

Summary

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Summary

House in Odden (pages 386—389)

This single-family house was planned in 1943 in connection with the construction of a smokehouse. It was intended to be situated west of the smokehouse on a cliff overlooking the sea. At that time the road was laid out and pines and other hardy trees and flowers planted which can withstand the severe climate of this region. When the owner in 1956 wanted to carry out the plan he was no longer interested in having a fine view. He wanted to erect his house on a lower level which had originally been intended as a garden sheltered from the wind. The character of the site led to the adoption of a circular design. It was important to place the house close to the shelter of the trees. The rooms around the central hallway are arranged in such a way that they receive maximum sunlight. The dining-room opening along one entire side into the living-room has a skylight over the round table. Fluorescent tubing was built into the skylight. Behind the dining-room there is an annex with the heating plant, the laundry and the store-room. The hall is connected with the living-room so that the latter can be enlarged on social occasions. Ordinarily these two rooms are separated by a curtain and shelves on which is displayed the collection of Peruvian objects. The bedrooms for the children and the parents are each connected with an ante-room and a bath. The grey hand-woven curtains overlap all the outside walls for acoustic reasons, but they are not suspended from the ceiling but from under the skylights. Since the owner and his wife had lived for several years in Peru, there was not much furniture available. The house was furnished in collaboration with the architect, but as the illustrations show, there can be no question of complete furnishing. The house is equipped with hot air heat, distributed to the various rooms in floor ducts. The waste air is drawn off in the hall through an exhaust conduit. The elevation elements are 72 cm. wide and consist of steel frames either glassed or covered on both sides with steel sheets and heat-insulated. The windows are of polyglass, with fixed panes on lower level; the skylights can be pivoted.

House at Farnley Tyas (pages 390—393)

The site is 7 km. south of Huddersfield on the edge of a high slope above a thickly wooded valley. This location yields a broad panorama over forest and moorland. The site covered with beeches, maples and chestnut trees is 90 m. long and only 18 m. wide. The house was erected on the edge of the slope. The house has a ground area of 148 sq. m.; no more was approved at the time of building. The restrictive regulations on area and quantity of materials were only eased when the house was practically finished. The owner laid down three conditions: the house must be low cost and simple to maintain; it must have maximum space devoted to actual living quarters; it must be arranged to make possible musical concerts. This house, which appears to be of two storeys when viewed from outside, has rooms on five different levels. The living-room is the largest room, in the centre. It opens into the other rooms: below to the studio, which lies, two steps lower, to the dining-room and the kitchen, which are an additional five steps lower; above to the gallery with the work room, thence to the later added children's and guest rooms and five steps higher to the parents' room and the bath. Laths measuring 7.62 x 5.08 cm. in threes are joined by bolts and fitted to stanchions. The trimmed joists are fitted into grooves in the beams and fastened together with

5 x 5 cm. angle irons. The ceiling and roof beams are laid down on the trimmed joists. The proportions are in correspondence with those of the Modulor; thus the spans measure 183, 355 and 549 cm. The foundation of clinker stone rests on a 10 cm. thick reinforced concrete base. The wooden stanchions are fitted into cast iron bases embedded in concrete. The solid masonry walls are covered on the inside with Celotex and rendered or covered with asbestos cement slabs and on the outside insulated with aluminium sheets and finished with horizontal beading. The sliding windows are fitted with simple polished plate glass and the fixed windows are double in hardwood frames. The partitions of the utility rooms are of 8 cm. thick clinker which is either rendered or covered with mahogany slabs. The floor on the ground level is paved with stone flagging, the living-room has a wooden parquet floor and the upper rooms have wall-to-wall carpeting. All ceilings are finished in mahogany or birch inlaid plywood slabs. The interior decoration was designed by the architect.

House at Santa Barbara (pages 394—398)

Neutra has been building an endless series of villas for well-to-do people in California, and yet each one of these houses has its own unmistakably individual quality. This probably stems from Neutra's intensive concern with the everyday living habits of the owners, upon which he always bases his plans. If, especially with the aid of his recent published works, one surveys the development of his plans and the cubic structure of his villas, one can note a clearly discernible simplification of what had previously been all too often inordinately complicated. In particular, our present example, a large villa in Santa Barbara on the Pacific coast, patently reveals this tendency.

The project was exceptionally comprehensive: In addition to the standard living- and dining-rooms there was provided a very spacious rumpus room (called by the Americans the Together Room) with a wide terrace and swimming pool as well as the parent's section and five children's bedrooms and guest room.

The house is divided into two sections, which to be sure are under one single roof but are clearly separate in the plan. One section, at a lower level, contains living- and dining-room, utility rooms and parent's bedroom. In front of the south rooms, which are situated behind a large picture window with fixed pane reaching from floor to ceiling, runs a narrow shelf having the effect of a balcony, 60 cm. wide, and not intended to be walked on, which is actually a continuation of the floor. All the south rooms open into one another by way of openings around one meter wide and constituting a kind of "enfilade" one behind the other along the side of the picture window.

The second, recessed and narrower section on the south side comprises the large rumpus-room as well as the kitchen; on the north side are five children's and guest rooms. On the south and east are broad terraces in front of this section accessible through wide, high sliding glass doors. A swimming pool is situated next to the house on the east side. There is an open carport under the parents' bedroom section. Adjoining is the main entrance with a single flight of stairs leading into the living section of the ground-floor. A second stairway running out-doors leads directly into the bedroom corridor for children and guests.

The details and the interior finish are of the utmost precision and simplicity. In contrast to other and earlier houses by Neutra, the architect has in this instance to a far-reaching extent separated and differentiated the garden and the living-rooms. An outdoor terrace on a level with the living-rooms is armated only on the east side facing the swimming pool; the other outside areas are in the form of balconies high above the wooded terrain.

The large south elevation of the living and parents' section consists of seven large plain square panes in metal profile sections. The outwardly projecting supporting girders of the roof and the floor structure are extended around 15 cm. beyond the ceiling boarding.

House in the Desert Inyo

(pages 399—401)

This house is located in the California desert in Inyo County near the Nevada state line. Not far from the property are the famous Death Valley—a burning desert nearly 100 m. below sea level—and

the highest peak in the USA, Mt. Whitney, 4800 m. altitude. The district, where formerly many travellers died of thirst, is today only thinly settled. Living is made possible by the presence of ground water and a simple road. The family consists of the parents, a daughter and a son. The parents work in their grocery store, service station and small motel. The house comprises three bedrooms and a guest apartment with patio along with a sitting-room around the fireplace and the open kitchen.

Sidney Troxell House, Pacific Palisades (pages 402—404)

The family has settled on a steep slope above a bay of the Pacific, at the foot of an unspoiled mountain district. A driveway and two footpaths lead from the highway down to the house. The living-room and the patioform a right angle enclosing a platform by way of which stone flagging runs from the edge of the site to the glass front on the east side of the living-room. The three children's rooms are situated north of the utility section and in close proximity to the living-room. The parents' bedroom adjoins on the south the living-room and the main entrance. Parents' and children's room are so disposed and furnished that the individual members of the family can enjoy complete privacy, and this will be an ideal solution when the children are grown up and return as guests. The timber construction of planed beams and chamfer beading is in keeping with the architect's method of construction which has stood the test of time (see Design Sheet).

House at Teddington (page 405)

The house was built for a family of four which preferred to invest its available money in a heating plant, in insulation and practical installations rather than in large rooms. The building authorities had prescribed that the living-room had to lie above the level of possible floods, in this case 1.20 m. above the ground level of the site. Therefore the ground floor is utilized only for the covered seating area, the garage and the boiler room. In spite of the small plan the architect has succeeded in separating the day rooms and the bedrooms into distinct sections. The living-dining room, the kitchen and the stairs are not sealed off from one another, but are harmoniously integrated. In spite of this openness from room to room the sitting areas are not disturbed by movement between the rooms. The exterior walls are of brick. The boarding of the roof cornice is white and the untreated concrete is painted dull black. The floors in the kitchen, in the dining-room and in the bathroom are paved with clinker slabs, the living room and bedroom floors have wall-to-wall carpeting. The interior walls are of brick; the inside of the exterior walls and the ceilings are fitted with insulation slabs.

Two-Room House with Courtyard (page 406)

A brick wall two meters high encloses like a snail shell the exterior and the interior of the house. The inner rooms are only 2.35 m. high but one does not have the feeling that the ceilings are oppressively low. The effect of height is achieved by the all glass south wall and the continuous skylight. Four sliding doors near the entrance and in the kitchen permit the living-room and the bedroom to be sealed off or opened into each other. The enveloping wall creates the courtyard, which produces the impression of a room without roof.

New Directions in Furniture Construction (pages 407—410)

One of the crucial problems in the construction of furniture is that of joining, the fitting together of the individual pieces. A joint is right when it provides a tight fit, when it is pleasing in appearance and when it is simple to produce. Techniques of wood and metal working furnish interesting possibilities of meeting all these requirements. In what follows we shall go into some of these possibilities in detail and see how they work out in practice. New solutions can be found by playing on the draughting board with lines and surfaces and by giving the mind a free rein. It is astonishing what ideas emerge after such a seemingly simple intellectual game. Ordinarily in a given piece of furniture a great variety of connections are used. The problem now is to find a kind of connection which can if at all possible be utilized in all structural

parts. What is meant here is not the application of one joint only for all the furniture in a house; rather there are various types of joint possible for various kinds of furniture depending on their function. A small number of different structural parts should yield a large number of combinations. This system makes it possible for even the medium-sized and small shop, with their high standards of individual workmanship, to engage in mass production. In the case of furniture the joints ought on principle to be visible. Whatever is functionally necessary has its own beauty and does not require any "beautiful" finish. The ornamental quality of the joints themselves is what makes this type of furniture distinctive. The illustrations and diagrams show four construction systems for the frame and legs of various kinds. The essential feature is the relationship between the structural details and the whole.

Bolted Furniture (pages 411—414)

The furniture of Kurt Thut is based on ideas which are similar to those of Werner Blaser. Both designers have in common a disciplined approach and technique.

Thut has developed a kind of construction based on a simple organization of profile parts (angle irons and flat steel pieces). The parts are cut to the desired length, perforated, finished and bolted together.

This assembly method is most clearly revealed in table construction. The connection between the flat steel frame and the four angles of the legs is similar to the type of steel construction developed by Mies van der Rohe; it is clearly distinguished from welded skeleton constructions in metal furniture, in the case of which woodworking techniques have left their traces.

There is nothing mysterious about this kind of construction, owing to its clarity of conception and to the fact that all the elements are visible. Despite the higher material expenditure it is in mass production more economical than welded tubular constructions. The severity which is so visible in the tables was not extended to the chairs: a consistent application of the construction principle would have entailed a lack of proportion between material outlay and result; therefore welded construction had to be resorted to.