The Shampay House of 1919
Authorship and Ownership

"I really do not know what 'a Schindler' would look like. You know much better what a 'Wright' would look and be like." 1

Introduction

The Shampay House of 1919 has been commonly understood to be the very last of Frank Lloyd Wright's cruciform Prairie houses. A fair amount of controversy has surrounded the authorship of the design, in particular, the extent to which Wright was involved and the degree of Schindler's contribution. David Gebhard attributes the design to Wright in Tokyo, with Schindler in Chicago making modifications, giving the latter credit for certain details: in particular, the placement of the garage as part of the main body of the house.2 Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer agrees with Gebhard, and regards the house as a direct source for the development of Wright's Usonian houses some fourteen years later.3 Pfeiffer also appreciates the transitional quality of the project among Wright's work, especially in the way the living areas are opened up to the garden. Nevertheless, he finds "certain details clumsy," a quality he blames on the "draughtsmen" [sic] Schindler. Barbara Giella asserts that the "project utilizes Wrightian morphology but not Wrightian syntax." 4 Then she distinguishes its characteristic features from Wright's typical Prairie designs, describing its asymmetric "spatial configuration," "the placement of the bank of tall, narrow windows," and "the blank wall." Much earlier, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., had expressed a different opinion when he wrote that "the Monolithic Homes, as well as C. E. Staley and J. P. Shampay house were developed by Schindler during Wright's absence in Japan. They are hardly to be considered Wright's work, though they issued from his office and the Monolith Homes drawings carry his signature."5 These commentators focus on the characteristics of the design and the identification of an original designer. Due to the lack of clear documentary evidence or any detailed examination of the project, many of the circumstances surrounding the development of the project have remained obscure. Thus, many of these observers' conclusions are conjectural.

Until recently, the only available sources have been the drawings from the Schindler archive at the University of California, Santa Barbara,6 and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona.7 However, recently discovered letters and annotated blueprints of the house, taken together with letters from the Schindler archive, provide a valuable foundation for reexamining the facts.8 This study clarifies some of the confusion and polemics while addressing the evolution of the controversy.

In 1917, after working for Ottenheimer, Stern, and Reichert in Chicago, Schindler joined Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Wasmuth portfolio (1910) significantly contributed to the early developments of Schindler's architectural thought. Schindler recalled his impression of the portfolio as a student in Vienna: "I immediately realized—here was a
man who had taken hold of this new medium. Here was 'space architecture.' Schindler worked in Wright's Chicago and Taliesin offices at a time when the Imperial Hotel designs were undergoing revision. Frictions over authorship within the office seem to have begun right away. Schindler clearly recollected a conversation with Wright at Taliesin. In a letter to Wright dated 10 June 1931, Schindler typed in upper case:

OF COURSE, ON THAT SUNNY SUNDAY MORNING IN TALIESIN, WHEN YOU ASKED ME TO TAKE "CHARGE OF THE WORK", YOU STILL REMEMBERED, HOW I HAD JUST SAVED YOU FROM MAKING A FOOL OF YOURSELF, BY PREVENTING YOU FROM LEAVING FOR JAPAN WITH AN ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS SET OF COMPUTATIONS AND PLANS FOR THE "IMPERIAL HOTEL", A SET WHICH REPRESENTED A WHOLE YEAR'S WORK OF YOUR OFFICE UNDER YOUR INNOCENT SUPERVISION, EXECUTED BEFORE MY ARRIVAL.  

Yet Wright denied Schindler's involvement in the Imperial Hotel in a letter to John Entenza, the editor of Arts and Architecture, dated 14 November 1934: "[Schindler] came to me as a green draughtsman, apprentice on salary—stayed with me six years—had nothing whatever to do with the Imperial Hotel plans or building—persuaded me to take on his pal in Vienna, R. Neutra."  

This is untrue. The recently discovered office correspondence between Schindler and Wright is largely about the Imperial Hotel and clearly shows Schindler's intimate involvement, especially in structural and mechanical aspects of the design. Gehbard commented that Wright needed Schindler "to complete the working drawings for the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, especially in developing its complex floating foundation."  

Esther McCoy offered more definite information: "The Imperial Hotel had been planned before Schindler went to work for Wright, but so many changes had been made that the architecture and engineering no longer agreed. The engineering represented a year's work but 'it was hopelessly muddled,' Schindler told me. According to him the old foundation plan was eventually abandoned and a new one developed."  

In an undated letter to Wright, Schindler took responsibility for the new foundation design:

THE SAVAGE INTENSITY, WITH WHICH YOU REPUDIATE ALL SUGGESTION THAT SOMEBODY MIGHT EVEN BE OF USE TO YOU PROVES YOUR DEBT. EVEN THE ALMIGHTY SEEMS IN NEED OF SOME ANGELS OR SAINTS AT TIMES. ONLY YOU KEEP QUIET WHEN ALL THE CREDIT FOR THE EARTHQUAKE RESISTANCE OF THE IMPERIAL HOTEL IS GIVEN TO YOU PERSONALLY, WHEREAS

But even onsite in Tokyo, Wright seemed inclined to want to downplay the potential impact of an earthquake. In a letter to Schindler dated 27 May 1919, he wrote, "Those I have consulted—engineers—who have built here these past twenty years say the earthquake bugaboo is exaggerated. There are no twists only uniform oscillations or all up and down shudder—on mud as we are—not violent."  

From October 1918 to September 1919, Wright spent most of his time in Tokyo. He claimed that Schindler had initially been hired as a draftperson, and then to work with his son Lloyd Wright on the Barnsdall House in Los Angeles. According to Gehbard: "If one takes into account Wright's inventive ability and his operatic ego-centricity (a characteristic Schindler later adopted), it is really unthinkable that he would allow anyone working for him to be fully responsible for any project. One must posit that the core of each scheme was solely Wright's. If he was in Japan, as was frequently the case during the years 1917 to 1921, Schindler (or later the architect's son, Lloyd Wright) might modify this or that detail."  

However, Gehbard's assumption is mistaken. During Wright's stay in Tokyo, Schindler was in full charge of the firm in the U.S., not only as architect, but also as superintendent for legal matters and office certifications. Schindler verified this in a letter sent to Wright on 10 June 1931. It begins:

I MYSELF ASKED THAT THE CIRCULAR YOU MENTION BE SENT TO YOU, AND ALTHOUGH I KNOW OF YOUR INABILITY TO SYMPATHISE WITH ANYBODY'S EFFORTS, THE STUPIDITY OF YOUR MUDSLINGING ANSWER IS UNEXPECTED. I WAS IN CHARGE OF YOUR OFFICE AND I CAN PROVE IT.  

Since Schindler had great respect for Wright, he must have retained vivid memories of his role in the office during Wright's absences. Schindler identified six projects of Wright's that he contributed to in this period. The same letter goes on to clarify the argument surrounding their authorship:

AFTER YOUR DEPARTURE, I CARRIED ON THE WORK, YOU WILL FIND IN YOUR FILES THE COPIES OF COUNTLESS LETTERS WHICH I WROTE AND SIGNED IN YOUR NAME. YOU WILL FIND THAT I EXECUTED THE FOLLOWING PLANS IN YOUR NAME: A RESIDENCE FOR MR. SHAMPAY, A CIVIC CENTER FOR WENATCHEE, AN ALTERATION IN ONE OF YOUR OAKPARK JOBS,
AN ALTERATION FOR MR. HARDY IN WISCONSIN, AN ACTORS APARTMENT FOR OLIVE HILL, A WORKING MAN'S COLONY FOR MR. HARDY, AND A RESIDENCE FOR EVANSTON. ALL THOSE PROJECTS WERE STARTED AFTER YOUR DEPARTURE AND DRAWN WITHOUT YOUR PRESENCE AND HELP. THEY WERE GIVEN OUT SIGNED WITH YOUR NAME. YOU WERE INFORMED OF ALL THIS WORK BY LETTERS AND BLUEPRINTS I SENT TO JAPAN. YOU ACCEPTED IT AND PAID FOR IT (AS LITTLE AS YOU COULD). YOU OFFICIALLY IDENTIFIED YOURSELF WITH IT.21

This statement is supported by a tiny handwritten card upon which Schindler noted the dates for each of the projects that he was working on in Wright's absence. The pertinent entries are:

1918
Oct 21st Wright leaves for Japan22
Oct 24th Leave Taliesin
Nov 21st Move in at 949 Chgo Ave23

1919
April 11th GARDEN FOR LA GRANGE
15" HOUSE CMR. SHAMPAY [COMPL]
May 13th COMMUNITY CENTER F. WENATCHEE WASH.
June 17th WORKINGMANS HOUSE F. MR. HARDY [COMPL]
July 13th SKETCHES FOR MR. STALEY'S RESID.24

From this new documentary evidence, the role of Schindler in Wright's office is clear. Apart from the Imperial Hotel and Aline Barnsdall's Olive Hill project, the exchange of letters during this period seems to show that only the Shampay and the Wenatchee projects were seen and commented on by Wright in Tokyo.

Wright never publicly credited Schindler for his contribution. He quite properly took the designs Schindler did in his office as his intellectual property, since Schindler was his employee. Schindler was censorious of Wright's attitude in the “savage intensity” letter cited above. In it, he continued:

DURING ALL MY TIME WITH YOU I HAVE NEVER HEARD YOU APPROVE OF ANYBODY BUT YOURSELF. . . . YOUR MEMORY BRINGS YOU INTO CONSTANT DANGER OF BECOMING A LIAR. I DID NOT EXPECT THAT MY DEVOTION TO YOUR WORK WOULD MEET WITH ANY APPRECIATION FROM YOUR PART. BUT IF ANY SENSE FOR FAIR PLAY IS LEFT IN YOU, THE FACTS STATED ABOVE SHOULD FORCE YOU INTO AN APOLOGY.

Every word of the above passage burns with anger for Wright's self-indulgent and officious attitude toward Schindler's contributions and those of others. Following these disputes, Schindler and Wright had practically no further contact, and tension remained between the two. Wright did, however, express regrets. A note dated November 1941 records: “R M S: Frank Lloyd Wright stopped by to see you, and also at my apartment. I did not see him but telephoned to him at Lloyd's. He says he once wrote you a letter, which he considers that one black mark of his life. Wants you to forgive him.”25

The Shampay Correspondence

According to Schindler, Wright left Taliesin for Japan on 21 October 1918; he arrived in Japan on 17 November.26 In 1919, Schindler worked on the design of the Shampay House from 15 April to 12 May, when he turned to a commission for a community center in Wenatchee. Six blueprints, at the scale of 1/8 inch to 1 foot, were sent to Wright in Tokyo at this time, one of which, the first-floor plan, is dated 4 May 1919. Wright replied on 27 May, on Imperial Hotel notepaper. After the “Dear Rudolph” salutation, the second and third paragraphs refer to the Shampay commission:

The Shampay—I hope he won't be shamming when it comes to paying plan arrived and has a familiar look,—the “per Schindler” rather silly, nicht wahr? However Schindler must live and ought to if this helps him to do so—all right.

The plan is rather complex as to “fl . . . t” (unreadable) the general ground plan arrangement seems good. Keep it all simple. I am sensible of over elaboration of my scheme of articulation in the hands of others and in my own hands too—it is a fascinating vice in extremes and hard on an owner—So be careful.—27

The letter goes on to discuss the construction of the powerhouse at the Imperial Hotel and that “much of the clumsy concrete work on the Banquet Hall footings and slabs and beams has been redesigned—by a good engineer . . . a Van Ranseller [sic] man with much practical experience.”28

Wright mailed penciled amendments on the Shampay House blueprints from Tokyo, postmarked 4 June and addressed: “Rudolph Schindler, c/o Frank Lloyd Wright, 1600 Monroe Bldg., Chicago, Ill., USA.” The envelope is marked in pencil “Rec. June 24th 1919.” The next handwritten letter to Schindler from Wright is dated 25 June and was received in the Chicago office on 22 July, almost a month later.29 Much of the early part of the letter concerns soil sampling and proposals to lighten the concrete on the Imperial Hotel by using lava instead of gravel: “A heavy building is a bad earthquake building. We are looking now
for this material." Then, "I hope the Shampay house has gone ahead. It is as good or better than they get who go to the School of Middle West for a Wright House a Lloyd-Wright facture—or a facture of the sham. The plan seemed good with the exceptions noted. The money is needed."\(^{30}\) Wright immediately turned to talking about a lecture he had just delivered: "I don't believe they got very much owing to their lack of complete familiarity with English." He complained about working conditions: "all the impact of personality softened to ineffectiveness by the necessary go-betweens." As for Miss Barnsdall: "She has sent money as requested."

Wright soon returned to the United States.\(^{41}\) A letter sent to Schindler by Wright from the Beverly Hills Hotel in California is dated 9 September. The final drawings for the Shampay House are dated mid-August. Wright would not have seen them. There are two more letters concerning the Shampay commission, sent to Wright on his fourth trip to Japan—he arrived in Yokohama on 31 December 1919.\(^{42}\) It is clear that Mr. Shampay has pulled out of the project and had not paid the fees due. Schindler wrote from Oak Park on 21 January 1920: "Will go after Shampay now—for $1000.—McArthur Architect recommended a lawyer F. J. Kasper—think we get something."\(^{31}\) On 25 January 1920, he wrote in another letter: "Mr. F. Kasper is going after Shampay—his fee is 15% of the amount secured if Shampay comes across without suit—and about $50.—fee incl. Court costs plus the 15% if judgment is obtained. I have [been] told to try and get a settlement and shall only proceed with a suit if the case looks good."\(^{34}\)

**The Shampay Drawings**

There are two complete sets of drawings in the collection of the Getty Museum; they are copyrighted by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. One set is dated 9 June 1919 and the other 13 and 18-20 August 1919.\(^{33}\) Among the drawings is an earlier schematic that does not belong to either
set. It includes the second- and basement-floor plans, dated May 1919.¹⁶

The Schindler Archive contains some schematic sketches, several blueprints, and two perspectives.¹⁷ Several sketches and blueprints, which seem to be initial designs, date to May 1919. Among others, two finished drawings—a basement plan¹⁸ and a ground-floor plan¹⁹—seem to be identical to two drawings at the Getty,²⁰ dated 9 June 1919, except that they are blueprints. One of the two perspectives is obviously that of the Shamay House, but the other is difficult to identify.²¹ Schindler’s name appears at the bottom of all archival drawings: “Frank Lloyd Wright Architect per R. M. Schindler.”²² Earlier commentators have based their analyses and attributions on these drawings alone.

Remarkably, a set of six previously unknown blueprints that were recently discovered by Schindler family archivist Maureen Mary offers a complete background as to how the design evolved and what Wright contributed to the design (see n. 19). The evidence is compelling and clearly supports Schindler’s claim that he is the original designer and sole author of the Shamay House. The blueprints are also of considerable significance since they are among the earliest of Schindler’s surviving designs. The six blueprints, drawn to ¼-inch-to-1-foot scale, show the initial design for the project. They comprise a basement plan, a first-floor plan dated 4 May 1919, a second-floor plan, a front elevation with perspective, a rear elevation, and a side elevation. Each blueprint is also marked: “The Shamay House, Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect per R.M. Schindler.”

The initial design is important for three reasons. First, it demonstrates Schindler’s comprehension of Wright’s Prairie grammar. The Shamay House derives not from a radical break with the Prairie tradition, but rather from a masterful distillation and amalgamation of a range of preexisting tendencies present in Wright’s practice. Second, the fundamental concept of this early design remains intact to the final scheme. Although the house evolves sequentially with minor alterations, there is almost no significant difference between the preliminary and the well-articulated ultimate version. The final design of August 1919 (at ¼ inch to 1 foot) preserves the integrity of the original sketches that were drawn at half that scale in May.²³ The third notable aspect of the initial design is that Wright’s remarks and amendments are marked in pencil on the blueprints Schindler sent him. Although he mailed his responses to Schindler on 27 May 1919, and Schindler received them on 29 June 1919, before the final drawings (dated 13 and 20 August 1919) were finished, there is little indication that Schindler took note of Wright’s suggestions. None of Wright’s comments on the blueprints seem to have inspired or even influenced the development of the design.

Close examination reveals the types of design changes made from one set of drawings to the next. Wright’s penciled amendments on the blueprints are shown in Figures 2 through 7. On the first-floor plan (Figure 2), Wright amended “solid panels” for the roof in front of the garage rather than an open trellis. He queried, “Why not a hand decorated window here,” on the front wall of the living room, and marked, “simple vertical wood bars—easy to draw,” for the screen wall on either side of the inglenook. Wright deleted a fly-screen wall from the entry porch and extended the space as far as the freestanding, twin piers supporting the roof. He proposed nullions—and presumably glazing—to balance those in the conservatory at the other end of the house, and inserted a window between the twin piers. It seems that Wright intended to turn the open porch into an enclosed room. In the same area, he questioned the inclusion of a lower wall near the twin piers: “Why this wall anyway?”

Neither the ¼-inch-to-1-foot drawings of the first-floor plan done in June nor those from August²⁴ show that Schindler took any notice of Wright’s suggestions. The August drawings remove the trellis in front of the garage altogether, instead of adding the solid panels that Wright proposed. The screens to the inglenook remain. It is not clear where Wright might have gotten the idea that Schindler had not intended vertical wood bars in the first place. The plan certainly suggests such an arrangement. Neither the June nor August plans add a window to the front wall of the living room. Such a solid end-wall to the living room is in no way typical of Prairie houses; they usually feature a window wall opposite the fireplace. Interestingly, in the Hollyhock House, which Schindler was to supervise after the Shamay, the fireplace does face a blank wall, but not so in residences A and B on Olive Hill, where this particular Prairie formula is preserved.²⁵ Unlike Wright, Schindler knew the site conditions. A ¼-inch-to-1-foot drawing at the University of California, Santa Barbara, shows that the house was placed in such a way that the living-room end wall faced the neighbor’s plot some twenty feet away.²⁶ Schindler preferred, it seems, to give the Shamay residents total privacy and to open up two sides of the living room to the front and rear gardens.²⁷

From the May to the June blueprints, Schindler himself made changes. In the May blueprint, the twin piers in front of the fireplace that articulate the living room from the spaces on the cross axis are wider than those shown in June. By August, they had been eliminated, perhaps not so much because of Wright’s admonition to “keep it simple,” but more probably as the result of reducing the total floor area. This reduction is most noticeable in the shortening of
the kitchen and the garage at the rear of the house. Schindler elaborated the parterre at the entry in the June drawing, but in August showed a more economical scheme in which the planters marking the gate are brought closer to the house and placed farther apart for vehicle access. There is a subtle change in the fenestration of the living room, too. The May blueprint shows a double mullion arrangement for the side wall with a single door opening. The June and August drawings indicate single Mullions and French doors. On the blueprint, the double Mullions of the living room are inflected in the inglenook screens, but, as might be expected, the double Mullions are removed from the later drawings. The blueprint shows a straight back wall for the kitchen and garage, whereas the June drawing indents the two entrances and inverts the corners. The entrance indents remain in the August drawing, but the indented corners have been removed. None of these modifications can be said to arise from Wright’s suggestions.

For the second-floor plan (Figure 3), Wright suggested that windows, “W,” and “flower boxes” be arranged symmetrically on either side of the stairs behind the chimney. Whether Schindler intended windows is unclear on the blueprint, but they are definitely shown on the June drawing and the August plan. At no time are the flower boxes included.

The basement plan (Figure 4) is very schematic. Wright proposed to “make chimney wider.” On the blueprint, Schindler wrote “Material—Hollow Tile, Stucco, Wood. Min. floor heights, 8’-0’ clear; [ditto] window height, 7’-0” from floor,” to which Wright appended, “first floor, 6’-6” second story.” The June basement plan is more elaborate, showing the foundations for the house as a whole. A laundry has been added behind the basement workroom. The August drawing does not change the basic layout, but gives a much more detailed plan of the foundations, including several cross-sections. The final August drawing shows the same ceiling heights for the first and second floors, 7 feet 2 inches.

On the front elevation (Figure 5), at the roof fascias of the living room and entry porch, Wright noted “pitch same as main roof” and “pitch this barge board same as the main roof,” respectively. Schindler had drawn the fascia pitched 30 degrees inward from the top for the main roof, but vertical for the lower roofs. The roof fascia of the conservatory is also vertical, but Wright suggested that it should “pitch backward same angle as main roof,” that is, sloping 30 degrees out from the top, contrary to the main roof. Wright marked the entry and rear elevations with the same barge-board instruction: “pitch,” “pitch,” and “pitch backward” on Figure 6, and “pitch slightly” on Figure 7.

In Figure 5, on both sides of the projecting living room, Wright redrew the horizontal lines for the planters with the instruction “Drop coping of flower box.” He queried (“?”) the terminal of the entrance porch and scribbled in some planting. He showed the elevation of the extension to the

*Figure 2* Shampay House, first-floor plan, blueprint, 4 May 1919, 13½ x 8½ in.
Figure 3 Shampay House, second-floor plan, blueprint, 4 May 1919, 13 x 8½ in.

Figure 4 Shampay House, basement plan, blueprint, 4 May 1919, 9½ x 7¾ in.

Figure 5 Shampay House, front elevation and worm's-eye perspective sketch, blueprint, 4 May 1919, 13 x 5¾ in.
By overdrawing on the blueprints, Wright also raised the upper roof (Figures 5–7) and extended the chimney mass horizontally (Figures 5, 7). In Figure 6, he specified the increase in roof height: “higher than lower roof by 9".” On the same elevation, Wright added the window between the twin piers in the extended entry, saw the alteration he had proposed in plan (Figure 2), and subdivided Schindler’s plain glazed doors to the living room and entry—curious, since none of the houses, around the time that Schindler joined Wright, showed divided glazing, although they might use art glass. Again, it is not a standard office detail as shown in the 1915 American System-Built drawings. Finally, in Figure 7, Wright followed through on his suggestion to have flower boxes (“F.B.”) outside the stairwell on the second floor, which were shown in plan (Figure 3).

In sum, Wright proposed seven elevational changes: the barge-board detail; the height of the planters; a larger entry hall with mullioned fenestration; a higher upper roof; an enlarged chimney mass; flower boxes at the second level; and subdivision of the living room’s glazed doors. The barge boards are not changed on the June and August schemes despite Wright’s request. Both sets of drawings show a two-step, vertical overlap for all fascias. Both give construction details including the barge board, or “cornice,” at 1½ inches to 1 foot. The top board is eight inches deep and the bottom board, set two inches back, is six inches deep. This was not a detail used in Wright’s office at the time Schindler joined it. Some typical roof cornices are to be found in Wright’s American System-Built house details of 1915.

The drawings of 9 June demonstrate that Schindler had already varied the height of the planters on his own
volition, before Wright responded, whereas the May blue-
print shows a constant height. The August drawing holds
to this variation. In neither the June nor the August sets is
the entry materially changed from the blueprint. Schindler
did not fill in with millons “same as rear,” but maintained
his original fly screens.

The proposal to enlarge the entry and turn the porch
into a room appears to have no basis in the client’s wishes.
In fact, there is no evidence that Wright ever knew what
the client’s requirements were. Schindler knew, since he
received the commission on behalf of Wright, in his
absence. Wright’s suggestion is purely an aesthetic judg-
ment. If carried out, it would have brought the Shampay
more in line with the symmetry of some other Prairie
houses, in which rooms are balanced on either side of the
living space. Schindler made no attempt to accommodate
Wright’s proposal in either the June or August schemes.

Nor was the suggestion to raise the upper roof an ad-
tional nine inches executed in subsequent developments.
However, this suggested alteration provides insight into the
subtlety of Wright’s thinking. It is an optical correction. If
the upper roof were raised up, it would look from the
ground as if it had the same slope as the lower roofs—a ma-
sterly touch.

In regard to another of Wright’s nonfunctional, aesthetic
preferences, Schindler did not enlarge the chimney mass in
the June and August drawings. In order to carry the flues
from the main fireplace and the boilers, he moved the chim-
nery mass off the axis of the living room in these subsequent
drawings. He did not add flower boxes to the second floor in
either later scheme; nor did he subdivide the living room
glazing in the manner Wright proposed. In both the June
and the August sets of drawings, Schindler replaced the sin-
gle doors of the blueprints with French doors.

Conclusion

In sum, Wright had no direct influence on the final design
of the Shampay House, which must now be attributed com-
pletely to Schindler. However, although the design was car-
ried out by an employee, the ownership is, of course, with-
out question Wright’s. The letters, blueprints, and
drawings from May through August 1919 prove the author-
ship. Any additional suggestions by Wright could not have
been received before Schindler produced the final drawings,
and in any event, his alterations were never incorporated
into the design.

Schindler was no “student,” “green apprentice,” or
“mere draughtsman”; he was, in fact, the best educated and
most experienced architect in Wright’s office. For all intents
and purposes, from 1917 to 1921, he was Wright’s partner
in all but name. Any influence was mutual. The impact on
Schindler of Wright’s work pales beside the deeper influ-
ences of his schooling with Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos.
Any effect from working for Wright was probably more
descriptive than positive. Schindler knew that the sculptural
direction Wright took during the period from the Imperial
Hotel to the Hollyhock House and the textile-block
schemes was not to be the future of the “space architecture”
of which Schindler had admiringly written in 1913.

Notes

1. Frank Lloyd Wright to R. M. Schindler regarding work for prospective
   clients while Schindler is in charge of Wright’s offices in the United States,
   undated. Getty Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, Special
   Collections and Visual Resources, Los Angeles (hereinafter Getty), 960076,
   Box 1, Folder 5.
2. David Gehhard, R. M. Schindler (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, 1980),
   37–38.
3. Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, with photographs by Yukio Futagawa, Frank Lloyd
   Wright Monograph 1914–1923 (Tokyo, 1985), 192.
   (1931–1937) and International Sources (1906–1917)” (Ph.D. diss., Colum-
   bia University, 1985), 243–46.
5. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., In the Nature of Materials (New York, 1973),
   123.
6. Schindler Archive, Architectural Drawing Collection, University Art
   Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.
7. Copies of the drawings are in the Getty.
8. The letters are now housed at the Getty, “Frank Lloyd Wright Corre-
   spondence with R. M. Schindler, 1914–1929, bulk 1918–1922,” Getty,
   960076. The blueprints are in the possession of Mark Schindler, R. M.
   Schindler’s son.
   and California Arts and Architecture 47 (1935), 18–19.
10. Schindler Archive. In the letters by Wright and Schindler quoted in this
   article, their misspellings and other errors have been retained.
11. Quoted in Esther McCoy, Vienna to Los Angeles: Ten Journeys (Santa
   Monica, 1979), 63. Before joining Wright, Schindler had spent six years
   in practice in Vienna and Chicago, with four built works and fifteen projects
   to his credit. In fact, Schindler is recognized as the sole architect of the
   40,000-square-foot Buena Shore Club, 1916–18, the largest project of his
   career, even though he was employed at the time by Ottenheimer, Stern,
   and Reichert in Chicago. See Barbara Giella, “Buena Shore Club,” in Lio-
   nel March and Judith Schein, eds., R. M. Schindler: Composition and Con-
14. Schindler Archive. Wright sent a note giving five points on structural
   principles sometime early in Sept. 1918: “Here it is Schindler. Think it
   over!” Schindler wrote his reflections on these points on 11 Sept.; his com-
   ment: “content shows superficial technical knowledge.” Getty, 960076, Box
   1, Folder 4.
15. Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 9.

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17. The Wright citation, dated on 4 Apr. 1954, was written after Schindler’s death on 22 Aug. 1953.
19. In 1994, while acting as archivist for the Schindler family, Maureen Mary discovered some sixty letters interleaved in magazines in Pauline Schindler’s archive. This correspondence is now housed at the Getty (see n. 7). We are indebted to Ms. Mary for a preview of the material.
20. Schindler Archive.
22. This would be the date of Wright’s departure from Taliesin. Wright wrote to Schindler from Chicago on 22 Oct. warning him not to tell anyone, especially Wright’s family, that he was leaving for Japan. Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 4.
23. In 1895, Wright’s Oak Park studio was located at 951 Chicago Avenue.
24. For these sketches, see Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 4.
25. From an unsigned but signed letter dated Nov. 1941. The note carries the signature “S.” There can be little doubt that this is Schindler’s wife, Pauline Sophie Schindler.
27. Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 9.
28. Presumably an alumnus of Remsen Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y.
29. Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 10. In a letter dated 25 Apr. 1919, Wright noted that Schindler’s “last letter came through in 28 days which is very fast.” Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 8.
30. Wright may be recalling a phrase of the painter James Abbott McNeill Whistler, who wrote in the Saturday Review of 26 May 1888, “A new class who discovered the cheap and foresaw fortune in the fact of the sham.”
31. Alofsin gives no departure or arrival dates. He notes that Wright was back in the U.S. in Sep., Alofsin, The Last Years, 310.
32. Ibid.
33. “McArthur” is almost certainly Albert McArthur, who had worked for Wright in the Oak Park studio before 1911. Schindler was meeting with him as a prospective tenant of one of Wright’s Oak Park properties. The same letter says that McArthur “talks at the $170” rent. Also see Alofsin, The Last Years, 68.
34. Getty, 960076, Box 1, Folder 13.
35. Getty, 1903.002.011 and 1903.012.017, respectively.
36. Getty, 1903.001.
39. Ibid., 3246.
40. Getty, 1903.002 and 1903.003.
41. Garland, Architectural Drawings, 3236 and 3237, respectively. The latter definitely does not depict the Shampay House. There is no high basement wall shown in either the elevations or the sections of the house.
42. “R. M. Schindler” is Schindler’s handwritten signature.
43. This recalls the way in which a final Beaux-Arts presentation had to follow the initial espierre to qualify.
44. Getty, 1903.003 and 1903.13, respectively.
45. Schindler executed the drawings for both residences.
47. The plot at 104th Street, Chicago, was 216 by 72 ft., as measured from ibid.
48. Getty, 1903.004 and 1903.014, respectively.
49. Getty, 1903.002.
50. Getty, 1903.012.
51. Getty, 1903.015.
52. The Baldwin House Wright refers to in Figure 7 is the Hiriam Baldwin Residence, Kenilworth, Ill., 1905. See William Allin Storrer, The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion (Chicago and London, 1993), S107 T10502. A detail photograph of the house is shown in Windenburg: Frank Lloyd Wright (New York, 1925), 62.
53. One other amendment apparently related to an exterior wall is indecipherable.
54. Pfeiffer, Monograph, 102, fig. 175 (see n. 3).
55. Getty, 1903.011 and 1903.017.
56. Pfeiffer, Monograph, 101, figs. 166–70.
57. Getty, 1903.009.
58. Getty, 1903.016.
59. Indeed, quite the opposite is true: the June elevation shows a roof height of 3 ft. 5 in., while the final August set shows 3 ft. 3 in. Getty, 1903.005 and 1903.015, respectively.
60. Getty, 1903.009, 1903.016.

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Figure 1. From the collection of R. M. Schindler, Architectural Drawing Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Reproduced in Garland, Architectural Drawings, 3256 (see n. 37). Figures 2–7. Collection Mark Schindler

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