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## NEXT PHASE IN WRIGHT'S GRAYCLIFF RESTORATION MARKS MILESTONE IN BUFFALO'S ONGOING CULTURAL RENEWAL

**Buffalo, NY, June 26, 2006** – Graycliff Conservancy, Inc. announced that it has begun Phase III of its \$3.2 million project to restore the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Graycliff estate (1926), the last built Wright commission in the Buffalo area and the summer home for Isabelle and Darwin D. Martin, located on the shores of Lake Erie in Derby, NY. This next phase of the architectural landmark's restoration will include major structural repairs to the main building, the Isabelle R. Martin House, and the adjacent Foster House, the two largest of the three Wright-designed buildings at Graycliff. The roofs and cantilevered balconies of both structures will be restored, in addition to interior framing improvements, repairs to the drainage, electrical, and plumbing systems of the Foster House, and the complete renovation of the Isabelle Martin House's massive stone chimney, windows and doors.

At the same time, the Martin House Restoration Corporation has expanded its ongoing program by purchasing the Gardener's Cottage, the last of four residences that Frank Lloyd Wright designed for Buffalo industrialist Darwin D. Martin in the early 1900s. Much like the Martin House and Graycliff, the Cottage experienced some neglect and damage, but underwent a restoration from 1987-1991 by the owner at that time. The 2006 acquisition of the Gardener's Cottage was made possible by a \$500,000 gift from Stanford Lipsey, publisher of *The Buffalo News*, and his wife, Judith. The Lipseys will also fund the construction of a \$100,000 greenhouse for the complex, to replace the original (not designed by Wright) that Martin acquired for the property in 1909. These recent acquisitions are the last steps in reuniting the entire historic grounds of the Darwin D. Martin property – consisting of the Martin House, pergola, conservatory and carriage house, the Barton House, the Gardener's Cottage, and the greenhouse – and to returning it to its original condition.

### **Other Cultural and Architectural Projects in Buffalo**

Other significant projects underway in the region include the restoration of Buffalo's landmark Henry Hobson Richardson building and Wright-designed Darwin D. Martin House, as well as the new Toshiko Mori-designed Visitors' Center at the Martin House. Following the New York State Assembly's committed \$100 million, these recent developments mark an important step forward in Buffalo's ongoing cultural renewal and the city and state's commitment to its architectural and artistic heritage and future.

New architecture thrives in Buffalo with the Burchfield-Penney Art Center's recently-announced plans for a new home, designed by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects. The new BPAC, located on the Buffalo State Campus and across the street from the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, will provide additional space for the museum's exhibition galleries and education and public programs. The 75,000-square-foot museum will join Buffalo's collection of architectural gems when it is completed in fall 2007.

In addition to the BPAC, two significant new Wright projects are underway, including: Frank Lloyd Wright's design for a winged Tydol Filling Station which will be constructed on the campus of the Buffalo Transportation/Pierce-Arrow Museum, located only a few blocks from where Wright originally intended it at Michigan and Cherry Streets; and the construction of Frank Lloyd Wright's Rowing Boathouse, providing a new home for the West Side Rowing Club, the nation's largest rowing club. Wright's design for the Boathouse, originally included in his Wasmuth Portfolio series of distinctive Prairie Style lithograph designs, was never built.

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617 MAIN STREET / SUITE 200 / BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14203 / 716 852 0511 / fax 716 852 0131

The city's architecture meets the stage when the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra presents "Shining Brow," a concert opera that follows the life of Frank Lloyd Wright, during the tumultuous years between 1903 and 1914. The production portrays Wright's relationship to Louis Sullivan, Mamah Cheney, and his wife Catherine with scenes shifting from the Cliff Dweller's Club in Chicago, to Oak Park, Berlin, and Taliesin. Sixty members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus will be included in the production, which will be performed in November 2006, at Buffalo's famed Kleinhans Music Hall, designed by father-and-son team Eero and Eliel Saarinen. In a different but similar initiative, the BPO recently released a CD entitled "Prairie Music," inspired by composer Aaron Copeland and Frank Lloyd Wright. The recording is a tribute to Buffalo and the two American masters who played a crucial role in the city's rich cultural heritage.

The city of Buffalo boasts one of the strongest architectural histories in the United States with landmarks designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen (Kleinhans Music Hall), Louis Sullivan (Guaranty Building), Stanford White (Williams-Pratt Mansion), and Frederick Law Olmsted (Buffalo Parks and Parkways), along with Wright and Richardson. Looking to the future, new architectural projects in Buffalo include acclaimed international architect Toshiko Mori's winning competition entry for a visitors' center at Wright's Darwin D. Martin House. This diversity of architects mirrors Buffalo's unique role in American history as a city of culture and innovation.

As yet another part of the city's renewal, the Erie Canal Harbor Project is also in the process of redeveloping the original 1825 Erie Canal Terminus and Waterway. The project includes the reconstruction and restoration of historic and cultural features of the terminus, a transit

plaza, a waterfront esplanade, maritime facilities, access infrastructure and a new Naval and Serviceman's Park. Final completion is set for fall 2007.

Together with its rich architectural history, Buffalo benefits from a vibrant cultural community, centered on the Albright-Knox Art Gallery's role as an outstanding center for modern and contemporary art. Housed in its original building by Green and Wicks (1900-1905) and an inspired modernist addition by Gordon Bunshaft (1962), the Albright-Knox is also part of Buffalo's architectural tradition. The Gallery showcases a variety of artists from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in its exceptional permanent collection, including Auguste Rodin, Piet Mondrian, Jackson Pollock, Spencer Tunic, Louise Bourgeois, and Catherine Opie.

The community has also invested in the ongoing preservation and restoration of the historic Roycroft campus in nearby East Aurora. Founded in 1895 by Elbert Hubbard, the Roycrofters were a community of skilled craftsmen – printers, book designers, furniture-makers – whose work is now highly sought after by Arts and Crafts collectors across the country. Most recently, the Buffalo community helped to renovate the Roycroft Inn that celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2005.

Buffalo is a city with a longstanding history of innovation, discovery, creativity, production and support for architecture, the arts and culture. From the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, through the invention of the grain elevator, to the harnessing of hydroelectric power at nearby Niagara Falls and the subsequent development of aviation, automobile and steel plants, Buffalo has played a distinguished role in the shaping of the American experience – a history that continues to be made today.

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#### Media Contacts:

Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
**Natalie Hoch**  
212-671-5170  
nhoch@resnicowschroeder.com

**Sascha Freudenheim**  
212-671-5170  
sfreudenheim@resnicowschroeder.com

Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau  
**Ed Healy**  
716-852-0511, x236  
healy@buffalocvb.org

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617 MAIN STREET / SUITE 200 / BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14203 / 716 852 0511 / fax 716 852 0131