

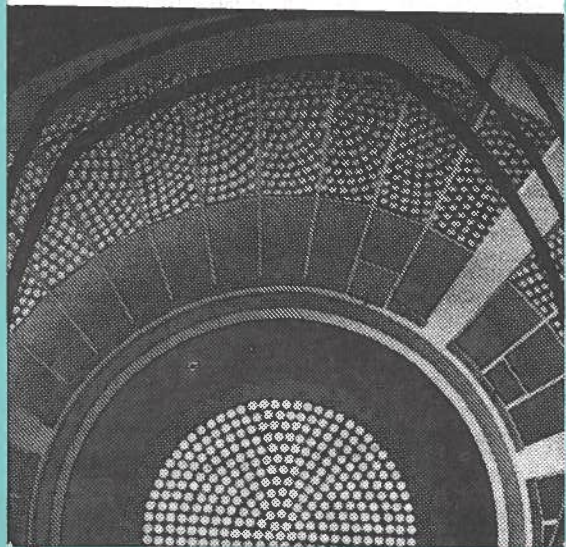
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international working-party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

# *Journal*

**10**

**November 1993**



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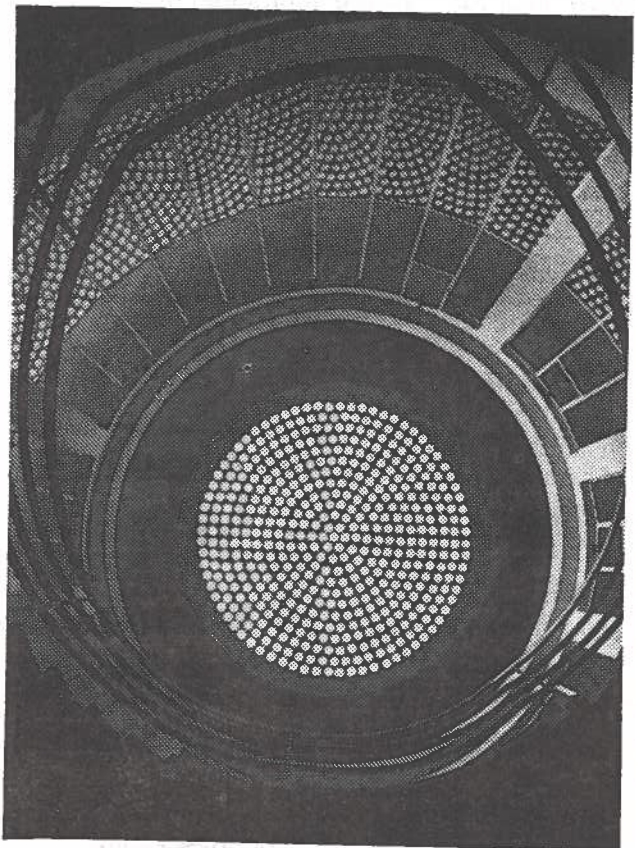
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# do . co , mo , mo .

*Hubert-Jan Henket*

## *Journal* 10

**November 1993**



**The bright-lit staircase of  
the Bellerive-plage baths in  
Lausanne, with glass blocks  
in the steps and the rooflight.  
See case study on p. 57-63.**

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

In principle, the DOCOMOMO Journal is available to members of DOCOMOMO International. The introduction of paid membership as per January 1st, 1994, will put an end to a confusing situation as to who is entitled to receive our periodical and who is not.

From that date, starting with issue 11, the Journal will be exclusively available to those individuals and institutions, including libraries, that paid the membership fee as mentioned on pages 8 and 9.

Upto and including issue 10 we will continue our previous system of distribution.

**From January 1st, 1994, subscriptions without membership are no longer possible.**

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In the 1920's and 30's the Modern Movement was an important international architectural development, especially in Europe. The cultural, economic and technical results of this movement are still noticeable today. Characteristic of this movement is among others that buildings were designed with a relatively short functional as well as technical life expectancy in mind. Therefore most of these buildings are in a bad condition at present, or they have been altered, sometimes beyond recognition. Due to their social and cultural value it is important to safeguard some of these for the future, in one or another way.

The International Working-party for the Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement DOCOMOMO was initiated in 1988 by the University of Technology in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, further to a research project on how the preservation of these buildings can be obtained in a coherent and effective way. The foundation of the Working-party is meant to advance an effective inventory, documentation and preservation of the most important Modern Movement buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of that period. The aim of the Working-party is to come to a network for exchange of experience and know-how and to draw the attention of the general public to the significance of this part of the cultural heritage.

The initiative is directed to:

- those who are involved in policy-making (legislation, financing, management),
- those who are professionally interested in the protection of early modern buildings, sites and neighbourhoods (architects, urban designers, art-historians, critics) and
- those who are responsible for their actual restoration (researchers, technical specialists, consultants).

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## The LAST issue: a happy anniversary?

Indeed, there are several circumstances that make the publication of our 10th issue a happy event. First there is the bare fact that we survived, ... so far! The still disappointing membership drive makes us quite worried at the same time. Despite the democratic agreement in Dessau to introduce a membership fee, it seems that commitment at no charge is a more popular option in practice.

Without paying members, however, we cannot survive. Please note, that if you do not pay your international membership fee, this will be the last Journal you will receive. See the notes by our chairman on page 12.

A happier note is, that Crittal Windows Ltd., our exclusive sponsor, decided to continue their support for the Journal for another year.

Congratulations DOCOMOMO !

So, what does this 10th issue offer, apart from a wealth of short reports, announcements, reviews and news?

Two articles explore the subtle confines of the Modern Movement in its relation between international modernism and local tradition (*Kraków*, p. 38, and *Marcel Iancu*, p. 42). Then there are two critical reassessments, on urbanism (see *Chandigarh*, p. 51) and on Modern Movement preservation (*Cardboard modernism*, p. 47).

Finally, two case studies to put your feet back on the ground, on *Casa Bloc* (p. 55) in Barcelona and on the *Bellerive-plage* baths (p. 59) in Switzerland.

And, don't overlook the call for papers for Barcelona on p. 9!

Don't miss our next issue, which will center on MoMo preservation in the Americas, and become a member now!

Wessel de Jonge

Secretary DOCOMOMO International

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## Letters to DOCOMOMO....

### Australia

Dear Sir, A group of interested architects, historians etc., are considering forming an Australian branch of DOCOMOMO. I would be grateful if you could send me any information that would help us form such a group.

Maisy Stapleton, National Trust  
Sydney, Australia, September 13th, 1993

## Events

### Restoration '93 - International Restoration Fair and Conference

Hynes Convention Center, Boston, Mass.,  
USA  
December 6 - 8, 1993

### Architecture and Modern Urbanism Annual DOCOMOMO UK Symposium

London, UK; March, 1994  
inquiries: coordinator of DOCOMOMO-UK

### International Style Architecture in Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv, Israel; May 22-28, 1994  
inquiries: see announcement

### Third International DOCOMOMO Conference

Barcelona, Spain  
June 15 - 18, 1994  
inquiries: see announcement

### 2nd International Congress on Restoration of Architectural Heritage and Building

Mar del Plata, Argentina  
August 28 - Sept. 4, 1994  
inquiries: see announcement

### Preserving the Recent Past

Chicago, Illinois, USA  
November 10 - 12, 1994  
inquiries: see announcement

## Alfreds Laukirbe (1901-93)

In memoriam

by Janis Lejnieks

To choose Riga Airport as a graduation subject in 1930, was a matter of great fantasy for a young architect. The world crisis touched the small new independent state of Latvia, too. Anyway, after graduating from the Latvian University Faculty of Architecture, Alfreds Peteris Laukirbe started his professional career in C.Ch. Schmidt cement factory in Riga. His research interests were connected with on-site production of cement brick, light-concrete blocks (Siporex) and partition walls of gypsum (Rigips), on which he published some manuals and books in Latvian and Russian. He was one of the pioneers of the Modern Movement in Latvia, using many innovations of the Latvian building industry. Most of his works are not of a large scale, but good examples of MoMo, well adopted to the local needs. Many of his detached houses show his favourite motives: cubist forms combined with semicircular ones in plan (for instance in Riga, Agenskalna str. 14, 25, 27, designed for the staff of the cement factory).

The most brilliant small settlement was designed by Laukirbe in 1939 for the Broceni cement factory, including detached houses for engineers and masters of the factory. Placed separately, there is a villa for the director. The opportunity was taken to promote the production of the factory. The rationally prepared plans are built up in 20 cm thick Siporex outside walls with an outside rendering, and Rigips 3/8" thick plates from inside.

World War II and the occupation of Latvia by Soviet and nazi forces interrupted the building activities, but also put up to 75 % of Latvian architects to flee. Some of them were called up for the Wehrmacht and later became prisoners of war. Laukirbe could leave the Russian camp only in 1954. He moved to Berlin to join his family which had not returned to occupied Latvia. He became *Oberbaurat* in the State Academy of Buildings, specialised on pre-fabricated construction work and published the book *Grosstafel-Systembau: eine industrialisierte Bauart*. This year, he died in Berlin. Pevsner has given his version of the table of *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*. We have not yet such a canonized one in Latvia, as the postWar period and the Russian occupation was not the right time for summarizing the results of the Modern Movement in independent Latvia. Alfreds Laukirbe was one of the most outstanding among them. Our duty is to preserve the heritage of Modern Movement in Latvia, including the works of Laukirbe.

*Janis Lejnieks is an architect and a member of the Latvian DOCOMOMO group.*

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## Former GIL di Montesacro in Rome gone to seed

by Giuseppe Strappa

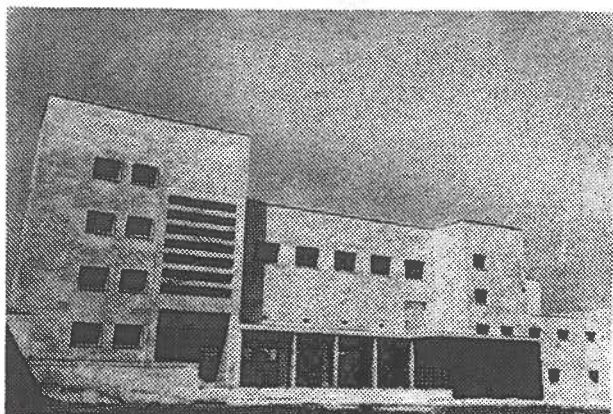
The lethal mix of political incapacity and deplorable indifference for Rome's cultural heritage has once again created a double-faced monster. This time it is the pitiful condition of the former *Gil di Montesacro* in *Viale Adriatico*, left in ruins and completely neglected.

This not only represents an irresponsible waste of costly public amenities in a district that certainly needs them, but also outrage committed against one of the precious masterpieces of our modern architecture, bearing witness to the original and forgotten contribution that Roman architects between the two Wars made to the resurgence of the city's culture. Now, at last, citizens residing in the area have started up a protest against the continuous neglect of this building.

Its architect, Gaetano Minnucci, was one of the brightest lights of that generation which, from the late 1920's to the Second World War, attempted to carry on the Roman tradition that united technique, functionality and art, often producing very valuable works. Always with an eye open to what was happening abroad, Minnucci designed important works such as the *Palazzo degli Uffici dell'Ente EUR* (1937), the *Dopolavoro alla Città Universitaria* (1933) and the hydro-electric plant at Castelgiubileo (1948).

But perhaps his most significant work was the small refined building he did in 1926 in *Via Carini*, one of the milestones of the 'Roman way to

Under the slogan *Architettura addio* (Bye Bye Architecture) a campaign was started to save Minnucci's masterpiece at *Viale Adriatico* in Rome, by publicizing this article in *La Repubblica* last Spring.



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modernisation', with large areas of untarnished plaster breaking away from the ornate decorations of the *barocchetto* style, while some traditional elements (the cornice, the footing) were maintained to indicate the Roman vocation for continuity with the past.

Being very well acquainted with Dutch culture (his wife was from the Netherlands and he knew personally modern masters such as Dudok and Oud), Minnucci had completely absorbed the art of creating large pure volumes, and had had the chance to appreciate the sombre, unrheterical way in which new public offices were being built in the north of Europe. The former *Gil di Montesacro*, the work he is best remembered for, owes its civilised dignity also to this experience. The building is made up of large, bare masses covered with *carrara* marble slabs, just 2 cm thick, that bear witness to the modern use made of materials, a simple covering and a long way from the copies of ancient buildings. Originally conceived as being of more modest proportions and less noble materials (Roman stucco for the outside), the present construction varies very little from the final design version, divided into two distinct blocks, one set aside for a gymnasium (40 x 21 m., the largest of its size in Italy at that time) and the other to services such as a theatre, library and study rooms. Outside, the swimming pool, adorned with a pleasant entrance in red *levanto* marble, looked out onto the playing fields. In the postWar period, after the dissolution of the *Gil* (*Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*, the Italian fascist youth movement - the editor), the building was initially used as a youth hostel, and was then split up: the gymnasium was entrusted to the Fifth District of Rome and the *Casa del Gil* came under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Post Office Department, that made extensive alterations to the original structures. Recently, a careful study of the building undertaken by Sergio Poretti and Rosalia Vittorini was presented to the International Congress on the protection of modern architecture organised by DOCOMOMO at Dessau as an example of the current relevance of Roman architecture between the Wars and as a bitter testimony to the state of neglect of its most representative works.

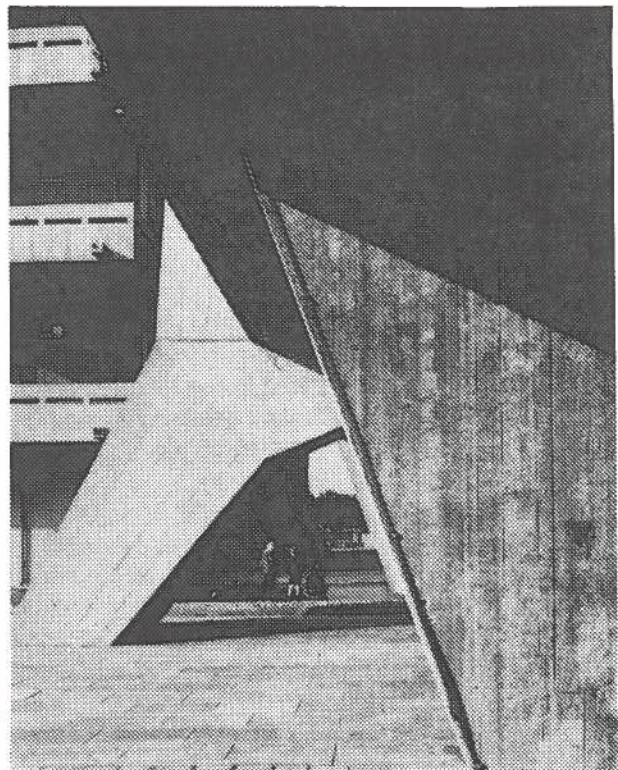
*Giuseppe Strappa is a member of DOCOMOMO Italy. Text previously published in Italian in La Repubblica, April 30th, 1993.*

# Two views on DOCOMOMO - campaigning for the Gorbals

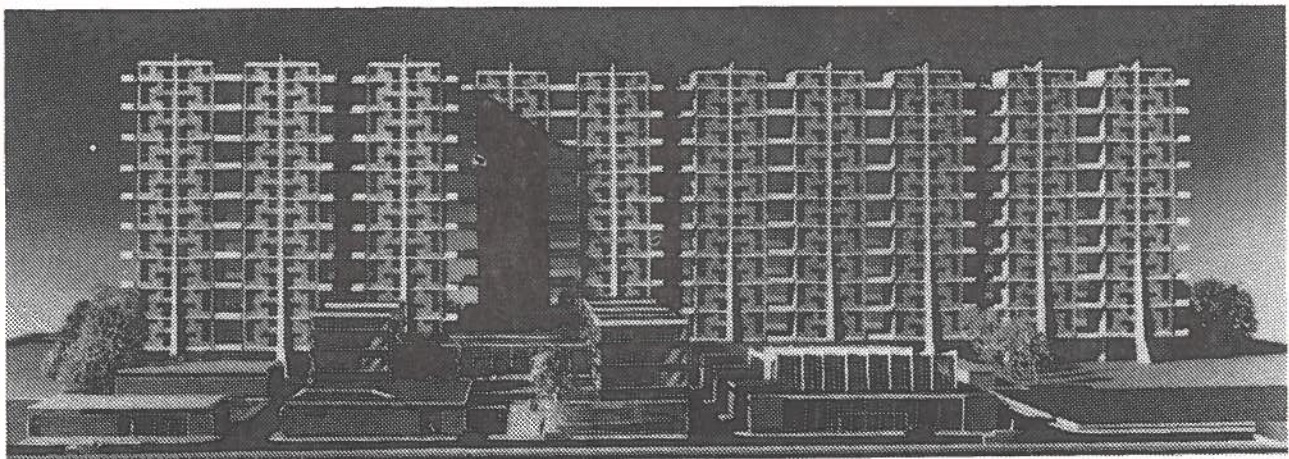
## The building....

Sir Basil Spence was, of all British-born architects practicing since the War, arguably the one with the truest sense of monumentality. At his best he could set up powerful rhythms and sustain them throughout a design, and nowhere was this more fully deployed than at these flats in Glasgow. They belonged to his Corbusian phase and were designed immediately after a visit to the *Unité d'Habitation* at Marseille. Another important influence was undoubtedly that of the young Danish engineer Poul Ahm. The central of three crosswalls is carried on two outwardly splayed legs providing wind bracing, and the loads from the two outer crosswalls, resting on narrow central supports, are transmitted to it through the floorslabs. This gives the flats their most dramatic and unique characteristic - the rhythm of inwardly and outwardly raking pilotis. The structure is unique in Britain in its sculptural use of rough concrete, in which it is comparable to contemporary work by Tange, Kunio Mayekawa's Harumi apartments in Tokyo in 1957, and Breuer's works in the USA. Externally a powerful rhythm is established by the towers, with an alteration between single and double height, solid and void. The dramatically cantilevered half-balconies at the open ends of each block emphatically engage the space around. But the social thinking behind the flats is also notable. Spence attempted to provide a setting for the particular social life of the Glasgow tenement *drying greens*. The large balconies linking the towers on alternate levels were shared (with light subdivisions) by four flats: 'By this perpetuation of the green, it is hoped to create a community spirit, while providing facilities on the spot for the pram and the drying of washing, normally lacking in multi-storey buildings, thus providing the tenants a little garden of their own - something they have never had before.'

*Text based on James Dunnett's article 'A Gorbals requiem' in Building Design, August 6th, 1993.*



Top: the rhythm of inwardly and outwardly raking pilotis gave the Hutcheson 'C' flats a dramatic and expressive character. The integration of architecture with structure made the flats exceptionally convincing within Spence's oeuvre. Photo: Henk Snoek. Bottom: original model. Photo: Alfred Cracknell. Right: on September 12th, the flats were demolished. Photo: Phil Hackett, Glasgow Herald.



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# Hutchesontown 'C' flats in Glasgow (Sir Basil Spence, 1957)

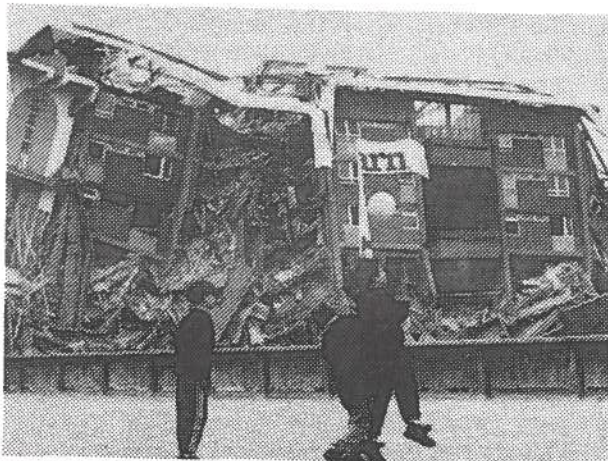
## ...the British.....

The fourhundred publicly subsidised apartments designed in 1957-58 by Sir Basil Spence with Povl Ahm of Ove Arup and Partners as structural engineers were demolished by Glasgow District Council last September 12th, under the mistaken impression that the flats were *Ceausescu-style* architecture. Glasgow does in fact have many blocks built on the large-panel system, common in the former Soviet block, but these are being renovated.

Basil Spence (1907-76) was the most highly honored architect of his time in Britain, being awarded the very rare honour of the Order of Merit, alongside Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland. These flats were arguably his most successful work, though he was best known as the architect of the rebuilt cathedral of Coventry. Now, however, the excitement of thirty years ago has completely evaporated and apart from that of DOCOMOMO UK, of Lord Palumbo, and some former tenants there was scarcely a voice raised in defense of the blocks, whose rough-shuttered 'brutalist' concrete was anathema alike to traditionalists, Post-Modernists and High-Technologists. Nothing could demonstrate more clearly the need to encourage a discriminating appreciation of modern architecture of this period, informed by historical awareness. This work of architecture has now gone and there is little point in rehearsing the arguments preceding its destruction.

However, it may be of interest to the international readers, as an illustration of the climate of opinion in Britain, to read the editorial comment of a leading London newspaper, *The Independent*, that has been included as an illustration to our national report (see elsewhere).

*James Dunnett, secretary of DOCOMOMO UK.*



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## ..... and the Scottish view

In early April 1993 we were approached by the secretary of DOCOMOMO UK, who asked if we would support a protest by themselves against the planned demolition of the Hutchesontown/Gorbals Area C blocks, along with an application for 'spot-listing'. Some of our Committee members had been involved in an attempt to get the blocks listed, two years ago, when they were newly refurbished, and not in their present appalling state. Now, however, our reaction was that we could not support a fresh intervention, for the following reasons:

- A demolition contract had now been let, so any protests would likely be too late, and merely created bad feeling: public opinion in the City had now, unfortunately, become violently hostile to these buildings.
- Our Committee had decided, as a matter of general policy, that the group should avoid becoming drawn into amenity-society-style *oppositional campaigning*, but should instead concentrate on research, education, and supply of information to other bodies. Active protesting here would run directly counter to this policy.

We do not, in general, accept the principle of interventions by foreign organisations in our country's cultural affairs. Nevertheless, we put these points to DOCOMOMO UK's secretary, who accepted that the chance of actually stopping demolition was slight, but contended that 'the important thing is to register a protest, to put on record, for the history books, that someone stood against it'. The British group then proceeded with their own campaign against what they termed as a 'shameful' proposal, inevitably stirring up bad feelings within the City. Despite efforts to clarify matters in the Press, our group has become tarred with the *ivory tower conservationist* brush, causing much complication and unnecessary antagonism in relations with groups ranging from the RIAS to Glasgow District Council Housing Department. In a further, more recent note to us, DOCOMOMO UK's secretary asserted that this case showed that more 'coordination' was needed. We agree wholeheartedly, and believe that the most straightforward and efficient way of achieving this is for DOCOMOMO's constituent national groups to deal with matters within their own countries, while communicating and collaborating with each other through the various committees and other mechanisms of DOCOMOMO International.

*Paul Stirton, convenor of the Scottish DOCOMOMO Working party.*



## How to save the ERA cafe?

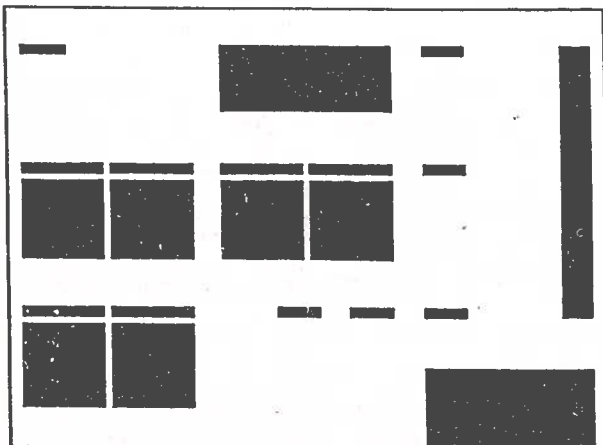
The ERA cafe is one of the most significant works by Josef Kranz (1901-68), designed in 1927-29 for the Cerná district in Brno. The coffee house was a main item in the 1979 exhibition on Kranz in Prague and Olomouc, curated by Vladimír Slapeta. At the time, the ERA cafe was famous, and not only as a social hot spot. With the purity of the design and the composition of the facade, in a highly personal interpretation of the modern vocabulary, the building is a striking example of what is locally known as 'lyrical functionalism'.

After being used for several purposes since the War, the cafe was recently returned to its original owner, Karel Matocha. The building is listed but totally run down and in need of far reaching repair. The intention is to have the building completely restored and to re-establish the ERA cafe in the building, an effort that is supported by the Brno Department for Conservation.

The State decided to support the project financially, but the amount of devastated objects in the country is so large, that it is hard to tell when this grant will become available. Apart from that, the costs for the proposed restoration will exceed this grant. In order to revitalise the ERA cafe in its original state and use, Mr. Matocha is currently surveying possibilities for financial support, either in sponsoring, loans, partnership or any other form.

After restoration, the premises can be made available to sponsors for presentations such as lectures, exhibitions and music performances. Also, the small apartment on the third floor is offered for temporary use by sponsors and others who will support the project, or possible business partners.

For more information, please contact:  
*Mr. Karel Matocha, Krkoskova 36b, Cerná Pole, 61300 Brno, Czech Republic, or Brno Institute for the Protection of Monuments, Zdenek Novák, director, Radnická 2, 60154 Brno.*



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## Heritage rehabilitation International conference in Argentina

### announcement

The First International Congress on Restoration of the Architectural Heritage and Buildings took place in Tenerife, Canarian Islands, Spain, in July 1992, with great success, attracting over 500 participants. Given the increasing interest in this first summit, we are very pleased to inform you about the Second Congress, that will be held on August 28th to September 4th, 1994, in the city of Mar del Plata in Argentina. The event is organized by the Argentine branch of the Center for Heritage Conservation and supported by the branches from Spain, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

There is a continuously growing concern for the conservation of the cultural heritage of all nations, trying to stop its being altered, damaged or even its very disappearance. The 21st Century will need restorers, conservators, architects, engineers, urbanists, historians, sociologists, museologists, etc., sharing a common language and joining forces in an interdisciplinary effort. The very aim of this Second International Conference on Rehabilitation of Architectural Heritage and Buildings is to bring together experts from various countries - with their particular views - tending to a unity of criteria and doctrinary principles. The organizers trust that this ample, pluralist summit will prove to be of use to the scientific, professional and political communities, in all the countries that are facing the development of a strategy for the preservation of their cultural heritage.

The following sessions are scheduled:

1. General matters.
2. The process of intervention.
3. Technologies and procedures for consolidation and restoration.
4. Social participation and administration.
5. Multidisciplinary issues.
6. Presentation of cases of general interest.

Apart from this, five post conference seminars of four days each are being organized in Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Chubut, Misiones and Salta. Other items are special lectures by invited speakers, an international competition for films and videos, and another one for unpublished written works. An exhibition on the recycling of buildings is scheduled.

A second information bulletin on participation and submitting papers, will be released soon, and can be obtained from: *Centro Internacional para la Conservación del Patrimonio, Sede Argentina, Perú 222 (1067), Buenos Aires, Argentina Fax: +54 - 1 - 343 32 60.*

# Call for Papers

The challenge of modernity; a critical review and contemporary positions

## Third International DOCOMOMO Conference Fondació Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona, June 15-17, 1994

The DOCOMOMO Iberian Working party is pleased to invite all those interested to participate in the Third International DOCOMOMO Conference on June 15-17th, 1994, in Barcelona. A Post Conference Tour is scheduled for Saturday, June 18, 1994. The Conference will be held under the patronage of the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Environment, the Generalitat of Catalunya and the City Government of Barcelona.

DOCOMOMO has been consolidated as an international organisation whose area of influence has been progressively growing through the formation of numerous working parties. The creation of three International Specialist Committees (ISC's on Registers, Education and Technology) has permitted the channelisation of the tasks destined to enlarge the documental base of DOCOMOMO. This process of consolidation is precisely what permits that a certain distance can be taken with respect to the documental and informative material recapitulated and favours a reflection which would permit clarification of what is the relationship to be established with the Modern Movement heritage as contemplated from a current perspective, that is from our contemporaneity.


### Main Theme

The crucial question upon which the Third International DOCOMOMO Conference will be focused is 'to what extent can we talk about the current validity of the Modern Movement' - or - 'what aspects of the cultural legacy of the Modern Movement live on in contemporary architecture?'. The papers presented during the first two days of the Conference will confront, to some extent, this theoretical frame of reference by prompting a discussion about concepts, authors or episodes of the Modern Movement whose reconsideration could be of interest in relationship to contemporary architecture.

The problem of the relationship between the Modern Movement and contemporary architecture will be confronted from a perspective which deals with issues such as: the idea of universality implicit in the modern project and its counter position with an architecture established in its context; the condition of modernity as a system of values which surpass mere stylistic rules; the problem and myth of technique in Modern Movement architecture; the type of cities generated by modern architecture, etc. These issues will nourish the content of the lectures presented and will allow a focus for the debates to be developed during the Conference.

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The first two days of the Conference (Wednesday, June 15, and Tuesday, June 16) will be dedicated to analysis and discussion of these issues through five daily lectures, by figures of renowned prestige in the area of reflection and critical analysis of the architecture of the Modern Movement. These lectures will be followed at the end of the day by a round table composed of all the speakers for each day and other invited guests.

The morning of the third day (Friday, June 17) will be reserved for papers, case studies and posters related to issues established by the Specialist Committees developed in parallel sessions. In the afternoon, the meeting of the DOCOMOMO Council is scheduled, parallel to a continuing presentation of posters, after which the plenary closing session of the conference will take place.

### Themes for the third day

For the third day, the first three themes are set by the ISC's and the last one by the scientific committee on architectural history.

#### I. Registers

In all the DOCOMOMO Working parties, the work on the register is proceeding. In order to continue the debate on the international register of Modern Movement buildings, sites and neighbourhoods, contributions to the Conference programme are

invited on principal and methodological issues that further set out the criteria for this inventory. The ISC/R is in need of some clarification and help in this debate. Contributions should be based on practical experience with making registers, and should address in particular:

### 1. Chronology

- 1.1. The question of cutoff dates and their national/regional justification (such as: starting date, final date, the assumption that the Modern Movement continues today).
- 1.2. The question if the constitution of sub-periods is useful.

### 2. Criteria

- 2.1. Critical examination of the five criteria set by the ISC/R (see p 9.), proposal of new criteria.
- 2.2. The question if we should introduce two categories: 'canonical' and 'ordinary'.
- 2.3. The question of including civil constructional works (i.e. of engineers), if 'modern'.

### 3. The extent of the register

- 3.1. What amount of fiches is desirable, how many per country/region.
- 3.2. What relation should there be with public or private inventories that already exist.

### 4. Matters of local organisation

- 4.1. How to proceed.
- 4.2. What system and software should be used.

### 5. The utilisation of the register

- 5.1. In what frame of reference (local, national, international).
- 5.2. What techniques should be used (publications for the general public or scientific periodicals; other media).
- 5.3. Aiming at what public (what are our relations? architects? conservation officials?)

### 6. Classification for the World Heritage List

What is the sense of giving a classification for a limited number of objects in view of a possible proposal for inclusion in the World Heritage List, supported by UNESCO and Icomos. The ISC/R proposes an amount of 10 objects for each national territory. What should the criteria for such a classification be?

## II. Education

For the session on education, abstracts for papers are invited that develop thoughts on using Modern Movement history in the training of architects.

## III. Technology

The ISC/T invites abstracts to be submitted, that establish a connection between the central issue of the Committee's field of work (i.e. the history of building technology and the relation with cultural developments in the period) with the main theme of the Conference (i.e. the influence of the Modern Movement on current architectural conceptions).

Central issues of the Technology session will be:

## 1. Preservation and re-use

How does the increase of technological knowledge in the period and the experiments in the use of materials, in applications and constructions, affect the issue of preservation and re-use today:

- 1.1. The developments and experiments in structural design in the period, in relation with the growing knowledge of concrete and steel constructions (e.g. how to deal with slender frames that do not come up to today's building codes?),
- 1.2. The developments and experiments in envelope design in the period, related to the development of new materials or new applications of materials (e.g. how to deal with deteriorating plastics applied to building facades?),
- 1.3. The issue of deteriorated components in buildings, that are industrially produced in the period, but that can not be industrially re-produced today (e.g. are we going to replace an industrially prefabricated concrete panel, by a hand crafted single copy?),
- 1.4. The connection between the increasing knowledge on building physics and the developments in the design of building envelopes in the period, and how to deal with this in a time when requirements have dramatically changed (e.g. how to deal with extremely transparent, single glazed curtain walls in view of environmental issues such as energy consumption?).

## 2. Connection: technology and architecture

How has the concept of the connection between technology and architecture changed as compared to today:

- 2.1. The discrepancy between optimal use of materials (e.g. minimal dimensions, attuning the form of individual structural elements to their specific function/location) and optimal use of labour (e.g. modular systems, dry assemblage, standardisation, prefabrication) in the period, as compared to today.

## IV. Architectural History

For the session on architectural history, abstracts for papers are invited that offer a conceptual overview, relating to the main theme of the conference. For poster sessions, contributions should disclose 'unknown chapters' in the historiography of the Modern Movement.

### Submitting abstracts

Experts wishing to contribute an essay to the Proceedings or to present a contribution (paper, case study or poster) to the third day of the Conference (Friday, June 17, 1994) are kindly invited to submit a detailed abstract, related to one of the themes as specified above. The abstract should be typewritten in English and should not

exceed two A4 sheets. Two copies of the abstract, preferably accompanied by a floppy disc, must be delivered at the secretariat of the Iberian DOCOMOMO Working party in Barcelona before **February 1st, 1994**. The following information must be given on the top sheet:

- Name and full address of the author(s), including telephone, fax and telex,
- Title of the contribution (maximum 60 letters),
- Theme related to the abstract, as specified above,
- Nature of the contribution (paper, case study or poster),
- Language of the presentation (see below),
- The software programme used on the eventual floppy disc (e.g. Word Perfect, Apple Words etc.).

Authors will be informed about acceptance of the proposed contribution by March 15th, 1994. Complete manuscripts, preferably accompanied by the full text on a floppy disc, are due at the Iberian DOCOMOMO Secretariat by June 7, 1994. Full texts are subject to review before final acceptance for inclusion on the Proceedings.

The official language of the conference will be English. On special request of the author, contributions can be presented at the Conference in French or Spanish, for which simultaneous translation will be provided. Additional facilities for German are still uncertain.

### Conference Proceedings

For publication in the Conference Proceedings, English translations of the papers presented in one of the other conference languages must be submitted by the author before the end of the Conference on June 18th, 1994. The proceedings will contain full English texts of all lectures, papers, case studies and posters presented at the conference.

Proceedings will be published after the Conference and are included in the Conference Fee.

### Post Conference Tour

The Post Conference Tour is planned for Saturday, June 18, 1994. The Tour will include the following buildings:

- The German Pavilion of the International Exhibition of 1929 (Mies van der Rohe, 1929), reconstructed,
- Dr. Lluís Sayé Anti-Tuberculosis Clinic (GATCPAC, 1934-36), restored,
- Casa Bloc (GATCPAC, 1934-36), very deteriorated, partly restored,
- Pavilion of the Spanish Republic of the Paris Exhibition of 1937 (Lacasa and Sert, 1937), reconstructed,
- Housing complex in the Barceloneta (J.A. Coderch, 1951-53), restored,
- Editorial Gustavo Gili (Baseó and Gili, 1956-58), maintains its original state,
- Villa La Ricarda (A. Bonet, 1960), original state.

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### Accommodation

The participants will be accommodated in hotels in Barcelona and direct environs. Costs for travelling, boarding and lodging are for the account of the participants.

### Venue

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona  
c/ Montalegre 5, Barcelona, Spain.

### Conference Fees

The fee for DOCOMOMO members is US \$ 350,-.  
The fee for non-members is US \$ 400,-.  
The fee for non-members including a two year membership for 1994 and 1995 is US \$ 450,-.  
Speakers accepted for papers or case studies are exempted from fees.

Special fees for representatives of the press, students etc., will be set at a later date and will be published in the Final Program.

The Conference Fees include:

- Final Conference Program and Book of Abstracts
  - Luncheon on June 15, 1994
  - Luncheon on June 16, 1994
  - Luncheon and dinner on June 17, 1994
  - Refreshments during the breaks
  - Conference Proceedings, to be mailed later.
- The Post Conference Tour is not included.

### Registration

Registration for the Conference will be possible after the mailing of the Final Program and Registration Forms in March, 1994.

### Time schedule and publicity plan

Further announcements and information will be published according to the following schedule:

- November 1993, DOCOMOMO Journal 10: Official Announcement and Call for Papers,
  - March 1994, mailing of Final Program and Registration Forms for the Conference and lodging.
- Dates**
- Third International DOCOMOMO Conference: Wednesday, June 15 - Friday, June 17, 1994,
  - Third DOCOMOMO Council Meeting: Friday, June 17, 1994,
  - Post Conference Tour, Saturday, June 18, 1994.

### Address

Abstracts for the third day of the Conference should be mailed so as to arrive by **February 1st, 1994**, to:

Iberian DOCOMOMO Secretariat  
Fundació Mies van der Rohe - Barcelona  
c/Bailèn, 25 4rt. -2º, 08010 Barcelona, Spain  
Tel: + 34 - 3 - 265 89 22/Fax: + 34 - 3 - 265 61 87

## From the chairman

The running of DOCOMOMO International costs money.

The English firm Crittall Windows Ltd., the manufacturers of the original steel windows, is so generous to send us a gift every year for printing and postage of the Journal. But there are many more costs such as the editing of the Journal, other publications, the maintenance of the international DOCOMOMO network, the stimulation of interest in DOCOMOMO ideals and so on.

We have reduced these costs to a minimum by making use of volunteers, university facilities etc. but still more money is needed.

Till the end of the year, the costs will be carried by my chair with some help of my faculty. This is why to date you received the Journal free of charge. But my resources have run dry by now. Therefore, at the last Council Meeting in Dessau in September 1992, the Council decided to introduce a membership fee, since we shared the opinion that an organisation like ours is only viable if the members are prepared and can afford its time and costs. We also decided, that as a matter of solidarity, the rich countries would pay for members in countries with economic difficulties.

In Journal 8, I invited all Council members to vote in writing on the membership fee. Approx. 80% of the Council voted for a membership fee of \$ 100,- for a period of two years (i.e. \$ 50,- per year). In Journal 9, I showed the result of the Council votes, I asked the national representatives to approach people in their countries to enlist as members of DOCOMOMO and I asked to let us have the names of these members before December 1st, 1993. So far so good.

To date, 7 countries have sent us a list of DOCOMOMO members. As you will understand, this is not enough.

We also get phone calls from countries, saying that the fee is too high. I can well understand that \$ 50,- per year is a lot of money, but we have decided by consent on this amount. I am afraid that we have to stick to this. Changing now would be far too complicated and time consuming.

So, if you are still interested in reading our Journal and in being a member of our international network, please enroll with your national DOCOMOMO representative.

**If you won't or you don't, this will be your last DOCOMOMO Journal.**

All I can add is that it was a nice meeting you.

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May I also ask the national representatives to remind those people interested in DOCOMOMO International to enroll as soon as possible with them. Please remember that we only can accept members who pay via their national representative, since we lose a substantial part of the value of individual cheques to the bank, due to exchange and administration costs at the bank. So, please don't send us your individual cheques, but send them to your national representative who is listed in this Journal.

The national representative will take care of the collective payment to us for all members in your country.

I am sorry to bother you with financial problems, since there are so many much more interesting subjects to think and talk about.

**But this is the reality, if you don't contribute from now on, there won't be a DOCOMOMO in future. So, please enroll now.**

*Hubert-Jan Henket  
chairman DOCOMOMO International*

## From the ISC/R: how to use the register fiche?

All DOCOMOMO Working parties have received the official DOCOMOMO register fiche for the national and regional registers of Modern Movement architecture, which was mailed by the International Secretariat in Eindhoven this Autumn. Here are some practical instructions for our work on the ISC/R fiches:

### Period

Each national section itself sets the limits of the period from which the buildings should be selected. The debate at the Conference in Dessau has indeed shown that the Modern Movement follows a distinctive chronology in each country. Nevertheless, it is suggested that we avoid going further back in time than 1890, even for the technical criteria.

Consequently, every working party will have to define the chosen period precisely; the part of the register submitted for the Barcelona conference should be comprehensive for the period as defined by your working party.

### Criteria

Buildings should be chosen following the criteria of the register fiche, point 5. It is suggested to give an evaluation ranging from A (best) to E (least), for each criterium and subtitle line.

### **Amount and priorities**

Each national territory can submit a register, with 50 objects as a maximum. Each national territory should indicate a maximum of 10 objects out of the total amount, without ranking order, that represent the most significant part of the Modern Movement' heritage in the country (top-10).

Every working party is of course free to extend its register to more than 50 buildings, but no more than 50 fiches are to be send to the ISC/R.

An informative list of the supplementary buildings can however be enclosed.

### **Photographic documentation**

Pictures in the photographic file that comes with each fiche are to be shiny black and white prints, 130x180 mm., with a maximum of 6 per building, each identified on the back with a sticker.

A summarizing list should register each photograph with a number.

Please, make sure that photographs are free from royalties. If not, than indicate the exact references of the photographer on the back.

### **Summarizing description**

Each register should be complemented with a summarizing list with the following simplified headings: name of the building, address, date of construction, architect(s).

Also, the name of the person in charge of the national register, with full address etc. should be stated.

### **Working language**

English or French, after preference of your working party.

### **Deadline and time schedule**

The completed register fiches should be received by the chairman of the ISC/R in Paris by February 28th, 1994, at the address of the French Working party, see their address in the list elsewhere in this issue.

The ISC/R will meet to discuss further policies on how to match different strategies as followed by the various groups, the software to be adopted, presentation of the registers in Barcelona, eventual publication etc.

Also the recommendation for the World Heritage List will be formulated.

### **Presentation at the Conference**

Possibilities for presentation at the next conference, in Barcelona, will be provided. If a register is submitted in time (see timeschedule), it can be presented in Barcelona with 1-6 slides for each building.

### **Gérard Monnier, chairman of the ISC/R**

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## **Preserving the recent past Conference in Chicago, Illinois, USA November 10-12th, 1994**

### *announcement and call for papers*

The National Park Service, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Historic Preservation Education Foundation, and the Society for Commercial Archeology will sponsor a three-day program on the challenges of identifying, evaluating, documenting, maintaining and preserving historic properties from the 20th Century.

The conference will be national in scope and will be the first of its kind to address the philosophical and practical issues associated with the preservation of the recent past.

The event is scheduled for November 10-12, 1994. Chicago was selected as the conference location for its diversity of 20th Century resources, and tours of the 'recent past' will be offered as part of the program.

Specific topics to be addressed include: - developing perspectives on the recent past; - educating the public about the recent past; - historic property types of the 20th Century and their special preservation challenges; - survey methodologies for roadside architecture; - impact of World War II on construction technology; - Space Age technologies and the built environment; - the evolution of modern housing; - planned communities; - history and preservation of the 20th Century building materials and technologies; - prefabrication; - coping with hazardous materials; - caring for recent public art; - preservation challenges of 20th Century interiors.

Persons interested in making presentation at the conference should submit a 250-word abstract of their proposed topic by December 15, 1993. Abstract submissions should include the title of the presentation, the name and occupation of the speaker, a one-page resume, their business mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and the abstract text.

*Abstracts should be sent to: Program Director, Preserving the Recent Past, P.O. Box 77160, Washington, DC 20013-7160, USA.*

*For additional information call Tom Jesater or Carol Gould at + 1 - 202 - 343 - 9578.*

# Vyborg Library revisited

## Russo-Finnish seminar in Vyborg and St. Petersburg, May 21-22, 1993

by Alla V. Solovjova

Much has been said and written about the life and work of Alvar Aalto, as well as the Vyborg Library, his outstanding creation of 1935. These notes are neither an analysis of Aalto's architecture nor an expert's opinion on the library. They are rather some thoughts provoked by the Russo-Finnish seminar on the problems of its restoration. This seminar took place on May 21-22 in Vyborg and St. Petersburg, and was sponsored by the unions of architects of St. Petersburg and Finland, as well as two other organizations: the Finnish Committee on the Library Restoration and the St. Petersburg Cultural Foundation.

### Interest from St. Petersburg

First, a little history on this subject. Why was this building chosen by the St. Petersburg Cultural Foundation as a subject of its special care? There are several reasons.

The Vyborg Library is the only one among the works of four or five great 20th Century architects which is located in Russia, near St. Petersburg. This is both an honor and a responsibility for us.

The library is a key design in Aalto's work, a certain phase in developing space. It was important for the entire process of creative architecture of the 20th Century.

For us, witnesses of the negative consequences of the triumph of the technocracy (to which one can attach a thoughtless functionalism of the form, or the so called ratio) Aalto's library is not just a 20th Century masterpiece, but one inspired by humanism and attention to man.

Due to its technical features, construction methods, and interior design, the Vyborg Library is unique in Russia. Other Vyborg monuments, which are also very interesting, were made according to our country's standards, be it baroque, northern *moderne*, classical or even Ulberg's constructivism.



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### Perestroika

Russia has had experience in the restoration of churches, castles and other buildings up to Art Nouveau, but it has had no such experience in Modern Movement architecture.

The ideas of a common Russo-Finnish restoration effort have been developing slowly and for some time. The first attempts, dating back to the epoch of the 'Iron Curtain', were unsuccessful. It is worth mentioning that the very value of this architectural movement became evident only recently.

We could take 1987-88 as the years of the initial restorational phase. At that time, the St. Petersburg Cultural Foundation was established. The Foundation immediately paid attention to the project. A Vyborg company received a renovation commission for the library. This was also the beginning of *perestroika* in Russia and direct links with foreign countries became possible.

By that time, the society and professionals of both countries had come to the conclusion that a real restoration of the building was necessary. A serious restoration project based on Aalto's original design and thorough research was needed. Then followed a series of professional exchanges, meetings, consultation between engineers, building officials etc. As a result, they became convinced that the restoration was a real possibility, not just a necessity. Later, public structures were organized to encourage mass support and public opinion, coordinate expert activity and raise funds. They are, in Finland, the *Committee for the Restoration of the Vyborg Library*, and in Russia, the *Board of Trustees of the Aalto Library*.

It is noteworthy that these public structures have been created with the help of two established foundations: the Alvar Aalto Foundation in Finland and the Cultural Foundation of St. Petersburg. These Foundations are well known in their countries.

They support the Board of Trustees both financially and logistically. The only difference is that the Finnish committee is a national one, whereas the other is regional. It is planned, however, to upgrade the Board of Trustees and to register it with the Russian Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Culture.

The day in Vyborg was marked by some emotional moments. The restoration of the library was symbolically started by the participants, who 'dug up the foundations'. Here, with spades, the chairman of the Union of Architects in St. Petersburg, his colleague Christian Gullichsen from Finland and, to the right, Mrs. Elissa Aalto. Right: the main floor of the library.

### Agreement signed

The seminar was a milestone on the way to the restoration of Aalto's library and in the process of getting public support for it. On the first day, in the building of the St. Peterburg Union of Architects, four presentations were made by each side (Finnish and Russian). Of those, three have been dedicated to Aalto's work, the rest to practical aspects of the library's restoration.

The Russian side presented a complete report on the building's technical condition and the Finnish side focused on the restorational process.

Following a general discussion and exchange of opinions, an agreement was signed on the finance and organization of the project.

The second day took place in Vyborg, on the site of the library. Unlike the previous day, this one was touched by strong emotions. The ceremony, the charitable performance by the famous Finnish singer Jorma Hynninen, and the symbolic start of the restoration (when all of the participants passed the spade and 'dug out the foundation', the brass band blaring away) helped to create an atmosphere of friendship and creativity. Good weather also helped to attract tourists and other spectators.

### Practical results

The practical results of the seminar are:

- the experts of the two countries for the first time could present each other the result of their studies and project proposals;
- important organizations were involved in the seminar, such as the Consulate-General of Finland in St.Petersburg, the Baltic Fund of Foreign Policy, the Office of the Mayor of St.Petersburg, the Leningrad Regional Soviet of People's Deputies, the Vyborg Authorities, DOCOMOMO, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation;
- during the seminar, 10 mln rubles were allocated for the restoration by the Ministry of Culture, and 15 mln by the Vyborg administration. It will be important since international donors require some governmental participation.;
- during the seminar a first bilingual document 'Agreement on the use of donation and other contributions for the joint Russo-Finnish restoration project of the Vyborg Library' was signed.

### International cooperation

In this document, it was confirmed that the Vyborg Library is in need of international aid. The Russian and Finnish sides have agreed that the architectural design would be undertaken by the Alvar Aalto Architects Ltd. with the assistance of architects from the Russian side. The Board of Trustees of Russia and the Restoration Committee of Finland will guarantee that the contributions for this project will be used under proper supervision and with the best possible expertise. The realisation of such a project can serve as an excellent example of international cooperation in

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the preservation of our cultural patrimony. The restorational problems of the library once again attracted public attention of the broadcasting system and the press, as well as of business and state organizations.

The participants in the seminar agreed that the next very important step will be State participation and that the time has come to create some joint structure, for example a joint venture or a stock company which would take production functions upon itself. However, the functions kept for the Finnish Restorational Committee of the Vyborg Library and the Russian Board of Trustees are: public supervision, fund raising and public relations.

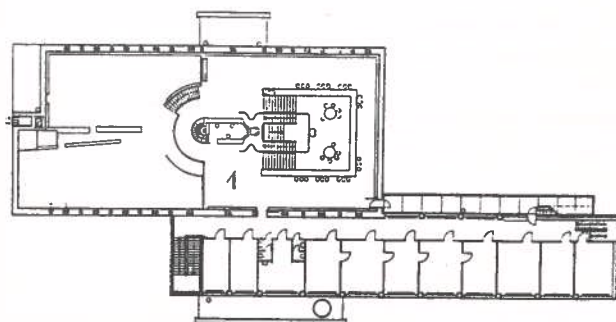
### Principle controversy

Two issues that are provoking discussion should be mentioned. First is the status of the library. The Finnish party disagrees that this building should be classified as a monument of local importance. I dare say that this is not a problem. Of prime importance is, whether it is protected by the State, in other words, is it a monument? Yes, the library is a monument being protected by the State, in accordance with the law and all other consequences thereof. There is no other similar status in Russia today.

The other controversy is the full conformity of restorational works to Alvar Aalto's project. The Finnish and Russian parties both have different opinions concerning this matter, as regards some changes, additions and improvements of 1935. It concerns the use of modern decorative materials and some modern constructions, including a lift not provided by Alvar Aalto.

The Russian restorational tradition stipulates the reconstructional works of that building in order to save the appearance of the building, as designed by the first architect. In this case, we mean the year 1940. All details, elements and parts of the construction of that time should be recreated in strict conformity with the author's idea.

*Alla V.Solovjova is organizer of the seminar, secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Alvar Aalto Library, director of the 'Hermitage' programme of the St.Petersburg Cultural Foundation.*





# Bucharest 1920's and 30's

## Exhibition and symposium

by *Luminita Machedon*

The Union of Architects, the Ministry of Culture and other Rumanian cultural institutes organized in Bucharest between April and May 1993 an exhibition and a symposium 'Bucharest in the 1920's - 30's, between avantgarde and modernism'. Both manifestations presented the great creations of this period, aiming to put the cultural values of the Rumanian Modern Movement into the national and universal cultural circuit. The exhibition had in view to reconstitute the phenomenon of the Modern Movement in Rumanian architecture, visual arts, literature, music and reveal the various ways in which they were received in the Rumanian cultural space. In the field of architecture, the exhibition tried to reveal the way in which architecture developed and found its creation methods, and aimed to show the most important names of architects and buildings. Plans, models, and about 300 photos (some of them copies of photos of the time) have been exhibited in the hall of the National Theatre in Bucharest. A symposium with a large spectrum of papers and discussions took place in Bucharest during the exhibition. Half of the 38 architects and art historians that participated in the symposium came from abroad.

The first attempt of Rumanian architects to express themselves in a modern style has been made on a ground where avantgarde architecture did not exist. On the other hand, some of the Rumanian students in architecture studied in the European capitals and discovered the avantgarde publications of the time on their own. Thus, one of the pioneers of the Modern Movement in Rumania was the architect and painter Marcel Iancu, who worked under the influence of the Dada artistic movement. He was one of the initiators of the Dada movement in 1916 in Zürich.

These tendencies are reflected in the edifices built in Rumania starting from 1926. Along with Marcel Iancu, Horia Creanga was the founder of modern architecture in the early 1930's. The influence of his personality on the students and his contemporaries was significant.

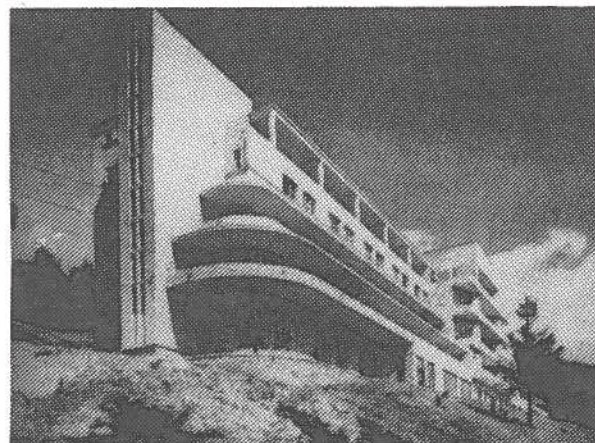
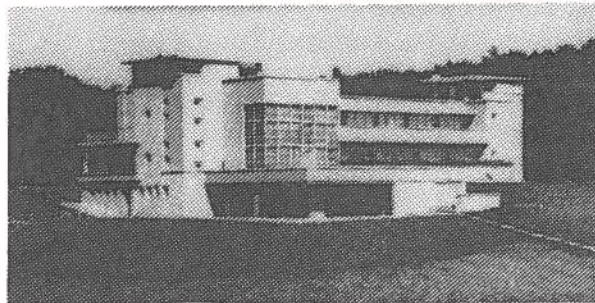
But beyond any influence, modern architecture was shaped by remarkable personalities; architecture attained a high quality level, its audience increased and became widespread. In this respect, the works of a number of architects such as Duiliu Marcu, Marcel Locar, Octav Doicescu, G.M. Cantacuzino, Tiberiu Niga, Grigore Ionescu, H. Delavrancea-Gibory, Dem. Savulescu, Alexandru Zamfiropol and so on, were mentioned at the symposium.

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Top: *Gaz-Electra Club* in Snagov (Diocescu, 1932).  
Middle: *Sanatorium Toria* in Covasna (Ionescu, 1935).  
Bottom: Bucharest, ARO building (Creanga, 1930-31).

A new formal language was imposed and functionalism, which was one of the basic principles, was developed.

The buildings presented in the exhibition, including dwellings, administrative buildings, hotels, industrial buildings and sanatoriums, lead us to the idea that modern architectural concepts have been performed in different ways, according to the different interpretations given by famous architects or imposed by certain artistic currents. But most of the valuable works got over the local determinism and joined the great movement of the International Style.

*Luminata Machedon is an architect in Bucharest and a member of DOCOMOMO Rumania.*



# The Weißenhofsiedlung

## International exhibition and catalogue

'Werkbund-Ausstellung *Die Wohnung*, Stuttgart 1927, *Die Weißenhofsiedlung*'; by Karin Kirsch, Stuttgart, 1993, 71 p., 115 ill.

### announcement

This exhibition is aimed to show the importance of this unique *ensemble* that was realised in Stuttgart in 1927. Seventeen of the most important European architects participated in the design of this estate, among them Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Oud, Gropius, Scharoun, Stam, Behrens and Max and Bruno Taut. Karin Kirsch, well known author of the reference work *Die Weißenhofsiedlung*, is in charge of the concept for and the contents of the present exhibition and catalogue.

Since original plans and photos are not released for a travelling exhibition for conservational reasons, reproductions of letters, sketches and plans are shown. Over 500 exhibits are included from more than 20 archives in Europe and the USA, many reproduced on scale 1 : 1. Models of the dwellings in the Weißenhofsiedlung have been built by students of the Stuttgart University of Technology, after the original construction drawings.

The connection with the interior designs of 1927 is made perceivable with photographs of the original interiors as well as furniture designed in the period, that is still or again being produced.

The exhibition comes with an extensive catalogue, that contains much of the exceptional material that Kirsch included in her previous publication, such as photographs and outstanding redrawn plans, sections and elevations. The catalogue is available in German, Russian and, soon, in English.

*The exhibition tours Tel Aviv (May 1994), Boston (Oct. 1994), Cincinnati (Nov.-Dec. 1994), Houston (Jan.-March 1995), New York (Sept. 1995) and is available for further shows from: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Ausstellungsdiens, PO Box 102463, D-70020 Stuttgart, Germany.*



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## Exhibitions

**1928 Beauty and Transparency, Logic and Ingenuity**

Wim Crouwel's farewell exhibition  
Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Until January 9, 1994

**Architettura Italiana d'Oltremare 1870-1940  
Italian Architecture Overseas 1870-1940**  
Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy; Until January 9, 1994

**Dimitris Pikionis (1887-1968)**  
Museum of Finnish Architecture, Helsinki, Finland; Until January 16, 1994

**Dudok's Palette; the master's use of colour**  
Goois Museum, Hilversum, the Netherlands;  
December 11 - March 6, 1994

**Young architects in the Reconstruction Period, 1940 - 1960**  
Beurs van Berlage, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; December 18 - January 23, 1994

**Hong Kong Architecture  
The Aesthetics of Density**  
Deutsches Architektur-Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Until February 27, 1994

**Moderne Architektur in Deutschland  
1900-1950  
2. Teil: Expressionismus und Neue Sachlichkeit**  
Deutsches Architektur-Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; February - May, 1994

**The Weißenhofsiedlung**  
Tel Aviv Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel; May 1994

Harvard Graduate School of Design, Boston, USA; October 1994

More venues in the USA in 1994; see announcement

**Archikatura II  
International Exhibition of Architectural  
Cartoon Competition**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; July- August, 1994  
inquiries: Slovak DOCOMOMO Working party

# PostWar social housing in the Netherlands 1945-65

2nd DOCOMOMO-NL Symposium  
*De Unie*, Rotterdam, July 1st, 1993

by *Wessel de Jonge*

The theme of the symposium was the actual significance of the ambitions in the early postWar social housing neighbourhoods in the Netherlands. The event was made part of the AIR-Alexander festival in Rotterdam, organized by the municipal Rotterdam Arts Foundation, that entirely revolves around postWar urban extensions. Today, many can hardly imagine how these neighbourhoods were the result of an immense and inspired national as well as local effort. Now, these results are often viewed upon in a totally different way and the qualities of these neighbourhoods are hardly being recognized. However despised or not, they are an important part of our recent socio-cultural and architectural history. Yet, this could not imply that all of these neighbourhoods should be preserved. Within the context of the multi-disciplinary AIR festival, we felt that DOCOMOMO's specific role should be to stress the social, cultural and political conditions of the period, in order to arrive at a better understanding of these neighbourhoods, an approach borrowed from the Scottish Working party. After chairman Dirk Baalman's opening remarks a series of papers were presented on the backgrounds of these residential areas, most of them based on personal experiences. The issue of the actual significance was discussed by a panel of speakers, who are or feel responsible for these areas in one or another way, expertly chaired by Miranda Reitsma of the Planning Department of Groningen.

## **Housing corporations: offside**

Noud de Vreeze, author of a recent reference work on the topic<sup>1</sup>, bore the brunt with his analysis of the history of postWar social housing.

In order to find an answer to the main postWar priorities (scaling-up and rationalisation of housing production, institutionalising of planning and management) the authorities adopted the CIAM principles to solve the housing shortage and urban issues with rational and scientific analyses rather than by architectural means.

However, this did not result in a consistent financial policy; sufficient funding was only supplied in the most urgent cases. Though the national policy was aimed at improving quantity and quality simultaneously, De Vreeze illustrated that in practice the focus shifted from one to the other. It was hard to believe one's ears when the former director of the National Housing Council NWR, Jaap Hermsen, explained that just after World War II, these corporations (professional organisations,

each owning hundreds of dwellings today) were too small, too conservative and shortsighted to be relevant in national housing policy. After satisfying the need of their own members, resulting in an average stock of about 20 dwellings, most corporations rested on their laurels rather than developing a concept about the future. They missed the bus in the postWar debate on the quality of social housing, that emerged after the War. The municipalities took over, with a share of over 45% in the production.

## **The broke-up world**

During the War, the architect Van Tijen carried out an extensive research after minimum requirements for social housing. Afterwards, this line was followed by several institutions and their concepts for different typologies became decisive for housing policy. Rather than designing, the architects participated in numerous committees and research groups, looking for clues in science and technology rather than in artistic features, thereby in a way following the footsteps of the preWar Modern Movement architects in Holland. This resulted in far reaching standardisation of complete dwellings and parts. De Vreeze's view that the rigidity of the postWar neighbourhoods stems from an un-emotional attitude of their designers was in contrast with the observations by Leo de Jonge, a main postWar social housing architect. He put into words the dilemma of many architects of the period. There was a strong tendency to create bright and lucid architecture to express the liberation from Depression and War. Although most architects were doubtlessly inspired by the Modern Movement, many were more hesitant about the rigorousness of its ways. There was a strong desire after high quality, both in plans and applied technology. However, the architects were confronted with the high costs of 'modern' buildings. Referring to this 'liberation mood' some architects still managed to convince their clients.

The central issue in social housing architecture seemed to be the balance between the demands of the people (variation and diversity) and the requirements of the authorities and the industry (standardisation of types and parts). The designers were the obvious professionals to deal with that and this resulted, among others, in the establishment of the Foundation for Architectural Research SAR in 1964, that developed a modular system that allowed standardisation of elements and parts. If the building industry succeeded to balance pro's and cons, not so the planning authorities. Refined subsidy systems for social housing necessitated to cut society into categories that are clearly distinguishable in bureaucratic terms: singles and couples, families, elderly people, and those again divided into various categories of care... This conception of categories and models ultimately led to what De Jonge identified as 'the broke-up world'.

<sup>1</sup> Noud de Vreeze, *De woningbouw van 1945 tot 1965*, Rotterdam, 1992.

### Shipbuilding Industry

The developments in building technology formed another decisive factor in the postWar housing production. The disastrous housing shortage could never be resolved by use of traditional technology alone. The corporations and the authorities were convinced about the 'closed' families being the target group, implicitly excluding differentiation in types as an issue. The question was how to speed up production rather than what to produce.

These factors formed the prerequisites for large scale mass production and the use of prefabricated parts. Director De Koning of *ERA Woningen*, leading building firm in postWar large scale mass production, explained on the building methods of these projects, based on technology and logistics from the shipbuilding industry: a parallel that no doubt would have appealed to many preWar modern architects. ERA involved skillful architects in the development of these highrises and the plans of the flats are of a high quality, even for today. The current issues are rather the depressing outdoor areas and the lack of infrastructure and facilities such as shops nearby. The poor technical quality that resulted from far reaching cuts in the construction budgets forms another problem.

### Social structure

An obvious explanation for the supposed failure of the postWar neighbourhoods, the social structure of the population, was contradicted by the panel. Peter Kuenzli (director Municipal Housing Corporation), Joost Schrijnen (head Rotterdam Department for Planning) and Arnold Reijndorp (sociologist and urban designer) agreed that indeed some areas suffer from a poor social structure, but the structure of and variety in population in most neighbourhoods, albeit slightly grown grey, is not at all worrying. Any solution should therefore take the actual population as a starting point.

Reijndorp's conclusion, that if it isn't a social housing problem, an answer must be found in the urban concept itself, was the prelude to some noteworthy remarks. De Jonge said, that, after the War, apparently there were not many skillful urban designers in the first place. Reijndorp added, that although we see many postWar extensions, based on the CIAM principles such as Pendrecht in Rotterdam (Lotte Stam-Beese), as models of sound urban planning, in fact they were rather designed by use of architectonic means. The proposed solution, not by demolition nor by conscientious conservation, but rather by a controlled ageing process in combination with preserving maintainance of the dwellings, allowing contemporary modifications and additions, was again questioned by Reijndorp. The issue is whether these areas would allow such interventions, without their urban character being spoiled.

Architect Henk van Schagen proposed a pragmatic approach. Reijndorp's idea that the architecture itself is determining for the urban characteristics

shouldn't keep us from interventions. The continuous satisfaction of the tenants could thereby be secured for the future too. The MoMo ideology should serve as a guideline for this process and should therefore be critically reassessed.

Van Schagen mentioned Ommoord, another postWar neighbourhood in Rotterdam, as an example where very few tangible elements such as massing, street profile or alignments can be found to help define new elements. Without such a guideline the approach of these areas is likely to get out of control, and the disastrous results of such a policy is already painfully obvious in many preWar quarters.

### Reassessment of Ideology

Cor Wagenaar, author of *Welvaartsstad in wording* on the Rotterdam reconstruction period 1945-52, stated that the 'modern' ideology already partly deteriorated over the years. The concept of the 'creatable society' (*maakbare samenleving*) is certainly outdated. The panel seemed to agree with Schrijnen that the postWar neighbourhoods shouldn't be dealt with as 'frozen history'. The reassessment of the moderns is however not sufficiently crystallized to provide a basis in practice. Still, whatever the intervention proposed, it should always be based upon a thorough understanding of the urban and historical context of the neighbourhood. It was encouraging to hear Peter Kuenzli, as the director of the city's largest housing corporation, identifying this as an indispensable investment.

What will be the physical outcome of these critical reappraisals is not at all clear yet. The provoking images of the renovation proposals of some of the ERA highrises that De Koning showed, illustrate that some first steps have been made.

The question whether the postWar neighbourhoods will withstand radical interventions will meet a different answer from case to case. The pragmatic approach, as suggested by the panel, could be a successful solution for some neighbourhoods. For some others, however, a more restrained approach, like a touch up, will be necessary. Most remarkable was, that the policymakers in the panel were much more positive about the postWar neighbourhoods than those who were responsible for the actual production in those days. There is certainly optimism in it, to hear some of today's policymakers recognise the value of the ideological background of the postWar neighbourhoods. After all, the significance of the Modern Movement goes beyond the tangible elements.

*Wessel de Jonge is the chairman of the Public Relations Committee of DOCOMOMO-NL.*

1. *Woningbouw, inspiratie en ambities; kwalitatieve grondslagen van de sociale woningbouw in Nederland*, by Noud de Vreeze, Almere 1993, 600 p., English summary, ISBN 90 - 5009 - 138 - 5.

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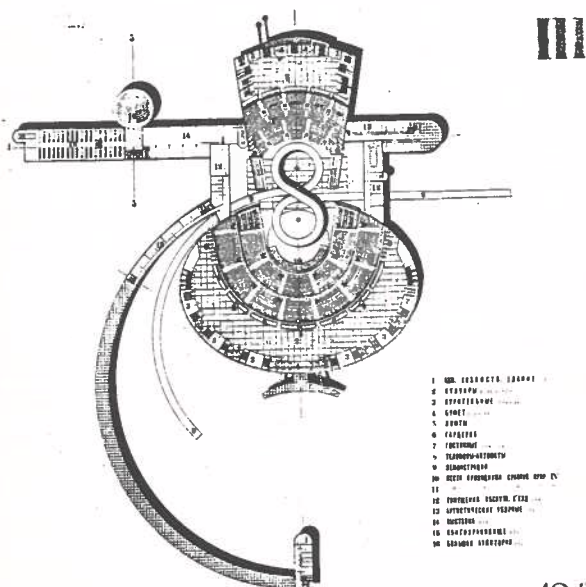
# Gabo and the Soviet Palace

## Exhibition in Moscow

by Vladimir Rezvin

From September 15th to October 19th, the exhibition 'Naum Gabo and the Competition for the Palace of Soviets, 1931-33' was held at the central Lenin Museum of Moscow. In 1988 the Berlin Galery managed to acquire a series of sculptures and archive materials of this world-known constructivist, dating from his Berlin period (1922-32), and including unique architectural designs as well as sketches, structural models and comments to the Palace of Soviets project. Some of the sketches, celluloid models and 'architectural' sculptures were displayed for the first time. Gabo's assistant, the American sculptor Charles Wilson made a model of his project exclusively for the exhibition. The competition was one of the biggest in the first half of this century. The construction of the Palace was meant to celebrate the successful fulfillment of the First Five-Year Plan, while the building itself was conceived as the biggest and most important exhibit of the Soviet State. Some 450 projects were submitted, and the ideas ranged from functionalism and architectural fantasies to classical forms. Among the participants were Soviet architects such as the brothers Vesnin, the Ginzbourg team, Gassenpflug and Lissagor, as well as their Western colleagues: Le Corbusier, Mendelsohn, Gropius and others. Naum Gabo (Naum Pevzner) was a professional sculptor and the main idea of his project is the unity of architecture and sculpture. Gabo saw the contest as a good chance to implement his own vision of democratic art. It induced the artist to an invention unusual for him: an architectural construction of light 'shells' forming two giant halls. Later he obtained

Viktor M. Olenev's entry for the second round, 1931.



patents for this constructive system: first in Germany and then in Great Britain, Switzerland and the USA. Gabo's entry consists of nothing but eight sheets. It clearly shows his force of imagination which enabled him to express his idea in a few drawings. The Soviet Government hoped that the contest, held in four stages from 1931-33, would generate a new style, to be called Socialist Realism. The two halls with 15,000 and 6,000 seats, would be used for the sessions of the Supreme Soviet, cinema and theatre shows as well as for mass manifestations of the working class.

The competition was widely discussed in society throughout the country and closely followed by world experts. Sixteen projects only, prepared on request by Soviet architects, were submitted in the preliminary stage. These works were used to specify the task and to generate ideas for the second stage. The second stage attracted 160 entries, including foreign ones. Amateur projects competed *hors concours*. The jury, consisting of professionals and politicians, awarded the highest prizes to Soviet architects Iofan and Zholtovski as well as to Hamilton (USA). Naum Gabo's project won no award, but his innovative ideas were further developed later. The project by Iofan, Shchuko and Gelfreich, approved on May 1, 1933, provided for a 415 m building topped by a giant statue of Lenin. The ideological concept was expressed with a great strength in architectural forms and the building was to be the highest in the world. Construction works started in 1939 but were never finished. But to build the Place, the biggest church in Russia, the Temple of Christ the Saviour, was demolished. Up to the 1950's, the palace-to-be determined the planning of the whole city. Today its foundation serves as an outdoor pool.

On the opening day of the exhibition high officials of the State Committee for Construction and the Union of Architects of Russia, as well as numerous visitors were shown an interesting and perfectly composed exposition. Also offered was a detailed and well illustrated catalogue in Russian and English. The exhibition is a result of successful long-term cooperation between the Shchussev Architecture Museum of Moscow and the Berlin Galery. It was also made possible thanks to sponsoring by the *Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin* and *Lufthansa*. The Central Lenin Museum, which provided its premises free of charge, and the Russian DOCOMOMO Working party also contributed to its organization. Most of the unique drawings and models, thoroughly restored and selected, came from the Shchussev Architecture Museum. The exhibition was coordinated by Jorn Merkert and Helen Adkins of the Berlin Gallery and conceived by K. Ter-Akopian of the Shchussev Architecture Museum and H. Adkins of the Berlin Gallery.

*Vladimir Rezvin is the director of the Shchussev Architectural Museum and chairman of the Russian DOCOMOMO Working party.*

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## Three Slovak exhibitions

'Slovak modern architecture 1920's-30's' with German/Slovak catalogue by Stefan Slachta and Markus Röthlisberger, 'Fridrich Weinwurm, architect of a new era' and 'Emil Bellus, regional modernism', with a catalogue in English/Slovak, var. authors.

### *announcement*

The Slovak Association of Architects SAS, home of the Slovak DOCOMOMO Working party, composed and produced three exhibitions on modern architecture in Slovakia. The material is strikingly complementary to each other.

The establishment of an independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 was a milestone, just as well for Slovak architecture. With the liberation, many Slovak architects that were working in Budapest, Vienna, Prague, Berlin or Dresden before the First World War, returned to their country.

As a pioneer of rationalist architecture, in the sense of Adolf Loos, here Fridrich Weinwurm should be mentioned. After his training as an architect in Berlin and Dresden, he returned to Bratislava in 1918 and started a design firm with I. Vecsei, that was active until 1938. In 1941, he was arrested by the Gestapo and shot when he tried to flee over the Hungarian border in 1942. A significant part of his work was dedicated to the issue of housing and domestic culture. In order to avoid the inhuman character of the tenement houses, he developed a strong concept of spatial harmony. Weinwurm is the author of social housing, villas, commercial buildings and sanatoriums.

### **Emil Bellus**

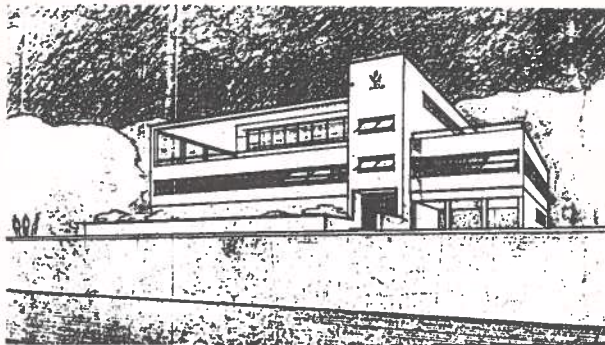
Located between Vienna, Budapest and Prague, Bratislava was a crossroads of various cultures. This broad cultural basis facilitated the development of an international modern architecture, that was generally appreciated by the public. In the late 1920's this architecture was particularly represented by the young Emil Bellus. Trained in Prague and Budapest, he adhered to a rigorous functionalist approach. Some striking examples are the *Propeller* ferry terminal along the Danube in Bratislava and the famous 'glass bridge' in Piestany. Even today, this bridge represents not only a technical feature, but plays an important role in the town's social life as well. In the 1930's, Bellus designed several commercial buildings with lush interiors, like the Cooperative House in Bratislava. The watertower and the 'automatic' mill NUPOD in Trnava, reopened last year, are often published and well known examples. In the late 1930's a fruitful cooperation between Bellus and Weinwurm existed, that was cut off by the latter's early death.

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A perspective of the Slovak Rowing Club by Emil Bellus, designed in 1930.

The building is located on the southern shore of the Danube and currently being restored.

Original perspective taken from the catalogue.

### **Rise and fall of Slovak modernism**

The years 1933-39 were characterized by the severe economic recession but just as well by the appearance of German fascism and the prejudice of a humanistic cultural development.

Since the housing problem was still unsolved, the social structure of society remained an architectural issue for many architects, as can be seen in the numerous projects for minimum dwellings. This is one of the main themes of the exhibition on modern architecture of the 1920's and 30's in Slovakia.

In the same period many factory towns were set up by the shoe manufacturing company Bata. In these garden towns, that are still used and appreciated, mostly individual houses were built, often semi-detached houses with a minimum floorarea.

Furthermore, between 1933 and 1937 numerous important competitions for sanatoriums and spas were won by both Czech and Slovak architects, that are most significant in the development of modern architecture in Europe.

In the late 1930's many renowned Czech architects were forced to leave the country. The offices of Jewish architects had to close down and many of them emigrated or perished in the concentration camps. Thereby, the strong impulse in Slovak architecture was weakened and the architectonic approach changed, referring to another set of values.

The exhibitions were recently on show in the former chocolate factory CIMA NORMA near Bern, Switzerland, and are available for further shows.

For more information, please write:

*The Slovak Association of Architects SAS, Stefan Slachta, president, Panska 15, 811 01 Bratislava.*

# Modern architecture in Croatia between the Wars

## A new tradition

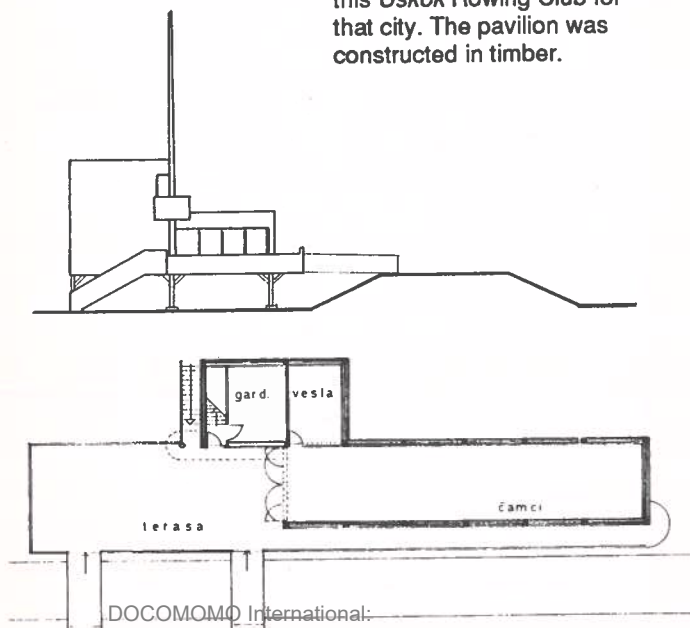
'Hrvatska moderna arhitektura između dva rata; nova tradicija'; by Tomislav Premerl, Zagreb, 1990, 272 p., 230 bl./w. ill., ISBN 86-401-0086-1.

### announcement by the editor

The International Secretariat recently received a copy of an important source on Modern Movement architecture in Croatia. Author Tomislav Premerl (1939) graduated as an architect in 1969 and got his PhD in 1985 at the Zagreb Architectural Faculty. Over the years he worked as a designer, a critic and a historian, publishing over 400 titles. After his editorship of *Arhitektura* ended in 1977, he was an editor of *Covjek i Prostor* ('Man and Space').

Modern architecture appeared relatively early in Croatia, especially in Zagreb: in the early 1920's it was confirmed by the work, results and influence of some sixty progressive, committed and skilful architects who made efforts to introduce the ideas and values of modern European architecture into a Croatian setting. This new generation of architects broke with historical eclecticism and turned their attention to the constructive and functional aspects in architecture. They considered themselves as the successors to the few strong and creative Croatian personalities of the *fin de siècle*, who paved the way for a new concept of space.

Anton Ulrich (1902) studied in Vienna under Hoffmann and worked in Zagreb since 1928, when he designed this *Uskok Rowing Club* for that city. The pavilion was constructed in timber.



Many of them started their training abroad before graduating from the new Zagreb Architectural School that opened in 1919. Again, quite a few went elsewhere to enhance their skills with further studies or training in the studios of Loos, Hoffmann, Poelzig or Le Corbusier. The first graduates of the school, in 1923, showed the same dedication to the humanistic starting points of this new architecture, as many others in that period in Europe.

All of a sudden, Zagreb witnessed a strong concentration of excellent architects, that not only adhered to the modern architectural principles to the full extent, but took part in formulating them as well. Zagreb became a main hotbed of modern architecture in this part of Europe due to this. Directing their particular attention to urban planning for an industrial society, their prime preoccupation was architecture's social impact.

In the 1920's and 30's many progressive architects in Zagreb worked in various groups, though others worked as partners or individually in their own studios. The group around Drago Ibler, active from 1926 to 1935, marked the true beginning of the new era. Other important groups are *Zemlja* ('the Earth') and the 'Zagreb Working party'.

Their very intensive social and intellectual activities is especially evident in numerous publications, in group exhibitions etc. In their programs and statements they tried to define the role and the place of architecture in society, its social and ethic components; though, to be truthfull, they discussed less about the formal articulation of space as a means to realize such programs.

Certain public issues, earlier considered to be second rate problems, now took a central position in the development of their spatial concepts. Ordinary buildings such as schools, factories, stadiums and hospitals provoked their professional interest rather than commissions for official or representational buildings. Also, they produced a number of projects for public urban developments and reconstructions. Apparently, society wasn't yet prepared to accept the prerequisites for a modern society: only few of these have been realized.

The rich cultural heritage of the country itself, on the other hand, remained a vital creative problem even for the modern architects between the two World Wars. This tempted them to proceed from the strict principles of the 'International Style': a concept that implied a general creative method that was unique, as well as a specific response to each individual design task, fit for the modern life.

Premerl's publication extensively covers the works of Viktor Kovacic, Drago Ibler, Antun Ulrich, Ernest Weissmann, Juraj Denzler, Josip Picman, Stjepan Planic, Juraj Neidhardt, Marijan Haberle and Hinko Bauer, as well as many others.

*Text composed by the editor on the basis of the English summary, translated by Nikica Petrak.*

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## Hong Kong architecture

The aesthetics of density

*announcement by DAM*

From 15 November 1993 to 27 February 1994, the *Deutsches Architekturmuseum DAM* in Frankfurt am Main, together with the Hong Kong Government, will be presenting an exhibition which charts the development of architecture and town planning in Hong Kong from 1841, when it was ceded to Britain, through to the present day. This wide-reaching exhibition offers an insight into Hong Kong's urban development in the light of its special and unique situation. With a population of 5.8 million on an area of just 1000 square kilometres, Hong Kong is one of the world's most densely populated cities. The extreme scarcity of land - combined with the effects of a population explosion and an economic boom - led to an intense high-rise building which, in turn, demanded tailor-made solutions to the problems of traffic and infrastructure as well as to the question of securing a certain quality of life for the population. Although Hong Kong is currently the site of one of the world's biggest public housing construction programmes, there is still a shortage of housing.

Examples of contemporary architectural trends are illustrated by a number of drawings, photos and large models, including the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank by Sir Norman Foster, the Bank of China by I.M. Pei and Asia's highest building - the Central Plaza by Ng Chun Man. A special section is devoted to innovative projects for satellite towns and inner city redevelopment.

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue in English and German, published by Prestel, discussing architecture and urban planning in Hong Kong and illustrating all the projects presented.

The Hong Kong Central Market was built in the 1930's and is still in use.  
Photo: Teppo Jokinen.



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## Rationalism overseas

Italian colonial architecture

*announcement by DOCOMOMO Italy*

This interesting exhibition examines an 'episode', up to now too often considered marginal: architecture and planning of the Italian territories located *oltremare*, along the African coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The history of Italian colonialism develops within a period of more than seventy years, between 1870 and 1945. Soon after the military conquest the main achievements are in the field of town-planning and architecture. Furthermore, during the second quarter of the 20th Century the politics of symbolic representation becomes a vehicle of political assessment. Documents, photographs, and original drawings are mainly from the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Well-known architects, such as Terragni, Pagano, Marconi, Piacentini, Piccinato, Valle, Alpago Novello and Vaccaro are among the key figures of the exhibition. Professor Giuliano Gresleri from the Faculty of Engineering of the University in Bologna is the coordinator of the working group. The catalogue is published by Marsilio.

*The exhibition 'Architettura Italiana d'Oltremare 1870 - 1940' can be seen at the Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna in Bologna until January 9th, 1994.*

## Next Journal: Americas!

The publication of the Journals form a 'bridge' between the biennial international conferences, that keeps the various working groups informed about what others are doing, to get inspiration for their own work, to get ideas on how to develop efficient strategies for safeguarding significant architecture, to get support for campaigns.

**Send in your news items with illustrations before April 15th, 1994. Texts for articles with a maximum length of 4 to 5 sheets A4 typewritten with 1,5 spacing (preferably also on floppy disc) with illustrations should be in by March 15th, 1994.**

**The next issue is planned to be ready for the Third International Conference in Barcelona.**

We intend to dedicate the next issue to Modern Movement preservation in the Americas. Experts in South, Middle and North America are emphatically invited to send in contributions.



## Documentary on MoMo

by *Artel Productions*

Artel Productions is currently producing a 50 minute documentary on the Modern Movement in architecture. The film will be screened at the International Conference on the subject, organized by UNESCO, to be held in Tel Aviv, May 1994. In the film, we intend to demonstrate how local circumstances such as climate, social and political environment, economic situation and technological development, affected the design of buildings in different parts of the world. We will also endeavour to show how the Modern Movement in architecture was linked to an overall search for new forms in art, such as constructivism, cubism, purism, *De Stijl* and other modern movements. We will be filming in seven countries: Germany, France and Holland, where it had all begun; Czechoslovakia, with its middle class orientation; Italy, with its link to facism; Israel, with its 'green site' development; and England, where conservatism did not allow much room for modernism. We will use stills and other archive material in order to emphasise the 'internationality' of this movement. To the best of our knowledge there has not been a film encompassing such a variety of countries making this comparison.

Special emphasis will be put on the International Style in Israel. Several European architects fled nazi Europe and settled in Palestine. There they contributed their talent and skills in building what later became the state of Israel. Tel-Aviv is the only modern city in the world built mainly according to the principles of the International Style. The *kibbutz* in Israel is a perfect example of socialist ideology manifested in architecture which comprises mainly of functionalism. These facts have hardly been exposed so far and we will take this opportunity to bring them to light.

We have access to a wealth of archive material - some of which has never seen before - made available to us by the DOCOMOMO network worldwide, as well as various archives around the world. We will include in the film plans, drawings, photographs and archive footage of typical projects of the era. This will be combined with on location filming and interviews. Contributors will include art/architecture critics and historians, who will give their pro's and con's regarding this movement and its effect on our contemporary aesthetics and lifestyle; conservationists and experts from various countries, who will give an insight into their local trend; and those who reside in houses built in this style, who can enlighten us with their experience of living with functionalism in this day and age.

**For more information contact: Artel Productions,  
25 Ferncroft Avenue, London NW3 7PG, UK,  
Tel: (71) 431 8555, fax: (71) 431 9202.**

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## Tel Aviv International Style

*announcement*

Tel Aviv in the early 1930's was at the height of its development, and the architects who were designing buildings in the city were applying the current trends in architecture. Today, sixty years later, the City of Tel Aviv-Yafo is cognizant of its architectural assets, and is acting to revitalize them. A comprehensive survey has designated the conservation of 1000 buildings that were built in 1931-48, and has also located six complexes which have preserved their original character. The International Style Architecture Conference (May 22-28, 1994) organized by UNESCO, the Municipality of Tel Aviv-Yafo, and the Tel Aviv Foundation, is a further step in the realization of this project. The Conference's aim is to bring the importance of the architecture of the 1930's in Tel Aviv to the awareness of the professional people and the public in Israel and in the world at large. The Conference will consider the Modern Movement and the sources of influence that contributed to the development of the International Style. There will also be discussion on the question of regionalism, or of 'How international was the International Style?'. The conference will initiate a renewed discussion of the International Style and its place in - and relevance to - contemporary architecture.

Modern architecture has arrived at the stage where it is necessary to deal with problems of its conservation. The Conference will give attention to philosophical, architectural, social and economic aspects related to the conservation of buildings and complexes in dynamic and active cities. By means of case studies, professionals will give present analyses of buildings and urban complexes that have been targeted for conservation, and will discuss the economics of conservation as well as techniques of revitalizing urban centers that it has been decided to conserve.

Among speakers who have already confirmed their participation in the Conference are: Kenneth Frampton, Edward Sekler, Richard Ingersoll (USA), Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre Holland, Wolf Tegethoff, Winfried Nerdinger (Germany), Phyllis Lambert (Canada), Roberto Segre (Cuba), Jean-Louis Cohen, Robert Herman (France), Bruno Zevi (Italy). Among the Israeli speakers are: Robert Oxman, Michael Levin, Shamay Assif, Nitza Szmuk, Ita Heinze-Greenberg, Edina Meyer-Maril and Peera Goldmann.

**More information from:  
International Style Architecture, Tel Aviv '94  
P.O.B. 23929 Tel Aviv-Yafo, 61231, Israel,  
Tel. 972-3-5287817, fax 972-3-5251282**



## Leen van der Vlugt and the Van Nelle Factories

'Wiederhall 14; Leen van der Vlugt'; by various authors, Amsterdam, 1993, 56 p., 125 bl./w. ill., 8 in colour, dfl. 49,50, ISBN 0920-1629; ISSN 90-72876-07-5.

### announcement by the editor

The periodical *Wiederhall*, published in English, recently released an issue on the Van Nelle factories for tea, coffee and tobacco near Rotterdam, designed by the architects Brinkman and Van der Vlugt between 1925 and 1929. The publication contains essays on the principal for the factories, Kees van der Leeuw (by Frank Kauffmann), the American inspiration for the new factories (Joris Molenaar), the vital role of structural engineer Jan Gerko Wiebenga in its construction (Wessel de Jonge), the disputed co-authorship of architect Mart Stam (Molenaar), Van der Leeuw's private house (Jeroen Geurst), Van der Vlugt's interior designs for a number of his works (Elly Adriaansz), tubular steel furniture (Otakar Mácel), the connection with furniture designer W.H. Gispen (André Koch) and the cooperation with W. van Tijen (by Jeroen Schilt). The wealth of documentation and background information is complemented with the biographies of those involved in the creation of the factories. A fascinating portfolio of period photographs of the factory's construction, made by the photographers Jan Kamman and E.M. van Ojen after commission by Kees van der Leeuw, has been included.

*Wiederhall 14* can be ordered from Stichting *Wiederhall*, PO Box 1923, 1000 BX Amsterdam.

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## Lotte Stam-Beese 1903-'88

### Urbanism in an international context

'Lotte Stam-Beese 1903-1988; Brno, Charkow, Moscow, Amsterdam, Rotterdam' by Anne-mie Devolder and Helène Damen (ed.), Rotterdam 1993, 144 pp., English summary, dfl. 49,90, ISBN 90 6906 014 0.

### announcement by the publisher

Architect and urbanist Lotte Stam-Beese was born in a Silesian railroad station and her family saw this as a portent of her nomadic existence. After studying at the *Bauhaus*, she worked with Hannes Meyer in Dessau, with Bohuslav Fuchs in Brno, met her future husband Mart Stam who was working on Makeyevka and Magnitogorsk in Siberia, joined him with the design of Orsk, moved to Amsterdam when Stalinism struck and worked there with Van Tijen and Maaskant, before finding her final destination as chief architect of the Rotterdam Department for Urban Development and Reconstruction in 1946. In this capacity she designed numerous extensions for the city, until far after her retirement in 1968. Many of these urban schemes were presented by *Opbouw*, at the CIAM conferences in Bergamo, Hoddesdon, Aix-en-Provence and Dubrovnik. One chapter of the book offers a reconstruction of the various design stages for these respective districts. Another chapter covers her design vocabulary in the context of the international discussions on urban design in that period. Her work in Holland is compared with the German *Raumstadt* concepts and the design of new cities in Russia, in terms of the use of grids, greenery etc., as well as her conceptual approach of society: 'space for one and space for the other'. A fourth chapter deals with the influence of the Pendrecht district in Rotterdam. Pendrecht has gone down in history as the textbook model of the 'neighbourhood-concept' and influenced the appearance of numerous suburbs in Holland, one of the most defining characteristics of the district being the 'housing unit', a spatial form which strongly expresses the 'neighbourhood-concept' and its social intentions and connotations. Also, the urban design of Pendrecht played an important role in the development of the profession itself into a position more independent from architecture. The last chapter of the publication gives an analysis of the changing sociological intentions in designing some of the various district. These change in time from 'unity in life style/community', to 'diversity/freedom of choice', to 'functional group encounter': the clear and intimate neighbourhoods of Zuidwijk, the grid of Pendrecht and the 'tree diagram' of Alexanderpolder. The book offers an English summary and various registers to facilitate further research and study.

## Bruno Paul in Soest

*Bruno Paul in Soest, Villas of the 1920's and their furnishings*, by Jost Schäfer, Bonn 1993, 88 pp., 172 illustrations, 12 in color. Dm 40,-.

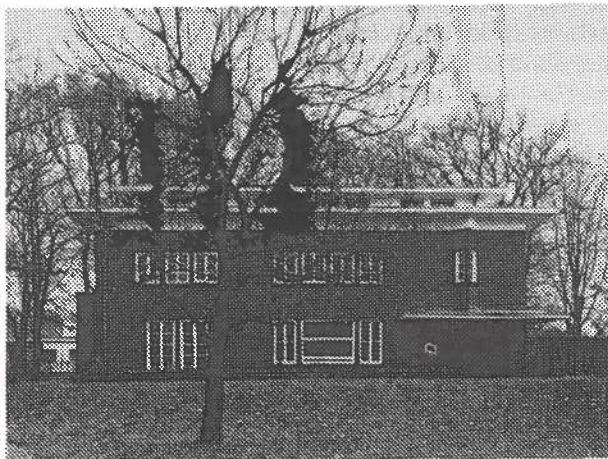
by Gail B. Kirkpatrick

Along with such names as H. van de Velde, P. Behrens and R. Riemerschmid, Bruno Paul (1872-1964) is considered as one from the generation of men who revolutionized the crafts and design. Their work developed from *Jugendstil*, the German *Werkbund* and from the Modern Movement as a precursor to or parallel with the Bauhaus.

From the beginning, Bruno Paul formulated demands that art and industry, the arts and crafts be united and that the general public would have access to these artistic products, designs which should function not only as museum pieces but also as objects in an every day and practical sense.

In his early years, Paul was associated with the circle artists and intellectuals whose ideas were reflected in the publications *Jugend* and *Simplizissimus*. Later Paul left for Berlin where he became director of the School for Arts and Crafts and the Academy of Fine Arts. Even before he had become a recognized designer and architect and with no official formal education in the discipline, he designed architecture and furnishings, some of his first commissions coming from wealthy business people who had Paul design their villas and all the furnishings, including even the garden. The multitalented Paul produced a significant number of villas especially during the 1920's, in the cities of Berlin, Dresden, Cologne, Prague and also in the more provincial town Soest in Westphalia, Germany.

Villa Plange, Thomätor 3, Soest; garden elevation. Bruno Paul, architect.



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In Soest, Bruno Paul designed three villas that were built between 1925 and 1930. To a large degree the original architecture is still intact, and serves as excellent example of the range and depth of Paul's talent as an architect and designer. In this book by Jost Schäfer, published by the Westphalian Institute for Historical Preservation in Münster, the history of these three villas in Soest - the Villa's Plange, Sternberg and Jahn - has been researched and all the original architecture along with the remaining furnishings designed by Paul have been extensively documented.

Exceptionally well preserved is the architecture of the Villa Sternberg (completed in 1927), and due to the fact that almost all the original furnishings still remain in the house, it can be considered unique among the examples of modern design from the 1920's.

The other two villas have experienced some changes in the original architectural design but remain nevertheless exceptional examples of that period of architecture. Almost the complete original documentation - blue prints, plans, sketches etc. - for both the architecture itself as well as the furnishings and the garden area has remained and could be viewed to a large extent in the private archives of the owners or residents of the villas. All of this information has finally been researched and published in this comprehensive documentation from Jost Schäfer with many exceptional photographs.

## Designing dangerously Violation and risk in Casa del Fascio

by Antonino Saggio

The most interesting and discussed building of 20th Century Italian architecture, the *Casa del Fascio* in Como by Giuseppe Terragni, is the result of a series of violations. The academic tradition, the historical context, the symmetry of the facade are all denied, and the dictates of the rationalist language are also abandoned. The mechanics of the language are the same as those for the *Novocolum* project. There, Terragni imposed on himself the hyers of volumes in section, the exceptional nature of corners, the symmetry; here, a dense block standing heavily on the ground. In both cases the final results go far beyond the original intentions, upsetting the apparent linguistic consequences in order to confirm the value of abstract and dynamic expression derived from Cubism.

The risk inherent in such an operation is evident, combining the academic and rationalist worlds in order to move beyond them both, is not without pain. The nervous tension, the difficult moments, the discouragement caused by criticism, the

uncertainty regarding construction, the accusation of plagiarism, are well known.

In this article the exceptional features of the Fascist Party Building are examined by the point of view of the challenge to find a composition uniting a series of opposites that are not only expressive but also of a symbolic nature.

Terragni starts with a stereometric shape and eventually achieves dynamic rotation. He moves away from the context, from stereometry, from the dignity of the vertical lines, but also from the lightness of the walls rediscovering their value as solid forms. From the symbolic point of view the transparency clashes with the use of stone claddings. Monumentality and the language of modern architecture are antithetical, at least up to that time.

But Terragni experimented with a new and untried area of modern architecture. He re-examined the characteristics of a wall's thickness, expanding it until it acquired depth. He was able to demonstrate the modern values of his building in spite of the strict stereometric limitation on which it is based. The Fascist Party Building is, therefore, an apparent contradiction. The project is based on design methods such as stereometry, proportion, wall thickness, but while making use of traditional architectural themes, the overall expression lies within contemporary architecture through its sense of abstract composition, the dialectic between structure and fittings, the depth of space that is enclosed, and the dynamic force that emerges from the whole composition.

*Summary by Antonino Saggio, member of the Italian DOCOMOMO Working party Steering Committee. The article was previously published in L'Architettura-cronache e storia, 1993, 7 - 6. It is the initial result of a research sponsored by the Graham Foundation for the Arts and is accompanied by a photographic essay by Dennis Marsico.*

## A guide book on Moscow

'Architectural Guide to Moscow';  
by Aleksander V. Anisimov, Rotterdam,  
1993, 159 p., ill., ISBN 90 6450 164 5.

*announcement by the publisher*

Published in the Netherlands, in English, and written by a Russian architect, this guide book on the architecture of Moscow is a true specimen of international cooperation, that follows some joint projects of the architectural academies of Moscow and Rotterdam. The publication is composed by Aleksander Anisimov, vice director of the Moscow Research and Design Institute for Culture, Leisure,

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Sports and Public Health Construction. Also an introduction to the urban and architectural history of Moscow is included.

The guide book first shows fourteen buildings that were never actually constructed, including even the site they were planned for: the wild fantasies of the 1920's, such as Leonidov's Heavy Industry Commissariat, Lissitsky's *Wolkenbügel* and some works of the Vesnin brothers.

The rest of the 200 buildings are actually built and still there, although many are delapidated. Each is covered with a recent photo, a brief description and plan, some information on the architect, the year of design and construction and information on the site with address and the nearest subway station.

Apart from a building's significance in architectural history, Anisimov's criteria for including buildings in the book were just as well the architectonic qualities and their accessibility for foreigners. Also, it was the aim to show as many building types and periods as possible. The substance of the new photos were made by Anisimov himself, just as numerous drawings of plans.

A guide book on St. Petersburg is being prepared.

## Soviet architecture studied

A first series of research papers

'Soviet architectural history: its study and problems'; by Iuri Volchok (ed.), VNIITAG, Moscow, 1991/92, 265 p.

*by Catherine Cooke*

Architectural publishing, like anything else economically unprofitable, effectively ceased in the former Soviet Union with the fall of Gorbachev. The orderly architectural journal disappeared, with a modest samizdat 'newsletter' only starting to fill the gap. There have been virtually no books, certainly nothing scholarly or oriented towards serious professional thought on subjects like modernist history. It is therefore no small achievement when a 265 page book of some quarter of a million words emerges under editorship of Moscow DOCOMOMO member Iuri Volchok, with fresh debate on reorienting and redefining 'Soviet' architectural history for the post-Soviet epoch. Half of the material derives from a two day round-table conference which Volchok chaired in April 1991, that is just before the August Coup. Among the 33 speakers were such pioneer researchers of Soviet Modern Movement as Selim Khan-Magomedov and Andrei Ikonnikov, lamenting, among much else, the very poor level of factual knowledge available to non-specialists on their actual building stock, on architects themselves, and

on the debates within the architectural profession. One particularly fresh and interesting paper, by Krashennikov, documents the fates of architects in various waves of Soviet repression since 1917, and the distortions of attribution that have resulted. Another paper gives a Russian vignette on the problem of evaluating postWar modernism. The well known regionalist Moscovite Andrei Kosinsky declares that Mikhail Posokhin, the leader of the 1960's international modernism in the Soviet Union, should be written 'out of history' for his much-hated redevelopment of central Moscow known as Kalinin prospect - now in the elimination of political ogres, renamed 'New Arbat'. Margarita Astafeva-Dlugach by contrast, as a historian, powerfully asserts the necessity of taking that work seriously, and of fully documenting Posokhin's unique role in postWar modernism as chief architect of Moscow. Forty 'written submissions' to the volume came largely from non-Russian republics. These include for example Mart Kalm who is now one of the leaders of DOCOMOMO in Estonia. But back in 1991, as Volchok regretfully concludes here, it was still too early for new methodologies to be very confidently pronounced. What mattered was the new openness 'to talk as *me* not as *we*', to accept a plurality of views as the norm, and at last 'to be able to study and write about our architectural history as everyone else does', according to the interests of the individual concerned.

Amongst these papers, Kazus and Manina of the Shchusev State Architectural Museum in Moscow, chief repository of such Modern Movement drawings as remain, lament not only the Museum's desperate shortage of resources for conservation, but also a new problem: the difficulty of acquiring documentation on recent buildings, particularly the technical data necessary for future conservation, from architects who are not accustomed, after the low esteem in which the Soviet profession was lately held, to think of themselves as 'masters' worthy of preservation.

In the second half of the volume Volchok has assembled further papers around three topics. *The history of history* surveys the last phase of Soviet writing on Soviet modernism and *The geography of history* returns to a regionalist view. Finally, *History for the future* brings to the Russian audience a sequence of Dutch, German, Belgian, British and Russian papers from the International DOCOMOMO Conference at Eindhoven, with the aim, as Volchok says, 'of showing the range of questions and views it is legitimate and necessary to address on this issue too.'

Iuri Volchok has to be congratulated for his boldness in stimulating debate around these issues, as well as for the enormous labour of getting the debates into permanent record in today's Russia.

For his next volume, now in editing, he has forced selected historians of Soviet architecture to get off their fences, in papers which openly elaborate their personal readings of that history. The Union of

Architects and the VNIITAG research institute supported the first publication and I hope they have resources to continue for the second. In present circumstances these are unique contributions to ensuring that serious professional debate around modern history continues in Russia.

*Catherine Cooke is a staff member of the Open University in the United Kingdom.*

## Scottish prefab bungalows

### Report by the Scottish Working party

'Moredun Housing Area, Edinburgh', by the DOCOMOMO Scottish National Group, Glasgow, 1993, 12 pages, 12 illustrations.

#### *announcement*

Our Scottish colleagues took the initiative to research an interesting housing area in Edinburgh. The results of this are summarized in a fascinating booklet, that is an inspiring example for other DOCOMOMO groups. The value of such work can be fourfold: it helps to define the cultural and historical significance of an object or area, it facilitates to start an eventual campaign for its safeguarding, it adds valuable information to the national MoMo register and it can help in gaining national prestige as a pressure group.

The importance of the Moredun Housing Area lies chiefly in the fact that it includes Scotland's last significant survival of that symbol of the emergency postWar building drive: the factory built *prefab*. Moredun has 139 survivors of a batch of 145 AIROH (Aircraft Industries Research Organisation for Housing) B2 Permanent Aluminium Bungalows, supplied and built in 1948-49. This is by far the largest group of *prefabs* remaining in the country. Furthermore, the next in size, a small estate of 24 bungalows at Toryglen, Glasgow, is scheduled to be demolished and redeveloped in the near future.

At Moredun, the *prefabs* are mixed in a single development with two other postWar prefabricated types, the BISF (British Iron and Steel Federation) Type A House and the Blackburn House, and one or two blocks of traditional masonry construction. For completeness, therefore, the report deals with the non-traditional section of the scheme as a whole, including a few blocks with traditionally-built housing incorporated in generally non-traditional street ensembles. The result is a more or less coherent area dominated by 1940's prefabricated structures, to an extent unparalleled in Scotland.

*The report can be ordered from the DOCOMOMO Scottish National Group, see elsewhere for address.*

# National Reports

A selection of information on DOCOMOMO's activities in the participating countries, sent in before April 15th, 1994, will be published in the next Journal, due for the Barcelona conference.

## Argentina: successful presentation

As we let you know in our previous report, an official presentation to the public of DOCOMOMO's work at an international and local level was finally staged in Buenos Aires. This was meant to reach a wider public and therefore aimed at gaining appreciation among those that are not yet concerned with the 20th Century architectural heritage.

As a result of this meeting, that was supported by the Professional Council of Argentinian Architects and the University of Buenos Aires, new initiatives have been decided upon. The first of these is the setting up of an archive of architectural plans and other drawings from the rationalist' period. To this end, some documents have already been submitted. The second is a specialized study of a house designed by a leading professional of the 1930's, ing. Antonio Vilar, which is being undertaken by students of the Introductory Course to Conservation and Recycling of Buildings, at the School of Architecture. We hope to inform you in the next Journal on the outstanding results of their work.

*(Report by Argentinian coordinator Mabel Scarone)*

## Brazil: cooperation with Icomos

The Brazilian Committee of Icomos expressed its interest in establishing close relations with DOCOMOMO-Brazil and invited us to talk about our organization on their next conference, in Blumenau (South of Brazil) in November 1993. In order to increase the network in Brazil a news bulletin of DOCOMOMO-Brazil is being organized, which will be distributed amongst those people who are interested in exchanging experience. It is impossible to ignore the great distances in our country, and this correspondence will be fundamental to improve our activities and to put people in contact with each other.

Architects of the State of São Paulo Heritage and the Brazilian Institute of Architects (IAB) are trying to save Rino Levi's residence in São Paulo. Rino Levi was one of the earliest and most respected MoMo architects in Brazil. The new owner intends to demolish the house and build a big new one on its site. His argument was accepted by the Council of the State, that refused to list the building in spite of a technician's opinion defending its preservation. Now, the IAB is making an appeal to the Brazilian Heritage to list it, and the DOCOMOMOBrazil was asked to be involved in this action.

*(Report by coordinator Anna Beatriz Galvão)*

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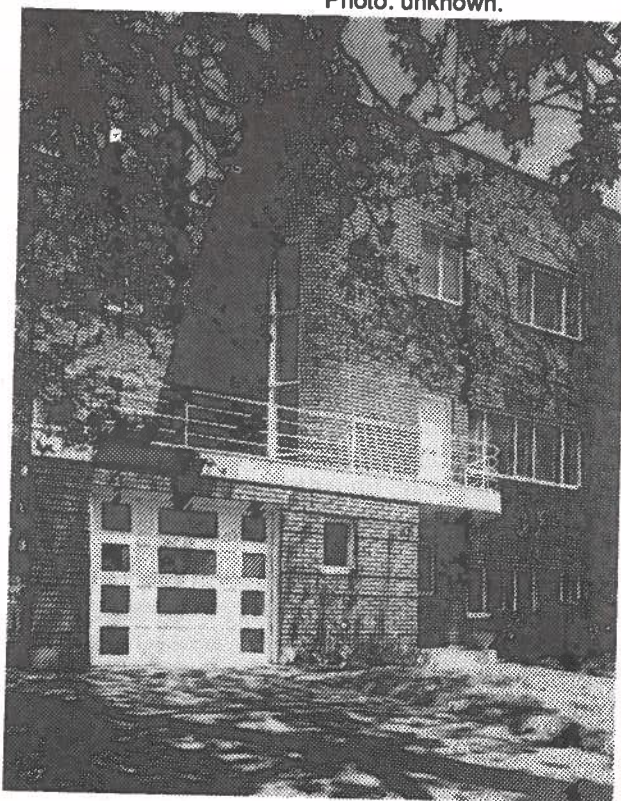
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## Canada/Québec: a provincial MoMo register

The DOCOMOMO group for Québec was pleased to learn the results of the referendum organized by DOCOMOMO International, intended to modify its constitution. DOCOMOMO Québec was founded in 1989 as *Montréal Moderne* at the occasion of an important campaign to prevent the transformation of Westmount Square, a group of buildings designed by Mies van der Rohe. DOCOMOMO Québec shares the mission of DOCOMOMO International in its will to increase knowledge and appreciation of modern architecture in our province. It is formed of roughly thirty members both from Montréal and Québec City, mostly university professors, architects and students, all modern-architecture-enthusiasts working for DOCOMOMO Québec in their spare time. In the spirit of the working parties of DOCOMOMO International, the Québec group concentrates its energy on hands-on research and communication and tries to be as unbureaucratic as possible. Our members hope that other groups interested in modern heritage will be created in the rest of Canada and North America and is eager to share with them their experience and knowledge.

For the past two years DOCOMOMO Québec has assembled an inventory of important modern buildings in Montréal. To complete this project, it has obtained a subsidy from the Ministry of Culture of Québec three times. It has recently recruited

Maison Jarry in Outremont, designed by the architect Marcel Parizeau in 1936, today is the headquarters of DOCOMOMO Québec. Photo: unknown.



members in Québec City to expand its inventory to the whole of the province. Although its inventory includes some private houses dating from the 1930's, most of the buildings studied were designed during the 1950's and the 1960's, reflecting the peak period of modernity in Québec.

Besides its work on the inventory, DOCOMOMO Québec acts as a watchdog to preserve the major buildings studied. Unfortunately, the insensitivity of owners and administrators towards modern architecture often causes important losses. In recent months, some important buildings were demolished such as the Caisse Populaire de Repentigny. To prevent the destruction of outstanding modern buildings, DOCOMOMO Québec has contacted owners to make them aware of the architectural value of their properties and has participated to colloquia and seminars. Members of DOCOMOMO Québec have published a special issue on the architecture of Mies van der Rohe in Montréal of the architectural magazine of the Order of Architects of Québec, *Architecture Québec*.

At the occasion of the DOCOMOMO International secretary's visit to Canada, DOCOMOMO Québec has organized, in collaboration with *Héritage Montréal*, a lecture and a seminar which brought together architects, officials from the municipal and provincial governments, members of heritage groups and professors. Wessel de Jonge has explained at this occasion the intentions of DOCOMOMO International and shown the problems and objectives of the preservation of modern heritage in the Netherlands. To increase public interest in modern architecture, the Québec group will organize an exhibition on modern heritage accompanied by a publication and a colloquium in September 1994. It will also present its inventory of modern heritage in Québec to DOCOMOMO International early next year and will participate to the Third International DOCOMOMO Conference in Barcelona in June 1994.

*(Report by France Vanlaethem, president DOCOMOMO Québec)*

#### **Croatia: priority questions for register**

First of all we would like to express our support to the improvements made within the DOCOMOMO Newsletters, moreover we were pleased to receive the recent 9th issue under the new and more appropriate name DOCOMOMO Journal.

We also have the pleasure to inform you that the Croatian DOCOMOMO Working party managed to provide its own, though very modest journal by establishing a regular permanent contribution within *Covjek & Prostor* - the Croatian Association of Architects' monthly magazine. In the first issue of DOCOMOMO-Cro we reported on the constitution of our working party. Furthermore, we

published essential DOCOMOMO documents - the Constitution and Statement in Croatian translation - as well as a short report on proceeding international activities.

While working on the draft register of Croatian MoMo buildings we were confronted with two predominant problems - the prolific substance of non-controlled alterations done to a rather big part of preliminarily listed buildings, and priority questions considering demolished, damaged or endangered MoMo buildings as part of the entire Croatian cultural heritage jeopardised by aggression. These two topics shall be continuously elaborated in forthcoming issues of our news bulletin.

Last but not least, we would like to remind you about the new telephone country code for Croatia, which is 385.

*(Report by Croatian coordinator Aleksander Laslo)*

#### **Estonia: debate, excursions and film**

The Estonian Working party has had quite an active working period. In May we enjoyed a visit of DOCOMOMO's international secretary Wessel de Jonge to Tallinn and Pärnu. MoMo objects were visited and a meeting 'Architecture of 20th Century as a National Heritage' was held in Tallinn Art University, where Mr. De Jonge gave a lecture on the preservation of MoMo heritage. DOCOMOMO International ideas and organization principles were also explained by him.

Afterwards the problems of preservation of Estonian 20th Century Architectural Monuments were discussed (report by Jaan Tamm, Head of the Union of National Monuments). The project of the new Law of Preservation on National Heritage was questioned.

In June a special trip to the Estonian-Russian town Petseri (see Sergei Fedorov's paper in the 1990 Conference Proceedings) was organized by the Museum of Estonian Architecture and the whole working party was invited.

Then, in September, the exhibition 'Otherwise, Functionalism and Neofunctionalism in Estonian Architecture' by Mart Kalm, Krista Kodres and Leonard Lapin was organized by our Museum, in Tallinn Art Hall. Finally, a video-film about Estonian functionalist architecture (script by Mart Kalm) will be completed during these weeks.

Currently, the Estonian Working party is working on a first version of a national Top-MoMo Register. Several practical restoration works concerning MoMo objects have been consulted by members of the group. A special architectural trip to Pärnu (where the best MoMo-objects are located) is in the process of preparation.

*(Report by national representative Karin Hallas)*

### Germany: a policy for Gropius' Törten Siedlung

For the first time the *Bauhausverein* awarded the Carl Fieger Prize, at the occasion of the opening of the Winter term 1993-94 of the Bauhaus Dessau.

This annual award honours the architect Carl Fieger (1893-1960), who came to Dessau with Walter Gropius and should be considered his main collaborator. He was amongst those that built the Bauhaus. Another well known design in this city is his Kornhaus on the Elbe banks.

The prize of DM 1000 is aimed to support young architects and designers to research the history of the Bauhaus, and is awarded to students in the Anhalt region for outstanding works and projects. The 1993 prize was granted to Barbera Kob and Elisabeth Schmid for their design of a pianist's studio in the Kühnauer Park.

The Dessau Department for Conservation is preparing a preservation directive for Gropius' Törten Estate. The intention is to restore the harmonic streetscape and to make the appearance of the neighbourhood a central issue in conservation policy again. One sample of each of the three housing types will be restored to its original state. A first step was the acquisition of a terrace house of the *Siëto IV* type by the City. Next, technological solutions will have to be developed for windows, doors, isolation and roofing that will be made available to the other dwellers too.

The German DOCOMOMO Group will have its next Autumn meeting in Braunschweig on November 27 and 28. Apart from the regular subjects related to the activities of the various working committees and the preparation of the German contribution to the Third International Conference in 1994 in Barcelona, professor Burkhart will guide the group on a tour of Otto Haesler's housing scheme in Celle.

*(Report by Karl-Heinz Burmeister, secretary DOCOMOMO Germany, translated by the editor)*

### Great Britain: anxieties, failure and a happy note

This has been a very busy last six months, fraught with anxieties and failure, but having achieved some successes, notably the listing of Alexandra Road and 'Torilla', the first thin wall concrete house by F.R.S. Yorke, built near Hatfield in 1935. The tragedy of the loss on 12th September of the Sir Basil Spence Blocks in the Gorbals, Glasgow, has made front page news in the national press and generated a leading article in 'The Independent'. Our anxieties remain over the fate of Sir Denys Lasdun's distinguished Keeling House, the prototype cluster block built in 1959 in Bethnal Green, London. We have been campaigning vigorously for the retention of these unique Modern Movement examples of public housing of the 1960's, but are frustrated by the time taken for the Secretary of State for National Heritage to act to list Keeling House despite the fact, as well

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informed circles believe, that English Heritage has recommended listing.

On a happier note, we have been delighted that the Secretary of State has accepted, in full, the recommendations of English Heritage to list postWar school, university and college buildings up to 1965, the cut off under the '30 year rule'. On an equally significant note, the decision by the Secretary of State to list for the first time a public housing scheme, the Alexandra Road Estate, Grade II\* is immensely welcome.

We are very pleased the new exhibition 'Modern Architecture Restored' has been so well received at Breda in Holland. Its opening celebrated the Dutch 'Architecture Day' recently. Birmingham is the current venue where it is being shown both in the City Plaza shopping centre and then at the new office development at 30 St Paul's Square. We welcome any suggestions for future venues.

Our next exhibition, organised in conjunction with Marco Vidotto, will be a retrospective of the work of Alison and Peter Smithson. It will also act as a memorial to Alison, who sadly died on 18th August last. The Arts Council has agreed to make a contribution to the costs but we are particularly pleased that the Building Centre Trust is providing the first venue here at 26 Store Street. We hope that the exhibition will travel to Oxford, Bath, Newcastle and Edinburgh, all significant places in Alison's life.

## Preservation, yes; but not at any price

THE TENSION between renewal and conservation is built into human nature and found in most areas of activity. The past is both a burden and an inspiration, a stultifying parent and a source of identity and continuity that people disown at their peril. Architecture poses this problem in particularly acute form because the destruction of old buildings is permanent and the products of renewal are durable and expensive. Aberrations take long to correct.

Yet even they divide opinion. Yesterday, 400 Glasgow flats designed by Sir Basil Spence and completed in 1965 were blown up, tragically with loss of life. Architectural historians lamented the demolition while local inhabitants applauded. Lord Palumbo believed these towers would come to be seen as "seminal works of art in the context of public housing". James Dunnett, an expert for a conservation body based in Holland, spoke enthusiastically of "the powerful rhythm of their row of linked towers".

Socially, however, they were a disaster — damp, windy, vandalised and hopelessly unsuited to the climate. Glasgow council could not afford £15m-£20m to renovate them, and all three local universities were uninterested in converting them for student accommodation. With no local support, their only friends were distant experts living in very different accommodation.

Should they, nevertheless, have been preserved as monuments to their period or their architect? In general, the presumption should always be for preservation. Far too much of the past has fallen victim to the political zeal of modernisers and self-indulgent excesses of architects with no interest in practicality or how people actually want to live. Grandiloquent monstrosities created by fascist and Communist regimes are only extreme examples of tendencies that have also infected democracies. Too many architects have been driven by monumentalism or theories of social engineering rather than responding to human needs. Even the great Sir Basil Spence did not see the folly of going to the Mediterranean for inspiration on a design for the Scottish climate.

Significantly, Glasgow's redevelopment plans look back to its own past. The city is reconstructing the old four-storey tenements in modern form, just as other cities are recreating workers' cottages and town squares. This is continuity through renewal rather than preservation and it fits the spirit of our time — chastened, more respectful of the past and sensitive to people's needs.

There was a case for preserving Sir Basil's towers, either as inspiration or awful warning, depending on choice, but not at any price and when no function could be found for them. Architectural students can study pictures of them instead.



Our Annual Lecture for 1993 will be given by Sir Bernard Fielden who will talk about 'Values in the Modern Movement'. This will take place on 28th October at 6.00 at the Royal Institute of British Architects and will be preceded by our Annual General Meeting.

We plan to increase the size and frequency of the UK Newsletter, commencing with the first issue for 1994 subject to funding.

Finally, I am happy to report that discussions are now proceeding cordially between North British Housing Association (NBHA) and Camden Council, regarding the transfer to the association of Lawn Road Flats by Wells Coates. This news is sadly marred by the death recently of our colleague Colin Jones who introduced NBHA to us and so paved the way for the transfer.

*(Report by coordinator Christopher Dean)*

#### **Israel: national and international activities**

The year 1994 will be of great importance for Modern Movement architecture in Israel, as important national and international activities will take place.

At a national level, the first general meeting of Israeli DOCOMOMO members will take place at the end of the year to develop a program for the public activities for next year, to make an evaluation of the buildings register that is being compiled and also to organize ourselves and explain our purposes to the new mayors that begin their task as a result of the municipal elections of late October.

At an international level, Israel will host two important activities.

The first one, in March, is the Second International Jerusalem Symposium on Heritage, that has as a subject 'heritage and planning for an era of socio-political change', and through sub-themes like 'decision makers and the public', 'development: destroying or sustaining culture' raises subjects that we may affront as DOCOMOMO working parties.

The second, in May, focuses on the International Style and will take place in Tel Aviv. This congress is being organized under the patronage of UNESCO and the auspices of DOCOMOMO International, and will analyze theoretical as well as technical and technological aspects of the Modern Movement heritage (see announcement).

All members of other DOCOMOMO groups are invited to obtain details on both events through our national secretariat (see elsewhere for address).

*(Report by Arie Sivan, national representant of DOCOMOMO in Israel)*

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#### **Italy: on the national register**

In November, we celebrate the first Anniversary of the Italian DOCOMOMO Working party. The members now number over forty, including recent adherents from Pisa, Rome and Turin. Furthermore, a postal current account has been established in August. The account number is no. 33924002, under the heading: Maristella Casciato c/o DOCOMOMO Italia.

In the last months the activity of the Italian Working Party mainly focused on the issue of the register. A special commission has agreed on the preliminary need of elaborating a project of a national register, meant as a reference frame for any positive program of protection, conservation, and restoration of modern architecture. This is considered an initial step, previous to any listing of a number of relevant modern buildings whose risk assessment is undisputable. Indeed, the commission aims to elaborate a document comparable to the 'plan for constraints', up to now very loudly required by cultural exponents, though never achieved by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Environment.

The proposed project should be articulated according to the following headings.

1. The definition of the criteria for recognising the buildings to be put under protection.
2. The definition of a procedure package of fulfillments for the protection. The procedure package will be articulated in relationship to different strategies of conservation, and according to a reasonable investment of financial resources.
3. The elaboration of a register form.

The concern of the commission for articulating the protection under a procedure package lies in the awareness that the present legislation, based on the plain enrollment of the monumental constraint, does result inadequately to the qualitative and quantitative features of Italian modern architecture. The constraint is a 'passive' tool of protection, therefore often ineffective, but it does not pay any attention to buildings that do not present any legislative constraint. In substance there is either an extremely rigid control (at least in administrative documents) or no control at all.

As a consequence the commission intends to focus on diversified procedure packages of fulfillments. The commission recognizes different approaches, from the most severe procedures to the more agile, with clear indications even for those buildings that will never fall under constraints, and anyhow to pursuing an action of controlling their destiny.

A draft of the register form has been extensively discussed and amended after several suggestions. In November, the form will be tested in a limited campaign, before starting a more comprehensive project in view of the national register.

The active participants in the special commission for the national register are: the members Basia

and Bardelli (for the Piemonte region), Verger (Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia), Casciato, Montenero, Muratore, Poretti, Redini, Saggiaro, Strappa, Veresani and Vocaturo (Lazio), Barucci (Calabria and Sicilia), Salto (Basilicata) and Morabito (Puglia).

The Italian DOCOMOMO Working party is planning a one-day conference to be held in November in order to discuss the goal of the national register and to examine the elaborated register form. At this meeting the annual assembly of the Italian Working party will take place too.

*(Report by Maristella Casciato and Luca Veresani of the Italian Working party Steering Committee)*

### **Lithuania: national register almost finished**

The Museum of Architecture, where DOCOMOMO's Lithuanian activities are based, will change its status.

From January 1st, 1994, the Museum will be a department of the Heritage Research Centre and we hope this will provide easier ways for MoMo buildings to be listed under the National Monuments Act.

This Autumn, the architectural society celebrates the second centenary of the Vilnius University Department of Architecture. The Academy of Arts existing today is the offspring of this school. In October 27 - 29 a conference and several exhibitions will be organized in honour of the institute.

Among the participants in the conference there will be many researchers, professors and architects both from Lithuania and from abroad: Latvia, Poland, Byelorussia. The conference will play the role of an action to increase the interest in MoMo architecture.

In May the Lithuanian group enjoyed the visit of DOCOMOMO Secretary Wessel de Jonge and we had a possibility to show both the architecture of the MoMo period and that of the earlier periods too.

We have no pretensions of including many buildings in the International DOCOMOMO Register, so we hope to send the list of our objects in time.

*(Report by Morta Bauziene, coordinator of the Lithuanian DOCOMOMO Group)*

### **The Netherlands: postWar is becoming hot item**

The 'philosophy group' within the Netherlands DOCOMOMO Working party met several times and is working on defining our MoMo-heritage, both in architectural form and in time. The most intensive debate however is on formulating a restoration philosophy: what necessary interventions can or cannot be undertaken and how can a building be given a new life with respect to the MoMo-qualities. The 'watchdog group' has had a rather quiet period. However, some buildings are at risk at this moment: Duiker's technical school in Scheveningen

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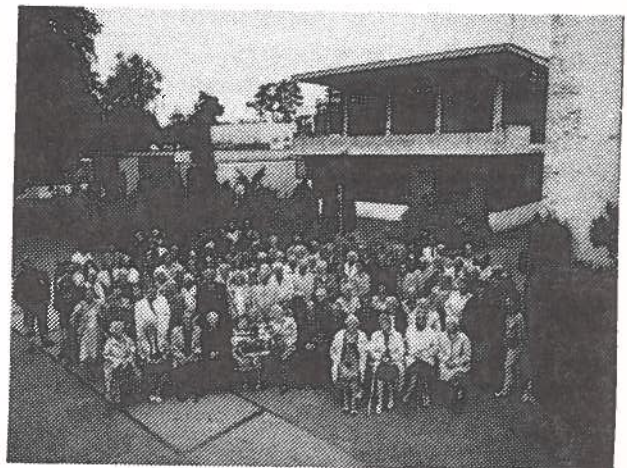
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and Van Eesteren's primary school in Den Haag. An attempt is made to organize a special mini-symposium with the municipality of Den Haag, to discuss the future plans and to convince local politicians of the value of these buildings. Finally, the 'register group' is working on the completion of the register forms for the buildings previously selected for the national MoMo register. On the International Day of Architecture, July 1st, 1993, the 'public relations' group of the Netherlands Working party organized a second national DOCOMOMO symposium, this time on the issue of postWar social housing. This theme is getting more and more topical in Holland, as is indicated by a series of events, publications and exhibitions on the issue.

The Rotterdam Arts Foundation organized a six-month festival on the postWar neighbourhoods of Rotterdam, focusing on the *Alexanderpolder*, including symposiums, seminars, lectures, several exhibitions, excursions, neighbourhood festivals and books. The annual DOCOMOMO symposium was made a part of this AIR Alexander festival.



A television documentary on the *Zonnestraal* Sanatorium in Hilversum (Jan Duiker, 1926) is being prepared for broadcasting next Spring. The photo of the opening on June 12, 1928, was reconstructed exactly 65 years later. For the photo, a group of people was invited that one way or another has been involved in the history of the building, such as Duiker's children and relatives of the Union leaders that initiated its establishment. Also, a number of people campaigning for its restoration was invited, among them many DOCOMOMO members. Photo: RQB Productions.

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Representatives of DOCOMOMO-NL were invited to participate in a discussion on the future for the architecture from the Reconsruction Period 1945-60 in the East-Central part of Rotterdam, that was organized by the municipality on November 12. Partly as a result of this meeting, the municipality will start a register project for postWar architecture in the city center.

On December 18th, an exhibition will be opened in Amsterdam on the architects that worked in the period just after the War: 'Young architects in the Reconstruction Period 1940-1960'. The exhibition can be seen until January 23rd in the beautiful *Beurs van Berlage* and comes with a catalogue. Other signs of growing interest in the history of social housing and urban planning are the recent publications on Lotte Stam-Beese and the first of four volumes of a monograph on CIAM president Van Eesteren. See elsewhere for reviews. Recently closed is a show on the oeuvre of Jan Wils (1891-1972), architect of the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium for which' survival DOCOMOMO has campaigned last year. The stadium is still there and next door, in his *Citroën Garage*, now partly in use as a gallery, the exhibition was held with great success.

Opening soon is another exhibition, on the use of colour by the architect W.M. Dudok. Until March 6th, many drawings, photo's and objects are on display in Hilversum, where he built one third of his 235 realised projects. A catalogue goes with the exhibition.

(Report by Rob Docter, DOCOMOMO-NL secretary)

### Norway: listing of two buildings required

This Fall, the Norwegian group focused on two objects in need of urgent protection: the Klingenberg Kino and the Vestkantbadet, both in Oslo. The Klingenberg Kino, designed in 1938 by Blakstad & Munthe-Kaas architects, is by far the finest authentic MoMo movie theatre in Norway and by now threatened by reconstruction plans. The Norwegian group has worked intensively to prevent these plans to be carried into effect. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is at this moment raising a request for protecting the theatre by law, so it seems that we have been successful sofar. The future of the almost authentic public swimming pool *Vestkantbadet* from 1932 by Bjercke and Eliassen is more unknown, but DOCOMOMO Norge has also in this case encouraged the Directorate to raise a request for listing.

(Report by Astrid Renata Van Veen, member of DOCOMOMO Norway)

### Russia: study of 'Soklöl' estate

The Russian National DOCOMOMO Working party had its last meeting on September 23rd in the Museum of Architecture in Moscow. Russian

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members expressed their gratefulness to the Executive Committee for exempting them from a membership fee.

During the past months we prepared and staged a number of exhibitions, amongst others on G. Goltz, B. Iofan, A. Minkus, I. Zsholtovsky, 'N. Gabo and the Palace of Soviets' as well as 'Architecture and Urban Design in the Netherlands after 1945'. A report on the Gabo show can be found elsewhere. In spite of the main stylistic features of neo-classic Soviet architects such as I. Zsholtovsky or G. Goltz, they were taking part in the Modern Movement of the 1920's and 30's. The problem of restoration and listing of the buildings of these architects as architectural landmarks has first priority in the tasks of our working party. Our group is currently working on the National Register in cooperation with the Commission for Inspection and Protection of State Monuments. In 1986 about 50 buildings of the Soviet period were listed as landmarks. Now we have already 56 monuments of the Modern Movement in our register, so far for Moscow only, and this work will be continued.

M. Nashokina, a member of our group, in collaboration with an architect and restorer, is making study of the conception and development of the 'Sokol' settlement (architect Markovnikov, 1924). They are working on a survey of the complex of buildings and designing a new reconstruction of the settlement.

I. Kazus together with the colleagues from the Shchusev Museum of Architecture are fond of the research 'The monuments of engineering and architecture of the beginning of the 20th century'. The members of our Working party show interest in the Conference of DOCOMOMO in Barcelona, and some of us hope to be present at that event.

*(Report by Vladimir A. Rezin, chairman Russian DOCOMOMO Working party)*

#### **Sweden: Interest is growing**

Our organization is becoming wellknown and we are being contacted by people who are dealing with buildings from the 1930's and want us to make investigations and statements. Some buildings in jeopardy or already destroyed have been presented in our major newspapers.

The general interest for MoMo architecture is growing, especially among younger architects. Some new housing areas in Stockholm have been realised in an architecture that is very sympathetic with the architecture of the 1930's, in a very successful way.

We have decided to make a short version of the DOCOMOMO Conference we had in Stockholm last autumn, and stage an evening with some of the lectures held then. This event is scheduled for November or December.

*(Report by Eva Rudberg, coordinator for Sweden)*

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# How *modern* is modernism in Kraków

## InterWar architecture in a former Polish capital

The architecture of our century was dominated by the Modern Movement: initially by its symptoms, then by its full-fledged form, and finally by its most decadent variety. That is why historians have primarily been interested in distinguishing the individual trends and most characteristic elements of this movement. They were interested in singling out its most representative features and elements which constituted a considerable achievement on a global scale. They also aimed at conducting syntheses which would depict all possible aspects of the origin and transformations of this 'modern' style. The innovative and formal solutions of the avantgarde came to be much respected, whereas the eclectic solutions which arose in the effect of stylistic mutations and local transformations came to be treated with considerable reserve. An example of this type of artistic activity, based on specific local aesthetic criteria was, among others, the Kraków group of artists that, since the 19th Century, had formed its own distinctive interpretation of the so-called 'alien' phenomena. This interpretation was coloured by the specific atmosphere of the city, and it can by all means be regarded as an event in the history of contemporary Polish architecture. Yet, apart from having been registered, it is still being treated as a marginal phenomenon.

by *Maria Zychowska*

The Kraków examples of this style, no doubt, belong to the first phase of modernism in the history of architecture. It is in this phase of the Modern Movement that one observes expressionist and neo-romantic influences and local traditions. Their ancestry goes back to classicism which had gradually evolved towards simpler forms and, at the same time, was an attempt to adjust to the atmosphere of the city in order to acquire a more individualistic formal expression. One should emphasize at this point that the above-mentioned forms arose quite outside the main trends of the 20th Century European architecture. They definitely deserve to be noticed although one does not record among them any outstanding artistic achievements which could be treated as milestones or turning points in the development of this aspect of life. The achievements in the sphere of architecture in Kraków during the interWar period are well worth recording and analysing for a number of reasons. Firstly, a considerable part of city architecture had

come into existence at that time. This part is so vast that avoiding to mention it or conducting a superficial analysis of only the most outstanding examples of this architecture, would seem to be a totally misguided procedure.

Secondly, the specific character of the city which grew out of the 'spiritual' atmosphere of this Polish capital from the times when our country was divided among three partitioning powers and from the characteristic attachment to the national past and the beauty of the old and new architecture, had all contributed to the formation of a powerful and significant center of architecture in Kraków. Its significance had already been noticed towards the end of the last century, but it was also strongly appreciated during the entire interWar period. The character of the local architecture, quite apart from the one-sided activities aimed at striving after beauty, was being understood, above all, as being in accordance with the fashionable European trends. As the third reason of our interest in this architecture,



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one should mention an attempt to define its real artistic values, both on a Polish and a European scale. It seems that it has too rashly been categorized as a symptom of provincialism and parochial interpretation of world phenomena. Besides, it does not seem fair to refer to the individual style of the city in the 1920's and 30's, well-merged with elements of older architecture of immense value, as an irrational procedure.

### Three groups

As regards the character of the realizations in the twenty year period between the two Wars, one may divide them into three groups:

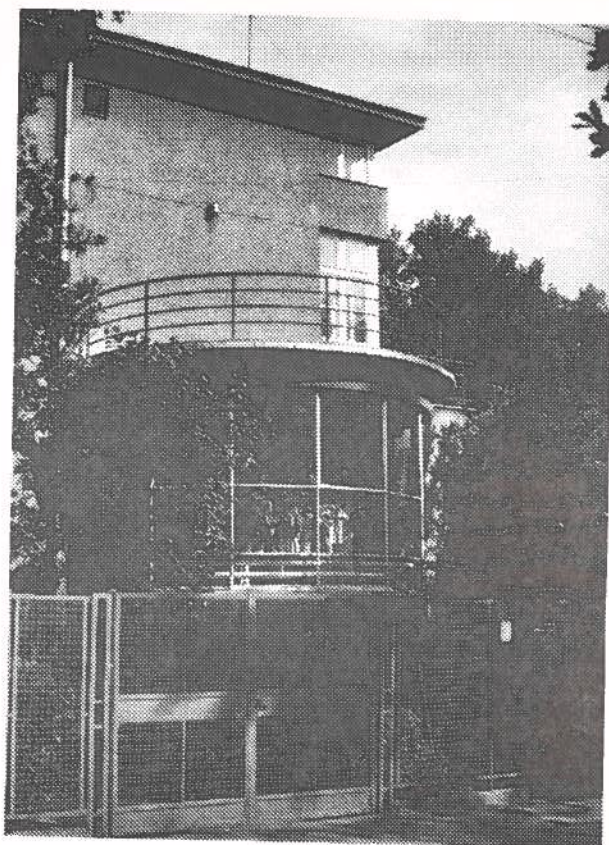
The first one comprises examples of architecture which take up historical stylistics and whose shape had been based on classical composition, referred to as academic classicism. From 1918 onwards, this trend is represented in Kraków by, among others, the Polish Savings Bank (PKO) designed by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, and by the Polish Bank

Far left: apartment building by Fryderyk Tadanier, 1930.  
Left: the gynaecological clinic by Jerzy Struszkiewicz, 1930-32, is an example of the Manor-style.

Top: apartments by Wacław Nowakowski, 1927-28.

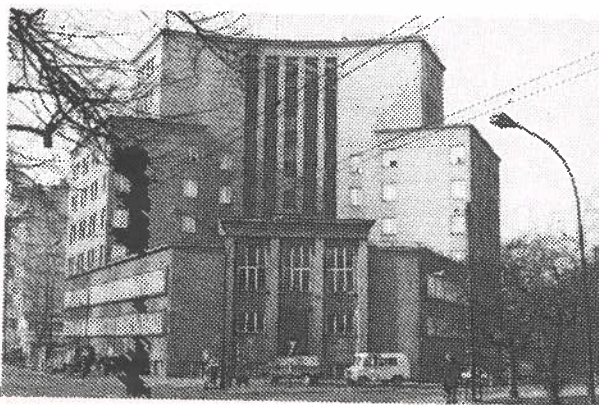
Top right: single family house designed in 1936 by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz.

Bottom right: the Agricultural Bank of 1938-1954, by Wacław Krzyżanowski.



designed by Kazimierz Wyczynski and Teodor Hoffman. Besides them, in the same group one finds the 'Polish Manor', that is a convention expressing national identity through the application of the elements characteristic of the old residences of the Polish gentry. The most representative ones in this category are to be found outside Kraków, for instance the gynaecological clinic designed by Jerzy Struszkiewicz.

Looking for inspiration in various historical trends and trying to combine their elements in an eclectic composition is visible on the facades of several buildings. Such examples of a wider European phenomenon of return to tradition can also be found in Kraków. Its traces can, for instance, be found in the building at 17 Lea Street, by Teodor Hoffman. Another group of buildings show simplified historical forms which are also, to some extent, based on classical compositions, but whose elements are limited to the form of simple columns and pilaster strips. Within this group one may distinguish the





so-called 'Kraków School' which was characterized by a specific preference for a highly decorative style. For many years this type of architecture has been the city's chief visiting-card. In this context, one should mention the apartment buildings for teachers of the Jagiellonian University and the building of the Insurance Company for City Officials.

### **Traditionalism**

Apart from tendencies towards excessive decorativeness, in accordance with the general striving towards more austere forms and details, a so-called 'verticalism' appeared, that is an updated and more simplified academic classicism. Excellent examples of these tendencies are the Jagiellonian Library by Waclaw Krzyzanowski and Fryderyk Tadanier's apartment building at Inwalidow Square. In the latter group one also finds the characteristic Kraków tenement houses erected in a traditional way, with spacious, comfortable apartments, in most cases with symmetrical simple facades with discreet vertical and horizontal decoration, mostly done in skillful plasterwork, and also coats-of-arms in relief and stylized friezes. Examples of this style are the houses designed by Waclaw Krzyzanowski, Adolf Duntuch, Jakub Spiry or Stanislaw Nebenzhal. The buildings which have been mentioned so far seem to point out that there was a strong tendency towards traditionalism in Kraków which in most cases relied heavily on national history, the romantic tradition and on the preserved elements of folk art. The latter had played an important role in Kraków architecture of the interWar period. It was, by no means, a unique phenomenon in Europe. Similar tendencies can be found in Scandinavia where stylized mediaeval motifs were reflected in religious architecture. An aversion from the avant-garde style was combined with an all-European assault on uniform, supra-national forms at the beginning of the 1930's. These tendencies were conducive to strengthening the position of the 'architecture-of-the-middle', taking an intermediary position between tradition and leading trends.

### **Undecorated**

The last group comprises buildings whose forms diverge most strongly from historical tradition. Their authors search for their own forms of expression on the basis of the interpretation of contemporary imported patterns. Quite modern buildings in reinforced concrete appear, permitting a free and unhampered shaping of the exterior, yet kept within the pattern of traditional composition. There are only some elements in their decoration that testify the onset of new stylistics. The most conspicuous examples are the Agricultural Bank by Waclaw Krzyzanowski, the Polish Savings Bank at Szczepanski Square by Fryderyk Tadanier and the Feniks Buildings by Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, Jerzy Struszkiewicz and Maksymilian Burstin. In the 1930's one observes the construction of a group of multi-family tenement houses, to some

extent modelled on functionalism, but in fact not having much in common with it, apart from the concept of small surfaced flats. Good examples are the housing complex in Pasterska Street, the housing scheme for the employees of the Social Insurance Agency in Falata Street, and the housing estate near Sloneczna Street. The authors of these new complexes concentrated primarily on the idea of ensuring a good standard of living for the tenants. In this context, one should also mention a cooperative building at 15 Parkowa Street which obtained a very simple, austere facade devoid of any decorative elements.

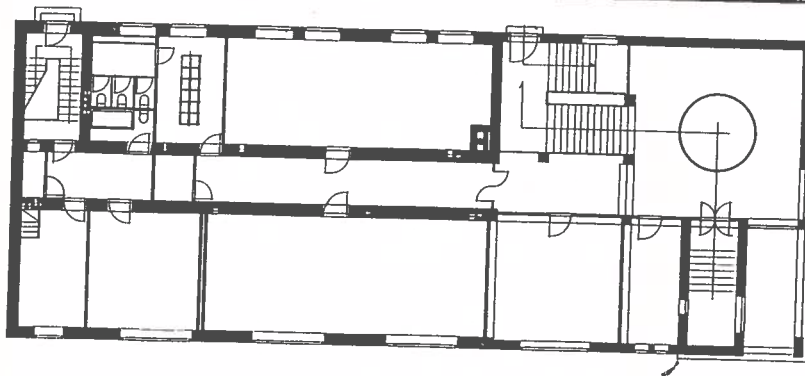
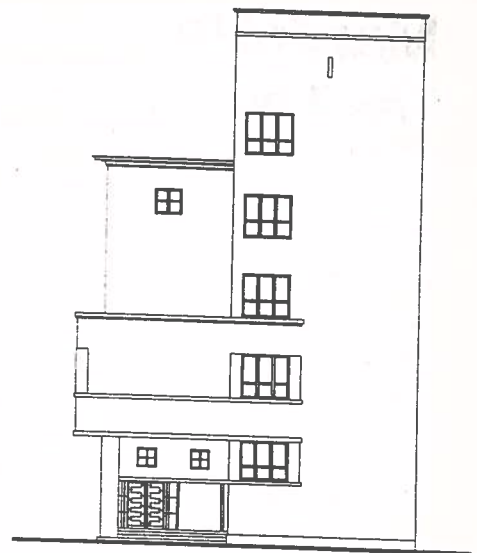
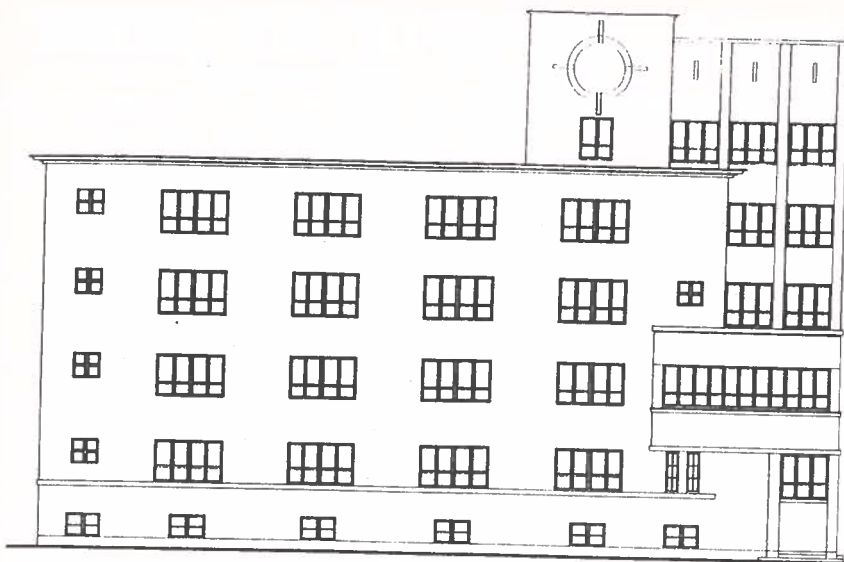
### **Industrial buildings**

Asymmetry, much in the spirit of cubist architecture, was not among the most popular solutions in Kraków. Similar conceptions appeared mainly in the realizations of industrial complexes, such as Wander's plant, by Jakub Spira, the clerks and workers' canteen in the Solway plant, by Waclaw Nowakowski, and also Fryderyk Tadanier's social care building in the worker's housing estate in Czarodziejska Street. In the latter group one also finds two one-family homes in Cichy Kacik designed by Szyszko-Bohusz.

The buildings belonging to the latter group are as close to avantgarde as it gets in Kraków, which does not mean, however, that they should be considered as examples of the avantgarde. While analysing the stylistics of these buildings one cannot avoid the Bauhaus' search after new cubist forms, although one observes a certain lack of consistency in the local realization of all the assumptions behind this movement. Thus, invoking compositions of mutually linked cubic shapes constitutes the greatest divergence from tradition. An analysis of new aesthetic principles allows to conclude that it has emerged only in industrial or commercial architecture as well as in realizations involving stringent financial conditions. This phenomenon is directly linked with the option of cheaper realizations, which almost entirely gave up the idea of decorativeness.

### **Outside 20th Century ideology**

This lack of understanding of the new times and its predominant ideology considerably depreciates the Kraków environment, particularly as it does not participate fully in the social problems related to construction. At the same time, however, it proves that the above-mentioned environment has retained its own character. It is characterized by relatively uniform aesthetic views and does not strive after changing fashions of the moment. The term 'fashionable European trend' had gradually acquired a pejorative ring. Hence, a wish to emphasize the 'native' character of architecture arose, although sometimes it was understood as adhering to a semi-modernist convention. An important feature of this architecture was its specific decorativeness, which sometimes was the result of



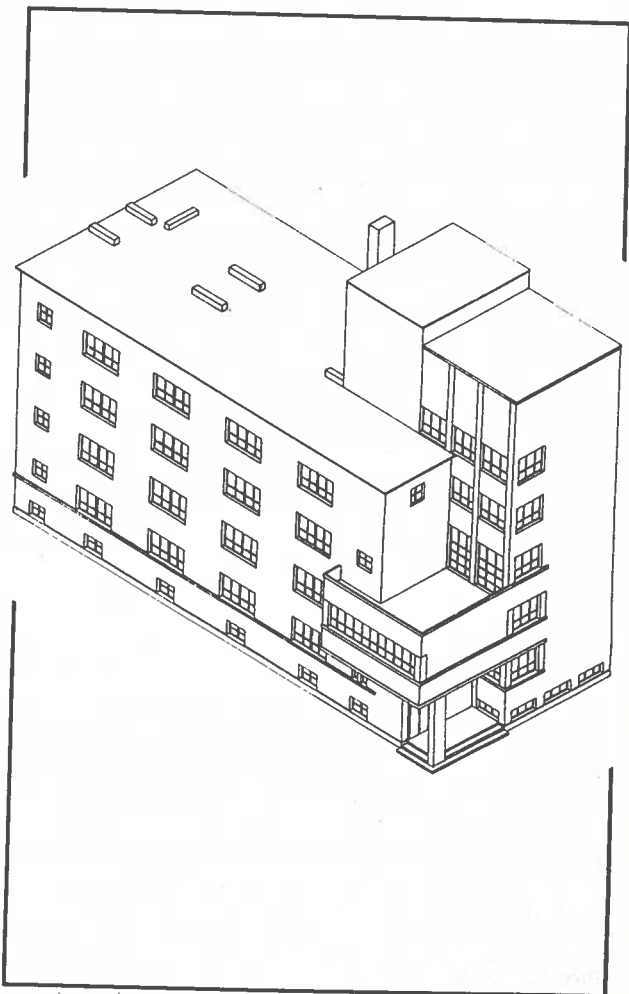
DOCOMOMO Poland has involved students of the Faculty of Architecture of the Kraków Polytechnic in documenting the city's MoMo heritage. Here is an excellent example of such a documentation: the City Excursions Hotel, designed in 1926 by Edward Kreisler. Student's name unknown.

administrative restrictions. This feature had been a predominant characteristic already before World War I. In spite of some transformations and simplifications in the 1920's, it was a decisive element as regards the design of the facades. It consisted, above all, of textural effects in plaster work, friezes placed over the ground and top floors as well as coats-of-arms in relief.

### Contemporary Polish history

Summing up one should stress that the phenomena mentioned above are important in a Polish architectural perspective. With respect to the European tradition, standing outside the predominant 20th Century ideology, they reflect social and artistic processes which had then taken place in Kraków. They have produced their own characteristic image which is equally unique as other phenomena of this kind, like the Amsterdam School in The Netherlands or the architectural styles in some totalitarian countries. The convention accepted in Kraków at the time, had a complex origin. Stylistically, it did not go further than semi-modernism. Ideologically, it looked back nostalgically to the past, consciously rejecting the avantgarde and surrendering to spontaneous pragmatism only sporadically. In this way, a part of our contemporary history has been preserved in the form of architecture and this is its real and true value.

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# Marcel Iancu and the Rumanian avantgarde

## Tradition, modernity and modernism

Rumania is a country that seems to have been always culturally isolated at the eastern gates of Europe. Yet in the roaring period between the two World Wars, several Rumanian artists made significant contributions to vanguard movements like Dadaism, that cast a spell on European culture. Apart from the poet Tristan Tzara and the sculptor Constantin Brancusi, the architect and versatile artist Marcel Iancu played a major role in introducing the avantgarde in Rumania.

Iancu dedicated much of his artistic career to the integration of the Arts. His works seem to be defined by a continuous struggle between tradition and modernity. How modern was this artist, who was so determining for the Modern Movement in Rumania?

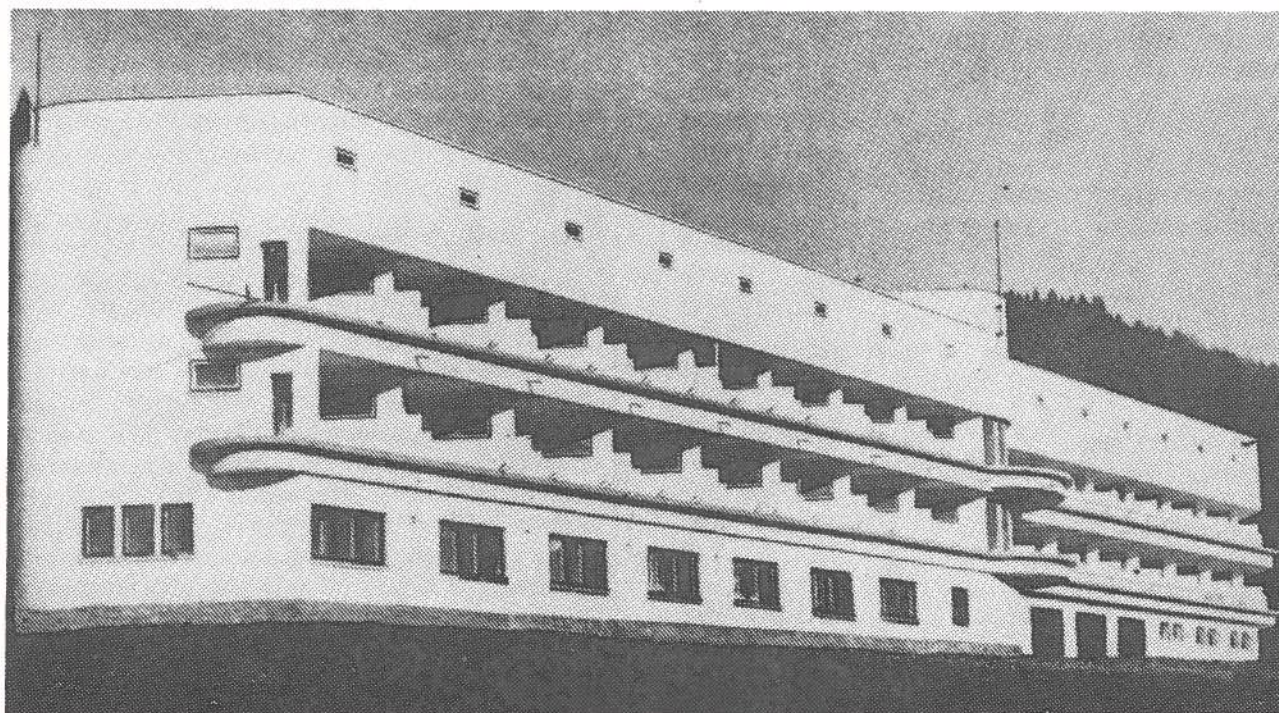
by Anca Tomashevski Sandu\*

Any artistic vanguard precedes, by definition, the appreciation by the society from which it seeks recognition. At the beginning of this century, this artistic phenomenon restructured the aesthetic categories and the objectives of architecture following the theoretical method *à la guerre comme à la guerre*. The *Fronde* was defiling insolently and ostentatiously, shocking through its aggression, calling for a general intellectual mobilization through proclamations and leaflets, because architecture had to be saved from opportunistic academism, from the sclerosis and the immobility in aesthetically dogmatic routine. *Off with the Procrustan reference to bourgeois conventionalism of styles!* Suddenly, artistic Europe was full of animation. Great alert. Debates, polemics, negations and innovations. Disgraces and passions. The vanguard

trumpeteers were followed by proselytes and epigones, conservatives and opportunists, by enthusiastic Jesuits and even by irresolute moderate intellectuals. With a noisy clash of arms, they did succeed to definitely shake off the comfort of historicist' certitudes.

### Funny, amazing figures...

Rumania, a country that always felt isolated at the eastern gates of Europe, was then, in those crazy years, for the first and only time, synchronous with the artistic quivering flowing from the cultural centers. Three Rumanian names of international fame set up and encoded the modern language in Rumanian arts: the sculptor Constantin Brancusi, the poet Tristan Tzara and the architect Marcel Iancu - painter, poet, publisher, graphic designer,



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urban planner, essayist, sketcher, scene painter and sculptor.

Marcel Iancu (Bucharest, 1895 - Ein Hod, 1984) was a first year's student at the Zürich Polytechnic when, on July 14th, 1916, the birth certificate of the Dada movement was signed in the Zur Waag Hall of the Voltaire Cabaret. Then, a first show was staged of a group including Tristan Tzara, Marcel Iancu, Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, Oppenheim .... only at a short distance of the house where Lenin was just thinking of the other revolution.

In 1917 the Dada gallery was opened in Zürich and Marinetti, Kandinsky, Apollinaire and Cendrars were present when Oskar Kokoschka's play was staged - all in a fabulous scenery by Marcel Iancu. It was about this totally original scenery made of posters, masks and abstract reliefs in wood, plaster and metal, that Jean Arp wrote to him from Paris in 1957: 'My dear Iancu, why haven't you thought of more of those sculptures.... funny, amazing figures? In those works you foresaw so many things! Only you, it's only you that was right, *despite your architecture*, as you foresaw the times of full and free falling in the Arts'.

### Bringing the avantgarde to Rumenia

Marcel Iancu came back home in 1922, after he had refused a chair at München University and after he participated in the first Congress on Constructivism - which he joined - in Düsseldorf. This same year marks other revolutionary events in the arts' high spiritual courts: the Dadaist movement, this international roar of laughter, current of fresh air, had vanished smilingly, as clean as it was in its superb freedom. In Paris, surrealism was born from its ashes. Also in Paris, Le Corbusier was building the Ozenfant House, designing a city for 3 million inhabitants and publishing *Vers une Architecture*. Loos was publishing the collection *Ins Leere gesprochen* and building the Rufer House and the model-district of Heuberg in Vienna. And Henry Russel Hitchcock and Philip Johnson wrote another birth certificate: 'The International Style. Architecture since 1922'.

In that same year, in Bucharest, Ion Vinea and Marcel Iancu issued the avantgarde newspaper *Contimporanul*. Immediately after their publication, the works that broke new ground for the Modern Movement were publicized. Le Corbusier, Gerrit Rietvelt, Adolf Loos with his house for Tristan Tzara in Paris of 1925....all soon became known. In terms of exclusiveness, it should be mentioned that articles were published that were written by Le Corbusier, Auguste Perret and other friends of Marcel Iancu, such as Delaunay, Max Ernst, Hans Arp, Theo van Doesburg, André Breton, Jean Cocteau, Paul Eluard, Sartoris, Miguel de Unamuno... Marinetti visited the *Contimporanul* group in 1926, due to his interest in this periodical, that promoted the highest form of vanguardism: *integralism* - a syncretic, affirmative and constructive synthesis of the Arts.

The first to develop a critical consciousness of

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changes necessary within the architectural vocabulary in Rumanian vanguardism is Marcel Iancu. Horia Creanga, unanimously considered as the main figure in Rumanian modernism by critics, as well as most other prominent interWar architects, saw in Marcel Iancu a model, but at the same time integrated his works into the current they adhered to. They understood that vanguardism, making room into the firmly rooted set of exhausted forms that had been institutionalized for long, had always to be treated in a special way. Therefore, Marcel Iancu dedicated the larger part of his energy to developing his theory on these new concepts. Only because he had paved the way, those of the second line - in terms of generations - could then create the masterpieces that would make some of them 'the greatest' or 'one of the most important'.

### The Kaaba at a carnival party

Why was Marcel Iancu, together with the whole of Rumanian vanguardism, unconditionally assimilated with the modern tendencies?

First of all, in Rumania modern architecture did not develop over a long period of 'gestation'; in a way, it was forcedly born, looking like a precocious child with too well-defined features.

What contemporary literature identified as 'the first cubist dwelling in Bucharest' were a few villas designed by Marcel Iancu in 1925-27. In those days, the Rumanian towns indulged themselves in a Balcanic chaos of styles. An eclectic academic style suffering from all possible influences was omnipresent: from palaces full of dignity to modest wagonhouses in the outskirts. Yet, it has to be mentioned that among those styles also a new original Rumanian style emerged that reached an admirable level of local cultural patriotism, though



Left: selfportrait.

Far left and bottom: one of the most significant works of Marcel Iancu, designed in 1936, is the Sanatorium for Dr. Popper in Predeal. The two period photos show the principal facade.



many times with awkward results.

It is against this background that we have to imagine Marcel Iancu's cubist volumes, disguised as the famous *Kaaba* from Mecca at a carnival party. Despite it, just in 1931, Creanga designed the ARO building, that became emblematic for the Rumanian Modern Movement.

A second argument is based on Umberto Eco's theory, that any vanguard phenomenon comprises two stages: a first, of a rather destructive nature, that is concentrated on dissolving obsolete formalized principles. A second stage, called experimentalist, is aimed at discovering the shapes of the new, in terms of expression. Yet, only together the two stages confer vitality and ardour upon this active cultural factor: the avantgarde.

### Integrating the ordinary

Marcel Iancu had his 'noisy' stage in his early years, at first in the original abstractness materialized by him in numerous new artistic forms. Then, in blazing advertising campaigns, full of irrevocable verdicts, revelations and triumphal discoveries: 'Off with the arts, it has prostituted itself!', 'Burn the drawing boards and make models!', 'Architecture, a bunch of worn out mausoleums...', 'Styles, impotent monstrosities...', 'Eradicate individualism!'...

All of these displayed the nervousness of artistic changes, simultaneously with the international vanguard movement. They probably originated in a nihilistic impulse inherent to the artist's age, but then: modernism itself lived its teens. The whole avantgarde gave the impression it wanted to have the last word.

Marcel Iancu was 'blowing up' the conventions in order to give them a new content. This effervescence of the inventor made him reveal a wealth of social valences of the new architecture, as well as the common factors to be integrated with aesthetics: the concept of functionality, sincerely acknowledged to be applied by help of new materials and techniques. But, never did his rebellious spirit degenerate into uselessness, into fury or idle demolition, his eccentricities never ended in scepticism, nor in the selfpride of an incomprehensible individualism. Marcel Iancu gave constructive solutions, he was good in spirits and optimistic: 'Architecture, art of spatial relations, of balanced volumetric rates...subject to the organic laws of sensibility and geometry...', 'urbanism, architecture's social aim...', 'Aesthetics, utilitarian sense of building...' This was Marcel Iancu's period of negation and his break with cultural conventions.

### Filter of traditions

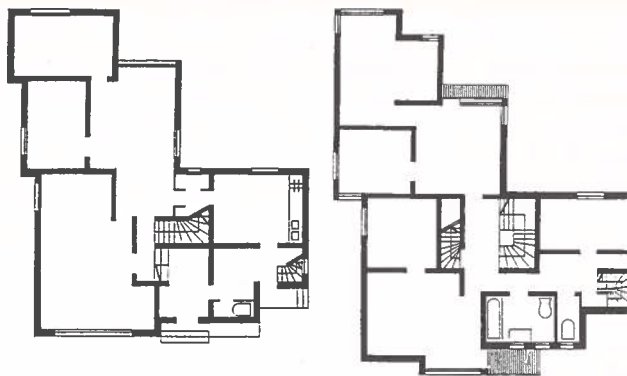
His career as a practicing architect only started with his maturity in intellectual terms. This is the distinctive, particular motivation that gives us the right to call him a cautious vanguardist, more so if we look at his buildings. But the real motivation is of a more general kind. It refers to the flexibility of a peripheral culture in the way that Rumanian

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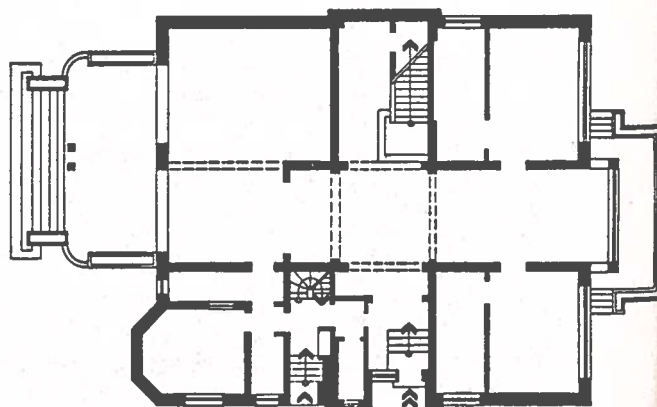
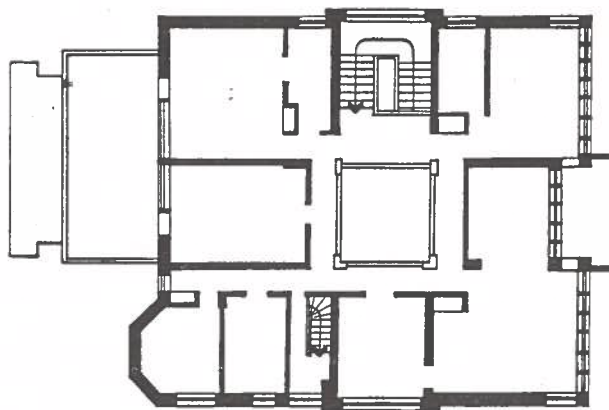
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culture appreciated European ideas and applied them to the most pragmatic of the Arts: architecture. Semantically or even semiotically, in terms of content and senses, Marcel Iancu's architecture concerted with tradition, even if the architect might not have been aware of this himself. He was a necessary filter of tradition, especially with respect to rural life.

His first designs for individual houses in Bucharest show a balanced attempt to move from a traditional way of living, typical for the middle-class, to modern functional principles. For example, his first house (the Lambru house) shows, on the one hand, the intention to separate areas within a volumetric unit and, on the other, ambiguity in defining functional arrangements within the rooms, although it is one of the few constructions unconditioned by the site

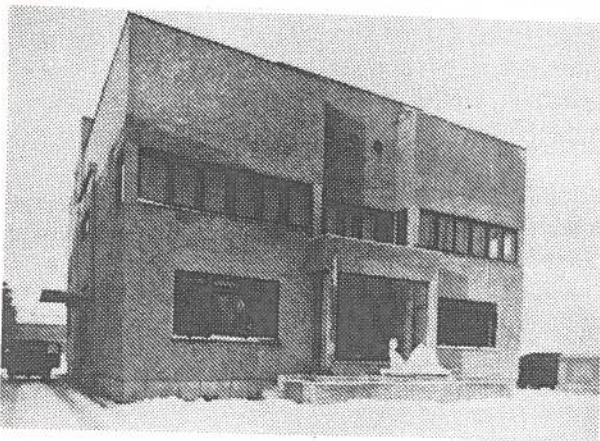


Left: Marcel Iancu's first work, the Lambru House in Bucharest; floorplan. Bottom: Chihaescu House of 1932; the plan shows an almost classical layout. A period photo, as published in *l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* in 1934, and a recent one. The combination of horizontal and round windows are found in the Lambru House too.

or other sometimes determining factors.

In aesthetics terms, the appearance of this first house is functionalist, yet it seems the result of some concessions, based on two supposed motives: it could be either an insufficient mastering of the new design vocabulary or a deliberate attempt to adapt the new lifestyle to more accepted standards, in order to facilitate reception by its users. In any case, the syntactic code of the elements making up the composition of the facades proves a thorough assimilation of the contemporary signals sent out from the cultural centers of the era.

In the same house, the orthogonal massing and facade treatment shows a dialogue between horizontal window bands and round windows, as perforations of the walls.



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### Modern or modernist

Following this prototype for an individual house, an obvious evolution can be seen in both the design for the Wexler Villa and the house for the chemist Chihaescu.

The first is the result of a program that included a workshop in the attic. It uses an unitary formal language from all points of view. The other, almost contemporary to the former (1932), shows an almost classical disposition of forms in plan, proportions and functional arrangements. Both correspond perfectly with the outside environment: a park behind and a promenade along the front garden. Inner spaces are visually connected, both horizontally and vertically, through mysterious vistas. And, again, the austerity of facades in outline and volume, tamed by the smart details of the form, remind us of the vanguard *fronde* struggling with formalized tradition.

If tradition is thesis and vanguardist' nihilism antithesis, then Marcel Iancu's vanguardism is synthesis; a tutorial modernist' spirit that stems from the Steiner House and the *Fagus Werke*, that adjusted his extreme avantgarde tendencies, and overlapping with a concept that was deeply rooted in the continuity of local cultural values.

One thing is sure: vanguardist Marcel Iancu was a modern architect. Yet, similarly, and without acknowledging it, architect Marcel Iancu was, in the better sense, a cautious *modernist* as well. If, in his youth, he severely criticized styles, as an architect he was feverishly looking for 'human' forms to express the new style.

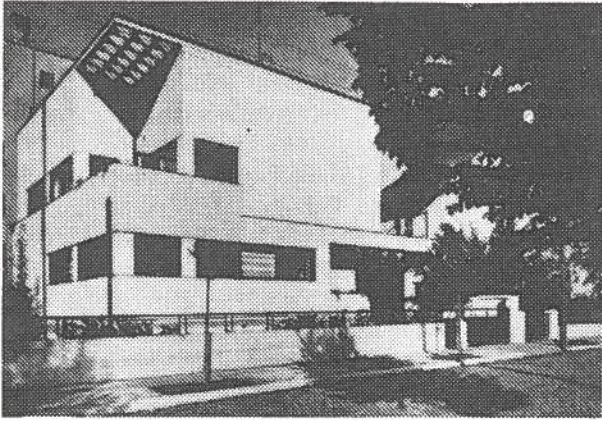
'We synthesize the everlasting will of universal life and the efforts of all modern experiments!', he declared. And, in some of his works, we really find this synthesis, that was born in Weimar where the modern movements of all the arts were brought together.

### Social illusion

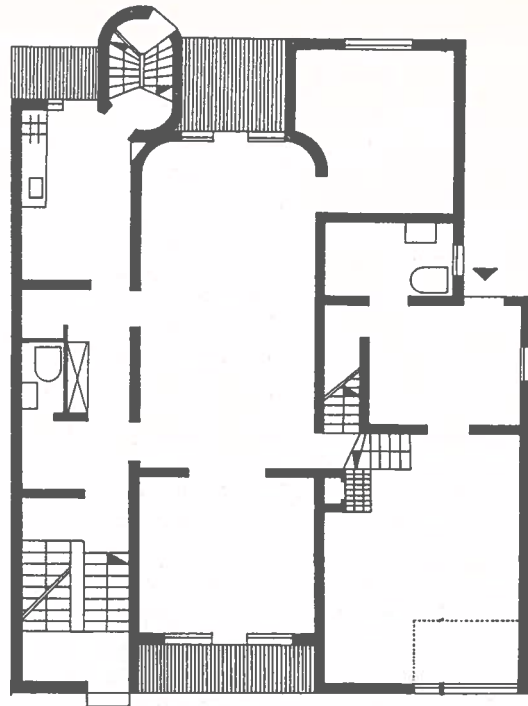
The Gold Building, a success both as an example of Modern Movement architecture and of urban integration, has a *bas-relief* by sculptor Mihaela Patrascu over the entrance. It is a detail that confers the entrance a particular style. For this artist, who was a good friend of his, Marcel Iancu built a house with a workshop, that is as peculiar as its owner. Mihaela Patrascu was an ex-wife of Pierre Curie and a friend of all the Parisian artists of *Les années folles*. She used to say: 'The real discoveries of our time are the light, the bathroom, the kitchen, the heating. I already congratulate myself for having all that in the new house Marcel Iancu will build for me'.

Marcel Iancu also built housing blocks but, unfortunately, most of these suffer from their environment, tortured by the crooked infrastructure of the city, or by the narrowness of their site.

This becomes obvious when studying the plans but is well hidden on an urban level of perception. Inside, the flats' surface area and fittings are not in



Top: the Villa Reich, dating from 1937, is one of Iancu's outstanding late works. Right: groundfloor plan of the house for the artist Milita Patrascu, 'that is as peculiar as its owner'.



harmony with the claimed 'collectivist' principles. On the contrary, stained-glass windows and other pieces of furniture designed by the architect show his concern for the individual psychic comfort. In all of his works, architectural details are part of the lexical content of modern aesthetics, yet he used them in a different way. Contrasting with the social illusion of equality in a machine age, they provide intimacy and humanity.

#### Unattained Ideals

The Reich Villa and the sanatorium for Doctor Popper at Predeal are two of his later works, dating from 1937. The horizontal elements in the composition of the facade soothes the cubic, stout massing of the villa, borrowing grace and elegance to the volume. Light has a main role here, playing in the filigree of details, enhancing the composition. The horizontality of the whole volume of Popper's sanatorium has a different sense within the topography of the mountain resort Predeal. Its rhythm is also defined by light and its lines seem to refer to the human silhouette and, maybe, to that of the firs and the movement of clouds.

It seems a certain thing that the ideal that Marcel Iancu adhered to, remained unattained: even with a pistol against his head, his hand could never draw a 'machine to live in'.

In 1941, Marcel Iancu had to stop his activities in Rumania. At the same time, violently, his creative activities as a whole ceased as well. '...Aware of the similitude of forms in architecture and fine arts, in creation and composition, I struggled all my life for a new synthesis of these arts. Unfortunately I could not fulfill this struggle in the country I was born, because of forced emigration in the best years of my activity.'

He moved to Israel and lived in Ein Hod, somewhere in the south part of the Carmel

heights, not far from Haifa. There he founded, amongst olive and cypress trees, under the burning sun of the Mediterranean, an original vilage of artists. He built no more houses. But he rebuilt, following archeological vestiges, a small place and created an artistic campus.

There he was again a painter, sculptor, sketcher... and especially a teacher in syncretism of the Arts. Nowadays, at Ein Hod, Marcel Iancu's exhibition is permanent. Since he was a vanguardist and a sentimentalist, bold and introvert, engaged and detached, sharp and tender, redeeming and sensible... fighter and man of silence... who can forget his art?

*Anca Tomashevski Sandu is an architect and editor in chief of Arhitectura.*

*\*Text has been considerably edited and partly rewritten by the editor. We apologize for any misinterpretation made.*

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# Cardboard modernism...

## ...can't young monuments look old?

It is relatively easy to register and describe monuments of the Modern Movement. The problems start when it gets to preservation. What makes up the *monumentability* of Modern Movement's monuments? Is it the immaterial aura, the conceptual significance or rather the worn out historic artefact itself that matters? Perhaps the clean and timeless image as appears on period photographs interest us most. Saving or recuperating this initial appearance seems to bring us back to the heroic days of the movement. A number of recent restorations that have been executed shows how we do not allow modernism to age, or at least we have problems to keep distance. The strong identification with the architects of the avantgarde makes originals and copies get mixed up. On the one hand this trend gives opportunities for innovative restorations. On the other hand it tends to turn the reminders of a powerful movement into empty gestures of a hilarious and caricatural revival; as perfect as the embalmed body of Lenin. This essay investigates *what* is being preserved by reshaping the traces of a movement which seems unable to go down in history.

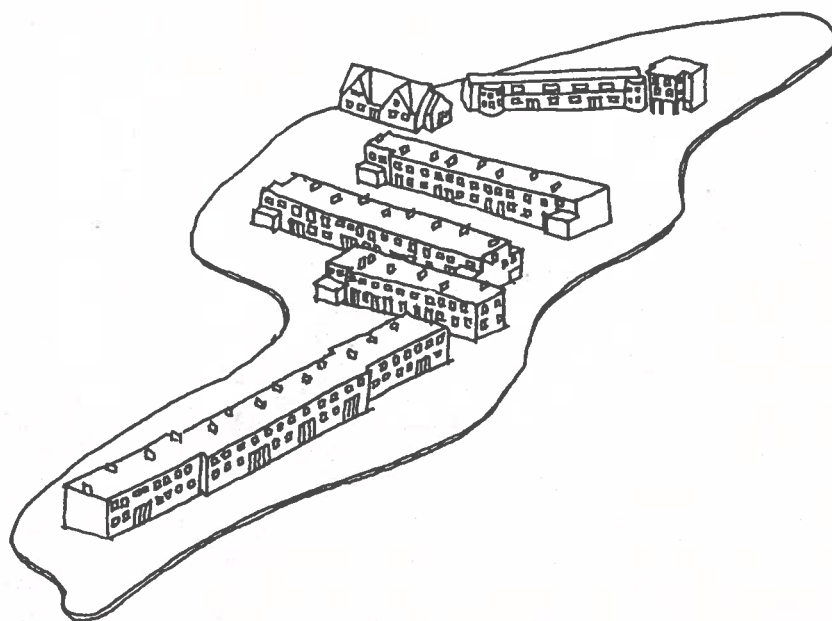
by Paul Meurs

The preservation of monuments of the modern movement presents anachronistic accidents that occur in the name of history and modernism. In fact, some buildings seem to be immune against historic events or decay. They survive bombings, demolition and fatal construction errors. The miraculous resurrection of the pavilion by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in Barcelona proves that good architecture can be timeless. The vitality of this temporary masterpiece was precisely captured in a copy (1929; 1985). Other monuments, on the contrary, have apparently

more conceptual than physical strength. They lack all resistance against the effects of time. The ruins of the Zonnestraal Sanatorium (Duiker and Bijvoet, Hilversum 1928) show the inevitable destiny of one-way constructions, no matter how eternal their architecture may be.

Perhaps the most 'moving' architectural heritage was left by J.J.P. Oud (1890-1963). His café *De Unie* in Rotterdam was once destroyed, but got rebuilt at another location in the city (1924-1940; 1986). The social housing project *De Kiefhoek* also faced reconstruction, as its provisional foundation

Distracted neighbourhoods: preWar housing areas don't come up to today's standards in floorarea and technical quality. The scale is outdated, not yet dealing with cars etc. To save the neighbourhoods, new plans are squeezed into the existing bodies, by combining or extending dwellings. There's a danger that eventually nothing is kept, and nothing is created at the same time. Unlike an organically grown historic townscape, an urban design need not to be preserved entirely in order to prevent its loss. By concentrating restoration in a representational part and by thorough renovation or redevelopment of the rest, both the old and the new can show full advantage.



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was too precarious to carry the houses any longer (1925; 1989). A rebuilt block, this time with a proper foundation, now even houses a reconstructed original museum dwelling. Another semi-permanent housing complex by Oud in Rotterdam, called *Oud-Mathenesse*, could in the end not survive (1922-1989). Shortly after the demolition of this tiny white village, however, the site-cabin which had been used by the construction supervisors re-appeared as a kind of three-dimensional billboard at an industrial site next to a highway in Sassenheim, some fifty kilometers from Rotterdam (1923-1938, 1992).

### Critical reassessment

Some examples of modern monument preservation show a striking similarity with experiences of a hundred years ago. Just like in the early days of *Denkmalpflege* and *Monument Trust*, there is hardly any distance between restorer and monument. The architects in the 19th Century relayed on their supposedly superb knowledge of medieval styles and felt competent to correct originals in order to make them match with their ideas. Nowadays, the problem to keep distance does not deal with styles, but with the personality of the author and the way he 'would have acted'. Thanks to all the available documentation, drawings and detailed information any restorer can turn into a reincarnation of any dead modern architect. Many restorations are done by people who have once worked with the authors. Some old masters do the job themselves. The lack of distance and the overdose of knowledge make the differences between original and copy and between creation and preservation fade away. On the one hand this enables an easy reproduction

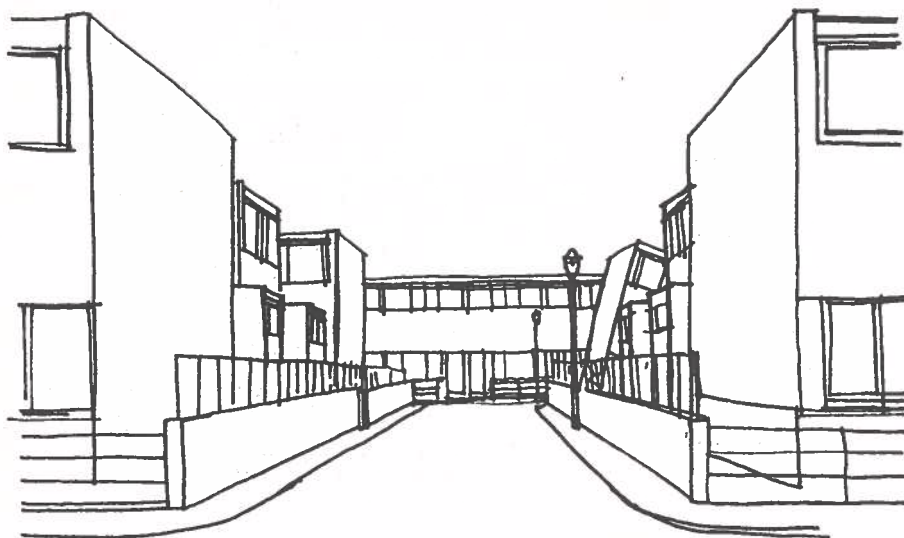
and popular divulgation of architectural masterpieces. On the other hand it takes the historic depth from modern monuments and changes them into superficial artefacts. A critical and distant reassessment is no longer possible.

### Author and monument

Thanks to copyrights, all architects can avoid aesthetic damage to their creations. They should even be consulted prior to alterations. Copyrights are a sign of respect to the aesthetic work of the author. When an object turns into a registered monument something else happens: it suffers a partial appropriation for the sake of the general interest. For such a far reaching decision generally there are architectonic, historic, cultural, aesthetic or anthropological excuses. These arguments do not have to coincide with the vision of the author; the value of a monument derives from what it represents in contemporary life. That is why concentration camps, torture rooms or everyday-constructions can turn into monuments. Once registered, the objects have a much better protection than with just the copyrights: demolition or harmful deteriorations are prohibited.

### Forever young

The importance of many modern monuments stems directly from the author. Buildings get famous because of the name of their architects. The conceptual context often prevails over the physical context. Besides, the place of the object in the oeuvre catalogue can be more important than the performance of the building in time. The emphasis on the author leads to some contradictions for the safeguarding of objects. First, preservation can offend the concepts of the author. After all, many



Kiefhoek booby-trap: Oud's *Kiefhoek* was not constructed with a proper pile foundation. Almost as to avoid sacrifice of the originals the houses slowly subsided, an important first step towards their eventual disappearance, taking place at current. The dwellings were aged, but for housing and architecture they remain indispensable. That is why a careful reconstruction of the neighbourhood is now being undertaken, with proper foundations. Most qualities and significations are being preserved. Except the intention that the houses are temporary. A secret treaty, to put one of the blocks right on the subsoil was made with the contractor. Nobody knows, nobody notes. But in twenty or thirty years time, or only ten, this block will slowly start to subside...

architects tried to quit with history and detested the thought that their buildings would go down in history as outdated relics. Protection of their (outdated and consumed) work therefore proves how they have failed. Second, repair from the point of view of the author sometimes presents a revision of history (see Niemeyer, below). And, third, time plays a paradoxical role. Although architectural innovations were supposed to be dynamic and temporary, they merely derived from static archetypes. Past and future do not exist in the utopian models, which are supposed to be eternal and disposable at the same time. The preserved fragments of these exemplary realities are doomed to stay forever young.

### Niemeyer vs. Niemeyer

The preservation of the Ministry of Education and Health in Rio de Janeiro shows how confusing the relation between authorship and general interest in practise can be. The building might be the youngest monument ever registered, just three years after its inauguration in 1945. It was designed by a group of six young Brazilian architects (including Niemeyer, Costa and Reidy) who got help from Le Corbusier in 1936. Rodrigo M.F. de Andrade, the director of the Brazilian monument trust SPHAN, explained the reason to protect the ministry as follows: 'this building represents a decisive step in the history of universal architecture (it is qualified as such in publications all over the world) in which Brazil is a pioneer country.' The fact that some of the architects worked for SPHAN in this period shows how the interest of the authors to defend their architecture was mixed up with the task to preserve the nation's heritage.

Seven Schröder Houses  
Project: The Schröderhuis in Utrecht arose at the edge of Utrecht, facing nature. Later on, a highway was built right next to it. Rietveld then suggested that the house could as well be demolished. And in fact, the speed on the highway is so high that you hardly can catch a glimpse of this main modern monument. Noise screens worsened it. Reproduction offers a way to stress the importance of this unique house. Seven in a row, six copies and one original complete the restoration. It forms a moving image for cardrivers. The original can only be recognized by the shape of the neighbouring house; the very silhouette that Rietveld used to trick the building inspectors to get a permit.

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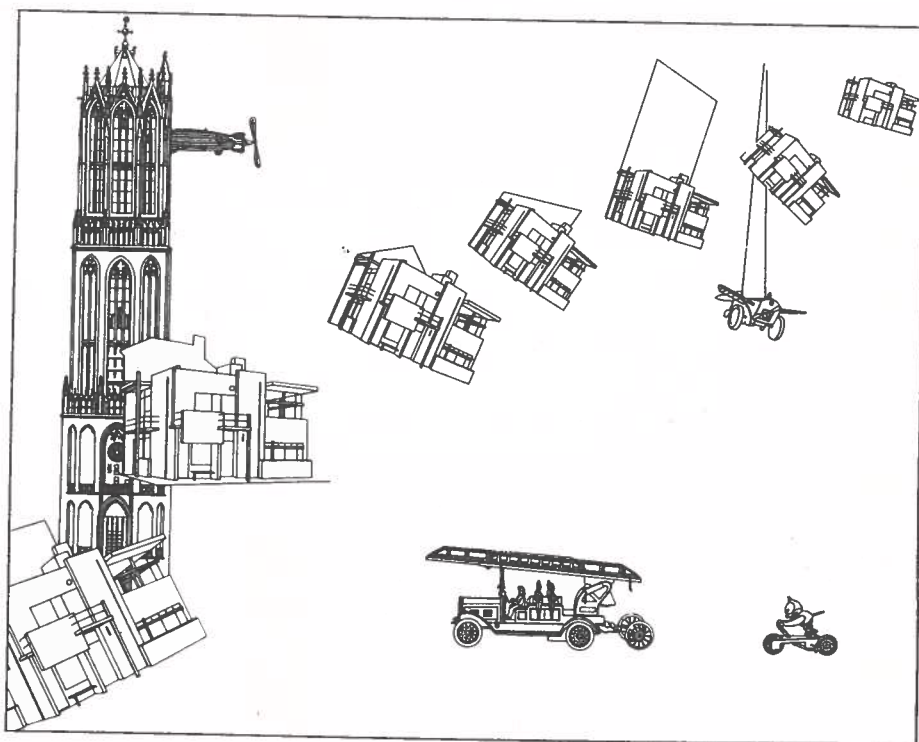
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The vision of authors on the essence of their projects can be rather different from the reasons for protection. Gerrit Rietveld thought that the Schröderhuis in Utrecht should rather be demolished after a highway was built alongside it. Oscar Niemeyer supported the initiative to tear down his Duchen factory in São Paulo. In both cases the value of the objects was so high that their demolition would mean c.q. have meant a big loss, despite the changed circumstances.

Niemeyer was also involved in restorations of his work, for instance at the chapel of *São Francisco de Assis* at Pampulha near Belo Horizonte (1942) or the Cathedral of Brasília (1958). These early masterpieces were reconsidered and more or less transformed into new works: materials got substituted, surfaces changed and new techniques were used. These redesigns result, in combination with the ridiculous conservatism in preserving the palaces in Brasília and the demolition of utilitarian buildings, in a new architectural inheritance which reflects how Oscar Niemeyer (age eighty-seven) sees the brilliant career of Oscar Niemeyer. In this way, the work of the Oscar Niemeyer of 1942 or 1957 has of course long disappeared.

### Copy and original

The belief in the past has increased since the dream of an utopic future ended. Henri Pierre Jeudy, a French sociologist, speaks of the process that would like to turn the world into a big mirror of life.<sup>2</sup> The cultural heritage is, in this view, no longer an attainment from the past, but a presence which is oriented towards the future. It means that the past lives, whereas the present fossilizes. Modern architecture is perfectly suited for resuscitation. The current interest in heroic architects leads to a



desire to step into their shoes. Besides, it is tempting to dream a nostalgic future through the past. The revival of modernism leads to stylistic quotations and the conquest of old ideas and designs. Literal appropriation of history is possible now that past, present and future are exchangeable; creation and reproduction overlap. The rebuilding of modern monuments demonstrates how construction and restoration have become alike.

Reproduction in time is an overture for reproduction in space. It allows the construction of better monuments, upto more original than the originals. The limitations of the old buildings or the locations, as well as ownership troubles are easily eliminated. Besides, the copies can arise in an ideal context for any potential target group. Corrections of the scale or proportions of the buildings are possible and, of course, appropriate techniques and systems should be applied. It was amusing to read in DOCOMOMO Newsletter 6 about the proposal to reconstruct Corbu's 'Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau' at the Parc Montsouris in Paris and see, only three issues later, how a campaign was started to save the copy of the very same 'Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau' that appeared in Bologna in 1977.<sup>3</sup>

Another striking example is the recent construction of a second replica of Oud's site-cabin for *Oud-Mathenesse*, this time on the original site in Rotterdam.

Even if this multiplicable monument preservation sounds a bit awkward, it fits amazingly well with modernism. On the one hand it does justice to its anti-historic postures and on the other hand it matches with the role of works of art in the age of (mechanical) reproduction.

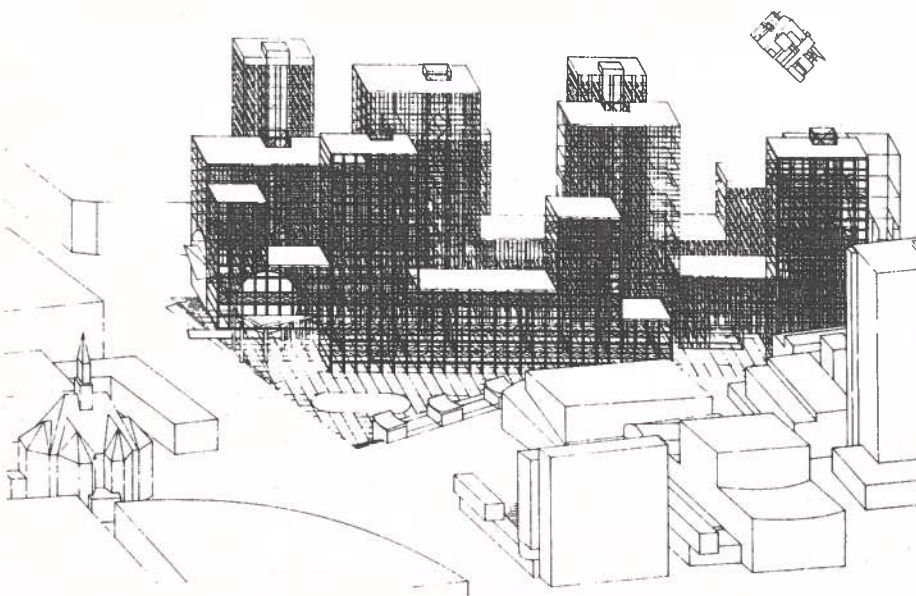
### Toothless æsthetics

The success of copies marks that the value of modern monuments can apparently lay beyond the physical truth, which deals with the time and the place of origin. Instead, there should be some sort of conceptual truth; an essence which can be present or symbolized in a copy. Reproductions might reflect for instance a concept, the memory of a moment in history or simply the space enclosed by an object and the way the light enters.

Reproducibility makes modern monuments immaterial, no matter how invariably the architects of copies speak of the 'surprising' three-dimensional effects and the 'shock' to see a paper plan realised. This is paper architecture, a cardboard modernism that might have the æsthetic appearance of the historic originals, but has become toothless in the postmodern conditions of today. The more we reconstruct and transfer, the more we lose contact with the innovative spirit we are desperately looking for. Meanwhile the less mediagenic historic buildings of the modern movement and the monuments that happened to arise at what now turned out to be a wrong place, are subjected to deterioration and loss.

*Paul Meurs is an architect and a researcher in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Drawings by Paul Meurs.*

1. Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, *Zelar pelo patrimônio é obrigação constitucional*, in: O Jornal, Rio de Janeiro 29-06-1957, quoted from: R.M.F. de Andrade, *Rodrigo e o SPHAN, coletânea de textos sobre patrimônio cultural*, Rio de Janeiro, 1987, p. 40.
2. Henri Pierre Jeudy, *Die Welt als Museum*, Berlin, Merwe Verlag, 1987, p. 10 (translated from *Parodies de l'auto-destruction*, Chapter 2, Paris 1985).
3. See DOCOMOMO Newsletter 6, November 1991, p. 4 and DOCOMOMO Journal 9, July 1993, p. 5.



Restoration of the unbuilt: In the future it will be possible to restore buildings that were never built, so we can keep a cancelled future. The competition for The Hague Townhall (1986) is a perfect pilot case. Meyer's selected project is under construction, but Koolhaas's was preferred by many. Once, the restoration of the latter can be executed, just to brighten the centre. The office towers evaporate; only a steel frame stands out against the sky, marking the city from afar. The square with kiosks and an ice-rink are made after all. Elevators zoom straight to the panorama platforms. It's even better than an ordinary town hall: a skyline like New York, a Paris' logotype and a hi-tech image like London; Amsterdam can forget about being the tourist capital!

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# A modern city kidnapped by its inhabitants

## Chandigarh between ideals and reality

Le Corbusier's concepts for the ideal city were controversial. Chandigarh, designed as the new capital of Punjab, India, was his only executed attempt to implement his urban theories. Corb's masterplan has been determining for the shape of the city to the present day. Designed to reflect the spirit of India's new found independence and powerful nationalist' feeling, its design and subsequent development has been beset by controversy over the years'. A personal and critical reassessment of a sophisticated modern city and its inhabitants.

by Ashok Bhalotra

Several years ago, I went back to Chandigarh to see how the city had developed. There I was, with mixed feelings. As a first-year student I was in Chandigarh for a month, at Le Corbusier's office and I made the gentlemen a cup of tea. Forty years have passed and it is difficult to evaluate the origin and development of Chandigarh. It is not easy to trace back the thin stories told in theoretical texts and discussions. The sense and non-sense of the evaluation are the two poles within which I would like to express some thoughts about Chandigarh, from a personal rather than a theoretical perspective.

### Modern society

My story is a personal experience, evaluation and interpretation of what happened to Chandigarh. It's no scientific, non-normative report, but a description full of prejudices, expectations, private philosophies, in short it is an individual way of thinking about Chandigarh and about the city in general. India 1947: independence, firm beliefs, optimism, delight. All in celebration of the defeat of three hundred years of colonialism. A colonialism which not only had the political-economical powers, but also carried some cultural dimensions in its trail. And it still does. Colonialism was an impediment, which curbed the country's own cultural development. Independence was very important, symbolically: India not only wanted to be free from colonialism and all kinds of prejudices, it also wanted to shake off its own cultural limitations. Historical developments might make the values and standards of the native, Indian culture suppressive even after independence. Independence brought about a simple optimism: let us start anew and focus on the ideal society. This idea was based on three principles: equality of rights, justice and legal security. There was a sharp contrast between the dream of Pandit Nehru, the architect of the new India, and the philosophy of Gandhi. A battle was fought between the ideals of the modern era, characterized by industrialisation, and the humane ideas of Gandhi about a small-scale rural community, based on true independence, independence from any form of centralism. The battle was won by the modernists, with Pandit Nehru in the lead. The

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humane, philosophical ideas remained hidden. India consciously entered the industrial era to create a modern society. It was the era of the 'we-are-in-no-way-inferior' philosophy, which had to materialize one way or another. Chandigarh is a result of this.

### Talent and genius

A city is the expression in stone of a philosophy and a culture in a certain era. Thinking about a city and creating a city is the materialisation of ideals in loam, stone, glass, steel and concrete. Abstract ideals are made tangible. The physical form of this ideal society is the city. Nehru's social ideology, the new government and the European ideals of the early years of the 20th Century, they all met here. A modern city was a natural ingredient of the new industrial society India hoped to be. The first question to ask is the most difficult of all: How do you build a city? How do you design a city? What is the essence of a city? Le Corbusier put it like this, if I remember correctly: 'A beautiful architecture calls for talent, the architectural and planning programme of the city calls for a genius.' This is the essence of the issue: Chandigarh as a collection of architectural objects and Chandigarh as a programme for an Indian city. The genius that India needed did not present itself, the talent did.

### Disasters for tomorrow

Umberto Eco once said; 'The combination of power and prejudices is the worst combination possible'. This is true: where Chandigarh is concerned, the prejudice was the blueprint Le Corbusier had already thought of and the power was Nehru's power. These two created the shape and content of the city in India which now stares us in the eye. This authoritarian attitude, which hardly bears any humane dimension - in spite of the poetical terms in which the architects described the city - has yielded a city, based on theories developed in and for Europe, particularly by Le Corbusier. Twenty years ago somebody said: 'We saved Europe'. You probably know his 'sweeping' plans for Paris and other cities. Fortunately a critical essay about Chandigarh has its own limitations and possibilities, for this city will

be kidnapped, taken over and subjected to a true metamorphosis by Indian society in the next forty years.

### Historical examples

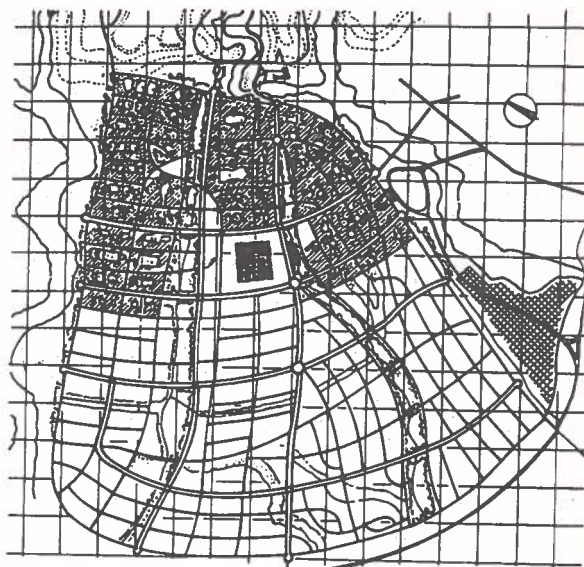
Le Corbusier's ideas for Chandigarh reveal a very authoritarian way of thinking about Indian society, in which by definition chaos had to be banned, as chaos creates revolution and revolt, calling forth new questions. The ideology within which these ideas have been developed, must be a subject of permanent discussion, because under the poetical surface of the architectural objects the ideology slips right through your fingers.

The images of Chandigarh are well-known: objects in space, architecture and trees make up the landscape: it is ingenious and a sign of talent, but not of genius, for it is no programme. The urban philosophy is missing. There is the escape from the city, the denial, a tendency increasingly adhered to by a number of contemporary architects. A very clear example is Japan, where the masters of architecture don't want a city. They don't believe in it. They want to dissociate themselves from the city as a phenomenon, as the place where culture, economy, education, all human activities and philosophies meet. This is the crux. These designers are not interested in the theory of the city, but in the theory of building and design, which is at quite a different level. This theory also was at the basis of the Chandigarh philosophy.

There was a firm belief that thinking about a part naturally created a whole. Repeating this unity might create a city. But this was not true. The conceivers of the city came across an Indian population, eighty per cent of which lived in villages. The village is a meeting point for people from an agricultural community, where colour, smell and sound - sensuality - are important features, also from a symbolical point of view. In such agricultural communities monuments were raised in the course of history, not just buildings, but cities as well. India is blessed with a large number of historical examples of urban planning. Four to five thousand years ago India was familiar with the conceived city, which was thoroughly discussed before it was actually built. It is a myth that Indian cities were built spontaneously, as organic cities, which grow just by themselves. A city is a human act, a cultural act, not a tree which grows spontaneously.

### The city as a body

The creation of the city started off with the idea of a small unit, being multiplied into larger units, the latter being transformed into even larger ones, a consistent multiplication creating the city. This idea came from the minds of both Alfred Mayer, the American architect who made the first design for the city in 1949, and Le Corbusier. Le Corbusier's addition four or five days after the commission consisted of a number of metaphors, more in

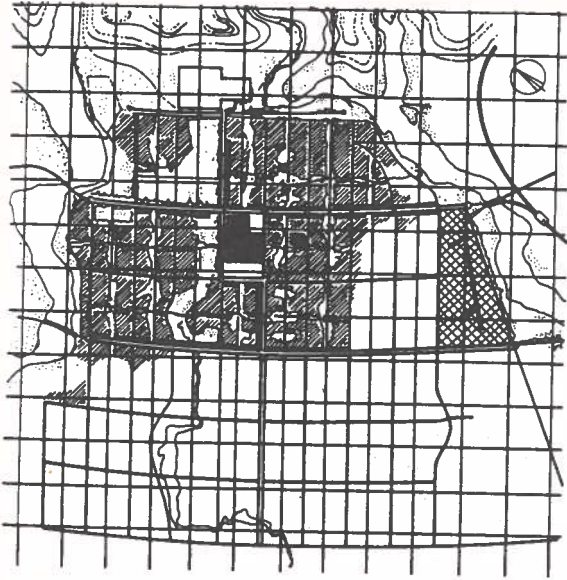


The Mayer Plan and the plan

particular the metaphor of the body as the blueprint for the city: head, heart, lungs, arms and legs were to be the various sectors of the city, with their separate functions. All studies about Mayer and Le Corbusier state that the city as a complex phenomenon, where many things happen simultaneously and where many possibilities still have to be created - the city as a meeting point - never crossed their minds. To Mayer and Le Corbusier the city was a machine, all parts of which had to function in a well-oiled way. Their philosophies are no history yet; they're still topical: the ratio of the parts creates the ratio of the whole, when combined.

Chandigarh is based on the belief that forty villages put together make a city. All these sectors and neighbourhoods that make up Chandigarh, however, have not been integrated into a larger unit. This is an ambiguous way of thinking about architecture, because on the one hand it is based on a cumulation of structures, which on the other hand consist of separate architectural objects. Conflict management and chaos prevention determine this philosophy of the city.

Le Corbusier applied the metaphor of the human body to Chandigarh, with its head, heart, lungs and a vascular system, the veins of the city. One may also extend the metaphor to include the anus; at the bottom of the city there are the slums. They support this metaphor, in a literal and figurative sense. There is a history to the city as a body. From about 1000 to 1500 architecture was seen as an object of lust in Europe. It was a taboo. The moralists identified two things which were bad: the body and architecture. Architects still enjoy using the sinful body as a symbol in their designs. This body, however, has long since turned into a cerebral dead, kept alive artificially. Sensuality, the sensual aspect of the body, has disappeared from city design. Without the senses which are part of the body, the city is incomplete.



by Le Corbusier compared.

### Wasteland

In the Chandigarh design process all the basic principles of the Indian city were brushed aside. There was no room for traditions in the ideals and optimism about the modern India, the modern city. Anil Kumar gives a very apt description: Chandigarh is a modern city for a traditional society, in which utopia has got the upper hand. I think that architecture should be a marriage between utopia and nostalgia, between history and ideals for the future. The image of the present moves along the axis between these two extremes. This did not happen in Chandigarh. I don't want to cover up the other side of the picture: the inhabitants of the city, the pioneers of Chandigarh, are proud of their city, because Chandigarh has dimensions which are absent in other Indian cities. First of all there are the aspects of hygiene and health care which have been given a prominent place here. Then there is the aspect of space: parks and sites for recreation have been included in the design. The inhabitants are also proud of the other route which has been chosen, a new route of using modern materials for new forms. In spite of all these positive features, Chandigarh remains a failure from a cultural and spiritual point of view. Only physical features of the city, based on motion and ratio and content of space, have had their effects. Dimensions which can't be measured, the soul, are missing in this design. Just like any beautiful, lively city, the Indian city has a considerable amount of chaos, which makes us experience the colours and smells of the city. This chaos defines the character of the city for each particular day. The Sunday city differs from the Monday city and in the evening the city is different from its daytime counterpart. Fortunately this phenomenon is in progress in Chandigarh now. The city is slowly being withdrawn from the dictate of functionality and the most beautiful

pieces of Chandigarh are the sites which reveal human intervention, against the rules. Thus the shopping centre has virtually been closed down and opposite there is a market now.

Functionalism's failure could not have been exposed more clearly. Just as beautiful are the huts which have been built everywhere, still showing the handprints of their makers. Strangely enough these handprints were a source of inspiration for Le Corbusier too. He was very much inspired by the architectural structure of Indian villages. At a particular moment however rational technology got the better of this inspiration, dragging down with it the humane dimension of ordinary life. And so a wasteland has grown, not just in a philosophical manner of speaking, but also in a physically tangible sense. It is a space in which people are lost and feel lost. Besides, these spaces can't be controlled and thus turn against their own functionality. The intensity of the urban space must be sustainable and controllable.

### Inside and outside

Another characteristic of an Indian city is the division between public and private. The public is always reduced to a minimum, to the bare essentials for the motion of people, for horses, carts, elephants. Right behind it is the private space, a succession of patios and inner spaces. In Chandigarh the house has been built as a separate element in an open space, a form of architecture which might have met with the same criticism, if it had been materialized in, for instance, the Netherlands. It is true: the city of Chandigarh has some beautiful architectural forms and colours, but they are also the graves for the city's functioning as a whole.

It is strange that inside the separate architectural objects Le Corbusier did identify the sensuality that should be characteristic of the city as a whole. This is a paradox which I can't explain.

Inside and outside Le Corbusier is a different architect altogether. In the building there is humanity, love and eroticism in form, space and light; it is visible and tangible. Once outside he loses all these qualities even to the extent of negating the humane qualities of the spaces inside. My criticism, then, is not a linear negative assessment, but hides the discourse of rejection and admiration, which may teach us something when analyzed properly.

This ambiguity has raised a schizophrenic issue: Do we want a city or do we want better, more beautiful villages? In the present discussion about this issue in the architectural world the city is seen as a threat to what, in Japan, is called the 'nomad'. The city is supposed to be a prison for the individual mind and creativity.

I think that a city is an organism in which freedom and the interdependence of elements of the social structure are important features.

The object-oriented architecture, used as the basis

for the city, has been the fatal stab for Chandigarh. The architectural dictate which lays down certain forms and materials, is harmed by the slums of the so-called city nomads. This stage of development in the socio-cultural structure has, literally, been kept outside the walls in Chandigarh. The slum dwellers, however, are the future occupants of the city. They are waiting for their chance to take over the city. But there is a lot of opposition from the purists of modernism. What is finished should not be touched again. An idea in conflict with the dynamism of the city, which should be the site for possible changes. To reach this state of continuous change the city should be a foundation rather than a rigid, untouchable form. The material and immaterial investments made by society must provide the basis for building. The immaterial contribution of the modernists about abstraction and emptiness has a cynical dimension for the city's inhabitants looking for intimacy and security.

### Fullness

Chandigarh has been the setting for functional and programmatic activities which have blocked normal Indian developments. The typically Indian *bazaar*, a shopping street full of all kinds of activities, where there is space for alternative thoughts, where news is being exchanged, is missing in Chandigarh. Here shopping is just the act of spending money and taking a product home in return. In India a shopping street is a place where people meet. That's why I think it's really great that Nek Chand literally filled up the empty space in Chandigarh in a philosophical and expressive way. With his sculptures of waste material he managed, in a critical way, to put a finger on the emptiness, the anonymity, the alienation of the city. There are other cities in India which share the grid, the organisational structure of Chandigarh. Jaipur, for instance, also has the grid for its rational basis, but this city has a completely different soul. In its design the rational grid has been combined with the content and the programme of a city. Jaipur is a city based on a functional grid, which follows the instructions of the times of the Vedas, written down about four to five thousand years ago and attributing certain symbolical values to the structure, the direction and the lay-out of the city. The spaces in the city all had a meaning. Jaipur is based on nine squares, a magical number symbolizing infinity. It is a city in which some palaces - just like some of the public buildings in Chandigarh - are the landmarks. But in Jaipur the complexity of the city, the city as a living phenomenon, is important. It is not emptiness, but fullness which characterizes the city here, as can be seen in the many *bazaars*. Here are the city's consulting rooms: little open shops along the streets, where everyone can drop in to talk, to buy something, to eat, to discuss and to do business. In Chandigarh this is impossible because of the way in which the city has been conceived and developed.

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### Kidnap of the city

Jaisalmer is a desert city with a clear starting point: the materials present locally. The city has been built with the stones of the desert and thus fits in naturally with its environment. The complexity of structure and growth, however, is fully present here as well. It is a fascinating example of a city, in which climate, habits, culture, architecture, images and colours combine to fill the needs of the persons that have to deal with it. Such a city, however, is also undeniably a feature of a particular era and as such it cannot be a model for a city to be built now, but it still is a reflection, which shows us that we have to confront the city consciously, to combine public and private, to make them truly meet and not divert, as happens in Chandigarh at the corner of every building, for there are no streets in this city. You feel alienated from the city and you just wonder: Why am I here?

The feeling of being taken over by the city, of being absorbed by it, is present in a city like Jaisalmer, a city which has been conceived, which has not grown spontaneously. Architecture like this doesn't grow on trees. Cities must be conceived and we must try our best to give them a structure which does justice to the sensuality of the city and the cultural dimensions. Conceiving cities remains a difficult task. Chandigarh is assessed forty years after the first drawing was made, which is a relatively short period of time. The inhabitants of the city will kidnap Chandigarh in decades and centuries to come. Even Chandigarh is attractive enough to be kidnapped. I think that in fifty or a hundred years Chandigarh will be a completely different city, provided the dictatorial way of thinking about controlling a city is left, and provided those who offer empty functionality and soulless rationality admit that this cannot go on and step aside to let the city grow. In a country of 900 million inhabitants there is a need for hundreds of new cities, in spite of the worldwide philosophy that urbanisation must be stopped, but they must not be conceived and built on the rationality of the dollar. The assignment is important enough to critically review what has been brought about so far. Chandigarh is not the worst example. It is even a successful city compared to cities built in other parts of the world these past forty years. The roads that must be taken to build a successful city start with finding one's way through the desert. The desert is a metaphor for the theory that you may get lost all the time, even in clearly structured surroundings.

*Ashok Bhalotra was born and trained in India, and is director of Kuiper Compagnons, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.*

1. An in-depth study by various, both Indian and European, authors on contemporary life in the 'City Beautiful' and its relationship to Le Corbusier's architectural designs can be found in 'Chandigarh, Forty years after Le Corbusier', ANQ Document, Amsterdam 1993, ISBN 90 71570 193.

# Restoration of the Casa Bloc in Barcelona

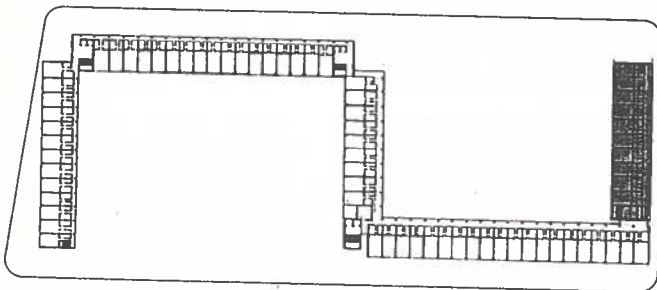
## A split property regaining its clarity

Casa Bloc (1932-36) was a result of the efforts by the designers of the GATCPAC group, that were closely related to the general discussion on social housing that took place in Europe in the 1920's. Casa Bloc became a social housing prototype thanks to its clarity in layout, the clever arrangement of the duplex flats and the sophistication of its constructions. Over the years the building lost many of its qualities due to deterioration, neglect, improper maintenance and the fact, that it was to be kept by different owners. The architects Jaume Sanmartí and Raimon Torres developed a plan for restoration, that is to be carried out step by step. The restoration of a first wing of the building was finished recently, and will be part of the tour after the DOCOMOMO Conference in Barcelona in June 1994.

by Jaume Sanmartí

GATCPAC, the 'Catalan Artists and Technicians Group for the Development of Contemporary Architecture', was founded in 1930 by the architects Sert, Torres Clavé, Illescas, Rodríguez Arias, Churruga, Subiño, Almansa and Perales. The periodical *Revista A.C.* provided this group with a principal medium of expression at a time when the rise of the Second Republic had created expectations for a social and political transformation, that was highly desired by the most progressive segments of Spanish society. GATCPAC constructed buildings, organized

exhibitions promoting architecture as well as decorative arts and urbanism, and undertook important urbanistic projects - the principal of which was the *Plan Maciá* (1932-34). Through their enthusiasm, Sert and Torres Clavé gained the collaboration and support of Le Corbusier in this urban proposal that, after the *Plan Cerdá*, had many consequences for Barcelona. The design was to be based on an open, setback block, directly inspired by Le Corbusier's proposed *redén*. The Casa Bloc, designed by the architects Sert, Torres Clavé and Subirana was constructed over



Top: original lay out of the Casa Bloc in Barcelona. The grey coloured wing on the right is the part already restored. The courtyard these flats are facing had been closed, on top, by the stables of the National Police, which have been demolished in 1986 as a first step in the building's rehabilitation. The other courtyard, left, is still closed today by the apartments for the police, built in 1944. Right: the facade of the restored wing, facing the courtyard. Photo: unknown.



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the period 1932-36, and should be understood in the context of a residential prototype for the new Barcelona that the 'Commissioner for Social Housing for the *Generalitat* was promoting. The housing project inherited, from the debate initiated in Europe during the 1920's, a basis of several clearly defined directives: economy, hygiene, and rationality.

In 1931, a small duplex housing complex, that has since disappeared, was built on a lot adjacent to that selected for the construction of the Casa Bloc. In view of this pilot project's success, the construction of a group of 207 duplex apartments was hastily initiated on a larger site of 9.000 m<sup>2</sup>. In evident reference to its rotund volumetric measurements, this housing scheme later became to be known as the Casa Bloc.

### Traditional and modern construction

The Casa Bloc, a building with an articulated floor plan, integrates perfectly with the urban layout of the *Sant Andreu* district. It is composed of five sections, each 10 m deep, that delimit two open spaces of 2.800 m<sup>2</sup> in size. These spaces are separated by a pedestrian passage that runs beneath the central section of the *redent*. Owing to its setback form, the building adapts well to the network of minor streets and buildings that define the local urban fabric.

From the outset, the Casa Bloc was planned as residential units with a ground floor that would accommodate services directly related to the housing, such as day nurseries, assembly halls, a library, etc. These services were to be located in the proximity of the open spaces that were intended as community gardens. The six storeys of the building designated for housing were organized by means of a unique type of duplex unit, without interior double-height spaces. The surface area of 75 m<sup>2</sup> was furnished with a combined living and dining room with a balcony, kitchen, laundry room and bathroom, all on the access level; three bedrooms were located on the upper floor.

The system of construction made the use of traditional and modern methods compatible. The steel structure of the building, formed of two 4 x 10 m modular bays, was made of steel bars organising the porches and framing into an arrangement facing alternate directions. The aim of this was to make the structure more adaptable to specific sections of the building.

The traditional method of brick construction was used as an infill for the frameworks, for the vaults of the interior stairways serving the apartments, the Catalan-style balconies and the exterior walls of the facades, which were finished with plaster. The windows and blinds were constructed of wood. The general stairways were a repetition of the solution already adopted in the Anti-Tuberculosis Dispensary in Barcelona, a work by the same architects

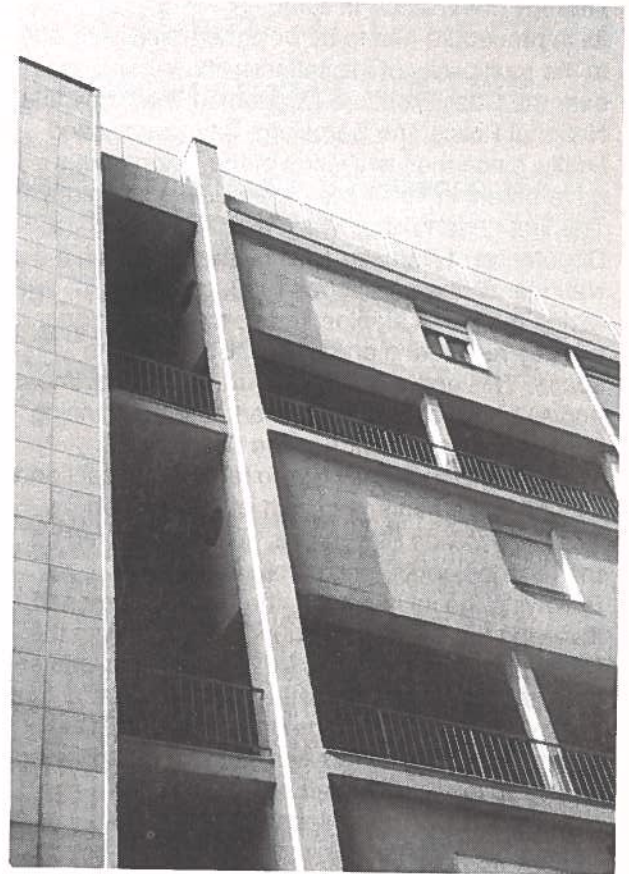
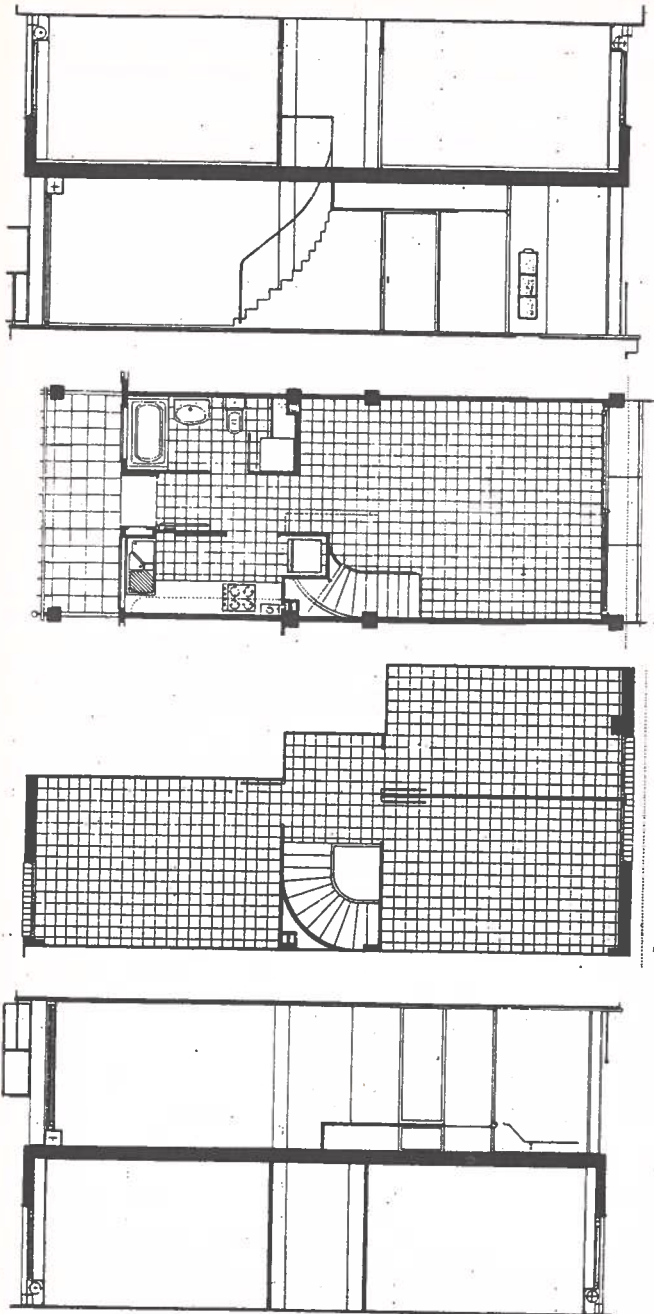


Top and far right: one of the galleries, after restoration. The false ceiling, hiding the new service systems, has been kept quite distant from the facade so as to retain the appearance of the bottom detail of the facade surfaces, as is seen in the right picture. Photos: unknown. Right, top to bottom: section, 1st floor plan, 2nd floor plan and section (upside down) of the restoration project.

### Degradation of the Casa Bloc (1940-80)

With the Republic's defeat in the Civil War, the Republican heritage began to suffer a process of cultural and physical ruin. The Casa Bloc, an undertaking emblematic of the Republic, received severe punishment. The administration of the property, which had never been inscribed in the Property Register, passed to the 'Board of Settlement of the Property of the *Generalitat*', and the apartments were awarded to persons not involved in the project.

In 1944 a block of apartments for the police, facing *Passeig Torras i Bages*, was constructed, and this destroyed the initial geometric configuration of the *redent*. This was accompanied by the partial occupation of the ground floors and of the open space adjacent to the area affected. The second negative development with respect to the original



project was the partial occupation of the second open space and its ground-level annexes by a school and various parochial institutions. Finally the entire west section of the Casa Bloc was converted into a residence for widows and orphans of the National Army, which meant the total privatisation of the remaining open space and the complete destruction of the building's interior. Paradoxically, the original facade, which showed the duplex composition of the building, remained intact. This alteration in the use of the building lasted for practically 40 years, during which time the Casa Bloc was also subjected to the natural process of aging. This was especially apparent in communal spaces such as stairways, lobbies and the passages of access to the apartments. In addition to this natural process, it should be mentioned that an unfortunate renovation of the system of general

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services was performed without the least care for or attention to the architectonic features of the building.

Interventions in the interiors of the apartments have consisted in changing tiles and surface finishings, in slightly altering the kitchens and bathrooms and in doing away with the laundry rooms. One lamentable alteration realized in practically all of the apartments has been the addition of the balconies to the dining room, haphazardly substituting the exterior walls and moving them as far as the facade, to gain interior surface area.

#### Rehabilitation of the building and its site

The incomplete documentation extant in 1980 did not accurately reflect the actual state of the building. The most informative plans were reproductions from *Revista A.C.*, documents of great historical value but of little technical interest, since they did not entirely correspond with the actual construction. It was essential to survey the building's true state and to diagnose the construction in order to evaluate the building's pathologies and to define the scope of a restoration project.

By the end of 1984 the Deputation of Barcelona, in its capacity of administrator for three of the building's five sections, initiated the process of rehabilitation for the Casa Bloc - taking into account, however, that a continued process of degradation, begun 50 years earlier, could not be reversed overnight. A

strategy both radical in its objectives and flexible its procedure had to be designed. This was due to the multiplicity of institutions with jurisdiction over the Casa Bloc: the Deputation, the Army, the National Police, the Barcelona City Council and finally, since the installation of the autonomous government in 1977, the *Generalitat* of Catalunya. The first undertaking, which was realized by the Deputation of Barcelona in collaboration with the National Police in October 1986, consisted in razing the horse stables and police installations, thereby recovering practically all of the open space. This operation, one of great physical impact and symbolic significance, marked the beginning of the process of restoring the Casa Bloc.

The first objective has been to rehabilitate section 1, with 30 apartments, and with its frontage on *Almirall Pròixida* Street. This activity centered on the facades, roofs, and communal spaces.

Following the initial phase, the work will proceed involving the central block (n°3) and that with the facade on *Torras i Bages* (n°2), which sections are both under the authority of the Deputation. After that, section 4, with its frontage on *Lanzarote* Street and occupied by military families, is to be rehabilitated.

Then section 5 will be left as the last phase, the restoration of which is depending on the transference of the widows' and orphans' house.

The restoration of the Casa Bloc has more than an exclusively architectonic dimension. At the same time this intervention sets forth to act as an inductor for the process of urban requalification.

That a building should be remarkable in its special architectonic significance and for its open spaces, is motive for inscribing its restoration within a framework superior to strictly *aedilitian* problematics.

### Directives for the project

In our view, the works on the Casa Bloc ought to be orientated by a necessary reference to the building as *edifice-manifesto*. The irregularity of the construction process, owing to the Civil War and especially to the absence of facultative direction after 1938 (with Sert in exile and Torres Clavé killed on the Aragonese front), throws doubt upon some partial aspects of the realized project which do not correspond with the images published in *Revista A.C.*

The impossibility of resorting to the authors of the project or of consulting their archives, which have disappeared or been destroyed, sets the theme of the activity's limits on grounds that are little defined. In this sense, the literal restoration of those elements presumably altered appears difficult and in some extremes, of doubtful validity.

In view of this, the restoration project should avoid imitative measures in restoring a building that was vanguardist in its moment and that is still valid today in its urbanistic and residential dimensions.

The restoration project should follow the initial plans of the GATCPAC architects: returning the

building to its original *redent* form, liberating the open spaces from spurious constructions and redefining the shape of the ground floors in order to maintain the pattern that the building holds in relation to the ground.

The selection and design of elements responds to a threefold objective: faithfulness to the formal language of the original project, adaptation to current technology, and the selection of materials which correspond to a modest budget and assure reasonable maintenance.

With respect to housing, decisive action must be taken in redirecting the modifications of the main balconies of the dining rooms and those situated at the corners of the blocks. The other changes, common to rehabilitated apartments, are due to conformity with new utilities systems and the upgrading of kitchens and bathrooms which logically retain their locations near the entry so as to receive ventilation from the access corridor.

### Overwhelming clarity

Work on the facades has respected the sense of their general composition, and consisted in redesigning their elements to conform with a functionalist approach, respectful of the building's language. The textures of the current materials that remain visibly apparent are a chromatic reference to the bitonal treatment of the access passages of the apartments, which in the original project had an expressionist flavour.

Included in the Casa Bloc's communal spaces are the general systems for the complex, and these should be revised in their entirety to comply with today's regulations. The installations for the general distribution system of utilities must necessarily pass through the access passages of the apartments, and with dimensional requirements which were not to be foreseen when the building was designed. Consequently, the project should conserve the form of the passageway section so that it is analogous to the original, placing the false ceiling in such a way that the corner of the framework - and with it that section of the building - remains unaltered in appearance. (see illustration) As a residential building the Casa Bloc is little more than 50 years old, which means that it is a young building with a more serious level of partial deterioration than its age would suggest. What does seem evident is that the building should continue being what it was originally intended to be - modernising and modifying its technological aspects, but respecting conceptually the formal language of its architecture and the typological planning that the work manifests with overwhelming clarity.

*Jaume Sanmartí and Raimon Torres are the architects of the restoration project for the Casa Bloc. They are both professors of Fifth Year Projects at the Escola Tècnica d'Arquitectura de Barcelona (ETSAB).*

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# Bains de Bellerive-plage (Piccard, 1936-37)

## Respecting the authenticity of hand-crafted concrete

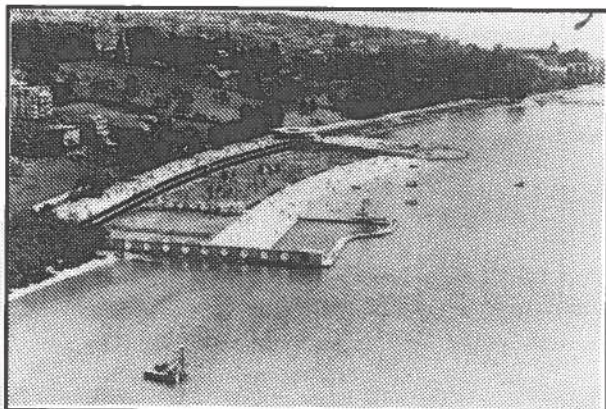
Created in 1936-37 by the architect Marc Piccard for the municipality of Lausanne, the Bellerive baths are an outstanding example of Modern Movement architecture in Switzerland. After more than half a century of intensive use, the serious state of decay of the waterproofing as well as the carbonation of the concrete surfaces, in addition to a previous series of not always successful alterations and extensions, required the restoration of the baths. This work started in Spring 1991 and was recently completed.

by *Patrick Devanthery and Inès Lamunière\**

In 1934 Marc Piccard, at the age of 29 and already working on the construction of a model livestock farm in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, won the competition for a public beach and bathing establishment with a project named 'One Way'. The jury was prestigious; apart from Alphonse Laverrière and Henri Robert von der Mühl, who attested obvious qualities to the project, Jean-Pierre Vouga emphasized the strength of the urban solution: 'The architecture marries the landscape, follows its curves and embellishes its tranquil lines'. The lay out is admirable. To the

east, on the extension of the *quay Ouchy*, is the main building, a glazed rotunda that shelters the lifeguard's changing rooms on three levels, the entrance ticket office and a restaurant with a panoramic view.

The rotunda opens into a building containing the public changing rooms. This structure stretches parallel along the shore, repeating seven elements, five of which are arranged in a curvilinear geometry that defines the area of the beach along the lake. To the west, this 240 m long structure ends in a spiral staircase that echoes the rotunda.



Left: aerial view of the Bellerive Baths on a period photo, around 1937.  
Bottom: the rotunda and the entrance in the late 1930's.  
Photos: Musée Historique de Lausanne.

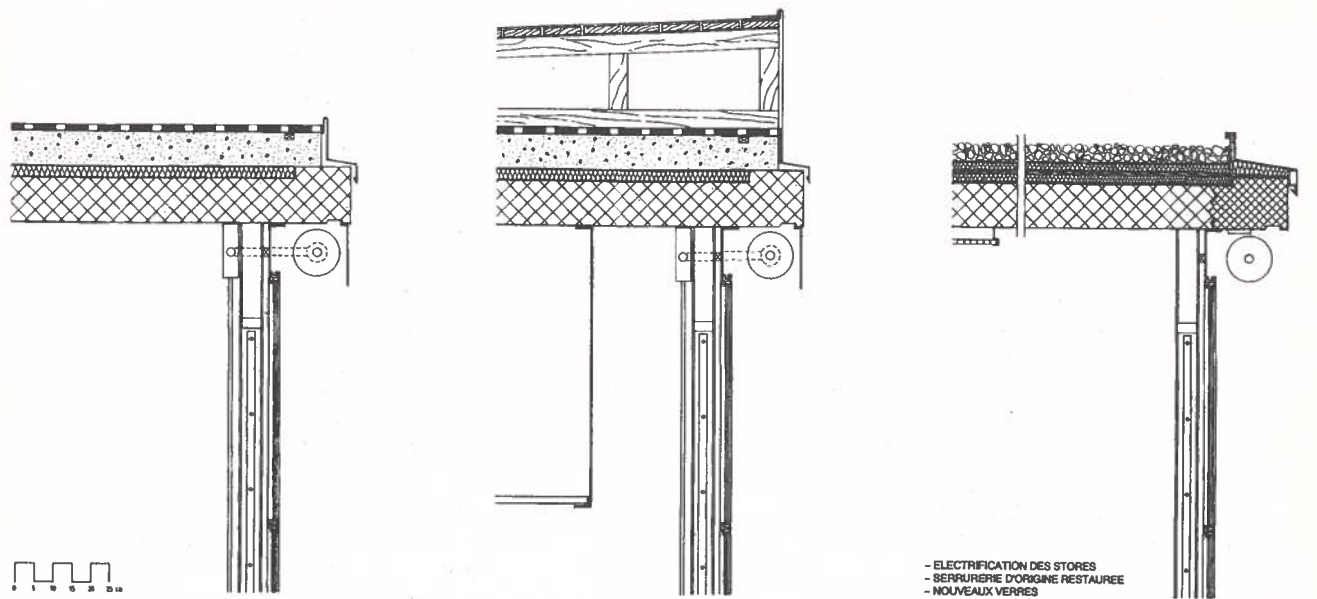


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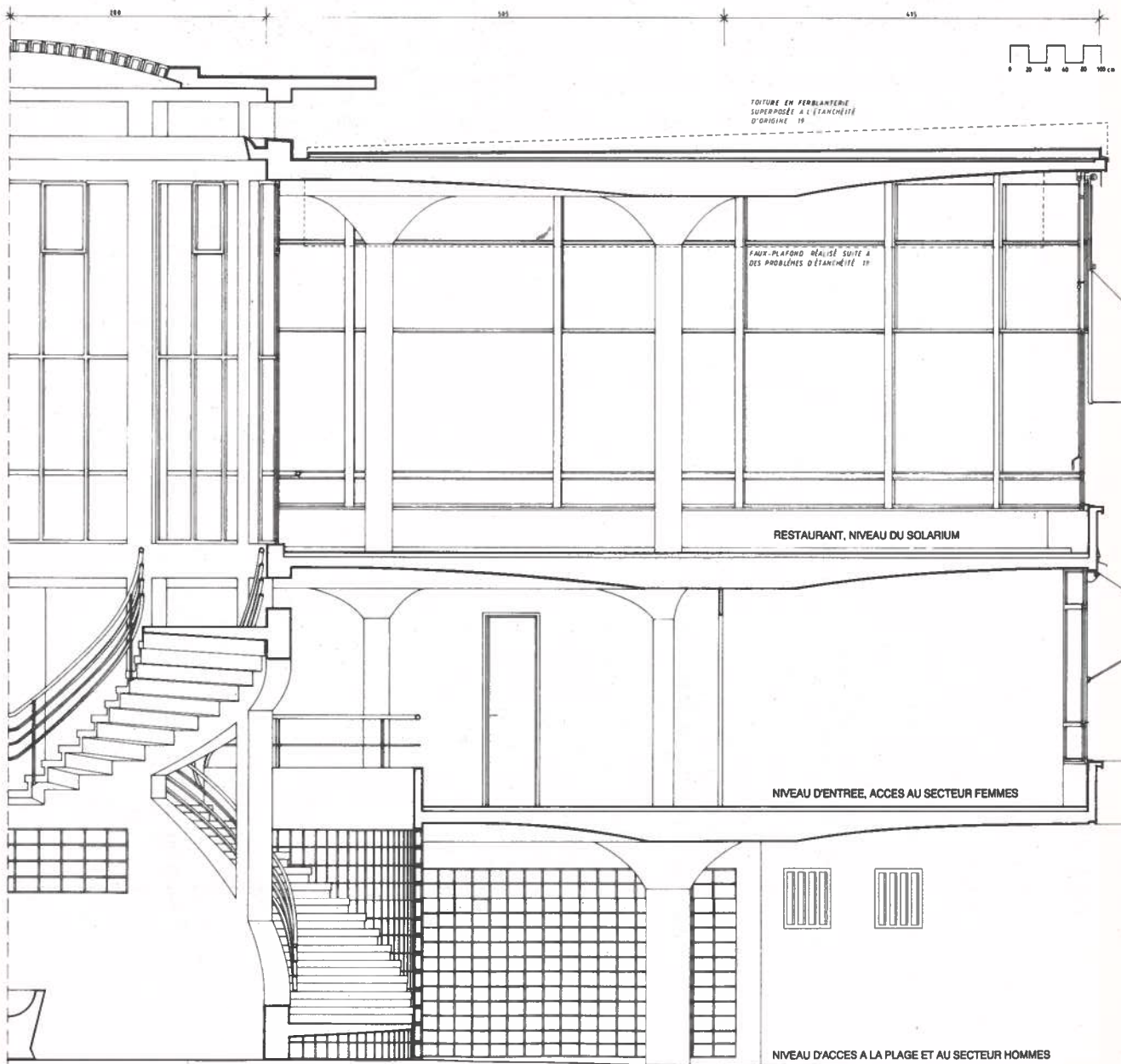
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- ELECTRIFICATION DES STORES
- SERRURERIE D'ORIGINE RESTAUREE
- NOUVEAUX VERRES



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### Concrete for the unemployed...

Enriched by his experiences with the functionality and rationality required for the farm buildings, the architect efficiently organized the different needs for the baths. Instead of the traditional symmetric T-shape, dividing sections for men and women, Piccard designed a linear plan with the women's changing rooms on top of the men's, and a roof terrace as a solarium. A clever system of separate exits and entrances permits vertical access. It is a rough and poor concrete, cast and compacted by hand - not mechanically - that forms the substance of 'Switzerland's most beautiful swimming pool'<sup>2</sup>. With its creation the socialist council of Lausanne actively fought unemployment. It was decided 'not to authorise the use of a concrete pump'<sup>3</sup> on the Bellerive Beach building site, which started at the height of the depression, in May 1936. This policy permitted to offer work to as many as possible of the unemployed, whose number had doubled that year.

It was a relief work where, in contrast with the convention of a forty-hour working week, one succeeded in finishing all construction works in a record period in order to allow the opening of the bathing establishment on July 10th, 1937. After more than half a century of intensive use the serious state of decay of the waterproofing as well as the carbonation of the concrete surfaces, in addition to a series of not always successful alterations and extensions mainly done in 1964, required the restoration of the baths, a work that started Spring 1991<sup>4</sup>.

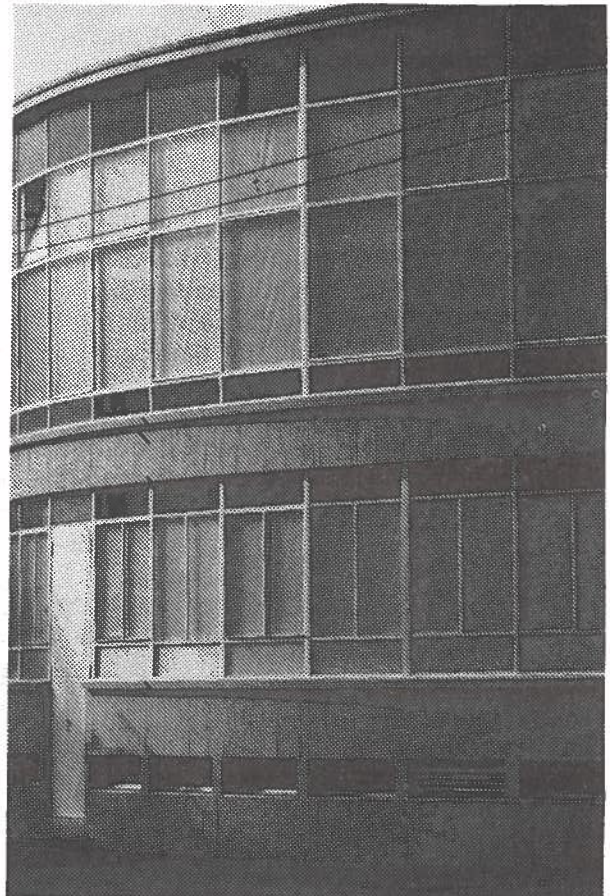
### Preservation of its essence

The bare exposure of the construction materials was just as much a wish of Marc Piccard, who strongly praised the plasticity and technical properties of concrete, as a result of the very methods of construction, which left their marks on the material that are still visible today. In contrast with the current situation, the costs for building materials necessitated an economic use of them. Yet, the available manpower enabled the work to be executed in a simple manner, that still appears sophisticated today due to the hand of the craftsman that seems to be ever present. This becomes apparent in the subtle differences between the framework of the linear volume - large rough planks, irregularly placed - versus that of the rotunda - small battens carefully put in place - , with the intention to have the traces in the concrete itself express the different functions of the various buildings. Not only the quality of the design of the complex, but just as well its properties in terms of technological conditions that determined the realization of the buildings, required a restoration which would reflect these characteristics to the greatest possible extent.<sup>5</sup> For instance: did the original method for reinforcement of the parapets with rebar of minimal dimensions, placed in a single

layer of concrete, avoid the complete deterioration of the partly carbonated concrete? Given the way the framework for the concrete was made, as well as its texture and the various elements linked to it, would it have been possible to 'repair' it and still ensure the preservation of its essence, its texture and colour?

Apart from the basic starting points we wanted the project's objectives to be limited and simple. A quiet voice murmured the *leitmotiv*: 'only do the necessary', 'respect the substance of the building', 'let us be guided by what the building says', 'don't take the answers for granted', 'repair, maintain, and do no more', 'rediscover the spatial qualities, the functional elements', 'transform only to strengthen Piccard's ideas', 'love the often rough patinas and textures' ...frightening objectives that challenged our knowledge, that were hardly able to provide us with answers and ultimate solutions that would be true to the original project.

Left: section of the rotunda. The dotted lines indicate the roofline and the false ceiling of the 1960's. On top, left to right, the detail of the floor's edges as original in 1937, after the 1964 intervention and after restoration 1993. Bottom: detail of the north facade of the restored rotunda. Photo: S. Cavero.

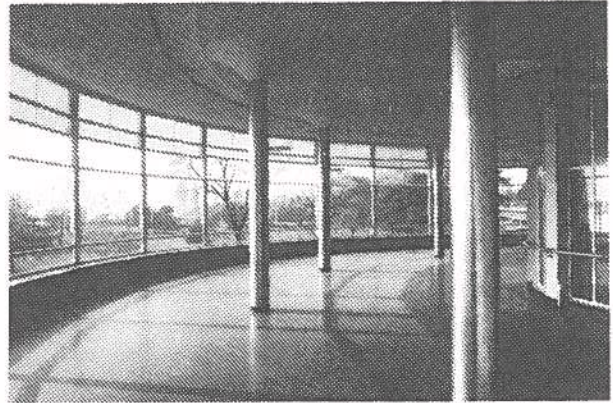
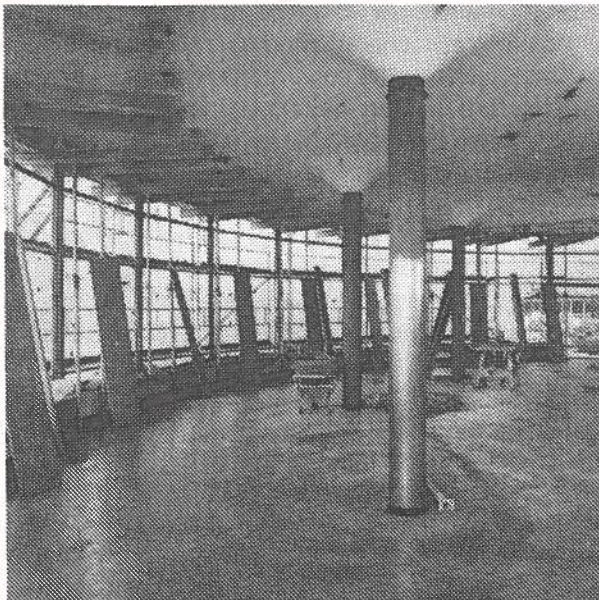


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Left, the interior of the rotunda during the works (photo: Philippe Pache). Right, the cylindrical restaurant after restoration.

### Rotunda

For the rotunda, various types of restoration work were carried out. To again appreciate the circular form of the restaurant, first of all a major clearance of the self-service counters was required. Like an octopus, the counters had gradually invaded three quarters of the available space, that once opened itself generously to the lake.

The repair of the steelwork of the facade, however, posed more of a challenge. Was it already doomed by its state of corrosion, that was especially advanced at the foot of the glazing?

The thermal conditions of the baths, that are used only during the summer, did not impose any serious constraints. It appeared possible to preserve the existing steelframes on site, replacing the lower parts, and sand blasting and treating the frames with an anti-corrosive before applying the last coat of paint.

Another issue was how to restore the roofs to their original state. The actual roof had been covered with an additional structure in wood with an aluminium sheeting, providing a better fall by raising it as much as 50 cm along the edges. An additional false ceiling in the restaurant concealed pipes that had been installed to ventilate the area between the original roof and the new structure, but these were choked already for years.

The aluminium sheets covering this additional roofstructure still allowed water to penetrate through the joints of the paving. The roofing itself had not been waterproof for maybe thirty years. Planning of the works to be carried out here was the more complicated since the condition of the actual roofing could only be guessed at. A proper inspection was not possible until after the actual works had started and the additional construction on the roof could be removed.

All of these problems seemed to have concentrated in the roof's edges, since there the

concrete of the floorslab had completely deteriorated and, literally, gone to pieces. The only possible solution was to remove the crumbled material and replace it.

As compared to the problems with the roof, preserving the valuable characteristics of the facade was relatively easy. They required simply to be recognised, after which the facade could be reconstructed on the basis of that what was shown on period photos.

### Functional changes

For the volume with the changing rooms, some problems had to be solved, that were of a more functional nature.

Preserving the lockers and cubicles was achieved by persuading the user of the value of these galvanized steel elements. By applying a more hygienic flooring and by a touch of bright yellow paint, enhanced by a higher level of lighting, security and more comfort were provided.

For the upgrading of the buildings as well as the revitalisation of some parts of the beach itself, it was necessary to include new dressing rooms for families. However, these were expected to modify the appearance and substance of this part of the building in an unacceptable way.

By locating them at the far western extremity of the linear volume, the preservation of the appearance of the ensemble could be guaranteed by again giving the building an end, that had been concealed by the interventions of the 1960's. The adopted form followed the curve of the righthand part and the demolition of non-supporting partitions revealed the general structure.

### Essential concrete repairs

The restoration of the concrete elements represents the essential part of the works. One of the most serious issues was to re-assure waterproofing of the roof of the changing room

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wing. The pavement of the solarium, on top of this volume, was in such a condition that it could only be demolished and reconstructed on site, in the same dimensions. Yet, the concrete was poured onto a bed of gravel, instead of the original layer of sand which had prevented water from draining away.

As for the parapets, the sophisticated repairing technique consisted of removing the corrosion from the steel by hand (even cutting it out when statically possible), followed by sand blasting and protecting the steel with a quartz covered epoxy that would then permit adhesion of a levelling mortar. A cement-plaster finish was applied, of which the composition and the admixtures correspond with the original. This proved to be fundamental for obtaining the desired character. A final treatment, by blasting the surface with a mix of water and sand under very low pressure, and then coating it with a light cement-coloured acrylic product, completed the appearance of the concrete work. This coating will provide sufficient protection for the first five to six years, after which it will have to be done again. The training of apprentices for this very careful work was entrusted to one single mason, who has completed all the necessary repairs.

In those cases where the cracks in the parapet panels were too serious and new dilatations were needed, a new joint was made by cutting the parapet from the floorslab and creating two bands of concrete of 15 to 30 cm with an elastic joint between them.

*Patrick Devanthery and Inès Lamunière are the restoring architects of the Bellerive-Plage, with Philippe Meylan, assistant architect, and A. Kugler, structural engineer. Photos and drawings by the architects except where stated otherwise.*

*\* Text has been largely rewritten by the editor on the basis of the original texts in french and English. We apologize for any misinterpretation.*

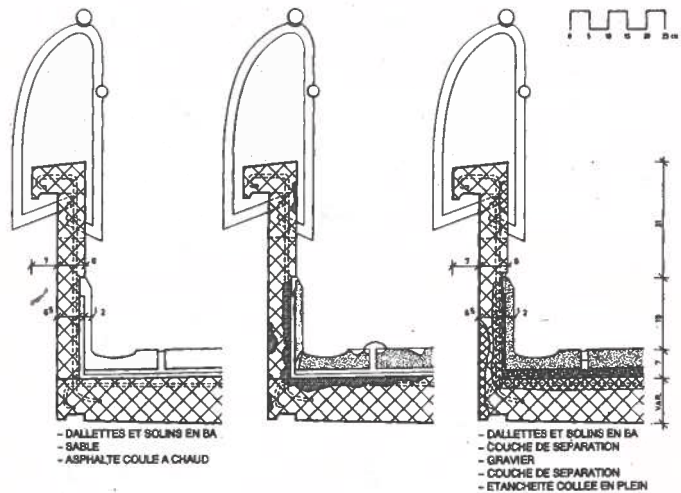
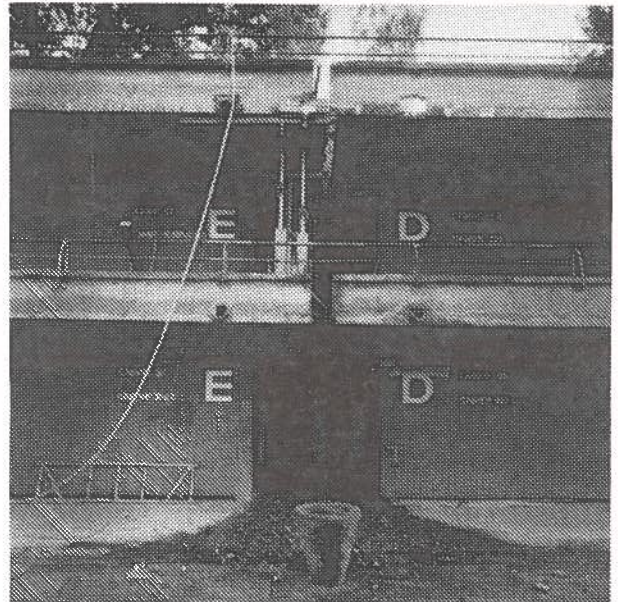
1. *Bulletin technique de la Suisse Romande*, Jan.1938, p.4.
2. Jacques Gubler, *Nationalisme et Internationalisme dans l'architecture moderne de la Suisse*, Lausanne, 1975, p.192.
3. Martine Jacquet, *Bellerive-plage, Chronologie*, ITHA, Lausanne, December 1990, p.22.
4. Financed by the Architectural Department of the City of Lausanne, the project and works mangement were commissioned to architects Patrick Devanthery and Inès Lamunière (assistant architect, Philippe Meylan); Gilles Barbey, architect, representative and expert for the Department for Conservation of the Vaud Canton; Pierre Frey, historian, responsible for the Piccard archives at the Institute of Theory and History (ITHA, EPFL).
5. A propos, we repeat the assertion of Alberto Grimoldi: 'The methods to choose are those which demand the least amount of sacrifice of the basic nature of the monument, not only today but also when the effect of the remedy wears off'. *FACES*, architectural journal no.9, Geneva 1988, p.24.

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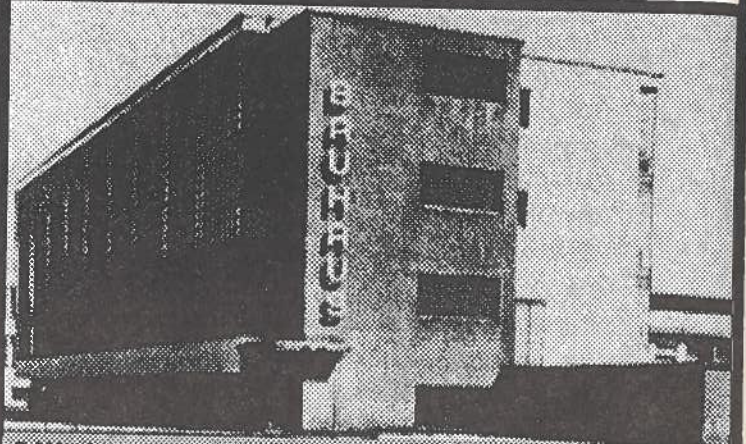
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Far top: the linear volume during restoration. Dilatation joints were made by cutting two elements apart and recasting 15 to 30 cm at each side. The joint was filled with an elastic material. Photo: Philippe Pache. Top: the parapet as original, in 1990 and after restoration. Bottom: the solarium on the roof after restoration.



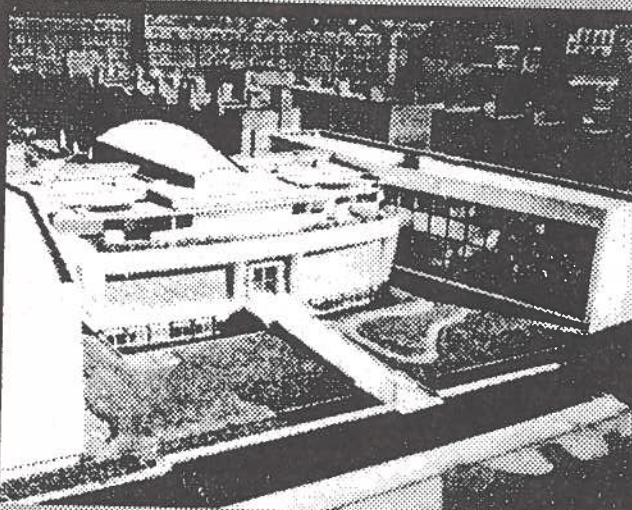




BAUHAUS, DESSAU - WALTER GROPIUS 1926

CATALYST OF THE

MODERN MOVEMENT

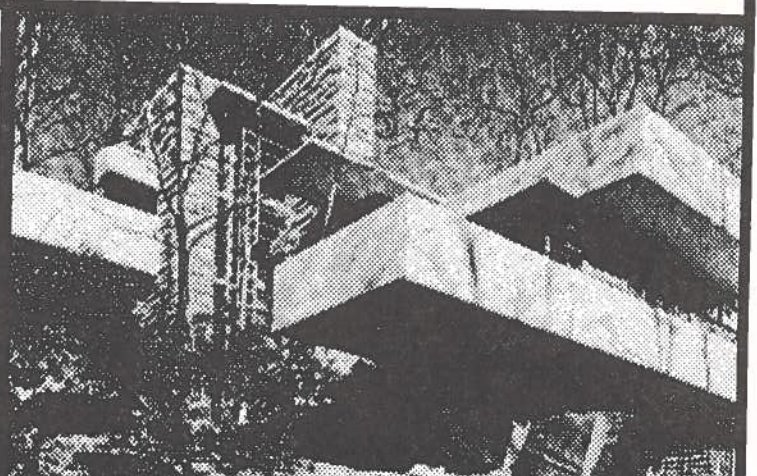


FINSBURY HEALTH CENTRE - TECTON 1938

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FALLING WATER, PENNSYLVANIA - FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT 1936

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