



## EXERCISE 7: ANALYSIS OF PLACE

*The good building is not one that hurts the landscape,  
but one which makes the landscape more beautiful than  
it was before the building was built.*

–Frank Lloyd Wright

### Introduction

Exercise 7 is a culmination of learning in the form of a precedent study by visiting the Bachman-Wilson House and creating a set of analysis drawings and diagrams. You will complete research, visit the precedent, and create a composition of various drawings to explain your precedent. This is designed to strengthen your visual thinking, idea development, and observation skills through rendering techniques and analysis of built sites. Design is grounded in ideas. *Ideas are fed by inspiration!*



Nolan, N. (6 June 2017). [Façade and Site Photograph.] *How Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House Ended up in Arkansas*. Retrieved from <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/gallery/crystal-bridges-museum-frank-lloyd-wright>.

### Learning Objectives and Evaluation Criteria

In successfully completing this exercise, students will demonstrate and will be evaluated on:

- Practicing thinking in abstract terms about architectural phenomena and ideas, especially spatial organization and development;
- Broadening the breadth and depth of one's environment design knowledge;
- Effectively working in a team (timeliness, participation, contributions, and quality); and,
- Employing library research to understand a precedent analysis.

### Assignment

An opportunity to visit a Usonian house by the architect Frank Lloyd Wright, the Bachman-Wilson House has been arranged. This visit, supplemented by library materials and other sources of information about Wright, will provide the basis for this analysis exercise. The task is to develop an analytical and spatial representation of this site. In addition to demonstrating an understanding of the physical characteristics of the place, you should become familiar with the ideas of the designer and the historical context in which the work is embedded.

### Schedule

One and half weeks

### **Final Deliverables**

The final submittal will consist of the following minimum requirements:

1. **Drawings.** You will produce organized presentation boards with drawings and diagrams, text, and other illustrative materials are to be organized in a unified graphic format.
2. **Statement of Research and Reflection:** You will submit a one-page typed statement of research that showcases your understanding of your precedent's design concept, the designer's rationale, and reflects on how research and precedent studies enhance one's design process. (You will also note your resources with proper citation methods. Remember to cite the inspirational images. Review the citation guides on Canvas.)

All exercises must be turned in complete and on time. **Late submissions will not be accepted.** The exercise grade will be based only on materials submitted at the time of the stated deadline. Students should ask if they do not understand the implications of this policy.

## EXERCISE 7: INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

An important component of this exercise is the opportunity to visit the building to be analyzed, the Bachman-Wilson House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1954. This exercise creates the opportunity to visit the interiors, building, and landscape to be analyzed. This visit, supplemented by library materials and other sources of information about Wright, will provide the basis for this precedent.



Nolan, N. (6 June 2017). [Photographs of Master Bedroom (left) and Bedroom (Right) on Second Level.] *How Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House Ended up in Arkansas*. Retrieved from <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/gallery/crystal-bridges-museum-frank-lloyd-wright>.

Tours will be led by the professors. Photography is allowed on the exterior only. You should be prepared to make sketches and notes of both interior and exterior spaces and details, and the relationships between them. Through text, your team will research and interpret the Frank L. Wright's working methods in the creation of ideas. Through drawings, you will decode a built work to understand how the designer made space, extended space from interior to exterior, created strong spatial conditions, and used light to create space. This research is NOT about the biographic story of the designer, but rather focused on their design process and a critical review of their built work. Consider, including the following in your final proposal: fundamental design principles, processes, and vocabulary; perception of volumes of space; abstraction of design concepts from the complexity of built reality; reasoned design decision making; drawing with clarity and conviction; and communication about design intentions and rationale. In addition to demonstrating an understanding of the physical characteristics of the place, you should become familiar with the ideas of the designer and the context in which the work is embedded.

The task is to develop an analytical and spatial representation of the Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House based on the issues listed below.

1. **Background**
  - Ideas of the designer particularly at the time of the project
2. **Parti/Concept**
  - Diagrammatic and conceptual
3. **Program**
  - Identification and location of various functions
  - Served versus servant (utility) spaces
  - Public versus private (gradient)
4. **Organizational Strategy**
  - Spatial organization and relationships (important adjacencies and separations)
  - Hierarchy (and the various means of establishing it)
  - Geometry and regulating lines
  - Symmetry versus asymmetry (local symmetries within an overall asymmetrical scheme) and axuality
5. **Spatial Definition and Articulation**
  - Degrees of enclosure
  - Spatial subdivision and linkage
  - Interior exterior relationships and extension.
  - Spatial overlap
  - Path-space relationships
  - Materiality: surfaces, patterns, colors, and textures.
6. **Circulation**

- Primary versus secondary
- Horizontal versus vertical

Different aspects of your analysis should be carried out by using a variety of diagrams based on plans, sections, elevations, obliques, and perspectives to fully explore the issues and illustrate your findings. You may find that some categories overlap. The isolation of various design strategies and ideas into simple, easily legible diagrams will produce the most effective results. As a general rule, each diagram should consist of four components: a visual referent, an idea, a title, and descriptive text (using environmental design vocabulary).

Self-critique your design by asking yourself the following questions (these will be similar to your professor's) and document your answers through words, diagrams, and sketches in your commonplace book:

- Am I using the proper drawings to graphically explain the precedent?
- Did I diagram the key design concepts (i.e. spatial hierarchy, circulation, spatial definition, etc.)?
- Are the images I have drawn complex enough to promote understanding of the precedent, but are simple enough to facilitate strong graphic images?
- Have I omitted necessary information and have we edited out all unnecessary information?

### Team Effectiveness

You will work in teams of two students (or three) as assigned by your professor. Team endeavors require mutual responsibility, leadership often coupled with some individual compromise, and an effort to find an equitable division of time and labor among all the members. In this regard, it is quite analogous to professional practice. At the end of the exercise you will be asked to evaluate yourself and your teammate in terms of timeliness, participation, contributions, and quality.

To create your team's set of drawings, you will complete research and create a series of drawings and diagrams to explain the Bachman-Wilson House. This is designed to strengthen your visual thinking, idea development, analytical skills, and observation skills through representational techniques and analysis of built environments. Design is grounded in ideas.

Each team will create a biography of resources with proper citation methods. This includes visual citation of images. Use books along with the internet to do research, but not only the internet. Each team is required to find and use a min. of two books. Your professor will indicate which citation style to use and you are welcome to use <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> for additional information.

### Required Readings

Important reading material will be made available to you by your professor prior to the field trip.

1. Ching, F. (2015). *Form, Space and Order*, fourth edition. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.
  - Review Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 (focusing on content that relates to the design issues and principles being analyzed)
2. Clark, R. and Pause, M. (2012). *Precedents in Architecture: Analytic Diagrams, Formative Ideas, and Partis*, fourth edition. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.
  - Review
3. Di Mari, A. (2015). *Operative Design: A Catalogue of Spatial Verbs*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: BIS Publishers.
4. Di Mari, A. (2016). *Conditional Design: An Introduction to Elemental Architecture*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: BIS Publishers.
5. Weigel Library, our Architecture and Design branch library in Seaton Hall on the third floor, is displaying references on Frank L. Wright and his designs during this exercise. Go visit and inspire yourself.

### Vocabulary

- Precedent Analysis
- Team Effectiveness

### Suggested Supplies

- Mylar
- Prismacolor pencils

### Quote Cited

- Lagdameo, J. (15 February 2017). 10 Frank Lloyd Wright Building We Love. Dwell. Retrieved from <https://www.dwell.com/article/10-frank-lloyd-wright-buildings-we-love-15858896>.