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Trends in Design at the Present Time

by *Benedikt Huber*

The present issue deals with four examples of the architecture of 1962. They permit us to form some impression of the way in which certain creators are endeavouring not just to carry on the movement which was called in the thirties the "new architecture", but to develop it in new directions wherever this proves to be viable. They are doing so in the midst of a vast diversity of trends that is so obvious in present-day architecture. These four examples can be taken as representative of the modern "second generation". The additive character, the extreme functionalism, the near monopoly accorded to the horizontal which were features of so many creations of the preceding generation are giving way to a tendency to discover a focus and to treat volumes from a plastic point of view. Hence the current inflation, not only of designs, but still more of architectural principles, recalling in a way the situation prevailing in the 19th century, which the initiators of the "new architecture" had believed they had forever overcome.

The Freudenberg Cantonal High School in Zurich

1958/61. Architect: Prof. Jacques Schader FAS/SIA, Zurich

The ever-increasing student enrolment on the secondary level (classical high school and modern school, known in Zurich parlance as "commercial school") has rendered necessary the creation of a second Cantonal School, for which an ideal site has been found on the old Freudenberg estate wisely acquired by the City. On the line of an ancient moraine the site, shaded by an admirable stand of trees, which have been preserved, has all the character of a hilltop location, and it has been sought to retain this character as much as possible. Surrounded as they are by a green zone, two schools—high school and commercial school—comprise 70 classrooms each and are interconnected by a common building reserved for the natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, geography) including a wing containing three large gymnasiums and the auditorium with a seating capacity of 500. Both schools are based on the principle of the large internal hall several stories high, this hall resolving the internal flow problem. This solution was adopted not merely for architectural reasons but for essentially pedagogical considerations: the central hall creates a focus where the students can feel part of a unified academic community. Another educative consideration has determined, in the natural sciences building, the arrangement of the collections in the corridors, which constitute a permanent exhibition. The same thing applies to the auditorium where the young students are given the opportunity to experiment with a drama that is not merely imitated from the regular theatres, this dramatic programme being intended to counteract the hyperintellectualism of the study curriculum by fostering the imagination and the capacity to feel, which is being greatly neglected in our age.

One-family House on the Sonnenberg, Zurich

1961. Architect: Ernst Gisel FAS/SIA, Zurich

In this house, the living area of which properly so called is situated at roof level in that the roof constitutes the groundfloor on the side facing the slope, all functionalism has been very deliberately avoided in an effort not to disturb the simple flow of everyday living. On the contrary, it is the everyday character of the house that has served as the ideal goal here, all the rooms being put on the same footing as regards dignity.

Children's Home in Amsterdam

Architect: A. van Eyk, Amsterdam

This home for underprivileged young people and children ranging in age from a few months to 20 is designed for around 125 residents divided into 8 groups. An attempt has been made to create an architectural setting in keeping with the dual phenomenon individual/collective (which is equally important in town-planning in general) and small/large, the complex as a whole tending to combine the advantages of a plan with a central axis and those with a decentralized lay-out.

Louis Kahn and the Medical Towers in Philadelphia

by *Ueli Roth*

H. R. Hitchcock has said of the laboratories, i.e., the Medical Towers, of the University of Pennsylvania that they constitute, along with the S. R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the most significant achievement in American architecture of the past few years. In fact, Louis Kahn's Medical Towers can be considered evidence of authentic originality and they can be regarded as speaking the idiom of an architectural

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ethic which requires subordination to the inherent laws of construction with the overall purpose in view. Nothing is left to chance; everything proceeds from a rigorous self-critical method permitting a reciprocal interaction between the element of vision and that of concrete choice.

New Conceptions of Interiors

by *Lucius Burckhardt*

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A functionalist conception of the multiple purposes a house ought to fulfil can have two entirely different consequences: a free plan permitting the rooms to be used for varying purposes as the need arises, or on the contrary, a lay-out that is as fixed as possible for the "living machine". The increasing need for small-scale plans will, on the other hand, entail a more charitable attitude towards the free-plan principle or a form of compositional romanticism instead of giving rise to research into truly new openings.

Instances 1962

by *Karl Gerstner*

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The title of this summary gives only an approximate idea of the pilot theme of the author, who makes use of a loan-term taken from office jargon. This is an artist like K. G.'s way of pointing out at one and the same time the emergent nature possessed by living art and the elective affinities to which any choice corresponds, or, as he takes pleasure in writing, the montage of examples gathered together by him under titles such as: the picture in its objective and material nature; the structural components; the "variables"; the plasticians; the luminists; the phenomenologists; the chromaticists. All forms of creation, including his own, which entail the active participation at an empathetic level of the viewer. The impossibility of rendering in a few lines the line of reasoning and the questions in such an analysis forces us to request the reader to be good enough to turn to the reproductions accompanying the article itself. This, we hope, will be more instructive than a necessarily meagre paraphrase of the commentary.

Toward an Orientation

by *Hansjörg Gisiger*

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Unlike Maurice Denis, the author states that a picture is in the first instance a crucifixion or a nude and only some way afterwards is it "a flat surface with colours assembled in a certain pattern". In other words, the thing which has to be said, its quality, is the decisive factor. Chasing novelty for the sake of novelty is an outmoded dead-end. As S. Giedion has said, the preceding generation's task was to clear the air; ours is to set our house in order.

Three Young Basle Sculptors

by *Claude Richard Stange*

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The three most important sculptors among the "19 Young Basle Artists" whose work was shown in an exhibition at the Basle Art Museum in the spring of 1961 are: Hans Christen, born at Sulz (Lucerne) in 1929, Walter Gürtler, who first saw the light of day at Allschwil (Basle) in 1931, and Paul Suter, born in Gränichen (Aargau) in 1926. All three are now working in Basle and all give evidence of a powerful personality placed in the service of impassioned formal research; this is the sole common denominator of three very distinct characters.