

# Frank Lloyd Wright House in Orinda a Structural Symphony

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*This glade is flanked by 8-foot tall sculptures of China's first emperor, Chin Shi Huang, and General Wang Yi. Photo Ohlen Alexander*

The Buehlers also asked for a workshop, which was “fitted with cabinets and drawers custom designed to Buehler’s specifications.”

The Buehlers refined their privacy during the 1950s by purchasing two lots south of their property line. In the 1960s, they engaged Henry Matsutani to create a formal Shin garden. Famed for revitalizing Golden Gate Park’s Japanese Tea Garden, Matsutani built the garden “on the contouring designed by Wright,” according to Roland. He diverted water from two creeks which still converge today to create a large, rock-lined pond

with an 8-foot high waterfall, accessible via an arched bridge, and added a 13-foot hexagonal wooden gazebo above “for serving tea and viewing the pond or circular western glade,” which is flanked by 8-foot tall sculptures of China’s first emperor, Chin Shi Huang, and General Wang Yi. A second, even more impressive, fieldstone-lined waterfall on the property’s Moraga Way border feeds into the winding creek from a 16-foot drop.

In 1992, the aging Matsutani and Maynard Buehler collaborated one final time – erecting a traditional, rectangular, sukiya-style tea house to the southeast. Reached via an arched concrete and log bridge over a Zen dry bed creek and sheltered by old growth native oaks, the tea house is a single screened room which opens via sliding panels onto an elevated platform.

Each building on the property keeps within Wright’s vision, underscoring the interconnectedness with nature that transcends the norm. “The Buehler building is a symphony,” says Dyson. “So many details so well worked out.”

## Fire and Rebirth

The Buehlers lived graciously in their Wright space for nearly 50 years, making only minimal tweaks until 1994. A faulty space heater sparked a fire, seriously damaging the hallway and bedroom wing. Olds came to the rescue, overseeing the home’s restoration from 1995 to 1997.

“Throughout the rehabilitation substantial attention was paid to the replication of details, including securing redwood of similar grain and quality to that used in the original construction” and replacing the gold leaf which had been damaged, according to Roland. *The New York Times* praised the Buehlers for saving the home and Olds for his faithful attention to detail.

Jim Colhoun Presents

## 1128 Larch Avenue, Moraga

Set back from the street, this single-level four bedroom home features a private location with hilltop views on a 1.16 acre lot. Classic hardwood floors throughout the home lead to a large family room. There is a formal dining room and an eat-in kitchen with french doors to the backyard. Outside, there is a separate detached office or workshop building which would be ideal for an artist studio.

Offered at \$1,069,000.



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