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Summary

Richard Meier, New York

House by the sea in Darien, Connecticut, USA

(Pages 392-394)

The site on which this house has been built is rocky, sloping and partly wooded. A great effort was made to preserve the view over the sea, and this consideration has determined the organization of the entire house.

It is a three-storey house occupied by a family with two children. The upper floor accommodates bedrooms, the children's play room, the bathroom, the library and a guest room. The middle floor, the entrance level, contains the living-room, the master bedroom, a bathroom and a toilet. On the lower floor we have the dining-room, the kitchen and the utility rooms. An outside stairway connects the three levels, including the entrance tract.

The plans present two characteristic features: on the north, there are solid-wall rooms and, on the south, they are largely open, so that the aspect of the house on the approach side is very compact, at the same time being wide open to the view over the sea. The house is constructed with a steel framework and concrete walls covered with a layer of white-wash.

Jean-Marc Lamunière, Geneva

A villa on Lake Geneva

(Pages 395-397)

Built in 1966, this villa is situated in the country near Jussy, on a site surrounded by orchards and fields. The building has two main tracts. The wings accommodating the garage and the living area are grouped around a courtyard, from which there is access to the house either via the main entrance or via the service entrance.

The spatial organization of the house is based on a scheme resembling a windmill van. Four wings containing the kitchen, the dining-room, the rooms of the son of the family, a terrace and the rooms of the master of the house are assembled around a living tract running up for two stories, with one side opening on to an elevated terrace. The steel construction rests on reinforced concrete foundations.

Harry and Penelope Seidler, Sydney

An architect's house near Sydney

(Pages 398-401)

The two architects built this house in a residential area 12 km. from the centre of Sydney. The site sloping from east to west, is accessible via a dead-end road from above. Near the road there has been constructed a garage wing, from which stairs lead down to the house proper. The house has four different levels (half-floors) overlapping in such a way that there is produced along the north-south axis of the building a tract which runs up through the entire height of the house and which contains the stairways, the fireplace and the sanitary facilities, forming at the same time a connection between the different levels.

The entrance of the house is on the top level, the one which comprises the entrance hall, the library, the kitchen and the dining-room. A half-floor lower there is the main living-room with a terrace and the master bedroom. The level situated underneath the entrance accommodates a study and an independent guest room.

The construction of the house is simple. Twelve disk-shaped supports arranged along four axes carry the roof. The principal construction materials are reinforced concrete and natural wood.

Fritz Eller, Erich Moser, Robert Walter, Düsseldorf

Architects' homes on the periphery of the city

(Pages 402-405)

The architects decided to build near Düsseldorf, in the country. Their houses are situated around twenty kilometers from the centre of the city. From the town-planning standpoint, next to farm-houses, the village is laid out in a very disorderly way. That is why the architects have made an effort to give a good example of how a housing project ought to be disposed.

The building site, long and narrow, was divided in such a way that it was possible to build three angular houses having atrium courts situated behind the housekeeping wing used in common, along the roadway. The remainder of the site is taken up by a playground and a pool. In this way each house enjoys its privacy, and there is also a common recreation tract. The service wing accommodates 6 garages, the heating plant, the fuel oil tank and a storage facility.

The living-rooms, kitchens and bathrooms display a high degree of individuality both in section and in organization. The children's rooms are separated by a sliding door, which permits direct contact with a large play and hobby room. All the living-rooms and the bedrooms are connected with the garden by means of large sliding and pivoting doors. The exterior walls are constructed in accordance with the two-jaw system and are set in separate foundations. The supporting system is made up of 17.5 cm. walls of perforated brick which are buttressed by reinforced concrete supports. The interior partitions are made up partly of double-baked brick 10 cm. thick and partly of pumice walls plastered on two sides.

The three houses are serviced by a central heating plant with hot water distribution system. In front of the large glazed surfaces of the living-rooms and the master bedrooms, there have been installed, in the ceiling, radiators. The architects have selected as construction materials those generally employed in the farmhouse of the district and, in particular, local timber and dark-red rebaked brick.

Richard and Su Rogers, London

Prototypes in steel

(Pages 406-407)

These prototypes of steel houses are based on studies carried out on a model capable of being utilized both as a detached single-family house and as a structure incorporated in a complex.

The first prototypes, at low prices, now stand at Ulting, Essex (House A) and in Wimbledon (House B).

In the report submitted by the architects, there appear the following characteristic features which have been determined in accordance with the special wishes of the owners:

- Capability of adapting each type, at planning stage, to different needs depending on the size and the financial means of the family.
- Protection of the private sphere.
- Low cost, or around £ 4/10 per sq. ft. for House A and £ 8 for House B.

The procedure selected meets these requirements in various ways:

1. A canopy steel construction, interior and exterior partitions that are removable, utilization of a large number of elements all having the same dimensions, the concentration of the utility areas.
2. Privacy is ensured by: the division of the living tract into separate house and studio units, the connection of these two parts by means of a closed-in courtyard.

Wolfgang Döring, Düsseldorf

A home for DM 80,000

(Pages 408-409)

Home of a nuclear physicist.

Conditions: the house had to be spacious, to have a rather high living tract and to be as economical to build as possible.

The living surface totals 150 sq. meters. The construction cost is DM 80,000. Six weeks were required for preparing the site and constructing the foundations. The house was then put up in six days.

The construction consists of beams of sized wood, beams being sited every 2.5 meters and reinforced by triangles of laminated wood. The partitions and ceilings are incorporated within one single well between the beam elements. All the parts of the construction were fabricated in the architect's shop, then tested, transported to the building site and put up in six days.

The house is accessible from all sides. It is situated 80 cm. above grade level. The lower face is covered with asbestos-cement panels. The beams rest on thin steel bolts.

It will be easy to extend or to transform the house. The dividing partitions and the ceilings can be easily removed.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Chicago

The new National Gallery of Berlin

(Pages 410-420)

The New National Gallery will constitute part of the new cultural centre of West Berlin. Of this complex two structures already exist, the St. Matthew Church by Stüler and the Philharmonic, the concert hall by Scharoun. Moreover, two other buildings, the Federal Library and a museum complex, are in the planning stage. The new Gallery will accommodate paintings, engravings and sculptures of the 19th and 20th centuries. The proprietor is the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, which already possesses all the national museums in West Berlin.

The New National Gallery is constructed on two levels. Above, there is a large exhibition hall and on the basement level numerous rooms reserved for the permanent collection of the Museum. The exhibition hall is a large glazed hall measuring around 2500 sq. meters. It is built on a vast terrace and covered with a square steel roof. The terrace measures 105x110 meters. It is accessible via three large stairways going up from the roadway.

The basement level is a reinforced concrete construction with a support span of 7.20 m. This level, whose total surface is around 10,000 sq. meters, accommodates the permanent galleries, the engraving studio, the administration area, an art library, a café, the technical installations and the storerooms.

The large exhibition hall as well as the basement galleries are air-conditioned; the humidity is 55%. The air intake and exhaust system has had a great deal of attention devoted to it.

The roof dimensions (a construction that is unique in the history of architecture) were calculated with the utmost precision with the aid of an electronic computer.

The total cost of this museum is evaluated at DM 25 million, around 20 million of which for the construction of the building alone.