

and creativity of African American literature, art, and film was not fully accepted until the hegemonic definitions of modernity that ruled these disciplines gave way to more pluralist criteria. From today's vantage point, it would seem illogical to think of the poetry of the Harlem Renaissance as a failed social experiment, in either social or aesthetic terms, or to think of the novels of Ralph Ellison or Toni Morrison as anything less than American literature. And yet we do so commonly in architecture by elevating the works of Frank Lloyd Wright as a style for all Americans when countercultural examples exist that demonstrate how unfit his Prairie Style was for nonwhite and working-class citizens of the United States.

In this spirit, recent exhibits such as "Reconstructions: Architecture and Blackness in America" have uncovered the avant-gardist and vernacular practices that cooperated to advance the social projects of African Americans in a Jim Crow world. In many of these architectural movements the aesthetics of the building were of secondary concern, in part because its residents did not own the buildings in which they lived, but more precisely because the modern subjectivities of its residents were more urgently expressed through the spatial and expressive practices of these groups. Even in the cases when social minorities employed the aesthetic principles of international style modernism to achieve their goals, it is important to celebrate the ways that they expanded these discourses. Julian Francis Abele's European tour likely yielded new insights that have yet to be recovered from his travels. In like manner, Paul Revere Williams' emulation of European revivalist styles likely employed the spatial observations of a minority subject who understood the back of house in nuanced terms. In contrast to Johnson and Hitchcock's initial call for a universal industrial vernacular that would provide the "regularity" required of an epochal architectural movement, it is important to hold their European inspired modernism on a par with the alternative modernisms that were established by other cultural groups during the long unfolding of modern architecture in the U.S. and globally.

These alternative traditions include the physical works of African American architects that promoted racial equality with their built works, from the pioneering