Le Corbusier

Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, known as Le Corbusier (1887-1965), was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds in Switzerland, a town renowned for the manufacture of watches.

After graduating from the municipal school in decorative art, Le Corbusier experienced the new movement of architecture, arts and crafts in Vienna, Berlin and Paris.

As an architect, he briefly worked for Auguste Perret and Peter Behrens, but he was mostly self-taught. His design work was the result of very thorough research for each prototype. Then, it involved his reputation is considered and refined the design until he was satisfied. It was the best building for the site and environment. Le Corbusier, worked closely with Perret, pursued clear, functional and clear design principles, and had an incomparable influence on 20th Century architecture and urban planning.

The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo

The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo was established to house and display the Matsukata Collection, donated to Japan by the French government after World War II. The founder of the Matsukata Collection was Kôjirô Matsukata, the president of the Kawasaki Dockyard Co., Ltd. who had traveled extensively in Europe and built a vast Collection of artworks.

After France stipulated that a French architect should design the museum to house the collection, the works were returned to Japan, and the Japanese government commissioned Le Corbusier to design the building for the new museum in 1955. Le Corbusier asked his three former Japanese apprentices, Junzo Sakakura, Kunio Maekawa and Takamasa Yoshizaka to help him supervise construction.

Many Japanese architects have been influenced by Le Corbusier's work and his architectural philosophy has made an outstanding contribution to the new architectural movement in Japan.

The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier,

an Outstanding Contribution to the Western Movement

was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2016

The National Museum of Western Art is the repository of something as just important as paintings and sculpture; architecture; and the building itself is just as precious as the artworks it houses. Le Corbusier, one of the most influential architects in the 20th Century, designed the museum, which was completed in 1959. The building, designed as a World Heritage Site, is acknowledged for its important contribution to the new architectural movement in Japan and represents “the five points for a new architecture” and is a wonderful embodiment of a “museum of unlimited growth”.

The Second Floor Exhibition Room

This exhibition room is arranged around the mezzanine and second floor forecourt and the exterior wall panels are also allocated to the second floor gallery. A small corridor-like glass walled gallery allows visitors leisurely strolling up the ramp, are treated to a wonderful museum of unlimited growth. In the exhibition space, artworks are arranged on the mezzanine floor, and the high and low spatial composition of the building by providing a view down onto the hall below and into the exhibition room behind the opposite balcony.

Visitors can enjoy a marvelous sight of the “five points for a new architecture” of Le Corbusier: pilotis, free plan, free flowing roofs, light and air, modular system.

This was one of the essential elements of “the five points for a new architecture” and the idea of a "museum of unlimited growth", which was completed in 1959. The building, designed as a World Heritage Site, is acknowledged for its important contribution to the new architectural movement in Japan and represents "the five points for a new architecture" and is a wonderful embodiment of a "museum of unlimited growth".

The Nineteenth Century Hall

The Nineteenth Century Hall, and the high and low spatial composition of the building provide a sense of the slow, changing scenery, and enjoy paintings appearing on a clear day, sunlight fills the hall with natural light and on the mezzanine floor (226cm) as well as the compressed spaces.

The concrete mullion-like narrow vertical louvers or “pilotis” on the exterior walls and the wall panels are also allocated to the second floor gallery. A small corridor-like glass walled gallery allows visitors to appreciate the complex spatial composition.

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**World Heritage Across Seven Countries**

*“The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement”, including the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, was added to the World Heritage List at the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee on July 17, 2016. This is the first time the group of 17 sites across seven countries and three continents was listed together. These sites encompass the history of the modern architectural movement, which criticized the style of architecture prior to the 19th Century and attempted to change architecture in accordance with the needs of a new society. The sites are also proof of the movement’s influence around the world. The movement was recognized as an innovative solution to 20th Century social and human needs.*

**La Maison Guiette**
France [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

**La Manufacture Saint-Dié**
France [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

**Le Corbusier’s出厂 at Ronchamp**
France [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

**The Five Points for a New Architecture 1926–**

Le Corbusier presented “the five points for a new architecture” considering such technical aspects as construction materials and methods, while incorporating concepts to create a structure to benefit the lifestyle and wellbeing of its inhabitants.

1. **Pilots**
   - A space supported by columns. It is a comfortable light and open space allowing freedom of movement of people and air.

2. **Rooftop Garden**
   - Generous rooftop spaces filled with plants enhance the reinforced concrete flat roof—such gardens in the sky are impossible to create on older buildings with their functional sloped roofs designed to repel snow and rain.

3. **Free Floor Plan (Flat Surface)**
   - Replaceable and movable partitions (interior walls) laid out on floors supported by columns allow the free design of interior space.

4. **Horizontal Oblong Windows**
   - Rooms are filled with light from windows extending the full width of the wall.

5. **Free façade**
   - Supporting the building on columns gives virtually unrestricted freedom to use panels and glass for exterior walls.

**The Five Points for a New Architecture**

- **1923** Le Corbusier showed the new architectural house to meet the needs of the new quarters with minimal elements. This is an example of standardized housing.
- **1927** This became a prototype of a house with special beams, which showcased the new possibilities of space within a building and made it possible to change the floor plan and room structure.
- **1930** Le Corbusier demonstrated the principles of prefabricated and standardized plan and structure. This was the first building that used steel frames for windows and panels instead of concrete.
- **1945** This is a prototype of a new house that was to establish a balance between architecture and interior and exterior space. The building also demonstrated the principle of replaceable and movable exterior walls and partitions (interior walls) and the creation of the now familiar open floor plan.
- **1949** “The five points for a new architecture” were applied again several decades after the principles were first proposed. The house had a fundamental influence on South American architecture.

**Le Corbusier’s Factory at Ronchamp**

- The factory was designed to meet social and human needs of modern people. The building also demonstrated the principles of replaceable and movable exterior walls and partitions (interior walls) and the creation of the now familiar open floor plan.

**The Complex of the Capital, Chandigarh**
India [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

- The work was based on Le Corbusier’s ideas of ‘Urban Life’ (“Pentur City” or “New Delhi Scheme”). This compound had an outstanding influence on the architecture of the subsequent urbanization.

**The Centre de recreation du corps et de l’esprit at Peminy-Vert**
France [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

- This peaceful and healthy environment was designed and established as a part of an urban planning scheme designed to improve urban life.

**Landmark**

- **1953** This is the most significant standardized “Minimal House” based on the Modulor system.

**Modulor**

- La Corbusier created his architectural measurement and proportion system by linking architecture and the human body. He drew up two proportional sets, red and blue, based on the following criteria: the ratio of the height of a human (183cm) to the height of their navel (113cm), which gives a Golden Ratio of 1.6181; and the overall height of a human with raised arms (226cm). Harmony and rhythm are created in architecture when Modular measurements are added together or a single measurement is repeated in a sequence.

Le Corbusier repeatedly worked on his plans for the “museum of unlimited growth” concept over a 36-year period from 1909 until his death. “Mundaneum, the World Museum” (1926) was his first museum project. A pyramid-shaped building allowed visitors to descend spirally from the center of the top floor exhibition room. The Contemporary Art Museum, Paris (1931) was the first museum of a square spiral form with an exhibition room above pilotes. In order to solve the problem of an ever-expanding collection, a central room was first created, around which exhibition rooms extending helically and outwardly were to be added as the number of exhibits increased.

Le Corbusier continued his research in to building a museum which could be constructed relatively easily, could accommodate a variety of exhibitions and which looked harmonious. He presented the prototype of a “museum of unlimited growth” in the museum in Philippine planning (1939).

**The Museum of Unlimited Growth (Museum Projects) 1929–**

- The design of the National Museum of Western Art was based on the principle of a “Museum of Unlimited Growth!”. The characteristics are still valid today.

1. **Enter the central hall through pilotes and go around the square spiral exhibition room.**
2. **There is a vast skylight shaped mezzanine space.**
3. **The dimensions and locations of the partitions (walls) in the exhibition room are flexible and allow a variety of different spatial arrangements.**

**The Pettie villa au bord du lac Léman**
Switzerland [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

**The Imamou Clarté**
Switzerland [Image 48x900 to 166x971]

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