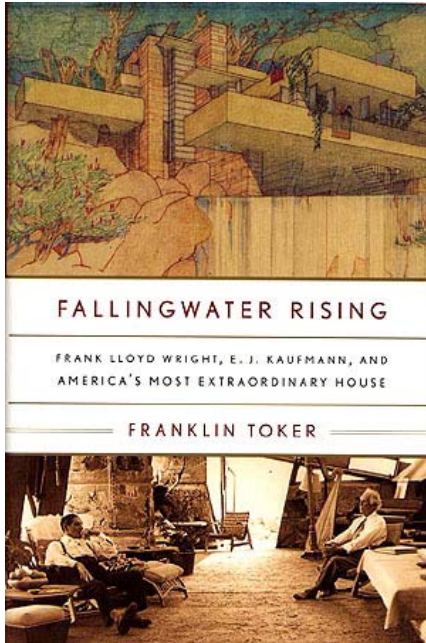


PRICE TOWER READING GROUP JANUARY 6, 6:30 PM, COPPER RESTAURANT + BAR

Fallingwater Rising: Frank Lloyd Wright, E.J. Kaufmann, and America's Most Extraordinary House, Franklin Toker (Knopf, 2005)

"Spellbinding . . . The season's best amalgam of storytelling, history, glitter, gossip, and art." —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* (2005)



An oddly "spiritual" agglomeration of rectilinear glass, concrete and stone masses set on a waterfall in the Pennsylvania woods, Wright's Fallingwater house made America fall in love with modernist architecture, according to this engrossing study. Architectural historian Toker approaches the building as a tense but fruitful collaboration between Wright's genius and the encouragement given it by his patron, Pittsburgh department store magnate E. J. Kaufmann, whom Toker credits with being "almost... the coarchitect" of the house.

He gives a detailed, sometimes hour-by-hour account of Wright's planning process, the engineering hurdles surmounted in realizing his structurally daring design, the critical and public acclaim the house has elicited through the years and its impact on American culture in everything from Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* to motifs in suburban tract housing. He sets the story against an erudite but accessible history of the rise of modernism and Wright's antagonism toward the German Bauhaus and International Style architects, whose austere, mechanistic stylings he denounced even as he was adapting and humanizing them to suit American tastes.

Toker sometimes makes too much, but the trenchant analysis of Wright's character and creativity, the often lyrical evocations of his buildings, and the opinionated but insightful overview of the modernist intellectual milieu of the 1930s make the book a wonderful exploration of the psychological and social meaning of architecture

Franklin Toker is a dedicated nonspecialist and popular teacher and lecturer. A broadly based scholar who was the first non-Italian called to teach the history of art at the University of Florence, Toker has researched the Gothic Revival, the ancient cathedral of Florence (whose excavation he directed over more than a decade), and the architecture and urban history of Pittsburgh. A past president of the international Society of Architectural Historians, Franklin Toker is a Professor of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh.

Please RSVP by January 2 for this event by contacting Scott Perkins at 336.4949 (Extension 112) or by email at sparkins@pricetower.org.