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LC
50 YEARS AFTER

International committee for
documentation and conservation
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the
modern movement

Journal 53 - 2015/02



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docomomo Journal Published twice a year by the

docomomo International secretariat.

docomomo International Instituto Superior Técnico,

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www.docomomo.com

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ISSN: 1380/3204 · D.L.: 380259/14

On the cover: Le Corbusier, Capitol Complex, Chandigarh, India, 1962.

© Ana Tostões, 2013.

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Journal 54 is scheduled for March 2016. Authors who would like to contribute to this issue are kindly invited to contact docomomo@tecnico.ulisboa.pt.

Guideline to contributors

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- All texts must be in English; if translated, the text in the original language must be enclosed as well.
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Books: Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1960.
Articles: Julius Posener, "Aspects of the Pre-History of the Bauhaus", *From Schinkel to the Bauhaus*, London, A.A., 1972, 43-48.

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EDITORIAL

- 02 **LC's Poetic Endurance
Time and Space — Light and Matter**
— BY ANA TOSTÓES



LECTURE

- 04 **On Collective Form**
— BY FUMIHIKO MAKI



ESSAYS

- 12 **The Role of the *Fondation Le Corbusier*
in the Conservation of the Le Corbusier's
Architectural Work**
— BY BÉNÉDICTE GANDINI
AND MICHEL RICHARD

- 18 **Restoration of the *Petite Maison,*
Corseaux, 1924,
Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret.
Construction Practice as Research**
— BY FRANZ GRAF AND GIULIA MARINO

- 26 **The villa *Le Lac* by Le Corbusier
and Pierre Jeanneret
at Corseaux-sous-Vevey.
The Color Rediscovered**
— BY ELISE KOERING

- 32 ***Maison Curutchet, La Plata, Argentina***
— BY JORGE NÉSTOR BOZZANO
AND JULIO SANTANA

- 40 ***La Villa Savoye* after Le Corbusier,
une *Longue Histoire***
— BY SUSANNA CACCIA GHERARDINI
AND CARLO OLMO

- 48 **The Restoration of the Paintings
of Le Corbusier in the Villa E-1027,
Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, Alpes
Maritimes**
— BY MARIE-ODILE HUBERT

- 56 **Renovation and Restructuring the
Cité de Refuge by Le Corbusier
and Pierre Jeanneret. Preserving
the Dual Functional and Architectural
Identity of the Masterpiece**
— BY GILLES RAGOT

- 64 **The *Couvent de La Tourette*
from 1960 to the present day.
Future Discernibility of Past Interventions**
— BY ROBERTA GRIGNOLO

- 74 **National Museum of Western Art
as Important Cultural Property of Japan:
its Evolution and Historical Value**
— BY YOSHIYUKI YAMANA
AND KYO FUKUDA



- 84 HERITAGE IN DANGER

- 86 NEWS

- 90 BOOK REVIEWS



- 96 APPENDIX



Le Corbusier
à PARIS
et
LUXNES
1962
et
JEAN PETT

Le Corbusier, Jean Pett
1962, Paris, France

Le Corbusier, Capito Mural painting, Chandigarh, India, 1962. © Ana Tostões, 2013.

LC's Poetic Endurance Time and Space — Light and Matter

ANA TOSTÓES

Chair of **docomomo** International

The theme of this 53rd **docomomo** Journal is LC — 50 Years After. As a tribute to Le Corbusier (LC) on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his death, this issue of **docomomo** Journal is focused on rehabilitation and conservation processes undertaken on Le Corbusier buildings and sites worldwide monitored by the *Fondation Le Corbusier* (FLC).

LC prolific personality as theorist, painter, sculptor, architect, urban planner, researcher, disseminator, thinker, and provocative activist, helped to make him a universal author. His dual and inseparable theoretical and practical activities represented a source for LC's balanced inspirational and systematic method. Envisaging "*la planète comme chantier*", LC drove his obsessive constructive impulse around the whole world, to nations such as Japan, Russia, Argentina and India. Thinking deeply about the human condition in the contemporary age, he looked for solutions to solve social, technical and spatial problems, believing that architecture could have the power to improve the world. To the question "architecture or revolution?" he answered "revolution can be avoided"² through modern architecture.

50 years later, Le Corbusier still creates controversy, passion, discussion and intellectual stimulus, confirming the *endurance* of his long life energy, spirit and legacy. Through time and space, proportion and matter, his architecture is in fact a "wise, correct and magnificent play of volumes gathered under light"³ crystallizing a vision of the world as an "*espace indicible*"⁴.

Nowadays, several of LC's buildings are under threat. This issue of **docomomo** Journal presents a large variety of interventions and approaches, showing the cross-section of issues that Le Corbusier's work raises in the restoration of Modern Architecture.

From houses to facilities, from Europe to Asia or America, from public authorities to private owners, these buildings have stood the test of time, proving their resilience and character.

I wish to thank Bénédicte Gandini, Michel Richard, and the FLC, for accepting the challenge to be the guest editors of this issue and to share with us the "transnational" importance of Le Corbusier, through the analyzes conducted by a exceptional range of experts.

docomomo International wishes to stress the importance of the FLC in disseminating LC's ideas and preserving his work. Besides being responsible for keeping alive LC's knowledge and spirit, and gathering precious archives

consulted on a daily basis by researchers worldwide, the FLC is carrying out a most important task: the proposed inclusion of "The architectural work of Le Corbusier [as] an outstanding contribution to the Modern Movement" in the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL). Envisaged as cultural property, it is a transnational application that brings together the nations of Argentina, Belgium, France, India, Japan and Switzerland at the World Heritage Convention. The aim is to fight for recognition of the buildings and sites constructed by Le Corbusier worldwide as exceptional and as milestones of the Modern Movement that influenced the practice of architecture everywhere.

After many well-founded efforts over 10 years, for recognition of the vital nature of LC's legacy, the WHL candidacy is still waiting for final positive results. As stated at the 12th **docomomo** Council Meeting (Helsinki, 2012), "**docomomo** International confirms the outstanding universal value of architectural works by Le Corbusier and supports a serial nomination in the World's Heritage List". Therefore, we believe that the conclusion of the recognition process is urgent, as we all know that it will also guarantee the protection of invaluable architectural ensembles, as in the case of the perfectly balanced Capitol Complex in Chandigarh which is under threat (see p. 84).

Quoting Tim Benton, LC with exigent and permanent criticism "was somebody capable of renewing himself at every moment, [believing] in the universal value of architecture"⁵. Today, we could reformulate this universal value as the urgency to strive towards a sustainable future. That's why **docomomo** chose "Adaptive Reuse: The Modern Movement towards the Future" as the main topic for the 14th *International docomomo Conference* that will take place in Lisbon from the 6th to the 9th September 2016, in order to pursue the Modern Movement's social and collective project engaged with the challenge of creating a better place to live in an ever faster changing world.

Notes

- 1 Jean-Louis Cohen, *Le Corbusier: La planète comme chantier*, Paris, Editions Textuel, 2005.
- 2 Le Corbusier, *Vers une Architecture*, Paris, Editions Crès, 1923.
- 3 *Idem*.
- 4 Le Corbusier, "*L'espace indicible*", *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, Paris, Nov.-Dec., 1946.
- 5 "UNESCO World Heritage List: Le Corbusier Proposal Deferred", **docomomo** Journal, 44, Barcelona, 2011, p. 89-90.



Capitol Complex at Chandigarh Faces Development Challenges

Le Corbusier's vision for the Capitol Complex as the crown of Chandigarh city nestled in the backdrop of the Himalayas responded well to the aspirations of a modern and independent India in 1948. As recorded by several researchers of modern architecture, the Capitol Complex was strategically designed by Le Corbusier to share an intended visual transparency with its natural setting of the hills and forests in the backdrop. While Chandigarh has expanded to the south-west with the initial designed sectors now giving way to large scale housing structures on the outskirts, the original sectors and the Capitol Complex have, to a large extent, retained their authenticity well in terms of form, colour, location and setting.

However, the physical and administrative juxtaposition of Chandigarh with the two adjoining states of Punjab and Haryana have recently resulted in a land parcel that seems to allow controversial development projects such as the contested Tata Camelot Housing near Sukhna Lake just beyond the Capitol Complex. This multi-storied housing project, that was conceived in 2006 near the Sukhna

Lake on a land piece owned by the Punjab Government, is being contested by Chandigarh's residents and the Forest Department through the judicial court to save the city's green areas and its modern legacy. Even though the project was given an initial clearance by the environment department of the Punjab State government, there was strong resistance from Chandigarh residents who filed a writ petition in 2013 against the project in the judicial court. In October 2013, the Supreme Court asked for the status quo with a clear directive that "even a brick should not be laid in the area", and referred the case to the Delhi High Court. The Delhi High Court is expected to hear the case on July 15, 2015. The residents and administration of Chandigarh are absolutely confident that these multi-storied towers will never be built, thus retaining the authenticity and visual integrity of the Capitol Complex which is now nominated for World Heritage as part of a serial transnational nomination in 2015.

In a country like India, where cities face great pressures of social demands and urban expansion becomes a necessity, it is difficult to argue for the retention of large open rural-urban pockets vis-à-vis needs of the city. Clearly, there are diverse views that are

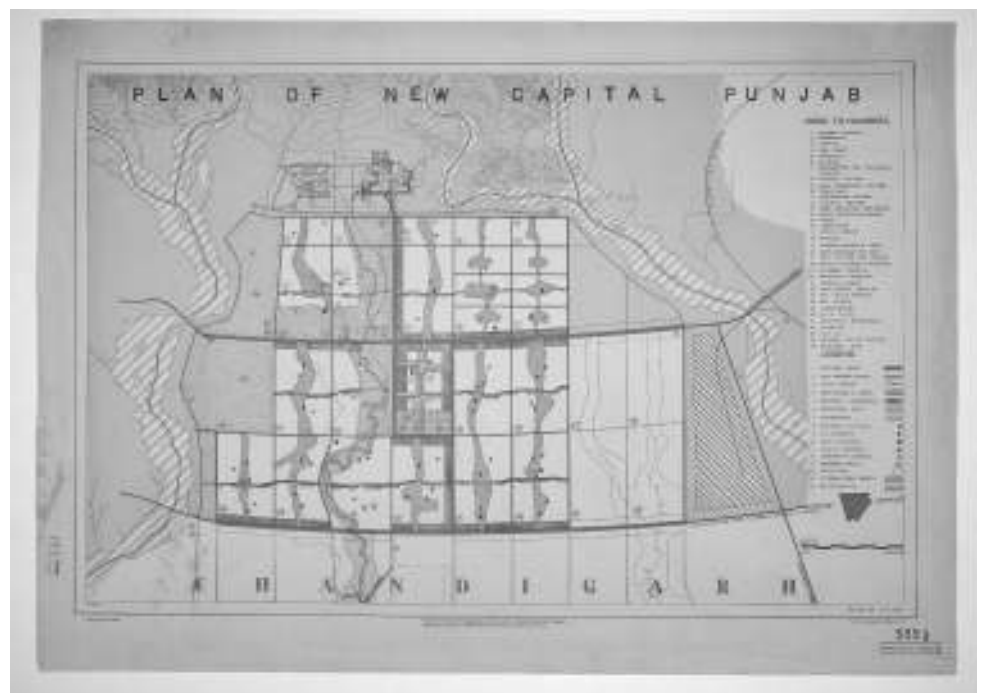
pitching heritage against development to justify such constructions. In the case of Chandigarh, the location of the proposed Tata Camelot Housing will be a visual eyesore from the Capitol Complex and also have a strong environmental impact as it is proposed to be built on a water catchment area near the eco-sensitive area of Sukhna Lake. Moreover, the Capitol Complex at Chandigarh, with its assemblage of the Assembly Building, the High Court and the Secretariat along with the Open Hand, is not only an internationally recognized masterpiece of modern architecture but also a national legend of independent India. This relic of 20th century architecture by Le Corbusier needs to be safeguarded in its natural setting for posterity and the will of Chandigarh residents will help in this realization. ■

Shikha Jain

Sign the petition to stop the construction of Tata Camelot Housing at

http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/save-le-corbusiers-capitol?source=c.em.cp&r_by=12525062

01-03 Le Corbusier, Capitol Complex, Chandigarh, India, 1962. © Ana Tostões, 2013.



04 Le Corbusier, Plan of New Capital Punjab, Chandigarh, India, 1950-1965. © FLC/SPA, 1953.

Casablanca Chandigarh: Modern Planning

Exhibition at the Canadian
Centre for Architecture, Montreal

In the editorial of *docomomo Journal* 28, published in March 2003 and inaugurating her tenure — as editor-in-chief of the magazine, Maristella Casciato undertook to consider “modernism outside the West” and to encourage “new cultures and new histories”, whilst simultaneously enriching the *docomomo* International network. She brought this intellectual endeavor with her to the position as Associate Director, Research at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal. Working alongside Tom Avermaete, she co-curated the exhibition: *How Architects, Experts, Politicians, International Agencies and Citizens Negotiate Modern Planning: Casablanca Chandigarh*, presented at CCA during the Winter 2013–2014 season. They also co-authored *Casablanca Chandigarh: A Report on Modernization*, the book published to coincide with the exhibition. A preamble to these projects lies in the CCA’s acquisition, in 2010, of architect Pierre Jeanneret’s personal archives, mainly pertaining to projects developed during the period from 1951 to 1965 when he renewed his association with his cousin, Le Corbusier, for the planning and construction of a new capital for the Indian Punjab following the Partition (1947).

Both the exhibition and the book scrutinize the history of the two cities that, in very different ways, experienced the weight of colonial rule in the 20th century: Casablanca, still under the French Protectorate, and Chandigarh, born from the ashes of the British Raj, at the end of colonization. Tom Avermaete examined French architect Michel Écochard’s plan for urban development of Morocco’s economic nerve center, which faced massive rural migration following World War 2. In 1946, the French government-appointed architect was appointed official in charge of the *Services d’Urbanisme* (urban planning) for the entire region. Maristella Casciato, meanwhile, retraced the creation of the Punjab’s new capital, whose urban and architectural planning was entrusted to Le Corbusier in December 1950 by Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

All too often, whether in the eyes of the general public or in historical studies, big

names in architecture are given sole credit for their constructions, ignoring the fact that architecture is a collaborative endeavor. Here, both Casciato and Avermaete emphasized the teams Écochard and Le Corbusier surrounded themselves with, not only colleagues operating in metropolitan centers, but also local architects, engineers, and urban planners. Moreover, the exhibition’s curators highlighted the appreciation these designers showed for local and traditional builders.

Unwilling to leave his Paris *atelier* for an extended period, in 1951, Le Corbusier had three colleagues jointly appointed “senior architects” in residence. These were E. Maxwell Fry and Jane B. Drew, both British, in addition to his former partner, Pierre Jeanneret, who was to bear sole responsibility after the departure of Fry and Drew in 1954, until 1965. Together, the three assembled a group of twelve or so Indian professionals, each of whom was entrusted with a specific set of tasks. This strict, although not particularly hierarchical, division of labor was to take concrete shape in the plan distribution of the Architects’ Office, the Chandigarh headquarters of the ambitious Punjab Capital Project. Another singular feature of the exhibition lies in how the curators/authors situated the planning of these two cities within the new geopolitical context that emerged from World War 2. A strategic equilibrium had been redefined by the rise to power of the United States and the USSR, a situation from which a number of countries, fiercely jealous of their independence, sought to escape by forming the Non-Aligned Movement. India was one. Meanwhile, the League of Nations, that legacy of World War 1, which had failed to ensure peace in the world, was replaced in June 1945 by the United Nations (UN). The new international institution was much more than a platform for diplomacy. Many departments were created under its umbrella, including the Technical Assistance Administration (TAA), conceived to promote the economic development of newly independent nations by sending teams of experts to consult with their governments. Architects and urban planners from the North found

this context provided new, transnational opportunities to exercise their professions, and forums for the exchange of ideas.

This double transnational and disciplinary perspective structures both the book and the exhibition, albeit in different ways, as the limitations and opportunities of each medium afford. The core of the publication consists of the in-depth study of these urban projects, alternating between the two, and framed by an international perspective, both geopolitical and professional. In its pages, the planning process is examined in detail, alongside governance and the design of housing and service facilities for each of the cities as well as their deployment. The organization of the book’s content into fragmented segments makes it possible to read discontinuously. The exhibition began with a presentation of the new world order in the museum’s central gallery, which is surrounded by five other rooms, a restrictive arrangement of gallery space. However, Japanese architects *atelier* Bow-Bow successfully made creative use of the special environment in collaboration with FEED, a graphic design firm based in Montreal. Thanks to the design of ad hoc furniture, the color choices and the staging of certain exhibits, visitors could easily follow the twin threads of the exhibition, which appeared immediately in the second room of the show. Furthermore, the unusual framing of the documents showed off even the smallest and most technical objects to best effect, and harmonized the heterogeneous corpus made up of works in various sizes and media: original drawings, reproductions of blueprints, photographs, models, publications and reports. These materials were drawn from a number of archival sources, including the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris, the Agha Khan Trust for Culture in Geneva, the gta Archives/ETH in Zurich, the School of Architecture in Rabat and the Government Museum and Art Gallery of Chandigarh.

On the walls of the central gallery, three large world maps illustrated the new transnational environment. The first of these summarized the syncopated dynamics of the decolonization that took place from 1945 to 1970. The second depicted the scope of activities conducted by international aid organizations from the Western and Soviet blocs, while the third presented the new amplitude and reach of certain urban planners and architects such as Michel Écochard, the American Jacob L. Crane, the German Otto H. Koenigsberger, Constantinos A. Doxiadis of Greece, and the British Mary Jaqueline Tyrwhitt. On a table in the center of the room, visitors



01 View of Gallery 1, "Transnational Urbanism". © Franco Panzini.



02 Le Corbusier, The Chandigarh family, © FLC/SPA, April 8, 1952.

could leaf through reports and publications from the many consulting missions in the “Third World”. Through the two openings at the back of the room, visitors caught a first glimpse of two documents invested with tremendous display and historiographical value: The CIAM grids elaborated by the India and Morocco workgroups for CIAM’s 9th Modern Architecture Congress (CIAM9) held in Aix-en-Provence during the summer of 1953.

These grids reveal very different approaches. The CIAM grid for Chandigarh, created by a group of young architects at the Architects’ Office known as the Association of Indian Modernists (AIM), was reconstructed for the exhibition on the basis of snapshots, as the original document no longer exists. The grid adheres strictly to the format and categories established at the urging of Le Corbusier by ASCORAL, based on the Athens Charter. The grid produced by GAMMA, the Moroccan group, however, deviates from the model. It is more analytical than normative, more concrete than prospective. Photographs of the existing country and people outnumber sketches and plans. Its aim was to make sense of an anarchic built environment, the shanty towns that had sprung up in Casablanca’s suburbs, and to explain the principles underlying organization of the new neighborhoods that were to replace them. This approach is a result of the methods adopted by the urban planning department, the *Services d’Urbanisme*, under the aegis of Écochard, who was

an architect, archeologist and urban planner rolled into one, attentive to the morphological, cultural, and technical dimensions of human settlements, be they antique or contemporary, monumental or haphazard. The photographs he took of both the ground and sky bear witness to his interest in local peculiarities, which a team of sociologists and ethnologists attached to the project, helped him to recognize.

The CIAM grids, striking for their large size, are each installed straddling two of the three galleries at the back of the museum space. Their narrative serves as referral into the rooms specifically dedicated to each associated city. Starting with the theme “Exploring”, under which umbrella the various means used to apprehend unique site conditions were exhibited, the exhibition unfolds on to two additional themes, “Planning,” and “Designing the Civic Fabric”. The former offered an opportunity to get acquainted with the teams and urban development projects, whereas the latter presented specific plans for housing and facilities.

The exhibition offered a unique opportunity to appreciate, in its full-scale, the Chandigarh master plan, later reproduced in *l’Oeuvre Complète*. The plan was drawn up in Paris, shortly after Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret’s first stay of about two months in Chandigarh, during the winter of 1951. Several rough sketches made on-site were exhibited alongside the plan, as well as Le Corbusier’s

Album Punjab (Punjab Sketch book), visible for the first time ever and complemented by a digital version. This sort of diary in the form of both writing and drawings contains observations, accounts of exchanges with administrative officials, passing thoughts and ideas. It allowed the architect to record his first impressions and trace the project’s development during the first weeks of work on site. Le Corbusier, like Pierre Jeanneret, was struck by the beauty of the landscapes he encountered. Photographs taken by the latter capture the bucolic quality of the setting and rusticity of villages, lingering on scenes of daily life. The *Album Punjab* includes observations on the urban fabric of Bogota, where the concept of “sectors” was first implemented. But in Chandigarh, the plan has more green and is more organic; its conception embraces the natural landscape, a backbone following the verdant valley that cuts across the plains, and coming to a head at the Capitol Complex, designed to stand out against the foothills of the Himalayas.

Less visually compelling, but by no means less effective, the Master Plan for Casablanca also dates from 1951. A mosaic of blue prints, it depicts the old city, surrounded with the newly planned neighborhoods and their transportation infrastructure, all based on the renowned Écochard 8x8 meter grid. The grid provided both technical and functional integration, and its standardization determines both the shape of the city and that of



03 Detail of the GAMMA Grid of Casablanca. © Franco Panzini.



04 Detail of the Chandigarh Grid with the listing of the four key words of the Athens Charter. © Franco Panzini.



05 View of the Gallery 4, "Designing the Civic Fabric of the New Casablanca". In the centre of the room, the model of the "beehive building" in the *cit  verticale* at *Carri res Centrales*, signed by Georges Candilis, Shadrach Woods and Vladimir Bodiansky. On the wall, photos by Yto Barrada. © Franco Panzini.



06 Aerial view of a neighborhood center in Casablanca, c. 1950. © Archive  cole Nationale d'Architecture, Robot.



07 Punjab Capital Project (PCP), Master plan for the new capital at Chandigarh after the design submitted by Le Corbusier, © FLC/SPA, April 1951



08 View of the Gallery 6, “Designing Chandigarh’s Civic Fabric”. In the center of the room, models of housing typologies designed by Pierre Jeanneret, Jane Drew, and Maxwell Fry. On the wall, photos by Takashi Homma. © Franco Panzini.

its buildings. The public spaces are defined by subtraction, while construction is achieved through addition, horizontal in the case of private houses, and vertical for the collective dwellings interspersed throughout the neighborhoods.

Particularly attractive exhibits include the original model for the “beehive building” in the *cit  verticale* (vertical city) at *Carri res Centrales*, signed by Georges Candilis, Shadrach Woods and Vladimir Bodiansky, and that for housing types in the *cit  verticale* at Sidi Othman, designed by Swiss architects Andr  Studer and Jean Hentsch.

Casablanca’s suburbs were planned for “*le plus grand nombre*” (the greatest number), as largely similar neighborhood clusters. Chandigarh, on the other hand, carries the social hierarchy of an administrative center, and provides public facilities serving the entire state such as the university, the research hospital, and the bus station. Documentation on this aspect makes it possible to grasp for the first time in real detail the scope of Pierre Jeanneret’s participation in building the city, which is much less famous than Le Corbusier’s monumental contributions. To illustrate his achievement, specifically in designing residential premises, six models of various housing projects, from the home of the chief justice to the modest row houses of ordinary people, were displayed in gallery six. These models were constructed as part of a class taught at the University of Bologna in 2012.

The contemporary photographs shot on site by the French-Moroccan artist Yto Barrada in Casablanca and the Japanese photographer Takashi Homma in Chandigarh are an essential complement to both the book and the exhibition. Large-scale prints occupy one entire wall of the exhibition gallery, under the title “Designing Chandigarh’s Civic Fabric”. These views bring to light contrasting contemporary urban realities accentuated by the unique perspective of each artist. Homma’s shots are more conventional, showcasing the architecture, its residential spaces and its details. Barrada, on the other hand, shows us an empty city, where human presence is hinted at by modifications added to the built environment. Her work shows us the ponderous public spaces with their planted beds, the fa ades of residential buildings in washed-out colors, rendered identical by the enclosure of their hanging courtyards and bristling with satellite dishes. She closes on the silhouette of *Carri res Centrales*, rising above the city.

As the last segment of the exhibition, these documents invited visitors to question the current cultural value of these modern neighborhoods, independent of the undeniable historical significance that Casciato and Avermaete successfully demonstrate. Preserving architectural integrity in Chandigarh, substantially altering the built environment in Casablanca, are these contrasting patterns of appropriation indicative of the success or failure of their models?

Are the differences, large or small, between these cities at completion and their contemporary shapes important to their standing as heritage sites? ■

France Vanlaethem
Chair of **docomomo** Qu bec

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- CCA, Public Programs education & events: Casablanca Chandigarh: <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/education-events/2426-casablanca-chandigarh-public-programs>
- CCA, Research: “We’re going to learn much more from Chandigarh”. An interview with Rahul Mehrotra: <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/study-centre/2325-we-re-going-to-learn-much-more-from-chandigarh>
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Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955 - 1980

Edited by Barry Bergdoll,
Carlos Eduardo Comas,
Jorge Francisco Liernur, Patricio del Real
Publisher: The Museum of Modern Art
(MoMa)
ISBN: 978-0-87070-963-0
Language: English
Year: 2015

A large-format, heavy, hard cover book with a well-known photograph by Guillermo Zamora of Enrique del Moral's Mercado de la Merced on its cover is the way the exhibition *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955 - 1980* gets shaped into a book. One could not expect different from the Museum of Modern Art, which is well known for having the same format catalogs with traditional design and pristine images. Next to its contemporaries (Henry Matisse; *The Cutouts, Design and Violence* and Björk), *Latin America in Construction's* physicality doesn't speak loud enough to stand out. It is a more modest, academic and introspective publication.

The catalog opens with *Portfolio* a contemporary photo-essay by the multi-published São Paulo-based architectural photographer Leonardo Finotti that separates an inch from his commercial work and captures good frames that serve as homage to the great modern photographers that are about to come to life in the next pages of the book. This editorial decision comes across as a bit strange. Why introduce a retrospective exhibition book with a photo-essay that, rather than speaking of the present, somehow mimics the technique, ambience and composition that the primary sources are about to deliver? One can start to tell, even from here, a more naive introduction to the publication, Brazil will be pictured as one of the modern favorites.

Glenn D. Lowry in his brief but concise foreword doesn't miss mentioning MoMA's

influence in the construction of the modern architectonic discourse through the exhibitions *Latin American Architecture since 1945* (1955) and *Brazil Builds* (1943) setting the current exhibition at the same level of its predecessors, announcing the making of ongoing historiography: "An exhibition and publication that function as an ongoing laboratory for constructing new histories" (p. 15).

Barry Bergdoll's "Learning from Latin America: Public Space, Housing and Landscape" excels by far the other texts in the book. His last exhibition inside the institution had to amalgamate his academic DNA with the precise coordinating skills that require the heavy machinery of professional research teams in more than ten countries in Latin America. It is a grand-finale that sets the bar high in terms of ambition, inventiveness and an important conjuncture in a period that can unite nations under one nostalgic sense of progress and equality (later depicted as faux hopes of developmentalism, struggle and regime). It also gives us the answer we are all curious about: why 1955? Why 1980? Although the latter is not properly answered, starting in 1955 was a strategy to consider not only the first results being built, but rather them being debated. Stepping aside from the turmoil of conservatism and entering the conversation completely aware of the critique was a means to critique the critique too. Bergdoll has a couple of statements that make clear his conclusions i.e. "Latin America as the new sources of not only forms, but attitudes" a diplomatic strategy when one has to amalgamate a complete history of modern architecture in so many different nations and conditions. His text is an intense and rich journey from economic models, to political processes and even the evolution of technique making the reading interesting, not only to scholars of the topic, but to a general audience that can relate to a rapid-growth period that shaped most of the cities we live in. Leaving value judgments aside, Bergdoll manages to speak on a broad spectrum that provokes new readings when weaving all the pieces and examples together. Although loose ends remain towards a present day history and the void between 1980 to 2015, it seems like that can be a story for another exhibition, and another conceptual discourse.

After the curator's introduction, comes a loud voice that plants itself like a life-lesson. "For better or for worse, Brazilian Modern Architecture has a story of its own, and it's a long one", writes Carlos Eduardo Comas professional scholar of the discipline. Brazil was a modern beast, and it was fed by two schools:

The *Carioca* School and the *Paulista* School. Comas, guest curator to the exhibition, writes about the similarities and differences of the two groups of architects and planners that shaped Brazil into its modern suit. He intelligently analyzes them through architectural elements and purposes that lets the text disseminate and weave both schools inside the concepts. Foundation, rule, continuity, divergence, balance and extension are the methods to evolution within the time-frame of the life span of the modern architects and their buildings.

The last individual essay is by Jorge Francisco Liernur, also guest curator, who addresses a more contextual piece of writing. He searches for a correlation between architecture and new general conditions of modernization. He worries and disseminates on the city as the platform where architecture is planted and embodies deeper and greater problems that shape progress, critically concluding and thoroughly ambushing the utopian ideas of modernity with the rise of capitalism's pragmatism. Idea is dead.

Plates is the section of the book that can better translate the physical panorama of the exhibition to the support the editorial intent. It reincarnates a modern-day-editorial-World Fair where pages serve as pavilions to showcase the power of construction and how architecture shaped progress, cities and regions. The authors of the different plates are part of the modern research network, **docomomo's** usual suspects, great academic eminences from each country depicted in the exhibition that have devoted their lives to the study of modern architecture. In each one's own style, but tracing a common structure to context the illustrations, the authors set fly to a general state-of-the-art panorama on the characteristics of each nation that make them so special. Ordered alphabetically, Argentina heads the plates also chronologically, one of the few nations that showcases its historicist architecture, fruit of the European heritage in the region, a cosmopolitan Buenos Aires that shows glamour and economic progress in a more traditional and aesthetic way. The illustrations, although a very impressive gathering of material, lack "traditional" qualities looked for in modern material. The quality of the opening photograph of Ruth Verde Zein's *Brazil*, for example, differs a mile from the Argentinian imagery. Brazil is represented with by-the-book modern history, opens with *Brazil Builds*, stating just how important the nation is in this piece of research. The chapter shows a cohesive notion of modernism with its glorified giants like the Pilot Plan for

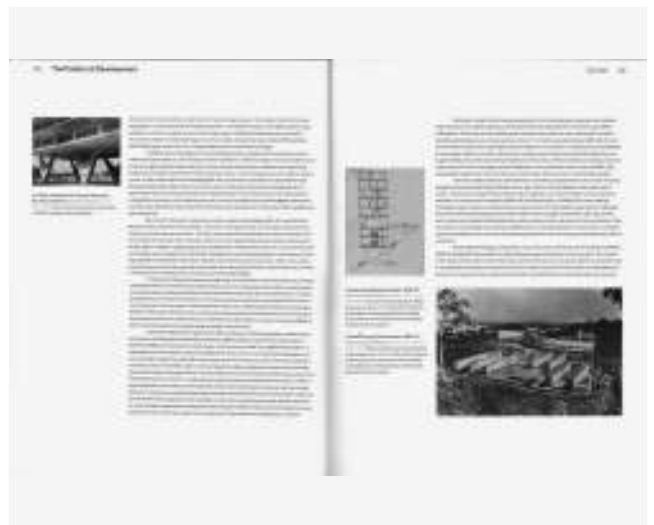


01 Carlos Raúl Villanueva, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Aula Magna, Caracas, Venezuela, 1952-53. © Leonardo Finotti, 2014.



02 Oscar Niemeyer, Palácio do Itamaraty, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Brasília, Brazil, 1962. © Leonardo Finotti, 2007.

03-04 BERGDOLL, Barry, "Learning from Latin America: Public Space, Housing, and Landscape", in *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980*, New York, MoMa, 2015.



05-06 COMAS, Carlos Eduardo, "The Poetics of Development: Notes on Two Brazilian Schools", in *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980*, New York, MoMa, 2015.

Brasilia by Lucio Costa (1957). Both schools are depicted in the panorama, referencing the previous essay by Carlos Eduardo Comas. Brazil is a brutal architecture of power and diplomacy that can only be compared to the number of spreads given to Mexico. Even though these two countries have a parallel emancipating progress in architecture, Mexico shows a completely different panorama than Brazil. Louise Noelle managed to showcase a broader spectrum of typologies, styles and experimentations showing how imbricate and autochthonous Mexican culture is and how strongly it is engaged with architecture. From State projects, to housing projects, skyscrapers, immigration, poetic Barragan, the cover picture by Guillermo Zamora, the 1968 Olympics and even stretching the research to experimental Agustín Hernández, the illustrations and their text paint an effervescent panorama of the country. The Caribbean region sadly misses out important research developed by scholars in the region including Gustavo Luis Moré and Alex Martínez Suárez. It would've been interesting to see this tropical smaller, but very valuable modernity, juxtaposing with the rest of the nations. It is difficult to detail all the research in the Plates section, and also unfair to do it isolated from the exhibition.

Authors: Argentina — Silvio Plotquin, Brazil — Ruth Verde Zein, Caribbean — Barry Bergdoll, Chile — Fernando Pérez Oyarzún, Colombia — Carlos Niño Murcia, Cuba — Eduardo Luis Rodríguez, México - Louise Noelle, Peru — Sharif Kahatt and Jean Pierre Crousse, Uruguay — Gustavo Scheps, Venezuela — Silvia Hernández de Lasala.

Alas the book ends with an authored bibliography that has a digital component to keep building the repository of research. Along with the boldness and value of the statement of putting together all these pieces of history, the project *Latin America in Construction* has a few, but very, contemporary intentions. The authored bibliography and the digital networked platform #archimoma keeps the contemporary discourse of a cutting-edge institution like the MoMA continuing.

The catalogue is, without a doubt, an important publication in recent architectural historiography and is a titanic effort that rarely could have been done without the powerful machinery of MoMA. It becomes a key bibliography in a new history of readings and is the stepping-stone towards constructing a more integral umbrella when studying Latin American modern architecture.

María García Holley



Le Corbusier. Mesures de L' Homme

Coordinated by Olivier Cinqualbre and Frédéric Migayrou
 Publisher: Centre Pompidou
 ISBN: EAN: 9782844266996
 Language: French
 Year: 2015

Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Le Corbusier's death, the exhibition organized at the Centre Pompidou invites to a reread of his work through the prism of the humane figure, not only in its physicality, but also in the perceptive and spiritual dimensions. Conceived in 1943, the *Modulor* influences a whole generation of architects. Even though, such a reflexion about an essential and universal measure — “the series Man”, thinker and perceiver — is at the hearth of the multifaceted work of Le Corbusier, to date, there was no publication to apprehend such fundamental notions about the architect's work.

Expanded by the contributions of young researchers, the catalogue presents the Corbusean course in the light of this theme, from the Jurassic origins until the last days along the Mediterranean. It highlights the ubiquity of the human in its production, from elements of the painted works, achievements or architectural projects, furniture and writings, which testify/reflect the richness and complexity of his thought.

Translated publisher's notes.



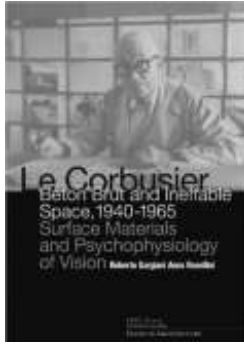
Le Corbusier Le Grand

Edited by Jean-Louis Cohen and Tim Benton
 Publisher: Phaidon
 ISBN: 978-0-714-84668-2
 Language: English
 Year: 2008

Drawing on an array of archival material, including sketches, photographs, and correspondences, *Le Corbusier Le Grand* depicts in roughly chronological order not only the vast and varied output of Le Corbusier, but also the major events, people, and forces that shaped the life of an artist who continues to fascinate those in and outside the architectural world.

Le Corbusier (1887–1965) is one of the giants of twentieth-century architecture and design. Born Charles Edouard Jeanneret in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, the self-named Le Corbusier was not only the creator of some of the most important and impressive buildings of the last century—Villa Savoye at Poissy, the Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut at Ronchamp, the Parliament Building in Chandigarh, India—he was also an accomplished painter, sculptor, furniture designer, urbanist, and author. His work and social theories continue to be a dominant force in the world of architecture and design, while his elegant bearing, typified by his round black eyeglasses, which are still today a signature look for architects around the world, helped cast him as an heroic figure out of Ayn Rand's novel *The Fountainhead*.

From the Publisher.



Le Corbusier: Béton Brut and Ineffable Space (1940 – 1965): Surface Materials and Psychophysiology of Vision (Essays in Architecture)

Edited by Roberto Gargiani and Anna Rosellini
 Publisher: EPFL Press
 ISBN: 978-0-4156-8171-1
 Language: English
 Year: 2011

Béton brut and ineffable space: two concepts defined by Le Corbusier after World War II that speak about a stronger dialogue between materials and artistic vision of his work. Invented to designate his own particular use of exposed concrete, *béton brut* is analysed from different perspectives: its fabrication with a rigorous selection of its constituent materials; its textural imprint obtained by a refined assembly of formwork; and the treatment of its surface with special types of paint.

In the synthesis of his artistic vision, ineffable space is explained in all its forms and meanings, from the insertion of the tapestries and paint in the qualification of the spaces, to the way in which photography is used to study the unexpressed potentialities of architecture and painting.

The genesis of Le Corbusier's work, the quality of constructions materials and questions of optics, artistic vision and the psychophysiology of perception are analysed in relationship with the contemporary artistic phenomena such as the automatism of Breton, the Art Brut of Dubuffet, the Concrete Music of Varèse, Klein's research on monochromes, Pop Art and the concept of transfer.

In this essay, a new vision is revealed about the last and fundamental works of Le Corbusier.

From the Publisher.



La Maison de la Culture de Firminy

Edited by Gilles Ragot, Sophie Omère, Jean-Marie Refflé, Franck Sénant and Michel Kneubühler
 Publisher: Éditions la Passe du Vent
 ISBN: 978-2-84562-230-2
 Language: French
 Year: 2013

At the end of 1966, the journal *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* devoted a special issue to cultural buildings. The part devoted to French cultural centers was introduced by extracts from a report by Emile Biasini¹. The report concerned both the result of the first cultural centers open to the public and a prediction for the next phase of construction. The text clearly emphasized the program's flexibility as a main goal, which implied the awareness of the unpredictability of uses and architectural implications: "which activities to expect in a house of culture. The answer is all of them, even those that are not yet invented. If it is difficult to imagine the latter, you must hunt down all the constraints that architecture can impose on the course of a cultural activity (...). These technical requirements need to be solved taking into account not only the present but also the future"². In this journal issue, released only a year after Le Corbusier's death, the Firminy Cultural Center, recently completed, evidently functioned as a model, even if it was not a cultural center according to the definition of the leading cultural policy program launched by the Secretary of State of André Malraux in 1959.

The book *La Maison de la Culture de Firminy* is the second issue in a collection entitled *Patrimoines pour Demain*, which aims to inform the wider public about a restored building. So this is the ambition of this richly illustrated book, with several contributions and essays by Gilles Ragot, Sophie Omère and Michel Kneubühler.

Upon his election in 1953, the Mayor of Firminy, Eugène Claudius Petit, began to work on a new urban plan by calling former employees of the reconstruction department, to create the new district of Firminy Vert, on hilly terrain on the south of the old city. The

civic center of Firminy Vert was a commission to Le Corbusier in 1955 with a program consisting of a church, a stadium, a swimming pool and a "house of culture and youth". The first civic center is the product of a troubled genesis. A first project combined the cultural center with the stadium stands (1956–1958). The complex profile resulting from this dual function a single-slope roof and inclined facade over the playing field that protected the stadium stands. The second project presented in July 1958 was based on the separation of the two facilities, whilst keeping some essential characteristics from the original proposal. Even if Le Corbusier designed an open-air theatre and a "miracle box" to help ensure good theatrical performances, the program of the Firminy Cultural Center is that of a large youth center. A plan with a relatively narrow width (18 meters) and considerable length (112 meters) make the building function as a linear promenade punctuated by double-height activity spaces where it is necessary. The structural system of the roof, which is composed by autoclaved cellular concrete (ACC) boards and tensioned cables as well as the articulation of three floor levels with the topography, makes this building totally different from other cultural centers based on compact solutions. The 16 bays punctuated by wavy ceiling boards confirm the direct link to the *La Tourette* convent in which Iannis Xenakis had developed these harmonic timber partitions. Le Corbusier visited the site on the 21st of May 1965, and died in the same year before construction was fully completed. André Wogenscky finished the construction and Pierre Guariche designed the interiors and a large part of the furniture. The cultural center was inaugurated on the 15th October 1966.

Gilles Ragot essay "*Firminy Toute une Histoire*" evokes the friendly and intellectual ties that linked Eugène Claudius Petit, Minister of Reconstruction and Town Planning (MRU), to the architect Le Corbusier. He then describes the genesis of the Firminy urban project, conceived as an illustration of the *Athens Charter* principles, and the role of Firminy Youth House in the context of the Firminy Vert ensemble composed of housing, cultural and sports venues. In a precise and documented narrative, the author insists on the programmatic hesitations that would make the Firminy House something more than a youth center and something less than a house of culture, including the attention paid to the topography and landscape, the origin of certain technical decisions such as the roof or the vicissitudes of construction (1961–1969) detected in the archives. Sophie Omère considers the study of Firminy furniture as a significant testimony of 1950's and 1960's design. The design of specific furniture for working spaces and for the shows, as well as the provision of

furniture was ensured by Pierre Guariche in the period between 1966 and 1969, although it continued without him in the following period 1969–1972. The analysis of lighting fixtures that would probably require further studies or the furniture restoration are featured as captioned pictures. Jean-François Gange-Chavan, in an interview, reminds us that architects in charge of historical monuments are generalists but nonetheless highlights some peculiarities of the restoration and of the preservation of the “building’s identity”. Michel Kneubühler returns to the programmatic hesitations and what they disclose of French cultural policy: the houses of culture after 1959, the legacy of the People’s houses and the tensions between culture and popular education. The reproduction of a personal note from Eugene Claudius Petit, “*Eléments de Réflexions sur la Maison de la Culture de Firminy*” clarifies precisely the point of view of the main stakeholder, from the project management point of view, on hesitations, temptations to organize human activities, and attempts to reconcile popular education and cultural policy.

The book does not focus too much on the dark years of the House of Culture that became sadly known for neglect and property loss in the late 1980s. Thus the text quickly jumps from genesis to restoration and the recent process to make this house a key element of a heritage ensemble. The absence of some bibliographical sources and notable references about Houses of Culture as well as the sequence of the project’s contributions — which begin with urbanism and architecture, end with cultural policies and their resulting programs, inserting furniture in the middle — may astonish the informed reader who may however take advantage of the organization by jumping from section to section, according to his or her needs or curiosities, without fear of compromising a scholarly, organized publication.

The tour guide, the last part of the book, is perhaps the one which gives us a better understanding of the building at several levels: those of the site and the urban structure as a whole, in its programmatic components, and interior design and detail. In a descriptive and educative manner, illustrated with contemporary images, this part reinforces the understanding of the turbulent history of the building but also the sequence of spaces and the Corbusean plasticity.

Richard Klein
docomomo France

Notes

- 1 “Les Maisons de la culture en France”, *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, 129, Décembre 1966 – Janvier 1967, p. 64–66.
- 2 *Idem*.



**Le Corbusier
 Ideas and Forms**

Edited by William J. R. Curtis
 Publisher: Phaidon Press Limited
 ISBN: 978-0-7148-6894-3
 Language: English
 Year: 2015

This book celebrates the genius of Le Corbusier and his oeuvre, and exposes the creative process that gave rise to his architecture. Not only a visionary architect, urban planner and theorist, but also a painter and sculptor, Le Corbusier made a thorough impact on the 20th century by dramatically changing architectural design and the way people lived in it. Today, over a quarter of a century since *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* was first published, the relevance of the legacy left by Corbusier is not called into question.

This second edition preserves the structure and main core themes, although developed in the light of new knowledge, bearing in mind the temporal hiatus between the two publications. The previously existing chapters have been completed or changed in some way to accommodate a more profound analysis of buildings. The author documents individual projects in detail, contextualizing his ideals and the cultural predicaments of the time, but above all exploring the relationship between ideas and forms in Le Corbusier’s architecture: through concepts, drawings and paintings that register his train of thought. In fact, the wide range of drawings, present in the book, purport to clarify the architectural understanding of the architect, while representing highly condensed abstractions of his vision of the world. Therefore, great emphasis has been given to the visual and physical qualities of the works themselves,

Published in the year of the 50th anniversary of Le Corbusier’s death, the book aims to epitomise the genesis of Le Corbusier’s vast body of work, focusing on the physical and environmental context, by plunging into the architect’s rich universe of forms and concepts.

José Pedro Cardoso
docomomo International Collaborator



The Villa Cavrois

Edited by Richard Klein.
 Publisher: Éditions du Patrimoine. Centre des Monuments Nationaux.
 ISBN: 978-2-7577-0423-3 (French);
 978-2-7577-0354-0 (English);
 978-2-7577-0461-5 (Dutch)
 Language: French, English and Dutch
 Year: 2015

A masterpiece of 20th century architecture designed by Robert Mallet-Stevens between 1929 and 1932, the Villa Cavrois had an eventful history before its restoration and opening to the public in 2015.

The man who commissioned it, Paul Cavrois, a well-established industrialist from northern France, wanted a residence large enough to house his family and servants. His meeting with Robert Mallet-Stevens was to make his project an object manifesto, an ocean liner rising on the heights of Roubaix, in a striking contrast to the neighboring traditional bourgeois houses. Mallet-Stevens mastered all aspects of the design: the silhouette and geometry of the villa: the simple, yet luxurious furniture, the material chosen specifically for each room — marble and precious woods in the reception areas and tiles in sober colors in the bathrooms and kitchen — the lighting fixtures, the heating and sound systems.

Occupied during the Second World War, sold by the heirs in the mid-1980s, abandoned and vandalized, the villa was purchased in 2001 by the French state, which decided to undertake its complete restoration. The work carried out — overseen by the *Centre des Monuments Nationaux* (Centre for National Monuments) since 2012 — had only one objective: to re-establish the villa’s original splendor. Now open to the public, the Villa Cavrois is one of Mallet-Stevens’ most beautiful creations, as well as a milestone in history of modern architecture.

Translated publisher’s notes.



Turismo y Arquitectura Moderna en Chile
Guías y Revistas en la Construcción de Destinos Turísticos (1933–1962)

Edited by Macarena Cortés
 Publisher: Ediciones ARQ
 ISBN: 978-956-9571-02-2
 Language: Spanish
 Year: 2014

Turismo y Arquitectura Moderna en Chile. Guías y Revistas en la Construcción de Destinos Turísticos (1933–1962) by Macarena Cortés offers a particular look at the heritage of modern buildings that allowed Chile to become a tourist destination country from the mid-thirties. This examination is based on how these buildings were shown in publicity produced by the *Ferrocarriles del Estado de Chile* railway company that, for more than three decades, promoted tourism and knowledge of both the Chilean countryside cities.

Natural landscapes, architecture and cities are shown in the light of an aesthetic that aspired to a large audience and wanted to make them desirable “destinations”. The articles of Claudius Galen, Hugo Weibel, Luciano Basauri and Dafne Berc allow a deepening of this perspective from different points-of-view, ranging from local urban history to the consideration of international cases.

Translated publisher’s notes.



Architecture du Canton de Vaud 1920–1975

Edited by Bruno Marchand (Director) and Marielle Savoyat (Coordination).
 Publisher: PPUR. Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes.
 ISBN: 978-2-88074-924-8
 Language: French
 Year: 2012

The Swiss Canton of Vaud has several well-known buildings such as Le Corbusier’s *Petite Maison* in Corseaux, Marc Piccard’s Bellerive baths in Lausanne, and Jean Tschumi’s Nestlé headquarters in Vevey. It also has different building complexes and less well-known architectural works, which are, nevertheless, also interesting and representative of a high quality of architecture. This book, through commentaries and illustrations, presents around 350 works, broken down by typologies, highlights the architecture of the Vaud Canton from 1920 to 1975. At the same time, it strives to raise public and professional awareness of the qualities of a heritage that is still often unrecognized and, until now, has never been the subject of such a comprehensive publication.

Translated publisher’s notes.



Cahiers Thématiques No. 12
Représentations de l'Architecture Contemporaine

Edited by Richard Klein and Éric Monin
 Publisher: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l’homme
 ISBN: 978-2-905865-05-2
 Language: French/English
 Year: 2013

Devoted to representations of contemporary architecture, this twelfth issue of *Cahiers Thématiques* proposes a polymorphic vision of an art not restricted just to its built form. Dematerialized, architecture journeys at the whim of techniques and media. Seriously commented, scrupulously figured or released from its weight by impertinent artists, architecture gives way to new horizons that open up spontaneously in the public imagination. The building then passes to its secondary plan in favor of its media format. From the Corbusian declamations to the spontaneous impressions that cover advertising plastic bags, the contributions collected in this volume describe the field of architectural representations that ranges from the more structured discourse to more banal applications.

Translated publisher’s notes.

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