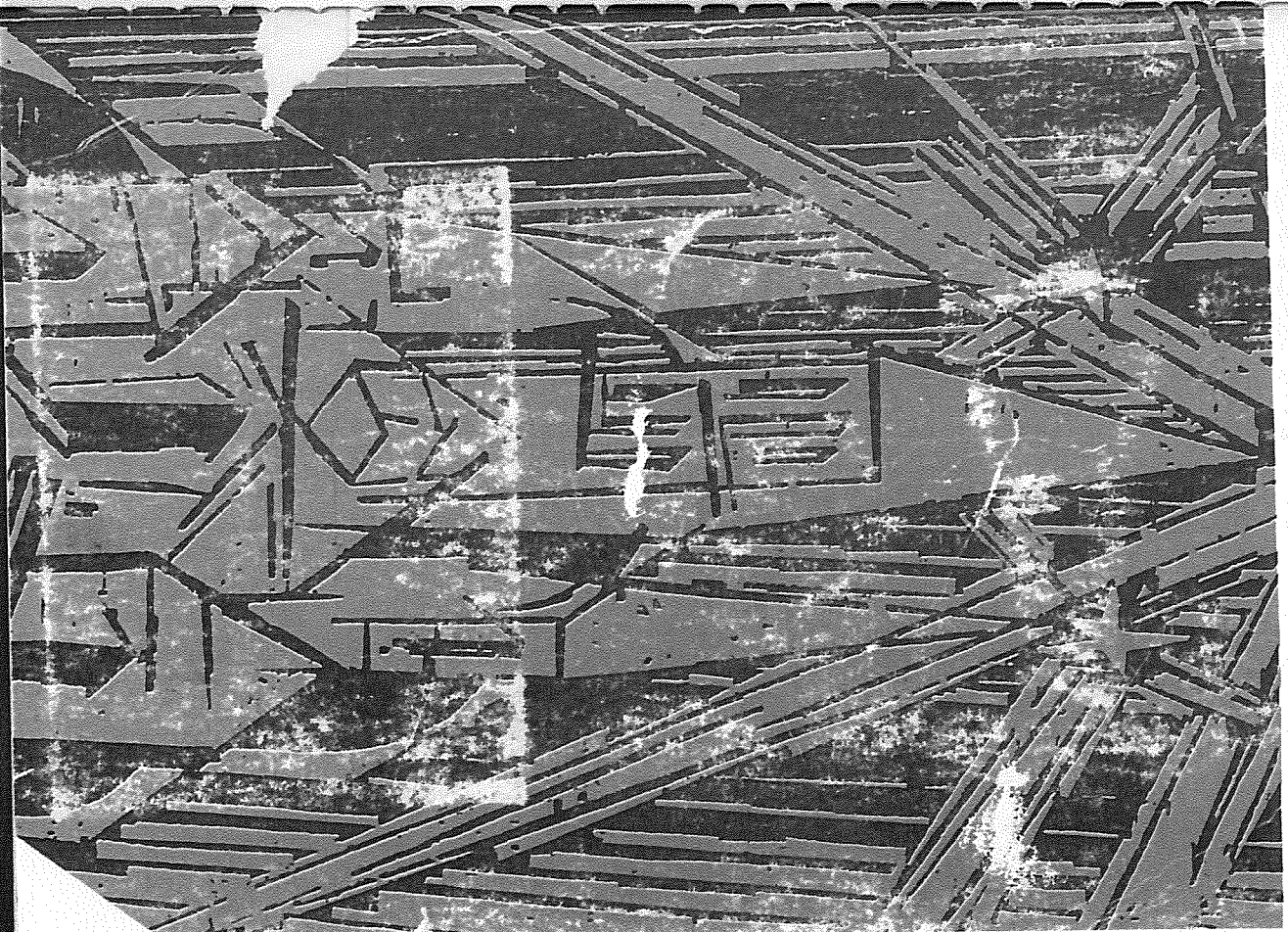


**Programs and manifestoes  
on 20th-century architecture**



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WORKS BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

I'LL LIVE  
AS I'LL WORK

AS I AM!  
NO WORK IN FASHION FOR SHAM  
NO TO FAVOUR FORSWORN  
WEAR MASK (REST OR THORN)  
MY WORK AS BEFITTEH A MAN  
MY WORK  
WORK THAT BEFITTEH THE MAN

I'LL WORK  
AS I'LL THINK  
AS I AM!  
NO THOUGHT OF FASHION OR SHAM  
NO FOR FORTUNE THE JADE  
SERVE VILE GODS-OF-TRADE  
MY THOUGHT AS BESEMEETH A MAN  
MY THOUGHT  
THOUGHT THAT BESEMEETH THE MAN

I'LL THINK  
AS I'LL ACT  
AS I AM!  
NO DEED IN FASHION FOR SHAM  
NO FOR FAME EER MAN MADE  
SHEATH THE NAKED WHITE BLADE  
MY ACT AS BECOMETH A MAN  
MY ACT  
ACTS THAT BECOMETH THE MAN

I'LL ACT  
AS I'LL DIE  
AS I AM!  
NO SLAVE OF FASHION OR SHAM  
OF MY FREEDOM PROUD  
HERS TO SHRINE GUARD OR SHROUD  
MY LIFE AS BETIDEH THE MAN  
MY LIFE  
AYE! WHAT EVER BETIDEH THE MAN

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**1907 Henry van de Velde:  
Credo**

In his book *Vom Neuen Stil* (On the New Style) Henry van de Velde continues the explanation of the principles set forth in his *Lateipredigten* (Lay Sermons). The three sections called by him *Credo* are to be found in the chapter entitled 'The Striving for a Style Based on a Rational, Logical Conception'. These principles, says Henry van de Velde, need only to be enunciated to be accepted as valid. Their fruitfulness has already been proved. In fact there arise from them the two basic demands not merely of the theory and critique of the new architecture, but also of its practice: honesty of materials, honesty of construction. Both have been till now uncontested.

**Thou shalt comprehend the form and construction of all objects only in the sense of their strictest, elementary logic and justification for their existence.**

**Thou shalt adapt and subordinate these forms and constructions to the essential use of the material which thou employest.**

**And if thou art animated by the wish to beautify these forms and constructions, give thyself to the longing for refinement to which thy aesthetic sensibility or taste for ornament – of whatever kind it is – shall inspire thee, only so far as thou canst respect and retain the rights and the essential appearance of these forms and constructions!**

**1908 Adolf Loos:  
Ornament and crime**

Adolf Loos (b. 1870 in Brno, d. 1933 in Vienna) brought back with him to Vienna from his three-year stay in the United States (1893–6) a remark of Louis Sullivan's: 'It could only benefit us if for a time we were to abandon ornament and concentrate entirely on the erection of buildings that were finely shaped and charming in their sobriety.'

From this Loos developed his radical aesthetic purism, which made him a zealous foe of Art Nouveau and the German Werkbund: 'The German Werkbund has set out to discover the style of our age. This is unnecessary labour. We already have the style of our age.'

The human embryo in the womb passes through all the evolutionary stages of the animal kingdom. When man is born, his sensory impressions are like those of a newborn puppy. His childhood takes him through all the metamorphoses of human history. At 2 he sees with the eyes of a Papuan, at 4 with those of an ancient Teuton, at 6 with those of Socrates, at 8 with those of Voltaire. When he is 8 he becomes aware of violet, the colour discovered by the eighteenth century, because before that the violet was blue and the purple-snail red. The physicist points today to colours in the solar spectrum which already have a name but the knowledge of which is reserved for the men of the future.

The child is amoral. To our eyes, the Papuan is too. The Papuan kills his enemies and eats them. He is not a criminal. But when modern man kills someone and eats him he is either a criminal or a degenerate. The Papuan tattoos his skin, his boat, his paddles; in short everything he can lay hands on. He is not a criminal. The modern man who tattoos himself is either a criminal or a degenerate. There are prisons in which eighty per cent of the inmates show tattoos. The tattooed who are not in prison are latent criminals or degenerate aristocrats. If someone who is tattooed dies at liberty, it means he has died a few years before committing a murder.

The urge to ornament one's face and everything within reach is the start of plastic art. It is the baby talk of painting. All art is erotic.

The first ornament that was born, the cross, was erotic in origin. The first work of art, the first artistic act which the first artist, in order to rid himself of his surplus energy, smeared on the wall. A horizontal dash: the prone woman. A vertical dash: the man penetrating her. The man who created it felt the same urge as Beethoven, he was in the same heaven in which Beethoven created the *Ninth Symphony*.

But the man of our day who, in response to an inner urge, smears the walls with erotic symbols is a criminal or a degenerate. It goes without saying that this impulse most frequently assails people with such symptoms of degeneracy in the lavatory. A country's culture can be assessed by the extent to which its lavatory walls are smeared. In the child this is a natural phenomenon: his

first artistic expression is to scribble erotic symbols on the walls. But what is natural to the Papuan and the child is a symptom of degeneracy in the modern adult. I have made the following discovery and I pass it on to the world: *The evolution of culture is synonymous with the removal of ornament from utilitarian objects*. I believed that with this discovery I was bringing joy to the world; it has not thanked me. People were sad and hung their heads. What depressed them was the realization that they could produce no new ornaments. Are we alone, the people of the nineteenth century, supposed to be unable to do what any Negro, all the races and periods before us have been able to do? What mankind created without ornament in earlier millennia was thrown away without a thought and abandoned to destruction. \*We possess no joiner's benches from the Carolingian era, but every trifle that displays the least ornament has been collected and cleaned and palatial buildings have been erected to house it. Then people walked sadly about between the glass cases and felt ashamed of their impotence. Every age had its style, is our age alone to be refused a style? By style, people meant ornament. Then I said: Weep not! See, therein lies the greatness of our age, that it is incapable of producing a new ornament. We have outgrown ornament; we have fought our way through to freedom from ornament. See, the time is nigh, fulfilment awaits us. Soon the streets of the city will glisten like white walls. Like Zion, the holy city, the capital of heaven. Then fulfilment will be come.

There were black albs, clerical gentlemen, who wouldn't put up with that. Mankind was to go on panting in slavery to ornament. Men had gone far enough for ornament no longer to arouse feelings of pleasure in them, far enough for a tattooed face not to heighten the aesthetic effect, as among the Papuans, but to reduce it. Far enough to take pleasure in a plain cigarette case, whereas an ornamented one, even at the same price, was not bought. They were happy in their clothes and glad they didn't have to go around in red velvet hose with gold braid like fairground monkeys. And I said: See, Goethe's death-chamber is finer than all Renaissance splendour and a plain piece of furniture more beautiful than any inlaid and carved museum pieces. Goethe's language is finer than all the ornaments of Pegnitz's shepherds.

The black albs heard this with displeasure, and the state, whose task it is to halt the cultural development of the peoples, made the question of the development and revival of ornament its own. Woe to the state whose revolutions are in the care of the *Hofrats*! Very soon we saw in the Wiener Kunstgewerbemuseum [Vienna Museum of Applied Art] a sideboard known as 'the rich haul of fish', soon there were cupboards bearing the name 'the enchanted princess' or something similar referring to the ornament with which this unfortunate piece of furniture was covered. The Austrian state took its task so seriously that it is making sure the foot-rags used on the frontiers of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy do not disappear. It is forcing every cultivated man of 20 for three years to wear foot-rags instead of manufactured footwear. After all, every state starts from the premise that a people on a lower footing is easier to rule.

Very well, the ornament disease is recognized by the state and subsidized

with state funds. But I see in this a retrograde step. I don't accept the objection that ornament heightens a cultivated person's joy in life, don't accept the objection contained in the words: 'But if the ornament is beautiful! Ornament does not heighten my joy in life or the joy in life of any cultivated person. If I want to eat a piece of gingerbread I choose one that is quite smooth and not a piece representing a heart or a baby or a rider, which is covered all over with ornaments. The man of the fifteenth century won't understand me. But all modern people will. The advocate of ornament believes that my urge for simplicity is in the nature of a mortification. No, respected professor at the school of applied art, I am not mortifying myself! The show dishes of past centuries, which display all kinds of ornaments to make the peacocks, pheasants and lobsters look more tasty, have exactly the opposite effect on me. I am horrified when I go through a cookery exhibition and think that I am meant to eat these stuffed carcasses. I eat roast beef.

The enormous damage and devastation caused in aesthetic development by the revival of ornament would be easily made light of, for no one, not even the power of the state, can halt mankind's evolution. It can only be delayed. We can wait. But it is a crime against the national economy that it should result in a waste of human labour, money, and material. Time cannot make good this damage.

The speed of cultural evolution is reduced by the stragglers. I perhaps am living in 1908, but my neighbour is living in 1900 and the man across the way in 1880. It is unfortunate for a state when the culture of its inhabitants is spread over such a great period of time. The peasants of Kals are living in the twelfth century. And there were peoples taking part in the Jubilee parade [of the Emperor Franz Joseph] who would have been considered backward even during the migration of the nations. Happy the land that has no such stragglers and marauders. Happy America!

Among ourselves there are unmodern people even in the cities, stragglers from the eighteenth century, who are horrified by a picture with purple shadows because they cannot yet see purple. The pheasant on which the chef has been working all day long tastes better to them and they prefer the cigarette case with Renaissance ornaments to the smooth one. And what is it like in the country? Clothes and household furniture all belong to past centuries. The peasant isn't a Christian, he is still a pagan.

The stragglers slow down the cultural evolution of the nations and of mankind; not only is ornament produced by criminals but also a crime is committed through the fact that ornament inflicts serious injury on people's health, on the national budget and hence on cultural evolution. If two people live side by side with the same needs, the same demands on life and the same income but belonging to different cultures, economically speaking the following process can be observed: the twentieth-century man will get richer and richer, the eighteenth-century man poorer and poorer. I am assuming that both live according to their inclinations. The twentieth-century man can satisfy his needs with a far lower capital outlay and hence can save money. The vegetable he enjoys is simply boiled in water and has a little butter put on it. The other man likes it equally well only when honey and nuts have been

added to it and someone has spent hours cooking it. Ornamented plates are very expensive, whereas the white crockery from which the modern man likes to eat is cheap. The one accumulates savings, the other debts. It is the same with whole nations. Woe when a people remains behind in cultural evolution! The British are growing wealthier and we poorer. . . .

Even greater is the damage done by ornament to the nation that produces it. Since ornament is no longer a natural product of our culture, so that it is a phenomenon either of backwardness or degeneration, the work of the ornamentor is no longer adequately remunerated.

The relationship between the earnings of a woodcarver and a turner, the criminally low wages paid to the embroideress and the lacemaker are well known. The ornamentor has to work twenty hours to achieve the income earned by a modern worker in eight. Ornament generally increases the cost of an article; nevertheless it happens that an ornamented object whose raw material cost the same and which demonstrably took three times as long to make is offered at half the price of a smooth object. Omission of ornament results in a reduction in the manufacturing time and an increase in wages. The Chinese carver works for sixteen hours, the American worker for eight. If I pay as much for a smooth cigarette case as for an ornamented one, the difference in the working time belongs to the worker. And if there were no ornament at all – a situation that may perhaps come about in some thousands of years – man would only have to work four hours instead of eight, because half of the work done today is devoted to ornament. Ornament is wasted labour power and hence wasted health. It has always been so.

Since ornament is no longer organically linked with our culture, it is also no longer the expression of our culture. The ornament that is manufactured today has no connexion with us, has absolutely no human connexions, no connexion with the world order. It is not capable of developing. What happened to Otto Eckmann's ornament, or van de Velde's? The artist has always stood at the forefront of mankind full of vigour and health. But the modern ornamentalist is a straggler or a pathological phenomenon. He himself will repudiate his own products three years later. To cultivated people they are immediately intolerable; others become aware of their intolerable character only years later. Where are Otto Eckmann's works today? Modern ornament has no parents and no progeny, no past and no future. By uncultivated people, to whom the grandeur of our age is a book with seven seals, it is greeted joyfully and shortly afterwards repudiated.

Mankind is healthier than ever; only a few people are sick. But these few tyrannize over the worker who is so healthy that he cannot invent ornament. They force him to execute in the most varied materials the ornaments which they have invented.

Changes of ornament lead to a premature devaluation of the labour product. The worker's time and the material employed are capital goods that are wasted. I have stated the proposition: the form of an object lasts, that is to say remains tolerable, as long as the object lasts physically. I will try to explain this. A suit will change its form more often than a valuable fur. A lady's ball

gown, intended for only one night, will change its form more quickly than a desk. But woe if a desk has to be changed as quickly as a ball gown because the old form has become intolerable; in that case the money spent on the desk will have been lost.

This is well known to the ornamentalist, and Austrian ornamentalists are trying to make the best of this shortcoming. They say: 'We prefer a consumer who has a set of furniture that becomes intolerable to him after ten years, and who is consequently forced to refurnish every ten years, to one who only buys an object when the old one is worn out. Industry demands this. Millions are employed as a result of the quick change.'

This seems to be the secret of the Austrian national economy. How often do we hear someone say when there is a fire: 'Thank God, now there will be work for people to do again.' In that case I know a splendid solution. Set fire to a town, set fire to the empire, and everyone will be swimming in money and prosperity. Manufacture furniture which after three years can be used for fire-wood, metal fittings that have to be melted down after four years because even at an auction sale it is impossible to get a tenth of the original value of the material and labour, and we shall grow wealthier and wealthier.

The loss does not hit only the consumer; above all it hits the producer. Today ornament on things that have evolved away from the need to be ornamented represents wasted labour and ruined material. If all objects would last aesthetically as long as they do physically, the consumer could pay a price for them that would enable the worker to earn more money and work shorter hours. For an object I am sure I can use to its full extent I willingly pay four times as much as for one that is inferior in form or material. I happily pay forty kronen for my boots, although in a different shop I could get boots for ten kronen. But in those trades that groan under the tyranny of the ornamentalist no distinction is made between good and bad workmanship. The work suffers because no one is willing to pay its true value.

And this is a good thing, because these ornamented objects are tolerable only when they are of the most miserable quality. I get over a fire much more easily when I hear that only worthless trash has been burned. I can be pleased about the trash in the Künsterhaus because I know that it will be manufactured in a few days and taken to pieces in one. But throwing gold coins instead of stones, lighting a cigarette with a banknote, pulverizing and drinking a pearl create an unaesthetic effect.

Ornamented things first create a truly unaesthetic effect when they have been executed in the best material and with the greatest care and have taken long hours of labour. I cannot exonerate myself from having initially demanded quality work, but naturally not for that kind of thing.

The modern man who holds ornament sacred as a sign of the artistic superabundance of past ages will immediately recognize the tortured, strained, and morbid quality of modern ornaments. No ornament can any longer be made today by anyone who lives on our cultural level.

It is different with the individuals and peoples who have not yet reached this level.

I am preaching to the aristocrat, I mean the person who stands at the pinnacle of mankind and yet has the deepest understanding for the distress and want of those below. He well understands the Kaffir who weaves ornaments into his fabric according to a particular rhythm that only comes into view when it is unravell'd, the Persian who weaves his carpet, the Slovak peasant woman who embroiders her lace, the old lady who crochets wonderful things with glass beads and silk. The aristocrat lets them be; he knows that the hours in which they work are their holy hours. The revolutionary would go to them and say: 'It's all nonsense.' Just as he would pull down the little old woman from the wayside crucifix and tell her: 'There is no God.' The atheist among the aristocrats, on the other hand, raises his hat when he passes a church.

My shoes are covered all over with ornaments consisting of scallops and holes. Work done by the shoemaker for which he was never paid. I go to the shoemaker and say: 'You ask thirty kronen for a pair of shoes. I will pay you forty kronen.' I have thereby raised this man to heights of bliss for which he will thank me by work and material infinitely better than would be called for by the additional price. He is happy. Happiness rarely enters his house. Here is a man who understands him, who values his work and does not doubt his honesty. He already sees the finished shoes in his mind's eye. He knows where the best leather is to be found at the present time; he knows which craftsman he will entrust the shoes to; and the shoes will be so covered in scallops and holes as only an elegant shoe can be. And then I say to him: 'But there's one condition. The shoes must be completely smooth.' With this I have cast him down from the heights of bliss to the pit of despondency. He has less work, but I have taken away all his joy.

I am preaching to the aristocrat. I tolerate ornaments on my own body, when they constitute the joy of my fellow men. Then they are my joy too. I can tolerate the ornaments of the Kaffir, the Persian, the Slovak peasant woman, my shoemaker's ornaments, for they all have no other way of attaining the high points of their existence. We have art, which has taken the place of ornament. After the toils and troubles of the day we go to Beethoven or to Tristan. This my shoemaker cannot do. I mustn't deprive him of his joy, since I have nothing else to put in its place. But anyone who goes to the *Ninth Symphony* and then sits down and designs a wallpaper pattern is either a confidence trickster or a degenerate. Absence of ornament has brought the other arts to unsuspected heights. Beethoven's symphonies would never have been written by a man who had to walk about in silk, satin, and lace. Anyone who goes around in a velvet coat today is not an artist but a buffoon or a house painter. We have grown finer, more subtle. The nomadic herdsmen had to distinguish themselves by various colours; modern man uses his clothes as a mask. So immensely strong is his individuality that it can no longer be expressed in articles of clothing. Freedom from ornament is a sign of spiritual strength. Modern man uses the ornaments of earlier or alien cultures as he sees fit. He concentrates his own inventiveness on other things.

## 1910 Frank Lloyd Wright: Organic architecture (excerpt)

In 1910 Frank Lloyd Wright (b. 1867 or 1869 in Richland Center, Wisconsin, d. 1957 in Taliesin West, Arizona) came to Germany at the invitation of the publisher Ernst Wasmuth in order to supervise the first publication of his *Collected Works* (1893-1910). Kuno Franck, for some time an exchange professor at Harvard, had drawn attention to Wright in Berlin. With this publication, for which Wright himself wrote an introduction, the architectural idea of a free spatial flow between the various dwelling-areas, and the organic development of a building on an L-, X-, or T-shaped ground plan gained a firm foothold in Europe.

In Organic Architecture then, it is quite impossible to consider the building as one thing, its furnishings another and its setting and environment still another. The Spirit in which these buildings are conceived sees all these together at work as one thing. All are to be studiously foreseen and provided for in the nature of the structure. All these should become mere details of the character and completeness of the structure. Incorporated (or excluded) are lighting, heating and ventilation. The very chairs and tables, cabinets and even musical instruments, where practicable, are of the building itself, never fixtures upon it . . .

To thus make of a human dwelling-place a complete work of art, in itself expressive and beautiful, intimately related to modern life and fit to live in, lending itself more freely and suitably to the individual needs of the dwellers as itself an harmonious entity, fitting in colour, pattern and nature the utilities and be really an expression of them in character, - this is the tall modern American opportunity in Architecture. True basis of a true Culture. An exalted view to take of the 'property instinct' of our times? But once founded and on view I believe this Ideal will become a new Tradition: a vast step in advance of the prescribed fashion in a day when a dwelling was a composite of cells arranged as separate rooms: chambers to contain however good aggregations of furniture, utility comforts not present: a property interest chiefly. An organic-entity, this modern building as contrasted with that former insensate aggregation of parts. Surely we have here the higher ideal of unity as a more intimate working out of the expression of one's life in one's environment. One great thing instead of a quarrelling collection of so many little things.

kingdom without force! Hurray for the transparent, the clear! Hurray for purity! Hurray for crystal! Hurray and again hurray for the fluid, the graceful, the angular, the sparkling, the flashing, the light – hurray for everlasting architecture!

## 1920 Le Corbusier: Towards a new architecture: guiding principles

Le Corbusier (b. 1887 in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, d. 1965 in Roquebrune, Cap-Martin, France) was already well known outside France when in 1920–1 those programmatic notes appeared in the periodical *L'Esprit Nouveau* which in 1923 he published in book form under the title *Vers une Architecture*. In 1910 Le Corbusier had worked for a few months with Peter Behrens in Berlin, knew the work of the Deutscher Werkbund (which, against van de Velde's protest – see page 28 – was already concerning itself with standardization and the problems of industrialization), had since 1917 travelled all over Europe and was now, from 1920, evolving an aesthetic of mass-production building.

### The engineer's aesthetic and architecture

The Engineer's Aesthetic and Architecture are two things that march together and follow one from the other: the one being now at its full height, the other in an unhappy state of retrogression.

The Engineer, inspired by the law of Economy and governed by mathematical calculation, puts us in accord with universal law. He achieves harmony.

The Architect, by his arrangement of forms, realizes an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree and provokes plastic emotions; by the relationships which he creates he wakes profound echoes in us, he gives us the measure of an order which we feel to be in accordance with that of our world, he determines the various movements of our heart and of our understanding; it is then that we experience the sense of beauty.

### Three reminders to architects

#### Mass

Our eyes are constructed to enable us to see forms in light.

Primary forms are beautiful forms because they can be clearly appreciated.

Architects today no longer achieve these simple forms.

Working by calculation, engineers employ geometrical forms, satisfying our eyes by their geometry and our understanding by their mathematics; their work is on the direct line of good art.

#### Surface

A mass is enveloped in its surface, a surface which is divided up according to the directing and generating lines of the mass; and this gives the mass its individuality.

Architects today are afraid of the geometrical constituents of surfaces.

The great problems of modern construction must have a geometrical solution. Forced to work in accordance with the strict needs of exactly determined

conditions, engineers make use of form-generating and form-defining elements. They create limpid and moving plastic facts.

#### *Plan*

The Plan is the generator.

Without a plan, you have lack of order and wilfulness.

The Plan holds in itself the essence of sensation.

The great problems of tomorrow, dictated by collective necessities, put the question of 'plan' in a new form.

Modern life demands, and is waiting for, a new kind of plan, both for the house and for the city.

#### **Regulating lines**

An inevitable element of Architecture.

The necessity for order. The regulating line is a guarantee against wilfulness.

It brings satisfaction to the understanding.

The regulating line is a means to an end; it is not a recipe. Its choice and the modalities of expression given to it are an integral part of architectural creation.

#### **Eyes which do not see . . . .**

#### *Liners*

A great epoch has begun.

There exists a new spirit.

There exists a mass of work conceived in the new spirit; it is to be met with particularly in industrial production.

Architecture is stifled by custom.

The 'styles' are a lie.

Style is a unity of principle animating all the work of an epoch, the result of a state of mind which has its own special character.

Our own epoch is determining, day by day, its own style.

Our eyes, unhappily, are unable yet to discern it.

#### *Aeroplanes*

The aeroplane is the product of close selection.

The lesson of the aeroplane lies in the logic which governed the statement of the problem and its realization.

The problem of the house has not yet been stated.

Nevertheless there do exist standards for the dwelling house.

Machinery contains in itself the factor of economy, which makes for selection.

The house is a machine for living in.

#### *Automobiles*

The Parthenon is a product of selection applied to a standard.

Architecture operates in accordance with standards.

Standards are a matter of logic, analysis, and minute study; they are based on a problem which has been well 'stated'. A standard is definitely established by experiment.

#### **Architecture**

#### *The lesson of Rome*

The business of Architecture is to establish emotional relationships by means of raw materials.

Architecture goes beyond utilitarian needs.

Architecture is a plastic thing.

The spirit of order, a unity of intention.

The sense of relationships; architecture deals with quantities.

Passion can create drama out of inert stone.

#### *The illusion of plans*

The Plan proceeds from within to without; the exterior is the result of an interior.

The elements of architecture are light and shade, walls and space.

Arrangement is the gradation of aims, the classification of intentions.

Man looks at the creation of architecture with his eyes, which are 5 feet 6 inches from the ground. One can only deal with aims which the eye can appreciate, and intentions which take into account architectural elements. If there come into play intentions which do not speak the language of architecture, you arrive at the illusion of plans, you transgress the rules of the Plan through an error in conception, or through a leaning towards empty show.

#### *Pure creation of the mind*

Contour and profile are the touchstone of the architect.

Here he reveals himself as artist or mere engineer.

Contour is free of all constraint.

There is here no longer any question of custom, nor of tradition, nor of construction nor of adaptation to utilitarian needs.

Contour and profile are a pure creation of the mind; they call for the plastic artist.

#### **Mass-production houses**

A great epoch has begun.

There exists a new spirit.

Industry, overwhelming us like a flood which rolls on towards its destined ends, has furnished us with new tools adapted to this new epoch, animated by the new spirit.

society today depends upon it. Architecture has for its first duty, in this period of renewal, that of bringing about a revision of values, a revision of the constituent elements of the house.

Mass-production is based on analysis and experiment.

Industry on the grand scale must occupy itself with building and establish the elements of the house on a mass-production basis.

We must create the mass-production spirit.

The spirit of constructing mass-production houses.

The spirit of living in mass-production houses.

The spirit of conceiving mass-production houses.

If we eliminate from our hearts and minds all dead concepts in regard to the house, and look at the question from a critical and objective point of view, we shall arrive at the 'House-Machine', the mass-production house, healthy (and morally so too) and beautiful in the same way that the working tools and instruments which accompany our existence are beautiful.

Beautiful also with all the animation that the artist's sensibility can add to severe and pure functioning elements.

#### Architecture or revolution (excerpt)

... In building and construction, mass-production has already been begun; in face of new economic needs, mass-production units have been created both in mass and detail; and definite results have been achieved both in detail and in mass. If this fact be set against the past, then you have revolution, both in the method employed and in the large scale on which it has been carried out. ... Our minds have consciously or unconsciously apprehended these events and new needs have arisen, consciously or unconsciously.

The machinery of Society, profoundly *out of gear*, oscillates between an amelioration, of historical importance, and a catastrophe.

The primordial instinct of every human being is to assure himself of a shelter.

The various classes of workers in society today *no longer have dwellings adapted to their needs; neither the artisan nor the intellectual.*

It is a question of building which is at the root of the social unrest of today: architecture or revolution.

1921

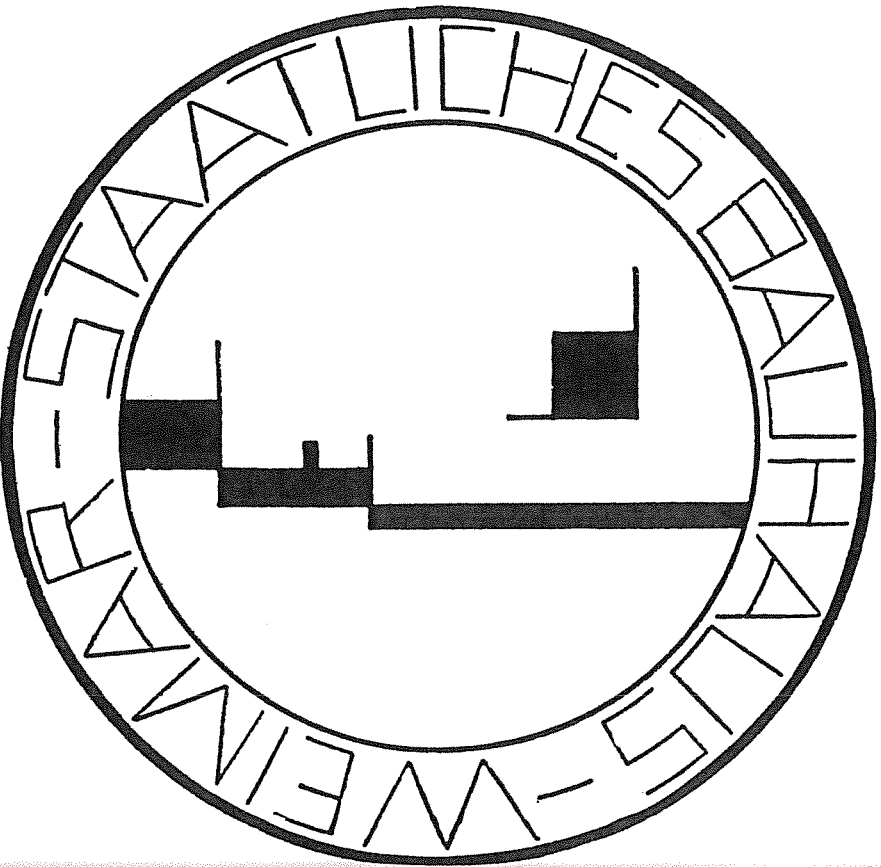
### Bruno Taut: Frühlicht (Daybreak)

In July 1920 Bruno Taut had to end the first series of his *Frühlicht* articles. The editor of *Stadtbaukunst* considered these contributions no longer tolerable.

In 1921 Taut went as municipal architect to Magdeburg and from there, from autumn 1921 on, he was able to continue the publication as a quarterly periodical. Once again the friends of The Glass Chain had a chance to speak.

Once again Taut prefaced the first publication with a piece of expressive, hymn-like prose. But in the ensuing issues it became clear that new ideas and forces were finding expression, new ideas and forces more closely related to reality. And new names: Oud, Mächler, Mies van der Rohe.

HOW DAY WILL EVENTUALLY BREAK - WHO KNOWS? BUT WE CAN FEEL THE MORNING. WE ARE NO LONGER MOONSTRUCK WANDERERS ROAMING DREAMILY IN THE PALE LIGHT OF HISTORY. A COOL EARLY MORNING WIND IS BLOWING AROUND US; HE WHO DOESN'T WANT TO SHIVER MUST STRIDE OUT. AND WE AND ALL THOSE STRIDING WITH US SEE IN THE DISTANCE THE EARLY LIGHT OF THE AWAKENING MORNING! WHERE ARE ALL THE NOCTURNAL SPECTRES! GLASSY AND BRIGHT A NEW WORLD SHINES OUT IN THE EARLY LIGHT, IT IS SENDING OUT ITS FIRST RAYS. A FIRST GLEAM OF JUBILANT DAWN. DECADES, GENERATIONS - AND THE GREAT SUN OF ARCHITECTURE, OF ART IN GENERAL WILL BEGIN ITS VICARIOUS COURSE. / THE IDEA OF THE EARLY LIGHT IS NOT MIRRORED IN THIS SERIES FOR THE FIRST TIME. IT WAS AND IS GOOD TO MAINTAIN OUR VIEW OF THE HORIZON WITH UNDIMMED IMAGINATION. TESTS OF THE REALIZATION OF THE NEW IDEA ALREADY EXIST IN MATERIAL, AND THESE PAGES ARE INTENDED FIRST AND FOREMOST TO SERVE THIS REALIZATION, STARTING FROM THE ACTIVITIES OF A TOWN COUNCIL THAT DELIGHTS IN THE FUTURE. THEY ARE INTENDED TO HELP OUR COMRADES IN GERMANY STRIDE FORWARD MORE JOYFULLY WITH US, AND OUR PATHS WILL MEET THOSE WHO ARE OUR BROTHERS IN SPIRIT BEYOND OUR FRONTIERS. / WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN PARALLELS BETWEEN MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL FLOWERING. THE FULL STOMACH DOES NOT LIKE IDEAS, THE OVERFULL HATES THEM, IT WANTS PEACE. TODAY MORE THAN EVER WE BELIEVE IN OUR WILL, WHICH CREATES FOR US THE ONLY LIFE VALUE. AND THIS VALUE IS: EVERLASTING CHANGE.



## 1923 Oskar Schlemmer: Manifesto for the first Bauhaus exhibition

Although this manifesto in the publicity leaflet for the first Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar (July to September 1923) was written with the approval in principle of Oskar Schlemmer's board of governors, it went to press before the board had been able to look at the text. Because of the statement that the Bauhaus was a gathering point for those who wished to build the 'cathedral of Socialism' the manifesto section of the leaflet was pulped. The precaution was in vain. Several complete copies reached the public and brought the Bauhaus under suspicion of being an institution that dabbled in politics.

The Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar is the first and so far the only government school in the Reich – if not in the world – which calls upon the creative forces of the fine arts to become influential while they are vital. At the same time it endeavours, through the establishment of workshops founded upon the crafts, to unite and productively stimulate the arts with the aim of combining them in architecture. The concept of building will restore the unity that perished in debased academicism and in finicky handicraft. It must reinstate the broad relationship with the 'whole' and, in the deepest sense, make possible the total work of art. The ideal is old, but its rendering always new: the fulfilment is the style, and never was the 'will-to-style' more powerful than today. But confusion about concepts and attitudes caused the conflict and dispute over the nature of this style which will emerge as the 'new beauty' from the clash of ideas. Such a school, animating and inwardly animated, unintentionally becomes the gauge for the convulsions of the political and intellectual life of the time, and the history of the Bauhaus becomes the history of contemporary art.

The Staatliches Bauhaus, founded after the catastrophe of the war in the chaos of the revolution and in the era of the flowering of an emotion-laden, explosive art, becomes the rallying-point of all those who, with belief in the future and with sky-storming enthusiasm, wish to build the 'cathedral of Socialism'. The triumphs of industry and technology before the war and the orgies in the name of destruction during it called to life that impassioned romanticism which was a flaming protest against materialism and the mechanization of art and life. The misery of the time was also a spiritual anguish. A cult of the unconscious and of the unexplainable, a propensity for mysticism and sectarianism, originated in the quest for those highest things which are in danger of being deprived of their meaning in a world full of doubt and disruption. Breaking the limitations of classical aesthetics reinforced boundlessness of feeling, which found nourishment and verification in the discovery of the East and the art of the Negro, peasants, children, and the insane. The origin of artistic creation was as much sought after as its limits were courageously

refuge. As the highest achievement of individual exaggeration, free from bonds and unredeemed, they must all, apart from the unity of the picture itself, remain in debt to the proclaimed synthesis. The honest crafts wallowed in the exotic joy of materials, and architecture piled Utopian schemes on paper.

Reversal of values, changes in point of view, name and concept, result in the other view, the next faith. Dada, court jester in this kingdom, plays ball with paradoxes and makes the atmosphere free and easy. Americanisms transferred to Europe, the new wedged into the old world, death to the past, to moonlight, and to the soul, thus the present time strides along with the gestures of a conqueror. Reason and science, 'man's greatest powers', are the regents, and the engineer is the sedate executor of unlimited possibilities. Mathematics, structure, and mechanization are the elements, and power and money are the dictators of these modern phenomena of steel, concrete, glass, and electricity. Velocity of rigid matter, dematerialization of matter, organization of inorganic matter, all these produce the miracle of abstraction. Based on the laws of nature, these are the achievements of mind in the conquest of nature, based on the power of capital, the work of man against man. The speed and supertension of commercialism make expediency and utility the measure of all effectiveness, and calculation seizes the transcendent world: art becomes a logarithm. Art, long bereft of its name, lives a life after death, in the monument of the cube and in the coloured square. Religion is the precise process of thinking, and God is dead. Man, self-conscious and perfect being, surpassed in accuracy by every puppet, awaits results from the chemist's retort until the formula for 'spirit' is found as well....

Goethe: 'If the hopes materialize that men, with all their strength, with heart and mind, with understanding and love, will join together and become conscious of each other, then what no man can yet imagine will occur – Allah will no longer need to create, we will create his world.' This is the synthesis, the concentration, intensification, and compression of all that is positive to form the powerful mean. The idea of the mean, far from mediocrity and weakness, taken as scale and balance, becomes the idea of German art.

Germany, country of the middle, and Weimar, the heart of it, is not for the first time the adopted place of intellectual decision. What matters is the recognition of what is pertinent to us, so that we will not aimlessly wander astray. In balancing the polar contrasts – loving the remotest past as well as the remotest future; averting reaction as much as anarchism; advancing from the end-in-itself and from self-directedness to the typical, from the problematical to the valid and secure – we become the bearers of responsibility and the conscience of the world. An idealism of activity that embraces, penetrates, and unites art, science, and technology and that influences research, study, and work will construct the 'art-edifice' of Man, which is but an allegory of the cosmic system. Today we can do no more than ponder the total plan, lay the foundations, and prepare the building stones.

But

**We exist! We have the will! We are producing!**

## 1923 Werner Graeff: The new engineer is coming

The first number of the periodical *G – Material zur elementaren Gestaltung* (material for elemental creativity) – appeared in July 1923 in Berlin. The publisher was the film pioneer Hans Richter; his fellow editors were Werner Graeff (b. 1901 in Wuppertal, lives in Essen) and El Lissitzky (b. 1890 in Smolensk, d. 1941 in Moscow). The editorial programme followed in its essential points the principles of the Stijl group. A new concept was introduced: 'The basic requirement for the creation of elemental form is economy. A pure relationship between force and material. This calls for elemental means, complete mastery of the means. Elemental order, adherence to laws.' Werner Graeff's contribution is dated December 1922. Alongside it stand theses from the Redlist Manifesto, Moscow 1920.

Essential criterion for modern, creative people:

*The capacity to think and fashion elementally.*

The school for the new creation of form is: to elucidate the elements of every creative domain radically and unimpeachably. And: to live the modern world-view in its most extreme implications.

*Now the new generation of engineers is growing up!*

This means: first the perfection – then the end of mechanistic technology. The last mighty soaring of mechanistic technology, because the requisite laws are a component of the modern world-view that has been mastered and the means for the creation of elemental form are perfectly clear to the new engineer.

Necessary consequences of this clarity and mastery are: simplicity, balance, naturalness, the shrewdest economy.

The new engineer does not modify, he creates afresh; that is to say, he does not improve, but provides an *absolutely elemental* fulfilment of every demand.

In a few years, the new elementally trained generation of engineers will easily fulfil every demand that can rationally be made upon mechanistic technology.

**BUT THIS IS NOT THE END:**

Above and beyond this, an immense, far more magnificent field, whose first outlines are already emerging in science and art, will open up to the leaders among the new creators. In a decade hypotheses will develop into theories – and finally into mastered laws. Then the capacity to treat every fresh demand in an absolutely elemental manner will lead forward only when it has become part of man's flesh and blood.

The new, more splendid technology of tensions, of invisible movements, of remote control and speeds such as cannot even be imagined in 1922 will come into being, uninfluenced by the methods of mechanistic technology.

The new engineer is ready and waiting. *Long live elemental creativity!*

## 1957 Konrad Wachsmann: Seven theses

When Konrad Wachsmann (b. 1901 in Frankfurt/Oder, lives in Los Angeles) returned to Germany in 1954 for the first time since his emigration in 1933, he was both an astonished and an astonishing individualist. He was astonished to find that in the *Technischen Hochschulen* virtually no attention was paid to the standards required for the mass production of industrially manufactured building parts. Wachsmann was astonishing because in a short time he was able, with his methods and constructions, to arouse unrest among students preoccupied with technical conventions. Will the 'machine-builder' replace the architect? Wachsmann's theses amount to a starting-point for industrialized building.

Science and technology make possible the establishment of tasks whose solution demands precise study before end results can be formulated.

The machine is the tool of our age. It is the cause of those effects through which the social order manifests itself.

New materials, methods, processes, knowledge in the fields of statics and dynamics, planning techniques and sociological conditions must be accepted.

The building must evolve indirectly, obeying the conditions of industrialization, through the multiplication of cells and elements.

Modular systems of co-ordination, scientific experimental methods, the laws of automation, and precision influence creative thought.

Very complex static and mechanical problems demand the closest possible co-operation with industry and specialists in ideal teams composed of masters.

Human and aesthetic ideas will receive new impulses through the uncommon application of contemporary knowledge and ability.

## 1958 Hundertwasser: Mould Manifesto against rationalism in architecture

On 4 July 1958 the Viennese painter Hundertwasser (b. 1928 in Vienna) read his *Verschimmelungs-Manifest* (Mould Manifesto) in the abbey of Seckau. He had already protested a year earlier in an exhibition pamphlet against the '90-degree angles of Vienna'. 'In 1920 the pavement and the walls of the houses had to be constructed smooth, but in 1957 this is an insanity! I cannot understand! The air raids of 1943 were a perfect automatic lesson in form: straight lines and their vacuous structures ought to have been blown to pieces, and so they were. Following this a transautomatism ought normally to have occurred . . . But we are building cubes, cubes! Where is our conscience?'

Painting and sculpture are now free, for today anyone can produce any kind of work and afterwards exhibit it. In architecture, however, this fundamental freedom, which must be regarded as the precondition for any art, still does not exist, because in order to build one first has to have a diploma. Why?

Everyone should be able to build, and so long as this freedom to build does not exist, the planned architecture of today cannot be considered an art at all. Architecture with us is subject to the same censorship as painting in the Soviet Union. What are put into execution are merely wretched compromises standing in isolation and created by people with a bad conscience whose minds are dominated by the foot-rule!

No inhibitions should be placed upon the individual's desire to build! Everyone ought to be able and compelled to build, so that he bears real responsibility for the four walls within which he lives. We must face the risk that a crazy structure of this kind may later collapse, and we should not and must not shrink from the loss of life which this new way of building will, or at least may, exact. A stop must finally be put to the situation in which people move into their living quarters like hens and rabbits into their coops.

If one of these ramshackle structures built by its occupants is going to collapse, it generally starts cracking first so that they can run away. Thereafter the tenant will be more critical and creative in his attitude towards the dwellings he occupies and will strengthen the walls with his own hands if they seem to him too fragile.

— The material uninhabitability of the slums is preferable to the moral uninhabitability of functional, utilitarian architecture. In the so-called slums only man's body can perish, but in the architecture ostensibly planned for man his soul perishes. Hence the principle of the slums, i.e. wildly proliferating architecture, must be improved and taken as our point of departure, not functional architecture. —