

## Martin House Fact Sheet

### Art Glass of the Martin House Complex

The art glass\* of the Martin House complex, like that in Frank Lloyd Wright's other Prairie houses, is an important component of the buildings' design. Wright held nothing back when he designed the art glass for the Martin House complex, creating **394 pieces** of art glass in 16 major patterns:

- 11 separate patterns in the Martin House (9 patterns for vertical windows and doors and 2 patterns for skylights and lay lights).
- 2 patterns in the Barton House (1 pattern for the windows and 1 pattern for the cabinet doors).
- 1 pattern for the conservatory.
- 1 pattern for the carriage house.
- 1 pattern for the gardener's cottage.

The "Tree of Life" pattern window is one of the most intricate art glass pattern that Wright ever designed.

Each window contains **over 750** individual pieces of glass. The "Tree of Life" window today remains as one of Wright's best and well known art glass designs. All of the art glass in the Martin House complex was made by the Linden Glass company of Chicago and was produced mainly in 1904—1905.



All of the windows were casement windows (hinged on the sides) or awning windows (hinged at the top). Unlike traditional stained glass windows, none of the Martin House windows had additional support bars added to them because the came (the metal strips which the glass fits into) were made of zinc in the Barton House and brass in the Martin House. Caming made from these metals is much stronger and stiffer than the usual lead caming.

We now refer to the 2nd floor windows as the "Tree of Life" pattern, the windows in Darwin Martin's office as the "Bursar's" pattern and the living room, dining room, and library windows as the "Wisteria" pattern. However, Wright never referred to these windows by these names. To him they were simply the 1st floor designs and the 2nd floor designs. Wright didn't even use the word *window*; he called

them "light screens," to distinguish his unique treatment of windows, doors, etc. The Martin House has more art glass in more patterns than any other house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. We are proud of this amazing array of art glass, and hope that you will enjoy seeing it for yourself when you visit the complex.

*\* the term art glass refers to Frank Lloyd Wright's unique "stained glass" compositions for windows, doors, cabinet doors, skylights and lay lights (electrically illuminated skylights).*