

English summary

ACTUR LACUA PLANNING COMPETITION

Page 13

In this article, the work of six architectural firms which participated in a planning competition for the city of Vitoria is featured. The competition, sponsored by the 'Caja Provincial de Ahorros de Alava' had as its purpose the first stage planning of three polygons of Actur Lacua. It was open only to registered architects of the province.

José A. Coderch

Page 17

In summary, J. A. Coderch states that the two concepts most importante in guiding his solution are 'the quality of life' and 'the quality of the environment'. The basic ideas for the plan of Coderch encompass the recuperation of the spirit of older cities in which human scale and light are important values. The streets should be as Bernard Rudofsky points out *streets for people* where children can safely venture into squares and streets. A third element incorporated is that of covered patios in the center of buildings in response to the harsh climate of Vitoria. They are a type of botanical parden to provide a pleasant open space protected from rain.

Corrales and Molezun

Page 25

Many times when a 'new town within town' is constructed it consists merely of apartment blocks of eight to ten storeys, the complementary facilities seem never to be completed and the parks exist only in the plans. Because of these opinions of José Antonio Corrales, his solution seeks a compromise between potential future private construction and planning and control of the necessary results.

The general scheme is in the form of a cross with a central square. The arms of the cross are dedicated to housing including two streets or one street and open space. The height of the housing (three storeys or five storeys in central areas) comes from the desire to maintain the same proportions as in the main street of Vitoria. The pedestrian ways are envisioned in the interior streets which converge on the central square and which can be used for a variety of activities form relaxation to performances, etc.

Fernández Longoria

Page 33

F. Fernández Longoria states that although his proposal may not encompass such great detail as other plans proposed,

he has attempted to determine general principles to regulate the urban form of the area. Against the homogeneous high density required, he has proposed the idea of dispersed concentrations by introducing points of intensive use. His plan embodies a decentralization of commercial and service activities at three peripheral points (south, north, and west) in addition to a central complex of commercial and recreational facilities. In response to the lack of a hierarchy of services and self sufficient neighborhoods, he envisions as a focus for complementary facilities large vestibules for information and interaction including public parking, offices, and housing. This he states as a potential for civic architecture which is more than the revival of the concept of the square.

Ferrán and Mangada

Page 45

To obtain a character more diversified and guarantee the viability of this 'new town' within Vitoria, the architects Ferrán and Mangada propose, instead of a strictly residential area, the inclusion of such compatible uses as workshops, offices, services, hotels, etc. The location of the site and its links with future means of transportation signifies a potential for the development of economic activities linked to areas outside Vitoria.

The plan of Ferrán and Mangada incorporates the Zadorra River as the focal element for a large area of park and recreational spaces and also forms a barrier between industry and residential sections. The center of the 'new town' is based on a central axis and forms a means of connection and integration with the old city. The diagonal axes create the integrative element between the various polygons.

Martín and Tabuenca

Page 55

As a basis for the proposal of Martín and Tabuenca, a sociological study was undertaken which predicted that the future development of the city of Vitoria would be in the service and electronic automation sectors. This economic improvement will alter attitudes and customs with regard to leisure, spending habits and will greatly increase the number of automobiles in the area. *The productive activities (home, education, work) will not be able to grant personal and creative satisfaction.* In response to this situation Tabuenca sets forth several premises for planning; human scale, complexity, and participation by the user in his environment.

The solution adopted uses the following ideas; the neighborhood as the dominant unit, a separation of pedestrian and

vehicular traffic, recreational facilities as an important part of the plan and elevated walkways as the connecting link for the neighborhood units.

Sola-Morales and Moneo

Page 63

The team of Manuel Sola and Rafael Moneo identified four issues that had to be taken into account in the development of their proposal for the planning of three polygons in Vitoria.

— Given that the road network was already constructed, it was accepted as a constraint. The architects chose to utilize the grid pattern and maximize the north-south axis and minimize those axes extending east to west.

— Due to the large scale given, the architects sought a methodological solution which did not program the entire polygon, but rather created a scheme for smaller entities which could be repeated and realized independently as needed.

— In meeting the demand for housing, Sola and Moneo opted for only four storey row houses in spite of the high densities required by the program. The houses are linked by an interior covered street and all units have a private garden or terrace.

— The common open spaces take the form of a 'central park' for each of the polygons. The architects have located civic functions in a decentralized manner within the residential sector.

THE LINEAL PARK

Page 98

This third article referring to leisure activities and open space by J. A. Espejel and Manuel Jaén focuses on current tendencies in the design of open spaces within the fabric of large cities. In the past 15 years a radical change has taken place in terms of planning for recreational needs. This is due to changes occurring in the factors which directly affect leisure: population, income, transportation, education, income, retirement age and amount of leisure time. The authors note that there has not only been a vast change in the amount of time dedicated to leisure activities, but a change in the nature of activities. Neighborhood sport facilities serve a definite function, but a connection between city and country is needed.

The authors argue that the lineal park (as seen in the example of Milton Keynes) which integrates natural areas into the city and which can be used as a transportation network (canals, bicycle paths, etc.) provide many benefits for the community including; the connection of the city with its regional open spaces, a perimeter of contact between different ecosystems, the increased possibility for unstructured leisure activities, and an improvement in the quality of the air in the city.

BANKINTER, AN AMERICAN BUILDING IN MADRID?

Page 104

Gabriel Ruiz Cabrero centers his article on the Bankinter building completed in 1977 and designed by Ramón Bescós and Rafael Moneo. As the title indicates, an analysis of the building leads to the discussion of the influence of various American architects and trends on Bankinter. *The quality and sophistication of the materials is so far above the Spanish norm that it gives the building, at first glance, an American image.* In addition to the quality of construction, the windows and panels executed in relief located at the top reminds one of the Chicago School.

Venturi can be seen in the main entrance with its functional but *ordinary* door as well as on a more profound level. *In modern architecture we have operated too long under the restrictions of inflexible rectangular shapes supposedly being determined by the technical requirements of the structure.*

However, to try to reduce the interpretation of Bankinter to a puzzle of American influences would be a mistake. Moneo and Bescós undertake an analysis of a difficult site (which is the product of a lack of planning) and simultaneously attempt to describe the situation of chaos and recover and restore this part of the city. The principal facade, facing the wide boulevard, the Castellana, is monumental and somewhat palatial, but the other facades seek to integrate themselves into the nearby neighborhood employing characteristic windows and a completely different scale.

In summary, Moneo and Bescós accept the language of the Modern Movement and use it in the work, however is on used a base formed by their own ideas and syntax.

THE DESIGN OF CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH

Page 114

Although Charles Rennie Mackintosh is generally known as Art Nouveau architect, the purpose of this article by Gabriel Ruiz Cabrero is to debate this issue. By presenting another facet of Mackintosh, that of designer along with other biographical information, a more complete view of the architect is seen.

His first professional success was the Glasgow School of Art, designed in 1896. The floor plan of the building is clear, demonstrating the architect's interest in the concept of space — an interest rare among the artists of Art Nouveau.

Though the members of the Arts and Crafts Movement saw the designs of 'the Four' (Mackintosh, the Macdonald sisters and McNair) as part of Art Nouveau, the designers themselves believed in the principle of *truth with respect to materials* which was proclaimed by the Arts and Crafts artists. An obvious similarity can also be seen in the early works of Mackintosh, particularly the craston Tearoom of Buchanan Street, and the style of the Viennese Sezession.

In the interior of the library of the Glasgow School of Art and the Cranston Tearoom of Sauchiehall Street which Mackintosh designed completely showing his great sensitivity for materials and details marks a change with the earlier works. These works demonstrate a predilection for vertical elements, variations in the heights of furnishings and the ingenious use of space.