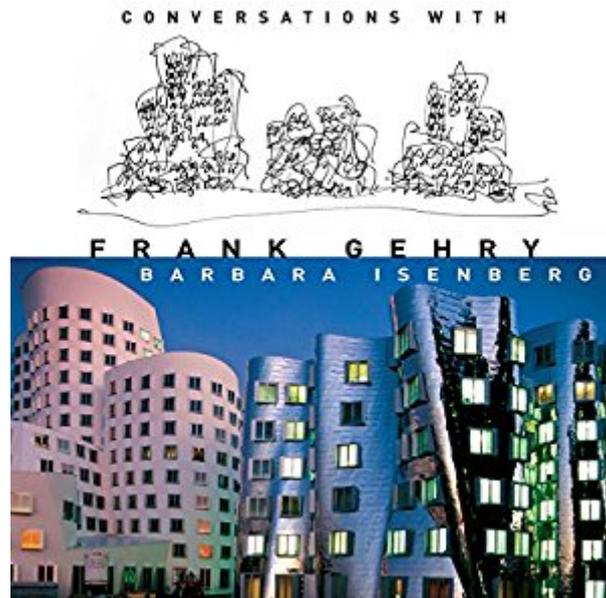


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# Conversations With Frank Gehry



## Synopsis

An unprecedented, intimate portrait of Frank Gehry, one of the world's most influential architects. Drawing on the most candid, revealing, and entertaining conversations she has had with Gehry over the last 20 years, Barbara Isenberg provides new and fascinating insights into the man and his work. Gehry's subjects range from his childhood - when he first built cities with wooden blocks on the floor of his grandmother's kitchen - to his relationships with clients and his definition of a "great" client. We learn about his architectural influences (including Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright) and what he has learned from Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and Rauschenberg. We explore the thinking behind his designs for the Guggenheim Bilbao and the Walt Disney Concert Hall, the redevelopment of Atlantic Yards in Brooklyn and Grand Avenue in Los Angeles, the Gehry Collection at Tiffany's, and ongoing projects in Toronto, Paris, Abu Dhabi, and elsewhere. And we follow as Gehry illuminates the creative process by which his ideas first take shape - for example, through early drawings for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, when the building's trademark undulating curves were mere scribbles on a page. Sketches, models, and computer images provided by Gehry himself allow us to see how so many of his landmark buildings have come to fruition, step by step. Conversations with Frank Gehry is essential listening for everyone interested in the art and craft of architecture, and for everyone fascinated by the most iconic buildings of our time, as well as the man and the mind behind them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a breezily readable, generously and eclectically illustrated book, packed with personal, practical and historical revelations and observations that paradoxically don't really add up to anything. But wait: that may very well be the point. First the good stuff. There are many, many pages here that are worth the purchase price: a photo of the model for the Disney Concert Hall that won the 1988 competition and that looks nothing like the finished building, another photo of what the Disney Concert Hall would have looked like had it been clad in travertine as was the original plan, Gehry's stories about surviving the Army and Harvard, Philip Johnson's assessment of the Bilbao Guggenheim, Gehry's practice of leaving building models outside for a year to see what they'll look like in the changing light of the seasons--and many more. I don't want to spoil all of them. Here's what isn't here: any singular philosophy or manifesto, anything admonishing or inspirational, any broad program or narrow purpose. In the sixties, Gehry started using rough, exposed framework and junky materials like chainlink and corrugated metal because, craftsmanship in construction had declined, and a perfect finish would have been impossible. In the seventies, he turned an ordinary house inside-out and outraged half of Santa Monica--because he needed extra space for his sons. In the eighties, he won the commission for the Disney Concert Hall by making an emotional appeal to Walt Disney's accessibility and unpretentiousness. In the nineties, he created the most astonishing building of the late twentieth century by first refusing a commission to repurpose an existing structure. Is there a pattern here? A take home lesson? None that I can see.

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