



## Alfonso Iannelli: Modern by Design

*David Jameson*

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**Alfonso Iannelli: Modern by Design** David Jameson

**The First Biography of the Influential Modernist Artist and Sculptor--Includes More Than 350 Full-Color Plates**

In 1914 Frank Lloyd Wright asked an unknown twenty-six-year-old Italian-American immigrant to sculpt the strikingly geometric figures for his landmark Chicago masterpiece, Midway Gardens. Decades later, when New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art installed one of Midway Gardens' female "Sprite" sculptures, they listed Wright as its only artist. In all those years that followed the original project, Wright never publicly referred to the actual sculptor responsible for those remarkable figures, perhaps preferring to keep the secret of their success away from the world. That secret was Alfonso Iannelli.

From his groundbreaking modernist posters designed for Los Angeles' Orpheum Theater to his zodiac figures at the twelve corners of Chicago's Adler Planetarium to his iconic industrial designs that appeared in households across America, Iannelli's diverse work placed him firmly on a national level in the design world. Having created the Iannelli Studios in suburban Park Ridge, Illinois, shortly after the turn of the last century, Alfonso Iannelli continued to create within and around a Modernism environment for nearly six decades. And he seemed to have known everybody who was anybody in the design world at the time, becoming friends with Mies van der Rohe, talking shop with Wassily Kandinsky and, for what seemed like decades, feuding with Frank Lloyd Wright. As a metaphor for America's cult of celebrity, he had become enormously famous. Then he was forgotten.

Author David Jameson has painstakingly collected a nearly complete archive of job files, correspondence and historical writings that Iannelli himself kept for sixty years. Exhaustively researched and beautifully illustrated with more than 350 full-color illustrations and photographs, *Alfonso Iannelli: Modern by Design* is the first comprehensive monograph on an artist, designer and leader of a Modernist vanguard whose important body of work has been historically overshadowed and is now at last becoming fully appreciated.

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