



IMAGING
THE
SPACE

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DI

THESIS

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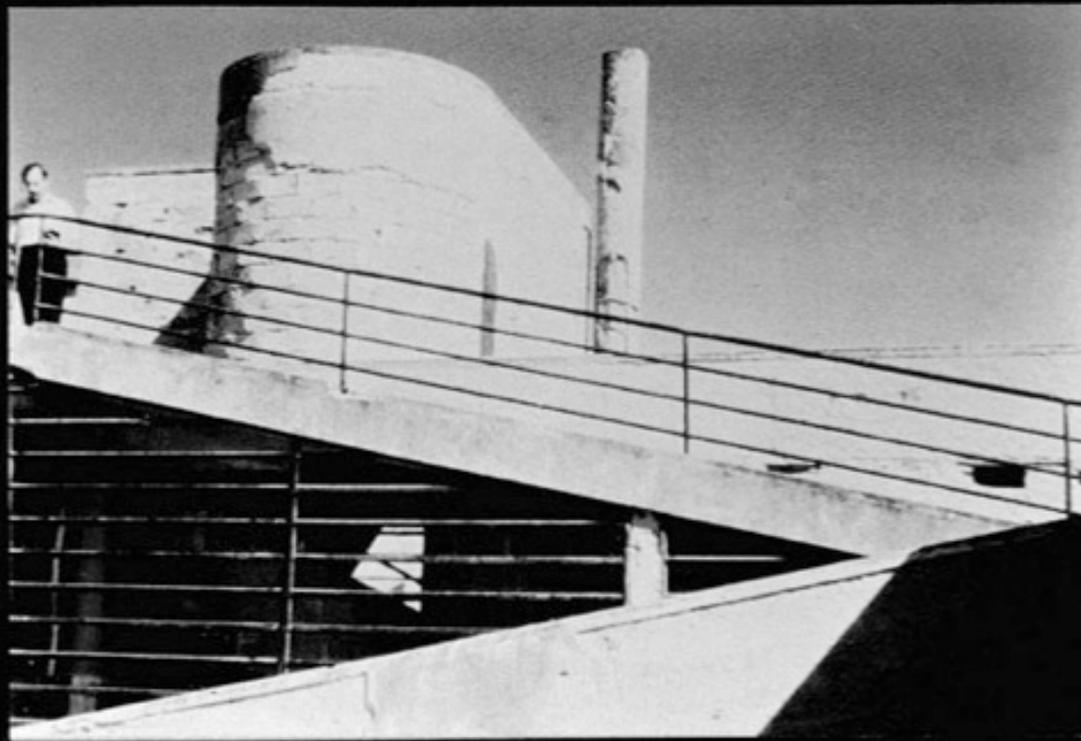
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INTRO-
DUCTION

WAYS OF SEEING

The most architectural thing
about this building is
the state of decay in which it is.



VILLA SAVOYE, 1931

Architecture only survives
where it negates the form that
society expects of it.
Where it negates itself by
transgressing the limits that
history has set for it.

Last year on my birthday, I received a gift that changed my idea of writing the master's thesis. It was John Berger's book "Understanding a Photograph". I was familiar with Berger's work from his BBC series, "Ways of Seeing", where he flirts with the boundaries of what an art piece or what a commodity and object are. His writings on images and photography are not actually only about seeing but also about how the world and is being seen and perceived by us in different manners. While reading the "Understanding a Photograph" about various ways that a photograph can be interpreted, I thought that architectural spaces can be highly influenced by photography and the way they are photographed. Or better to say that the representation of architectural spaces can be deceiving for the viewers and can actually work as "Propaganda" for the innocent architects behind their desks! What are we are faced with when we are presented by representations of architectural spaces? How can we be sure next time when we are looking at some colorful Instagram posts from famous architectural firms that we are not being directed to see some qualities that actually don't exist?

This phenomenon doesn't begin with Instagram as some might imagine but goes back to the history of architecture. As long as there have been architects and architectural drawings, people were being faced by the representation of spaces, but not the real space until the buildings were built and commissioned were paid. The qualities of spaces cannot be judged only from the drawings. Two great opposing examples of this can be seen in the different architectural style of Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier's.

Loos belonged to the generation of architects before the second world war and Le Corbusier, although started his career earlier, to the after-war generation who were influenced by Loos. After visiting Villa Muller, by Loos, in Prague, I realized why he was always against images of architecture and proudly said his spaces are ineffective in two dimensions. Adversely, after visiting Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, I was almost shocked because of what I had seen before from the images of Villa Savoye and what I experienced by actually being in the space.

Loos in his essay "The Principle of Cladding" (1898) writes: "There are architects who work in a different way. Their imagination doesn't form spaces, but mass. Whatever the mass of wall leaves over, are the spaces". This fragment makes a fundamental difference which is the main subject of this comparison between Loos and Le Corbusier. This difference is closely concerned with the way in which space is experienced. On the one hand, spaces in which the entire body can dwell - all the senses being involved; on the other hand, spaces where there is perhaps only room for the roaming eye. **Spaces for use as opposed to spaces for looking at**¹. But this doesn't mean that Loos himself didn't use images of spaces for his own purposes.

Firstly, I'd talk about appropriation of reality through images and films, then in the second and third chapters, I will look at how Le Corbusier and Loos used images in the presentations of their work. In the end, I want to see whether architecture today is really suffering from some sort of widespread diseases or not. A visual disease.

APPRO-
PRIATION
OF THE
REALITY



figure 1



figure 2

The limitations of images for making the reality as it actually is quite obvious, but here I wanted to have an example in which these constraints are more visible, "The Cameraman" (1928), a silent movie by Buster Keaton (the movie was directed by Edward Sedgwick and Keaton himself which is uncredited). Buster in this movie is a clumsy cameraman who is working for an MGM news agency and now is in love with a girl who works there as a secretary. He's trying to get closer to her by finding a job there. But all his attempts to take valuable footage in order to prove himself to the producers of MGM have been disastrous and unsuccessful. Finally, with the help of the girl who tells him about a fight before anybody else knows, he finds a chance to go there as the first correspondent and take a really precious footage of that fight.

In this scene from the film, he is being sent to Chinatown to film the brawl between two Chinese gangs. And we know that it is really crucial for him to

capture something first hand and special for the first time in his career. In this footage (figure 1) he is trying to encourage the man in white to fight with the guy in black. It seems that nothing matters to him except what he is going to shoot, there is no question of morality or humanity; a film should be made whether some people hurt or even destroy each other. And as soon as they start fighting, Keaton without showing any emotion in his expressions begins to film them as nothing happened a few seconds ago. (figure 2). Not expressing any emotion, of course, is one of Buster Keaton's great abilities, but here is more sarcastic which can be read as the gap between reality as it is and as it is pictured. (figure 3) which can be read as the gap between reality as it is and as it is pictured (figure 5).

Susan Sontag in her book "On Photography" writes: "Cameras implement an aesthetic view of reality by being a machine-toy that extends to everyone the possibility of making disinterested judgments about



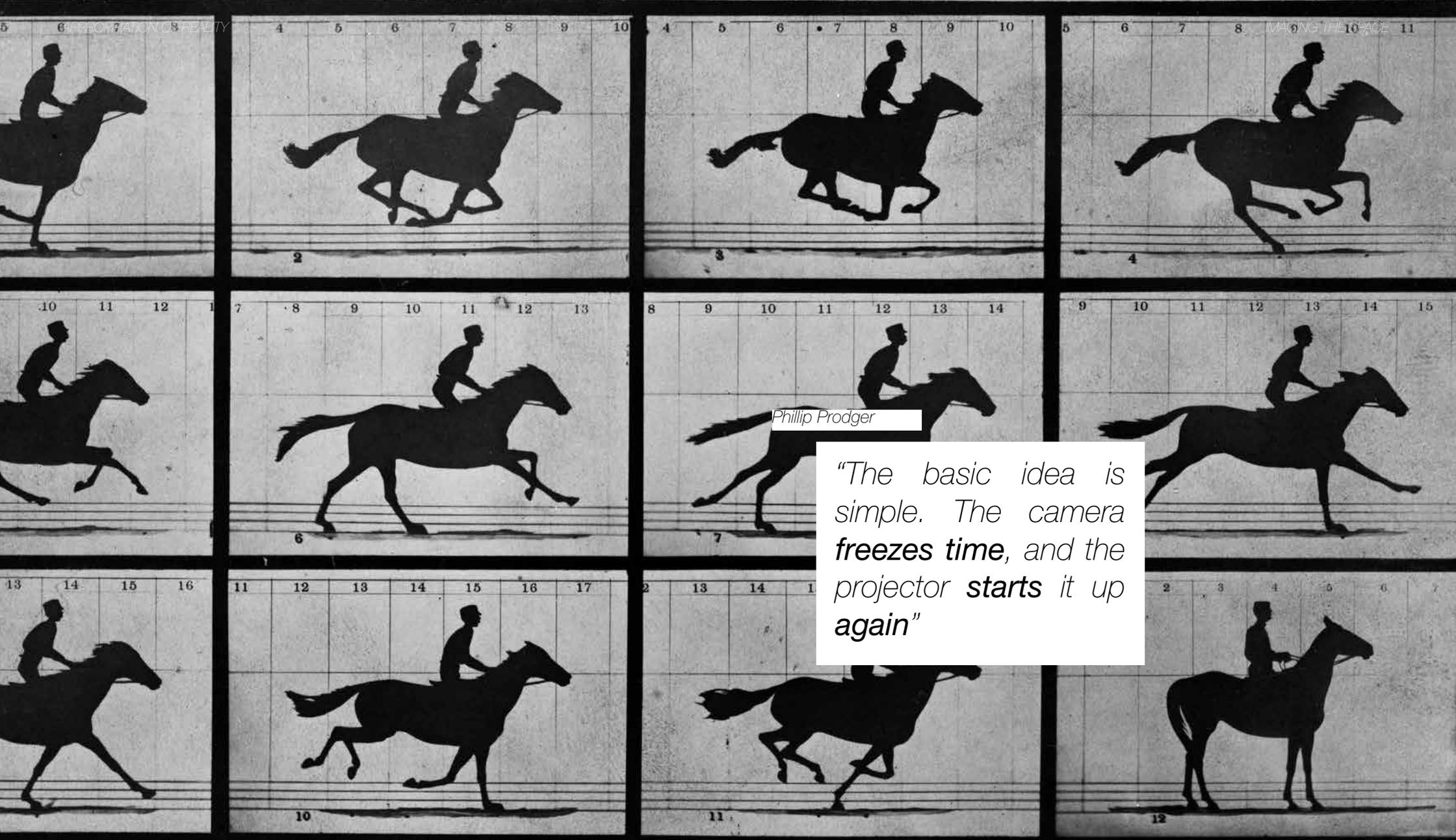
figure 3

importance, interest, beauty. ("That would make a good picture.") Cameras implement an industrial view of reality by gathering information that enables us to make a more accurate and much quicker response to whatever is going on. The response may, of course, be either repressive or benevolent: military reconnaissance photographs help snuff out lives, X-rays help save them."¹ And here interestingly, Keaton tries to have a picture of a probable murder, although we know that this is a comedy and nothing serious is going to happen in the end.

After a few seconds of shooting, he realizes that this fight is going nowhere because it is getting settled. Therefore it is not worth being shot anymore when there is nothing interesting happening in front of the camera. That is when he decides to participate again in the action, but this time he has to make a major impact in order to get a better result or a "better fight". He finds a knife on the ground and gives it to one of the fighters (figure 4). Keaton as a cinematographer

has involved himself in the action which is going on in front of the camera, that is why this scene is really important. The cinematographer is actively trying to change what is happening in front of his camera, an active effort to change the reality. He is filming for the news agency and for the sake of a report to people who weren't there themselves, but in this case, the reality is being appropriated. He is filming his own version of the reality that he himself appropriated.

Here is important to note the intrinsic differences between photography and cinematography. The most noticeable difference is that every second of a film consists of at least 16 frames per second (up to 48 fps), which they are all non-identical images being reeled after one another creating the magical effect of the moving pictures. But that is basically what makes these two mediums so look alike. Phillip Prodger² in his article, Photography and Cinema: A Tale of Two Closer-Than-You-Think Siblings, writes: "The basic idea is simple. The camera freezes time, and the projector starts it



Phillip Prodger

"The basic idea is simple. The camera freezes time, and the projector starts it up again"

MUYBRIDGE.

MORSE'S Gallery, 417 Montgomery St., San Francisco.

THE HORSE IN MOTION.

Illustrated by
MUYBRIDGE.

AUTOMATIC ELECTRO-PHOTOGRAPH.

...IE GARDNER," owned by LELAND STANFORD; running ⁸ a 1.40 gait over the Palo Alto track, 19th June, 1878.

The negatives of these photographs were made at intervals of twenty-seven inches of distance, and about the twenty-fifth part of a second of time; they illustrate consecutive positions assumed in each twenty-seven inches of progress during a single stride of the mare. The vertical lines were twenty-seven inches apart; the horizontal



figure 5

up again." He also mentions the creation of moving pictures by Eadweard Muybridge, the great motion picture pioneer: "He began by making sequences of instantaneous photographs of a horse's gallop in the 1870s—at that time a subject of widespread scientific interest—creating photographic grids recording phases of the animal's gait. . . His next conceptual advance was to develop a device to reanimate his pictures in short loops, called the Zoöpraxiscopes, now considered an important forerunner of cinema."³

Muybridge work might have influenced Marcel Duchamp for his so called revolutionary painting, "Nude Descending a Staircase" in 1912. "He shocked the art world with his painting not by nudity—the painting was too abstract to show any, but because he depicted the descent in a series of steps taking place all at the same time. In a way, he had invented the freeze frame."⁴ Not to forget that these traditions of storytelling in different frames and sometimes in one

frame, first appeared in the religious paintings depicting the life story of Jesus, where he is crucified and in the same painting/frame he is descending to the sky. Duchamp was just following the western traditions of painting, in a more abstract and somewhat radical way.

Adversely, in a film, we are faced by a continuity, a momentum that goes on, contrary to a photograph that makes the time stands still at the very moment when the photograph is taken. John Berger in his book, *Understanding a Photograph*, writes: "Photographs are retrospective and are received as such: films are anticipatory. Before a photograph, you search for what was there. In the cinema, you wait for what is to come next. All film narratives are, in this sense, adventures: they advance, they arrive. The term flashback is an admission of the inexorable impatience of the film to move forward."⁵ Although photographs seem to be the opposite of films in that sense, on this topic, which is going over the creation of reality through the lens of a camera, by referring to photographs I am



figure 6

aiming to talk about what is being seen as images through the eyes (and the reality which is being created) and not talking over the differences of these two mediums.

Back to the subject of images, John Berger implies that: "An image is a sight which has been recreated or reproduced, it is an appearance, or a set of appearances, which has been detached from the place and time in which it first made its appearance and preserved - for a few moments or a few centuries. Every image embodies a way of seeing."⁶ When we see, we are dealing with these sights and appearances that we do not possess. And if we are not able to touch them they remain like images to us. It is like looking at a landscape far away from one is standing. What makes them separated is ways of seeing. The ways of seeing the photographer who chooses the frame and the angle, the speed of the shutter, the depth of the field and decides what to include and what to exclude. Susan Sontag has mentioned the discontinuity of images: "Photography

reinforces a nominalist view of social reality as consisting of small units of an apparently infinite number - as the number of photographs that could be taken of anything is unlimited. Through photographs, the world becomes a series of unrelated, freestanding particles; and history, past, and present, a set of anecdotes and fait divers (short news stories). The camera makes reality atomic, manageable, and opaque. It is a view of the world which denies interconnectedness, continuity, but which confers on each moment the character of mystery. Any photograph has multiple meanings; indeed, to see something in the form of a photograph is to encounter a potential object of fascination. The ultimate wisdom of the photographic image is to say: "There is the surface. Now think - or rather feel, intuit - what is beyond it, what the reality must be like if it looks this way." Photographs, which cannot themselves explain anything, are inexhaustible invitations to deduction, speculation, and fantasy."⁷ That is what happens by Keaton's camera work when his audience



figure 7



figure 8

wouldn't see the reality as it was, but a highly appropriated selection of moments through his camera lens (figure 6) which can be understood in other ways. The fighters probably wouldn't get involved in that fight in that level of violence if it wasn't for him. That scene is just an exaggerated moment of when a person behind the camera decides to deceive the audience, in order to hide and reveal but for his/her own will. Albert Camus doesn't believe that any sort of photographs can be the same as the reality they are presenting: "Even the very best photographs betray reality - they result from an act of selection and impose a limit on something that has none."⁸ This can be linked to Roland Barthes⁹ fundamental problems of facing an image: "According to an ancient etymology, the word image should be linked to the root *imitari*. Thus we find ourselves immediately at the heart of the most important problem facing the semiology of images: can analogical representation (the "copy") produce true systems of signs and not merely simple agglutinations of symbols?" Both talk about the lack of genuity in images trying to make the real, real.

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As discussed above, the reality through the camera lens would be different than what it is. Walter Benjamin in his influential 1936 essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* argued that "even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: Its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be." He referred to this unique cultural context as its presence in time and space' as its 'aura'.¹¹ He explains in another article, *A short history of photography*: "What is aura?": a peculiar web of space and time: the unique manifestation of a distance, however near it may be. To follow, while reclining on a summer's noon, the outline of a mountain range on the horizon or a branch, which casts its shadow on the observer until the moment or the hour partakes of their presence - this is to breathe in the aura of these mountains, of this branch. . . . The situation is complicated by the fact that less than at any time does a simple reproduction of reality tells us anything about reality."¹² "Aura" quite obviously is not the object itself, but an individualized atmosphere that envelopes the authentic object, a subtle but distinct sensation received in



Ronald Barthes

*"According to an ancient etymology, the word image should be linked to the root **imitari.**"*

the presence of the original. An image, even if photographic, might provoke such a sensation; but this would be the aura of the image, not that of the object represented.¹³

Walter Benjamin claims that the very invention of photography transformed not only the architecture but the “entire nature of art.” In “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” he notes that the lens sees that which the unaided eye cannot and makes obvious certain aspects of the original that would otherwise be unknowable; in addition, photography puts “a copy of the original into situations which would be out of reach for the original itself” and thereby undermines the original’s “presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.” Both processes, Benjamin claims, interfere with the authenticity of the object and severely depreciate its “authority.” This authority he calls the “aura” of the object, and in a now-famous, a line he insists “that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art.”¹⁴

Nowadays, more than ever, people are encountering with images in different ways, from TV to social media such as Instagram or Facebook, from books to newspapers and magazines. Life is being experienced as other people experience it, or better how they see it. The revolutionary Soviet filmmaker, Dziga Vertov¹⁵, about this reality being created by a camera writes: “I’m an eye. A mechanical eye. I, the machine, show you a world the way only I can see it. I free myself for today and forever from human immobility. I’m in constant movement. I approach and pull away

from objects, I creep under them. I move alongside a running horse’s mouth, I fall and rise with the falling and rising bodies. This is I, the machine, maneuvering in the chaotic movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations. Freed from the boundaries of time and space, I coordinate any and all points of the universe, wherever I want them to be. My way leads towards the creation of a fresh perception of the world. Thus I explain in a new way the world unknown to you.”¹⁶ In his revolutionary movie, “Man With a Movie Camera” (1929) he changed how the movies and moving pictures can be seen. “By filming in three cities and not naming any of them, Vertov had a wider focus: His film was about The City, and The Cinema, and The Man With a Movie Camera. It was about the act of seeing, being seen, preparing to see, processing what had been seen, and finally seeing it. It made explicit and poetic the astonishing gift the cinema made possible, of arranging what we see, ordering it, imposing a rhythm and language on it, and transcending it”.¹⁷ The camera can show us whatever it wants to show. The person behind the camera can show what s/he wants to picture, and that is the representation of reality which we are faced. Garry Winogrand¹⁸, the famous American photographer has a quote saying: “A photograph is an illusion of a literal description of how the camera saw a piece of time and space”¹⁹

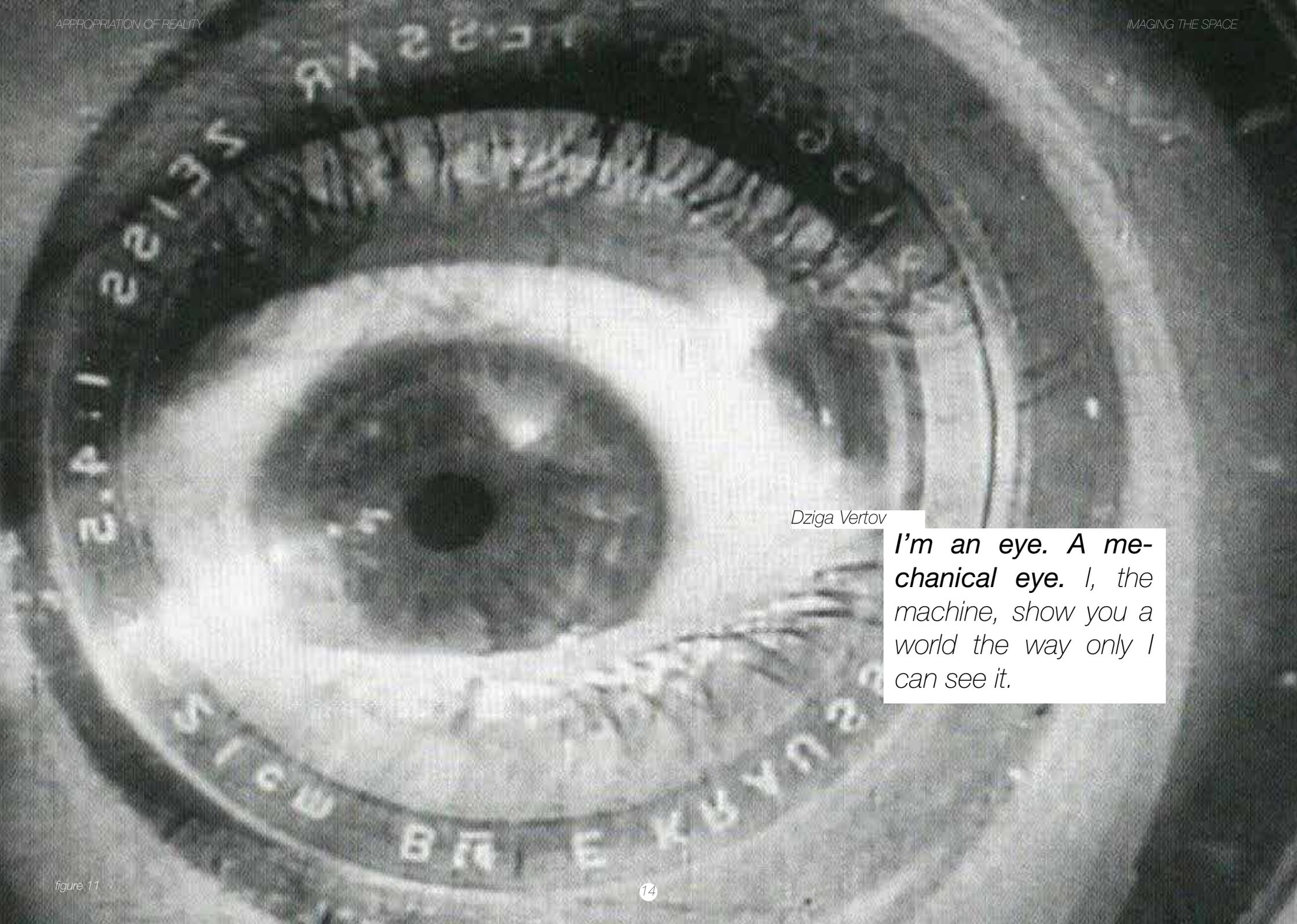
The perception of the world/reality is being altered for people who are living in societies highly engaged in the use of the Internet and social media. The effect of images is so important that most people, visiting a new place, spend the whole time taking photos and videos, not



figure 10

really noticing what is happening around them. All the senses are being neglected to give way to what can be seen and captured. Space loses its three-dimensional aspects and is limited to what can be seen on a flat screen which in the end makes the reality being appropriated and castrated. It is interesting to note that at the early ages of the invention of photography, this was welcomed by the elites and was regarded as a reliable way of seeing. “Zola, declared in 1901 after fifteen years of amateur picture-taking, “you cannot claim to have really seen something until you have photographed it.” Instead of just recording reality, photographs have become the norm for the way things appear to us, thereby changing the very idea of reality, and of realism.”²⁰

But it should be noted that photography was succeeding oil paintings and in that sense has already made huge differences. From accurate real-life paintings, now people could see photographs which exactly were copying the image of the real for them. Although that sounds too mechanical and soulless, John Berger in his book, *Ways of Seeing*, makes it clear that the importance of the decisions made by the photographers are not the last stage of perception process of an image, it is also the decisions that have been made by the viewers: “For photographs are not a mechanical record. Every time we look at a photograph, we are aware of the photographer selecting that sight from an infinity of other possible sights. . . The photographer’s way of seeing is reflected in his choice of subject. The painter’s



Dziga Vertov

I'm an eye. A mechanical eye. I, the machine, show you a world the way only I can see it.

way of seeing is reconstituted by the marks he makes on the canvas or paper. Yet, although every image embodies a way of seeing, our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own way of seeing."²¹ Which can leave us some hope that not every image or spectacle can make all of us confused about what is being seen.

Sontag, took it even further when she implied that we experience the life as if we are ourselves in a movie: "It is common now for people to insist about their experience of a violent event in which they were caught up—a plane crash, a shoot-out, a terrorist bombing—that "it seemed like a movie." This is said, other descriptions seeming insufficient, in order to explain how real it was."²² That reality can be defined as in the images and representations of similar situations. This is not really far from the imagination considering how we are being who raised and fed from early stages of life by images, movies and TV.

In conclusion, it can be said that the images have the magical power and influence on our perception of the real world to the degree that can replace all other senses of a human being for grasping the qualities of the space. The spectacle can limit the understanding of any space for us to two-dimensional space of a screen, either a movie theater or an Ipad or even an outdated page of a newspaper. The Cameraman serves as an exaggerated example of how that reality can be manipulated by someone behind the camera and how the world can be defined through the mechanical eye of a camera. In the following chapters, these phenomena will be more talked about in the architectural world.

*“Le Corbusier thought of architecture in **idealistic** and **metaphoric** terms: **architecture** not as a building, but as **representation**. For him, a building was always like something else.”*



SUBJECTIVE
MATTER

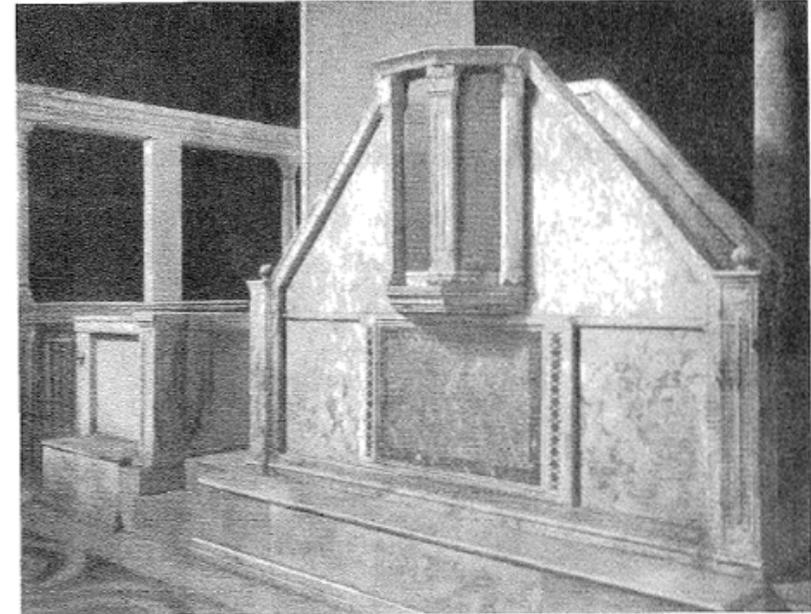


figure 2

In this chapter, as an attempt to see how the appropriation of reality was shaped Le Corbusier's ideas about architecture some aspects of his architecture in relation to photography, images, and the act of seeing are studied. Daniel Naegele¹, in his essay, *Savoye Space*, describes how Le Corbusier early education in the neo-medieval beliefs and in the organic similes of art nouveau was influential on how he imagined architecture as a form without having a body. "He thought of architecture in idealistic and metaphoric terms: architecture not as a building, but

as representation. For Le Corbusier, a building was always like something else." Architecture as 'representation' shows how he's already thinking of architecture as a subjective and not obsolete form of objectivity.

Stanislaus von Moos³ claims that for Le Corbusier the relationship of the architectural work to a specific site and its material realization are secondary questions: "that for him architecture is a conceptual matter to be resolved in the purity of the realm of ideas, when architecture is built it gets mixed with the world of phenomena and necessarily loses its purity. And yet it is significant



INTERIOR OF S. MARIA IN COSMEDIN

figure 3

that when this same built architecture piece enters the two-dimensional space of the printed page it returns to the realm of ideas. The function of photography is not to reflect architecture as it happens to be built. Construction is a significant moment in the process, but by no means its end product. Photography and layout construct another architecture in the space of the page."⁴ Le Corbusier's buildings get alive once again when they are being photographed when they are being represented. Photography for him has such great importance although once in praise of drawing and seeing he said: "A camera is a tool for idlers, who use a machine to do their seeing

for them".⁵

Le Corbusier manifests an architecture of photography as early as 1923 in his *Vers une architecture*, a book that he claims avoids "flowery language, ineffectual descriptions," relying instead on "facts exploding under the eyes of the reader by force of images."⁶ Le Corbusier was cofounder, with Amédée Ozenfant, of Purism. Purism, like much avant-garde art movements at the time, was a self-referential art that constantly called attention to the act of seeing. In the Purist painting, the physiological effects of color and line combined with a highly ambiguous field to transmit a

*“Purism, like much avant-garde painting at the time, was a self-referential art that constantly called attention to **the act of seeing.**”*



figure 4

“resonance” that had a very calculated emotional impact. Such perception was received somatically, the resonant space of the painting expanding into real space to “touch” the viewer. In this sense “resonance,” what Le Corbusier described as a “sounding board that vibrates within us,” was a palpable, quasi-scientific parallel to the aura.⁷ So a painting or an image which belongs to the two dimensions world can, in Purists ideas, transfer a sensation, a feeling, and resonance. Le Corbusier from this point tries to create that aura, or resonance in his works, through views and images that he creates in his buildings, literally or physically. In Villa Savoye⁸, the visitor is constantly on the move, and that starts from the moment one gets to the entrance of the villa. The ramp invites one to move and in each turn, the gaze is busy with finding some new views to the surroundings. (figure 1)

It is important to notice that his early buildings were built in the early 20th century and modernity was at early stages. Comparing contemporary modern city dwellers to people who lived in pre-industrialization era, Beatriz Colomina⁹ describes how one can experience the modern architecture differently: “The point of view of modern architecture is never fixed, as in baroque architecture, or as in the model of vision of the camera obscura-which is fixed at one point- but always in motion, as in film or in the city. Crowds, shoppers in a department store, railroad travelers, and the inhabitants of Le Corbusier’s houses have in common with movie viewers that they cannot fix (arrest) the image. The

windows of Villa Savoye is panoramic, you cannot open them and look out for a full view.”¹⁰ They have eliminated the classical painting composition of the foreground, middle ground, and background because of their linear and ribbon forms. So in that sense, it is true that he is giving us more images and views but they really lack that quality of the full view images.

The views in Villa Savoye cannot be fully understood spatially because of the narrowness of the windows, they are more like frames rather than windows. Benjamin description of a movie viewer is what actually happens in Le Corbusier’s interiors “no sooner has his eye grasped a scene than it is already changed, they inhabit a space that is neither inside nor outside, public nor private.” It is a space that is not made of walls but of images. Images as walls. Or as Le Corbusier puts it, “walls of light”. That is, the walls that define the space are no longer solid walls punctuated by small windows but have been dematerialized, thinned down with new building technologies and replaced by extended windows, lines of glass whose views now define the space. The walls that are not transparent now float in the space of the house rather than produce it.

Similarly in other projects various usage of “window as an image” has been used by him: “Le Corbusier said about the entrance hall of the La Roche house, that the most important element of the hall is the big window and that for that reason he had prolonged the upper edge of



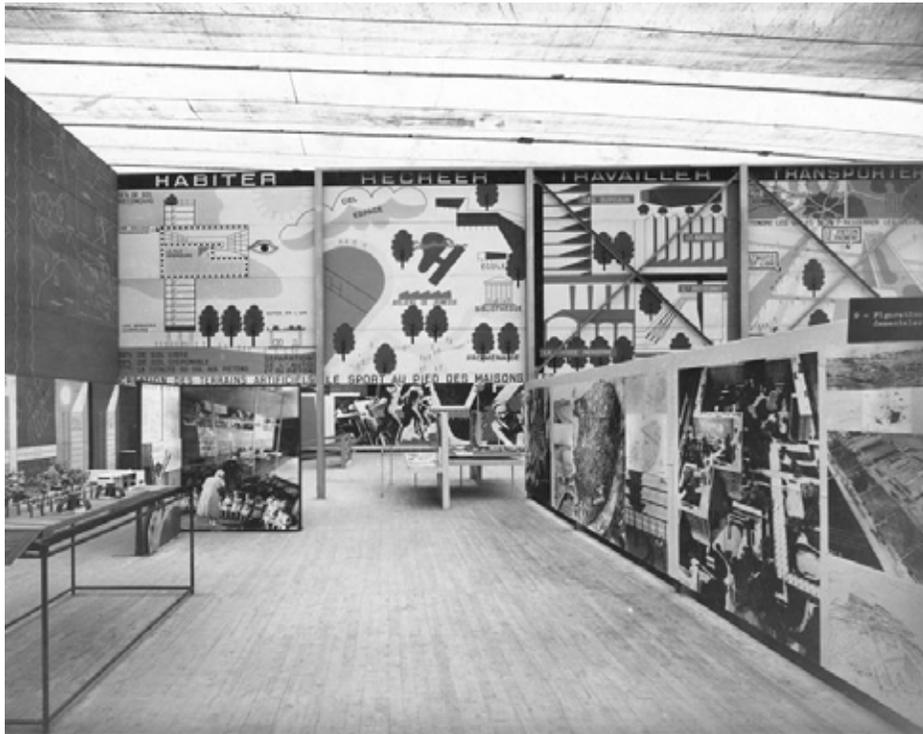


figure 6

the window to match the parapet of the library. The window is no longer a hole in the wall. "the walls give the impression of being made out of paper," the big window is a paper wall with a picture on it, a picture wall, a (movie) screen."¹¹ (figure 2)

In "The work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Benjamin remarks that: "In contrast to the magician... the surgeon... abstains from facing the patient man to man, rather, it is through the operation that he penetrates into him. Magician and surgeon compare to the painter and cameraman. The painter maintains in his work a natural

distance from reality, the cameraman penetrates deeply into its web. There is a tremendous difference between the pictures they obtain. That of the painter is a total one, that of the cameraman consists of multiple fragments which are assembled under a new law. Thus, for contemporary man, the representation of reality by the film is incomparably more significant than that of the painter, since it offers, precisely because of the thoroughgoing permeation of reality with mechanical equipment, an aspect of reality which is free of all equipment. And that is what one is entitled to ask from a work of art."¹² Beatriz Colomina using Walter Benjamin's distinction between the



figure 7

painter and the cameraman concludes that Le Corbusier's architecture is the result of his positioning himself behind the camera.¹³ It can be understood that he designs as he is in his mind capturing images. His buildings then might create more 'resonance' on paper and two-dimensional space than in reality and three-dimensional spaces.

Benjamin concluded that: "the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility." If at first photography's perception seemed to align with Modern movement beliefs, ultimately its effect proved corrosive to a sense of origin and authenticity,

qualities that became increasingly important to an architecture that revealed in the truths of structure and material. Thus, if initially, photography permitted modern architecture to appear to fulfill its own theoretical precepts, eventually it obstructed it from becoming what it truly wanted to be. Architecture, seemingly of unquestionable objectivity, was known through photography, and photography construed architecture as an image. By "reproducing" unique objects, photography extracts the aura, leaving these objects the equivalent of all others. Because the new perception has a "sense of the universal equality of things". Eventually, however, the image

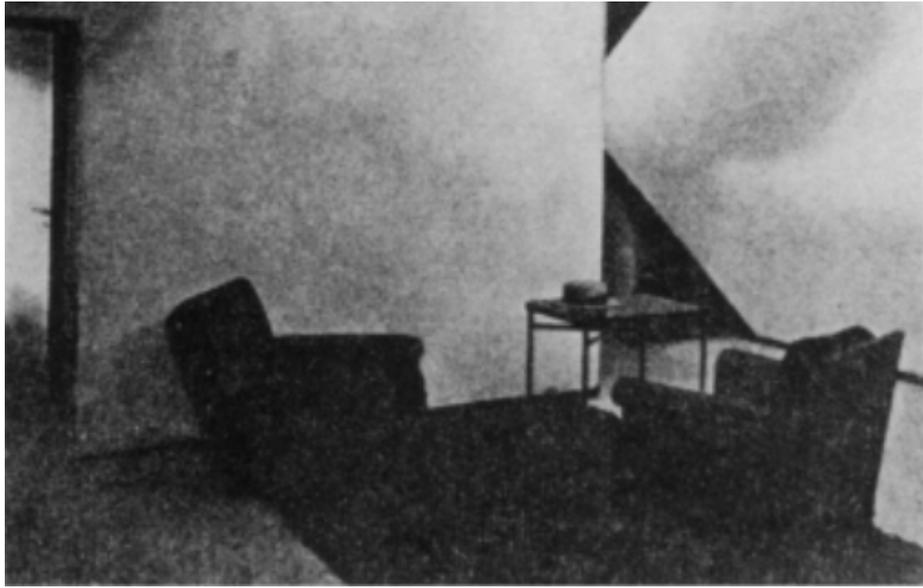


figure 8

of architecture bred an architecture of image.¹⁴

According to Colomina, the most primordial activity in the house for Le Corbusier is seeing. The house for Le Corbusier is nothing than a device to see the world, a mechanism of viewing. Le Corbusier's basic definition of the primordial idea of the house "the house is a shelter, an enclosed space, which affords protection against cold, heat and outside observation." Shelter, separation from the outside, is provided by the window's ability to turn the threatening world outside the house into a reassuring picture. The inhabitant is enveloped, wrapped, protected by pictures. He writes about the windows in his book, *Twentieth Century Building and Twentieth Century Living*: "Window fulfills its true

destiny, it is the provider of light... From this emerges the true definition of the house: stages of floors... all around them, walls of light. Walls of light! Henceforth the idea of the window will be, modified. Till now the function of the window was to provide light and air and to be looked through. Of these classified functions I should retain one only, that of being looked through... To see out of doors, to lean out."¹⁵ The modern transformation of the house produces a space defined by walls of (moving) images. This is the space of the media, of publicity. To be "inside" this space is only to see. To be "outside" is to be in the image, to be seen, whether in the press photograph, a magazine, a movie, on television or at your window.¹⁶

If at the Villa Savoye, the intercourse

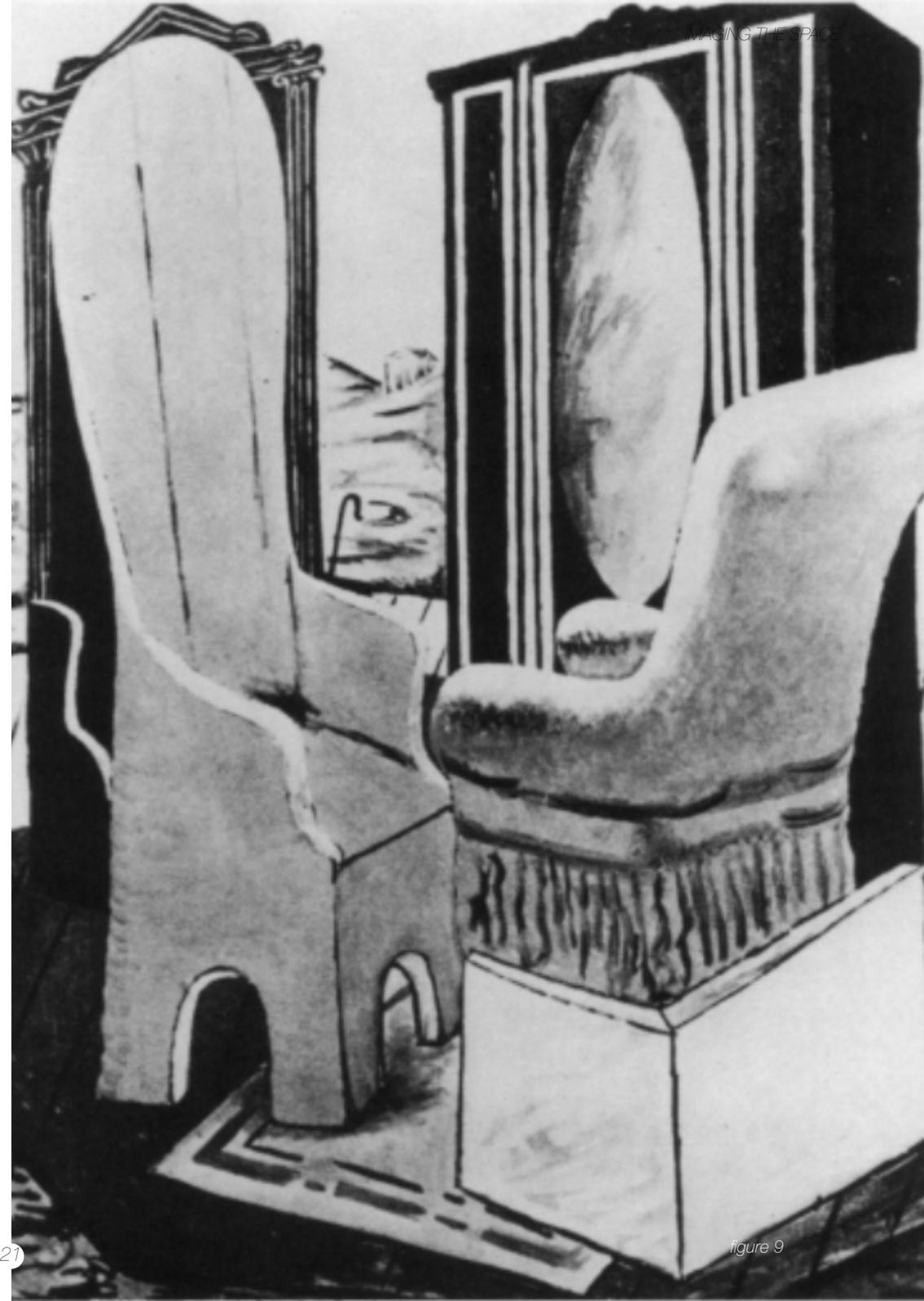


figure 9

*“Le Corbusier and the surrealists alike wanted to shockingly **surprise** man’s **perception** of the world through the deliberate **reversal** of the **expected**”*



figure 10



figure 11



figure 12

between real and represented is incidental, in Le Corbusier's exhibition pavilions, representation is enlarged to the scale of architecture itself; indeed, it becomes architecture. In the Pavillon des Temps Nouveaux tent, Le Corbusier created an interior structure in which the walls were literally words and images. (figure 3-4) "To enter this labyrinth was to walk within the pages of a book. When the pavilion was photographically documented in his 'Des Canons, des munitions', the images of scripted walls served as actual pages in the book, thus returning the word to the printed page."¹⁷

In the Pavillon Suisse in Paris which is a dormitory, there is a curved rubble wall that dominates the lobby and the library space. According to Naegele, near the completion of the building Le

Corbusier's client who didn't like that idea in his building, forced the architect to cover it with a mural. Le Corbusier, uncomfortable with traditional arts, employed "the new means" to create a photomural consisting of forty-four photographs and extending the full length and height of the wall. Its images were of geometric, man-made objects combined with abstract microscopic and aerial views of nature, "new vision" views unavailable to the unaided eye.

In a lecture in Prague two years later, André Breton heartily praised the photomural as an example of "concrete irrationality." He enthusiastically described it as "irrationally way," compared it favorably to the work of Gaudí, and declared it an indication that architecture was again attempting "to break through all the limits." The

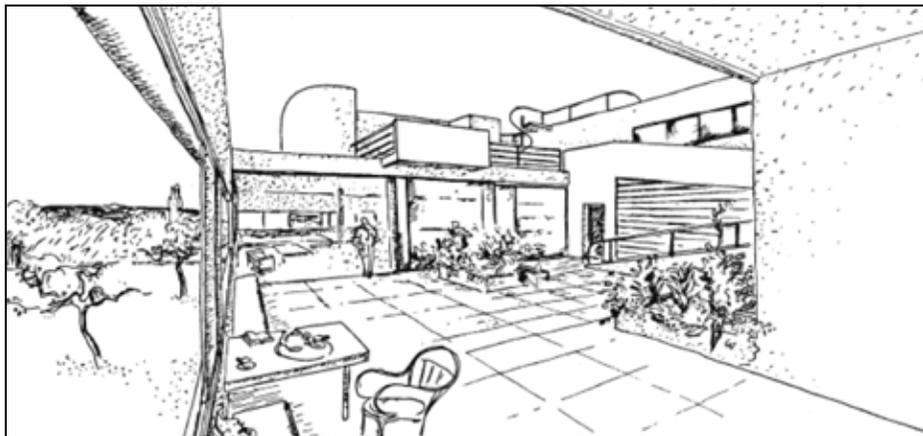


figure 13



figure 14

curved wall was hardly an irrational wave, nor had Le Corbusier intended for the mural to invoke the irrational. Yet Breton's assessment was insightful. The mural was a representational overlay. Alongside the rational order of architecture, it placed an irrational order, creating a dialectic condition with both psychological and spatial implications. The illusory space of representation interrogated the "real" space of architecture. The photomural dematerialized architecture. And for Le Corbusier, it made manifest in architecture a contradictory space similar to that presented in his ambiguous photography."¹⁸ (figure 7)

Le Corbusier enlarged photography and made it into architecture, and brought its space—the space of representation—into dialogue with the space of reality. The resulting dialectic condition, though architectural, mirrored the condition of photography itself. The photograph is an "objective image," both reality and representation. Its essence is an illusion, and it was Le Corbusier's inclination to recognize illusion as truth and to elevate this truth to an ideal. Illusion can be felt; it can be sensed as the distance between appearance and reality, between what is perceived and what is known. Its corporeal equivalent is a spirit. Its architectural parallel is space, space that asserts itself as a distinct and psychically invigorating atmosphere. This space is like the aura of an image. To offer it as an environment was, for Le Corbusier, the premise of a new architecture.¹⁹

In the Pavillon Suisse Le Corbusier started

to flirt with boundaries of what reality is and what images are. In that sense, his work can be seen as surrealism. Alexander Gorlin²⁰ contends that Le Corbusier and the surrealists alike jolt (shake roughly) man's perception of the world through the deliberate reversal of the expected, and the juxtaposition of the banal with the extraordinary. For surrealists, the goal was the transcendence of everyday reality. For Le Corbusier, it was ostensibly (apparently) the promulgation of his social program, itself an "extraordinary" imposition and transformation of the existing societal and architectural order of the day.²¹

Le Corbusier's photographs of his architecture are highly intentional; not passive recordings, but an active commentary on his work. In the interior photographs there is meaning in whether a room is empty or not, what furniture is inside and where it is placed, and the size and the position of the human figures. Like the plan and elevations, the photographs are an integral part of the presentation of Le Corbusier's architecture. In a way, the photographs are as important as the buildings they represent. In the work of the 1920s human beings are noticeably absent; only the forms intimately related to their physical form and scale, i.e., chairs, tables, cups, are retained as evidence of their presence. In interior photography of La Roche house in Paris, in a stark white room, two empty chairs sit in conversation with each other, as in De Chirico's *Furniture in a Valley*.²² (figure 8-9)

Le Corbusier, once stated, “the exterior is always an interior”, Gorlin pointing out about that writes: “ in that the natural elements of sky, earth, and horizon were to be treated mythologically as the elements of a vast outdoor room, an extension of the single room shelter. Human Condition III is Rene Magritte’s clearest exposition of the theme of ambiguous interior- exterior space where a painting of a landscape reproduces the actual scene from the window. Since the “real” landscape and the painting of the landscape are, in fact, mere two-dimensional depictions, our entire perception of reality is questioned as it is now possible that the view from any window could be real or illusory. In painting, three-dimensional space must be created before it can be questioned whereas in architecture, already in the third dimension, the reverse procedure occurs. In Le Corbusier’s Pavillon de L’Esprit Nouveau, one wall of the outdoor terrace has been opened to the foliage, the scene flattened and stretched like a painting across the frame of the two-story opening.²³ (figure 11-12)

In the photographs of houses of Le Corbusier, they are never covered with curtains, neither is access to them prevented by means of hampering objects. On the contrary, everything in these houses seems to be disposed of in a way that continuously throws the subject toward the periphery of the house. The look is directed to the exterior in such a deliberate manner as to suggest the reading of these houses as frames for a view. Even when actually in an ‘exterior’, in a terrace or in a ‘roof

garden’, walls are constructed to frame the landscape, and a view from there to the interior.²⁴

The photograph, if only momentarily, is about space and form, not representational content; and the reader who recognizes this must also recognize the illusion of all images. The photograph is instructive. It teaches the “reader” to see. Unlike the fictive medium of painting, photography is an “off strike of reality.” By dissipating objectivity, by freeing the image of its apparent “content,” it allows the photograph its spatial nature. Ambiguity’s oscillation (movement back and forth) makes temporality an essential part of this nature. As a spatiotemporal construct, the ambiguous image becomes a new architecture, one which interrogates its own constitution. In this sense, Le Corbusier discovered illusory space in the space of representation. But how to introduce such space to the seemingly nonfictive realm of architecture?²⁵

An answer is found initially in certain early houses of Le Corbusier in which “reality” is presented, if only momentarily, as representation. At Villa Savoye, a framed opening in a freestanding wall provides the roof terrace with a “picture” of the natural landscape; while the large, unglazed opening of the south facade, when viewed from outside the house, provides a taut, canvaslike elevation animated by ever-changing natural light, light trapped within the composition. In both instances, architecture confines nature, reducing it to surface treatment.



figure 15



figure 16



*“The **look** is directed to the **exterior** in such a deliberate manner as to suggest the reading of these houses as **frames for a view**. Even when actually in an ‘exterior’, in a terrace or in a ‘roof garden’, walls are constructed to **frame the landscape**, and a view from there to the interior.”*

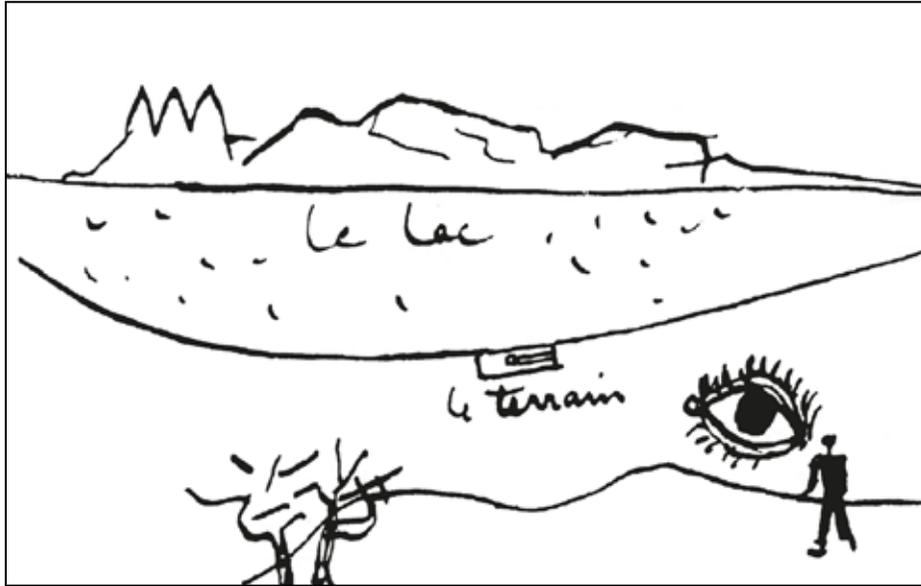


figure 18

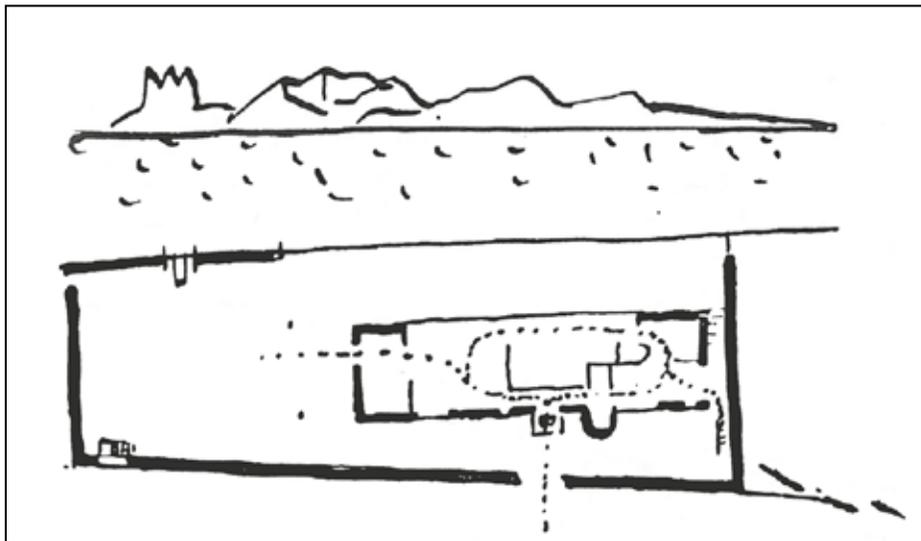


figure 19

As flattened representation, it loses its privileged position as reality and becomes a sign of itself.²⁶ (figure 17)

Looking at a landscape through a window creates a separation. It can be through a car windshield, a train window or in an airplane. Any window and any viewer can experience this split. The world is divided into two separate realms. The realm that we are truly in it and surrounded by its borders, and the realm that we can only look at it when we are inside the first one. Colomina talks about the tangibility of that experience: "A "window" breaks the connection between being in a landscape and seeing it. The landscape becomes purely visual, and we depend on memory to know it as a tangible experience."²⁷ That is the separation of the natural world and the man-made world of buildings and interiors. The man coming from nature is creating spaces to separate itself from the natural world which he found threatening and not comfortable all the time. The creation of architecture depends on that fear of not being safe outdoors.

In the case of Villa Savoye, this split can clearly be seen. The most prominent aspect is that the building is not sitting on the ground and instead, on a set of columns. Besides that, all the ribbon windows and openings that Le Corbusier used imply the two different worlds of inside and outside. Gorlin in his essay, *The Ghost in the Machine: Surrealism in the Work of Le Corbusier*, writes about this separation:

"The entire villa is virtually a roof garden, enclosed on four sides, open to the landscape through strip windows. . . In one drawing the horizon line stretches across the window boundary, connecting the outside with the gridded roof terrace, where a table is set for tea. A vertical line divides the scene in two, the landscape of nature on one side, and on the other, the artifacts of "civilized" man, a bentwood chair and teacup. This duality recalls Magritte's *The Voice of Silence*, where a bourgeois living room, furnished with the same chairs but empty of people, is juxtaposed to the menacing black void on the other side of the wall."²⁸ (figure 12,13) Here also the two worlds are being depicted with the highest contradiction possible, the void and its nothingness next to the interior space of that living room. The difference is that in the Magritte's painting, the void, which is threatening, is also situated inside the building and in the landscape.

"The view from the house is a categorical view." In framing the landscape the house places the landscape into a system of categories. The house is a mechanism for classification. It collects views and, in doing so, classifies nature of the picture is the window. In another passage from *Précisions*, the window itself is seen as a camera lens: "When you buy a camera, you are determined to take photographs in the corpuscular winter of Paris, or in the brilliant sands of an oasis: how do you do it? You use a diaphragm. Your glass panes, your horizontal windows are all ready to be diaphragmed at will. You will let light in wherever you like."²⁹ If the window is a lens, the house itself

is a camera pointed at nature. Detached from nature, it is mobile. Just as the camera can be taken from Paris to the desert, the house can be taken from Poissy to Biarritz to Argentina.³⁰ Le Corbusier confirms that idea himself when he says: "The house is a box in the air, pierced all around, without interruption. . . . The box is in the middle of meadows, domination the orchard. . . . The simple posts of the ground floor, through a precise disposition, cut up the landscape with a regularity that has the effect of suppressing any notion of 'front' or 'back' of the house, or 'side' of the house. . . . The plan is pure, made for the most exact of needs. It is in its right place in the rural landscape of Poissy. But in Biarritz, it would be magnificent. . . . I am going to implant this very house on the beautiful Argentine countryside: we will have twenty houses rising from the high grass of an orchard where cows continue to graze"³¹

Le Corbusier describes the house in *Précisions* in terms of the way it frames the landscape and the effect this framing has on the perception of the house itself by the moving visitor. The house is in the air. It has no front, no back, no side. The house can be in any place. It is immaterial. That is, the house is not simply constructed as a material object from which certain views then become possible. The house is no more than a series of views choreographed by the visitor, the way a filmmaker affects the montage of a film. Significantly, he has represented some of his projects in the form of a series of sketches grouped together and representing the perception

of the house by a moving eye. As has been noted, these drawings suggest film storyboards, each of the images a still.³²

The description of the petite Maison on the shores of Lake Geneva in *Précisions*, Le Corbusier recalls: "The key to the problem of modern habitation is to inhabit first. . . . placing oneself afterward" but what is meant here by "inhabitation" and by "placement"? The "three factors" that "determine the plan" of the house—the lake, the magnificent frontal view, the south, equally frontal—are precisely the factors that determine a photograph of the site, or rather, a photograph taken from the site. "To inhabit" here means to inhabit that picture. Le Corbusier writes; "Architecture is made in the hand," then drawn." Only then does one look for the site. But the site is only where the landscape is "taken", framed by a mobile lens.³³ (figure 18,19)

"To inhabit" means to inhabit the camera. But the camera is not a traditional place, it is a system of classification, a kind of filing cabinet. "To inhabit" means to employ that system. Only after this do we have "placing", which is to place the view in the house, to take a picture, to place the view in the filing cabinet, to classify the landscape.³⁴

The house is drawn with a picture already in mind. The house is drawn as a frame for that picture. The frame establishes the difference between 'seeing' and merely looking. It produces the picture by domesticating the 'overpowering' landscape.³⁵

There is an interesting passage in Griffioen article, *Imaging purity*, in which he writes: "In 1924, a year after the publication of "Vers une architecture", Adolf Loos wrote a polemical text warning against the 'deceptive methods' of some of his contemporaries who base their reputation on *pretty drawings and fine photographs*. Although it is unknown if Loos specifically had Le Corbusier in mind when writing this, it is interesting to note his fear that representations of architecture would gain dominance over the architecture itself."³⁶ Well, that is exactly what happened. The current influence of images and photography is inevitable on our architecture and our taste. The difference is the scale of that widespread disease which today, with the Internet and social media, are at the highest point. The representations of architecture are what is rewarded and not how good or bad, a space is lived and experienced.

Le Corbusier is not to blame for what happened afterwards, because he was simply ahead of his time and using media to sell his ideas. But his ideas were influential enough to change the architectural trends after him. His focus on "the photographic gaze, with its concentration on surfaces, stimulated the migration of architectural meaning to the outer shell, to the appearance of things" became the trend of the architectural world these days. Long story, short, Le Corbusier's architecture as Griffioen writes, " was thoroughly photogénique: geared to the camera"³⁷ and one after visiting his spaces can say if those buildings are truly built for living or the sake of images.



INTERIOR
DRAMA



In 1910, Loos wrote in his essay "Architecture": "It is my greatest pride that the interiors which I have created are totally ineffective in photographs.... I have to forego the honor of being published in the various architectural magazines"¹. Loos was reacting to the decisive similarities between architecture and the images of the architecture. In his opinion, the photographs could not reproduce the interiors he designed. Walter Benjamin in his essay, *A Little History of Photography*, expressed similar opinions on this subject: "Everyone will have observed how much easier it is to get the measure of a picture, especially sculpture, not to mention architecture, in a photograph than in reality."² But he talks about getting a dimension and not really and fully understanding the space, after all, the "aura" in his ideas cannot be captured in reproduction of a piece of art, especially an architecture space. Loos on the same essay continues: "The mark of a building which is truly established is that it remains ineffective in two dimensions."³ He is talking about other qualities and senses, smelling, touching and feeling a space. (figure 2)

Richard Neutra recalls, Loos "prided himself on being an architect without a pencil: "In the year 1900, Adolf Loos started a revolt against the practice of indicating dimensions in figures or measured drawings. He felt, as he often told me, that such a procedure dehumanizes design. "If I want a wood paneling or wainscot to be of a certain height, I stand there, hold my hand at a certain height, and the carpenter makes his pencil mark. Then I step back and look at it from one point and from

another, visualizing the finished result with all my powers. This is the only human way to decide on the height of a wainscot, or on the width of a window."⁴ Loos was inclined to use a minimum of paper plans; he carried in his head all the details of even his most complex designs, because for him architectural spaces would be created by imagining and feeling the space rather than seeing it. It would be notable to indicate the differences of his opinions from that of Le Corbusier on the same topic.

In "The Principle of Cladding" Loos points out that: "The artist, the architect, first senses the effect that he intends to realize and [then] sees the room he wants to create in his mind's eye. He senses the effect that he wishes to exert upon the spectator . . . hominess if a residence."⁵ He asserted that for him architecture is more of sensing instead of seeing, that is what separates his spaces from those of Le Corbusier in which seeing was the most important aspect. It can be traced back to Adolf Loos hearing loss as well. As a child, his hearing was poor, and by the time he reached his mid-50s, his condition had deteriorated to the point that he became dependent on a hearing trumpet. As it declined further, he began to carry a pen and notebook, writing down what he wanted to say. "From the mid-1920s on, Loos read his environment from an almost completely sound-insulated world."⁶ I am not entirely sure about what happened then to his way of working, but it is probable to think that he used all his other senses more, to replace the weakness of his hearing.

Weizman⁷ in her essay, *Tuning into the Void, The Aurality of Adolf Loos's Architecture*, states that: "Perhaps Loos

was aiming to substitute architecture for hearing itself—as if, in the fine, fragile structures and textures of the inner ear, he could understand the relationships of materials to sound. Marble would, of course, differ from wood or glass in its reflectivity of sound, just as people, as they moved about, would impact the acoustic qualities of a space. The marble, wood, carpet, and concrete in Loos's designs are intended to perform not simply as visual features or designations of luxury, but as elements of a carefully engineered sound contraption.⁸ It can be concluded that every detail in his architecture would have all these qualities of materials and senses. (figure 3)

Therefore, this aspect might have triggered him to even think of the people as actors in his spaces as well, the movement and their actions would be more important than anything else. The performing becomes a prominent part of his design, that he creates spaces for visitors to his spaces, not people who inhabit there, then everyone is an actor to the scene and is being seen by others in interior spaces.

For example in the "petit salon" in Josephine Baker⁹ house, which was never built, is a key element of Loos's theatrical design. The petit salon, a space next to the swimming pool, a top lit, double-height swimming pool, 9m long, 4m wide and 2m deep, surrounded by glass windows, functioned like a visual apparatus in which the voyeur (Loos) observes the swimmer (Baker), who, consumed by her own reflection, cannot see the spectator. (figure 5,6) Loos said about this house: 'I drew a plan for Josephine', wrote Loos. 'I think it to be one of my best. The outer wall is covered



figure 3

with white and black marble plates – horizontally striped. The most beautiful aspect of the house is a swimming pool, with supernatural light effects.' Catherine Slessor¹⁰ in her essay, *Loos and Baker: a house for Josephine*, writes: It may be no coincidence that the denuded modern surface and the art of striptease both came into being in the early 20th century. Loos's is clearly an objectifying male gaze and the house a fastidiously confected Modernist peep show.¹¹ Colomina also imagines a scenario in which the swimmer in the pool might see her reflection, framed by the window, 'of her own slippery body superimposed on the shadowy figure of the spectator ... thus she sees herself being looked at by another; a narcissistic gaze superimposed on a voyeuristic gaze'. This 'erotic complex of looks' is inscribed

in each of the four large windows opening onto the swimming pool. 'Each, even if there is no one looking through it, constitutes, from both sides, a gaze', says Colomina.

Josephine Baker's swimming pool can be compared to a painting by Mary Cassatt¹². (figure 4) "In The Loge" is an 1878 painting depicting a woman at the Garnier Opera in Paris using opera glasses to watch other guests in their theater box during the intermission, while she herself is being spied upon by another person. It is interesting that now we got stuck between two gazes, one of us looking at her and the man looking at her. The voyeuristic look is not only for the man who is looking at her, but also for us looking at her image.¹³ The opera

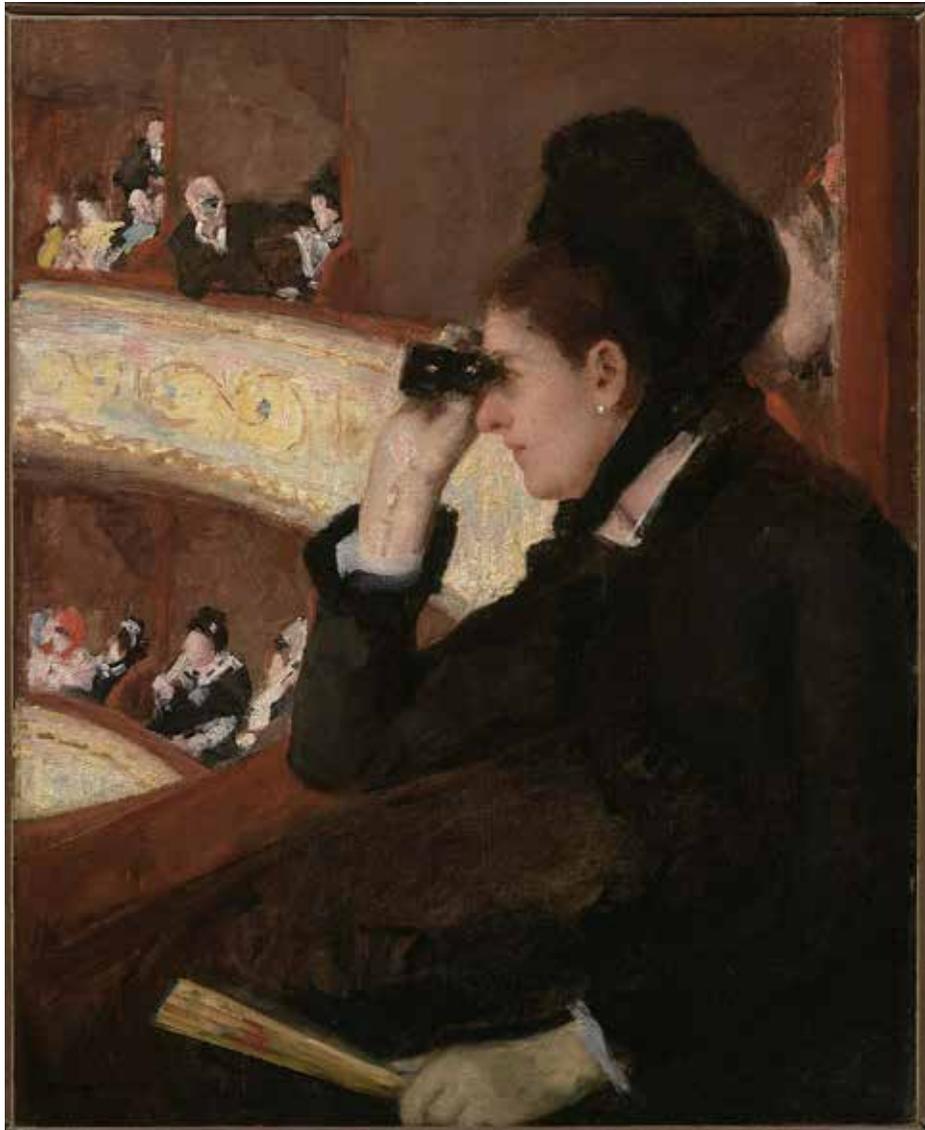


figure 4

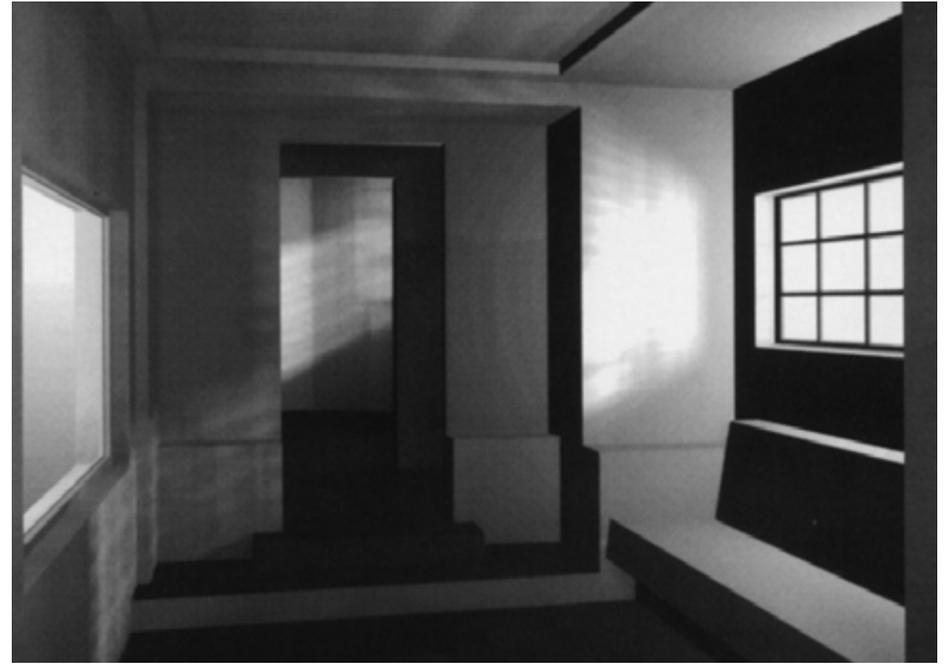


figure 5



figure 6

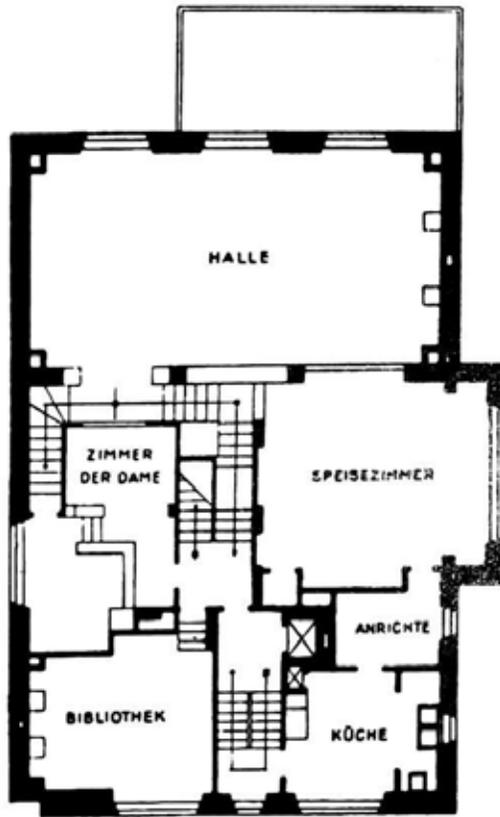


figure 7

houses were not only to view the opera itself, but a gathering place for upper class people of time where they could socialize and meet each other, and more importantly a place where they could see and be seen. One important cultural aspect of modern life.

Similarly, that is the case in Moller house (Vienna, 1928) where there is a raised sitting area of the living room with a sofa set against the window. (figures 7,8,9) "Although one cannot see out the window, its presence is strongly felt. Anyone who, ascending the stairs from the entrance

(itself a rather dark passage), enters the living room, would take a few moments to recognize a person sitting on the couch. Conversely, any intrusion would soon be detected by a person occupying this area, just as an actor entering the stage is immediately seen by a spectator in a theater box."¹⁴ The window is only to let the light in and the focus is on the interior, the outside world is not what this building is pointing at. Colomina in the same book concludes: "The inhabitants of Loos's houses are both actors in and spectators of the family scene- involved in, yet detached from, their own space."

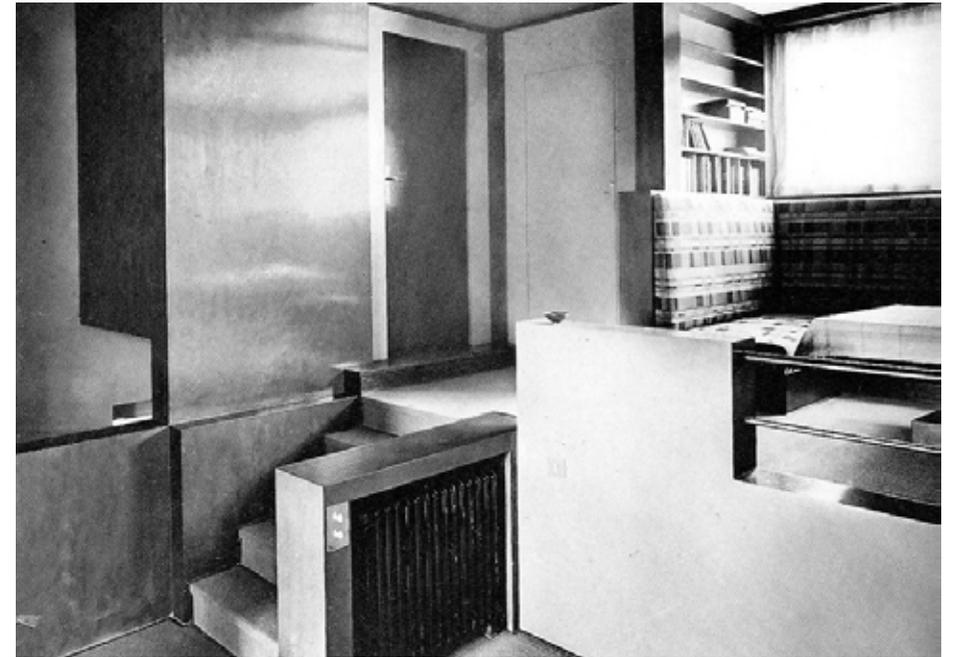


figure 8

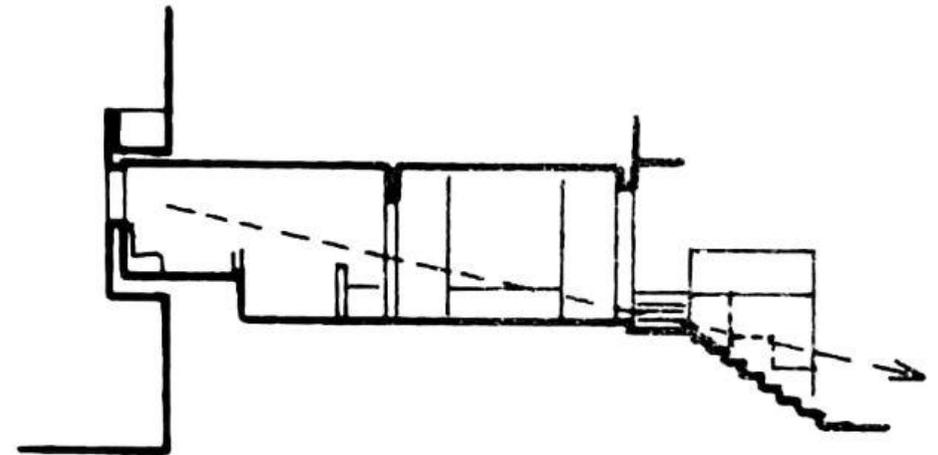


figure 9



Loos

“the artist, the architect, first senses the effect that he intends to realize and [then] sees the room he wants to create in his mind’s eye. He senses the effect that he wishes to exert upon the spectator . . . homeyness if a residences.”

The theater box is a device that both provides protection and draws attention to itself. When Munz¹⁵ describes the entrance to the social spaces of the Moller house, he writes: "Within, entering from one side, one gaze's travels in the opposite direction till it rests in the light, pleasant alcove, raised above the living room floor. Now we are really inside the house." So where were we before? We may ask, when we crossed the threshold of the house and occupied the entrance hall and the cloakroom in the ground floor or while we ascended the stairs to the reception rooms on the second or elevated ground floor. The intruder is "inside", has penetrated the house, only when his/her gaze strikes this most intimate space, turning occupant into a silhouette against the light. The "voyeur" in the "theater box" has become the object of another's gaze; she is caught in act of seeing, entrapped in the very moment of control. In framing a view, the theater box also frames the viewer. It is impossible to abandon the space. Let alone leave the house, without being seen by those over whom control is being exerted. Object and subject exchange places.

Jacques Lacan pointed out this feeling that is also true for the experience of one sensing the Loos's interiors, "I can feel myself under the gaze of someone whose eyes I do not even see, not even discern. All that is necessary is for something to signify to me that there may be others there. The window if it gets a bit dark and if I have reasons for thinking that there is someone behind it, is straightway a gaze. From the moment this gaze exists. I am already something other, in that, I feel myself becoming an object for the gaze of others. But in this position, which is a reciprocal one, others also know that

I am an object who knows himself to be seen.¹⁶ There is always another space in "Raumplan" that overlooks to another one. The complexity of interior spaces makes one feel always being looked at by others even if there is no one there.

This treatment to the inhabitants of the space is the most distinct aspect of Loosian system of planning form of Le Corbusier's machine of seeing. Loos creates the drama in his interiors, as Colomina puts it: "His architecture is not simply a platform that accommodates the viewing subject. It is a viewing mechanism that produces the subject. It precedes and frames its occupant."¹⁷ In Frau Müller's boudoir or women corner in villa Müller (1930, Prague), a narrow space with a single window to the exterior is designed for her as a library and a meeting room, which can be used as music room during the parties with its view to the living room as well. Fischer¹⁸ about this space in his article, White Walls in the Golden City, points out that: "While the man was sequestered in a corner of the house in dark mahogany seclusion, the woman was placed in a box suspended over, but not included in, the activities of the main social space of the living room. Who was watching whom? Who controlled the gaze and thus the business of the house? Was the boudoir a sentry box or a prison cell?"¹⁹ The Loos's interiors have characters like the people who inhabit them. A masculine or a feminine space are in dialogue together.

In villa Müller, entering to the hall is designed as one is entering a stage. After a dark corridor and a flight of stairs, suddenly one enters a wide room with a high ceiling. There is a continuous

movement in this interior. The body is arrested in this space while look can travel through other spaces. In the hall, one can feel being seen by others. Other spaces look down to the living room and enhance this feeling. Colomina about this room remarks: "Looking at the photographs, it is easy to imagine oneself in these precise, static positions, usually indicated by the unoccupied furniture. The photographs suggest that it is intended that these spaces be comprehended by occupation, by using this furniture, by "entering" the photograph, by inhabiting it."²⁰ Which contrasts what Le Corbusier was probably intending to create, he wanted to create an image of the space, not necessarily a space to be inhabited, but an image. This is a feeling one can sense being in his interiors that is more about seeing than being. (figure 10)

There is an unknown passage of a well-known book, Le Corbusier *Urbanisme* (1925), that reads: "Loos told me one day: 'A cultivated man does not look out of the window; his window is a ground glass; it is there only to let light in, not to let the gaze pass through.'²¹ It points to a conspicuous yet conspicuously ignored feature of Loos's houses: not only are the windows either opaque or covered with sheer curtains, but the organization of the spaces and the disposition of the built-in furniture seem to hinder access to them. A sofa is often placed at the foot of a window so as to position the occupants with their back to it. They all imply the focus of his spaces towards the inside the house and the stories or dramas which were happening there.

Now if look at the way Loos houses were photographed the differences will reveal more. He wasn't intended to create that

publicity through images for his work. Loos destroyed much of the archival evidence of his work, arguing that "every work of art possesses such strong internal laws that it can only appear in its own form." He claimed photographs were useless in trying to document his projects.²² Although he was taking care of how they are being photographed. Fischer also notes: "Loos's houses were difficult to appreciate either through photographs (especially black-and-white images) or drawings, which in any case Loos did not widely circulate. A Loos house was an elegant conundrum, a puzzle for architects to explore and appreciate on its own terms. It resisted categorization."²³ Instead he was focusing more on the piece of domestic drama which he had in mind.

Colomina in her book writes: "Many of the photographs [of Loos's architecture], tend to give the impression that someone is just about to enter the room."²⁴ It can be seen in one of the rear and only published photograph of an Adolf Loos interior that includes a human figure. The man can only just be seen at the entrance to the drawing room of the Rufer house (Vienna, 1922). (figure 11) What is he going to do, who is he or what is the business there, we don't know. It all adds to the dramaticity of the space.

Something is about to happen which we are clueless about it. This image can be compared to this scene from Hitchcock's "Psycho" (1960) when the detective is going up the stairs now knowing what is expecting him. This the highest amount of suspense that can be reached within a few seconds in a movie. (figure 12)

In contrast to Le Corbusier which treated



*“What is he going to do, **who** he is or **what is the business** there, we don’t know.”*



figure 12



figure 13



figure 14

architecture as a more subjective matter, for Loos objectivity of architecture mattered more, although he was trying to flirt with those boundaries by mixing the relation of inside and outside. Kenneth Frampton²⁵ has pointed out, appear to be openings and openings that can be mistaken for mirrors.²⁶ For example in the Steiner house (Vienna, 1910), there is a mirror just under an opaque window. (figure 13) The window is only a source of light and the mirror returns the look to the inside. That mirror can be compared to the mirror which Freud used to hang in his studio in Vienna. "In Freudian theory, the mirror represents the psyche. "The

reflection in the mirror is a self-portrait projected onto the outside world. The placement of Freud's mirror on the boundary between interior and exterior undermines the status of the boundary as a fixed limit. Inside and outside cannot simply be separated. Similarly, Loos's mirrors promote the interplay between reality and illusion, between the actual and virtual, undermining the status of the boundary between inside and outside."²⁷ (figure 14) Loos is doing what le Corbusier did with his photo mural walls, creating an illusional space.

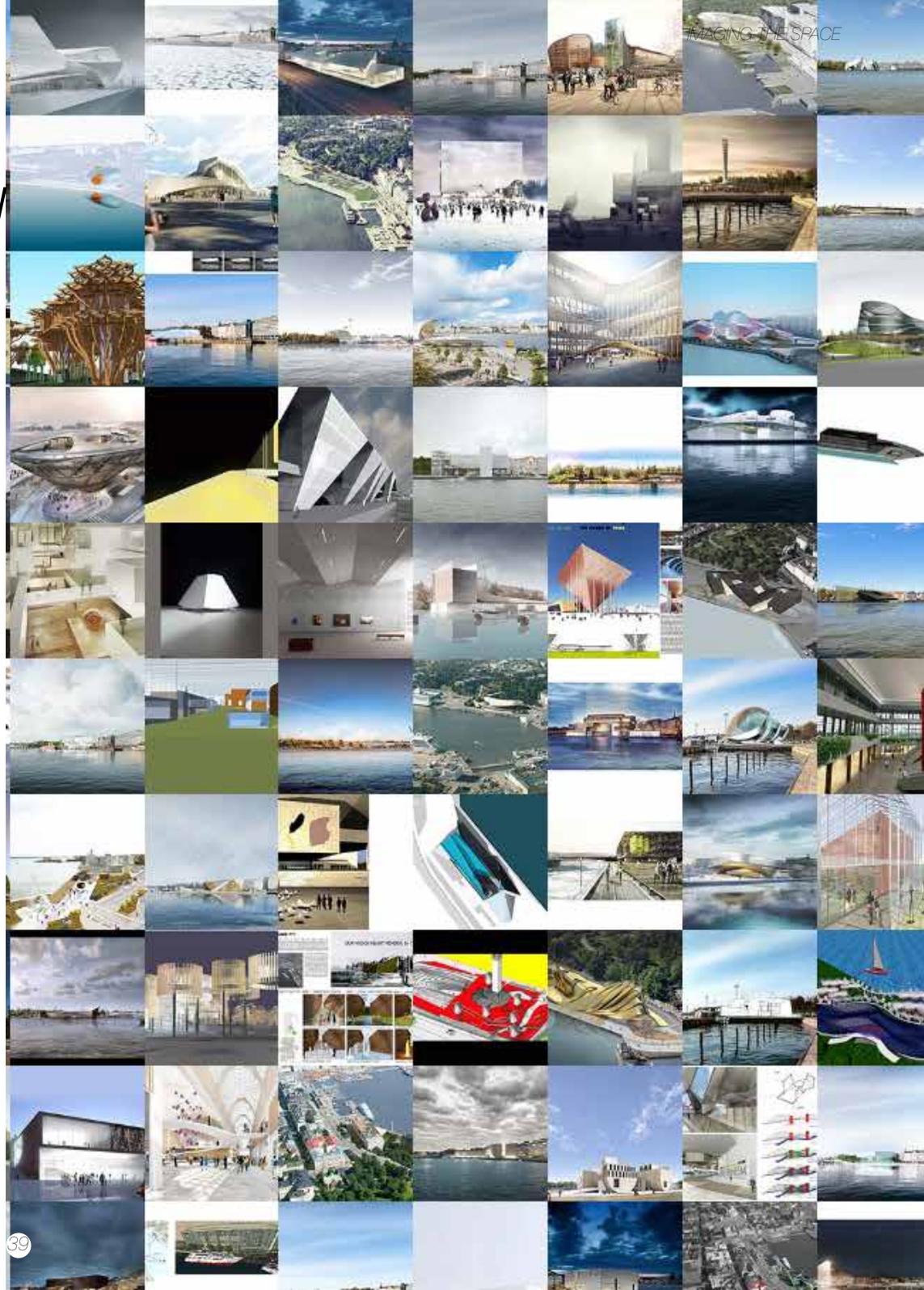
The spread of photography coincides with the development of psychoanalysis. Between the two there is more than one relation. Benjamin points out that it is through photography that "one first learns of the optical unconscious, just as one learns of the drives of the unconscious through psychoanalysis." And Freud himself explicitly sees the relation between unconscious and conscious in terms of photography: "Every mental process... exists to begin within an unconscious stage or phase and it is only from there that the process passes over into the conscious phase, just as a photography picture begins as a negative and only becomes a picture after being formed as a positive. Not every negative, however, necessarily becomes a positive; nor is it necessary that every unconscious mental process should turn into a conscious one."²⁸ The unconscious and the conscious, the invisible and the visible, like the negative enclosed within the camera and the print of the exterior developed from it, cannot be thought of independently of one another. Furthermore, both photography and the unconscious presuppose a new spatial model in which interior and exterior

are no longer clear-cut divisions. In fact, photograph represents a displacement of the model of the camera obscura, and with it, as Jonathan Crary²⁹ notes, the figure of an "interiorized observer" a "privatized subject confined in a quasi-domestic space, cut off from a public exterior world," into a model in which the distinction between interior and exterior, subject and object, are "irrevocably blurred."³⁰

In conclusion, the insulation and emptiness in the photographs of the Villa Müller can lead to a setting where the occupant is always a stranger performing a role on a private stage. This stranger is denied a view out of the house by windows that are too high, too narrow or blocked, or by mirrors that keep the gaze reflected inward. He must be protected from the distractions of the surrounding city. With Le Corbusier, the reverse is true, of course. The Villa Savoy is a film where the actors are forever focused outward, peering through the strip windows at the landscape and claiming it for their own. The perception here is not static but rather in motion. For Colomina the irony is that in the end, both regimes lead to alienation. "The subject in Le Corbusier's house is estranged and displaced from his/her own home," exactly like the poor Loosian occupant, except in this case it is because there is no possibility of stasis. In a Loos house, the subject is always about to arrive; in a Le Corbusier house, he has always just left.³¹



C O N - C L U S I O N



Honorable
Mention

“Architects live and die by the images that are taken of their work, as these images alone are what most people see. For every person who visits a private house, there are maybe 10,000 who only view it as a photo.”¹

“Photogénique Architecture” or one might say the spaces that are created for the sake of being photographed, publicity and social media. Instagramable spaces. Are we living in the era of “Photogénique Spaces”? Is our experience of living threatened by the influence of images on how we actually live?

Nowadays, social media has a great influence on how we see the world as they are highly dependant on images/videos/GIFs, etc. Even newspapers are dependant on photography to transfer their messages in a more effective, although most of their pages are filled with written texts. These influence of images which were talked about in the previous chapters is playing a crucial role in architecture today. The way people see architecture and the places they want to live in. These trends are changing people's taste of favorable architecture who are potential clients of architectural offices. One might call it even a disease, which is getting more widespread than ever before. Space should look photogénique instead of being livable, homey and comfortable. We need more than comfort and silence in our lives. We need Drama. And we need to be appreciated by others based on how beautiful looking the spaces that we are in, how they can be photographed beautifully, and later

be possible to be shared on social media, for attention, for communicating with other people, or “friends” which are not there anymore. Everything is visual and illusional. There is less and less demand for real communication between two or more people in real life, we would rather solve everything online, even marriages! So when life is not following the physicality anymore, when the images of reality are more important than the real itself, when most people would prefer seeing instead of being, then architecture might follow as well.

In the early 20's century, Loos and Le Corbusier were needed to move architectural spaces beyond what they were. It is not a space you can live in and enjoy your life, it is rather space where you can see and be seen by others, to overcome the boringness and the difficulty of life/being. Le Corbusier's focus on “the photographic gaze” and the appearances of things” became the trend of the architecture. Architecture as ‘representation’ is what we are dealing with nowadays. Everyone wants to see glorious and magnificent Render images of spaces. The image is more important than anything else. Adolf Loos feared this, way before everyone else might have noticed. He wrote about ‘deceptive methods’ of some of his contemporaries, and that might make the representations of architecture gaining dominance over the architecture itself. But what he did had other problems. Loos created spaces that were struggling not to be represented but by doing that turned the residents and the visitors, an object of the gaze. In Josephine Baker's house, for example,

the voyeuristic atmosphere created by windows towards her body reveals his intentions. Loos spaces are perfect for peeping and enjoying someone else's existence/image. The architecture of Masturbation?

Seeing and being seen in the space. There are two spaces which can be compared to Loos and Le Corbusier's architectural works in an extreme way and I thought it is necessary to also mention them. One is the Barcelona Pavilion (1928) of Mies Van Der Rohe. When commissioned to build the German pavilion he asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs what was to be exhibited. ‘Nothing will be exhibited’ he was told, “The pavilion itself will be the exhibit”.¹ In the absence of a traditional program, the pavilion became an exhibit about the exhibition. All it exhibited was a new way of looking. a person standing in front of one of the glasses sees himself reflected like a mirror but as he moves behind he sees the exterior perfectly. Then architecture is a platform of seeing.

The other space is Public Space/Two Audiences (1976), Dan Graham's contribution to the Venice Biennale Arte, where a rectangular room was divided into two squares by an acoustic pane. One end was mirrored, while the other end wall was white. Visitors to the pavilion could see themselves, looking at themselves in the other room. The room could capture an image. In both pavilions, visitors see themselves in the space of the exhibition. People only encounter themselves and their reflection. Here the architecture becomes the optical instrument and the

viewers are the performers. It seems that the two ideas of Le Corbusier and Adolf Loos, in these spaces, are coming together, architecture as an image and architecture as a drama set.

In the end, I would like to say that the most of architectural spaces today are manipulating us by the way they are represented by images. “The image has doubtlessly become the most powerful medium for the distribution of visual content regardless of location. The growing use of the image is mirrored in the publication of architecture.”² Either on the social media or websites, beautifully printed booklets on shiny papers and magazines (or commercial books, such as Taschen publication), tourist guides and so on. The image of architecture is what valued today and not the space by itself. Being in the space and perceiving it by all senses is what I think is lost in judging the architecture of today, judging made by politicians or businessmen to decide to build a new airport or a stadium, a decision made by locals to have a new design for their community center, or by the judges of huge architectural competitions for billion dollars projects all over the world. The architecture of living spaces vs Photogénique architecture. Art vs Business. Life vs Instagram. Although regarding the era we're living in, it might seem inevitable to suffer this much from Photogénique architecture: “The growing use of the image within architecture might be understood from an economic point of view, as a result of both the increasing specialization in building and planning industries, and the establishment of international markets no

longer bound by borders, as well as the ensuing intensified competition among architects.”³ Nevertheless it has its own great negative influence on architecture.

In this capitalistic world where money and businesses are valued more than anything else, why would architecture offer something different than that? As Sheikh Baha’i⁴ the Persian poet in the 16th century composed this verse:

از کوزه همان تراود که در اوست

Which literally means “Nothing comes out of the vase but what’s in it”, when there is water, then water comes out when there is wine, wine, and when there are human feces, feces come out. When the world is a place of commerce and everything is compared by its monetary value, why not architecture. Why not Frank Gehry, OMA Jean Nouvelle, MVRDV, and all other brands design the whole planet. Or even the other planets. Architecture follows the trend of the day to survive and to make money. After all, we all live on that.

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figure 5: El-Dahdah, Farès. Atkinson, Stephen. *The Josephine Baker House: For Loos's Pleasure*. Essay in Assemblage No. 26. Apr. The MIT Press. 1995, p. 86. A part of the page from the essay, Petit salon in Josephine Baker's house.

figure 6: *Ibid.* Hallway looking into the pool in Josephine Baker's house. p. 85.

figure 7: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 245. Illus. Adolf Loos, Muller house, Prague, 1930. Plan of the main floor.

figure 8: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 239. Illus. Adolf Loos, Moller house, Vienna, 1928. The raised sitting area oof the living room.

figure 9: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 243. Drawing. Moller house. Plan and section tracing the journey if the gaze from the raised sitting area to the back garden. Drawing by Johan van de Beek.

figure 10: Author unknkown, Around 1929, *Living room of Villa Muller, Vienna*. Accessed on 15 January 2019, <http://>

socks-studio.com/2014/03/03/i-do-not-draw-plans-facades-or-sections-adolf-loos-and-the-villa-muller/

figure 11: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 253. Illus. Adolf Loos, Rufer house, Vienna, 1922. Entrance to the living room.

figure 12: Hitchcock, Alfred, 1960, *Psycho*, a screenshot from the movie, released USA 1960.

figure 13: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 256. Illus. Adolf Loos, Steiner house, Vienna, 1910. View of the dining room showing the mirror beneath the window.

figure 14: Colomina, Beatriz, 1994. *Privacy and Publicity, Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 257. Illus. Sigmund Freud's study, Berggasse 19, Vienna. Detail of the mirror in the window near his worktable.

Conclusion:

figure 1: Part of the front page website Guggenheim Helsinki design competition 2014, accessed on 14 March 2019, <<http://designguggenheimhelsinki.org/exhibition/participating-architects>>

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