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Towers in Milan

by Benedikt Huber

During the last few years an ever increasing number of skyscrapers have gone up in Milan. This issue devotes especial attention to the Pirelli building (arch.: Gio Ponti, A. Fornaroli, A. Roselli, E. Dell'Orto; eng.: Pier Luigi Nervi), the "Galfa" building (arch.: M. Bega; eng.: G. Casalis) and the "Torre Velasca" (arch.: L. B. Belgioioso, E. Peressutti, E. N. Rogers; eng.: A. Danuso). The first, 30 stories high, when seen from the side, is impressive for the boldness of its "membranous" fragility, whereas, in front view, the facing of glass and metal (curtain-wall type elevation) detracts from the effect of the structural elements. As for the second, also 30 stories high, it adheres to the now classical conception of "Lever House", while the "Torre Velasca"—whose mushroom shape looms over the neighbouring houses and which is supposed to "overcome functionalism"—raises the question as to whether it really represents a new departure in modern architecture.—However that may be, the zest and the pomp of so many modern "towers" remain impressive; they would almost remind one of those of San Gimignano, if it were not that the rather noticeable absence of city-planning considerations to some extent prevents these proud and often moving creations in Milan from harmonizing to produce a unified effect comparable to that made by their Tuscan precursors, mutually hostile though the latter are.

Nestlé Administration Building in Vevey

1960. Architect: Jean Tschumi FAS/SIA, Lausanne

5-storey building in a large park; basements and ground floor of reinforced concrete, structure of upper floors of steel. Latest type of air-conditioning, very carefully designed sunbreaks. The entrance canopy, of aluminium, is a fine example of how a given material can be used with regard to its expressive properties.

Warehouse with Offices in Brugg

1957/59. Architect: W. Gantenbein FAS/SIA, Zurich; engineers: H. H. Rinderknecht SIA, Morges and Basle

In expanding the premises of this wholesale paper concern, it was more economical to annex a new building to the old premises.—Cost: Fr. 76.— per cu.m.

Iron Sculpture by Georges Schneider, at Delémont

by Maria Netter

Selected in a competition and designed to be placed in front of the alcohol warehouse of the Federal Alcohol Administration at Delémont, this sculpture is a "constructed symbol, at once objective and stylized". The artist, at one time influenced by Germaine Richier, here freely elaborates on the reverberations set off within him by the teaching of Zadkine, who was his master at the Grande Chaumière.

Office Building of an Insurance Company in Rotterdam

Architect: A. Bodon, of the architects office v. Bruggen, Drexhage, Sterkenburg, Bodon, Rotterdam

The company's offices occupy the first floor, the remainder of the building being leased to a café-restaurant and to other firms.

Communal Administration of Therwil

1959. Architects: W. Wurster FAS and H. U. Huggel FAS, Basle

This building was conceived for a commune that is still rural but whose urbanization is imminent (15 km from Basle); it was designed with the probability of later extensions in mind. Cost: Fr. 137.— per cu.m.

Oscar Weber Department Store at Arbon

1958/59. Architect: D. Adorni, Arbon, in collaboration with A. Gisel, architect, Arbon

Construction of steel comprising a ground floor (sales departments—shop—refreshment counter) and one upper floor (sales and offices, etc.) reached by escalator. Total volume: 14,668 cu.m.; cost per cu.m.: Fr. 131.—.

Café City in Zurich

1958. Architect: Hanspeter Räber, Zurich

The premises (100 sq.m.), at first planned for a shop and including 5 voluminous pillars, were difficult to handle in a free manner. The café, likewise equipped for quick lunches, has 70 seats.—One of the walls is decorated with an aluminium polychrome relief by Camille Graeser, a work of concrete art, with application of a new colour technique.

Discussion of the Problem of the General Contracting Firm

What is aimed at here is not to start an exhaustive investigation but simply to assemble various points of view with a view to discovering equitable solutions to the problem that will not fail to be defined by, among others, the professional associations FAS and SIA.—This issue presents three variant opinions:

1. *The point of view of an architect:* Dr. R. Steiger, arch. FAS, maintains that the "general contractor" does not represent a novel method of building but, essentially and even uniquely, a new method of financing, reflecting the growth of capitalist concentration. Two forms: a) the general contractor, guaranteeing a fixed consideration and a dead-line, concludes an agreement on the basis of detailed plans by an architect; b) the other form is more dangerous from the architectural point of view, the agreement being made on the basis of small-scale plans and the main consideration being economy. In France a third form, resulting from the disappointment produced by the above, is making an appearance: that of a combine of enterprises, called a "pilot enterprise". This form, if realized under the direction of an architect, could be a solution to the problem, as it pays greater heed to architectural values without losing sight of irreversible trends in the economy.

2. *The point of view of a municipal official:* Dr. S. Widmer, member of the Municipal Council of Zurich and Director of the Construction Department, recalls the criticisms formulated against the excessively high cost of the buildings constructed under the responsibility of an architect. However, in Zurich, the combined opposition of simple contractors, construction workers and architects has ended in denying to the city the less costly recourse to a general contractor for projects ordered by the municipality. At the present time, the competition between architects and general contractors can only tend to improve quality.

3. *Point of view of a general contractor:* The author reveals the guarantees and financial and practical facilities entailed by the entrance on the scene of his line of activity, which he feels can not jeopardize architectural values and, what's more, complies with modern economic necessities.

The Painter Carlo Cotti

by Gualtiero Schönenberger

Of Italian descent, C. C. was born in Lugano in 1903. Studied at the Accademia Brera, Milan, then, in Rome, appropriated the fresco and mural technique. Lived for a time in Zurich; 1936: paintings in the church of Nottwil (Canton of Lucerne). Has been living again in Lugano since 1940. Numerous exhibitions, the principal one being at the Villa Ciani Lugano (1954); his more recent canvases (abstract) were exhibited in 1959 at the Cittadella Gallery, Ascona.—His originality and his perfect integrity as an artist, which ignores the mistrustful atmosphere surrounding him in his city, make him one of the most significant painters in the Ticino at the present time.

The Figurative Style of William Scott

by J. P. Hodin

One of the rare modern artists still having recourse to the brush and to colours and possessing, as far as his craft is concerned, thorough training, William Scott is at the present time, without any doubt, the major painter of the English "intermediate generation". His work, which is not really non-representational, never fails to call to mind, with its figures, a Dubuffet who would not "fabricate" and, with its still lifes, the representationalism rediscovered by way of the abstract manner of Staël. W. S. has as his ambition the restoration of the fundamental primitiveness which is the prime condition of all great art (Lascaux, Goya, Renoir, Bonnard), which great art has always been "sexed" (not to be confused with sex appeal) and has nothing in common with the works of mere craftsmanship or ladies' fancywork which unfortunately takes the place of creation in the case of a great number of contemporary artists.