NPS Form 10-900-b
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

The Arkansas Designs of E. Fay Jones, Architect

B. Associated Historic Contexts

The Arkansas Designs of E. Fay Jones, Architect 1956-1997

C. Geographical Data

State of Arkansas

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Cathryn A. Slater — 2-10-00

Signature of certifying official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register — 4/28/00

Date

Significant Architect

E. Fay Jones is best noted as an architect of residential and ecclesiastical design, whose work expressed an strong appreciation for the principals of modern organic design--harmony with nature, use of natural materials, and the overriding importance of light and space. Among those architects who were strongly influenced or trained by Frank Lloyd Wright, Jones is noted as strikingly different for having absorbed the principals of "organic design" without becoming trapped into a career of mimicking Wright's output or designs. Jones' work has been identified as highly original architecture with a distinctive architectural vocabulary that remained largely consistent throughout an era marked by a myriad of competing architectural trends and fads. The architectural consistency and unfailing high quality of his design work over the entire length of his career, without regard to the evolving paradigms of mainstream "modern architecture," was one of the main reasons for his recognition by his peers.

Jones' career was predominantly focused on small scale residential work in Arkansas, where he also taught at the University of Arkansas, and in surrounding states. As a result, his work did not achieve as high a profile as some of his contemporaries who worked on larger commissions and in larger markets. Over his 41-year career, however, Jones's work received extensive coverage in popular and professional architectural periodicals and publications, much of which is documented in the MPS cover. Many of the nominated properties received professional design awards and were widely published in period journals. Scholarly recognition of Jones' work, as noted in the MPS, has ranged from F. L. Wright himself to modern architectural historians such as Prof. Richard Longstreth.

By far, Jones' most well known and praised work was the 1980 Thorncrown Chapel, which was named the AIA's "Best Work of American Architecture of the 1980s." Scholars, architectural history books, and professional organizations have widely honored Thorncrown Chapel as a significant work of contemporary architecture, which even with its recent date is likely to pass the test of time. Thorncrown Chapel was also the catalyst for a wider appreciation and recognition of Jones' work. (Again, one can argue that without the completion of Thorncrown, Jones' work would never have received the level of acclaim it now appears to have. Others may argue that Thorncrown merely placed a broader spotlight on a body of work that was always admired and recognized by the architectural profession and to a smaller extent the general public.) The AIA currently lists Thorncrown Chapel along with seven other modern architectural masterpieces in its competition to determine "What is the most important building of the 20th century?"

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

The Arkansas Designs of E. Fay Jones, Architect 1956-1997

Overview

As an architect, Fay Jones was exceptional in the truest sense: "out of the ordinary course; unusual; uncommon; extraordinary."[1] Though thoroughly grounded in the principles of organic architecture espoused by Frank Lloyd Wright, Jones made the principles his own and transformed them into a unique architecture that defies labels. While staying abreast of what his peers were doing—his career spanned the International style, Brutalism, post-modernism, and Deconstructivism, among other architectural movements—Jones made a conscious decision to remain "outside the pale."[2] In doing so, he created a rich, coherent, and quintessentially American body of work that is, in a word, exceptional.

Teaching and maintaining a practice in the mountains of northwestern Arkansas, Jones concentrated on residential projects for twenty-five years and was not widely known until completion of his Thorncrown Chapel in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in 1980. The chapel's stunning design won international acclaim, and the worldwide architectural community finally knew what the owners of Jones-designed homes had known since the 1950s: Fay Jones was an architect of extraordinary artistry and intellect. Thorncrown Chapel received the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honor Award in 1981, and in 1990 the AIA recognized Jones's full body of work—"an exquisite architecture of gentle beauty and quiet dignity"[3]—with its highest tribute, a Gold Medal. In surveys conducted the next year, architects ranked Jones second among six "most admired" living architects and Thorncrown Chapel as the best work of American architecture during the 1980s.[4]

Though still living, Jones was forced to retire at the end of 1997 by a debilitating illness. The practice he started in 1956 no longer bears his name (now it is Maurice Jennings + David McKee Architects), and Jones's remarkable body of work is complete.

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[1] *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, Unabridged*, 2nd ed. (William Collins Publishers, Inc., 1979), p. 637.

[2] Fay Jones quoted in Robert Adams Ivy, Jr., *The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA* (Washington, D.C.: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1992), p. 12.

[3] From text of the citation accompanying "The 1990 Gold Medal" conferred on Fay Jones, FAIA by the American Institute of Architects.

[4] Ivy, p. 13 and "Readers Respond," *Architecture: The AIA Journal*, September 1991, p. 91. The other architects/firms whose work was "most admired" were Kohn Pedersen Fox and I. M. Pei (tied for first place), Antoine Predock, Charles Moore, and Robert Venturi (who also appeared on the "most despised" list).

Fay Jones's Career

The recognition received by Fay Jones since 1980 culminates a long and exemplary career marked by an intellectual curiosity that might seem at odds with Jones's personal history and the place where he chose to practice architecture. Born in 1921 in the cotton belt community of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Jones moved with his parents to the state capital, Little Rock, before the family settled in El Dorado, an oil boom town in southern Arkansas. There, Jones's parents—Euine Fay Jones, Sr. and Candy Louise (Alston) Jones—operated a restaurant. Although working with his parents is credited with instilling in Jones a solid work ethic,[5] it also, according to Jones himself, "made me realize that I didn't want to be in the restaurant business, so I was looking for another field all along."[6]

In an interview conducted in the early 1980s, Jones remembered that "my teachers used to send home notes to my parents about my having artistic talent. . . . I'd always liked to draw, and I kept thinking I wanted to be an artist, whatever that meant."[7] But it was not only painting and drawing that he enjoyed; he also "liked to build things."[8] A red wagon received for Christmas was dismantled for parts, and "I was always building lean-tos against the house."[9] The lean-tos eventually gave way to a more sophisticated structure—one that some have suggested presaged the manner in which he later would carefully integrate buildings into their natural surroundings: ". . . in my high school days I built a pretty fancy treehouse, a big thing I could sleep in. It had a balcony, roll-down canvas blinds, and a fireplace."[10]

Just before graduating from high school in 1938, Jones discovered how to combine his two passions, art and building, into a single career. Between films at the local movie theater, he saw a short subject on the new Johnson Wax Company building in Racine, Wisconsin, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Filmed in Technicolor, the short opened up a new world to Jones—the world of architecture. "There was something about that film and seeing that building—all of a sudden it come together," he later recalled. "This thing called art and this thing construction—it's all here. And I walked out of that theater knowing that it's an architect that I want to be."[11]

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[5] Ivy, p. 16.
[6] Fay Jones quoted in Department of Arkansas Heritage, *"Outside the Pale": The Architecture of Fay Jones* (Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 1999), p. 2.
[7] Fay Jones quoted in Mel White, "The Master Builder," *Arkansas Times*, October 1983, p. 57.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 57.

A mixture of deliberate decisions and fate delayed Jones's entry into the architectural profession until 1950, but his circuitous route to becoming an architect provided him with experiences, skills, and knowledge that shaped his unique approach to design.

In addition to his construction projects, as a teenager Jones found time to become an Eagle Scout and "then went on to Sea Scouting, which led to an ambition to attend the United States Naval Academy," according to one Jones interviewer.[12] Jones thought he was on his way to an appointment to Annapolis when the congressman sponsoring him failed to win re-election. This twist of fate propelled him to the University of Arkansas School of Engineering, the closest he could come at the time to studying architecture in his home state. In his 1992 book *The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA*, Robert Adams Ivy, Jr. noted that Jones studied civil engineering for two and a half years, and "his buildings would later express and integrate structure into their fabric."[13]

World War II brought another opportunity for Jones to join the Navy. He enlisted in 1941, the same year that he met Mary Elizabeth Knox, a native of Hot Springs, Arkansas, who was called "Gus" by her friends. They married in 1943, after Jones had completed Naval flight training. Later that year, Jones was sent to the South Pacific, where he spent fifteen months flying dive bombers and torpedo bombers.[14] Even this experience, while not obviously related to architecture, may have affected Jones's design work. Robert Ivy quotes Jones as saying that he was "fascinated with the three-dimensionality of flight" and points out that "Jones would achieve a soaring lightness and precision akin to flight" in some of his buildings.[15]

After being discharged from the Navy in 1945, Jones began looking at architecture programs. He tentatively had decided to enroll at Washington University in St. Louis when he heard about the new program in architecture being started at the University of Arkansas by John Williams, an Oklahoma A&M graduate. Jones promptly signed up and in 1950 became one the program's first five graduates.[16]

An often-told story relating to the development of Jones's career recounts his first face-to-face meeting with Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Johnson Wax Company building had brought together

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[12] Ibid.
[13] Ivy, p. 16.
[14] White, p. 58.
[15] Ivy, p. 17.
[16] Ibid., and White, p. 59.

Jones's interests in art and building, inspiring him to become an architect. In 1949, while still in architecture school, Jones learned that Wright would be receiving the AIA Gold Medal in Houston, Texas, within striking distance of the University of Arkansas. A *Smithsonian* article about Jones by Andrea Oppenheimer Dean describes this first encounter with Wright:

> Jones organized a field trip to Houston and, the night before the awards ceremony, went with three other students to see the much-publicized new Shamrock Hotel, where he inadvertently stumbled into an exclusive private party thrown by the owner. Fleeing down an empty corridor, an awestruck Jones literally bumped into Wright just as the great man was looking for a way to escape a cocktail party in his honor. Jones remembers "just plastering myself up against the wall to leave him plenty of room to walk by. He must have seen my fright, because he came up to me and stuck out his hand and said, 'My name is Frank Lloyd Wright. I'm an architect.' I told him I was an architecture student, that my name was Fay Jones, and Wright kept saying, 'Jones. I grew up with the Joneses. My mother's family name was Jones.'"[17]

Dean quotes Jones as modestly saying that the bond he developed with Frank Lloyd Wright "seemed to come from my name, from both of us being exactly the same height, and from sharing Welsh heritage." It was Wright, in fact, who first told Jones that Euine, his little-used first name, is an archaic Welsh form of John.[18]

Wright and Jones would meet again, on many occasions, but upon graduation from the University of Arkansas, Jones moved to Houston to accept a fellowship and begin a graduate teaching assistantship in architecture at Rice University. Jones has described Rice as having "an old, established and very high-quality program" which tested the work he had done in the fledgling Arkansas architecture program.[19] With his master's degree in hand, Jones went on to teach at the University of Oklahoma School of Architecture for two years, 1951-1953. At the time, the Oklahoma program was headed by Bruce Goff, a controversial architect who Jones names as one of his influences.[20] Jones says, "I had never been at a school where there was such tremendous talent . . . such dedication to the work. It was the most artistic, exciting work I have seen to this day. It was an exhilarating time."[21]

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[17] Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, "The Cathedral Builder Born 500 Years Too Late," *Smithsonian*, August 1991, p. 106.
[18] Ibid., p. 107.
[19] Jones quoted in White, p. 59.
[20] Ivy, p. 18 and "The AD 100 Architects: E. Fay Jones," *Architectural Digest*, August 15, 1991, p. 134.
[21] Jones quoted in Ivy, p. 18.

It was Bruce Goff who brought Jones and Frank Lloyd Wright together again. (In 1951, *Life* magazine reported that Goff was "one of the few U. S. architects whom Frank Lloyd Wright considers creative. . . ."[22]) During a visit by Wright to the Oklahoma School of Architecture, Goff included Jones in a small faculty dinner with Wright. The discussion that evening led to Wright's inviting Jones to spend Easter of 1953 at Taliesin West, near Phoenix.[23]

In turn, the trip to Arizona brought an invitation from Wright for the entire Jones family (by then including two small daughters) to spend the summer of 1953 at the first Taliesin, near Spring Green, Wisconsin. This four-month apprenticeship was followed by annual Easter pilgrimages by the Jones family to Taliesin West, the last one coming in 1959, shortly before Wright's death.[24]

The time spent with Frank Lloyd Wright had a profound effect on Fay Jones's life and career. Besides adapting to his own use Wright's principles of organic architecture, Jones followed Wright's advice in accepting a professorship at the University of Arkansas School of Architecture in 1953. Robert Ivy writes: "Wright advised, 'Why not go back to Arkansas? It is not spoiled as the rest of the country. You can build there.'"[25]

Jones certainly knew that the university town of Fayetteville, set in the Ozark Mountains in the northwestern corner of the state, was far removed from the major centers of architectural innovation. (Another architect who has been named by Jones as an influence,[26] Edward Durell Stone, was a Fayetteville native who referred to his hometown as "a hotbed of tranquillity."[27]) Andrea Oppenheimer Dean reports Jones as saying, "My ambition was limited to doing two to three houses every year and having favorable responses in this area of the country. I wanted respect for what I was doing, but I didn't expect to become a well-known architect. My focus was on being a good teacher."[28]

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[22] "The Round House," *Life*, March 19, 1951, p. 70.
[23] Ivy, p. 18.
[24] Dean, p., 107 and Ivy, p. 19.
[25] Ivy, p. 19.
[26] "The AD 100 Architects: E. Fay Jones." In this brief description of his design approach, Jones says he was influenced by Stone "for his simplifying planning arrangements." Robert Ivy explains that Stone's influence on Jones was not so much through design but professional and personal: "[Stone] demonstrated, through a fully exercised life, what an architect from Arkansas could accomplish in the international arena." Ivy, p. 29.
[27] Stone quoted in Philip Langdon, "In The Wright Tradition," *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1989, p. 83.
[28] Dean, p. 107.

True to this statement, Jones did no outside design work during his first two years as an assistant professor of architecture at Arkansas. Then, he says, "I designed myself a house, which was the first thing I had built as an official architect on my own. And that house got me another house, and that house got me another house. And I seem to always have had a few houses to do."[29]

This unassuming description of how his remarkable practice began sheds light on Jones, the man, and Jones, the architect. Invariably described as "humble," "courteous," "gracious," "warm," "gentle," Jones, the man, is anything but ego-driven, helping to explain why—despite his enormous talent—his work was not widely known for many years. Jones, the architect, wanted to design houses, saying: "[T]he house is the one architectural problem that has the most potential for becoming a work of art. It is a building type less encumbered by the many forces that influence nonarchitectural decisions (building committees, realtor logic, complex finance, etc.) and in it all of the purely architectural problems exist."[30]

Jones chose to focus on small-scale works throughout his career, even after his reputation grew and larger projects could have been his. Robert Ivy notes, "By choice, Jones's range has been limited to two major building types—houses and sacred structures."[31] Moreover, "Jones focuses on the individual in his work. He has designed no high-rise towers, multifamily houses or new towns; not by chance, this university professor . . . has produced more than 200 private residences—customized shelter for individual clients."[32]

Jones's earliest clients were fellow faculty members of the University of Arkansas: "creative individuals with low budgets."[33] Along with his own house, completed in 1956, the work Jones did for university faculty members enabled him to put to use the principles of organic architecture he had learned from Frank Lloyd Wright.

"By organic architecture," Wright wrote in 1914, "I mean an architecture that *develops* from within outward in harmony with the conditions of its being as distinguished from one that is applied from without."[34] Expanding on his definition, Wright said organic architecture is:

> First, a study of the nature of materials you elect to use and the tools you must use with

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[29] White, p. 80.
[30] "Grotto and Geometry," *Progressive Architecture*, May 1965, p. 147.
[31] Ivy, p. 10.
[32] Ibid., pp. 24-25.
[33] Ibid., p. 20.
[34] Frank Lloyd Wright, "In The Cause of Architecture II," *The Architectural Record*, May 1914, p. 406.

> them, searching to find the characteristic qualities in both that are suited to your purpose. Second, with an ideal of organic nature as a guide, so to unite these qualities to serve that purpose, that the fashion of what you do has integrity or is *natively fit*, regardless of preconceived notions of style.[35]

Agreeing with his mentor, with whom he frequently has been compared, Fay Jones said, "We must not reduce architecture to fashion design. Fashion in architecture is besides the point."[36] Also like Wright, Jones always aimed to ensure that his buildings *fit*. He once wrote that in organic architecture, "nothing is superfluous, and everything justifies itself by contributing to [a] central generating idea. Frank Lloyd Wright summed it up: 'The whole is to the part as the part is to the whole.'"[37]

From the start, however, Jones's designs were no mere copies of Wright's; neither he nor Wright wanted them to be. Jones remembered an admonition on the wall at Taliesin that said "if you understand the underlying principles you will own the effects."[38] Wright himself wrote, "It has been my hope to have inspired among my pupils a personality or two to contribute to this work, forms of their own devising. . . ."[39]

With his first constructed design, his own residence, Fay Jones seemed to pass the test. At Jones's invitation, Wright came to Fayetteville to lecture in 1958. Jones later recounted Wright's visit to the two-year-old Jones home: "Wright himself stood out there by my house, with its vertical board-and-batten siding, and he said, 'You know, I tend to do it like this,' motioning horizontally, 'but you tend to do it like this. Do more of *this*; I like the drip,' which is how he referred to the way I had the battens kind of hanging down."[40] This vertical emphasis, which became more pronounced later in Jones's career, is one of several factors that would distinguish Jones's work from Wright's.

Wright also introduced the general public—of northwestern Arkansas, at least—to Jones's work. During his lecture at the University of Arkansas, Wright told the audience that they should go

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[35] Wright, p. 413.
[36] Fay Jones quoted in Vernon Mays, ed., *What Makes A Good Building* (Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Studies, no date), p. 12.
[37] E. Fay Jones, "The Generative Idea," *Landscape Architecture*, May/June 1983, p. 68.
[38] Jones quoted in Dean, p 108.
[39] Wright, p. 413.
[40] William Marlin, "Truing Up: The Architecture of Euine Fay Jones," *Inland Architect*, November-December 1989, p. 37.

look at Jones's house if they wanted to see a compelling example of organic design. Two thousand or so people reportedly did just that over the next few days.[41]

Soon Jones's residential designs were attracting national attention. Initially, however, most of the attention came from the home-building public rather than from the professional architectural community. In October of 1959, *House Beautiful* was the first national magazine to publish Jones's work. In that issue, the magazine featured a house Jones had designed in 1958 for Dr. and Mrs. Calvin Bain in Prairie Grove, Arkansas. The article focused on the home's "open plan" as well as on the architect's exquisite use of simple natural materials, concluding with a statement that could apply to a majority of Fay Jones designs: "This ability to get the most out of the simplest materials, combined with the magnificent development of interior space, resulted in true refinement at modest cost."[42]

According to Gus (Mrs. Fay) Jones, the magazine article about the Bain residence brought more than 600 unsolicited requests for house plans,[43] and it was just the first of several *House Beautiful* articles during the late 1950s and early 1960s that featured Fay Jones houses.[44] During the same period, Jones's residential designs also were appearing regularly in other publications aimed at the general public, including *House Beautiful/Building Manual*, *House and Home*, and *Life*.[45]

From the beginning, Jones's designs exhibited many of the characteristics for which he would become known, and the early magazine articles about his work frequently highlighted these characteristics: respect for the natural setting, sophisticated orchestration of space and light, use of simple but meticulously crafted natural materials, integration of ornament into the overall design, expressed structure, and repetition of forms:

> "This is a house that is not only joined to its site but appears born of it. The limestone and sandstone of which the house is built are the same rocks that lie strewn over the landscape."[46]

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[41] Ibid.
[42] Guy Henley, "The Open Plan—A Way To Gain Spaciousness," *House Beautiful*, October 1959, p. 299.
[43] Ivy, p. 210.
[44] In addition to the October 1959 issue, Fay Jones and his work were featured in these issues of *House Beautiful*: November 1959, January 1960, March 1960, April 1962, June 1962, October 1963, July 1964, April 1965.
[45] Ivy, p. 219.
[46] "Magnificent Space On A Magnificent Site," *House Beautiful*, July 1964, p. 61. This article is about the Clark residence in Arkansas.

"This house and garden work as one, and there is no real separation between them. . . . It's this continuity that makes the house appear even more spacious than it is."[47]

"By . . . letting each purposeful space borrow from the next, the architect has created interesting vistas throughout the house. . . ."[48]

"Intriguing glimpses such as this [from the dining area through the kitchen into the entry hall] contribute to the spatial richness of the interior of the house."[49]

"The house has an open plan. . . [y]et without use of partition walls, each area does have a feeling of apartness and self-containment."[50]

"The simplicity of the palette [of materials] means there is almost never an interruption in the flow of space by switching to a different material."[51]

"Everywhere solutions of great elegance were found within the limitations of the materials themselves. . . ."[52]

"Though rich in its living experience, the house is built of materials that are inexpensive locally."[53]

"House, landscaping, furnishings and equipment were planned simultaneously as a single entity. Not a gate, lamp, fireplace tool, or intercom grille was overlooked in terms of individualization for the specific design used for this house."[54]

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[47] "Romantic House On A Country Hilltop," *House Beautiful*, April 1965, p. 185. The "country hilltop" is in Little Rock, Arkansas; the house is "Pine Knoll," built for Mr. and Mrs. Graham Hall.
[48] Guy Henley, "The Open Space Plan—A Way To Gain Spaciousness," *House Beautiful*, October 1959, p. 299. This is the article about the Bain residence, Jones's first published design.
[49] "A House That Turns Existing Into Living." *House Beautiful*, October 1963, p. 181. This article is about the Snow residence in Fayetteville, Arkansas.
[50] "Romantic House On A Country Hilltop," p. 198.
[51] "Magnificent Space On A Magnificent Site," p. 108.
[52] Henley, p. 299.
[53] "A House That Turns Existing Into Living." p. 233.
[54] "Romantic House On A Country Hilltop," p. 196.

In 1961, just five years after completion of his first project, Fay Jones received not one but two "Homes for Better Living" Awards from the American Institute of Architects in conjunction with *Life* and *House and Home* magazines—the first of many national design awards he would receive over the course of his career. The awards were for houses built in 1960: the Adrian Fletcher residence in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and the home of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton, located in Bentonville, Arkansas.

That Fay Jones has a sense of humor, but not an outsized ego, is obvious in a story he has told about his trip to the awards ceremony in Philadelphia in 1961, when he was not yet well known: "*Life* magazine was handling the awards presentation, and when they saw that Fay Jones was a double award winner, they just assumed that I was a woman. They must have thought, 'Here's some little girl out there in Arkansas, and between the milking and the plowing she's knocking out house plans.' Oh, this was going to be a big story for them." When the magazine's associate editor who was covering the awards ceremony realized that Fay Jones was a man rather than a woman, "She tore out of there to call Henry Luce in New York. They weren't interested in a guy for the cover, but if I'd been a girl I'd have been on the cover of *Life* magazine."[55]

The year following the "Homes for Better Living" Awards brought the first publication of a Jones design in a national architectural journal. In May of 1962, *Progressive Architecture* featured the residence Jones had designed for himself and his family. Like the articles in popular magazines, this one discussed features that would become characteristic of Jones's work. Unlike the popular magazines, however, *Progressive Architecture* explored Jones's design philosophy, giving the architect his first opportunity to explain to a national audience an approach to design that he eventually would articulate hundreds of times to students, the media, other architects, and the general public: "Always, my design philosophy is one of organic fabrication, the unity of part and whole." In addition, "The solution must grow directly out of the problem itself—the program, the site, orientation, and the materials to be used."[56]

More AIA awards came in the mid-1960s—Awards of Merit in 1964 for the home of Mrs. Harold Snow in Fayetteville and in 1966 for "Stoneflower," the Shaheen-Goodfellow weekend home in Eden Isle, Arkansas—and they were followed by more articles about Jones projects in both popular and professional publications. During the late 1960s and through the 1970s, the Jones designs that attracted the most national attention were Stoneflower (later singled out as a harbinger of his design for Thorncrown Chapel) and a residence just outside of Little Rock,

[55] Jones quoted in White, pp. 52-53, 56.
[56] "Organic Fabrication," *Progressive Architecture*, May 1962, p. 139.

Arkansas, designed for Sam Pallone in 1977. Between 1965 and 1971, Stoneflower was featured in *Progressive Architecture*, *House and Home*, *Life*, and the *American Journal of Building Design*. In 1978, the Pallone residence received an AIA Award of Merit and appeared in the publications *Housing* and *Architectural Record*. Summing up Jones's career to that point, a 1979 article in *Art Voices South* told readers that Jones had "become quite famous nationally for his remarkable residential designs. . . ."[57]

The next year saw the beginning of a new chapter in Fay Jones's career. Already nationally known for his houses, he would become internationally known for a sacred structure that was completed in 1980, and he would receive a new round of national awards, culminating with the AIA Gold Medal in 1990.

Thorncrown Chapel, located just outside the historic Ozark Mountains resort community of Eureka Springs, Arkansas, opened to the public in July of 1980. Its owner, James Reed (an Arkansas native who had retired to the Ozarks after a teaching career in California), expected three or four dozen daily visitors to enjoy the site's panoramic view of the mountains. Instead, by the following winter, 40,000 people had made the pilgrimage to Thorncrown Chapel. Ten years later, Thorncrown was welcoming 250,000 visitors annually.[58]

Thorncrown Chapel immediately struck a chord with the general public, and the response from the architectural community was nearly as immediate and enthusiastic. In *Architectural Record*, Charles K. Gandee called the chapel "a brilliant testimony to the power of architecture to intensify experience and inspire contemplation, and a fitting gauge by which to measure one architect."[59] Writing for the *AIA Journal*, Stanley Abercrombie said "Thorncrown Chapel . . . is more than a striking building. . . . it is an original."[60] In *Time* magazine, Wolf Von Eckardt called Thorncrown an "enchanting example of contemporary architecture" and noted that it was "one of the most popular and widely publicized of American buildings."[61] *Newsweek* pointed out that the chapel had "been praised in almost every architectural journal in the Western world."[62] Among the foreign architectural journals that featured Thorncrown Chapel were

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[57] Edgar A. Albin, "Architecture in Arkansas: A Creative Cooperative Endeavor," *Art Voices South*, January-February 1979, p. 10.
[58] Charles K. Gandee, "A Wayfarer's Chapel By Fay Jones," *Architectural Record*, March 1981, p. 90 and Dean, p. 103.
[59] Gandee, p. 92.
[60] Stanley Abercrombie, AIA, "A Building Of Great Integrity: Fay Jones' Thorncrown Chapel, Eureka Springs, Arkansas," *AIA Journal*, Mid-May 1981, p. 141.
[61] Wolf Von Eckardt, "Creating for God's Glory," *Time*, 19 April 1982, p. 50.
[62] Douglas Davis, "A Church Is Not A Home," *Newsweek*, 28 March 1983, p. 76.

Domus, Kenchiku to Toshi (*Architecture and Urbanism*), *L'Architettura*, and *The Architectural Review*.

In 1981, Fay Jones received an AIA Honor Award for Thorncrown Chapel, and ten years later an AIA survey named it the best work of American architecture of the 1980s.[63] Clearly, the chapel was a turning point in the career of an architect who had settled in Fayetteville, Arkansas, to teach and practice, wanting "respect for what I was doing" but not expecting "to become a well-known architect."

Thorncrown Chapel's resounding success opened many doors for Fay Jones. However, while appreciating the recognition and the opportunities it brought, Jones chose to stay the course by continuing to teach and maintain a small practice. As explained in an interview two years after Thorncrown's completion, the "desire to give personal attention to projects is why Jones has kept his architectural firm small, rather than letting it expand, as it could have, to match his reputation."[64] Thus, despite international acclaim, Fay Jones continued to work from the second floor of a small office building (of his own design) in downtown Fayetteville, with four to six people in the firm and no receptionist—"Whoever's handiest to the phone answers it."[65] As she had for nearly thirty years, Gus Jones handled most of the firm's paperwork.

Fame did bring some changes. Though Jones still did not accept more work than he personally could handle, he was able to be more selective, and his commissions became more geographically far-flung. By the close of the 1980s, his designs could be found in Mississippi, South Carolina, Colorado, and Massachusetts, and projects were in the works for clients in Texas, Michigan, Virginia, and Alabama.[66]

Also by the close of the 1980s, Jones had retired from the University of Arkansas faculty. After a few years of cutting back, he stopped teaching entirely in 1988 in order to focus on a practice that had grown to national scope. The decision to leave teaching was not made lightly. Jones had been a professor of architecture longer than he had been a practicing architect, and his was a distinguished teaching career. During his thirty-five years at the University of Arkansas, Jones served as chairman of the Department of Architecture from 1966 until 1974, when the School of Architecture was created. He then served for two years as the school's first dean before giving

[63] Ivy, p 13.
[64] White, p. 63.
[65] Jones quoted in White, p. 63.
[66] Ivy, p. 214.

up the position to spend more time in the classroom.[67] During his years of teaching, he received the "Distinguished Faculty Award" in 1961 and the "Faculty Distinguished Achievement Award in Research" in 1961 and 1982. The university also honored him with the "Architecture Distinguished Alumnus Award" in 1976 and the "Distinguished Alumnus Citation" in 1981. In 1980, he was awarded the Rome Prize Fellowship, which afforded time to study in Europe. In 1985, he received the first American Collegiate Schools of Architecture Distinguished Professor Award[68] for his "sustained creative achievement in the advancement of architectural education."[69]

Though Jones's international reputation was founded on his design of a chapel, the "heart of [his] work . . . continued to be single-family houses—exceedingly well crafted open-plan dwellings that nestle into natural settings, capturing light and views from the outdoors."[70] The 1980s saw completion of numerous acclaimed residential designs, among them the 1983 Reed residence in rural Hogeye, Arkansas; the Edmondson residence in Forrest City, Arkansas, an elaborate complex that Jones worked on through the mid-1980s; and the Watson residence in Fairfield Bay, Arkansas, completed in 1986. Indicating Jones's continued appeal to both the public and the architectural community, the Edmondson residence was published in *Southern Accents*, *Progressive Architecture*, and *Architectural Lighting*. In 1984, *Architecture: The AIA Journal* featured the Reed residence, which later received an AIA Honor Award—Jones's second. The Reed residence also appeared in *L'Architettura* and *Kenchiku to Toshi*. Robert Ivy chose the Watson residence as one of two Jones designs (the other was Thorncrown Chapel) to highlight in his article for *Architecture* following Jones's receipt of the AIA Gold Medal in 1990. The Watson residence was featured in *L'Architettura* in September of 1990.

While concentrating on houses, Jones also had the opportunity during the 1980s to expand on themes sounded in Thorncrown Chapel. An elegant pavilion, known as Pinecote, designed in 1987 for the Crosby Arboretum in Picayune, Mississippi, earned Jones his third AIA Honor Award in 1990. Robert Ivy calls the pavilion "a masterwork that rivals Thorncrown,"[71] while to William Lake Douglas it is "a timeless building."[72] Back in Arkansas, the Mildred B. Cooper Memorial Chapel was completed in 1988 and garnered extensive coverage in architectural and trade publications, including *Progressive Architecture*, *Architecture*, and *Modern Steel*

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[67] White, p. 56 and "Fay Jones Wins AIA Gold Medal," *Progressive Architecture*, January 1990, p. 28.
[68] Ivy, pp. 21 and 216.
[69] Award quoted in Jack Golden, "From The Editor," *Friends of Kebyar*, April/June 1989, p. 2.
[70] Philip Langdon, "In The Wright Tradition," *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1989, p. 83.
[71] Ivy, p. 76.
[72] William Lake Douglas, "The Poetics of Revealed Construction," *Progressive Architecture*, May 1987, p. 107.

Construction. Jones even returned to Thorncrown, designing in 1989 a separate worship center to relieve the crowding caused by the chapel's enormous popularity.

In August of 1989, Vernon Reed, director of the AIA Central States Region, initiated Fay Jones's nomination for the AIA Gold Medal, the highest award the AIA bestows on individual architects. The Gold Medal "serves as recognition for a lifetime of distinguished achievement and significant contributions to architecture and the human environment."[73] Because "it honors a lifetime of achievement and work of historic significance,"[74] the Gold Medal is not necessarily presented every year.

Comparing Jones to previous Gold Medal recipients Bernard Maybeck (1951) and Richard Neutra (1977), whose careers also encompassed primarily residential designs constructed in a particular area of the country, Vernon Reed wrote "to Fay Jones, a house is a shelter of poetic art. No architect has more skillfully employed ordinary and common materials in a composition which not only solves the utilitarian functions of living, but elevates the art of living into its most noble form." Pointing out that Jones "serves as a role model for the largest segment of architectural firms in this country—small firms serving mainly a local or regional client base—and consistently demonstrates to them the value of design integrity," Reed asserted that "there are no Fay Jones designed structures that are embarrassments to his career. Every single work of his is a masterpiece. Every building epitomizes his ability to order every piece of building material into a magic web where functional, technical, and esthetic solutions intertwine into a single brilliant work of art."[75]

Reed's cover letter also noted the unlikely location of Jones's practice in the "Ozark mountains of northwest Arkansas" and the great popularity of Jones's designs: "[T]he public loves his work, as evidenced by widespread publication of his work in consumer magazines, as well as professional journals." He closed by saying, "We should honor this architect of incomparable talent. The selection of Fay Jones would grace the AIA Gold Medal and increase its stature in the eyes of the public."[76]

The Gold Medal nomination was supported by three pages of references to glowing comments on Jones's work by a number of architectural authorities (cited more extensively in the section on

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[73] 1990 Gold Medal news release, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Vernon Reed to Christopher J. Smith, AIA Secretary, 21 August 1989, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D. C.
[76] Ibid.

Jones's influence). Also supporting the nomination were letters from Harlan E. McClure, FAIA, Dean Emeritus of the Clemson University College of Architecture; Charles W. Moore, FAIA, O'Neil Ford Centennial Professor in Architecture, The University of Texas at Austin; William Marlin, architectural critic and biographer; and Richard Longstreth, Associate Professor of Architectural History, The George Washington University.

In being selected to receive the 1990 AIA Gold Medal, E. Fay Jones of Fayetteville, Arkansas, joined an exceptionally distinguished list of architects who collectively have shaped the built environment not only of the United States but of much of the industrialized world. Charles McKim, Sir Edwin Lutyens, Louis Sullivan, Eliel Saarinen, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Skidmore, Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Eero Saarinen, Alvar Aalto, Marcel Breuer, Louis Kahn, and I. M. Pei are among the forty-seven architects who preceded Jones in receiving the Gold Medal.

The award was presented to Fay Jones at a ceremony held at the National Building Museum in Washington, D. C. on the evening of February 22, 1990. During the afternoon, he was praised by President George Bush at a White House reception. "Jones has created a truly American architecture that is respected the world over," said the president.[77] That night, Prince Charles of Great Britain, in Washington to take part in an AIA conference being held in conjunction with the Gold Medal ceremony, also praised Jones's buildings for evoking "the amplitude of nature without damaging nature."[78]

Demonstrating that ten years of international renown had done little to enlarge his ego, Jones, who followed Prince Charles to the dais, began his acceptance speech by saying "he felt like a country-and-western singer following Luciano Pavarotti."[79] In a speech noted for its brevity,[80] Jones spoke "quietly, modestly, yet with great assurance and civility"[81] about the architectural continuum, recognizing the value of historic architecture while cautioning against slavish imitation: "If one has a belief in the continuity of past and present—and future—then part of the pleasure of his work will lie in the creative connections he can make between that work and its sources, sources not simply quoted but transformed."[82] He might have used as examples his own

[77] President Bush quoted in Dean, p. 108.
[78] Prince Charles quoted in Dean, p. 110.
[79] Dean, p. 110.
[80] *Architectural Record*, April 1990, p. 21.
[81] Dean, p. 110.
[82] Jones quoted in *Architectural Record*, p. 21.

highly successful efforts to transform the principles of organic architecture into entirely original designs.

The text of the citation that accompanied the Gold Medal was an eloquent tribute to Jones from his peers:

> The American Institute of Architects is privileged to confer the 1990 Gold Medal on Fay Jones, FAIA, who, for more than four decades, has created an exquisite architecture of gentle beauty and quiet dignity that celebrates the land and embraces the American spirit. Complex yet delicate, grand in vision yet human in scale, bound firmly to the earth yet soaringly spiritual, his work strikes an emotional chord that touches the soul of all who encounter it. Humble, original, intelligent, and uncompromising, he embodies everything that architecture can and should be.

Additional proof of the very high esteem Jones enjoyed within the ranks of the architectural profession came the next year. Hundreds of respondents to a 1991 *Architecture* magazine survey ranked him second among six "most admired" living architects.

By the time he received the Gold Medal, Fay Jones's productive years unfortunately were numbered, his career destined to be ended by debilitating illness. Even so, the early 1990s brought more well-received designs, perhaps most notably the Marty V. Leonard Chapel in Fort Worth, Texas, and Pine Eagle, a small chapel at a Boy Scout camp in southern Mississippi.

In terms used by Jones when describing his approach to design, the chapel in Fort Worth presented a "problem"—"the program, the site, orientation, and the materials to be used"—considerably different from the sorts of projects for which he was known. The chapel occupies an urban site on a "a nearly treeless hillside overlooking Interstate 30 west of downtown"[83] Fort Worth. Because of its location, "the Leonard Chapel is made of brick, Philippine mahogany and glass, and is turned inward to minimize distractions and provide a secluded place for meditation."[84] Termed "an impressive achievement"[85] by the architectural critic for *The Dallas Morning News*, the chapel demonstrated Jones's ability to use his design philosophy and principles to solve any "problem" presented to him.

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[83] David Dillon, "Grandeur In A Small Place: Fay Jones' Leonard Chapel Is An Impressive Achievement," *The Dallas Morning News*, 5 December 1990, p. 4C
[84] Dean, p. 110.
[85] Dillon, p. 4C.

A more typical "problem" for Jones was the rural lakeside site of Pine Eagle, the tiny (500 square feet) chapel/multi-purpose pavilion he designed for a Boy Scout camp. At the chapel's dedication in November of 1991, Jones said the small structure "attempts to align itself with the earth, the water, and the sky . . . with the wonderful bounties of nature."[86] Robert Ivy asserts that Pine Eagle captured "the spiritual qualities of transcendence and imminence in its frame. The structure both points upward—aligning itself with universal, timeless forces—and opens outward—framing the immediate world like a Zen window."[87] Pine Eagle was just one more example of Fay Jones's enormous gift, in Vernon Reed's words, for ordering "every piece of building material into a magic web. . . ."[88]

Sadly, Parkinson's disease forced Fay Jones to retire from his architectural practice at the end of 1997. Designs for six residences, a visitor center, two pavilions, two chapels, and a fountain rounded out the final five years of his career.[89] Most of these projects were not in his home state but, fittingly enough, the very last completed Jones design—the Fulbright Fountain,[90] dedicated in 1998—is on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

The Design Philosophy and Principles of Fay Jones

> . . . as architects we have the potential to build buildings that not only accommodate our functional needs, but stand as models which represent the best of our ideas. We have the power and responsibility to shape new physical and spatial forms in the landscape—forms that will sustain and nourish and express that all-important intangible, the human condition at its spiritual best.[91]

Throughout the forty-one years of his career, Fay Jones sought to design buildings that would "sustain and nourish and express . . . the human condition at its spiritual best." He did so by consistently following the same design philosophy and principles. As he first explained to a national audience in 1962: "Always, my design philosophy is one of organic fabrication, the unity of part and whole." Further, he said, "The solution must grow directly out of the problem itself—the program, the site, orientation, and the materials to be used."[92]

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[86] Jones quoted in Ivy, p. 93.
[87] Ivy, p. 93.
[88] Vernon Reed to Christopher J. Smith.
[89] Telephone interview with Mrs. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas, 22 January 2000.
[90] The fountain honors the late Senator J. William Fulbright, a Fayetteville native.
[91] Jones quoted in *What Makes A Good Building*, p. 12.
[92] "Organic Fabrication," p. 139.

Over and over, and more frequently as his reputation grew, Jones articulated his philosophy and principles. Speaking for a professional audience in a 1983 interview with William Lake Douglas, Jones said:

> Frank Lloyd Wright and the principles of organic architecture have had the greatest influence on my architecture. Those principles have to do with relating, symbiotically, a building to its site, and with displaying and using materials honestly.
>
> What made Wright's work appeal to me was the total attention he gave to everything: landscape, interior design, appointments. And the "part and whole" relationship—each part inner-linking and intertwining so that it is all out of the same piece of cloth.[93]

In the same year, but being interviewed for an *Arkansas Times* magazine article, Jones went into more detail explaining his approach to design to a lay audience:

> The building-site relationship is one of the tenets of organic architecture—this strong sense of the symbiotic relationship of a building to its site. Somehow you're trying to look at the ideal aspects of the site, trying to build a building that's responsive to its environmental context. . . . You've got to incorporate the place into making the architecture so that the natural fact and the artifact are working together to their mutual benefit. . . .
>
> Another tenet of Wrightian architecture is the part-whole relationship in the bigger and smaller elements of a building. The part is to the whole as the whole is to the part—that is the simplest definition that Mr. Wright gave to organic architecture. . . .
>
> Another tenet involves the nature of the materials—that is, using materials according to their nature. You don't embarrass a material by putting it into some inferior position. . . . Whatever it is doing, it's doing that job better than anything else could, and it's in a position of honor in the whole ensemble.[94]

Elaborating on the "part-whole relationship," Jones often talked about the "generating idea" needed to create a good design:

> "Organic architecture has a central generating idea; as in most organisms every part and every piece has a relationship. Each should benefit the other; there should be a family of form, and pattern. You should feel the relationship to the parts and to the whole."[95]

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[93] E. Fay Jones, "The Generative Idea," p. 68.
[94] Jones quoted in White, pp. 60-61.
[95] Jones quoted in *"Outside the Pale"*, p. 48.

And:

> "The generating idea establishes the central characteristics, or the essence, or the nucleus, or the core; it's the seed idea that grows and generates the complete design, where it manifests itself from the large elements down to the small subdivision of the details."[96]

Other themes frequently sounded by Jones in discussing his work are closely related to the organic ideal. For instance, there was the need for architecture to transcend mere building to become art: "You could have [a design] very mechanistically diagrammed out and you could build box-like things that [serve the need for shelter], but that's mere building—that's just construction. Technically it might be all right, but it's not architecture. Architecture has got to transcend that some way."[97]

Jones also sometimes linked architecture and music, a practice that dated back to his years at the University of Oklahoma, teaching under Bruce Goff in the early 1950s. Robert Ivy says Jones "recalled Goff's passion for music, that recordings of works by Villa-Lobos, Ravel, and Debussy reverberated through the building and provoked discussions of music's relationship to architecture."[98] Jones himself said, "Music is more than something for the soul; it is information that one can absorb and analyze. In listening to music, I hear certain systems of order, rhythms, and counterpoint which I feel can take place in architecture, in built form, as form and space. Architecture is a kind of instrument on which nature can play."[99]

In adapting the principles of organic architecture to his own work, Fay Jones was embracing, according to Robert Ivy, "an evolving tradition that extends back 200 years. Romantic philosophers, led by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and their literary popularizers unleashed forces still reverberating when they proclaimed the supremacy of nature. Equating nature and truth, they made nature the criterion by which all phenomena are united."[100]

In a section called "Nature and Romanticism" in his book about Jones, Ivy explains the rise of Romanticism in literature and the parallel architectural movement away from "a classical system

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[96] Ibid., p. 54,
[97] Jones quoted in White, p. 61.
[98] Ivy, p. 18.
[99] E. Fay Jones, "The Generative Idea," p. 69.
[100] Ivy, p. 22.

based on mathematical models to a pluralistic melange."[101] The transcendentalists of New England—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Walt Whitman, and others—brought the discussion of nature and truth to this country. Ivy notes that the transcendentalists had a strong influence on Fay Jones's mentor, Frank Lloyd Wright, and that Emerson even described organic architecture: "We feel, in seeing a noble building . . . that it is spiritually organic; that is, had a necessity, in Nature, for being; was one of the possible forms in the Divine mind, and is now only discovered and executed by the artist, not arbitrarily composed by him."[102]

Writing in 1914, Frank Lloyd Wright discussed the evolution of organic architecture in America:

> [The] ideal of an organic architecture for America was touched by [Henry Hobson] Richardson and [John Wellborn] Root, and perhaps other men, but was developing consciously twenty-eight years ago in the practice of [Dankmar] Adler & [Louis] Sullivan, when I went to work in their office. This ideal combination of Adler & Sullivan was then working to produce what no other combination of architects nor any individual architect at that time dared even preach—a sentient, rational building that would owe its "style" to the integrity with which it was individually fashioned to serve its particular purpose—a "thinking" as well as "feeling" process, requiring the independent work of a true artist imagination. . . ."[103]

While carrying forward a philosophical, artistic tradition, Fay Jones's organic architecture was not imitative. As he discussed in his 1990 Gold Medal speech, he saw architecture as a continuum and took pleasure in making creative connections between his work and "its sources—sources not simply quoted, but transformed."

That Jones transformed rather than quoted his sources is widely acknowledged. William Marlin asserts that "Jones is not an emulous disciple of Wright but a transporting deliverance, evolving organic values beyond his hero's vocabulary."[104] Jack Golden, founding editor of *Friends of Kebyar* and a former student of Jones at the University of Oklahoma, said Jones "has proven his architectural maturity by creating his own traditions and mastering the art of integrating structure

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[101] Ibid.
[102] Emerson quoted in Ivy, p. 22.
[103] Wright, p. 406.
[104] Marlin, p. 30.

and nature to produce architecture of real and lasting beauty."[105] Writing for *Atlantic Monthly*, Philip Langdon discussed the issue at some length:

> Fay Jones's career has turned out to be more fruitful than those of most Wright devotees. Nearly seven hundred people apprenticed under Wright from Taliesin's founding, in 1932, until the master's death, in 1959, and the Taliesin organization continues to train students and design buildings. Yet hardly a word is heard about most architects who came under Wright's tutelage. While Wright himself is proclaimed a genius and celebrated with an endless series of books and museum exhibits, the apprentices are, as a group, held in low esteem in the profession. . . .
>
> There are many sources for this disdain—among them an uneasy sense that those who stayed too long in Wright's rural compounds became architectural cultists. . . .
>
> Jones turned out different. He absorbed the underlying principles of Wright's work and has used them to devise remarkably satisfying houses that are not clones of Wright's."[106]

Wright himself identified one distinction between his work and Jones's when he visited the Jones residence in 1958 and commented on the vertical emphasis created by the home's board and batten siding.[107] This vertical emphasis became more pronounced as Jones's work evolved, culminating in the soaring spaces of his chapels.

Another obvious distinction was Jones's use of expressed structure, a characteristic that Robert Ivy suggests hearkened back to Jones's study of civil engineering.[108] As Jones explained in an interview with William Marlin: "What is significantly different [about my work] is that I have been interested in showing the structure, such as the beams, joints, joinery, and other kinds of connectors that are clearly articulated in my buildings." By contrast, Jones said, "Wright, for some deeply felt reasons, was always after spatial plasticity, and you often have a helluva time figuring out what is actually holding his things together, or up. . . ."[109]

Andrea Oppenheimer Dean states: "Wright's and Jones's work diverge in much the same way as do the architects' temperaments. There is a soft side to the architecture and personality of Jones that is seldom seen in Wright. While some of Wright's buildings feel dark, Jones's are always

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[105] Golden, p. 2.
[106] Langdon, p. 84.
[107] Marlin, p. 37.
[108] Ivy, p. 16.
[109] Marlin, p. 33.

suffused with light."[110] Similarly, Philip Langdon points out that "Jones's geometry is less demanding than the master's. His floor plans are looser, for example, and his furniture is relaxed and informal."[111]

The philosophical underpinnings of organic architecture, translated into the principles that Fay Jones learned from Frank Lloyd Wright—building-site relationship, part-whole relationship, nature of materials—brought coherence to Jones's work. It was his gift, however, to be able to use the principles to design buildings that "sustain and nourish and express . . . the human condition at its spiritual best."

Architecture in Arkansas

Arkansas is an unlikely place to find an architect of Fay Jones's talent and stature. Edward Durell Stone, another Arkansas native who reached the highest echelons of the architectural profession, took the more predictable route to success by leaving Arkansas at an early age to study at top schools (Harvard and M.I.T.), eventually establishing an East Coast practice that grew to international proportions.

By staying in (or, actually, returning to) Arkansas, Fay Jones consigned himself to having mainly a regional audience until the world took notice of Thorncrown Chapel. In choosing Arkansas as home base, he was—as always—following his own drummer. Ultimately, however, he proved that exceptional talent can be fulfilled no matter its location, and recognition will follow.

For its entire history, Arkansas has been—relative to the rest of the U.S.—a poor and poorly-educated state with a small population. Better known for its natural attractions than its man-made ones, Arkansas has an architectural legacy that is much different from older and more affluent states—and one that is not nearly so well documented. Only now is a book on the state's architecture underway.[112]

A few men billed themselves as architects prior to the Civil War in Arkansas, but they are thought to have been skilled craftsmen who planned buildings that they constructed. (One, an "R. Larrimore," who briefly lived in Little Rock during the 1840s, advertised both his

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[110] Dean, p. 108.
[111] Langdon, p. 86.
[112] Cyrus Sutherland, a retired University of Arkansas professor of architecture, is preparing *Buildings of Arkansas*, one in a series of books on "Buildings of the United States" sponsored by the Society of Architectural Historians.

architectural and undertaking skills.[113]) Not until after the Civil War did architects deserving of the title begin settling permanently in Arkansas, coming to take advantage of opportunities created by war's end. Between 1865 and 1870, for example, Little Rock's population more than tripled, spawning a building boom that had attracted architect Thomas Harding by 1869.[114] He was followed over the next few decades by several others, notably Charles L. Thompson, who arrived in 1886 and practiced until 1938. Because most other towns in Arkansas during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were too small to sustain an architect's practice, Thompson and his firm (as well as other Little Rock-based architects) designed buildings all over the state. Thompson's significant impact on the state's built environment was recognized by the listing of more than 120 of his firm's designs in the National Register in 1982 (NR 12/22/82).

A few of the architects who came to Arkansas were professionally trained (including one, George R. Mann, who had attended M.I.T. and worked briefly for McKim, Mead, and White[115]), but most either had started as draftsmen and worked their ways up or were schooled in engineering. As educational and licensing requirements became more stringent, young Arkansans interested in becoming architects had to leave the state to go to school. Some of them returned home to practice; others remained away. A major turning point for the architectural profession in the state came with the creation of the architecture program at the University of Arkansas in 1946—the program from which Fay Jones was one of the first five graduates in 1950.

The number of architects in Arkansas increased with the availability of professional training in the state. Many Arkansas-trained architects established practices in smaller Arkansas cities, so that those needing the services of an architect did not always have to turn to Little Rock for assistance. However, even in Little Rock, architectural firms remained relatively small and typically served no more than a regional clientele. (Today, there are some exceptions to this rule. For example, the firm founded by Charles L. Thompson in the late 19th century, now known as Cromwell Truemper Levy Thompson Woodsmall Inc., has thirty-nine architects and engineers [and a total staff of 103] and a national practice in certain specialized areas.)

Considering the size of its population (currently about 2.5 million) and the income levels of its residents, Arkansas has been adequately served—perhaps surprisingly well served—by architects since the late 19th century. Today, the AIA lists 128 architectural firms in Arkansas, with small

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[113] F. Hampton Roy, *Charles L. Thompson and Associates: Arkansas Architects, 1885-1938* (Little Rock: August House, 1982), p. 17.
[114] F. Hampton Roy and Charles Witsell, with Cheryl Griffith Nichols, *How We Lived: Little Rock As An American City* (Little Rock: August House, 1984), p. 109.
[115] Roy, *Charles L. Thompson and Associates*, p. 67.

firms located in cities and towns throughout the state. In Little Rock, the state's largest city, a few dozen small to mid-sized firms are in business, along with three firms considered large by Arkansas standards.[116]

While there has been no particular dearth of architects in Arkansas, the state has produced only two—Edward Durell Stone and Fay Jones—whose names are recognized nationally and internationally. Of the two, only Jones received his architectural training and established his practice in the state. Also, of the two (and of *all* Arkansas architects), only Fay Jones was selected to receive the AIA Gold Medal. Given these facts, it is safe to say that there never has been, and may never be again, another architect in Arkansas like Fay Jones—an architect of extraordinary talent who was born and educated in the state, chose to practice there, and went on to international acclaim and the AIA's highest honor.

Fay Jones's Influence on American Architects and Architecture

From the time he began architecture school in 1946 until he retired from practice in 1997, Jones saw the rise and fall of a number of architectural styles or movements. While he was an architecture student at the University of Arkansas, the International style still generally held sway, but in his first few years out of school, Jones was immersed in organic architecture as practiced—very differently—by Bruce Goff and Frank Lloyd Wright. (Jones has said that Goff's approach to organic design produced buildings that "began to look like organisms."[117]) After his teaching career started at the University of Arkansas, Jones saw fellow Arkansan Edward Durell Stone emerge as a leading practitioner of Neo-Formalism, and Jones was a self-professed admirer of Louis Kahn, sometimes associated with Brutalism. Post-modernism and Deconstructivism also appeared on the architectural scene before the end of Jones's long career.

As a professor of architecture, Jones stayed abreast of architectural trends. As a practitioner, however, he chose his own course. Writing about Jones's "place in contemporary architecture," Robert Ivy has said:

> "Outside the pale," Jones's admission of noninvolvement in contemporary ideological dialogue, sums up his attitude toward most contemporary building and frames an understanding of this architect's work. An individualist whose work has followed a steady path, Jones has maintained a calm voice through years of raging debate, clashing

[116] The 1999 Little Rock telephone book lists about seventy-five small and mid-sized firms. The three large firms are Cromwell Truemper Levy Thompson Woodsmall Inc., Gaskin Hill Norcross (formerly the Blass Firm), and Wittenberg Delony & Davidson Inc.

[117] Ivy, p. 29.

philosophies, and changing styles. The voice is firm with self-knowledge. Jones's path has been his own.[118]

Ivy goes on to note: "In any review of the architecture of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Jones's work stands resolutely alone, revealing no parallel, no peer, and no apparent successor."[119]

If Jones left "no apparent successor," did he have no real influence on architecture during his career? American architects said otherwise in 1991, when they named him one of the country's most admired living architects. While the influence of eminent architects sometimes is demonstrated by pointing to designs by other architects that obviously mimic the work of the masters, the influence of Fay Jones is more subtle and, some would say, more profound. To mimic a Jones design is to betray the principles Jones followed in his work. Architects who claim his influence, and do so justifiably, do not design buildings to look like his. Rather, they strive to emulate his design principles and to infuse into their work the power and spirit of Jones's best designs. They are *inspired* by Jones, not merely influenced by him.

The physical characteristics of Jones's work that exerted the most influence—or provided the most inspiration—remained very consistent over the years. From the beginning of his career, Jones was admired for his ways with space, light, and natural materials, as well as for the coherence of his designs. The very first article published on a Jones design (in 1959) commented on "the magnificent development of interior space."[120] Similar comments about Jones's orchestration of space and light, about his meticulous crafting of natural materials, about his buildings' relationships to their settings, and about the relationship between small details and the overall design are found in a majority of the articles written on Jones's buildings. (See previous discussion in section on Jones's career.)

Also from the beginning of his career, those who wrote about Jones's work often moved past analysis of the physical attributes of his buildings to discuss the emotional impact the buildings had on those who experienced them. For example, at one Jones-designed house built in the early 1960s, the living room's "view, changing with the time of day and season of the year, is a continuing source of refreshment."[121] The residence of Mrs. Harold Snow, for which Jones won

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[118] Ivy, p. 12.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Henley, p. 299.
[121] Curtis Besinger, "It's Not How Much You Spend But How You Spend It," *House Beautiful*, June 1962, p. 81.

an AIA Award of Merit in 1964, was described as "a revelation of the part that architecture can play in outlook, in mood, in depth of enjoyment."[122]

Fay Jones's influence on other architects is manifest in their responses to his work. In 1976, architect John H. Howe of Minneapolis wrote to Jones:

> I am a jealous wreck [after seeing slides of your work]. I can only gasp at the magnificence and richness of your interiors. Indeed your living rooms are twentieth century baronial halls; withal so harmonious, broad in concept and delightful in detail, all parts related to the whole. The flow of space, and integration between exterior and interior, is unparalleled.[123]

The following year (and three years before Thorncrown Chapel opened to world-wide acclaim), architect O'Neil Ford said, "Most people don't know it yet, but Fay Jones is one of the most outstanding architects in America."[124]

Charles Moore also was among those in the architectural profession who recognized Fay Jones's greatness early on. In the foreword to Robert Ivy's 1992 book on Jones, Moore wrote:

> It must be almost forty years since I first saw a Fay Jones house. . . . I remember thinking it was beautiful—that it had rich and mysterious spaces . . . [and] there were fiendishly ingenious details. . . .
>
> . . . When [Thorncrown Chapel] was finished, and dazzled every architecture jury in sight, then clearly the time was right for Fay's extraordinary talent, at once familiar and amazing, to become public—celebrated in books and magazines worldwide. Suddenly the secret was out and the wonderful works of Fay Jones were the center of public celebrations, culminating in his 1990 AIA Gold Medal.
>
> I have no real excuse to congratulate myself that one of my continuing enthusiasms for all these decades has become a national historic treasure. But it does make me proud, even thrilled, to see that this powerful and special genius who embodies nearly all the qualities we admire in an architect has become a part of the public realm.[125]

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[122] "A House That Turns Existing Into Living," p. 176.
[123] John H. Howe to E. Fay Jones, 4 April 1976, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas.
[124] O'Neil Ford quoted in Marlin, p. 29.
[125] Charles W. Moore, "Foreword" in Ivy, p. 7.

Thorncrown Chapel, of course, brought Jones and his work to the attention of a much wider audience. Just as thousands of average people who visited Thorncrown fell under its spell, architectural authorities were awed by what Jones had accomplished. The "Statement of Contribution" that is part of Jones's nomination for the AIA Gold Medal refers to the architectural community's response to Thorncrown:

> In 1986, *Architecture* magazine invited its readers to nominate buildings of the last 10 years for addition to its 1976 list of the best works of architecture of America's first 200 years. The building that evoked the greatest response was the tiny, remote Thorncrown Chapel. . . . In his editorial, Don Canty quoted an anonymous nominator: ". . . the most complete and fully expressed architectural thought built in the last 10 years." Critic Wolf Von Eckardt, writing in *Time* magazine, compared Jones's work to music: "The Chapel is as evocative as a Bach fugue."[126]

Writing for *Architectural Record*, Charles K. Gandee said: "For the last 30 years, Jones has been gradually perfecting a distinctive vernacular that seems to have as its goal the symbiotic melding of architecture and landscape. . . . Thorncrown Chapel . . . bespeaks a lifelong pursuit of mastering materials, forms, and details."[127]

As Thorncrown Chapel became widely known, perfect strangers—some in the architectural profession and others not—let Fay Jones know what the building meant to them:

> "I recently saw photographs of your Thorncrown Chapel in the AIA Journal. What a glorious statement of hope. . . . I'm not sure why I'm writing to you, except that your work is a great encouragement to me."[128]

> "This is simply to tell you how much I like and admire your Thorncrown Chapel. . . . I hope . . . you will not have reason to cringe at the sight of the influence your chapel will have on others."[129]

> "I was in your audience at MIT the other evening and now I know why I like Thorncrown

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[126] "Statement of Contribution," 1990 Gold Medal nomination, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D. C.
[127] Gandee, p. 88.
[128] Ted Trinkaus, Wake Forest, North Carolina, to E. Fay Jones, 12 November 1981, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas.
[129] Harwell Hamilton Harris, Architect, Raleigh, North Carolina, to E. Fay Jones, 27 October 1981, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

> Chapel so much. . . . I felt a soaring of the mind and spirit. . . . And what a teacher you are! As a lay person I learned a great deal and one could see from the response of the students that they did too. Your personal integrity hovered over the podium as you spoke."[130]

As his reputation grew, Jones increasingly was in demand as a speaker, particularly at schools of architecture. After hearing Jones lecture at the University of Hawaii Architecture School in 1987, Elmer Botsai, FAIA wrote: "You have restored my soul. . . . Obviously your work speaks for itself. You are without question one of the most consummate architects in the history of American architecture."[131]

Rick Phillips, a Honolulu architect who also heard Jones speak at the University of Hawaii Architecture School, later wrote an article for *Friends of Kebyar* in which he called Jones "nothing less than a figure of historical significance at a time when architecture sorely needs some 'history in the making.'" Pegging Jones as "an intellectual architect," Phillips said that "he is an accessible intellectual. His games challenge, but all of us can play."[132]

Shortly before Jones was nominated for the 1990 AIA Gold Medal, Philip Langdon wrote in *Atlantic Monthly* that "architects admire Jones because he has had the tenacity to continue exploring a small number of enduring ideas rather than accommodating himself to every shift of fashion from Bauhaus to Deconstructivism. . . ."[133] Further, according to Langdon:

> Fay Jones exerts a powerful appeal because he brings to the fore two deep-rooted American ideals. One is that of the individualist who develops a personal philosophy about his work and holds to it, even when others in his field are heading in an entirely different direction. The other is that of the lovingly designed and carefully crafted single-family house in a setting imbued with nature.[134]

Similar points about Jones were made in the Gold Medal nomination's "Statement of Contribution":

> His work articulates a set of unified philosophies which embrace man's great intellectual and intuitive powers. . . .

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[130] Betty Meyer, editor of *Faith and Forum*, to E. Fay Jones, quoted in "Statement of Contribution."
[131] Elmer Botsai, FAIA to E. Fay Jones, quoted in "Statement of Contribution."
[132] Rick Phillips, "Fay Jones: Intuition & Intellect," *Friends of Kebyar*, April/June 1989, p. 12.
[133] Langdon, p. 85.
[134] Ibid., p. 87.

He has unselfishly shared those philosophies with students and practitioners for over 35 years—all across the nation—as his special insights are sought by colleges and universities, by AIA chapters and components for lectures, exhibitions, and design awards jury duty.

His work is acclaimed by ordinary folks—those who have some difficulty understanding the trendy fashions of architecture—as well as by architecture's most severe and knowledgeable critics.

His form of practice—small in size, limited in building types, mainly regional in scope—has proved to be exactly right for his peers to be inspired by his design accomplishments. With over 80% of the architectural firms in the United States identifying with his size and form of practice, Fay Jones stands as an exemplar for honesty in design.[135]

In closing, the "Statement of Contribution" asserts: "Fay Jones's gentle, nurturing design work enriches human life; . . . it truly represents the most consummate pure architectural design that our profession is capable of producing."[136]

Supporting Jones's Gold Medal nomination were letters from well-known authorities, including Charles Moore, who admitted to having been "an ardent fan of Fay Jones since what must have been the late 'fifties," when he visited his first Jones-designed house. "It represented the kind of effective focus of a boundless capacity for caring that I thought then and still think is unequaled in an architect of our time," Moore wrote. Moreover, Jones's work "is I think truly great transcendent architecture, all the greater because it speaks intimately to many, many people."[137]

Harlan E. McClure, Dean Emeritus of the Clemson University College of Architecture (and, like Jones, an American Collegiate Schools of Architecture Distinguished Professor), wrote of Jones's "extraordinary capacity to deal brilliantly with a broad range of American building problems in which his organization of space and his uncommon use of commonplace materials elevates them to poetic compositional elements beautifully ordered to capture the joy of living and the grandeur of a place." Calling Jones "a complete master of his art," McClure stated: "This gentle unassuming man has built with knowledge, integrity, and a grace that has placed his work in a rare category, appreciated by the general public as well as by more sophisticated critics."[138]

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[135] "Statement of Contribution."
[136] Ibid.
[137] Charles W. Moore, FAIA to the AIA Board of Directors, 20 November 1989, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.
[138] Harlan E. McClure, FAIA to the AIA Board of Directors, 15 November 1989, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.

William Marlin began his letter of support by explaining that "over twenty years of newspaper and magazine commentary, and more recently as the authorized biographer of Buckminster Fuller and Frank Lloyd Wright, I have been privileged to explore and explain the values and visions of some of the most momentously creative, profoundly principled figures of our century." Seeking to learn more about greatness, Marlin wrote, "it was not long before I was drawn to the radiantly dynamic example of Fay Jones, who is integrity incarnate—and an artesian font of inspiration for those who genuinely care about the practical dimensions of philosophic depth." Speaking of the architecture and the man, he stated: "If the adroit siting, lyrical clarity, engaging scale, and superb detailing of [Jones's] work rings true for a great many people, this is in part because his own honesty, humanity, creative honor, and capacity for reverence have found compelling countenance." Finally: "While it cannot be said that Fay Jones has defined, codified, and evangelized some new architectural epoch, whether of style or theory, he has discerned and dramatized a needed direction, bringing off his exploration of both historical precedent and contemporary imperative with consummate discipline."[139]

Architectural historian Richard Longstreth, who "has focused on American subjects of the 19th and 20th centuries," discussed Fay Jones's contributions in the realm of domestic design, saying: "The caliber of the work itself is very high, and collectively it reaffirms the importance of such a practice to the legacy of modern American architecture." Like many other Jones observers, he noted that "Jones has always been very much his own architect; his work is distinct and distinguished unto itself." Asserting that "Jones is among the few architects of any generation who has mastered the faculty of grounding design in the basics of the program, while developing the design so that it transcends those concrete factors," Longstreth summarized by saying Fay Jones "is an architect who resists easy categorization, but one of great artistry, originality, and distinction."[140]

Jones's selection to receive the 1990 Gold Medal brought more personal tributes from his peers. Hugh Newell Jacobsen wrote a particularly warm and enthusiastic letter of congratulation:

> There simply are not words to express the absolute righteous, correct, timely and altogether appropriate choice by the AIA for the recipient of the Gold Medal! At last we have one of us engraved on that granite wall of real heroes and corporate heavies.
>
> At last we have one of us who write specs banging away alone in the basement late at

[139] William Marlin to the AIA Board of Directors, 20 November 1989, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.
[140] Richard Longstreth to the AIA Board of Directors, 3 November 1989, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.

night on the typewriter; one who is still there thru [*sic*] the weekend detailing in a sea of yellow bum-wad.

Your work is consistent and growing better.
Your work is at once fresh and inevitable.
Your work is art.[141]

Two years later, after Thorncrown Chapel had been selected by AIA members as the best work of American architecture during the 1980s, Jacobsen wrote to Fay Jones again, saying the selection "secures your place forever in American Architecture. We who had you there for years salute you."[142]

Even in retirement, Jones continued to receive praise for his work and evidence of his influence on American architecture—and on Americans:

> I'm writing both to congratulate you on a lifetime of work that places you among the immortals, and to tell you that you've been an inspiration to me for a very long time. I'm sure that despite the honors you have so deservingly been given, you can have no idea of how many lives of both architects and nonarchitects you have impacted in powerfully positive ways.[143]

On occasion, Jones's impact extended beyond the boundaries of the U. S. In 1992, British architectural student Mark Jefferson took part in an exchange program between the University of Arkansas and the University of Brighton. Now he says: "The effect of meeting Fay Jones and experiencing some of his buildings . . has been profound and has given me great inspiration to try to create something of value in buildings of my own."[144]

Though expressed in many different ways, there are common themes running through all that has been said about the influence and inspiration of Fay Jones and his work:

1) *He set his own course, following the same design philosophy and principles*

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[141] Hugh Newell Jacobsen to E. Fay Jones, 19 December 1989, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas.
[142] Hugh Newell Jacobsen to E. Fay Jones, 8 November 1991, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas.
[143] Edward Allen, Architect to E. Fay Jones, 15 October 1998, personal papers of E. Fay Jones, Fayetteville, Arkansas. Mr. Allen is the author of the textbook *Fundamentals of Building Construction: Materials and Methods*.
[144] Mark Jefferson to Cheryl Nichols via e-mail, 13 January 2000.

throughout his career, regardless of current architectural trends. Not only did this make his work unique but his design integrity was a source of inspiration in the architectural community.

"An individualist who followed his own path. . . ." (Ivy)

". . . he has had the tenacity to continue exploring a small number of enduring ideas rather than accommodating himself to every shift of fashion. . . ." (Langdon)

". . . an architect who resists easy categorization. . . ." (Longstreth)

2) *He was a master of his art. His manipulation of space and light, integration of buildings into their settings, and ability to meld details with the overall design of a building were exceptional.*

"I can only gasp at the magnificence and richness of your interiors. . . . The flow of space, and integration between exterior and interior, is unparalleled." (Howe)

". . . rich and mysterious spaces. . . fiendishly ingenious details. . . ." (Moore)

". . . lifelong pursuit of mastering materials, forms, and details." (Gandee)

". . . extraordinary capacity to deal brilliantly with a broad range of American building problems in which his organization of space and his uncommon use of commonplace materials elevates them to poetic compositional elements beautifully ordered. . . ." (McClure)

3) *He designed buildings that not only were beautiful but carried a powerful emotional impact.*

". . . glorious statement of hope. . . ." (Trinkaus)

". . . soaring of the mind and spirit. . . ." (Meyer)

"You have restored my soul. . . ." (Botsai)

"Fay Jones's gentle, nurturing design work enriches human life. . . ." (Statement of Contribution)

4) *He always exhibited great personal and professional integrity, providing inspiration and serving as an excellent role model.*

". . . embodies nearly all of the qualities we admire in an architect. . . ." (Moore)

"Your personal integrity hovered over the podium as you spoke." (Meyer)

". . . integrity incarnate. . . ." (Marlin)

5) *He maintained a small practice that focused on the design of houses, again providing inspiration and serving as a role model for other architects.*

"The caliber of the work itself is very high, and collectively it reaffirms the importance of such a practice to the legacy of modern American architecture." (Longstreth)

"At last we have one of us engraved on that granite wall of real heroes and corporate

heavies." (Jacobsen)

"His form of practice—small in size, limited in building type, mainly regional in scope—has proved to be exactly right for his peers to be inspired by his design accomplishments." (Statement of Contribution)

6) *The impact of his work was far-reaching because it appealed to both design professionals and to the general public.*

". . . an accessible intellectual. His games challenge, but all of us can play." (Phillips)

"His work is acclaimed by ordinary folks . . . as well as by architecture's most severe and knowledgeable critics." (Statement of Contribution)

"This gentle unassuming man has built with knowledge, integrity, and a grace that has placed his work in a rare category, appreciated by the general public as well as by more sophisticated critics." (McClure)

7) *The man and his work simply were extraordinary.*

". . . one of the most outstanding architects in America." (Ford)

". . . has become a national historic treasure. . . [a] powerful and special genius. . . . " (Moore)

". . . without question one of the most consummate architects in the history of American architecture." (Botsai)

". . . nothing less than a figure of historical significance. . . ." (Phillips)

"[His work] is I think great transcendent architecture, all the greater because it speaks intimately to many, many people." (Moore)

". . . a complete master of his art. . . ." (McClure)

". . . an architect . . . of great artistry, originality, and distinction." (Longstreth)

"Your work is art." (Jacobsen)

". . . a lifetime of work that places you among the immortals. . . ." (Allen)

Frank Lloyd Wright knew that many of his students simply imitated his work, but Wright hoped for more: "[W]hen the genius arrives nobody will take his work for mine—least of all will he mistake my work for his."[145] Clearly, there are many who believe the genius arrived in Fay Jones.

[145] Wright, p. 410.

F. Associated Property Types

Name of Property Type: Arkansas structures designed by architect E. Fay Jones

Description
Properties associated with this context will have been designed by E. Fay Jones and built between 1955 and 1990 in Arkansas. Reflecting the focus of Jones's practice, most properties will be residential and ecclesiastical structures. Jones, however, did execute a few commercial and civic designs, the latter usually taking the form of pavilions in park-like settings.

In all cases, Jones's projects reflect the philosophy and principles of organic design to which he adhered throughout his career, emphasizing the character of the materials employed, the building's relationship to its natural setting, and the relationship of the parts to the whole. In keeping with the manner in which Jones always approached design, allowing the solution to grow out of the problem (program, site, orientation, materials to be used), his structures cannot be categorized by style, but they do generally exhibit certain characteristics for which Jones became known: masterful orchestration of space and light, respect for the natural setting, use of simple but meticulously crafted natural materials (especially wood and stone), integration of ornament into the overall design, expressed structure, and repetition of forms.

Significance
The extraordinary artistry and intellect of E. Fay Jones, his unique place in architecture in Arkansas, and the inspirational influence that he had on architects and architecture in America—and on the ordinary people who experienced his structures—give his work exceptional significance at the state or, in one instance, the national level, thus falling into the category of Criteria Consideration G. Selected examples of his work in Arkansas are eligible for the National Register under Criterion C because they are the works of a master and possess high artistic values.

Despite the relatively recent vintage of Fay Jones's work, many of his projects have been the object of close scrutiny by other architects, architectural critics, and historians, allowing them to be placed in historical perspective. Defining Jones's place in the American architectural continuum is made easier by his adherence to principles of organic architecture that now are nearly a century old (as articulated by Frank Lloyd Wright), as well as by his choice to adhere to those principles regardless of current architectural trends. His was not a "style" but an approach to design, helping to put to rest concerns about whether his work will hold up as architectural trends come and go.

In presenting Fay Jones with the Gold Medal for a lifetime of achievement, the American architectural community, as represented by the American Institute of Architects, already has declared his body of work to be historically significant. Architectural authorities also have established the fact that Jones alone, among hundreds of architects who studied under Frank Lloyd Wright, had the genius to transform the teachings of his mentor into original architecture. Specific structures that have been authoritatively analyzed and are widely considered to be some of the best examples of Jones's work can be said with confidence to have exceptional significance.

As discussed more thoroughly in the section on Jones's influence, his exceptional significance is underscored by the many ways in which he and his work influenced and inspired:

1) He set his own course, following the same design philosophy and principles throughout his career, regardless of current architectural trends. Not only did this make his work unique but his design integrity was a source of inspiration in the architectural community.

2) He was a master of his art. His manipulation of space and light, integration of buildings into their settings, and ability to meld details with the overall design of a building were exceptional.

3) He designed buildings that not only were beautiful but carried a powerful emotional impact.

4) He always exhibited great personal and professional integrity, providing inspiration and serving as an excellent role model.

5) He maintained a small practice that focused on the design of houses, again providing inspiration and serving as a role model for other architects.

6) The impact of his work was far-reaching because it appealed to both design professionals and to the general public.

7) The man and his work simply were extraordinary.

In a letter of support for the nomination of Fay Jones-designed properties to the National Register, Robert Ivy writes that in reviewing Jones's projects, "one is struck by their complexity and complete synthesis—a remarkable achievement of the most sophisticated ideas in built form." He also makes the point that the "nature of the construction, primarily wood and stone,

and the fragile character of the sites that are so integral to Jones's work all demand protection that nomination to the Register could encourage."[146]

Finally, another letter of support, from the president of AIA Arkansas, makes clear the status of Fay Jones in Arkansas architecture: "It is safe to say that every architect within our state greatly admires and values the work of E. Fay Jones. His is not a style that can be emulated, but this is what makes his body of work so unique and important to our state. It is his approach to design, his respect for the site, and his attention to detail that have influenced architecture."[147]

The United States has produced many architects who became more famous than Jones did, who were more commercially successful than he, and who developed "styles" that other architects could imitate. However, very few architects hewed so closely, and with such remarkable results, to the same design philosophy and principles throughout their careers, consciously choosing to eschew current trends and remain "outside the pale." Even fewer architects have produced work that so consistently struck a deep emotional chord with both design professionals and the general public. As an architect, Fay Jones was exceptional—a true American original.

Registration Requirements

To be included in this nomination, properties must have the following characteristics:

(1) They must have been designed by E. Fay Jones between 1955 and 1990.
(2) They must be in Arkansas.
(3) They must exhibit all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The aspects of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship must be present because they all relate directly to Fay Jones's approach to design and the principles of organic architecture. In turn, if those five elements are intact, the aspect of feeling also will be present. The aspect of association will be present in all properties selected for inclusion in this nomination because they must be associated with Fay Jones.
(4) They must be exceptional examples of Jones's work, as identified both by the architect himself and by published authoritative analysis, so that they will fall into the category of Criteria Consideration G.

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[146] Robert A. Ivy, FAIA to Cathy Slater, Director, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 12 January 2000, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, Arkansas.
[147] Eugene Terry, President, AIA Arkansas, to Cathy Slater, 19 January 2000, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, Arkansas.

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

[X] See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

[X] See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- [X] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [X] University
- [X] Other

Specify repository: Maurice Jennings + David McKee, Architects

I. Form Prepared By

name/title Cheryl Nichols, consultant
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 3-6-00
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9880
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Early in 1996, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) initiated a context-driven survey of Arkansas buildings designed by noted Fayetteville architect E. Fay Jones, who at the time was still practicing. It was felt that these properties were in danger of deterioration or insensitive rehabilitation and that the work of Jones, the only architect in Arkansas who is internationally recognized, needed to be documented while still in relatively good condition. It was hoped that by emphasizing the importance of these properties, the AHPP could encourage their continued preservation, protection, use, and adaptive re-use.

The project involved significant interaction and cooperation among the AHPP's program areas. The AHPP architectural historian, working with Jones and his firm, identified all of the Jones-designed buildings in Arkansas and scheduled survey trips to document and photograph each building. All phases of the project were coordinated with National Register of Historic Places staff to determine which Jones-designed properties would be considered eligible for National Register listing. Throughout the course of the project, public input was sought through press releases to media outlets in areas of the state targeted for survey visits.

The multiple property listing of the Arkansas designs of E. Fay Jones is based on a survey of some seventy-five (75) examples of his work around the state. The survey was conducted primarily by Helen Berry, who served as AHPP survey historian, special projects historian, and architectural historian at various times during the project. She holds a B.A. in Art History from the University of Dallas and is completing a thesis on Fay Jones in order to receive an M.A. in Art History from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. At the end of 1998, she left the AHPP staff to begin work on a doctorate in Art History at New York University. While working on the Fay Jones project, she was assisted at various times by other members of the AHPP staff, primarily in support roles during the survey phase of the project.

The survey historians visited some seventy-five Jones-designed buildings. Seven of these were selected for inclusion in the nomination. These seven properties initially were identified by Jones himself as particularly important examples of his design philosophy and development as an architect. Their selection was confirmed by the professional historians and architectural historians of the AHPP's Survey and National Register staffs, who felt the properties met the "exceptional importance" mandate of Criterion Consideration G.

For each recorded property, locations were noted on USGS topographical maps and city maps. Photographs, both black and white prints and color slides, were taken of exterior elevations and

significant interior details. Computerized inventory forms, complete with plan view drawings, were completed. Research, utilizing primary, secondary, and oral history sources, was conducted.

When the nomination was returned to the AHPP by the National Register in March of 1999, Helen Berry had left the AHPP staff. Cheryl Nichols, a consultant, was contracted the following summer to do additional research to fill gaps and address concerns raised by National Register staff and to revise the nomination for resubmission. She has a B.A. in History from Hanover College in Indiana and an M.A. in American Civilization, with a concentration in historic preservation, from The George Washington University. For the past twenty years, she has been actively involved in preservation in Arkansas, including writing extensively on historic buildings and neighborhoods. Per National Register staff's recommendation, she familiarized herself with the many magazine and journal articles—some sixty of them—that have been written about Fay Jones and his work so that pertinent information from these articles could be incorporated into the nomination. She did the same with Robert Adams Ivy's book on Jones (and consulted Ivy himself via e-mail). She also did background research on Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruce Goff, and organic architecture; and she obtained additional information (particularly relevant to the issue of Jones's influence) from the American Institute of Architects in Washington, D.C., AIA Arkansas, and from Mr. and Mrs. E. Fay Jones. She also was able to take advantage of information assembled for an excellent exhibit on Fay Jones's work—*"Outside the Pale": The Architecture of Fay Jones*—that opened in June of 1999 in the newly-rehabilitated Old State House Museum in Little Rock.

The properties in this nomination are exceptionally significant documents of the work of an internationally known Arkansas architect who has retired from practice due to declining health. By publicly recognizing their importance, the AHPP hopes to ensure not only the properties' continued survival but, even more, the careful stewardship that they so richly deserve.

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