

Frank Gehry

Frank Owen Gehry (/ˈɡɛəri/ *GAIR-ee*; né **Goldberg**; February 28, 1929 – December 5, 2025) was a Canadian and American architect and designer. A number of his buildings, including his private residence in Santa Monica, California, have become attractions.

Gehry rose to prominence in the 1970s with his distinctive style that blended everyday materials with complex, dynamic structures. Gehry's approach to architecture was described as deconstructivist, though he resisted categorization. His works are considered among the most important of contemporary architecture in the 2010 World Architecture Survey, leading Vanity Fair to call him "the most important architect of our age".^[2]

Gehry was known for his postmodern designs and use of bold, unconventional forms and materials. His most famous works include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in Spain, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, and the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris. These buildings are characterized by their sculptural, often undulating exteriors and innovative use of materials such as titanium and stainless steel.

Throughout his career, Gehry received numerous awards and honors, including the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1989, considered the field's highest honor. He was also awarded the National Medal of Arts and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in the United States. Gehry's influence extends beyond architecture; he designed furniture, jewelry, and liquor bottles.

Early life

Frank Owen Gehry was born Frank Owen Goldberg on February 28, 1929, at Toronto General Hospital in Toronto, Ontario,^{[3][4][5]} to parents Sadie Thelma (née Kaplanski/Caplan) and Irving Goldberg.^[6] His American father was born in New York City to Russian-

Design	
Website	<u>foga.com</u> (http://foga.com)

Frank Gehry

CC FAIA



Gehry in 2007

Born	Frank Owen Goldberg February 28, 1929 <u>Toronto, Ontario, Canada</u>
Died	December 5, 2025 (aged 96) <u>Santa Monica, California, US</u>
Citizenship	Canada · United States
Education	<u>University of Southern California</u> (B.Arch)
Occupation	Architect
Spouses	Anita Snyder (<u>m.</u> 1952; <u>div.</u> 1966) Berta Isabel Aguilera (<u>m.</u> 1975) ^[1]
Children	4
Awards	<u>List of awards</u>
Practice	Gehry Partners, LLP
Buildings	<u>List of works</u>
Design	
Website	foga.com (http://foga.com)

Jewish parents, and his Polish-Jewish mother was an immigrant born in Łódź, Poland.^{[7][8][9]} A creative child, he was encouraged by his grandmother, Leah Caplan,^[10] with whom he built little cities out of scraps of wood.^[11] With these scraps from her husband's hardware store, she entertained him for hours, building imaginary houses and futuristic cities on the living room floor.^[6]



Gehry Residence in Santa Monica, California

Gehry's use of corrugated steel, chain-link fencing, unpainted plywood, and other utilitarian or "everyday" materials was partly inspired by spending Saturday mornings at his grandfather's hardware store. He spent time drawing with his father, and his mother introduced him to the world of art. "So the creative genes were there", Gehry said. "But my father thought I was a dreamer, I wasn't gonna amount to anything. It was my mother who thought I was just reticent to do things. She would push me."^[12]

He was given the Hebrew name "Ephraim" by his grandfather, but used it only at his bar mitzvah.^[13] In 1954, Gehry changed his surname from Goldberg to Gehry, after his then-wife Anita expressed concern about antisemitism.^[14]

Education

In 1947, Gehry's family emigrated to the United States, settling in California. He got a job driving a delivery truck and studied at Los Angeles City College.^[15]

Gehry stated,

I was a truck driver in L.A., going to City College, and I tried radio announcing, which I wasn't very good at. I tried chemical engineering, which I wasn't very good at and didn't like, and then I remembered. You know, somehow I just started wracking my brain about, 'What do I like?' Where was I? What made me excited? And I remembered art, that I loved going to museums and I loved looking at paintings, loved listening to music. Those things came from my mother, who took me to concerts and museums. I remembered Grandma and the blocks, and just on a hunch, I tried some architecture classes.^[16]

Gehry went on to graduate from the University of Southern California's School of Architecture in 1954, where his professors included William Pereira.^[17] During that time, he became a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi.^{[18][19]} He then spent time away from architecture in numerous other jobs, including service in the United States Army.^[11] In the fall of 1956, he moved his family to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he studied city planning at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Gehry always expressed a socialist philosophy for architecture, something that was influenced by political views as he expressed a more leftist attitude to the world. These progressive ideas about socially responsible architecture were under-realized and not respected by his professors at Harvard, leaving him to feel disheartened and "underwhelmed".^[20] Gehry's distaste for the school culminated after he was invited by his architecture professor to engage in a discussion revolving around a "secret architectural project in progress", which was ultimately revealed to Gehry as a palace that he was designing for Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista.^{[6][21]}

Career

Gehry ultimately dropped out of his graduate program at Harvard University (where he studied urban planning) to start a furniture manufacturing company Easy Edges, which specialised in creating pieces with cardboard.^{[22][23][24]}

He returned to Los Angeles to work for Victor Gruen Associates, with whom he had apprenticed while at USC. In 1957, at age 28, he was given the chance to design his first private residence with friend and old classmate Greg Walsh. Construction was done by another neighbor across the street from his wife's family, Charlie Sockler. Built in Idyllwild, California, for his wife Anita's family neighbor Melvin David, the over 2,000 sq ft (190 m²) "David Cabin"^[25] shows features that were to become synonymous with Gehry's later work, including beams protruding from the exterior sides, vertical-grain douglas fir detail, and exposed unfinished ceiling beams. It also shows strong Asian influences, stemming from his earliest inspirations, such as the Shōsōin in Nara, Japan.^[26]

In 1961, Gehry moved to Paris, where he worked for architect Andre Remonde.^[27] In 1962, he established a practice in Los Angeles that became Frank Gehry and Associates in 1967,^[11] then Gehry Partners in 2001.^[28] His earliest commissions were in Southern California, where he designed a number of innovative commercial structures such as Santa Monica Place (1980) and residential buildings such as the eccentric Norton House (1984) in Venice, Los Angeles.^[29]

Among these works, Gehry's most notable design may be the renovation of his own Santa Monica residence.^[30] Originally built in 1920 and purchased by Gehry in 1977, it features a metallic exterior wrapped around the original building that leaves many of the original details visible.^[31]

Other of Gehry's buildings completed during the 1980s include the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (1981) in San Pedro, and the California Aerospace Museum (1984) at the California Museum of Science and Industry in Los Angeles.^[32]

In 1989, Gehry received the Pritzker Architecture Prize, where the jury described him: "Always open to experimentation, he has as well a sureness and maturity that resists, in the same way that Picasso did, being bound either by critical acceptance or his successes. His buildings are juxtaposed collages of spaces and materials that make users appreciative of both the theatre and the back-stage, simultaneously revealed."^[33]

Gehry continued to design other notable buildings in California, such as the Chiat/Day Building (1991) in Venice, in collaboration with Claes Oldenburg, which is well known for its massive sculpture of binoculars. He also began receiving larger national and international commissions, including his first European commission, the Vitra International Furniture Manufacturing Facility and Design Museum in



Chiat/Day Building in Venice, California
(1991)



Public housing in Frankfurt-Schwanheim
(1994)

Germany, completed in 1989. It was soon followed by other major commissions including the Frederick Weisman Museum of Art^[34] (1993) in Minneapolis, Minnesota; the Cinémathèque Française^[35] (1994) in Paris, originally The American Center in Paris,^[36] and the Dancing House in Prague (1996).^[37]

From 1994 to 1996 a couple buildings by Gehry for a public housing project were realized in Goldstein, part of Frankfurt-Schwanheim (1994). In 1997, Gehry vaulted to a new level of international acclaim^[2] when the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao opened in Bilbao, Spain. Hailed by The New Yorker as a "masterpiece of the 20th century", and by legendary architect Philip Johnson as "the greatest building of our time",^[38] the museum became famous for its striking yet aesthetically pleasing design and its positive economic effect on the city.^[39]

From then on, Gehry regularly won major commissions and established himself as one of the world's most notable architects. His best-received works include several concert halls for classical music. The boisterous, curvaceous Walt Disney Concert Hall (2003) in downtown Los Angeles is the centerpiece of the neighborhood's revitalization; the Los Angeles Times called it "the most effective answer to doubters, naysayers, and grumbling critics an American architect has ever produced".^[40] Gehry also designed the open-air Jay Pritzker Pavilion (2004) in Chicago's Millennium Park;^[41] and the understated New World Center (2011) in Miami Beach, which the LA Times called "a piece of architecture that dares you to underestimate it or write it off at first glance."^[42]

His other notable works include academic buildings such as the Stata Center (2004)^[43] at MIT, and the Peter B. Lewis Library (2008) at Princeton University;^[44] museums such as the Museum of Pop Culture (2000) in Seattle, Washington;^[45] commercial buildings such as the IAC Building (2007) in New York City;^[46] and residential buildings, such as Gehry's first skyscraper, the Beekman Tower at 8 Spruce Street (now known as 8 Spruce) in New York City (2011).^[47]

Gehry's most recent major international works include the Dr Chau Chak Wing Building at the University of Technology Sydney, completed in 2014,^[48] and the Chau Chak Wing, with its 320,000 bricks in "sweeping lines", described as "10 out of 10" on a scale of difficulty.^[49] Other of his projects include the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi on Saadiyat Island in the United Arab Emirates and the Forma skyscraper project in his hometown of Toronto.^[50] Other significant projects undertaken by Gehry such as a multi-decade renovation of the Philadelphia Art Museum were in the design stage. In October 2013, Gehry was appointed joint architect with Foster + Partners to design the High Street phase of the development of Battersea Power Station in London, Gehry's first project there.^[51]



The tower at 8 Spruce Street in Lower Manhattan, completed in 2010, has a stainless steel and glass exterior and is 76 stories high (2010).



The Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health of the Cleveland Clinic in Las Vegas, Nevada (2010)

In recent years, some of Gehry's more prominent designs failed to go forward. In addition to unrealized designs for the Corcoran Art Gallery expansion in Washington, DC, and a new Guggenheim museum near the South Street Seaport in New York City, Gehry was notoriously dropped by developer Bruce Ratner from the Pacific Park redevelopment project in the New York City borough of Brooklyn, and in 2014 as the designer of the World Trade Center Performing Arts Center in New York City.^[52] Some stalled projects showed progress: After many years and a dismissal, Gehry was reinstated as architect for the Grand Avenue Project in Los Angeles, and though his controversial^{[53][54][55]} design of the National Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial in Washington, DC has had numerous delays during the approval process with the United States Congress, it was finally approved in 2014 with a modified design.^{[56][57]}



New World Center in Miami Beach, Florida (2011)

In 2014, two significant, long-awaited museums designed by Gehry opened: the Biomuseo,^[58] a biodiversity museum in Panama City, Panama; and the Fondation Louis Vuitton,^{[59][60][61]} a modern art museum in the Bois de Boulogne park in Paris, France. Both opened to generally positive reviews.^{[62][63][64]}



Fondation Louis Vuitton (2016)

Also in 2014, Gehry was commissioned by River LA (formerly the Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation), a nonprofit group founded by the city of Los Angeles in 2009 to coordinate river policy, to devise a wide-ranging new plan for the river.^{[65][66]}

In February 2015, the new A\$180 million building for the University of Technology Sydney was officially opened, whose façade has more than 320,000 hand-placed bricks and glass slabs. Gehry said he would not design a building like the "crumpled paper bag" again.^[67]

Gehry told the French newspaper La Croix in November 2016 that President of France François Hollande had assured him he could relocate to France if Donald Trump was elected President of the United States.^{[68][69]} The following month, Gehry said that he had no plans to move.^[70] Trump and he exchanged words in 2010 when Gehry's 8 Spruce Street, originally known as Beekman Tower, was built 1 foot (0.30 m) taller than the nearby Trump Building, which until then was New York City's tallest residential building.^{[69][71]}

Notable Gehry-designed buildings completed in the 2020s include the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial in Washington, DC,^[72] and the LUMA Arles museum in France.^[73] In 2021, noting Gehry's progress on an increasing number of significant projects in his hometown, including the Grand Avenue Project, a concert hall for the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, and an office building for Warner Bros., The Architect's Newspaper stated that "Seventy-four years after he moved there from his native Toronto, L.A. is looking more and more like Gehry Country."^[74]

Architectural style

Said to "defy categorisation", Gehry's work reflects a spirit of experimentation coupled with a respect for the demands of professional practice, and remained largely unaligned with broader stylistic tendencies or movements.^[75] With his earliest educational influences rooted in modernism, Gehry's work sought to escape modernist stylistic tropes while remaining interested in some of its underlying transformative agendas. Continually working between given circumstances and unanticipated materializations, he was assessed as someone who "made us produce buildings that are fun, sculpturally exciting, good experiences", although his approach might become "less relevant as pressure mounts to do more with less".^[75]

Gehry's style at times seemed unfinished or even crude, but his work was consistent with the California "funk" art movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, which featured the use of inexpensive found objects and nontraditional media such as clay to make serious art.^[76] His works always had at least some element of deconstructivism;^[77] he was called "the apostle of chain-link fencing and corrugated metal siding".^[78] However, a retrospective exhibit at New York's Whitney Museum in 1988 revealed that he was also a sophisticated classical artist who knew European art history and contemporary sculpture and painting.^[76]

Early influences and design philosophy

Gehry often described architecture as inherently sculptural, asserting, *"I always thought that architecture was, by definition, a three-dimensional object, therefore sculpture."* (<https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=dADH1yXvyUkC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=frank+gehry&ots=nQIP5PpLOy&sig=wGF6yzGi9yJOQujpBx8IK-pg9c0#v=onepage&q=frank%20gehry&f=false>) This perspective reflected his commitment to blending artistic and architectural disciplines. Gehry's early work with sculptors influenced his experimental approach, which includes deconstructing traditional architectural forms and embracing ideas of flow and defamiliarization, akin to Viktor Shklovsky's concept of "laying bare the device". (<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/fish-ichthyologist-viktor-shklovskys-diverse-achievement/>) Critics often described his work as embodying structuralism rather than traditional formalism.

Cultural and personal influences

Gehry's Jewish heritage and immigrant background shaped his architectural philosophy. He often reinterpreted traditional forms in ways that reflect his multicultural experience. His works were described as embodying "a critique of consumerism" by defying expectations of luxury and focusing on creativity.^[79] For Gehry, architecture was not just about creating buildings but about crafting spaces that inspire and challenge societal norms.

Material innovation

A hallmark of Gehry's style was his innovative use of materials. He challenged architectural norms by incorporating unconventional elements such as corrugated steel, chain-link fencing, and plywood. His works are celebrated for their *"raw aesthetic"*^[79] that combines everyday materials in unexpected ways, creating structures that blur the line between functionality and artistry. (<https://books.google.com/books?h>

[l=en&lr=&id=cF5CivJnv2MC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=frank+gehry+facts&ots=B65UYVLXqU&sig=1O85g4Hb9X7FbLCYNrd6uyJVS90#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://www.google.com/search?q=frank+gehry+facts&rlz=1C1G5g4Hb9X7FbLCYNrd6uyJVS90#v=onepage&q&f=false)) These material choices also reflected a critique of luxury, emphasizing creativity over opulence.

Gallery



Former Rouse Headquarters in Columbia, Maryland (1974)



Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Maryland (1967)



"El Peix", fish sculpture in front of the Port Olímpic in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain (1992)



Dancing House in Prague (1996)



The Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle (2000)



Gehry Tower in Hanover, Germany (2001)



Weatherhead School of Management,
Case Western Reserve University,
Cleveland, Ohio (2002)



Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los
Angeles (2003)



Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing
Arts, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson,
New York (2003)



Stata Center, Massachusetts
Institute of Technology,
Cambridge, Massachusetts (2004)



BP Pedestrian Bridge, Millennium Park,
Chicago (2004)



MARTa Herford, Herford, Germany
(2005)



Hotel Marqués de Riscal in Elciego,
Spain (2006)



The headquarters of IAC in Manhattan,
New York City (2007)



Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Ontario,
Canada (2008)



Gallery of African American Art, Ohr-
O'Keefe Museum Of Art campus in
Biloxi, Mississippi (2010)



Dr Chau Chak
Wing Building in
Sydney (2014)



Biomuseo in Panama City (2014)



David Cabin – Idyllwild, CA (1957)



Neuer Zollhof - Düsseldorf, Germany (1998)



Energie-Forum-Innovation in Bad Oeynhausen, Germany (1995)



Toledo Museum of Art Center for Visual Arts in Toledo, Ohio



Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas (2010)

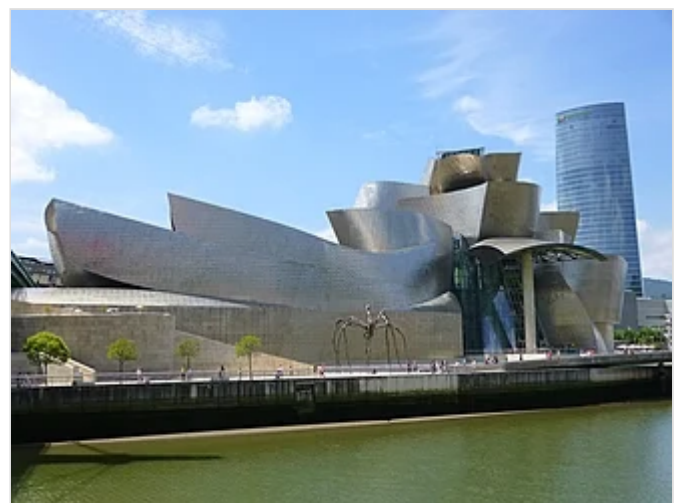


The Grand and Conrad hotel in Los Angeles

Bilbao effect

The term "Bilbao effect" emerged in urban planning to describe the transformative impact of Gehry's architecture. His design for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, revitalized the city, serving as a prime example of how architecture can drive economic and cultural renewal. The museum's dramatic curves and shimmering titanium panels are defining features of Gehry's style, emphasizing movement and fluidity.^{[39][80][81]}

After the phenomenal success of Gehry's design for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, critics began referring to the economic and cultural revitalization of cities through iconic, innovative architecture as the "Bilbao effect".^[82] In the first 12 months after the museum was opened, an estimated US\$160 million were added to the Basque economy. As of 2014, over \$3.5 billion have been added to the Basque economy since the building opened.^[83] In subsequent years there have been many attempts to replicate this effect through large-scale eye-catching architectural commissions that have been both



Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

successful and unsuccessful, such as Daniel Libeskind's expansion of the Denver Art Museum and buildings by Gehry himself, such as the almost universally well-received Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles and the more controversial Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle.^[84] Though some link the concept of the Bilbao effect to the notion of starchitecture, Gehry consistently rejected the label of a starchitect.^[85]

Academia and design career

Academia

In January 2011, Gehry joined the University of Southern California (USC) faculty, as the Judge Widney Professor of Architecture.^[86] He continued in this role at his alma mater. He also held teaching positions at Harvard University, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Toronto, Columbia University, the Federal Institute of Technology in Zürich, and at Yale University, where he taught.^[87]

Though he was often referred to as a "starchitect", he repeatedly expressed his disdain for the term, insisting he is only an architect.^{[85][88]}

Gehry received over a dozen honorary university degrees (see #Honorary degrees).

In February 2017, MasterClass announced an online architecture course taught by Gehry that was released that July.^[89]

Exhibition design

Gehry was involved in exhibition designs at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art dating back to the 1960s. In 1965, Gehry designed the exhibition display for the "Art Treasures of Japan" exhibition at the LACMA. This was followed soon after by the exhibition design for the "Assyrian Reliefs" show in 1966 and the "Billy Al Bengston Retrospective" in 1968. The LACMA then had Gehry design the installation for the "Treasures of Tutankhamen" exhibition in 1978 followed by the "Avant-Garde in Russia 1910–1930" exhibition in 1980. The subsequent year, Gehry designed the exhibition for "Seventeen Artists in the '60s" at the LACMA, followed soon after by the "German Expressionist Sculpture Exhibition" in 1983. In 1991–92, Gehry designed the installation of the landmark exhibition "Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany", which opened at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, and the Altes Museum in Berlin.^{[90][91]} Gehry was asked to design an exhibition on the work of Alexander Calder at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Resnick Pavilion, again invited by the museum's curator Stephanie Barron.^[92]

In addition to his long-standing involvement with exhibition design at the LACMA, Gehry also designed numerous exhibition installations with other institutions. In 1998, "The Art of the Motorcycle" exhibition opened at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum with its installation designed by Gehry.^[93]

In 2014, he curated an exhibition of photography by his close friend and businessman Peter Arnell that ran from March 5 through April 1 at Milk Studios Gallery in Los Angeles.^[94]

Stage design

In 1983, Gehry created the stage design for Lucinda Childs' dance *Available Light*, set to music by John Adams. It premiered at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles at the "Temporary Contemporary", and was subsequently seen at the Brooklyn Academy of Music Opera House in New York City and the Theatre de la Ville in Paris. The set consisted of two levels angled in relation to each other, with a chain-link backdrop.^[95] The piece was revived in 2015,^[96] and was performed, among other places, in Los Angeles and Philadelphia, where it was presented by FringeArts, which commissioned the revival.^[97]

In 2003, Gehry designed the set for the American premiere of Janáček's opera *Osud* at the Gehry-designed Fisher Center at Bard College.^[98]

In 2012, Gehry designed the set for the Los Angeles Philharmonic's opera production of *Don Giovanni*, performed at the Walt Disney Concert Hall.^[99]

In April 2014, Gehry designed a set for an "exploration of the life and career of Pierre Boulez" by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which was performed in November of that year.^[100]

Other designs

In addition to architecture, Gehry made a line of furniture for Knoll and for Heller Furniture, jewelry for Tiffany & Co., various household items, sculptures, and even a glass bottle for Wyborowa Vodka. His first line of furniture, produced from 1969 to 1973, was called "Easy Edges", constructed out of cardboard. Another line of furniture released in the spring of 1992 is "Bentwood Furniture". Each piece is named after a different hockey term. He was first introduced to making furniture in 1954 while serving in the U.S. Army, where he designed furniture for enlisted soldiers.^{[24][101][102]}

In many of his designs, Gehry was inspired by fish. "It was by accident I got into the fish image", claimed Gehry. One thing that sparked his interest in fish was the fact that his colleagues were recreating Greek temples. He said, "Three hundred million years before man was fish....if you gotta go back, and you're insecure about going forward...go back three hundred million years ago. Why are you stopping at the Greeks? So, I started drawing fish in my sketchbook, and then I started to realize that there was something in it."^[103]

As a result of his fascination, the first Fish Lamps were fabricated between 1984 and 1986. They employed wire armatures molded into fish shapes, onto which shards of plastic laminate ColorCore are individually glued. Since the creation of the first lamp in 1984, the fish has become a recurrent motif in Gehry's work, most notably in the *Fish Sculpture* at La Vila Olímpica del Poblenou in Barcelona (1989–92) and *Standing Glass Fish* for the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden (1986).^[104]



Wiggle side chair

Gehry collaborated with luxury jewelry company Tiffany & Co., creating six distinct jewelry collections: the Orchid, Fish, Torque, Equus, Axis, and Fold collections. In addition to jewelry, Gehry designed other items, including a distinctive collector's chess set and a series of tableware items, including vases, cups, and bowls for the company.^[105]

In 2004, Gehry designed the official trophy for the World Cup of Hockey.^[106] He redesigned the trophy for the next tournament in 2016.^[107]

He collaborated with American furniture manufacturer Emeco on designs such as the 2004 "Superlight" chair.^{[108][109]}

In 2014, Gehry was one of the six "iconoclasts" selected by French fashion house Louis Vuitton to design a piece using their iconic monogram pattern as part of their "Celebrating Monogram" campaign.^[110]

In 2015, Gehry designed his first yacht.^[111]

In 2020, Gehry designed a limited edition bottle of Hennessy cognac.^[112]



Frank Gehry designed kettle, presented in the Indianapolis Museum of Art

Software development

Gehry's firm was responsible for innovation in architectural software.^[113] His firm spun off another firm called Gehry Technologies that was established in 2002. In 2005, Gehry Technologies began a partnership with Dassault Systèmes to bring innovations from the aerospace and manufacturing world to AEC and developed Digital Project software, as well as GTeam software. In 2014, Gehry Technologies was acquired by software company Trimble Navigation.^{[114][115]}

Personal life

A naturalized U.S. citizen,^[116] Gehry also retained his Canadian citizenship.^[117] He lived in Santa Monica, California, and practiced out of Los Angeles.^[118] Having grown up in Canada, he was an avid fan of ice hockey. He began a hockey league, FOG (for Frank Owen Gehry), in his office.^[119] In 2004, he designed the trophy for the World Cup of Hockey.^[120]

In 1952, Gehry married Anita Synder; in 1966, they were divorced.^[1] In 1975, he married Berta Aguilera.^[121]

Gehry was known for his occasional bad temper. During a trip to Oviedo to accept the Prince of Asturias Award in October 2014, he received a significant amount of attention, both positive and negative, for publicly flipping off a reporter at a press conference who accused him of being a "showy" architect.^{[122][123]}

Gehry was a member of the California Yacht Club in Marina Del Rey, and enjoyed sailing with his fiberglass-hulled yacht, *Foggy*.^[124]

Gehry died from a respiratory condition at his home in Santa Monica on December 5, 2025, at the age of 96. He is survived by his wife Berta and three children.^[121]

Philanthropy

In 2014, Gehry co-founded Turnaround Arts: California, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that expands access to the arts in under-resourced public elementary and middle schools across California.^{[125][126]} In addition to serving as a board member for the organization, Gehry served as a visiting artist with students.^[127] He also served on the leadership council of the New York Stem Cell Foundation.^[128]

Gehry also donated his time to design projects pro-bono. In 2014, he began pro-bono work with the L.A. River Revitalization Corp., a nonprofit group founded by the city, to develop the LA River Master Plan.^[129] In 2015, he unveiled his design, for which he waived his design fee, for the Children's Institute in Watts, an LA-based social services organization that provides services to families who have experienced violence and poverty.^[130] The Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA), which is an educational center and performance space that provides free instruments, music training, and academic support to students from disadvantaged neighborhoods, was also designed pro-bono by Gehry and was completed in 2021.^[131]

Legacy

Gehry is considered one of the most influential figures in American architecture, and one of the most influential architects in the 20th century.^{[132][133]} *The Guardian*, in their obituary, called Gehry "the most recognizable American architect since Frank Lloyd Wright".^[132] He was called a "Titan of Architecture" by *The New York Times* in their obituary of him and was credited for designing some of the world's most recognizable buildings.^[121] *The Los Angeles Times* described Gehry as a transformative architect who "transformed Los Angeles' urban landscape".^[134]

Gehry was said to have been one of the first architects to "grasp the liberating potential of computer design".^[121] He was also the progenitor of the "Bilbao effect", referring to a museum that he built which revitalized the economy of the city of Bilbao.^[39] The BBC noted that when Gehry redesigned his own Santa Monica home using chain-link fencing, plywood and corrugated steel materials, is what "built his daring reputation".^[135]

In popular culture

In 2004, Gehry voiced himself in an episode of the children's TV show *Arthur* called "Castles in the Sky", where he helped Arthur and his friends design a new treehouse.^[136] He also voiced himself in a 2005 episode of *The Simpsons*, "The Seven-Beer Snitch", where he designs a concert hall for the fictional city of Springfield. He later said he regretted the appearance, as it included a joke about his design technique that has led people to misunderstand his architectural process.^[137]

In 2006, filmmaker Sydney Pollack made a documentary about Gehry's work, *Sketches of Frank Gehry*, which followed Gehry over five years and painted a positive portrait of his character; it was well-received critically.^[138]

In 2009, architecture-inspired ice cream sandwich company Coolhaus named a cookie and ice cream combination after Gehry. Dubbed the "Frank Behry", it features Strawberries & Cream gelato and snickerdoodle cookies.^{[139][140]}

Exhibitions

In October 2014, the first major European exhibition of Gehry's work debuted at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.^[141] Other museums and major galleries that held exhibitions on Gehry's architecture and design include the Leo Castelli Gallery in 1983; and the Walker Art Center in 1986, whose exhibition then traveled to the Toronto Harbourfront Museum, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the LACMA and the Whitney Museum. Museums with exhibitions on Gehry's work included the Philadelphia Art Museum, the Museum of Modern Art (1992), the Gagosian Gallery (1984, 1992 and 1993), the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (2001), the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2002), the Jewish Museum in Manhattan (2010), and the Milan Triennale (first in 1988, then in 2010 with an exhibition entitled "Frank Gehry from 1997"), and LACMA (2015).^[142]

Gehry participated in the 1980 Venice Biennale's The Presence of the Past exhibition, designing an architectural facade for the Strada Novissima installation.^[143] He also contributed to the 1985 Venice Biennale with an installation and performance named Il Corso del Coltello, in collaboration with Claes Oldenburg.^[144] His projects were featured in the 1996 event,^[145] and he contributed to the 2008 event with the installation Ungapatchket.^[146]

In October 2015, 21 21 Design Sight in Tokyo held the exhibition Frank Gehry. I Have An Idea, curated by Japanese architect Tsuyoshi Tane.^[147]


In 2021, the Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills held Spinning Tales, an exhibition of new fish sculptures by Gehry.^[148]

Awards and honors

- 1974: Fellow of the American Institute of Architects^[151]
- 1977: Arnold W. Brunner Prize in Architecture^[151]
- 1986: Distinguished Architect Award from the American Institute of Architects (Los Angeles Chapter)^[152]
- 1987: Fellow of American Academy of Arts and Letters
- 1988: Elected into the National Academy of Design^[153]
- 1989: Pritzker Architecture Prize^[154]
- 1992: Praemium Imperiale^[155]
- 1994: The Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize^[156]
- 1994: Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture^[157]


External videos



 Frank Gehry: My days as a young rebel (https://www.ted.com/talks/frank_gehry_my_days_as)

- 1995: American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award^[16]
- 1995: Chrysler Award of Innovation in Design^[158]
- 1998: National Medal of Arts^[159]
- 1998: Inaugural Austrian Frederick Kiesler Prize for Architecture and the Arts
- 1998: Gold Medal Award, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
- 1999: AIA Gold Medal, American Institute of Architects
- 2000: Cooper–Hewitt National Design Award Lifetime Achievement^[160]
- 2002: Companion of the Order of Canada (CC)^[161]
- 2004: Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service
- 2006: Inductee, California Hall of Fame
- 2007: Henry C. Turner Prize for Innovation in Construction Technology from the National Building Museum (on behalf of Gehry Partners and Gehry Technologies)
- 2009: Order of Charlemagne
- 2012: Twenty-five Year Award, American Institute of Architects
- 2014: Prince of Asturias Award
- 2014: Commandeur of the Ordre National de la Légion d'honneur, France
- 2015: J. Paul Getty Medal
- 2016: Harvard Arts Medal
- 2016: Leonore and Walter Annenberg Award for Diplomacy through the Arts, Foundation for Arts and Preservation in Embassies
- 2016: Presidential Medal of Freedom
- 2018: Neutra Medal^[162]
- 2019: Inductee, Canada's Walk of Fame
- 2020: Paez Medal of Art, New York City (VAEA)^[163]

a young rebel), 44:28, TED Talks^[149]

 Frank Gehry: A master architect asks, Now what? (https://www.ted.com/talks/frank_gehr_y_a_master_architect_asks_now_what), 21:56, TED Talks^[150]

Gehry was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1974,^[164] and he received many national, regional and local AIA awards. He was a senior fellow of the Design Futures Council and served on the steering committee of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

Honorary degrees

Source:^[165]

- 1987: California Institute of the Arts
- 1987: Rhode Island School of Design
- 1989: Otis College of Art and Design
- 1989: Technical University of Nova Scotia
- 1993: Occidental College
- 1995: Whittier College^[166]
- 1996: Southern California Institute of Architecture^[152]
- 1998: University of Toronto
- 2000: Harvard University
- 2000: University of Edinburgh

- 2000: University of Southern California
- 2000: Yale University
- 2002: City College of New York
- 2004: School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- 2013: Case Western Reserve University
- 2013: Princeton University
- 2014: Juilliard School
- 2015: University of Technology Sydney
- 2017: University of Oxford
- 2019: Southern California Institute of Architecture^[167]

See also



- Contemporary architecture
- Organization of the artist
- Thin-shell structure

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External links

- Frank Gehry (https://www.ted.com/speakers/frank_gehry) at TED
 - Frank Gehry (<https://charlierose.com/guests/116>) on *Charlie Rose*
 - Frank Gehry (https://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/g/frank_gehry/index.html) collected news and commentary at *The New York Times*
 - Frank Gehry (<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/frank-gehry>) collected news and commentary at *The Guardian*
 - Frank Gehry (<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0962197/>) at IMDb
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