Zeitschrift: Bauen + Wohnen = Construction + habitation = Building + home : internationale Zeitschrift

Herausgeber: Bauen + Wohnen

Band: 1-5 (1947-1949)

Heft: 11

Werbung

Nouveau Cinéma Etoile, Zurich (page 34)

Le cinéma est aménagé dans un nouvel hôtel construit dans le cadre du plan d'assainissement de la vieille ville. Afin de conserver le jardin de la cour attenante, la salle du cinéma fut reléguée au sous-sol. Le manque d'espace a restreint les dimensions du hall d'entrée qui s'ouvre de plain-pied, et où la caisse a dû être insérée dans le mur. Le foyer et le vestiaire sont situés en contrebas. L'aménagement intérieur de la salle obéit aux principes de la visibilité et de l'acoustique. L'écran est vraiment placé comme un „point de mire" et son bord inférieur parfaitement visible de toutes les places.

Nombre de places	450
Distance d'un rang à l'autre .	83 cm
Largeur des sièges	55 cm
Distance de projection . . .	24 m
Distance du siège le plus éloigné de l'écran	23 m
Ecran	4,40 × 3,30 m

Summary

Aspects of theatre construction (page 1)

Considered from various points of view, present-day theatre construction faces a variety of problems of acute importance. In a number of countries affected by the last war, above all in a typical theatre country such as Germany, numerous theatres have been destroyed and their reconstruction is either under way or planning. Elsewhere, for instance in the US, the majority of theatre buildings is superannuated in both technical and architectural respects so that there the problem of reconstruction will sooner or later arise as well. This situation obtains at a time when the theatre projecting work of the past twenty-five years has yielded a wealth of ideas and plans, but little achievement.

The variegated development of the theatre has occasioned great variety in the building programmes. The requirements of an opera house differ from those made of a chamber-play theatre, or of a variety and revue house or a festival play-house serving a specific purpose. In addition to these theatres proper, the present age tends to add architectural structures embodied in larger organisms such as school theatres, the theatre installations of public halls and actual multi-purpose premises which — usually as additions to hotels — must, besides their proper functions, serve for banquets, conventions or exhibitions. In all such cases it will prove of advantage to the architect to provide for theatre requirements in the first place.

Experiments recently made with so-called arena theatres are among the new features in theatre construction.

In brief, it may be said that things are in full swing from all directions. It is to be hoped that the realizations which the next decades will no doubt bring may produce new buildings adequate to the spirit of the 20th century in free co-operation with the theatre and those concerned with it, free from a misconception of tradition and just as free from attempts at mere tricks.

Frederick Kiesler's theatre projects (pages 2—4)

The Universal Theatre, as Kiesler termed it, planned for Woostock, which was never built, was to be an inexpensive structure for various purposes. It combines a forestage and central stage, and both stage and auditorium or, rather, auditoriums, are mechanically adjustable. The new architectural organism was not only determined by structural tricks but also by the requirements of the new theatrical style as created by dramatists, directors and actors. It is a double theatre just like the Brooklyn project, with a central stage in which the larger auditorium can be turned into a central arena by splitting the seating arrangement (a portion of the seats are pivoted), without vacating the seats. According to requirements, the small room can be used for intimate performances, the large one for more monumental productions. A special arrangement is provided for the opera and for revues and variety shows.

Walter Gropius' universal theatre Design for the Piscator stage 1926/27 (page 5)

Gropius says: — "My 'total theatre', by means of ingenious technical installations, enables the director to have the play acted on the closed stage, on the forestage or the circular arena or on any of them simultaneously. Acting may take place on the centre stage or on one of the lateral stages or on all three concomitantly.

"The house is changed completely when the large turnable is revolved on its centre by 180°. Then the inserted, lowering small centre is placed in the middle of the house and completely surrounded by rising rows of seats. This rotation can be effected by machines during the performance.

"In my 'total theatre' the complete auditorium — walls and ceilings — can be surrounded by film screens. Such screens are placed between the twelve supporting columns, and the film projected from twelve cabins simultaneously from behind, so that the audience may, at will, be placed in the middle of a tossing sea or a converging crowd of people.

"The theatre is the large space machine with which the director can, according to his creative force, build his personal work."

Open and peep-show stage combined (page 6)

In the spatial theatre, the lateral sections of the auditorium are projected on to the stage by rolling, sliding, or wheeled wall panels achieving connection with the cyclorama as the rear limit of the stage. The intermediate space between cyclorama and panels necessary for entrances and lighting appears as a shoulder in the wall and is repeated by the wall shoulders in the auditorium. If necessary, it can be obliterated by appropriate light effects.

Arena theatre (pages 7—8)

Recently a type of theatrical performance has made an appearance in the US which is called 'arena style' or 'theatre in the round' where it is becoming increasingly popular. The essence of this method lies in the fact that a stage of traditional form is dispensed with. The performance takes place in the centre of an auditorium of square, round or oblong configuration. A style attempting at a certain intimacy by direct contact between actors and audience presupposes maximum audibility, and this, too, limits the size of the room.

The practical problem of entrances and exits is solved by simply providing narrow passages at the four corners of the seat squares (or between the four sectors), through which the actors appear from behind a section of the audience.

The rooms hitherto used for arena theatres are generally very simple from the architect's point of view. That of the University of Seattle is a simple circle, that of Karamu theatre is oblong. The lighting installation is arranged on parallel beams and achieves strong, concentrating spatial effects despite its simplicity. As early as 1930, Norman Bel Geddes submitted a finished project for Chicago, and recently the plans for a multi-purpose stage basing on the principle of the arena theatre were published, which is destined for theatrical performances, television, fashion shows and radio broadcasts. In such a case, a complicated mechanical and technical machinery with movable platforms, light banks and so on replaces the simplicity, which was the spiritual force of the arena theatre.

Frank Lloyd Wright and the theatre (pages 9—11)

The Hartford theatre project, the predecessor of which is to be found in the plans for Florida Southern College, is a chamber-play house seating approx. 700. The stage and auditorium are under the same ceiling. The stage comprises a turntable by means of which the normal changes of scenery are effected. The front half of the turntable itself projects into the auditorium, and it is preceded by a forestage with lateral wings which can be entered by the actors from the sides.

The Hartford theatre is a kind of synthesis of peep-show and spatial stage whose conventional fixation by the proscenium arc is dispensed with.

The formal structure of the interior as well as of the unit as a whole, rests in imaginative stereometric members. The unit is thereby clearly subdivided and functionally determined. As shown by the section of the model, the interior embodies a strong concentrating tension increased by the symmetrically broken breadthwise disposition. The shape of the interior creates possibilities for colour arrangements and embodiment of applied and projected painting — an element which will be of great importance in future theatre constructions.

Art Center of the University of Arkansas Fayetteville / Arkansas (pages 12—14)

The "Center" comprises three building units: the three-storey school and studio wing, the experimental theatre to which