Fazlur Rahman Khan was a renaissance in skyscraper construction during the second half of the 20th century. Khan was a pragmatic visionary: the series of progressive ideas that he brought forth for efficient high-rise construction in the 1950s and 1960s were validated in his own work, notably his efficient designs for Chicago’s 100-story John Hancock Center and 110-story Sears Tower (the tallest building in the United States since its completion in 1974).

His characteristic statement in an essay in 1973, having just been selected Construction’s Man of the Year by Engineering News-Record, is commemorated on a plaque in Ontario Center, Chicago: “The technical man must not be lost in his own technology. He must be able to appreciate life; and life is art, drama, music, and most importantly, people.”