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The Palace of Justice of Chandigarh

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Architect: Le Corbusier, Paris

One year ago, WERK published photographs of the future capital of East Punjab, Chandigarh, which was then under construction. Now that the Swiss photographer Ernst Scheidegger has recently returned from a trip to India, we can present a few photographs of a new building now completed, the Palace of Justice, the first of the government buildings conceived, as an integral part of the over-all plan for the city, by Le Corbusier. Like everything else constructed at Chandigarh, the building is oriented at such an angle as to be open to the prevailing winds, the intention being to provide sufficient ventilation during the hot season. The greatest care has been devoted to furnishing protection against the sun: huge sun shields and umbrella roof over the roof terrace. Proceeding exactly as he did at Ronchamp, Le Corbusier has by no means sought to restrict the space resulting from isolated slabs but has achieved a composition of convex elements, each part of the building not so much revealing the function it is intended to serve as contributing to an architectural whole which is in itself an essentially plastic work of art. Nothing could be more different, in fact, from the spirit of the American skyscrapers in which technics and function are so integrated as to become aesthetic ends in themselves. And yet both conceptions have an equal right to be considered representative tendencies in the architecture of our time. — The architecture of the Capitol at Chandigarh manifests a will to modern monumentality which at the same time breathes something of the spirit of the ancient temples.

Sandoz Laboratories, Orléans

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1949–52, Jean Tschumi, arch. FAS/SIA, Lausanne-Paris

The problem confronting the architect was to design a large number of units destined for the most diverse functions while at the same time managing to create a broad green area harmonizing with the surrounding countryside. The main building has now been completed. The basement serves as raw material depot, the ground floor is reserved for cloakrooms and showers and, also, the storeroom for finished products; the mezzanine houses a second general storeroom, the first and second floors the fabrication rooms; the third comprises a large air-filtering room (the type of fabrication here requiring extremely pure air) and a room for semi-finished products; the fourth is reserved for the personnel. — All the elevations are in rough concrete without stone granulating and yet retain very well the appearance of a poured material.

Eternit S.A. Administration Building, Niederurnen

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Haefeli, Moser, Steiger, arch. FAS/SIA, Zürich, and collaborators

The architects were confronted with the dual problem of erecting a new building for the administrative services, which were too cramped in the old building, and of making it possible to present, as a "display", the products of the company, utilizing for the administrative section Eternit products, which have become, as everyone knows, rather important elements in modern architecture not only on account of their technical properties but because of their colour variations. Therefore there was designed a three-storey building intended for offices, and an exhibition wing; but Eternit products were not used in the construction of the latter in order to throw into sharper relief those which are on exhibition. The ground floor of this exhibition wing is a reception hall, and the various superposed levels where the products of the firm are exhibited are themselves, as it were, extensions of the landings leading to the offices. — The firm's keen sense of what constitutes up-to-date publicity has made possible a building thoroughly in keeping with the spirit of modern times.

Main Hall of the Winterthur Accident Insurance Co., Zürich branch

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1954/55, Otto Glaus, arch. FAS/SIA, and collaborators

The problem was to house on the ground floor of an already existing office building a main hall, at the same time creating a wider entrance and stairway. For this reason all walls were eliminated, columns being arranged as supporting elements and the whole being subdivided by glass partitions which have the additional advantage of providing excellent acoustic insulation.

Institute of Organic Chemistry of the University of Basle

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1950/52, Building Department of the City of Basle, chief architect Julius Maurizio, arch. FAS/SIA; project and plans: A. Rederer, arch. SIA; director of works: M. Streicher, arch.

On the occasion of the nomination of a new professor for the chair of organic chemistry of the University of Basle, a number of firms in Basle contributed generously to the financing of the new building for this Institute (in which the number of students has increased in 50 years from 77 to 294) — the old building, the renovation of which will begin shortly, being from now on reserved for inorganic chemistry alone. The connection between the two buildings was greatly facilitated by the fact that the surrounding site is occupied solely by university buildings. The new Institute comprises a basement and 4 storeys, with laboratories and lecture halls. Cost: 4,600,000 Fr. (exclusive of architect's and engineer's fees).

Sculptures of Franz Fischer on the facade of the new building of the Swiss Bank Union in Zürich

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It was resolved to avoid in these four bas-reliefs the allegorical, the artist making each sculpture a kind of still life in an attempt to evoke symbolically the various aspects of Zürich (geographical setting — foundation of the oldest church — the commercial city — the university city).

Homage to Georg Schmidt

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On the occasion of the 60th birthday of Georg Schmidt, curator of the Museum of Fine Arts of Basle, Chr. Bernoulli invited many foreign personalities to send birthday messages giving expression to their esteem. It is their letters which are reproduced in the present issue; here it will be sufficient to observe that they all agree in lauding the achievements of the curator who, though 60, remains ever youthful in spirit. He has not only reorganized with a master's hand the exhibition of the permanent collections, but moreover he has revealed as profound a feeling for excellence as he has an understanding for living values and he has been most energetic in acquiring so many works put up for auction by Nazi barbarism, and consequently has succeeded in making the Museum of Basle the most complete and the finest museum of modern art in Europe.

Constantin Brancusi in America

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by Georgine Oeri

Even though it may be fundamentally out of keeping with anything suggesting a museum, the sculpture of Brancusi, this master who is now 80, has not for all that failed to draw crowds to the exhibitions of his sculptures organized recently at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and at the Museum of Art in Philadelphia. Brancusi acquired, as it were, a legendary aura through his participation in the Armory Show of 1913 and he has ever since been successful in getting his works into the private collections of the pioneers of the cause of modern art, found everywhere throughout the U.S.A. What's more, Brancusi's conceptions have been responded to in America on a profound level. For the simplicity (a knowledgeable simplicity moreover) which he tries to achieve answers to the essentially American need to grasp becoming and embody it in the absoluteness of design; and at the same time Brancusi's manner of allowing or seeming to allow the material to speak for itself, achieving a synthesis of the natural and the mythic, is related to one of the most authentic aspects of the mode of apprehension of the New World with its marked sensitivity to everything that is at the same time elementary force (i.e. elements) and emergent myth.