

FRANK  
LLOYD  
WRIGHT

THE GEORGE D. STURGES RESIDENCE

FEBRUARY 21, 2016

LAMA | los angeles  
modern auctions



# Introduction

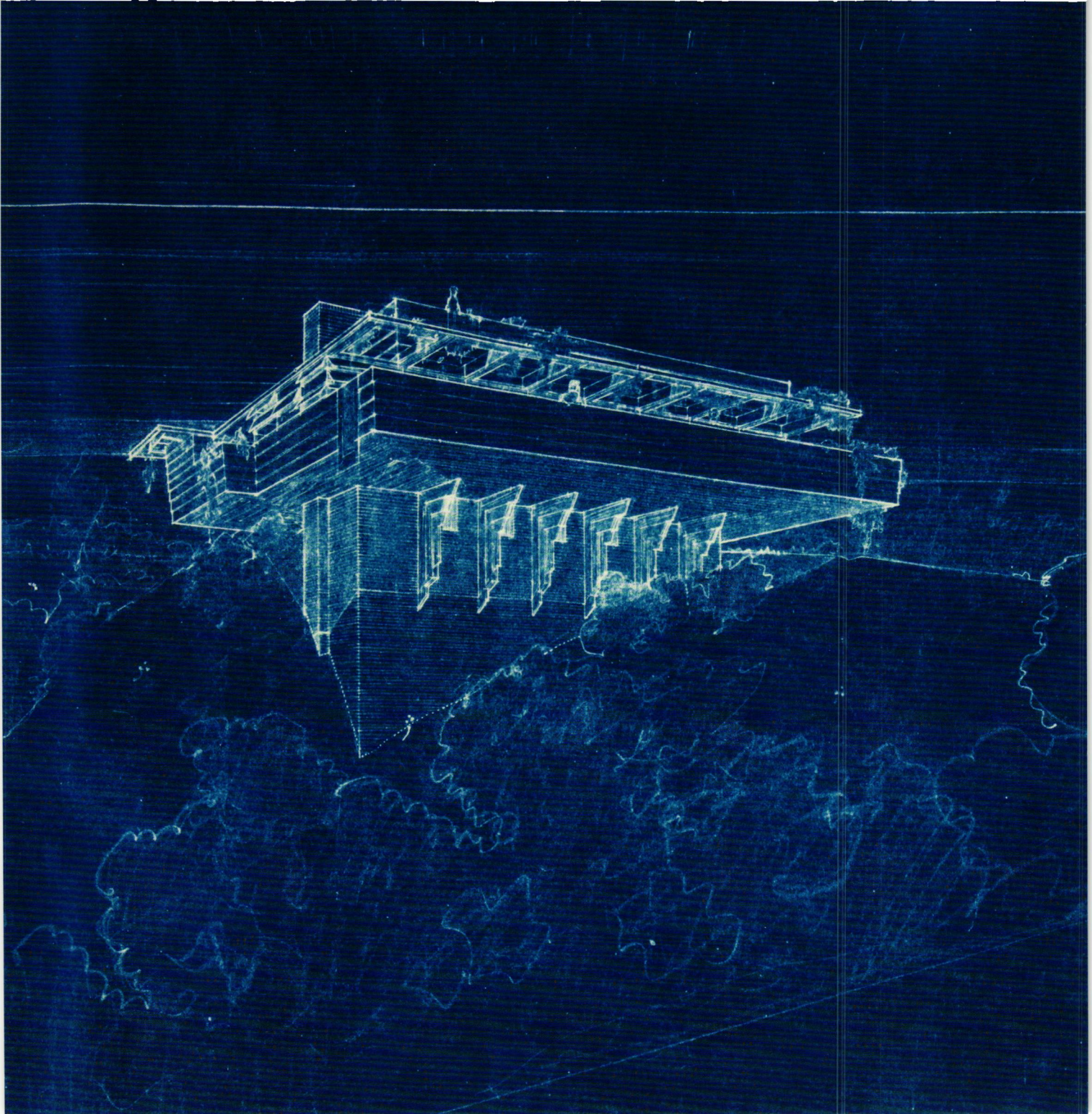
BY PETER LOUGHREY

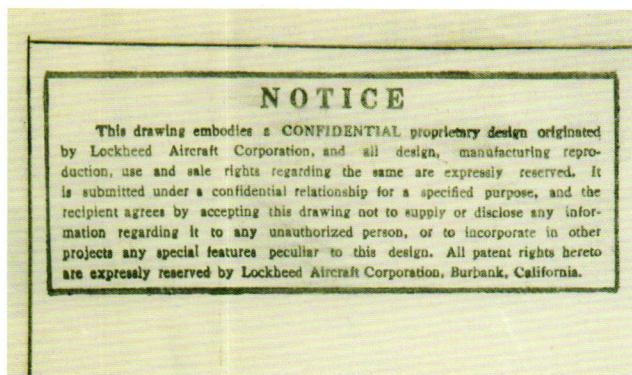
Since LAMA's first auction in 1992, we have always had a special affinity for the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. In fact, the very first auction lot ever offered by LAMA was a Wright-designed window from the Lake Geneva Inn in Wisconsin. In the years since, we have presented numerous chairs, tables, ceramics, glass, and textiles designed by the master. So why not an entire house? We have been offered other significant houses in the past, but we always felt we should wait until a house of unimpeachable pedigree was available.

We are, therefore, incredibly proud to present the George D. Sturges Residence in the February 21, 2016 auction with the cooperation of Barry Sloane and Marc Silver of Sotheby's International Realty. In this special catalogue, we have endeavored to give as much context as possible by using a rich archive of vintage materials gathered by the most recent resident of the property, the late Jack Larson. This archive includes vintage prints of rare photographs, copies of old blueprints, Frank Lloyd Wright books, and a host of additional ephemera related to the house. The archive will be included in the sale of the property, as well as two small dining chairs that appear to be from the original construction in 1939. Of course, everything attached to the structure, like the Lautner-designed sofa and dining table, will also be included.

One of the most difficult decisions that had to be made when organizing this collection concerned the various freestanding pieces apparently executed by John Lautner. We will be selling these works individually because they were created to address the specific functional needs of various owners over the years and were not part of the original concept for the house. They are neither "organic" to Wright's original concept for the Sturges Residence nor are they technically reproductions. Frankly, the next owner may have completely different needs for interior furnishings, but they will at least have the opportunity to acquire any of these works as well, if so desired.

I hope you will enjoy this catalogue. I would like to thank everyone who helped make it possible. First, thank you to Thomas S. Hines, Frank Escher, and Greg Cerio for their expertise and insights revealed in their respective essays. Thank you to the Getty Research Institute, the Museum of Modern Art | Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation at Taliesin West for access to historical information. Finally, thank you to the entire LAMA staff for their tireless efforts, and to our extended family of professional experts—Michael Rabkin, Joe Molina, Barry Sloane, Marc Silver, Carlyle Eubank, Allison Smith, Susan Rogers, and Claudia Ng.

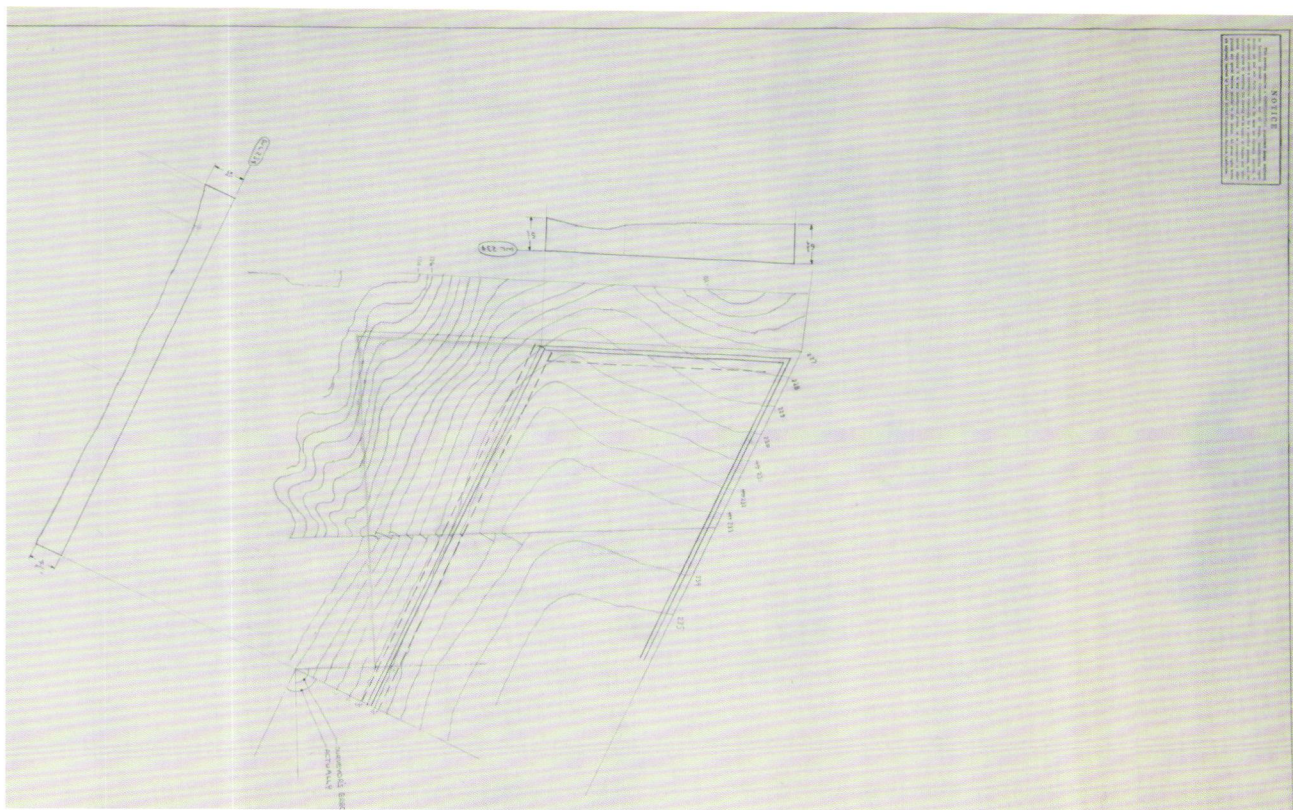


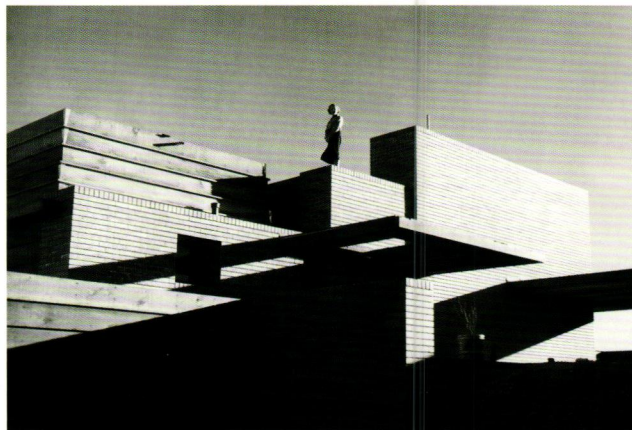


*OPPOSITE* Copy of blueprint of Frank Lloyd Wright's early concept for the Sturges Residence with wooden supports, 1938. Copyright © Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, AZ. Vintage copy of blueprint from the collection of Jack Larson sold to benefit The Bridges/Larson Foundation.

*LEFT* Detail of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation drawing paper.

*BELOW* Plot drawing by George D. Sturges, drawn on Lockheed Aircraft Corporation drawing paper. From this original sketch, Frank Lloyd Wright created a concept drawing of a dramatic cantilevered house similar in design, but more compact than the Fallingwater Residence, completed the same year. Vintage drawing from the collection of Jack Larson sold to benefit The Bridges/Larson Foundation.





## Knowing the Sturges House

BY THOMAS S. HINES

I first encountered Frank Lloyd Wright's Sturges House in courses in the History of Architecture at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where I was a graduate student in the 1960s. This was indisputably "FLW Country." He had been born nearby in 1867 in Richland Center, Wisconsin and had lived as a child and teenager and had gone to high school in Madison and had then matriculated as "special student" at the University of Wisconsin. Long after that he had built "Taliesin," his great longtime home and studio in Spring Green, Wisconsin, northwest of Madison. In 1937, also in Madison, Wright had built his first so-called "Usonian" house for Herbert and Katherine Jacobs, a small, wood and brick, two bedroom, flat-roofed, moderately-priced structure that took its

name from various sources, including a play on "US-ian." It was followed, in the late 1930s and 1940s, by other Usonians in Wisconsin, and in neighboring Illinois and Michigan. Wright's similar, though distinctive, Sturges house (1939) in the Brentwood district of Los Angeles is generally considered to be his "California Usonian."

When, in 1968, I received an appointment at UCLA to teach urban, architectural and cultural history, I was fortunate to live first in the 1937 Strathmore Apartments in Westwood, designed by Richard Neutra, one of Wright's already famous former apprentices—about whom I would soon begin to write a book. At the same time, I began to