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Summaries in English

Alexanderpolder Housing Project, Rotterdam

*"Opbow" Experimental Group, Rotterdam
by H. Hartsuyker*

The architects of "Opbow", Rotterdam, along with "De 8", Amsterdam, constitute the Dutch CIAM. For the 2nd CIAM Conference (Bergamo, 1949), "De 8" had prepared a project for the new village of "Noord-Oost-Polder", while the "Opbow" presented a second one in connection with the new district of Rotterdam called Alexanderpolder, to be erected east of the city. Since then, the group has been constantly busy with the practical realization of the said project; the illustrations in the present issue show the next-to-last stage. The town-planning aspect of it was studied up to 1953, then presented at the E 55 Exhibition, Rotterdam, "The City of Tomorrow", in the shape of a model (scale 2:100). – Town-planning questions in Holland have been regulated by law on the local level, since 1901, and in 1941 a planning program went into force on the national level, which has grown to be applied on a vast scale as a result of post-war reconstruction. At Rotterdam there has been undertaken, in addition to the reconstruction of the city centre, the erection of new districts, including Alexanderpolder. The very site, a polder area, reclaimed from the sea, is the creation of visionaries and pioneers, a circumstance which works in favour of a rational planning program, which also seeks to avoid monotony. There are envisaged for the district 8 neighbourhood units of about 4000 inhabitants each and 3 vertical housing units of around 1500 inhabitants each. It was sought to realize here a positive synthesis of housing, work, recreation and traffic.

"Dreisnitz" Apartment House, Zurich-Schwamendingen

1954/55, Architects: J. Schütz FAS/SIA, C. Rathgeb SIA, Max Steiger, Zurich; Eng.: Henauer and Lee SIA, Thalwil

12-storey apartment house with flats for workers. – Rents: 2-room flats, 1320 to 1968 fr.; 3-room flats, 1680 to 2232 fr. (exclusive of cleaning and heating).

Building for offices and Flats, Dolderstrasse, Zurich

1954/55, O. Glas, arch. FAS/SIA, Zurich, in collaboration with J. Messerli, M. Buchhofer, Zurich, F. Friedli, Münsingen

The part now finished constitutes the 1st stage. The fine old house already existing on the site is probably bound to be pulled down some day, and will be replaced by a second modern construction.

"Manegg" Housing Centre, Zurich

1954/55, Architects: B. Giacometti FAS/SIA, Zurich, R. Winkler FAS/SIA, Zurich; Eng.: A. Keller SIA, Zurich

Intended for families with annual income of 9000 fr. (today 11000). Thanks to generous communal and cantonal subsidies, the rents (exclusive of heating) are 1140 fr. for a studio or a 2-room flat, 1300 fr. for a 3-room flat, and 1440 fr. for a 4-room flat. – In all: 14 2-room flats, 30 3-room flats, 20 4-room flats, 6 4-room flats in a house for 3 families, with studio. – Interesting feature: the tenants are tending increasingly to accept flats with kitchenettes.

Project of the "Halen" Housing Centre, near Berne in Pre-fabricated Elements

Architects: Studio 5 (Berne): Fritz, Gerber, Hesterberg, Hostettler, Pini

A complex of 65 houses on a slope overlooking the Aar; it was sought to preserve a homelike scale, while at the same time taking advantage of all the economies made possible by the use of pre-fabricated elements.

Group of Single-Family Houses at Binningen

1955/56, Architects: U. Löw and Th. Manz SWB, Basle

The Theurillat real estate company has understood the issues in such a way that it will be possible to show that speculative building does not necessarily succumb to the mediocrity prevailing in contemporary architecture. In all: 3 6-room houses, 4 4-room houses and 4 car stalls which can be sold separately.

Group of Connecting Apartment Houses on Colmarerstrasse, Basle

*1955/56, Architects: U. Löw and Th. Manz;
Eng.: E. and A. Schmidt SIA, Basle*

The assignment was to put up on three cleared lots, not a very promising site, 2 building units with as little trouble as possible. A common pavilion gives the complex a certain unity, and the roof terraces make up a little for the absence of gardens. On ground floor, 4 shops, the caretaker's flat and one 1-room flat. The other floors comprise in all 12 3-room flats; moreover, there are on the attic floor 3 flats (one 2-room and 2 1-room flats). – One of the blocks is constructed in part of pre-fabricated elements.

Recent Works by Hans Aeschbacher

by Willy Rotzler

If, in different periods, sculpture seems bound to follow the same line of development, each time making a fresh start from the beginning (archaic style, classical style with its closed volume, then Baroque dissolution), the contemporary movement strikes out in a radically new direction, evidenced by its dematerialization, its dynamism and its integration of the void (see Carola Giedion). Nevertheless, the traditional plastic conception has not been totally abandoned in the sense of "closed". This is true of Brancusi. This is also true of H. Aeschbacher, the work of whom, at the last Biennale of Venice, was the only non-representational work, which, in the Swiss Pavilion, was connected with solid volumes. His new lava stelae, and those in granite, realized at Six-Fours, as well as his other recent works, do not make any overt reference to man, but preserve a human scale, and remain eminently static and architectural.

Contribution to the Study of Design

by Paul Klee

Before Christmas 1956, Benno Schwabe, Basle and Stuttgart, published under the title "Das bildnerische Denken" a volume bringing together the posthumous texts of Paul Klee relating to the theory of design. In the course of several years' work, their editor Jürg Spiller has edited the manuscript of the three-semester course given by Klee in 1921 and 1922, entitled "Contribution to the Study of Design". He has supplemented this series with other notes by Klee as well as with notes taken by members of Bauhaus who attended his lectures. This work is enriched by the reproductions of Klee's sketches intended for his courses and also by other illustrations; it is a compendium bringing together inexhaustible material to aid in the understanding just as in the practice of modern art. The present issue reproduces certain passages of two of the chapters of the book specifically devoted to the general theory of design.

New Acquisitions by the Museum of Art of Winterthur (1950-1956)

by Heinz Keller

The Museum started from a basic program, which is normal for a town the size of Winterthur, i. e. to combine with local painters, here beginning in the 18th Century, along with Felix Meyer, Anton Graff and the minor painters of Winterthur, the representative painters of later Swiss art; and has in the 20th Century, devoted itself to a much more far-reaching program, a task which soon overtaxed the resources of the Fine Arts Association of the town. The "Galerieverein", established after 1915, and private collectors were from that time on more than generous in proffering assistance. In 1951, the opening of the Museum of the Oskar Reinhart Foundation greatly simplified the task of the Museum of Art, which is particularly rich in French art, thanks to its remarkable collection of German, Austrian and Swiss works. – The most recent acquisitions and regroupings have to do with the creation of a Modern German room (Karl Hofer and the Expressionists), in addition to sculpture (H. Haller, O. Bänninger, H. Hubacher). Only three new but splendid acquisitions have come from France: a panel of Nenuphars by Monnet, the Portrait of the Postman Roulin by Van Gogh, donated by the heirs of Georg Reinhart. Another equally significant acquisition: a bronze by Brancusi (Study for the Portrait of Mlle Pogany). – We can only hope that abstract art, shunned up to now by potential donors, will soon be purchased by the Museum itself.