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Adaptable Plans

With reference to the 'Neuwil' project in Wohlen published below, this interview is concerned with problems of the flexibility of housing plans, their technical aspects, their possibilities and, above all, with the framework within which the given flexibility is applied.

'Neuwil' Project in Wohlen AG

1963-1965. Architects: METRON, team of architects, Niederlenz

The two housing blocks, with 49 units each, are distinguished by a developed 'prolongement du logement'. Inside the flats the partitions are freely adjustable on a pre-established grid. Every resident receives a brochure containing recommendations for practical plans.

Hechtliacker High-rise Building in Basel

Architects: Otto and Walter Senn BSA, Basel

Three high-rise buildings are to be erected on a wooded meadow sloping north in the vicinity of the city. The plans of this pentagonal high-rise house are related to those applied by Otto Senn to the Berlin Interbau.

Multi-family House on Hegibachstrasse in Zurich

1959/60. Architect: Ernst Gisel BSA/SIA, Zurich

The house contains mainly three-room flats; the ample depth of the site renders possible a flexible disposition of the furniture in the living-room, which is well related to the kitchen from the standpoint of service.

Small Flats on Clausiusstrasse in Zurich

1960/61. Architect: Ernst Gisel BSA/SIA, Zurich

This block containing 16 small-scale flats stands in a densely built up district. All flats are accessible via arbourways opening into a beautifully proportioned round stairwell.

Multi-family House in Aarau

1962. Architect: Hans Zangger, Zurich

The house contains flats of widely varying sizes ranging from one to five rooms. The garden in particular is remarkable in that its planting is continued up onto the balconies and the roof garden, where there are concrete plant troughs.

Houses on Greene Street, New Haven, Conn.

Architect: William Mileto, New Haven, Conn.

The 34 flats have one, two or three bedrooms. This is a low-rent project, though financed privately.

'Florence Virtue' Co-operative Row-house Project in New Haven, Conn.

Architect: John M. Johansen, New Canaan, Connecticut

This is a row-house project with 129 units with one to four bedrooms. The houses are grouped in broad green zones, with the entrances accessible from public thoroughfares.

Courtyard Houses in Ljan near Oslo, Norway

Architects: Inge Dahl, Aasmund Dahl, Mari and Gullik Kollandsrud, Anton Knudsen and Kjell Richardson, Interior Decorator

In a rather old residential suburb 6 km from Oslo is this housing complex consisting of eight courtyard houses giving the effect from the outside of a closed unit; on the inside, however, each unit is adapted to the requirements of the owners.

Courtyard Houses in Amsterdam

1960-1964. Architects: Lucia Hartsuyker-Curjel and Hendrik Hartsuyker, Amsterdam

A narrow strip of ground was reserved on the north side of a future park for experiments in the expansion plan for Amsterdam-Buitenveldert. The housing group consisting of eight courtyard units was proposed by architects who themselves live in House No. 3.

'Im Büel' Project at Geroldswil ZH

1963/64. Architect: Prof. William Dunkel BSA/SIA, Kilchberg ZH

The project comprises 12 single-family houses of which every two are combined in a pair separated by a fire wall. Living-rooms, dining-rooms and study as well as the kitchen are in each case situated on the ground level and thus enjoy direct access to the gardens, with the bedrooms, etc., being reached via an inside stairway from the living-room.

The Textile Class of the School of Applied Arts, Zurich

by Erika Billeter

The textile class of the School of Applied Arts of Zurich, as early as 1916, had the good fortune to obtain as director Sophie Taeuber-Arp, whose ideas were in advance of her time and who along with her pupils did genuine pioneer work in this field, in that she developed textile designing on the basis of its own inherent norms. Even before Bauhaus, Sophie Taeuber divided up carpet surfaces into geometrical or freely abstract motifs. Elsi Giauque has continued in this tradition since 1944. She has been a contributor to the modern realization that the spatial dimension also may be extended to textile products. Independent shapes in space are the transparent hanging fabrics 'Transparency' dated 1945 and 'Hovering Column' of 1965. Nevertheless, the two-dimensional wall and floor carpet also has its spatial function to fulfil.

Walter Kern

by Josef Paul Hodin

The author Kasimir Edschmid in his Journal 1958-1960 calls Walter Kern one of the most manifold talents in Switzerland: 'abstract painter, poet, brilliant essayist and manager of a large enterprise'. Walter Kern was born in Küssnacht on the Lake of Zurich in 1898, and he grew up in Küssnacht and Zurich. His artistic activity always ran parallel to his principal job as a business man, during his periods of travel in Geneva, Spain and Italy and during his sojourns in Thun, Zurich, Davos and Winterthur. At the present time he lives at Uttwil on the Lake of Constance. His friendship with Swiss and German painters gave rise to numerous publications in the field of art criticism. After beginning as an expressionist, he went over to a kind of abstract creation that is rooted in the interior life, producing works that closely resemble those of Paul Klee. Characteristic of the combination of the pictorial and the literary in his work are the 'scriptural pictures'.

Gotthard Jedlicka

by Hans A. Lüthy

This article pays homage to the art historian Gotthard Jedlicka, Professor for Modern Art History at the University of Zurich, who died on November 9, 1965. He is honoured as a teacher, as a writer and as a man. Jedlicka as early as the beginning of the Twenties had been attracted by the French art of the turn of the century, and in 1928 he made a name for himself with a large monograph on Toulouse-Lautrec. There followed standard works on Pieter Bruegel, Edouard Manet and Modigliani as well as numerous publications on contemporary artists. His writing on art was based in unique fashion on the observation of the artistic genius. Of all his friendships, some extending for decades, with artists, the most important were those with Max Gubler, Hans Purrmann, Alberto Giacometti and Hermann Hubacher. He repeatedly brought his students into contact with the original works, and the weekly discussions in the Zurich Kunsthau therefore occupied an important position in his activity as a teacher.