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FALLINGWATER

In Association with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

RIZZOLI
FALLINGWATER'S INTERIORS: RUSTIC ELEGANCE AND FLEXIBLE LIVING

By Justin Gunther
In creating Fallingwater, Wright and the Kaufmanns collaborated to construct a place of repose where the family could escape the city for renewal in nature. Ever present is an interaction between interior and exterior that promotes a powerful interplay between the comforts of home and the natural world. The Kaufmanns appreciated the intense connection to nature the architecture afforded, and they adapted to Wright’s design, creating a country house with rusticity and sophistication.

With the systems of Wright’s architecture—stone, glass, steel, and woodwork—defining the backdrop, the Kaufmanns decorated Fallingwater with eclectic tastes and a discerning eye. The objects that fill Fallingwater represent a lifetime of collecting, and notions of flexibility and informality governed the Kaufmanns’ assemblage and arrangement of art. Their relaxed, yet refined, approach harmonized with Wright’s modernism and provided the essential personal touch to complete the composition. Tracing the evolution of the collection—from Wright, through the Kaufmanns, to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy—reveals the themes that created one of the world’s most dynamic interiors.

**Wright’s Backdrop**

Wright defined the background for decoration, choosing materiality and coloration with great restraint and precision. He carried the stone and concrete of the exterior inside to create a neutral palette of gray and rosy ochre. The only other color was his signature Cherokee red, specified for all metal surfaces. Liliane Kaufmann initially found this limited color scheme “cold, barren, and monotonous,” but she quickly became accustomed to its beautiful simplicity, writing that the painted concrete served as “a quiet background” for artwork. The calm tones of the stone and concrete paralleled the broad swaths of color in nature, and like wildflowers and songbirds set against masses of green and brown in the woods, the Kaufmanns’ art and vivid textiles were meant to animate spaces with accents of color.

Complementing the subtlety of the interior backdrop was Wright’s choice of architectural ornament. Curved metal shelves, a spherical fireplace kettle, shield-shaped trellis lights, and dentils in light screens were understated and rigorously integrated with the building. True ornament, Wright believed, should exist as “the inherent melody of structure,” as the “manifest abstract pattern of structure itself.” Fallingwater’s ornament does just that by responding throughout to the plasticity of the reinforced concrete, the horizontality of the cantilevers, and the nuances of the landscape.

Most important, nature rather than manufactured ornament is maintained as the interior’s primary enlivener. Broad bands of windows open the house to countless perspectives, and as Edgar Kaufmann jr. wrote, “Attention is directed toward the outside by low ceilings; no lordly hall sets the tone but, instead, the luminous textures of the woodlands, rhythmically enframed.” The windows’ steel framework articulates nature, producing a patterned view of the landscape that Kaufmann jr. and others likened to folding Japanese screens changed out with the seasons.

Wright designed over 160 pieces of freestanding and built-in furniture to complete the composition of his interior. Manufactured by the Gillen Woodworking Corporation of Milwaukee, the furniture was constructed of marine-quality plywood to resist warping, and veneered with North...
Carolina black walnut. Wright regarded wood “as the most humanely intimate of all materials,” and the rich brown of the walnut offered a warm contrast to the sandstone and concrete surfaces. To add interest and visually reinforce the lines of the house, Wright retained sapwood in his veneers, carefully book-matching the streaks to create stunning highlights.4

Furthering the continuity between architecture and interior decoration, Wright integrated primary design motifs into the furniture to echo the building’s structural themes. The horizontal line predominates and gives the furniture a rhythm and humanized scale that promotes interaction and relaxation. Paying homage to the cantilevers, table tops flair out from supports of interacting planes, and long sofas built against walls seem to float. The cascading shelves of the partners desk evoke the overlapping structural trays of the house. And quarter-circle openings in desktops, rounded shelves, and bullnosed edges all balance with the house’s rounded rooflines and parapet walls.

By using seating of varying heights and proportioning it lower to the ground, Wright planned an environment conducive to people’s natural patterns of gathering and conversation. In addition to the fixed sofas, Wright designed two types of movable seats—higher hassocks with a cabinetry frame and lower zabutons, named after a type of Japanese floor pillow. At Edgar Kaufmann jr.’s suggestion, cushions were made of Dunlopillo, vulcanized liquid latex honeycombed with air bubbles. The latex foam provided durability and ventilation and represented the first residential application of the material.5

Backs and seats of sofas were originally upholstered in a beige monk’s cloth, and the Kaufmanns tried red, green, yellow, and blue on the moveable furniture before settling on red and yellow. When not in use, zabutons and hassocks were arranged consonant with the architecture, in asymmetrical patterns suggesting movement. The vivid red and yellow brought color into the realm of spatial accentuation, and the “free-floating seats,” Kaufmann jr. said, served as “signposts of space . . . [allowing] the eye to measure distances and areas by providing reference points.” The splashes of color also helped to loosen up the interior, reducing emphasis on finite points and directing attention to a myriad of views.6

The Kaufmanns embraced the majority of Wright’s vision for the interior; however, they
fig. 6: Partners desk in the living room.
The four design motifs found throughout the house (horizontal lines, cantilevers, circles and semi-circles, and cascading elements) are found in the desk and unify the elements within the space. Located next to the stairs to the stream, the desk’s bottom lozenge-shaped shelf also neatly echoes the shape of the hatch’s concrete opening.
fig. 7: A furniture grouping beside the living room fireplace. Zabutons (left) and hassocks (right) were loosely arranged to facilitate comfort and conversation.
**fig. 8:** The master bedroom fireplace displays some of the house’s most dramatic stonework, including a niche for the family’s fifteenth-century Madonna and Child. To the right on the rock shelf are two samples of experimental music printing by Paul Koch. The picture frame and lamp on the desk are Tiffany, and the peasant chair is English. In the corner by the door is an upholstered slipper chair by László Gábor and a Hiroshige woodblock of an iris garden, a Christmas gift from Wright.
fig. 9: The diversity of the Kaufmanns' collection is apparent throughout. In this corner of the living room, visitors encounter Florentine peasant chairs around a Wright–designed dining table; a portrait of Edgar Kaufmann Sr. by Austrian-born Victor Hammer hanging above a Burmese wedding chest; and shelves displaying a varied range of objects, including a German woodstove model (top shelf), an Indian incense burner (top shelf), a Zuni Pueblo pot (third shelf), a Danish vase by Axel Salto (second shelf), and a Pennsylvania earthenware flower pot (bottom shelf).
did reject rugs, barrel chairs, and light standards planned for the living room. Wright designed area rugs to accentuate spaces and mirror features, like the central ceiling light fixture. While the Kaufmanns used their long-haired dachshunds as an excuse, the underlying reason for rejection was a desire for informality. Instead of site-specific rugs, they decided on a looser scattering of tribal Moroccan rugs and large animal fur throws made from locally trapped skunks and raccoons. The barrel chairs proposed for the dining table further competed with easy-going country life. The Kaufmanns disliked the chairs’ strictness and rigidity, substituting rustic three-legged peasant chairs found in Florence. To light the living room at night, Wright suggested distributing lamp standards around the room. Wright created two different designs; the Kaufmanns rejected both, arguing they introduced an odd solemnity and nervousness to an otherwise peaceful space.\footnote{7}

The Kaufmanns did accept a scattering of smaller task lamps, on desks and beside beds, to provide supplemental light for reading and writing. Wright attached pivoting shades of black walnut—long and horizontal for desks and short and vertical for bedsides—to bases of patinated bronze. The remainder of lighting was indirect and integrated with the architecture, concealed behind wooden shields atop cabinetry or behind muslin-covered ceiling screens. At the recommendation of Edgar Kaufmann jr., Wright used fluorescent tubes, a new product in the 1930s. Fluorescents provided an even, continuous light and, when reflected off the warm-tinted ochre of the ceiling, produced a soft, calming effect.\footnote{8}

\textbf{Kaufmanns’ Collection}

By the end of 1937, Fallingwater was largely completed, and the Kaufmanns began enjoying their weekend retreat. Some woodwork and final touches were not finished until 1938, and the guest house and servants’ quarters would come later in 1939. Nevertheless, Wright had set the primary scheme for the interior, and the family began decorating by following the architect’s lead. In his memoir of Fallingwater, Edgar Kaufmann jr. credits his mother as the primary decorator, stating that Liliane’s “wide-ranging tastes and keen attention to detail allowed her to improvise with grace and individuality.”\footnote{9} However, more than Liliane’s hand was at play. The collection amassed for Fallingwater was a collaborative family effort and included objects acquired through retailing, travel, associations, and friendships.

While the majority of objects were new purchases, a number were imported from their earlier houses. Large-scale Audubons from the 1831 double-elephant folio and chestnut-stump side tables, which Wright disliked because of their upside-down orientation, were brought from the Hangover, the Kaufmanns’ original cabin at Bear Run. As reminders of La Torelle, their Benno Janssen–designed manor in the Pittsburgh suburbs, they displayed a wrought-iron fireplace fork and an elaborate candlestick, both crafted by Samuel Yellin, and a sculpture of the Madonna and Child. The centuries-old wooden sculpture came to the family through the New York firm of French & Company, renowned dealers of European art, and was a favorite of Liliane’s. The work was given special prominence in Fallingwater, displayed in a niche Wright designed within the stonework of the master bedroom fireplace.\footnote{10}

In buying for Fallingwater, the Kaufmanns collected with well-cultivated and confident...
tastes, and ownership of Pittsburgh’s largest department store presented the family with an almost limitless outlet. As innovative retailers with close ties to New York and Europe, the Kaufmanns embraced the latest trends. Their commitment to art was evidenced by their 1930 remodel of the department store’s main floor, which incorporated dramatic, chic interiors designed by Benno Janssen and a series of murals entitled the *History of Commerce* by Boardman Robinson. At the unveiling, Edgar Kaufmann’s speech revealed his opinion that “the development of art should be the cultural goal of America . . . . As a general appreciation of beauty grows, we are prompted and inspired to cherish more and more zealously the principles of art and the laws of harmony.”

Liliane championed this cause by taking over the store’s unprofitable eleventh floor. In 1933 she opened the Vendôme shops, named after the elegant Place Vendôme in Paris, to offer sophisticated customers a high-quality selection of tasteful goods. Rather than stylistic homogeneity, Liliane stressed a causal attitude toward style, offering a creative mix of high style and craft, from modern to antique.

This was an aesthetic the family carried over to Fallingwater and explains the rich diversity of their collection. The Kaufmanns felt variety, flexibility, and comfort complemented not only a country lifestyle but also Wright’s naturalized modernism, which expressed freedom in design and an organic approach to form and materials. Furthermore, the refinement of the architecture created an extremely accepting interior, one that embraced the Kaufmanns’ relaxed and elegant sensibilities. With diverse tastes, they bought objects dating to a wide range of eras and an even broader range of national and ethnic origins—over thirty different countries and cultures are represented in the living room alone. Many of these items were acquired during buying trips, coordinated with the store’s offices in New York, London, Paris, Florence, and Vienna. Some shopping was done much closer to home, in the mountains of Appalachia, where they bought local craft pieces, such as milk glass, Pennsylvania painted farm chairs, and salt-glazed stoneware.

Edgar and Liliane’s retailing connections in New York and abroad cultivated their son’s interest in art, and from 1927 to 1935, Kaufmann jr. pursued a broad and unconventional education. During that period he studied painting in New York, attended the Kunstgewerbeschule in Vienna,
apprenticed under Viennese artist Victor Hammer in Florence and London, and joined Wright’s fellowship at Taliesin. Lasting friendships were made during this coming of age, many of which impacted Fallingwater.

His time in New York was facilitated by his childhood mentor, W. Frank Purdy, who headed the Ferargil Galleries. Purdy helped introduce Kaufmann jr. to the New York scene, and among the artists he befriended was the Harlem Renaissance sculptor Richmond Barthé. Four portrait sculptures by Barthé made their way to Fallingwater: a statue of the renowned, African-American stage actress Rose McClendon and busts of Kaufmann jr., an unknown boy, and W. Frank Purdy. The spirituality and repose of Barthé’s McClendon blended perfectly with the house’s landscape, and Kaufmann jr. felt it “should stand nearly hidden in some haphazard spot, to be discovered now and then, or sought out—but not displayed.” Its placement, partially hidden amidst the rhododendron of the stepped canopy, complemented the work’s drama and serenity.

While in Vienna, he cultivated a friendship with Hungarian-born painter László Gábor. In 1935 the family helped Gábor immigrate to the United States and employed him as the store’s art director. In addition to designing product displays and shop windows, Gábor created comfortable furniture for Fallingwater, of which only one chair—a slipper chair in the master bedroom—survives. Gábor later assisted others in Austria with the immigration process. Of particular note was Josef Frank, who organized an exhibition at Kaufmann’s in 1951 of his furnishings designed for the Swedish firm Svenskt Tenn. The leather-seated chair by Frank in Edgar Sr.’s bedroom was purchased through this association.

A great appreciation for Victor Hammer’s talent motivated Kaufmann jr. to apprentice with the artist from 1930 to 1933. Liliane made the introduction, having met Hammer in London in 1929, where she commissioned the portrait of her husband entitled *Excursion* now hanging in Fallingwater’s living room. Hammer had set up an artists’ workshop in Florence, the Stamperia del Santuccio, and along with painting, Kaufmann jr. studied bookbinding, printing, and calligraphy. Punchcutter Paul Koch was also in residence, and Kaufmann jr. worked with him on a reprint of Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*. The senior Kaufmanns adored Koch and were flattered

*fig. 14*: Souvenir postcard image of Liliane Kaufmann shopping in a Mexican bazaar, 1940s. *Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.*

*fig. 15* (right): Mexican pottery and Pre-Columbian figures on the cantilevered shelves of the guest house.
by his gifts of experimental music printing, which they treasured and displayed in Fallingwater’s master bedroom.  

After Hammer, Kaufmann jr. enrolled in Wright’s apprenticeship program at Taliesin, enfranchised by the architect’s philosophy after reading his recently published autobiography. Although he only spent a brief six months at Taliesin, his experience there cemented the family’s tie to Wright and set the Fallingwater commission in motion. By April of 1935, Kaufmann jr. had returned to Pittsburgh to take his long-deferred place in the family store. As merchandise manager for the home department, he played a pivotal role in integrating the family’s interest in art with business, particularly through exhibitions. In 1938 Kaufmann jr. began an association with the Museum of Modern Art, enlisting the department store as a site for the museum’s newly instituted program of traveling exhibitions. The store also organized shows internally, and in 1940 Kaufmann jr. and Liliane presented *Below the Rio Grande*, an exhibition of Mexican antiques and folk art. Items displayed were offered for sale and several unsold pieces went to Fallingwater, including the painting *Virgen de Guadalupe* at the top of the stairs, milk glass bottles decorated with the Mexican coat of arms in Liliane’s bathroom, and majolica vases in the guest house.

This interest in Latin American culture emerged from numerous trips, and Liliane frequently expressed her fondness for Mexico, once stating, “I have never seen so much sheer natural beauty added to so much that is old and interesting.” The family’s wealth and connections provided entrance to the country’s elite artist circles. Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo became family friends, which explains Rivera’s Conté crayon *Profile of a Man Wearing a Hat* in the guest bedroom and his *Torrid Siesta (El Sueño)* watercolor in the bridge. Rivera introduced the Kaufmanns to sculptor Mardonio Magaña, and the family was taken by his rough-hewn folk compositions. They purchased four of his works, one in wood and three in stone, to complement Fallingwater’s rusticity. Another acquisition tied to Rivera was the purchase of an 1877 painting entitled *Landscape: Jalapa, Mexico* by José María Velasco. The artist had been Rivera’s mentor and was regarded as Mexico’s greatest landscape painter. Outside of fine art, the Kaufmanns bought Mayan pre-Columbian figures, small religious paintings on tin called *re cuer das*, and countless pieces of pottery in bazaars and antique shops throughout Mexico.

By further cultivating his connections at MoMA, through his work on Eliot Noyes’ 1941 exhibition *Organic Design in Home Furnishings* and as a member of the architecture and industrial design committees during his war service, Kaufmann jr. eventually became head of the museum’s industrial design department and later the director of the Good Design program of 1950–55. Under the auspices of “good design” and the tastemaking authority of MoMA, Kaufmann jr. headed juries to select items for exhibition at Chicago’s Merchandise Mart and MoMA. Products meeting the requirements of good design “merged form and function” and demonstrated “an awareness of human values expressed in relation to industrial production for a democratic society.” Among those featured in the exhibitions were Louis Comfort Tiffany, Alvar Aalto, Gunnel Nyman, Kaj Franck, Saara Hopea, Timo Sarpaneva, Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy, Bruno Mathsson and Finn Juhl.

Kaufmann jr. brought “good design” home to Fallingwater, integrating works by these artists and designers into Fallingwater’s furnishings. Just about every room is decorated with one or more
pieces by Tiffany in bronze and Favrile glass, the most remarkable being the Mandarin table lamp Kaufmann jr. placed in his mother’s bedroom. He appreciated both the lamp’s beauty and structure, comparing the strengthened form of the shade’s folded veining to the house’s folded concrete slabs.24 Beautifully blown pieces of Scandinavian glass, appearing with almost as much frequency as Tiffany objects, included iconic Savoy vases by Aalto, richly colored bowls in amethyst and sapphire by Franck, nesting tumblers by Hopea, an amorphous crystal ashtray by Nyman, a tri-color vase by Sarpaneva, and a unique glass sphere with internal filaments also by Sarpaneva.

Pertaining to chairs, one of the most talked about is the Butterfly Chair on display in Edgar Sr.’s bedroom designed in Buenos Aires by Bonet, Kurchan and Ferrari-Hardoy. Kaufmann jr. called this Butterfly Chair the “granddaddy of them all,” since it was one of the first brought into the United States. Kaufmann jr. purchased others for the MoMA collection, and after exhibiting the Butterfly Chair there it became immensely popular and spawned countless derivatives.25

Bruno Mathsson and Finn Juhl, whose respective bentwood lounge and 45 Chair are in Fallingwater, also owe much to Kaufmann jr. for their popularity. Through MoMA and the Good Design shows, Kaufmann jr. helped introduce these Scandinavian designers to the American market. He admired their furniture for its duality of craft and industry and praised their designs for “revealing a practical, uncomplicated sensible beauty.” As shown by the ease with which they relate to Fallingwater, their chairs represented an honest approach to materials, simplicity of line, integration of decoration and structure, and balance of proportions. For Kaufmann jr., these chairs also served as comforting reminders of the strong friendships he cultivated with Mathsson and Juhl.26

Another friendship with ties to the Good Design exhibitions was Kaufmann jr.’s close relationship with A. James Speyer. At Kaufmann jr.’s request, the installation of the Good Design exhibitions at the Merchandise Mart in 1954 and 1955, and at MoMA in 1955, were directed by Speyer, a talented young architect with an eye for exhibition design. Like Kaufmann jr., Speyer had grown up in Pittsburgh, and his parents, Tillie and Alexander, were some of Edgar Sr. and Liliane’s closest friends. The families frequently enjoyed weekends together at Fallingwater and shared a passion for art and collecting. Their aesthetics often overlapped, and the Kaufmanns displayed gifts

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*fig. 16: Window display from one of Edgar Kaufmann jr.’s *Good Design* exhibitions. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.*
from the Speyers throughout the house, including a large glass lens over the entry door, a French rooster weathervane, and Mexican copper trays.27

In addition to James, other Speyers were accomplished in the arts. Tillie Speyer took up sculpture later in life, primarily in stone, and a stylized, spiral marble work by her rests on the desk in the guest house bedroom. Nora, James’s sister, became an accomplished painter, and while her work does not hang in Fallingwater, a painting by her husband, Sideo Fromboluti, can be found in the guest house. Entitled August, Fromboluti’s abstracted landscape in heavy impasto complements the house’s textures and provides contrast to Velasco’s more academic landscape hanging just opposite.28

The Kaufmanns’ relationship with Wright influenced the collection as well. On occasional visits throughout the 1950s, Wright frequently made recommendations, particularly for modern sculpture placement. As Kaufmann jr. recalled, he would ask “to have statues relocated, often only a few feet from where they were . . . into a telling position, where it accentuated a feature of the architecture.” The orientation of Jacques Lipchitz’s Mother and Child on the wall of the plunge pool was once turned 180 degrees at Wright’s request. Although outspoken about the sculpture, Wright, as Kaufmann jr. remembered, “never made a sarcastic remark about these works, nor attempted to persuade us to other tastes.” The architect held intense respect for the family’s understanding of his architecture and clearly accepted their approach to decorating with modern sculpture. In addition to Mother and Child, the collection grew to include Marino Marini’s The Horseman, Jacques Lipchitz’s The Harpist, Peter Voulkos’s Funiculated Smog, Auguste Rodin’s Iris, and Joseph Goto’s Landscape in the Air.29

Through the gift of six Japanese woodblock prints by Hokusai and Hiroshige, Wright extended his love of Asian art to Fallingwater. The Kaufmanns do not credit Wright, but their collection of Asian sculpture—including guardian lion tomb panels, a cast-iron Buddha head, and ceramics, such as Ming Dynasty teapots and Imari plates—was likely influenced by visits to Taliesin. There they would have admired Wright’s extensive Asian collection and also the arrangements of greenery and flowers that harmonized with the artwork and architecture. At Fallingwater, this

fig. 17: Liliane Kaufmann (left) with Tillie Speyer (right) at the guest house swimming pool, 1938. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

fig. 18: A. James Speyer smoking poolside, Darthea Speyer sunbathing on the trellis, and Tillie Speyer reclined and reading at the guest house, all enjoying the relaxed spirit of Fallingwater, early 1940s. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

fig. 19 (right): Desk in the guest house bedroom. Hanging above is Sideo Fromboluti’s August and on the desk is a marble sculpture by Tillie Speyer. The barrel chair is Wright’s prototype for the dining table in the main house, which the Kaufmanns decided not to use.
fig. 20: Ming Dynasty teapots and Imari plates displayed on the built-in sideboard and Canton ware rice bowls on the streamlined metal shelves are evidence of the Kaufmanns' interest in Asian antiques.
tradition manifested itself through displays of fresh-cut flowers, always of one color and variety, taking inspiration from both Wright’s practices and Liliane’s love of cutting gardens.\textsuperscript{30}

The Kaufmanns also visited Wright at Taliesin West in Arizona. These travels, in addition to vacationing in Palm Springs, cultivated an interest in Native American basketry and pottery of the Southwest. In various locations throughout the house, they accessorized with Zuni and San Ildefonso Pueblo pots and Pomo tribal baskets.\textsuperscript{31}

**Stewardship**

Edgar Sr. and Liliane passed away in the 1950s and Kaufmann Jr. held on to Fallingwater until 1963, at which point he donated the house and land to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Fallingwater opened as a house museum, with the conservancy acting as the primary steward; however, Kaufmann Jr. maintained ownership of the collection and edited Fallingwater’s interiors with curatorial sensibilities. He exercised greater scrutiny than his parents but preserved their spirit of diversity.

Along with concerns about presentation were personal attachments to particular works and worries about the new museum’s resources to conserve fine art. Noteworthy objects that left Fallingwater, some going to his house in Garrison, New York, others to his apartment in Manhattan, included Joan Miró’s *The Cat*, Piet Mondrian’s *Diagonal*, Theodoros Stamos’s *Greek Orison*, a sketch of a man by Amedeo Modigliani, a painting by Frida Kahlo, an etching by Paul Klee, drawings by Peter Blume, and Auguste Rodin’s *Iris*.\textsuperscript{32} As Kaufmann Jr. watched the museum mature, he gifted works to enhance the house’s appearance. A sampling of the fine art he added include two Picasso aquatints, Lyonel Feininger’s *Church on the Cliffs VII*, a brass relief by Luisa Rota, and Bryan Hunt’s *Bear Run I*. Hunt’s piece was commissioned in the late 1970s to fill the long-standing void created by the loss of Marino Marini’s *The Horseman* during a 1956 flash flood.\textsuperscript{33}

Regarding textiles, Kaufmann Jr. thought the “rugs, bedspreads, upholstery, and other textiles that add color everywhere” should be “restored and replaced” to maintain the freshness and residential character of the house. He actively acquired Moroccan rugs for the floors, tribal ikats

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*fig. 21: View of the living room, likely taken in the early 1960s. The Miró to the right of the dining table is one of the works Edgar Kaufmann Jr. removed from Fallingwater. *Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.*
for dрапing, and spirited patterns for pillows, and curators have carried on this collecting tradition. The Kaufmanns frequently reupholstered, and under Kaufmann Jr.'s guidance the furniture was last redone in the 1980s with Jack Lenor Larsen's Doria fabric.  

For the conservancy's management of Fallingwater, Kaufmann Jr. stressed flexibility, stating the house's "character does not depend on particular objects in fixed places, but on a sensitive, flexible response to what was the original atmosphere of Fallingwater." The objects were "merely accoutrements of pleasant living," "this's and that's" collected "out of friendship and liking for the things themselves, and brought in to simply make things more personal." In interpreting the house, the collection should be subordinate "to the real values present."  

The conservancy strives to honor this philosophy through its interpretation of the house, focusing on the message of Wright's architecture and using the collection to reveal side stories about the family. Above all, the collection shows that "a Wright house uses and favors fine art," and by decorating in the same spirit that formed the architecture, the Kaufmanns contributed to a unified composition of building and nature.

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fig. 22: Auguste Rodin's Iris was once displayed on the stone retaining wall at the guest house swimming pool. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

fig. 23: Jacques Lipchitz's Mother and Child on the wall of the plunge pool. The orientation shown was suggested by Wright, which the Kaufmanns later changed by turning the sculpture 180 degrees. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

fig. 24 (right): Jacques Lipchitz's Mother and Child on the wall of the plunge pool.