

English summary

Beginning with this issue, «Arquitectura» changes to a bimonthly schedule of publication. Our readers will note the reduced size of the issue. This is due to the fact that we are no longer publishing double issues as in 1977, but will publish six single numbers this year. With this change there is also a slight restructuring of some of the sections we have included to date.

The central theme is maintained and delicately in this and the following issue to a group of architects from Seville.

The drawings of Margarita Suárez Carreño and the text by Juan Benet continue the series on urban landscape.

An alternative to current architectural education is proposed in this first in a series of three articles by Jorge Togneri. Robert Venturi presents 'plain' and 'fancy' architecture as seen in his addition to the Allen Memorial Art Museum of Oberlin, Ohio.

The first second and third place awards granted in the recent architectural competition of Córdoba are featured with a commentary by E. Pérez Pita and J. Junquera.

Architects from Seville

Page 3

Several articles ranging from an editorial comment to the results of a survey undertaken by the professional association of architects of Andalucía and Badajoz accompany the works shown as the focal point of this issue.

As stated in the editorial, we continue in our attempt to present a current view of architecture in Spain by featuring younger and lesser known architects. Part of this issue and the following one are dedicated to a group of architects who all are graduates of the School of Architecture of Seville (with the exception of Luis Marín de Terán) and who are currently practicing in the province of Seville.

Although we do not propose that these architects are representative of Andalucía nor do they represent any one particular mode of approach, overall, some common aspects do appear which seem stronger than the aspects that separate the architects. We can see, for example, an acceptance of the rationalist concept in the ordering of the floor plan, a clear intention to spatially manipulate the large volumes (voids, covered terraces and mezzanines are used in almost all the projects) and the rejection of elements that could be interpreted as folkloric.

Gabriel Ruiz Cabrero and Víctor Pérez Escolano give background information on the environment and personalities behind the works shown in this issue. «If the city of Seville and its monuments are well known, the opposite is true of its present day architecture.» Not only is the architecture which is constructed worth studying, but also the cultural situation which gives rise to this architecture and which is seen in the concern of these architects for the profound values of their city. A common attitude can be centered in the attempt to present architecture directly related to problems of 'context' and in one way confronts the architecture that may be called 'official'.

Crisis in Architectural Education

Page 50

Jorge Togneri refers to a crisis or contradiction that can currently be witnessed in architectural education. The purpose of this first article of a three part series is to define the crisis, the educational process and to present a synthetic definition of architecture. The methodology to be used and expounded in the following articles includes a discussion of the following: the design process, the relation of architecture with the overall productive system, a critical analysis of pedagogical and didactical principles, the consequences of the application of these principles, in light of these points, a discussion of the profound roots of the educational crisis and finally, the structure for an alternative to the present crisis.

The crisis, Togneri contends, embodies a lack of congruence between what is learned during the years of preparation for professional work and what the productive system requires in terms of knowledge and experience. This crisis, he admits may be found in the economic or cultural system, however, it is worthwhile to understand this context through a discussion of the specific problems of architectural education.

Competition in Córdoba

Page 57

More than 100 Spanish architectural teams entered this competition to design the Science Department for the University of Córdoba. The programs consisted of facilities for chemistry and biology courses including; common areas (library, cafeteria, etc.), classrooms and lecture rooms, and laboratories for a projected total of 1500 students. The three awards granted were to Francisco Sáez de Oiza, E. Pérez Pita and J. Junquera, and Antonio Ortiz García and Antonio Cruz Villalón.

The comments of the members of the jury supporting their choices for the awards include the following. The first place project showed a rational, functional and antimonumental concept, adaptable to the environment and future additions. The second place award was seen as a project showing great sensibility with well studied solutions, though slight weaknesses in the area of the laboratories. The third award represented a rational solution, however, not a daring one. The main floor was praised, but some problems were seen in terms of circulation patterns.

Plain and fancy architecture by Cass Gilbert at Oberlin and the addition to the museum by Venturi and Rauch

Page 66

Adding to a Cass Gilbert building is difficult in the words of Robert Venturi because «you are tampering with what has become at Oberlin an icon» and it can be compared to «drawing a mouse-tache on a Madonna». The aesthetic of Gilbert, one of allowing complex and contradictory unity including hierarchies among ordinary and ideal elements and plain and fancy styles can be seen in the Cox Administration Building, the School of Theology and others. Though difficult to following, the office of Venturi and Rauch has carefully analyzed the problem and created an addition which in some ways contrasts with and in other ways is analogous to the Art Museum.

The program for the addition included a new large gallery for modern art, an enlargement of the facilities of the Art Department, the rehousing of the Art Library, a renovation of the existing museum, etc. Due to site restrictions, the new addition took the form of a long building that closely paralleled the old complex. The gallery itself is a slightly distorted square which, to satisfy its goals of neutrality and flexibility, and character and natural light, employs both artificial light and natural light (which enters through visible windows) flexible display panels, cak floors, and a view to a decorative «Ionic» column in the outside garden. The other new facilities are in three-storey loft, rectangular in shape, with consistent bays and continuous strip windows which recalls a high school gym of the 1940s.

From the outside the addition is a box-like form with flat surfaces of varying materials. It recedes from the old buildings via jogs in its plan. Its flat surfaces are in harmony with the simple proportions and low relief of Gilbert's Quattrocento ornament. The pink granite and rose sandstone of the new facade are analogous in color but contrasting in overall pattern of the old building. Like the buildings by Cass Gilbert at Oberlin, the new addition by Venturi and Rauch is in some ways plain and in some ways fancy.