

Impact of WBG on suburban ...

If you mean can we pick out pieces, ^{devices, inventions} of Griffin in our houses of today, we can't — he had no direct influence of this sort. It's true that he had a number of followers, Australian disciples during his lifetime and for about five years after he left. e.g. Parliament House, Canberra, is in watered-down Griffin style. So is the Hotel Canberra. But the copyists soon gave up & started copying someone else.

But in a more intangible yet more durable way, as an example and stimulation & inspiration to potentially creative architects here, he had untold influence. Thanks to him and just one or two others Melbourne had a modern movement in architecture decades before the rest of Australia. He is still an inspirational influence in Melbourne.

Chicago School?

Louis Sullivan had no direct influence here — altho' the "Chicago window" which he and his colleagues developed, a big central 'picture window' with opening sashes each side, was once the rule for our suburban villas. But Frank Lloyd Wright, the most important member of the Chicago School, has had a strong effect on our younger architects quite recently. An English critic said recently that Australia had the largest living school of Wright disciples. Perhaps this is because of the 'softening up' Griffin gave us 40 yrs. ago.

How complaints? Blind spot?

Yes, he had a blind spot, a weakness — some might call it a fatal flaw — on practically completing an invention, on persevering until it really worked. He was a man of ideas and

The idea of some new structure or invention was all that really mattered to him.

Don't think he was uninterested in structure, plumbing, waterproofing. These problems fascinated him, but theoretically. His errors were administrative — errors in execution.

He was always inventing new structures & finishes. He just wasn't interested in the safe, proved ways. His patented 'Knitlock' concrete block system for walls and roofs, sometimes worked wonderfully, but he ^{sometimes} pushed it too far. His structure for the Capital Theatre was years ahead of its time.

You may say that an impractical architect, like this, whose roofs were always liable to leak & whose houses were often inclined to cracks, doesn't rate serious consideration as an architect. Like a brilliant surgeon whose patients have the irritating habit of dying. I ^{certainly} wouldn't defend Griffin's many impractical details and poor supervision. I think he did himself and the architectural profession untold harm by these errors, not to mention his poor clients (except that they usually loved him so much they were the first to forgive him).

Evaluation ?

First impulse of everyone is to compare him with his one-time colleague Frank Lloyd Wright. He wasn't as great an innovator, but then Wright really was a phenomenon.

Griffin was however more civilized, better educated, I think more humane and dedicated to improving the environment of people. If it is good art to create a building that has character which is unique, appropriate to the occasion, and consistent throughout its many parts — then Griffin proved several times that he was a great artist. His tragedy was that he was given so few opportunities to prove it. I have no hesitation in saying that, with more opportunities

and more years on his life he would have been among the small band of world recognized leaders of the first half of the 20th C.

NO DEVICES, INV'S
NO DIRECT INF
HAD FOLLOWERS-

BUT INTANG., MEANING
DURABLE—

INSPIRATIONAL INF

FATAL FLAWS

NOT ENG. BUT PRAC

~~NOT~~ EXPLANATIONS

NO EXCUSE/SURGEON

GAVE CUENTS A LOT

COMPARE F.L.L.W.

NOT ART. INNOVATOR

— BETTER EDUC-

CIV. ART.

IF N'S GT ART.

CHAR - UNIQUE

APPROPRIATE
UNIFIED

- THEN G.

TRAGEDY - NOT OPPORT.

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