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Private Home at Küsnacht near Zurich

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1953-55, Prof. Alfred Roth, arch. FAS/SIA

The problem was to build a large home with the hall, living-room and dining-room forming a spacious unified whole; at the same time the house was to be tied in with the garden as much as possible. The building lot measuring around 1600 sq. m. is elongated and thus the architect has planned a structure likewise elongated and deliberately extended by the vestibule and the hall constituting a covered garden. The rhythmic disposition of the walls parallel to the longitudinal axis permits, on the south side, a direct integration of the house with the garden, the living-room moreover being in glass and the dining-room provided with large bay windows. The plan as a whole is based on a modulus of 90 cm. selected not for any abstract considerations but in keeping with the given conditions.

Plan for a Country Villa near Brussels

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1956, Prof. Alfred Roth, arch. FAS/SIA

The original idea, conceived by two families of friends, was to build two separate homes on a site of 2 hectares in the vicinity of Brussels. But whereas the larger house – a permanent home – will not be carried out in accordance with the architect's plans, the smaller one is for the time being intended to be merely a week-end "cottage". Major consideration: to give clear expression by way of the restrained severity of the design to the dual function of the house, which is to be a spacious place to relax and also a place for gracious living. The swimming pool is 20 m. long.

Installation of an Apartment in Berne

411

1957, Martha Huber-Villiger, decorator, Zürich

4-room apartment which is extremely comfortable without sacrificing any of its intimacy. The furniture has been selected with a view to flexible arrangement in case the family ever has to move. Dining-room and study decorated in the same way so they can be used in combination for parties. Harmonious selection of materials and fabrics.

Carpets, Mats and Fabrics in the Home

414

by Max König

A carpet is beautiful when it harmonizes both with fine old furniture and with good modern creations, regardless of whether it is plain or has a patterned design. Beautiful things are not necessarily expensive, and there can still be found good creations which are not mass-produced. Japan has taught the Americans occupying the country the fundamental importance of material composition, and the choice of carpets and tapestries is being increasingly determined, fortunately, by the architect and thus subordinated to the overall designs of interiors.

Upholstered Furniture

418

by Benedikt Huber

Ever since the creations of Breuer, Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier first came out – and they have never lost any of their appeal – attempts have been made to massproduce beautiful furniture (Alvar Aalto, Saarinen, Charles Eams); very recently certain Swiss decorators have happily renewed the spirit of the 30's (which had waned far too much) and succeeded in creating models which will assuredly not date as quickly as so many other designs from the intervening period.

A "Saffa" Table Service

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The organization committee of "Saffa" (Exhibition on "The Swiss Woman in the Home and at Work", planned for next year) and the Sola tableware factory at Emmen have instituted a competition for table service designs which are to fulfill the requirements of good design and also those of mass production. There took part the metal-working classes of the Schools of Applied Art of Berne, Lucerne and Zurich; all the productions of the latter represented outstanding work, revealing in this way that this school not only knows how to mould taste but has likewise become a kind of pilot project for industry.

Houses on the Greek Islands

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by Giorgio Crespo

In the houses on the Greek Islands what is particularly striking is the harmonious simplicity both of each individual home and of what we would call nowadays the town plan embodied in entire complexes of houses. Moreover, whereas in our northerly latitudes we build for bad weather, the Mediterranean climate of Greece permits osmosis, as it were, between exteriors and interiors, the courtyard or patio, and even a part of the street forming an integral whole with the house. There are 3 main types of house: 1. The House facing the street, as a general rule with 2 storeys. The stairway is on the outside; in front of the house there is a bench, sometimes even a private area. – 2. The L-shaped House. The patio is separated from the street merely by a low wall. The L plan is a result of the recessed kitchen, oven and toilets; in the patio an outside stairway runs up to the flat roof. – 3. The House with closed-in patio, which is a kind of further development of the former type, often has a summer sleeping area above street level. – The same functional simplicity is a marked feature of the other buildings: chapels, churches, convents, baker's ovens, etc. This is a perfection which elicits our admiration not merely owing to its exotic appeal to the idle tourist, but owing to its sharp contrast with the dissatisfaction which our semi-technical civilization cannot fail to arouse in us.

The Ceramics of Antonio Cumella Serret

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by Willy Rotzler

With the widespread diffusion of receptacles made of other materials than clay, ceramic production became a fine art in which design was no longer anything but the preliminary stage of mere ornamentation, unless it became degraded into miniature sculpture and curios. It was a fine art likewise threatened by industrial methods of production and by pure art by great artists such as Picasso, Braque, Miró, etc., seeking to create ceramic works which gave rise to unfortunate industrial imitations. But, toward 1900, an attempt was made to get back to the sources of this art, represented in this case by the pure ceramic designs of the Chinese and the Japanese – pure designs enriched and heightened only by the effect of the glaze which is equally pure and, as it were, abstract. Antonio Cumella Serret is one of the artists who exemplifies in the most noble fashion this renewal of the great tradition in ceramics. He was born at Granollers (Barcelona Province) in 1913, and he is internationally known for having been singled out for awards on two occasions at the Triennale of Milan (1936 and 1951). We have had the privilege of seeing his work in Switzerland, first at the Galerie de l'Entracte (Lausanne) and quite recently at the Museum of Applied Arts in Zurich. In nearly all cases his work consists of pure ceramic creations without any utilitarian function, in which there is revealed a world of shapes which are specifically Iberian and even Ibero-Moorish, from the sensible way he applies the glaze, which has such a muted splendour. What proves that Serret is intensely conscious of the character of pure art possessed by his creations (comparable in this respect to the ceramics of the Japanese) is the fact that he applies a severe self-criticism to himself and in fact destroys many of his own works, preserving only those which meet his very high standards of perfection.

Games for Adults

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by Ursula Isler-Hungerbühler

The functional perfection of the objects given us in such great quantities by modern industry runs the risk of transforming this century into a century of boredom by the progressive elimination of the unexpected and of all fantasy. The danger is that we may lose that play instinct which can be defined as the ultimate freedom. It is therefore a pleasure to find something really different like these games for adults such as, e.g., the House of Cards by the American architect Charles Eams or the steel Spring "Slinky" created by Richard T. James (Philadelphia) which Max Bill could describe as the most inspired of all toys. We should also mention the patience game "Decor", the "Trigon" of W. Kienzle, and the fine cube puzzle by the Zurich bookbinder Franz Zeier.