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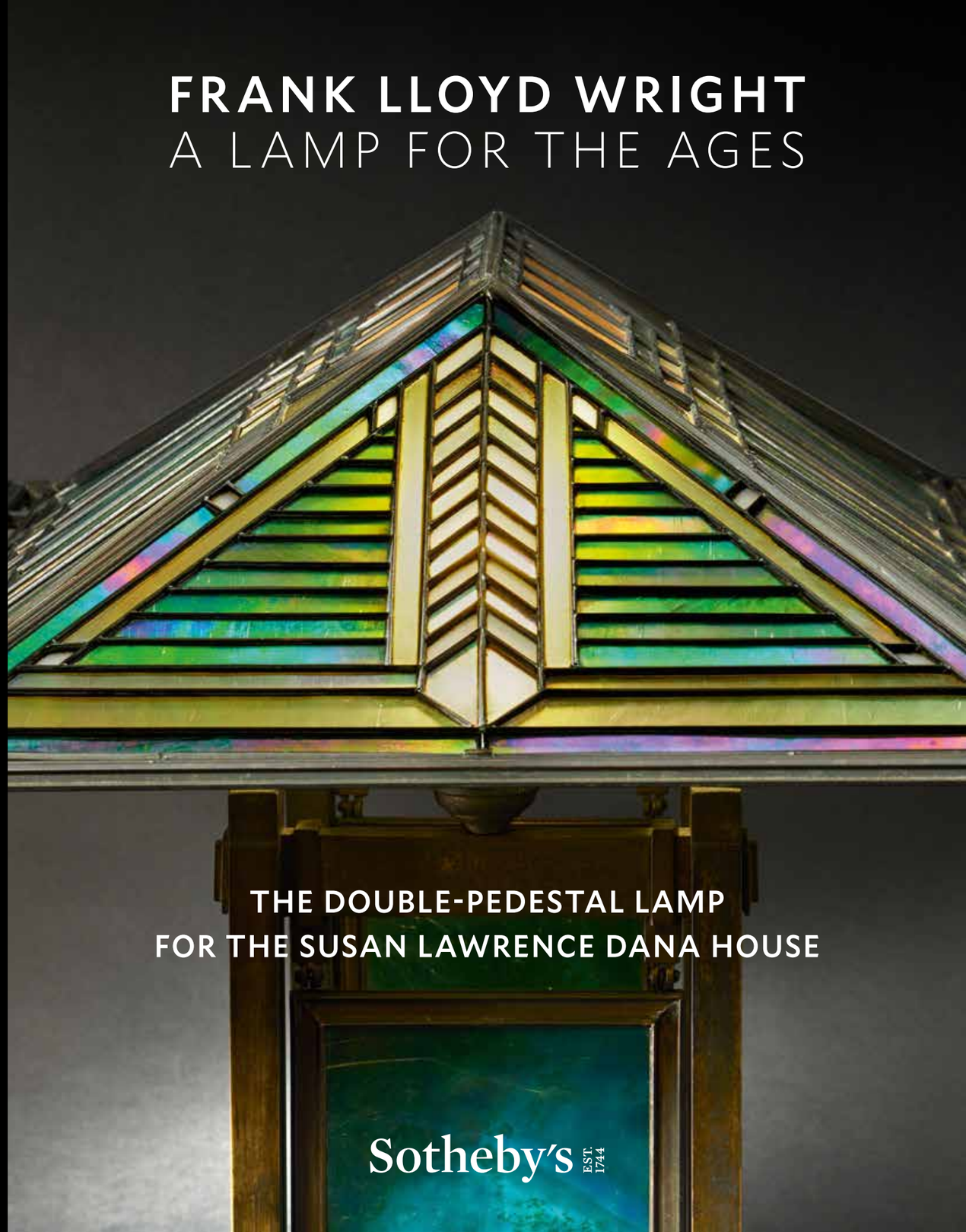
A LAMP FOR THE AGES



THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE

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“ SIMPLICITY AND REPOSE ARE THE QUALITIES THAT MEASURE THE TRUE VALUE OF ANY WORK OF ART. ”

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

“ I DON’T CREATE A FANTASY WORLD;
I CREATE A REALITY OF FANTASY. ”

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT
A LAMP FOR THE AGES

THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE

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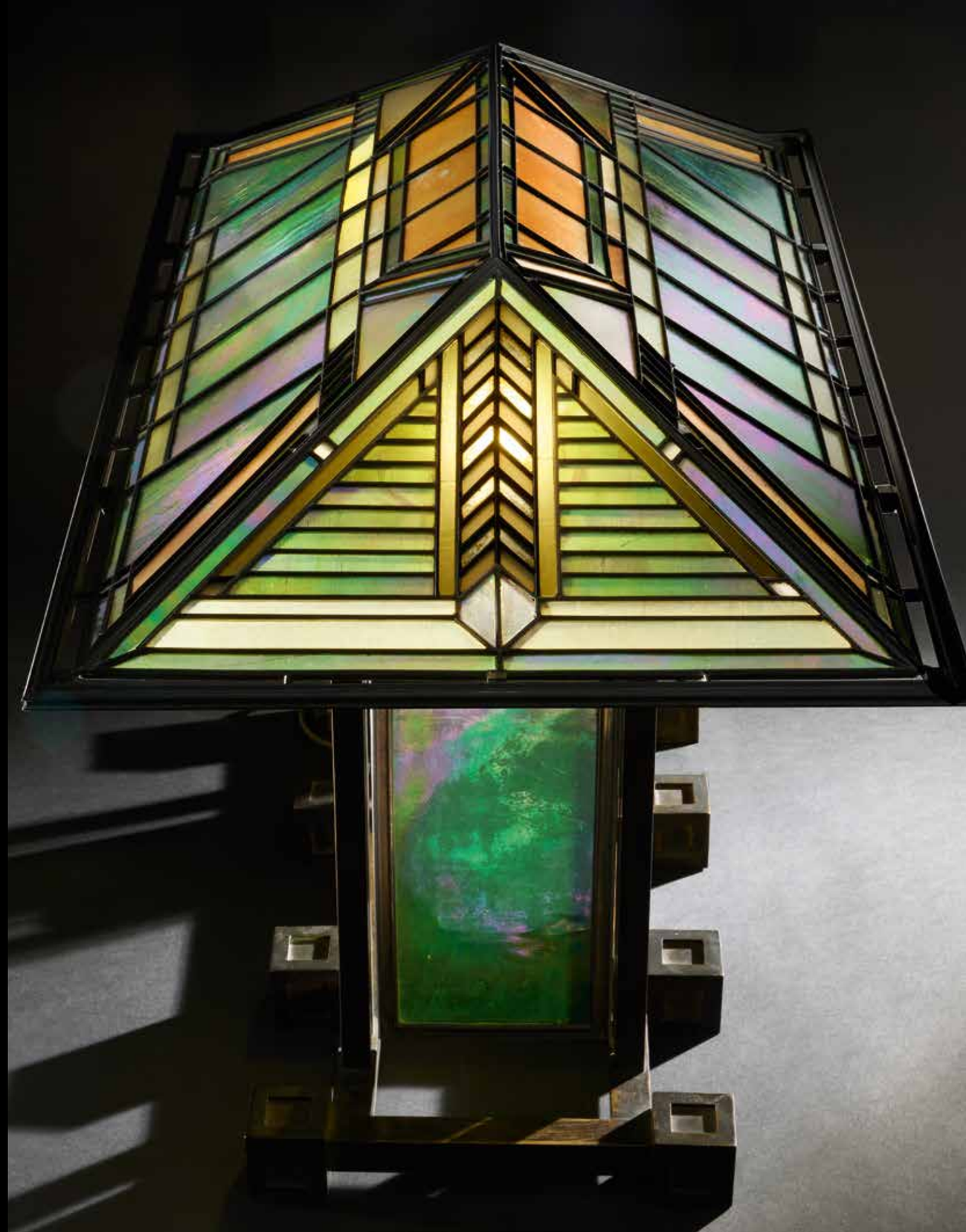

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Chairman
Co-Worldwide Head of
20th Century Design
Jodi.Pollack@sothebys.com

CARINA VILLINGER
Head of 20th Century Design, Americas
Senior Vice President
Carina.Villinger@sothebys.com

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Assistant Vice President
Head of Sale and Specialist
20th Century Design
Margaret.Wood@sothebys.com

GRACE BRADBURY
Cataloguer and Deputy Head of Sale
20th Century Design
Grace.Bradbury@sothebys.com

PAUL DOROS
Senior Tiffany Consultant
20th Century Design
Paul.Doros.Consultant@sothebys.com

WRIGHTIAN EXCEPTIONALISM

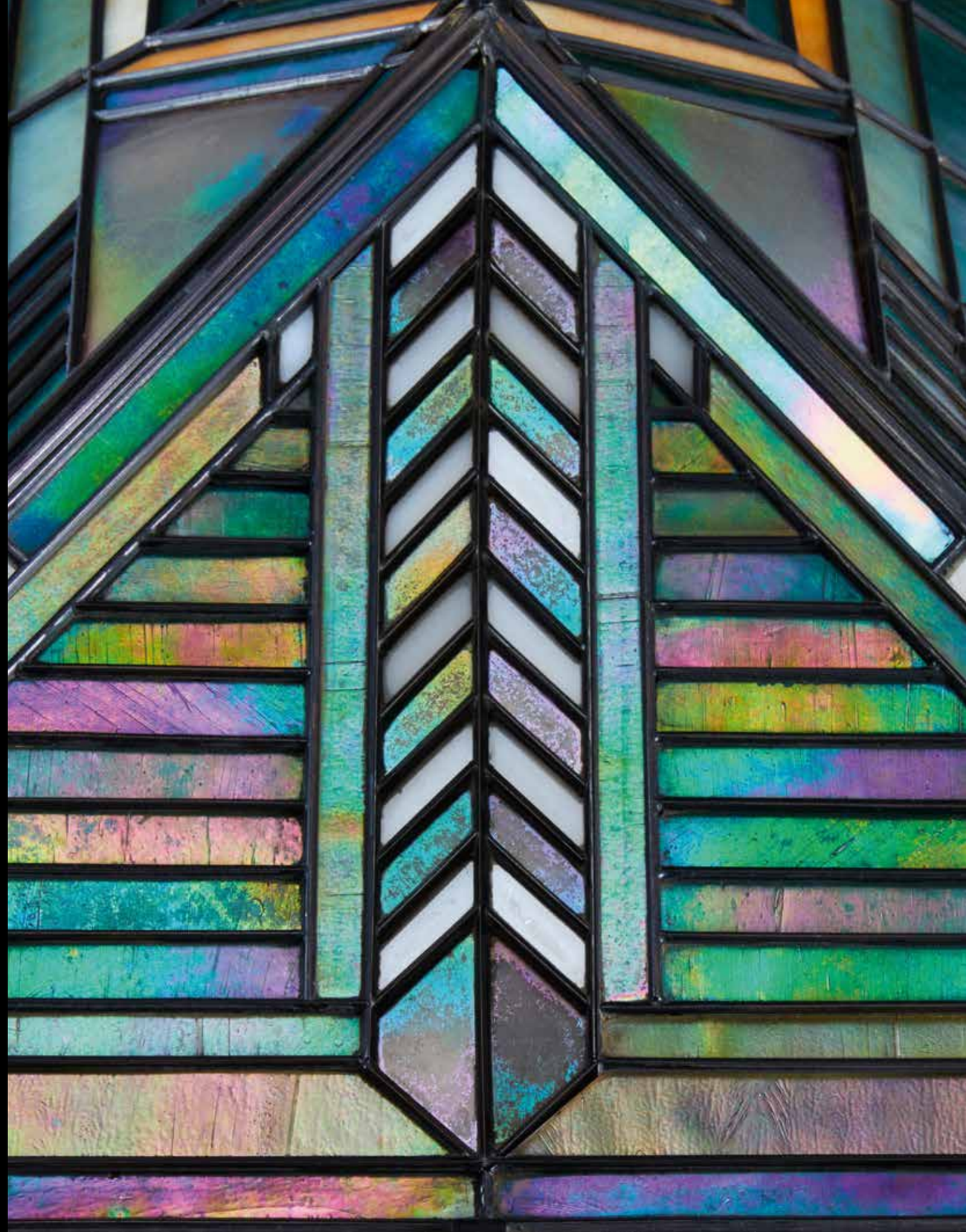
JODI POLLACK

It is a rare gift to encounter a work of art that makes such a strong impression that it remains in our conscious thinking for days, weeks, or even years. The Dana House Double-Pedestal Lamp is one of these magical objects. For anyone fortunate to have experienced this lamp or its mate, these are creations that immediately provoke wonderment, reflection, and inspiration.

What strikes us first is its commanding presence, the sheer gravitas it exudes. Then, its radiant, shimmering glass, which comes to life in an almost kaleidoscopic effect, shifting in colors as one moves around the lamp. The more time spent looking, the more readily apparent it becomes that one is in the presence of something vastly more complex than a strikingly beautiful object; it is a spatial composition of line and form, conceived as only Wright could envision with exacting architectural precision. Essentially a house in miniature, the lamp distills the pure essence of the architect's design principles on a remarkably intimate scale. It is a perfect, timeless artifact of Wrightian exceptionalism.

Designed for the Susan Lawrence Dana House in 1903, the Double-Pedestal Lamp has become universally recognized as one of the quintessential icons of 20th century design, crafted by the most visionary and influential architect of our time. Inspired by the sumac tree and the autumnal palette of the prairie landscape, the lamp speaks directly to Wright's lifelong love affair with nature as his greatest source of inspiration. And when seen within the fabric of the Dana House, it reinforces Wright's philosophy that everything he created – from this remarkable lamp down to a simple bud vase – was part of his holistic vision to create a "total work of art."

Standing on its own, the lamp is awesome. It serves as a beacon of progress, innovation, and the American pursuit of greatness through design. Likely owing to its complexity and cost, Wright's designs for the Dana House interior only called for two of these extraordinary Double-Pedestal Lamps. The mate to the present example is in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas Foundation, acquired in 1988 through the support of Governor Jim Thompson, in order to return a national treasure back to the Dana-Thomas House Museum. As the only remaining example still in private hands, we are humbled and honored to present this magnificent icon to the global art world.



THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP IN THE INTERIOR OF THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE

PROPERTY FROM
AN IMPORTANT AMERICAN PRIVATE COLLECTION

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT
AN IMPORTANT DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP

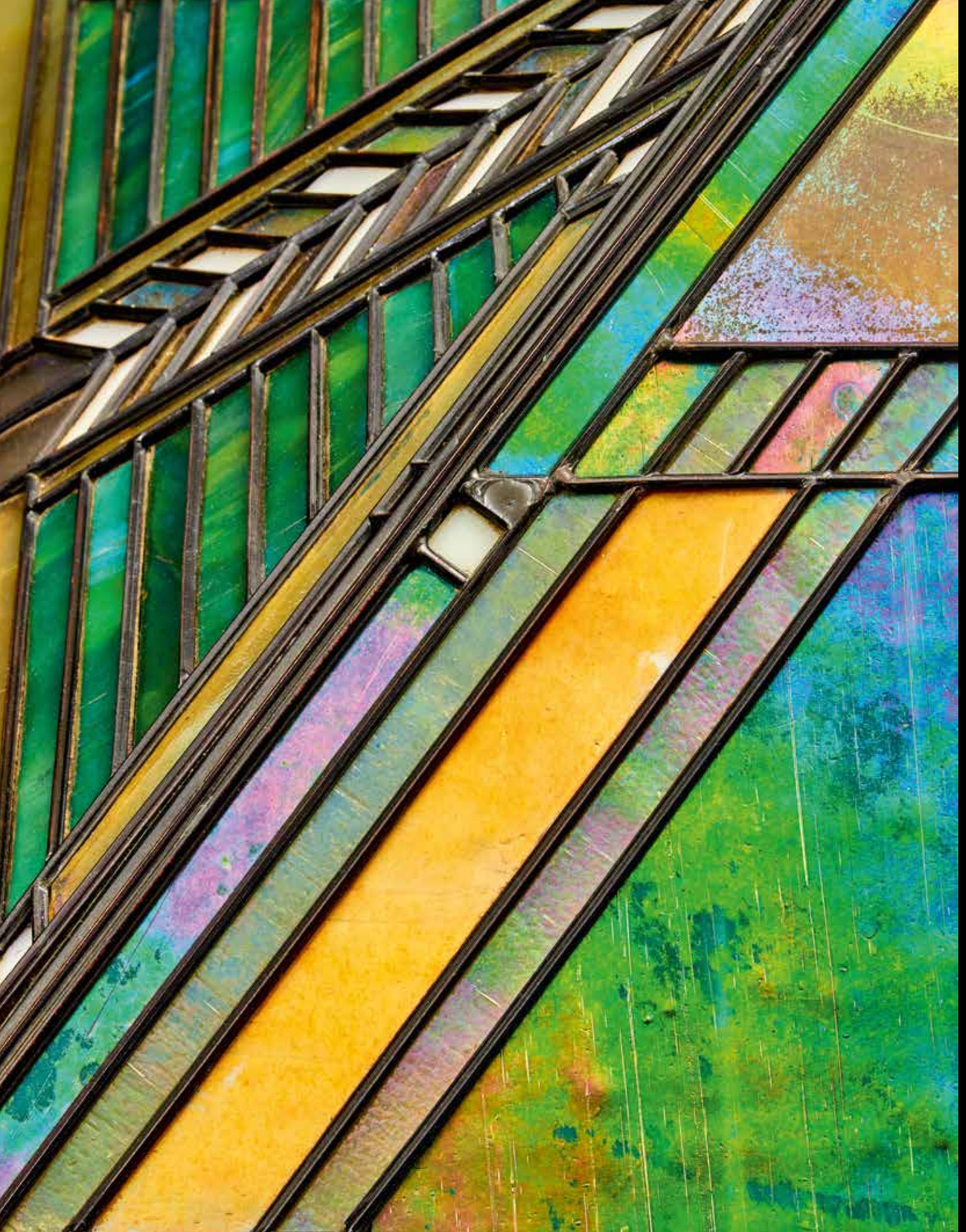
FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

iridized and opalescent glass, brass-plated "colonial" zinc came, bronze

23 ½ by 32 ¼ by 19 ¼ in.
59.7 by 81.9 by 48.9 cm.

Designed *circa* 1903 and executed
by the Linden Glass Company, Chicago, Illinois, *circa* 1904.

$ 3,000,000-5,000,000



PROVENANCE

Susan Lawrence Dana, Springfield, Illinois (commissioned directly from Frank Lloyd Wright in 1902)

Charles and Nanette Thomas, Springfield, Illinois (acquired from the above through the acquisition of the Susan Lawrence Dana House in 1944)

Payne Thomas (acquired by descent from the above)

Private Collection (acquired by descent from the above)

Christie's New York, 10 December 2002, lot 25 (consigned by the above)

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

LITERATURE

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Linden Glass Company, "Bill to Susan Lawrence Dana," Chicago, July 1905 (for the original receipt from the Linden Glass Company for their work for the Susan Lawrence Dana House, including the fabrication of two Double-Pedestal Lamps)

Frank Lloyd Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," *The Architectural Record,* vol. XXIII, no. 3, March 1908, pp. 155-165 (for Frank Lloyd Wright's writings), 174-179, 211 and 221 (for archival photographs and sketches of the Dana House and its furnishings)

Frank Lloyd Wright and C.R. Ashbee, *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright,* Berlin, 1910, p. 6 and pl. 32-43 (for archival photographs of the Dana House and its furnishings)

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Donald Hoffmann, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House: The Illustrated Story of an Architectural Masterpiece,* New York, 1984, p. 72, figs. 114-115 (for the sketch and archival photograph of a related model for the Robie House)

Stevenson Swanson, "This house shows the Wright way: Home kept as shrine to architect," *Chicago Tribune,* March 22, 1987, pp. 1-2 (for a discussion of the house's history and the establishment of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation)

"Wright Lamp, Right Price," *Chicago Tribune,* January 26, 1988, p. 22 (for a related Single-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

Chicago Tribune, February 3, 1988 (for a photograph of Illinois Governor Jim Thompson with a related Single-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

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Chicago Tribune, September 5, 1990 (for the Double-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

Blair Kamin, "Entirely Wright: A Walk Through Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House in Springfield," *Chicago Tribune,* November 4, 1990, pp. 16-21 (for a discussion of the home's history and the Double-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer and Yukio Futagawa, *Frank Lloyd Wright Selected Houses 1,* Tokyo, 1991, p. 93 (for the Double-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

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Julie L. Sloan, *Light Screens: The Leaded Glass of Frank Lloyd Wright,* New York, 2001, pp. 64-70 (for a discussion of the Dana House) and 106, fig. 117 (for an archival photograph of a related model for the Robie House)

Julie L. Sloan, *Light Screens: The Complete Leaded-Glass Windows of Frank Lloyd Wright,* New York, 2001, p. 236, fig. 281 (for the Double-Pedestal Lamp in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House)

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THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE, EXTERIOR FRONT ELEVATION

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT
A LAMP FOR THE AGES

THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP
FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the surrounding suburbs of Chicago and greater Illinois became fertile ground for the rising architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Possessing both an unshakable confidence in his abilities and a clear vision for his future, Wright was introduced to Susan Lawrence Dana in the early 1900s — a fortuitous encounter that resulted in what many consider to be his most defining and quintessential early commission. Among the many masterworks created for Dana's Springfield, Illinois home, the present offering, the Double-Pedestal Lamp, stands as one of the most remarkable: a fusion of architecture, fine design, and technological innovation that encapsulates both Wright's holistic approach and the artistic ambition of the project.

Susan Lawrence Dana, an independently wealthy and intellectually progressive woman, became Wright's patron at a pivotal time in both of their lives. Dana had recently suffered the loss of both her husband and father and inherited a substantial estate from her father's ventures in banking, railroads, mining, and real estate. Rather than retreating, she seized the opportunity to transform her family's Italianate home into a modern architectural and cultural landmark. Dana found in Wright an ideal collaborator: a visionary designer seeking the opportunity to unify landscape, architecture, and the interior design program into a wholly integrated experience. Entrusting Wright with every detail of the project – and essentially giving the architect a "blank check" budget – the house was his most ambitious and extravagant commission to date. Designed and completed over the course of two years, the result became not only one of his most fully realized "total works of art," but it presently remains one of his most impressive expressions of Prairie-style architecture and craftsmanship.

ABOVE: SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA, CIRCA 1900
OPPOSITE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, SELF-PORTRAIT, CIRCA 1903

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, PRESENTATION DRAWING OF THE DINING ROOM OF THE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1903

Wright's design for the Dana House was radical in its totality. Over the course of the project, he and his studio created more than 100 custom pieces of furniture and over 450 art glass windows, doors, and lighting fixtures, including 6 Single-Pedestal Lamps and 2 Double-Pedestal Lamps. The architect's philosophy, rooted in an ideal of organic unity, rejected the division between structure and ornament. As he stated in his 1901 essay "The Art and Craft of the Machine:" "It is quite impossible to consider the building one thing and its furnishings another… they are all mere structural details of its character and completeness."

Nowhere is this philosophy more vividly realized than in the Double-Pedestal Lamp. One of only two created for the Dana House — the second of which resides in the permanent collection of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation — this lamp exemplifies Wright's seamless integration of architecture, design, and emerging technology. It stands not only as a masterwork of design, but as a sculptural embodiment of Wright's integrative architectural vision.

THIS LAMP EXEMPLIFIES WRIGHT'S SEAMLESS INTEGRATION OF ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY. IT STANDS NOT ONLY AS A MASTERWORK OF DESIGN, BUT AS A SCULPTURAL EMBODIMENT OF WRIGHT'S INTEGRATIVE ARCHITECTURAL VISION.

The lamp's structure is deeply architectonic: its rectilinear base of stacked modular cubes evokes both the foundation of the original Italianate house and Wright's expansive Prairie-style addition. Above, a broad, sloping shade echoes the deep eaves and pitched roof lines of the Dana House itself. Composed of richly-colored opalescent and translucent glass, the shade features abstracted geometric patterns and a stylized sumac motif — a native prairie plant Wright interpreted throughout the house — rendered in tones of gold, amber, and mossy green. When illuminated, it casts a warm, autumnal glow that transforms the room into a poetic interplay of light and form. Deeply inspired by nature, the lamp's sumac motif and earthy tones speak to a broader aesthetic philosophy expressed by Wright himself: "Go to the woods and fields for color schemes. Use the soft, warm, optimistic tones of earths and autumn leaves… they are more wholesome and better adapted in most cases to good decoration."

And yet, in reflected daylight, these same panels unveil a luminous, effervescent iridescence — shifting into vivacious hues of turquoise, fuchsia, lavender, emerald and gold. This visual oscillation from autumnal to iridized grants the lamp a dual identity: simultaneously an integrated element of its architectural space and one that uniquely transforms around each viewer's vantage point.

“ I BELIEVE A HOUSE IS MORE A HOME
BY BEING A WORK OF ART.”

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

DANA HOUSE, FRONT ENTRY FACADE, CIRCA 1950

Suspended between the base supports are two vertical blue-green glass panels affixed with hinges that allow for gentle movement. It has been suggested that these panels may reference Japanese “shoji” screens — an influence Wright deeply admired during his visits to Japan — which were traditionally believed to repel evil spirits. Whether symbolic or purely formal, these moving panels add a subtle kinetic element to the lamp and further emphasize its interactive, living presence in the home.

Technologically, Wright’s use of electricity in the Double-Pedestal Lamp is a further testament to his bold, forward-thinking approach to design. The electric lightbulb at the time was still a relatively new invention, with many architects and designers hesitant to embrace it as a primary source of illumination. Wright, on the other hand, viewed electric light as “no longer an appliance nor even an appurtenance, but really architecture… made a part of the building.”

As manifest in the present offering, the young architect recognized the light bulb not merely as a functional necessity, but as an opportunity to revolutionize domestic lighting. Freed from the constraints of oil and gas, Wright exploited the visual and spatial possibilities afforded by this less cumbersome source of fuel. For one, it allowed him to focus more on the atmospheric qualities of lighting – the glow, diffusion, and projection of light as aesthetic phenomena. The lamp's sloped shade became a canopy not over a flickering flame but over a steady, glowing source, casting a diffused, ambient light that animated the geometric glasswork from within. The result is both modern and transcendent: a quiet halo of color and form.

Beyond the lamp's formal attributes, it is also intrinsically reflective of the personality and values of its original patron. Susan Lawrence Dana was a progressive thinker and political activist who saw her home as both a social salon and a political forum. She was an early supporter of women's suffrage, civil rights, and social welfare reforms, and frequently hosted activists, artists, and intellectuals of the day. Over time, the house evolved from a center of elite cultural gatherings into a hub of reformist activity – serving as campaign headquarters in her pursuit to pass legislation for equal rights to women, and even for a time as "The Lawrence Center for Constructive Thought." Dana's trust in Wright's progressive and radical vision — and her willingness to surrender every aspect of the design process to the architect — speaks to both her forward-thinking spirit and deep belief in the transformative power of design. Just as the house and lamp embodied Wright's architectural philosophy, they also mirrored Dana's social and political convictions.

The house remained under Susan Lawrence Dana's care until 1944, when publisher Charles C. Thomas purchased it with many of Wright's original furnishings intact. The home served as the headquarters for his publishing company until 1981, when the State of Illinois acquired it and renamed it the Dana-Thomas House Foundation, in commemoration of Mr. Thomas' attentive stewardship over the years. Seeking to return as many original furnishings to the home as possible, the foundation – along with the support of the-then Governor Thompson – began re-acquiring pieces as they became available, most notably the 1988 purchase of the second Double-Pedestal Lamp. The house is presently one of the best preserved and most intact of all Wright's projects, and the lamp remains a crowning jewel of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation's collection.

The Double-Pedestal Lamp is not only one of Wright's most singular achievements in design, but also one of the few objects to encapsulate his complete creative vision. With its architectural presence, intricate glasswork, and masterful execution, it stands as a timeless artifact of innovation, modernism, and supreme artistry. This offering, the only example to remain in private hands, presents the collecting community with what may prove the last opportunity to acquire this legendary icon of design history. It is, in every sense, a brilliant beacon of Wright's architectural genius and an enduring testament to the power of design to shape not just space but meaning.

FROM LEFT:
DANA HOUSE, FRONT ENTRY FACADE
DANA HOUSE, EXTERIOR COURTYARD AND GARDEN
DANA HOUSE, NORTH FACADE AND COURTYARD
DANA HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM

“ WHAT IS THIS MAGIC MATERIAL,
THERE BUT NOT SEEN IF YOU ARE LOOKING
THROUGH IT? YOU MAY LOOK AT IT, TOO,
AS A BRILLIANCE, CATCHING REFLECTIONS AND
GIVING BACK LIMPID LIGHT. ”

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, THE DANA HOUSE, AND THE MAKING OF A TOTAL WORK OF ART

PAUL GOLDBERGER

Frank Lloyd Wright was a protean designer, an architect not just of buildings but of objects as small as books and chairs and as large as towns and cities. Everything, he believed, was within his purview, and few things satisfied him more than the opportunity to design every aspect of a building. Wright never wanted to stop at the structure; if it did not contain his furniture, lighting, and carpets, he considered it incomplete. Thus there are Frank Lloyd Wright plates and Frank Lloyd Wright desks and Frank Lloyd Wright stained-glass windows and Frank Lloyd Wright dining chairs and Frank Lloyd Wright curtains. Wright wanted his residential clients not just to live in Wright houses, but in total Wrightian environments in which everything bore his mark. It is easy to dismiss this as merely an act of architectural ego, a quality which Wright had in ample supply. But there were deeper and more important impulses behind Wright's desire to design as much as his clients would allow him to. He believed earnestly in the

HE SAW EVERYTHING, FROM ARCHITECTURAL GESTURES AS SWEEPING AS THE OVERHANGING EAVES OF A LOW-PITCHED, EMBRACING ROOF TO OBJECTS AS TINY AS A SLENDER BUD VASE ON AN OAK TABLE, AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THE REACH AND AMBITION OF HIS AESTHETIC VISION.

German concept of the *gesamtkunstwerk*, the work of art in which every piece is conceived as part of a larger whole and is an essential part of that whole. He saw everything, from architectural gestures as sweeping as the overhanging eaves of a low-pitched, embracing roof to objects as tiny as a slender bud vase on an oak table, as a demonstration of the reach and ambition of his aesthetic vision. In his determination to design everything Wright had architectural history on his side; Michelangelo saw no distinction between architecture, sculpture, decoration, and engineering, and closer to our own time, architects as different as Stanford White and Antonio Gaudi often designed furnishings and decorative elements as a way of assuring the consistency of an aesthetic idea.

OPPOSITE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, CIRCA 1924

To Wright, every house he designed had the potential to be a *gesamtkunstwerk*. In the introduction to the *Wasmuth Portfolio,* a celebrated German publication of the drawings for his earliest major projects, Wright spoke of his desire to integrate every element of his houses into a unified work of design. "They are all mere structural details in its character and completeness, heating apparatus, light fixtures, the very chairs, tables, cabinets and musical instruments, where practicable, are of the building itself," Wright wrote. "Floor coverings and hangings are a part of the house as the plaster on the walls or the tiles on the roof."

The extent to which Wright succeeded in his aim to make a house a fully integrated work depended, of course, on his clients and the extent to which they were comfortable giving Wright free reign over the various elements of the project that went beyond the design of the physical structure itself. Most were willing to do so. They were already possessed of a certain appetite for aesthetic innovation, not to say risk taking, or they would not have hired Wright in the first place. Once they had decided that they were prepared to live in Wright's architecture, it was not necessarily so much greater a leap to sit on his chairs and enjoy the light of his lamps.

That was surely the case with Susan Lawrence Dana, one of Wright's most committed clients, and among the first to commission a house that would give Wright the opportunity he desired to conceive of a villa as a unified work of architecture and interior design. Dana was a wealthy widow in Springfield, Illinois, the heiress to a mining fortune, and when she hired Wright in 1902, she was forty and he thirty-five. She was an enlightened, if eccentric, client; an arts patron and committed suffragette, she was, like Wright, acquainted with the Chicago social

reformer Jane Addams, who, Brendan Gill speculated in his biography of Wright, may have first connected her to the architect. Dana, as Ada Louise Huxtable has written, was "the first of a line of intelligent, sophisticated, wealthy women who were attracted to Wright's stimulating ideas and persuasive personality."

THE ENTRY, THROUGH AN ARCHED PORTAL TOPPED BY A LOW GABLE, IS ALMOST MYSTERIOUS, AS IF IT WERE A TUNNEL TO ANOTHER WORLD; ABOVE IT IS A SECOND-FLOOR GABLE AND GLASS DOORS, SUGGESTING MONUMENTALITY AND LIGHT WITHIN.

Wright must have been quite persuasive indeed, since Dana first conceived the project as a renovation of the large Italianate mansion in the center of Springfield in which her parents had lived, and as the design process moved forward the notion of renovation gradually gave way to new construction. Eventually not much was left of the original house, where Dana's mother, also a widow, would remain in residence with her daughter. Wright kept Susan Dana's father's study, where Dana, something of a spiritualist, and her mother might commune with the family patriarch. But the room that allowed the two women to look backwards would end up subsumed within a large and otherwise entirely new, entirely Wrightian world. When it was completed in 1904 the 12,000 square foot house was the most expansive, not to mention the most extravagant, residence Wright had built.

The site of the house, a conventional corner lot in a residential neighborhood, was somewhat constrained, and that, along with Susan Dana's hope to retain at least something of the old family mansion while at the same time giving Wright the freedom of decorative expression he craved, led to a house that, more than many of Wright's early designs, seems to face inward. The entry, through an arched portal topped by a low gable, is almost mysterious, as if it were a tunnel to another world; above it is a second-floor gable and glass doors, suggesting monumentality and light within. Otherwise, the façade is discreet, calm, and muted. But like the front of almost every Wright building, it makes us want to come inside.

ABOVE: DANA HOUSE, FRONT ENTRY FACADE, CIRCA 1955
OPPOSITE: SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA OUTSIDE THE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1915-1920

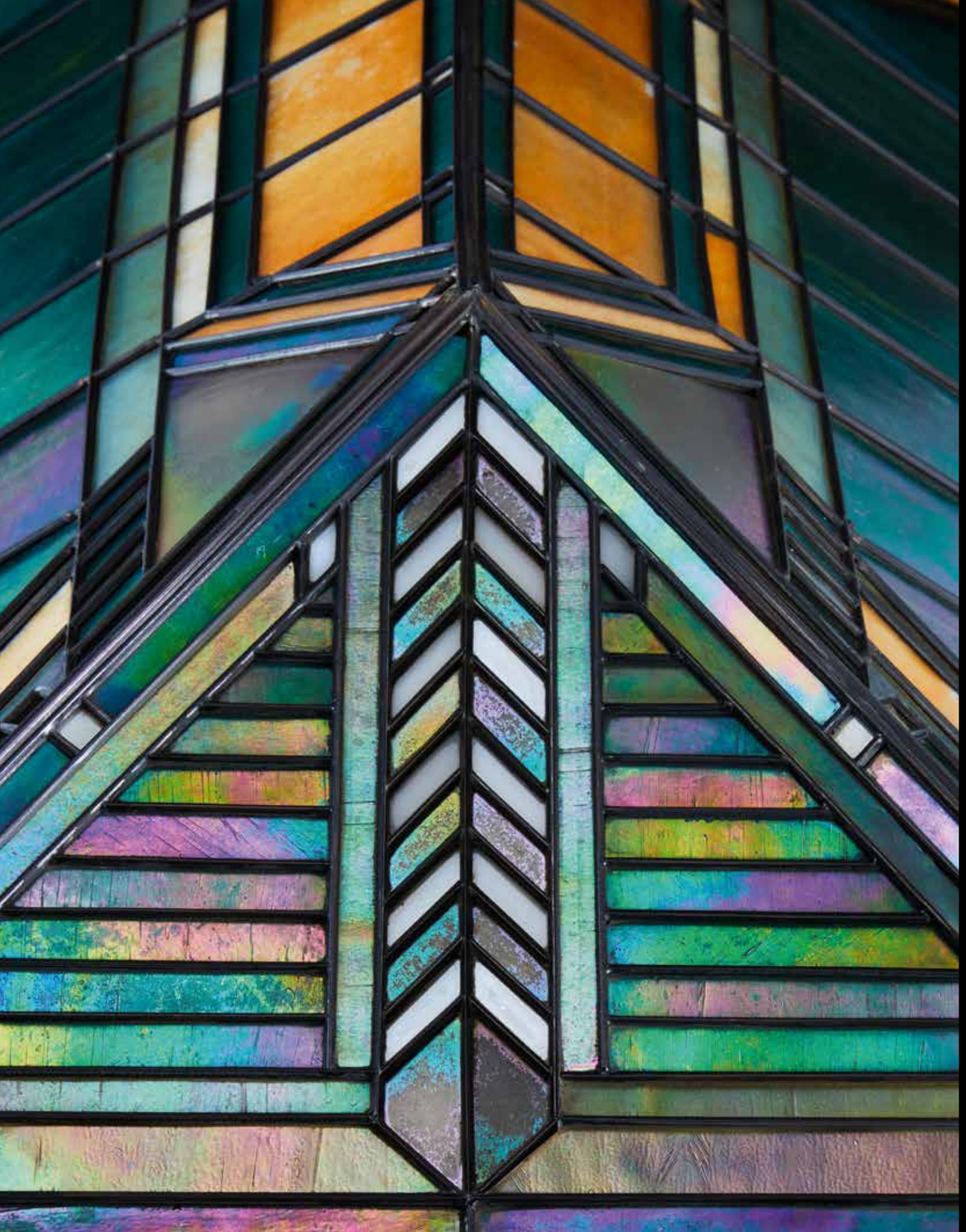
NATURAL LIGHT FROM SECOND STORY WINDOWS WASHES DOWN INTO THESE SPACES, AND UNLIKE MANY OF WRIGHT'S INTERIORS, WHERE STRONG HORIZONTALS PUSH RELENTLESSLY OUTWARD, THE ROOMS IN THE DANA HOUSE SEEM TO RISE AND TURN INWARD, AT ONCE MAJESTIC AND PRIVATE.

And then Wright's sensual world begins to unfold. The entry arch turns out to be not one arch but two, and once inside the door that is set within the inner arch there is a vestibule with a barrel-vaulted ceiling of bands of colored glass designed in abstract patterns that set out the design motif for the house, which is inspired by sumac and other wildflowers of the Midwest, all in a palette of autumnal colors. Then comes an inner door, and the space billows up into a two-story reception hall; ahead, on axis with the front door, is a terra cotta statue of a female figure, designed by Wright and executed by the sculptor Richard Bock,

ABOVE: DANA HOUSE INTERIOR, CIRCA 1905
OPPOSITE: DINING ROOM OF THE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1908

placing a capstone on a slender, tapered skyscraper that foreshadows Wright's Mile High Skyscraper that he would design half a century later—not the only element of the Dana house that suggests a connection to Wright's later work.

But the greater drama here is not in the statue but in Wright's spaces: the reception hall, which steps upward and gives onto a two-story, barrel-vaulted dining room; a passage leading to an enormous gallery, also high and with a vaulted ceiling; and the other public rooms. Natural light from second story windows washes down into these spaces, and unlike many of Wright's interiors, where strong horizontals push relentlessly outward, the rooms in the Dana house seem to rise and turn inward, at once majestic and private.

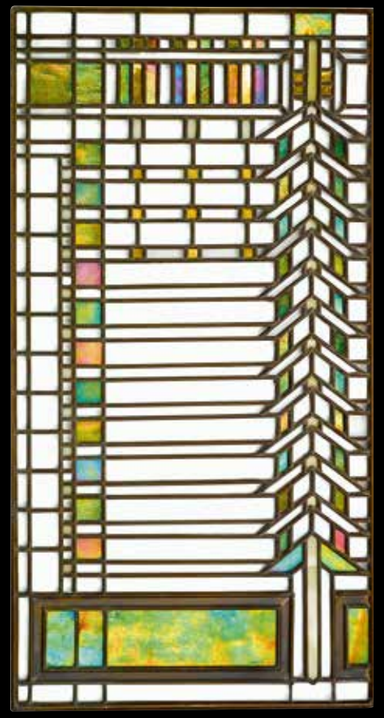


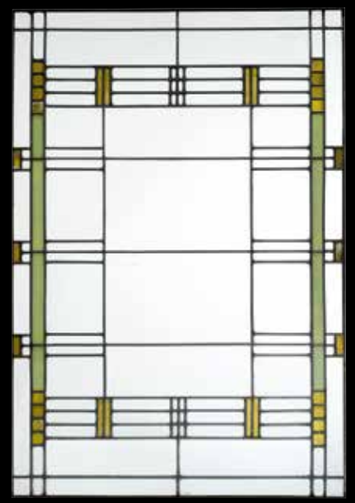
Light, both natural and artificial, was critical to Wright, and with the Dana house he experimented more boldly than ever before with ways in which he could use glass to produce pieces that would stand on their own as art objects and at the same time would shape the quality of light within his architecture. Wright had been creating glass designs in abstract patterns and integrating them into his architecture for several years, and he would do so with particular note in two houses that date from the same year as the Dana house, the Arthur Heurtley house in Oak Park, outside of Chicago, the suburb where Wright himself then lived, and the Ward Willits house in nearby Highland Park. Both Heurtley and Willits are among Wright's masterpieces, but in neither of these houses was the glass as extensive, as colorful, and as varied as in the Dana house, where the remarkable vaulted ceiling of colored glass in the front vestibule is but the first of the many manifestations of Wright's expressions of the potential of glass as both an architectural and artistic material in this house.

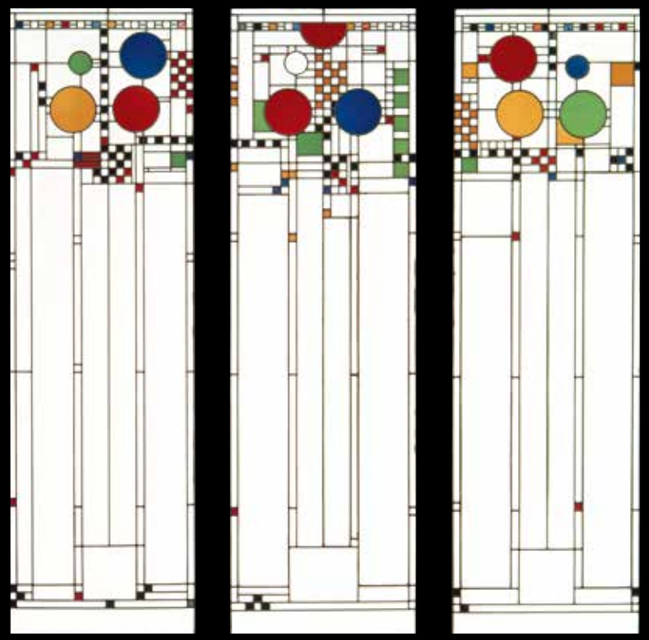
LIGHT, BOTH NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL, WAS CRITICAL TO WRIGHT, AND WITH THE DANA HOUSE HE EXPERIMENTED MORE BOLDLY THAN EVER BEFORE WITH WAYS IN WHICH HE COULD USE GLASS TO PRODUCE PIECES THAT WOULD STAND ON THEIR OWN AS ART OBJECTS AND AT THE SAME TIME WOULD SHAPE THE QUALITY OF LIGHT WITHIN HIS ARCHITECTURE.

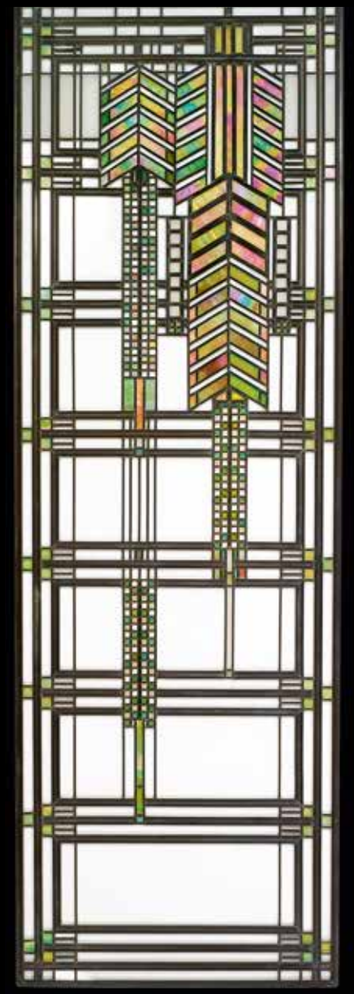
The Dana house has several spectacular windows whose exuberance would not be equaled in Wright's oeuvre for another decade, until he created his famous stained-glass windows for the Avery Coonley Playhouse in Riverside, Illinois, of 1912, a colorful pattern of balloons and confetti in which round balloons, which appear to have floated to the top of the window, play off against the straight lines that were more characteristic of Wright's early decorative work. The playful design was intended to entertain children, but over the years it has entertained adults so well that the original windows were long ago sold off to museums and collectors, and by now their design has been replicated in so many mass-produced gift objects like glassware, coasters, and trivets that it might be said to symbolize the commercialization of Wright as much as the distinction of his decorative designs.

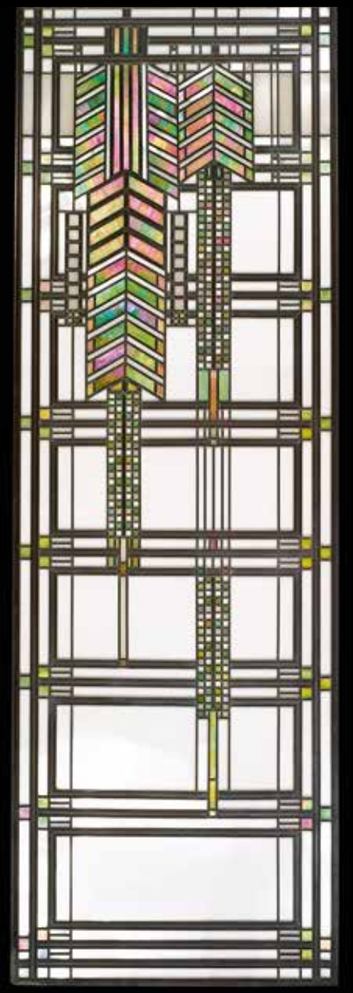
Happily, the extensive glasswork within the Dana house glass has not been so commercialized. While Wright created an astonishing 250 windows for the house, the high point of glass design is surely the extraordinary lamp design that Wright created in multiple variations, including hanging lamps for the dining room, single-pedestal lamps and, most significantly, a pair of table lamps with double pedestals in bronze. The hanging lamps and their brethren share an abstract geometric pattern of diagonals that recalls the pattern of lines in the glass in the arched transom over the front door, which Wright intended as an abstraction of the wings of a butterfly. The glass in the lamps is more purely geometric, without











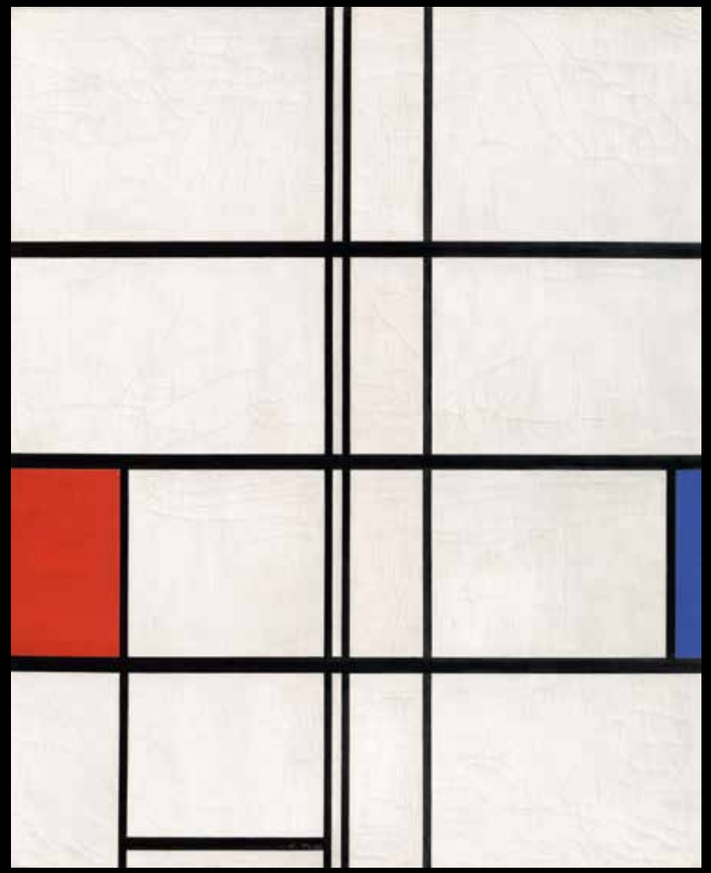
COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, WINDOW FOR THE ARTHUR B. HEURTLEY HOUSE, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS, CIRCA 1902
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, "CHEVRON" CASEMENT WINDOW FOR THE DARWIN D. MARTIN HOUSE, BUFFALO, NEW YORK, CIRCA 1903-1905
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, WINDOWS FOR THE AVERY COONLEY PLAYHOUSE, RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS, CIRCA 1912

OPPOSITE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, TWO "SUMAC" WINDOWS FOR
THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1903-1904

the double reading of the transom. The double pedestal lamp, taken as a whole, goes beyond the abstract composition of its glass shade to confer a whole other level of visual experience. It evokes, powerfully but never literally, Wright's architecture, or at least his architecture of this period; the shade of the double pedestal table lamp seems to echo the profile of Wright's low, hipped roofs, and Wright's lines feel so present in its structure that it is only a slight exaggeration to say that it possesses the spirit of a Wright building. The table lamp is a Wright pavilion, a Wright gazebo, wrought in miniature, and it has both the power and the delight of any miniature, an expression of a larger world, compressed and somehow made both more intense and more joyful.

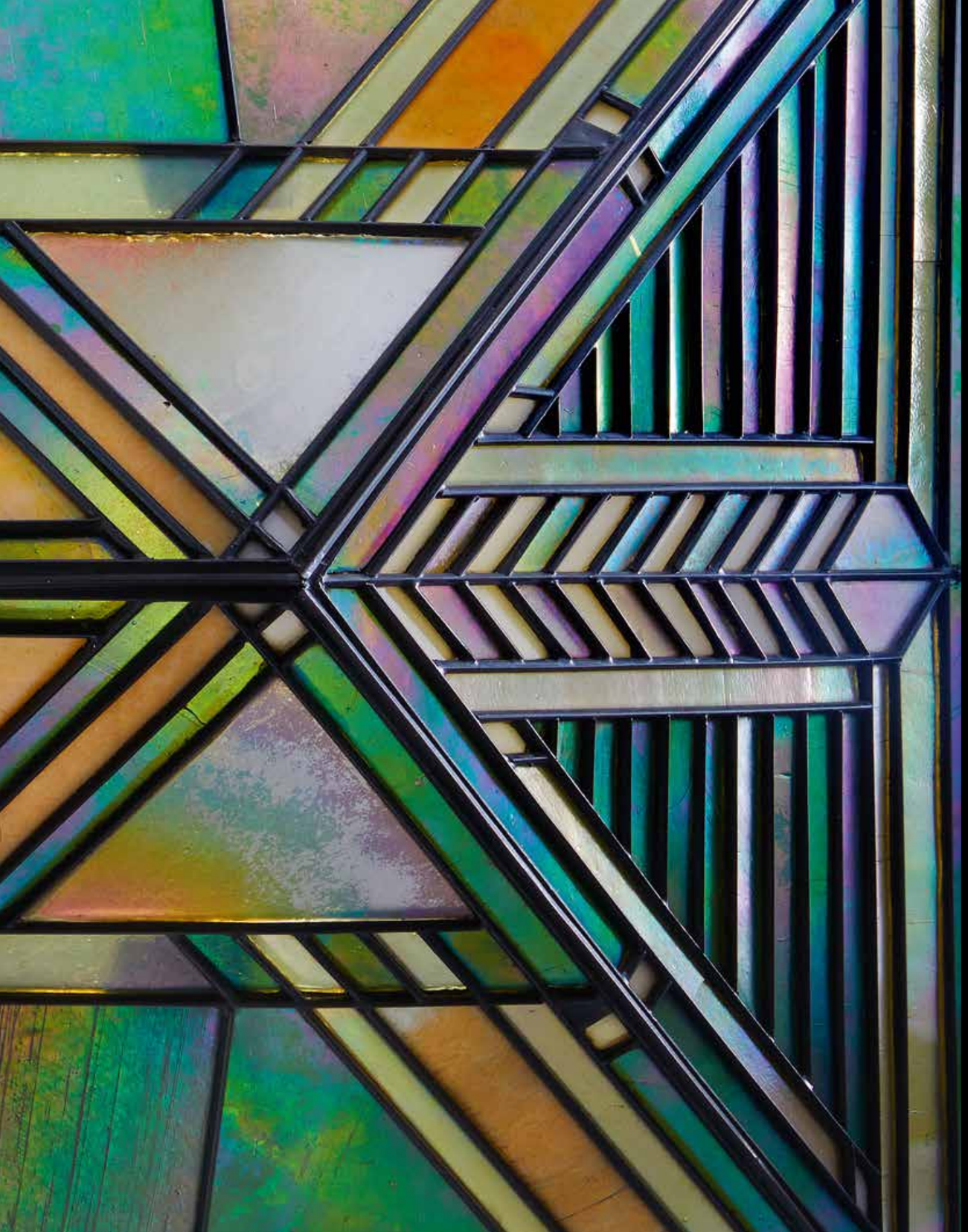
THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP IN THE INTERIOR OF THE DANA HOUSE

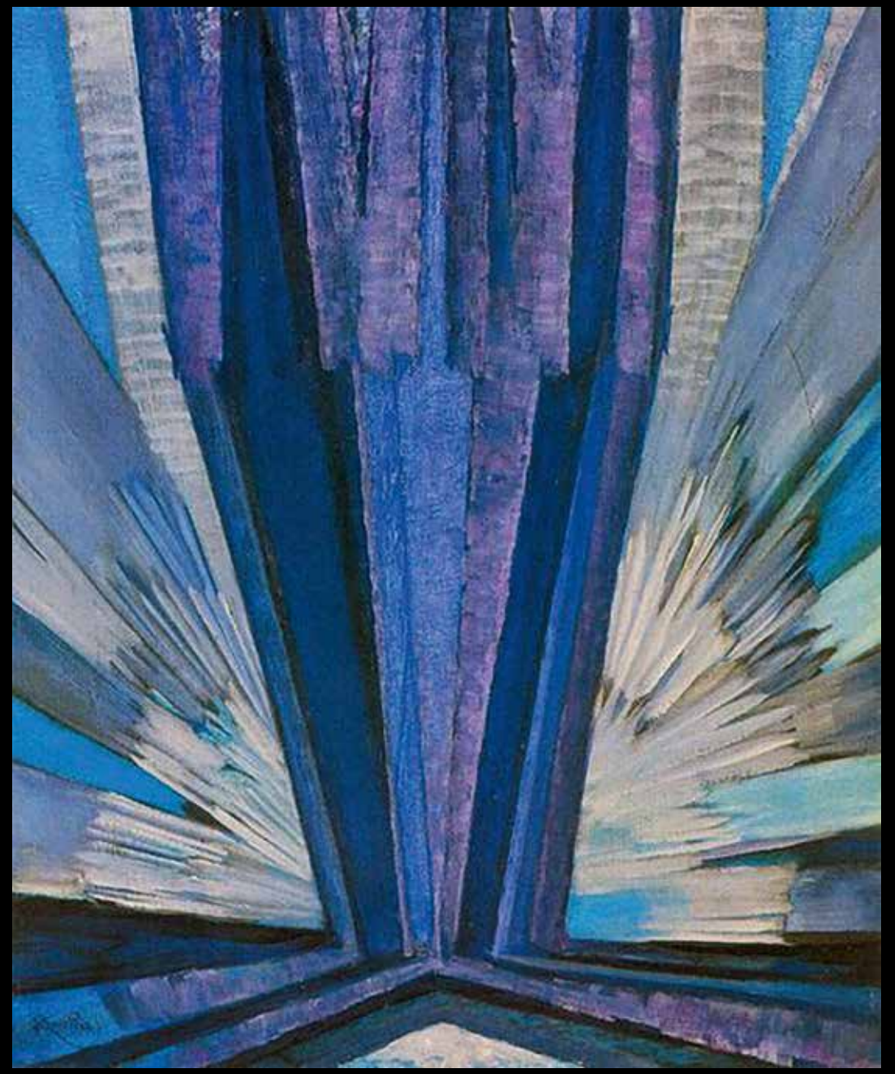


It is one of Wright's great triumphs, a work of design that possesses the dignity and the gravitas of a work of architecture and communicates Wright's aesthetic as clearly and as fully as his buildings. The lamp provides light, but it also symbolizes protection and shelter; it demonstrates clarity of structure, and it establishes, remarkably for what it is, a sense of space under its generous, glowing shade. Like the real spaces in Wright's buildings, it is balanced between openness and enclosure, and it feels at once comforting and exciting, protective and free.

The glass shades of the lamps share with many of the windows in the Dana house a geometric design that is strikingly advanced. It looks to the work of Mondrian surely, and it is not hard to see hints of Cubism in Wright's crisp linear patterns. Wright was aware of this: in 1952, he wrote to the student apprentices working at Taliesin, his studio and residence, that "I used to love to sit down at the drawing board with a

ABOVE: PIET MONDRIAN, *COMPOSITION IN WHITE, RED AND BLUE*, 1936. OIL ON CANVAS. COLLECTION STAATSGALERIE, STUTTGART, GERMANY





T-square and triangle and concoct those patterns that you will see in the windows. I evolved a whole language of my own in connection with those things. That was long before the Mondrians [sic] and these other things ever happened. You will see nearly everything that they ever thought of in these glass patterns—especially in the Midway Gardens [a large entertainment facility in Chicago that opened in 1914 and was demolished in 1929]. And also in the home of Mrs. Lawrence Dana…Every house I did had it in evidence—especially the Dana house."

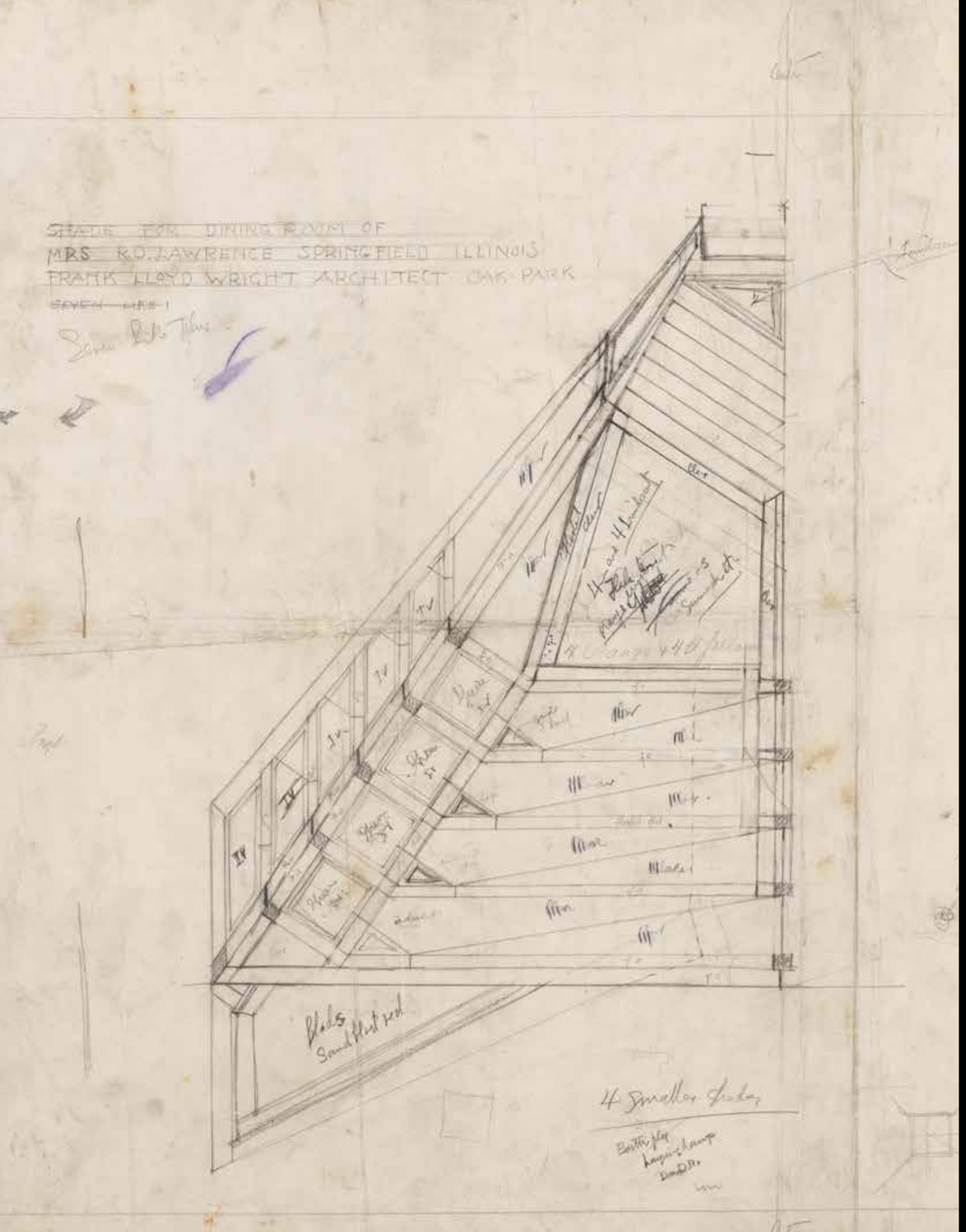
ABOVE: FRANTIŠEK KUPKA, *BLUE*, CIRCA 1914. OIL ON CANVAS

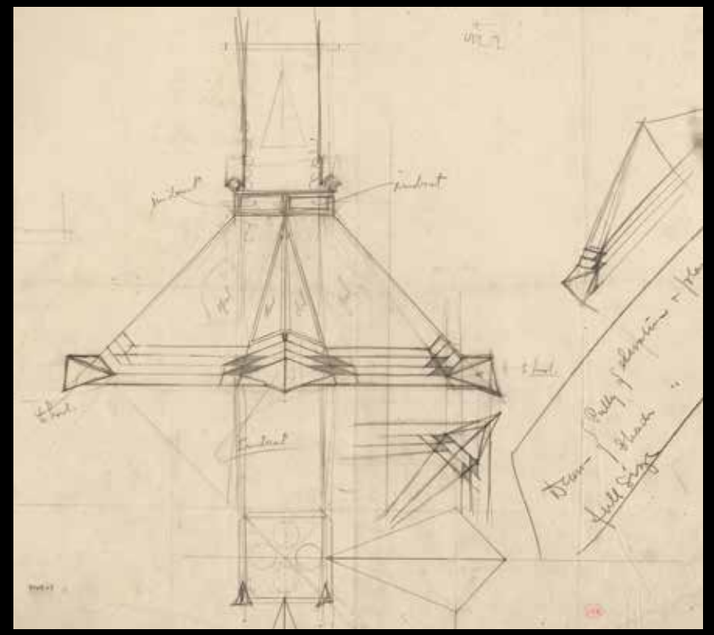
But it was not only the patterns of the lampshades that foreshadowed art that would follow Wright. The colors, too, suggested a new and different world, one both freer and more intense than the lamps of Louis Comfort Tiffany, remotely comparable to Wright's lamps but leaning heavily toward representation of

AND MORE RADICAL STILL WERE THE COLORS IN WRIGHT'S LAMPS, ESPECIALLY IN THE PANELS SET INTO THE BASE OF THE DOUBLE PEDESTAL LAMP, WHICH SWIRLED WITH CHANGING COLORS IN A MANNER THAT SEEMS ALMOST PSYCHEDELIC.

natural form, different from Wright's abstraction. And more radical still were the colors in Wright's lamps, especially in the panels set into the base of the double pedestal lamp, which swirled with changing colors in a manner that seems almost psychedelic. Wright prefigured abstract art in his glass patterning, and he prefigured the postwar color field painters in the changing, blurring panels of color. Or do they look backwards to Monet? It is possible to see these bedazzling panels both ways.

ABOVE: HELEN FRANKENTHALER, *RIVERHEAD*, 1963. ACRYLIC ON CANVAS. COLLECTION KUNSTMUSEUM BASEL, SWITZERLAND





Some elements of the lamps also pointed toward Wright's later work. It was not just the slender female figure who seemed to be putting the finishing touches on a Wrightian tower that seems to hint at what would come so many years later. One of Wright's drawings for the glass lampshades for the Dana house, which shows the geometric pattern of the glass, bears a striking similarity to the glass form of Beth Sholom Synagogue in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, that Wright designed in 1954—a building in the form of a great glass tent that the congregation's rabbi would say evoked Mount Sinai.

Wright's later work was hardly an echo of his early work. No one could confuse Unity Temple of 1904 with the Guggenheim Museum of 1959 or suggest that Wright did not continue to develop new ideas in his career, which began in the 19th century before the advent of the automobile and ended at the beginning of the age of jet travel. But there were certain themes of his architecture that did not change, most notably his reliance on geometric form, and his desire to assemble geometric forms into unusual, complex, and yet balanced compositions, and his commitment to assuring that both natural and artificial light would in some way feel integral to his architecture. A drawing of one of the Dana house chandeliers

ABOVE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, DESIGN DRAWING, CEILING LIGHT FOR THE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1903
OPPOSITE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, DESIGN DRAWING, CEILING LIGHT FOR THE DANA HOUSE (DETAIL), CIRCA 1903

underscores this. It shows us how Wright saw the lighting he designed, including the double pedestal lamp, as not just a source of light but as a way in which he could work out ideas at small scale and communicate the essence of what he wanted his architecture to be.

If Wright ended his career as a celebrated figure in American culture, Susan Lawrence Dana was less fortunate. Her generosity toward Wright was matched by her enthusiasm for spending her fortune in other ways as well, including commissioning a Tiffany necklace for $24,000 to wear when she was presented at the Court of St. James. She had entertained lavishly, and for more than two decades all of Springfield society came together under the warm glow of Wright's glass lamps. By 1928, however, Dana no longer had funds to maintain the house and was forced to move elsewhere in Springfield. The house entered a bleak

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE, ELKINS PARK, PENNSYLVANIA

period during which it was largely abandoned until it was sold in 1944 to Charles and Nanette Thomas, who lived in a portion of the house and turned most of the building into an office for their medical publishing company. The Thomases were nevertheless respectful stewards and kept most of the original glass and furniture. They turned Dana's library into a library for their medical journals, put proofreaders in the billiard room, and arrayed the stenographic pool around the dining room table. Charles Thomas had hoped that the house could eventually become a museum, and in 1981, thirteen years after his death and six years after the death of his wife, their son Payne, then the company's chief executive, sold the house to the State of Illinois for $1 million. The state undertook a full restoration and now operates the house as a public museum, with most of Dana's original furniture, including the other double pedestal lamp, on permanent display. According to his son, Payne turned down higher offers to honor his father's wish that the house be in public hands. In gratitude, the state named the museum the Dana-Thomas House, honoring both the visionary patron who built it and the public-spirited publisher who preserved it, keeping Wright's unified work of art and architecture intact.

ABOVE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, PRESENTATION DRAWING FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1903

“ THE LONGER I LIVE, THE MORE BEAUTIFUL LIFE BECOMES. IF YOU FOOLISHLY IGNORE BEAUTY, YOU WILL SOON FIND YOURSELF WITHOUT IT. YOUR LIFE WILL BE IMPOVERISHED. BUT IF YOU INVEST IN BEAUTY, IT WILL REMAIN WITH YOU ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE. ”

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR AND LIGHT

THE DOUBLE-PEDESTAL LAMP FOR THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE

JULIE L. SLOAN

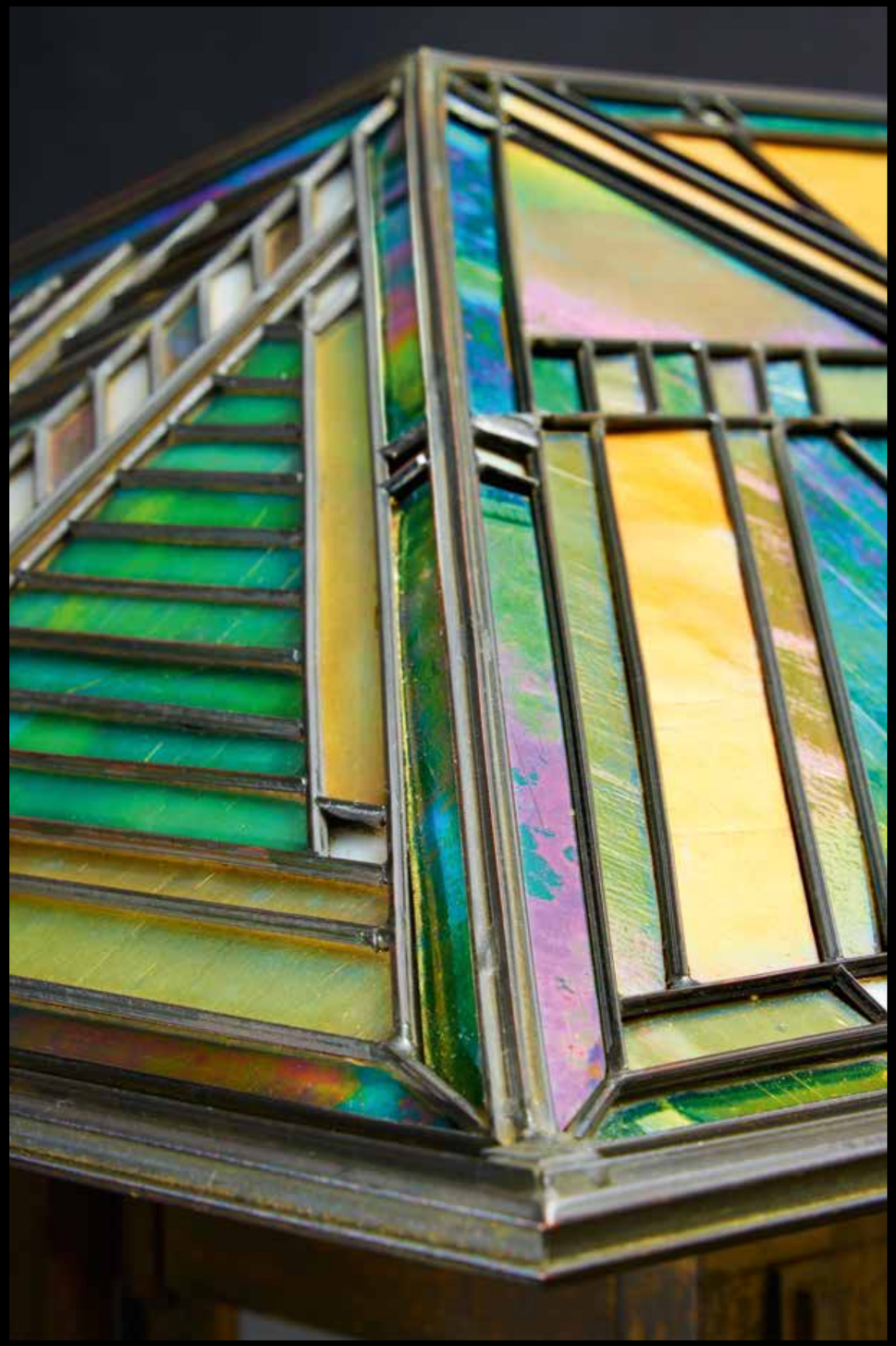
"Glass and light: two forms of the same thing!" So wrote Frank Lloyd Wright in his 1928 essay on glass — a material he found magical for its ability to be both reflective and transparent, fragile yet weatherproof. He controlled the interplay of light and color in his Prairie houses through leaded-glass windows and table lamps. This mastery is most beautifully realized in the Susan Lawrence Dana House in Springfield, Illinois. With more than 250 windows, the house shimmers with resplendent light and envelops visitors in the luminous warmth of windows and lighting crafted from gold, amber, and mossy green glass.

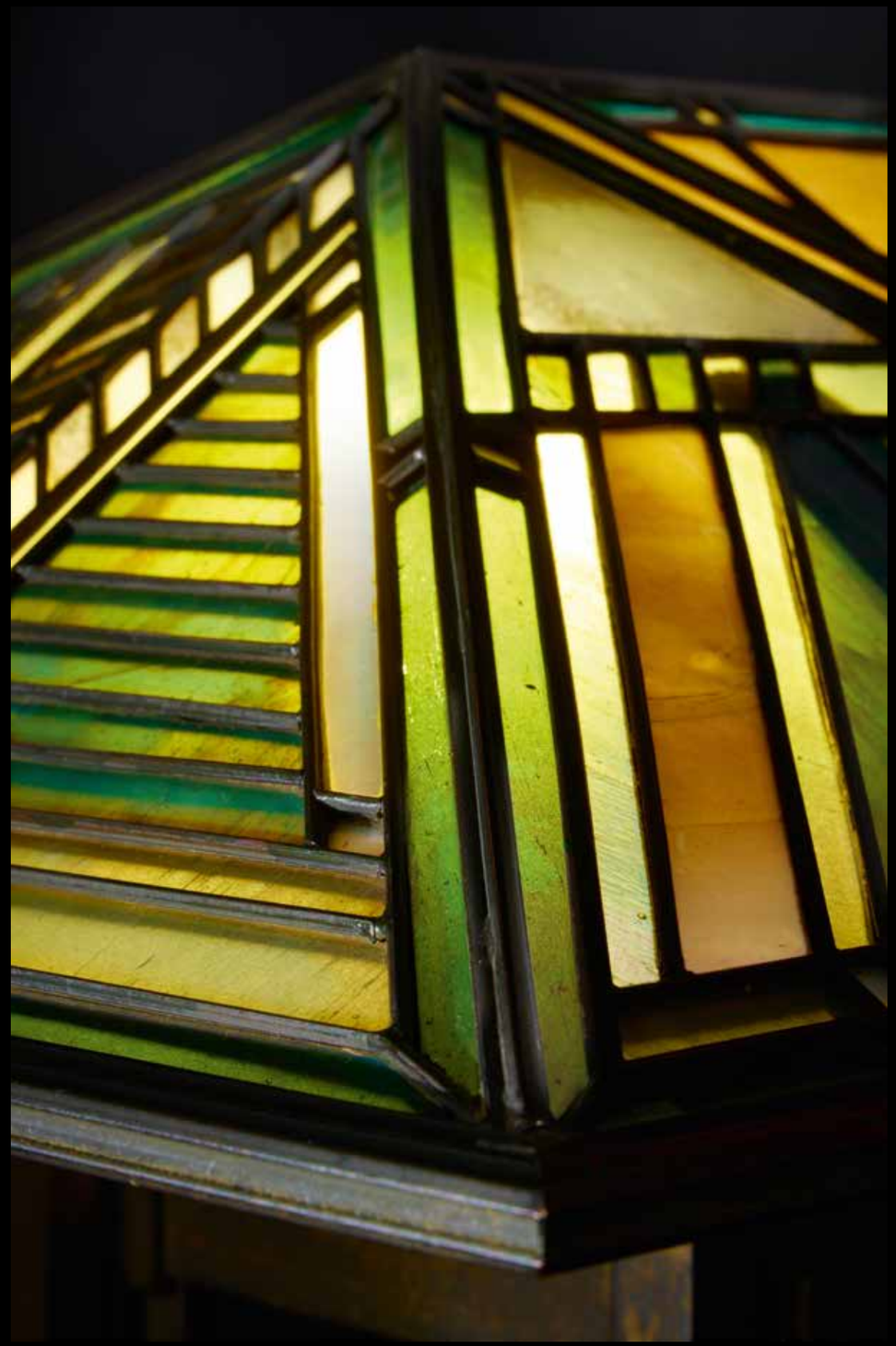
THE FORM IS A MICROCOSM OF THE HOUSE ITSELF — A MINIATURE VERSION OF THE HOME, DAZZLING WITH IRIDESCENCE IN DAYLIGHT AND GLOWING WITH THE SUN-BAKED HUES OF THE PRAIRIE BY NIGHT.

The Dana House was lit internally by an array of lighting from sconces, chandeliers, and table lamps. Wright's Double-Pedestal Lamp — one of only two examples of this monumental and elaborate design commissioned for the house — features a double bronze pedestal supporting a hipped-roof shade. The form is a microcosm of the house itself — a miniature version of the home, dazzling with iridescence in daylight and glowing with the sun-baked hues of the prairie by night. Its palette harmonizes with the house's magnificent program of windows, utilizing the same materials.

The lamp's architectonic form not only reflects Wright's interior design palette but also echoes the shape and massing of the house. The pitch of the roofs is emulated in the sloping sides of the lamp's shade, including the Japonesque kick of the eaves where they flatten at the bottom. Viewed from the narrow end, the lamp's legs recall the masonry piers on the exterior of the living room wing — an architectural reference point in miniature.

Three principal materials define the lamp: iridized glass, brass-plated zinc came, and bronze. The glass was machine-rolled: molten glass was poured onto a hot steel table and flattened with a roller — a process developed in 1840s England that produced what became known as "cathedral" glass. Many types of opalescent glass — glass made translucent by the addition of opacifiers to give it a milky effect — were made by the





cathedral process, and Wright utilized these as well. By 1900, cathedral glass was made in America by about two dozen glass factories (of which only three survive today). Less expensive than mouth-blown glass and more compatible with Wright's belief in the usefulness of machine-made components in architecture and decorative art, cathedral glass placed him philosophically at odds with the Arts & Crafts movement of the period.

When lit, the 308 individual pieces of colored glass in the lamp diffuse the tints and hues of the prairie. Wright advised designers to "go to the woods and fields for color schemes. Use the soft, warm, optimistic tones of earths and autumn leaves… they are more wholesome and better adapted in most cases to good decoration." Later, in 1928, he explained that "glass plays the effect the jewel plays" in architecture. To heighten the jewel-like effect of the colored glass, Wright had its surfaces enhanced with an iridescent coating, giving them a kaleidoscopic sheen that comes to life when light is reflected from its surface. This effect was achieved by fuming the glass in a kiln infused with vapors of metallic salts — the same technique used by Tiffany Studios in America and Loetz in Austria to create iridescent surfaces on glass vases. Different metals — such as tin and chrome — imparted distinct hues. To Wright, rigid metal "cames" were essential in realizing the striking rectilinear designs of his windows and lighting. In 1908, he wrote that

cames were "treated as metal 'grilles' with glass inserted," and reiterated in 1928 that "the metal divisions become a metal screen of any pattern — heavy or light, plated in any metal, even gold or silver — the glass a subordinate, rhythmical accent." In the Double-Pedestal Lamp, as in the Dana windows, the came was innovative in both material and shape. Made from brass-plated zinc, it was stiff and lightweight, unlike traditional lead, which was flexible and heavy. This rigidity eliminated the need for support bars, which Wright felt disrupted stained-glass window designs.

Invented some fifteen years before the Dana House was built and manufactured by Chicago Metallic Company, zinc cames could be plated with copper or brass, yielding a warm brown or golden surface patina that complemented Wright's naturalistic palettes. In the Dana House, the cames were plated with brass that has mellowed over time to a soft brown. Structurally, this new came retained the standard H-shaped came profile but featured triangular rather than flat or rounded legs — a more delicate, attenuated profile called, for reasons unknown, "colonial." Wright's glass designs of this period employed an unusually narrow version of this colonial came, less than ⅛ inch in width. Its triangular profile produced a clean, elegant line that belied its strength and gave Wright the perfect linear grid for his ambitious leaded-glass compositions.

Bronze, unsurprisingly, was used to great effect in the base of the Dana House lamp. Practically, it provided the necessary weight and stability to prevent tipping, while its malleability when molten made it ideal for casting into sculptural forms. Its natural golden-brown hue — along with its capacity for patination and electroplating — aligned perfectly with Wright's "warm, optimistic" color schemes. Unlike the nature-inspired bronze bases of Tiffany Studios, which were also plated or patinated, Wright's base was composed of rectilinear forms. Eight cubes with recessed squares anchor the heavy bronze base to the earth, like the roots of a tree. Paired square columns support the shade. The form resembles a Japanese torii gate, an influence that also informed Wright's design of the Dana House gallery window, from which hang nine panels of leaded glass. In parallel, the Double-Pedestal Lamp features two impeccable sheets of green iridized glass, suspended by small, discreet hinges between the columns that allow each panel to swing freely and to leverage the ever-changing light conditions around the lamp. These hanging panels serve no practical function other than to dazzle, creating a kaleidoscopic play of light and color that captivates the eye with shifting reflections from their brilliantly iridized surfaces in hues of fuchsia, aqua, green, and gold. They are a unique and striking element of the lamp's design.

The lamp was fabricated by the Linden Glass Company in Chicago, a division of Spierling & Linden, a decorating firm that supplied furniture, wall treatments, and metalwork across the Midwest and as far as California. Frank L. Linden (1859–1934) founded the glass division in 1888. An invoice from the company to Susan Dana, dated July 1905 — more than six months after the house was completed — describes the pair of lamps as " double standard [with] special shades." Originally priced at $125 each, a pencil notation on the invoice reduces the total to $200 for both —a considerable sum for luxury objects at the time.

OPPOSITE: LINDEN GLASS COMPANY, BILL TO SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA, JULY 1905

CHICAGO July 6th, 1905
(216 MICHIGAN AVENUE)

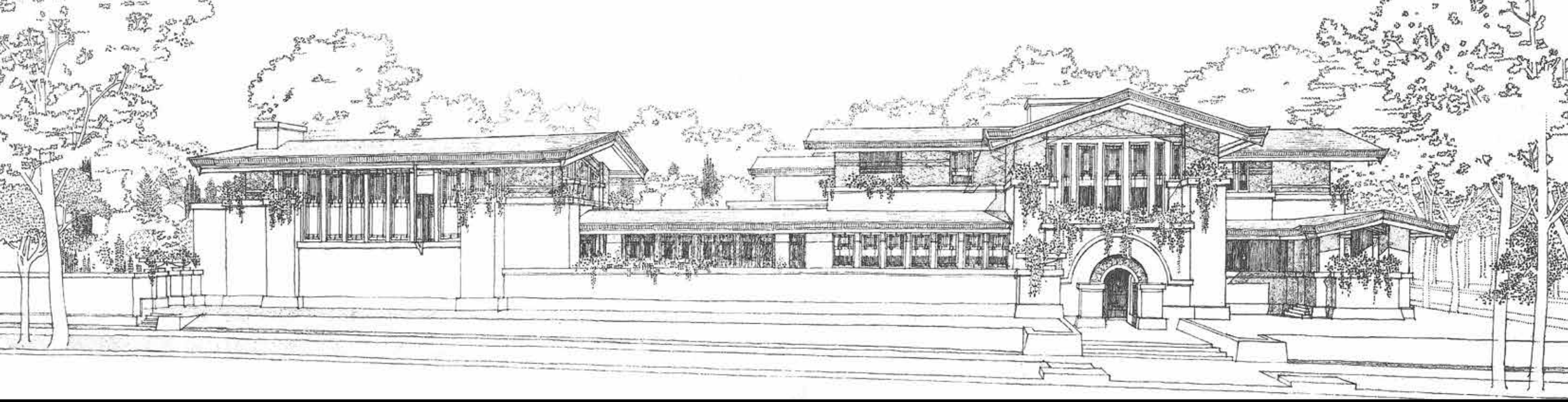
Mrs. S. L. Dana,
Springfield, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect

DR. TO **Linden Glass Company**

23 Yards binding for Hall curtains, 35¢	$ 8.05
Dining Room window seats and pillows	86.00
12 Yards velvet for same at 4.50	54.00
3 Pcs. Korah silk Bowling Alley, 18.00	54.00
2 Hall cushions	31.50
1 Library cushion	27.00
Bookcase couch Library	89.00
3-1/2 Yards brown velvet sent to Springfield, 4.50	15.75
3 Yards fringe at 2.00	6.00
2 Yards Belford velvet, Mr. Ayers, 4.50	9.00
4 Panels leaded glass Music Room cabinet, 8.00	32.00
2 single standard special lamps, narrow strip shades, at 85.00	170.00
2 Double standard lamps special shades, ~~125.00~~	~~250.00~~
6 Electric light bulbs, 75¢	4.50
Studio screen/ 9 lights decorative glass	130.00
1 Movable drop light, square shade	35.00
11 Yards electric wire cord, 15¢	1.65
~~To altering 2 door lights second time, first measures being wrong~~	~~15.00~~
To repairing 2 door lights broken at house	9.00
	$1027.45

A house — no less a public house museum like the Dana-Thomas House today – cannot be transported to another location. The house stands as Wright's most spectacular of his Prairie Period. The remarkable Double-Pedestal Lamp, representative of the spirit and structure of the Susan Lawrence Dana House on an approachable scale, carries Wright's vision beyond the walls of one of his most defining residential commissions. It is a masterpiece in every sense — uniting artistry, material innovation, and craftsmanship into a singular expression of Wright's artistic genius.



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ABOVE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING OF THE SUSAN LAWRENCE DANA HOUSE, CIRCA 1910

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WRITING CONTRIBUTORS
Paul Goldberger
Julie L. Sloan

DESIGN
Eri Koizumi

PHOTOGRAPHY
Edward Parrinello

IMAGE EDITING
Meridith Passabet Owsiany