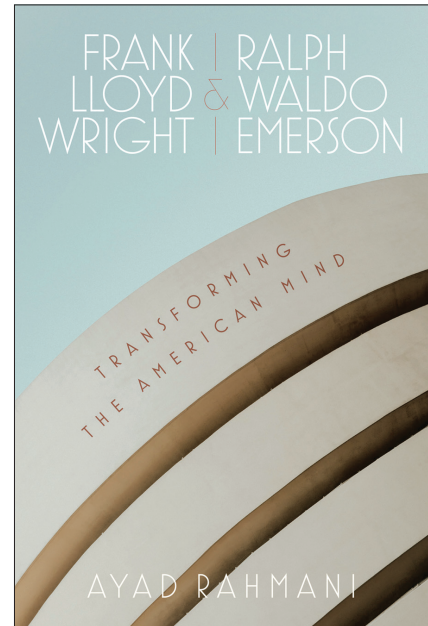
Ayad Rahmani shows that Emerson's writings provide an avenue for interpreting Wright's complex approach to country and architecture. The two thinkers cohered around a common concern for a nation derailed by nefarious forces that jeopardized the country's original promise. In Emerson's condemnations of slavery and inequality, Wright found inspiration for seeking redress against the humiliations suffered by the modern worker, be it at the hands of an industrial manager or an office boss. His designs sought to challenge dehumanizing labor practices and open minds to the beauty and science of agriculture and the natural world. Emerson's example helped Wright develop architecture that aimed less at accommodating a culture of clients and more at raising national historical awareness while also arguing for humane and equitable policies.

Frank Lloyd Wright and Ralph Waldo Emerson presents a new approach to two vital thinkers whose impact on American society remains relevant to this day.

AYAD RAHMANI is professor of architecture at Washington State University, where he teaches courses in design and theory. He also serves on the board of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy. He is the author of two previous books, the most recent being *Kafka's Architectures*.

PRAISE FOR FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"Part intellectual biography and part history of American architecture, Ayad Rahmani's book is a rich and engaging exploration of Frank Lloyd Wright's philosophical scaffolding. Rahmani demonstrates, in particular, the centrality of Ralph Waldo Emerson's contributions to Wright's worldview and his architectural theories and craft."—**Scott Slovic, University Distinguished Professor of Environmental Humanities, University of Idaho**



SEPTEMBER 2023

360 pages, 6 1/8 x 9 1/4, 38 halftones

978-0-8071-7980-2

Hardcover \$49.95, ebook available

Architecture / Literary Studies

Published with the assistance of the
John and Virginia Noland Fund



338 JOHNSTON HALL | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70803

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