



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
Callaghan 2308

E gallery@newcastle.edu.au
W www.newcastle.edu.au/universitygallery
T + 61 2 4921 5255

OPENING HOURS

Wednesdays – Fridays 10am–5pm
Saturdays 12 noon–4pm
Or by appointment

VIRTUAL WRIGHT:
EXPLORING THE HOLLYHOCK HOUSE

EXHIBITION 11 - 28 October 2017

THE UNIVERSITY
GALLERY

THE ALINE BARNSDALL (HOLLYHOCK) HOUSE

Louise Aline Barnsdall (1882 - 1946) was an American oil heiress, enthusiastic supporter of the theatre and life-long advocate for women's rights. In 1919 she purchased a large hilltop property in a Los Angeles suburban area known as Olive Hill. Her intention was to create a 'progressive theatrical community' with her own home as its centrepiece. In addition to her house, she wanted two theatres – one for live performances and the other for motion pictures – and accommodation for a resident director, and artists and actors. All of these different buildings were to be sited in a park-like environment.

Barnsdall commissioned American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867 – 1959) in 1919, to design the buildings and landscape for this community. By 1921 its first stage, her home and two guest residences, were completed. However, a combination of cost overruns and dissatisfaction with some of the impracticalities of the elaborate design, led Barnsdall to terminate Wright's commission. Indeed, before the first stage of the larger project was complete, Barnsdall had already privately decided to abandon the house, the property and her plans for a theatrical community. In 1927 the property was donated to the City of Los Angeles for use as a public library and park.

By the 1930s, Barnsdall's property had fallen into disrepair. The impact of major earthquakes and ongoing problems with water-proofing and drainage, meant that by 1942 much of house was no longer accessible. Despite attempts in the 1970s to restore the house to its former glory, by 2000 the property had been effectively closed to the general public for several decades. It was only in 2015, after a careful restoration process, that a small section of the house was finally reopened to the general public. Today the Aline Barnsdall House is regarded as one of the world's great buildings, even though relatively few have experienced it and many of its innovative features remain hidden from view.

Aline Barnsdall's home is popularly known as the Hollyhock House, because Wright's design features many geometric interpretations of Barnsdall's favourite flower, the alcea or hollyhock. Ornamental hollyhocks adorn the roofscape, wrap around the elevations, frame window and door reveals, line the entryway and even shape the furniture used throughout the house. Stained-glass windows in the house feature Wright's hollyhocks, the geometry of which is then extrapolated to the decorative panels and corner-glass windows. Planter boxes around the house are not only filled with alcea, but they are decorated with Wright's geometric interpretation of the plants.

The Hollyhock House resists easy stylistic classification, having variously been described as 'Mayan Revival', 'Pre-Columbian Revival', 'Babylonian Modernism' and 'Pre-Californian Modernism'. Wright himself described the design as an example of 'California Romanza', a reference to both a location (and its associated climate and history) and a musical concept, relating to freedom of form or unbound self-expression. Regardless of how it is classified, the house is undeniably monumental, with its heavy, seemingly ancient and yet somehow timeless forms.

In its planning the Hollyhock House is arranged around a central courtyard with one side left open, to function as an outdoor performance space. Despite this, the exterior expression is closed, hermetic or constrained, with relatively few openings in the angled concrete walls. Inside, all of the major spaces open into the courtyard, through glass doors, colonnades and walkways. A series of roof terraces, accessible from the interiors or by way of the courtyard, provide additional vantage points. At the centre of the courtyard is a pool, and water was meant to flow from here, into a moat around the fireplace in the living room.

DIS-SECTIONS

1. *Dis-section A-N (Alcea Nudiflora) through the Loggia*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
2. *Dis-section A-B (Alcea Biennis) through the Dining Room*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
3. *Dis-section A-A (Alcea Acaulis) through the Library*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
4. *Dis-section A-G (Alcea Grossheimi) through the Kitchen*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
5. *Dis-section A-C (Alcea Calvertii) through the Music Room*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250

DIGITAL FLY-THROUGH

6. *Fly through: Hollyhock House*, 2017
digital video
4 mins (looped)

DIS-SECTIONS (CONT.)

7. *Dis-section A-P (Alcea Pallida) through the Living Room*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
8. *Dis-section A-L (Alcea Lavateriflora) through the Terrace*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250

9. *Dis-section A-S (Alcea Striata) through the Garden Court*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
10. *Dis-section A-H (Alcea Heldreichii) through the Lounge*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250
11. *Dis-section A-F (Alcea Flavovirens) through the Porch*, 2017
digital print
84 x 119 cm, \$250

SITE PLANS

12. *The Hollyhock House: Site Context*, 2017
digital print
59 x 84 cm
13. *The Hollyhock House: Ground Floor Plan*, 2017
digital print
59 x 84 cm
14. *The Hollyhock House: First Floor Plan*, 2017
digital print
59 x 84 cm

VIRTUAL REALITY

OPENING NIGHT ONLY
Virtual reality tour through Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House
HTC Headsets, with mirrored screens. Put on a head set and pick up the controller to become completely emersed in the virtual environment of Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House.

HISTORICAL IMAGES

15. *Lady of the House: Aline Barnsdall*
photographer unknown
digital print
16 x 13 cm
16. *Olive Hill: Hollyhock House ariel view*, 1924
image courtesy of Security Pacific Historical Photography Collection
digital print
15 x 23 cm
17. *Music Room: the Grand Piano*,
photographer: Donald Hoffman
digital print
15 x 18 cm
18. *Women in Garden Courtyard: Afternoon Tea*, 1928
courtesy of Seaver Centre for Western History Research
digital print
15 x 19 cm
19. *Front East: Highest point of Olive Hill*
photograph: Ezra Stoller
digital print
15 x 22 cm
20. *Child's play: the Nursery*, 1965
photographer unknown
digital print
15 x 22 cm
21. *Hollywoodland: Forecourt*
photograph: Ezra Stoller
digital print
15 x 22 cm
22. *Dry: Moat: Pool: Overgrown*, 1996
photograph: Carol Westwood
digital print
15 x 22 cm
23. *Uncontrollable: the Garden Courtyard*, 1939
photographer unknown
digital print
15 x 19 cm
24. *Pergola: the Garden Courtyard*
photograph: Donald Hoffman
digital print
15 x 22 cm
25. *Roof Terrace: to the master bedroom*
courtesy of David and Michael Devine
digital print
15 x 22 cm
26. *L. A. Confidential*, 1996
Photograph: Carol Westwood
digital print
15 x 22 xm
27. *Dining Room: Spine*, 1982
photograph: Michael Edwards
digital print
15 x 22 cm
28. *Lloyd Wright: Kitchen*, 1947
photograph: Donald Hoffman
digital print
15 x 13 cm
29. *External: Entrance*
courtesy of Frank Lloyd Wright Archive
digital print
15 x 22 cm
30. *Centrepiece: Fireplace*, 1927
courtesy of the Los Angeles Times
digital print
15 x 22 cm
31. *Manicured: the Garden Courtyard*,
photographer unknown
digital print
15 x 22 cm

AUGMENTED REALITY

Use an iPad or iPhone to launch the app 'Augment'. Select the 'Scan' option and hold your device directly above the image on the plinth. You will then be shown a three dimensional image. Please ask staff if further assistance is required.



- 32. *Digital Model: Lounge Suite, 2017*
augmented reality
- 33. *Digital Model: Master Bedroom Section, 2017*
augmented reality
- 34. *Digital Model: Planter Box, 2017*
augmented reality

- 35. *Digital Model: Library Suite, 2017*
augmented reality
- 36. *Digital Model: Dining Suite, 2017*
augmented reality
- 37. *Digital Model: Entrance Section, 2017*
augmented reality

DOCUMENTARY

- 37. *Houzz TV: Exclusive video of Wright's Hollyhock House 2015*
video documentary by Houzz TV
7 mins 46 secs

EXHIBITION WORKS CREATED BY

IAN OWEN

NICHOLAS FOULCHER

SAMANTHA WATT &

MICHAEL J. OSTWALD

The artists would like to acknowledge Craig Williams and his team at the Innovation Resources Division at the University of Newcastle, Luke O'Donnell from the School of Creative Industries and Narelle Foulcher for providing catering. This exhibition is dedicated to Amy, Lyla and Cerys.

Cover image: Ian Owen, Nicholas Foulcher, Samantha Watt & Michael J. Ostwald, *Dis-section A-H (Alcea Heldreichii) through the Lounge, 2017*, digital print, 84 x 119 cm (detail).



Women in Garden Courtyard: Afternoon Tea, 1928
Courtesy of the Seaver Centre for Western History Research



Centrepiece: Fireplace, 1927
Courtesy of the Los Angeles Times