

George Pappas
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Falling Water vs. the Guggenheim Museum

Frank Lloyd Wright was born in Wisconsin on June 8, 1867. He made many iconic buildings over his years as a modern architect. Wright started college at University of Wisconsin in 1885. About a year later, he went to the Chicago architectural firm of Adler and Sullivan. There he worked with Louis Sullivan and eventually developed his own architectural style. Wright's home in Oak Park Chicago is considered his first "architectural masterpiece." This would be the first in many of his iconic architectural works (Biography.com Editors).

Frank Lloyd Wright's style mostly consisted of what architects call prairie style. This style consists of "low pitched roofs, overhanging eaves, a central chimney, and open floor plans" (Mihai). This style of architecture is what Frank Lloyd Wright will always be known for.

Frank Gehry was born on February 28, 1929 in the city of Frank Owen Goldberg in Toronto, Canada. He is known for his unique postmodern design style. According to Dennis J. Sporre, postmodern design "seeks social identity, cultural continuity, and sense of place." He graduated from University of Southern California's School of Architecture and later enrolled in Harvard Graduate School of Design located in Massachusetts. He later dropped out and moved back to California. Gehry first started off as an interior designer; his first well known design pieces would be his "Easy Edges" cardboard furniture line. This would start his career in the architectural world (Biography.com Editors).

Frank Gehry's style is known as Deconstructivism. This is a bold and postmodernist style of architecture first used in 1988 (Deconstructivism). He uses many curves and wavelike panels

to create a free flow styling of architecture. This will be what Frank Gehry specializes in for the rest of his architectural career.

The two buildings that these two architects have created are very different in their styling and design. One is very linear and has many square shapes, and the other is very bold with many curves and wavelike walls. The *Falling Water* building looks to be a lot more peaceful than the *Guggenheim Museum*. This is a result of the location, materials used, and the shape of the building.

Falling Water is located in the rural southwestern Pennsylvania area in a very secluded location surrounded by miles of trees and wilderness. This is very different from the *Guggenheim Museum*; the *Guggenheim* is right on the outskirts of a city called Bilbao in Bizkaia, Spain. This is where the use of space comes into play. The “Design of space essentially means the design and flow of contiguous *spaces* relative to function” (Sporre). Both these buildings are placed in a location where they make the most sense. While *Falling Water* was surrounded by trees and wilderness, the *Guggenheim Museum* is surrounded by busy business, busy roads, busy people, and other buildings. One of the reasons this building stands out from the rest is not only because of the size of the building, which is very large compared to its surroundings, but also because the materials used to make the *Guggenheim Museum* is very different from the buildings surrounding it. As the buildings around the *Guggenheim* look like they are made out of stone, the *Guggenheim Museum* itself looks like it is wrapped in sheet metal or some kind of reflective material; this is most likely done to set it apart from the rest of the buildings and also to achieve the design Frank Gehry wanted for his Museum; it is much easier to shape metal panels than to try and achieve the same shape with stone.

Comparing this location to *Falling Water*, this building had no other buildings to compete with as it is the only building to grab the audience's attention. With that said, it doesn't need to have different materials from what surrounds it; this can be shown with the use of rock and wood seen in the interior and exterior of the house. The materials used allow the building to somewhat blend into its surroundings. The surroundings also influence the style of the house, as most of nature is organic and unique, *Falling Water* is very linear and uniform; allowing contrast which makes the building stand out from its surroundings. This combination of blending the building into its surroundings but still allowing it to stand out is one of the many reasons why Frank Lloyd Wright is a great architect.

The two buildings are also different in their classification in architecture. *Falling water* would be considered earth rooted while the *Guggenheim Museum* would fit into the earth dominating classification of architecture. *Falling Water* would be considered earth rooted because it mostly uses the same materials from the surrounding environment. It also submits to gravity, there is nothing about the building that is trying to defy gravity. The classification of the *Guggenheim Museum* would fall into the earth dominating category because of how it stands out from its environment. Its large size (compared to the buildings around it) gives it a sense of power and aggression. The *Guggenheim Museum* also does not have any relationship between the building and the earth. This, along with its large size, helps the building to demand the viewers' attention. For all these reasons, it is believed that the *Guggenheim Museum* would fall into the earth dominating classification.

Both Frank Lloyd Wright and Frank Gehry were and still are very talented architects and had many different reasons for using the styling, location, and materials that they did. Many more reasons beside these three are thought about while making these admirable pieces of art.

However, when the viewer sees the final product and can walk inside it, they can easily notice how much thought and effort went into creating these remarkable buildings.

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