

Architectural Cultures: Modernism

Lecturer & Tutor: Professor Paul Walker

Student: Nathan Hughes, 525671

The essay is to discuss the conception, development, realization, and/or reception of one building design, and to discuss in detail the architect/s of that design and the role of the selected project in their career trajectory and development.

Maximum length, with bibliography & end notes: 4000words
Essay Length: 3920 words, with Bibliography and Endnotes: 4316 words. Due Date: 2nd Of July, 2014

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The essay is written as a statement of the conception, development, realisation, and reception of the 'Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau' (PEN) and the role of Le Corbusier (LC) in the project. The essay argues and concludes that the PEN leads LC on a career trajectory that develops into the 'Phillips Pavilion'.

CONCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

I

P U R I S M

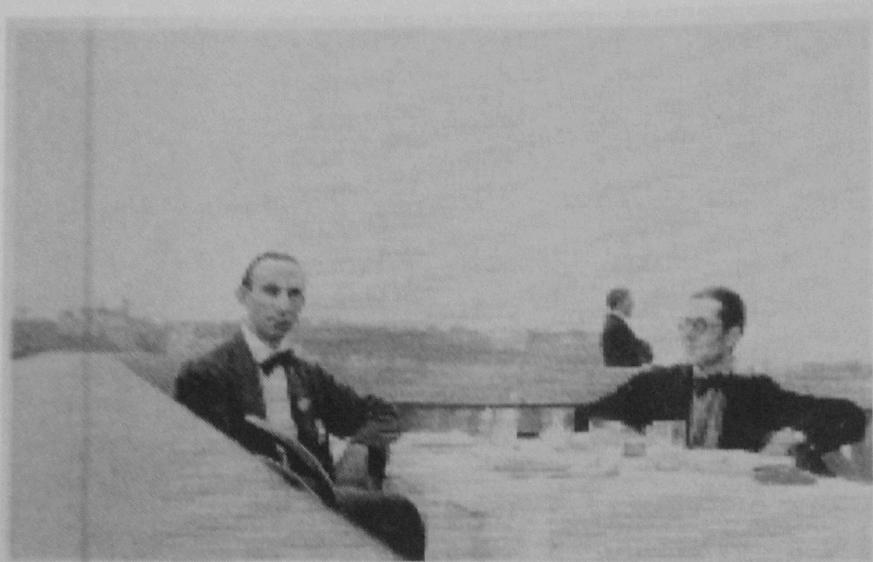


Fig. 1 - Partners: Amedee Ozefant and Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, published in Frampton, K., *Le Corbusier*, New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001, p25

“Painting is an artificial formation, which, by appropriate means, should lead to the objectification of the entire ‘world’.”
- Ozefant & Le Corbusier, 1920

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1. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p65
 2. Ibid., p53-54
 3. Ibid., p59

According to ‘Purists’ nothing is worthwhile that isn’t rationally and universally applicable to/as human control, ² “*for a state of elevated order.*”³ In line with neo-platonic thinking,⁴ cultivated abstract form or ideas are the ‘elevated order’ and pure construction of man. In the conception of the art work, a goal is of first importance; from this, the artist has a sensation to enforce upon the spectator; which must be primed through technical means of composition⁵ consisting of the following:

4. Frampton, K., *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, (1980) 4th ed., (Singapore: Thames & Hudson), 2010
5. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p59

1.0 Primary Forms and Lines

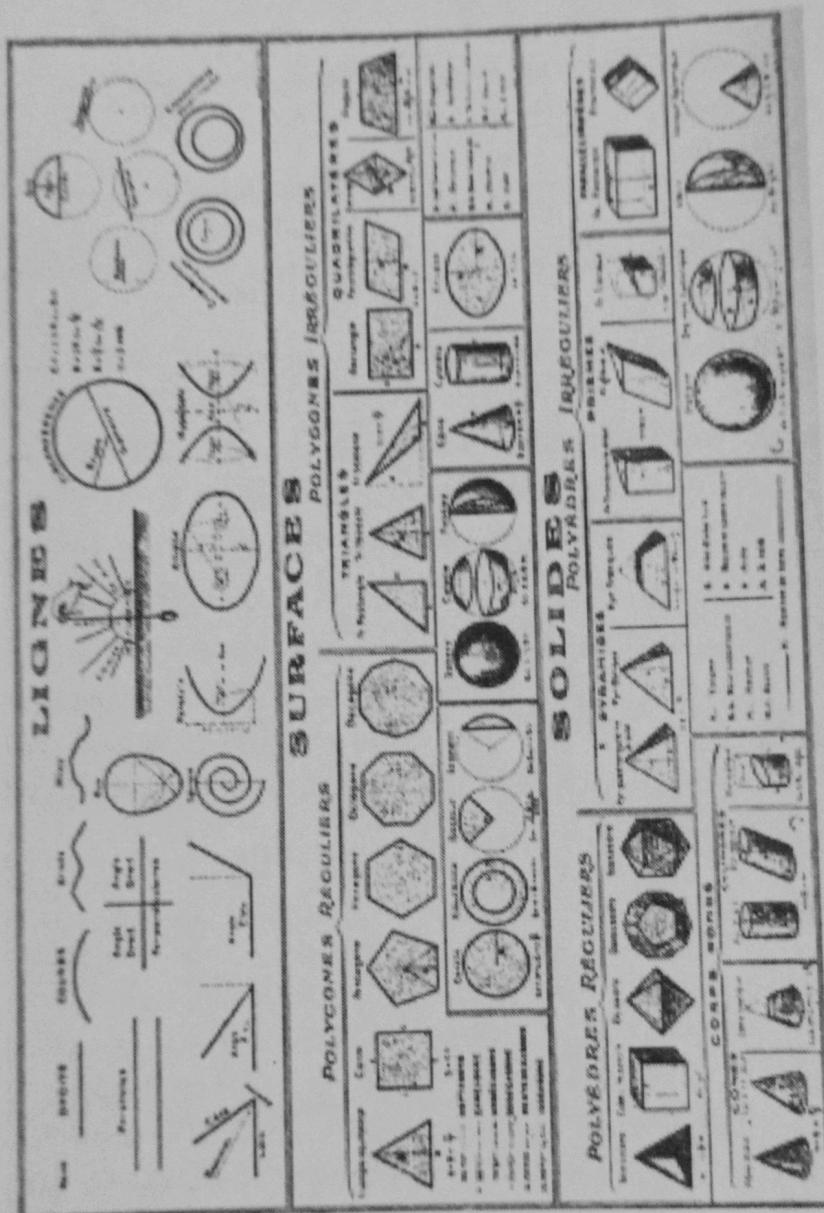


Fig 2. - Back of French Elementary School Book, published in Le Corbusier, *The City Of Tomorrow And Its Planning*, (1925) Trans. from 8th French ed. Trans. by Etchells, F., (New York: Dover Publications, Inc.), 1987, p. xxviii

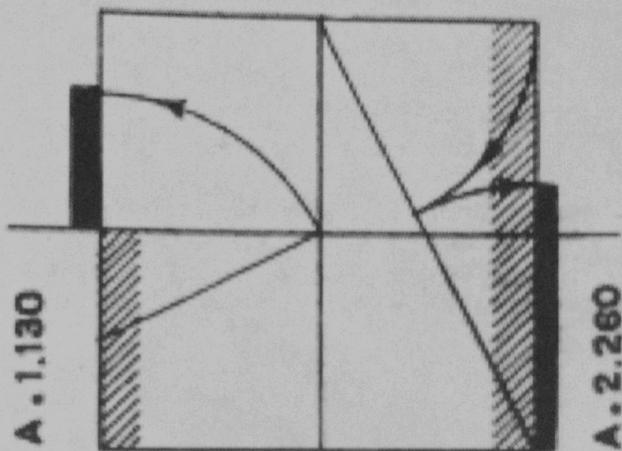
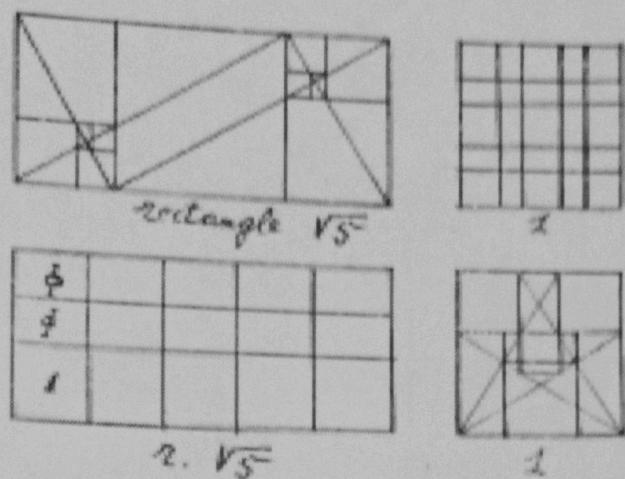


Fig. 3 - Golden Sectioning
 published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, New York: Rizzoli, 1991, p15

Primary forms and lines as compositions are directly related to the geometry of the medium being used. In Purist painting, the 'regulating lines' must first fit the canvas dimensions.⁶ In Purist 'architecture' 'regulating lines' of the volume and surface forms are determined by the plan and proportion.⁷

6. Ibid., p61

7. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p117

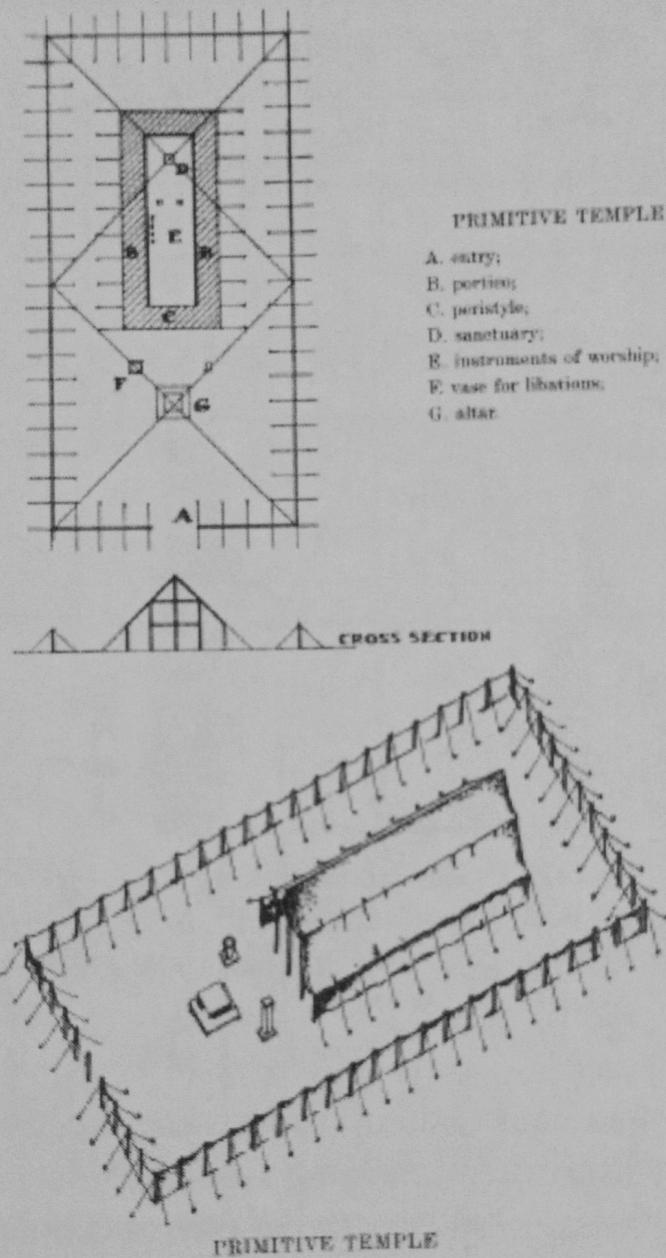


Fig. 4 - Primitive Temple
 published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p118

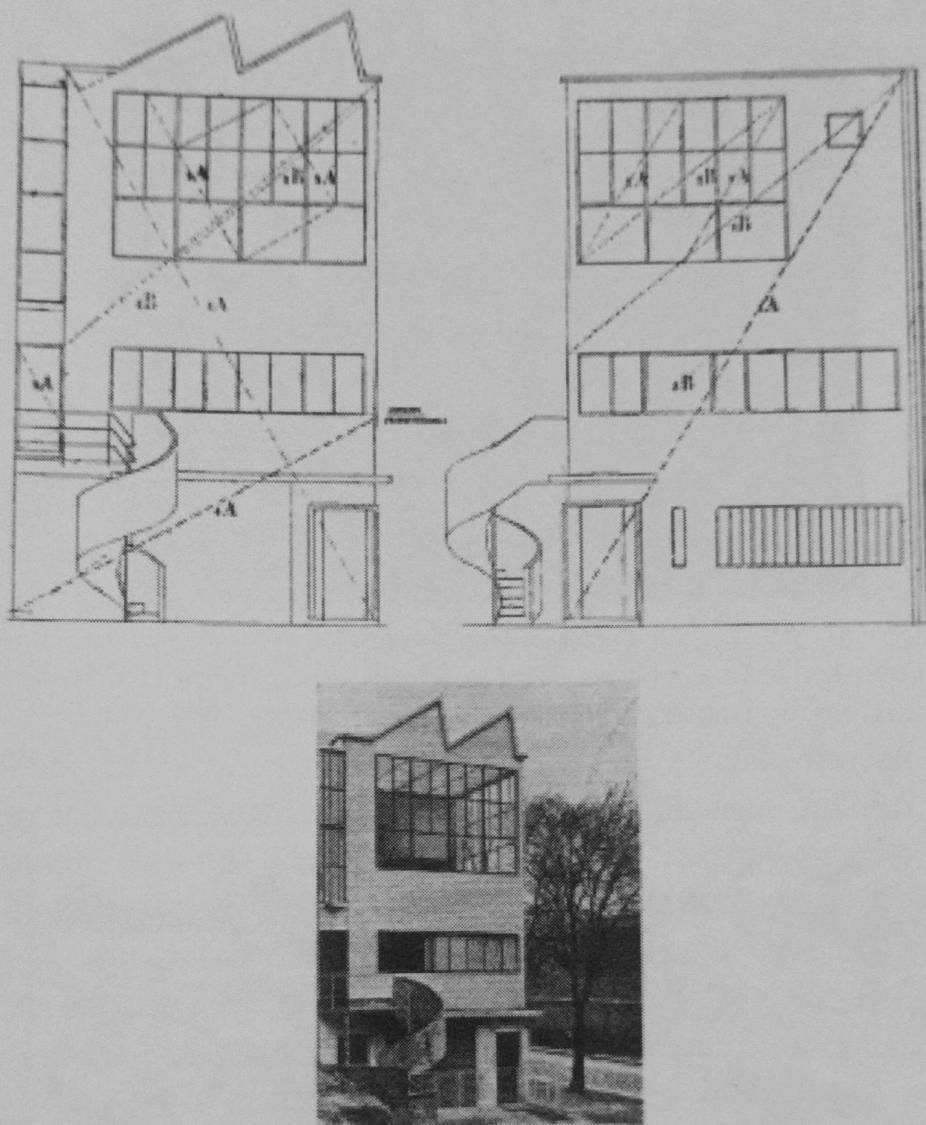


Fig. 5 - Ozefant's Studio
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from
2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J.,(Los Angeles:
Getty Research Institute), 2007, p142

1.1 Themed Objects and Mechanical Selection For Secondary Resonance or 'Triggers's

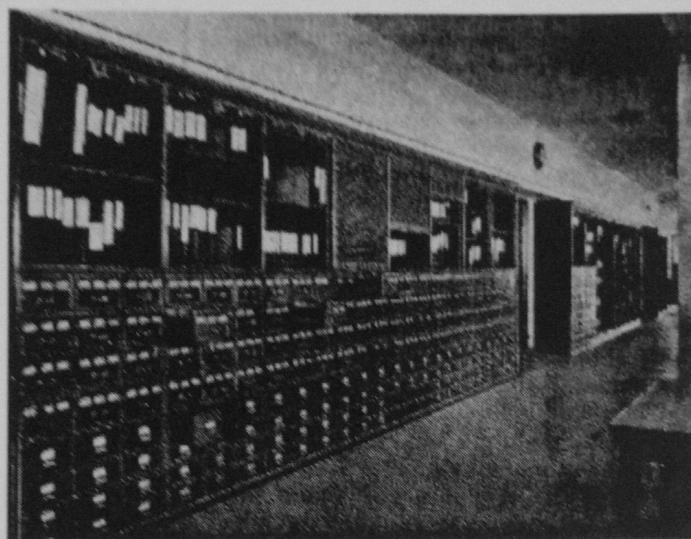


Fig. 6 - Filing System
published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925),
Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britain: MIT Press), 1987, p74

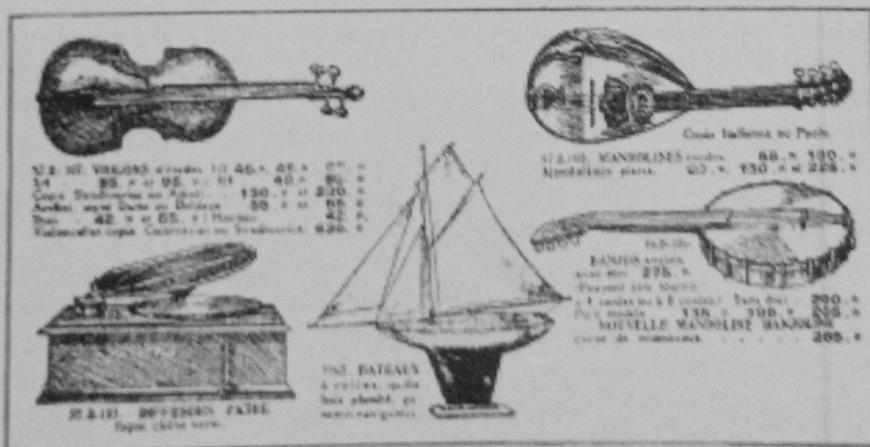


Fig. 6 - Filing System
published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925),
Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britain: MIT Press), 1987, p88

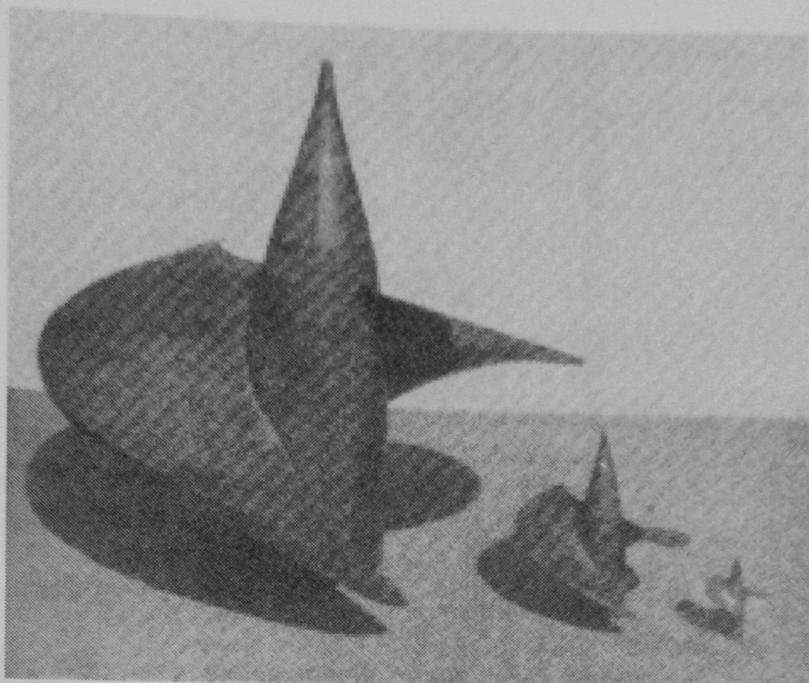


Fig. 8 - Multi-scaled Ship Propellers
published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925),
Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britian: MIT Press), 1987, p113

Themed-objects are those objects organised and fabricated by a culture with respect for the laws of physics and maximum economy, as these are selected for 'imperative needs' that are associated with the evolutionary harmony, completion and extension of man.⁹ This 'mechanical selection' is intimately interconnected with the human scale containing "curves of the greatest capacity, strength and elasticity, etc,"¹⁰ all of a geometrical order. Both 'mechanical and natural selection' are elitist themes for the determination of 'purification',¹¹ or at least the "fantasy of performance".¹²

why this term?

8. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p55-56

9. Ibid., p56-57

10. Ibid., p57

11. Ibid.

1.2 Conception of Space and Layering

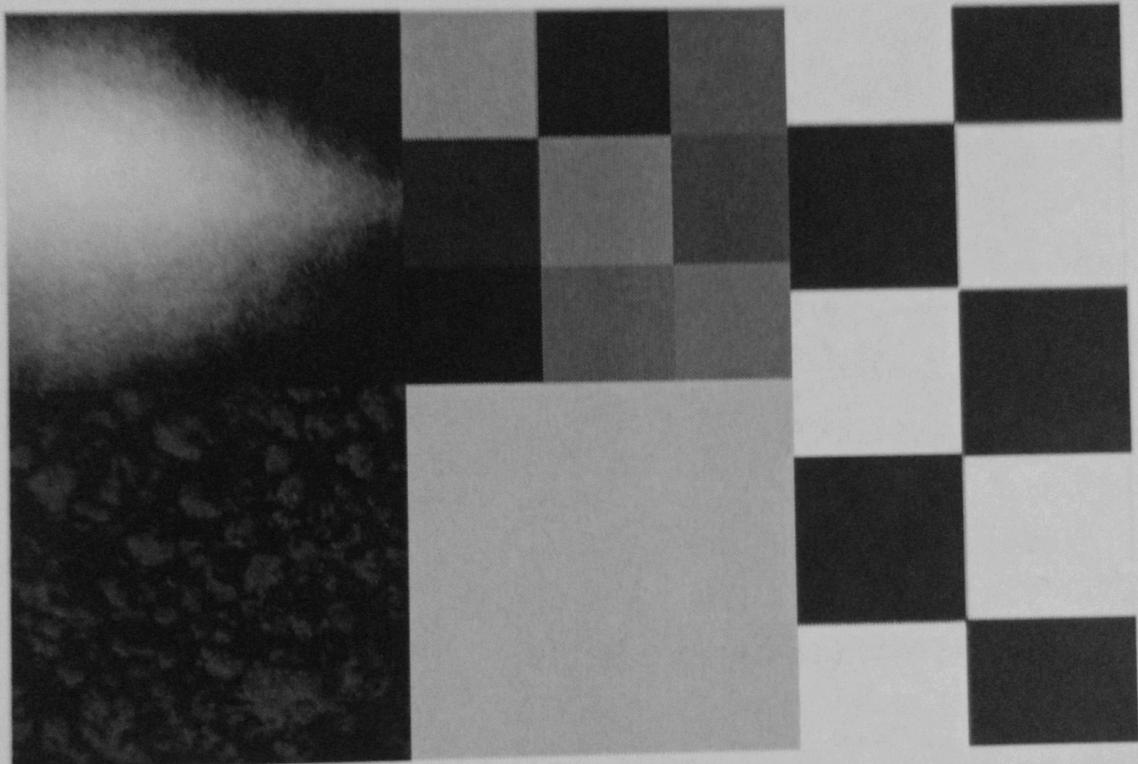


Fig. 9 - Purist Primary Colours (Their Own Major Scale)
Earth Tones, Reds, Ultramarine Blue, Ocre Yellow and Black & White

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12. Benton, T., *Dream Of Machines: Futurism and l'Esprit Nouveau*, Journal Of Design History, (UK: Oxford University Press), 1990, Vol.3, No.1, p31
13. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p58
14. Ibid., p60

*“A work of art is an association, a symphony of consonant and architectural forms, in architecture and sculpture as well as painting.”*¹³

- Ozenfant and Le Corbusier, 1920

Purists envision the surface of a painting as a three-dimensional space,¹⁴ the ‘architectural form’ of layering is apparent in their painting and architecture. This layering effect,¹⁷ or ‘collagist’ method of construction,¹⁶ is a key concern to Purists, as is their strict use of primary colours (of their own ‘major scale’). Colours determine not only the volume/s each layer represents, but that form continues to be the focus. Colours can also determine which volume is pushed forward and which recedes within the composition.¹⁷

15. Naegele, D., *Le Corbusier And The Space Of Photography: Photo-murals, Pavilions and Multi-media Spectacles, History Of Photography*, (Taylor & Francis Ltd.), 1998, Vol.22, No.2, p129

16. Frampton, K., *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, (1980) 4th ed., (Singapore: Thames & Hudson), 2010, p153

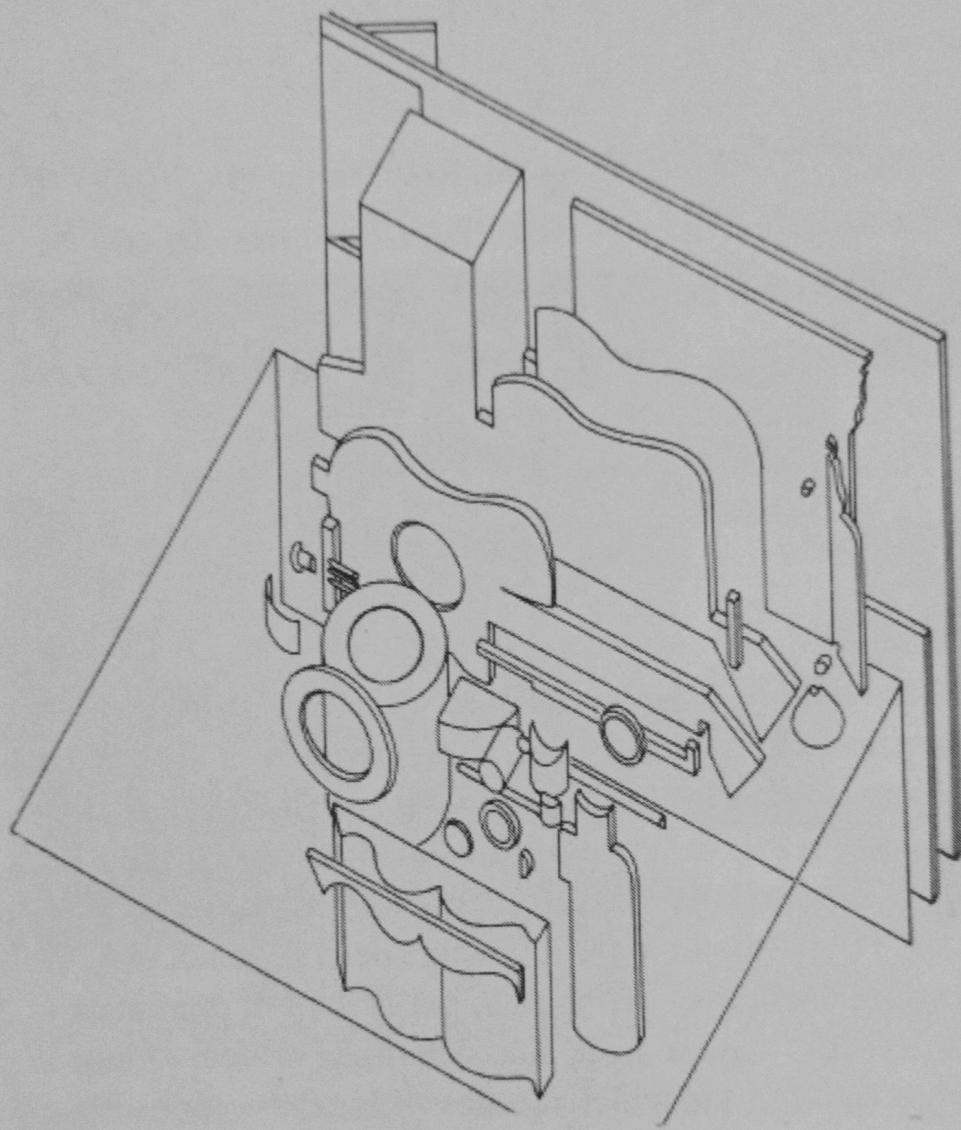


Fig. 10 - Layered Breakdown of Purist Painting
'Nature morte à la pile d'assiettes et au livre'
published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, (New York: Rizzoli), 1991, p72

17. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p58

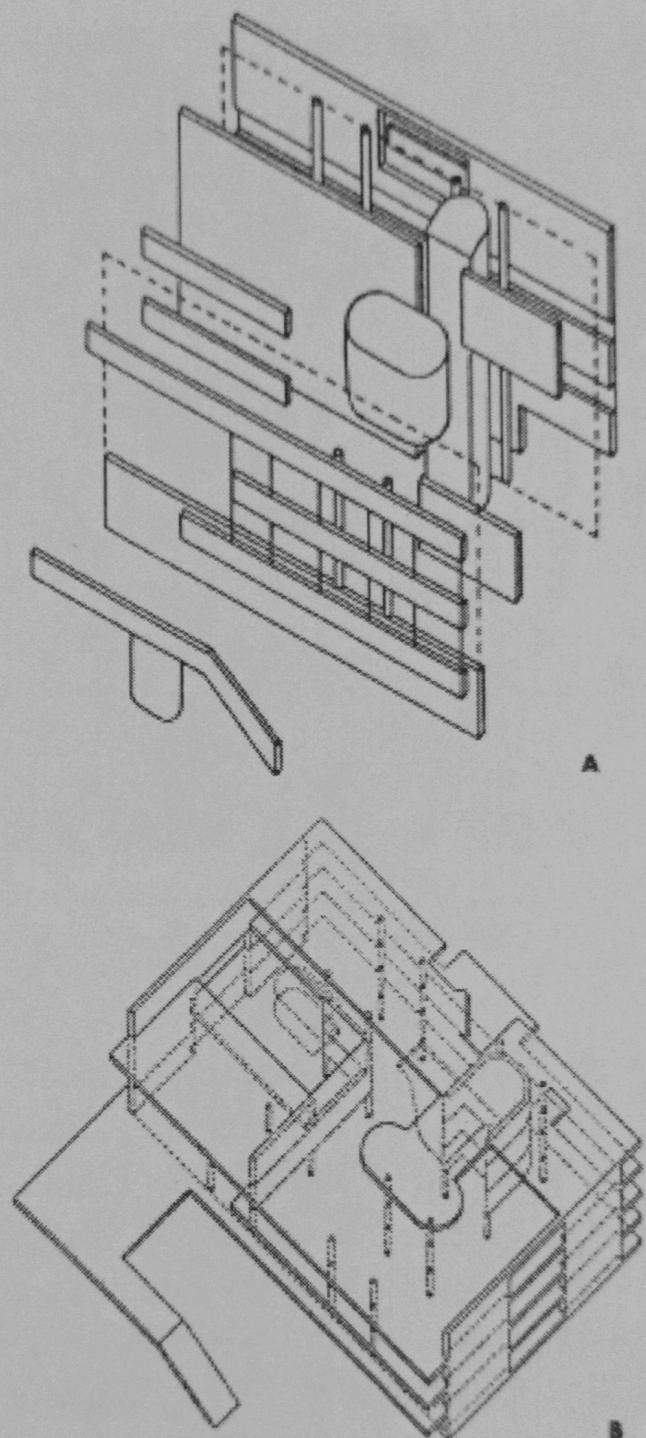


Fig. 11 - Layered Breakdown of 'Villa Stein'
published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, (New York: Rizzoli), 1991, p87

1.3 Holistic Approach and Density

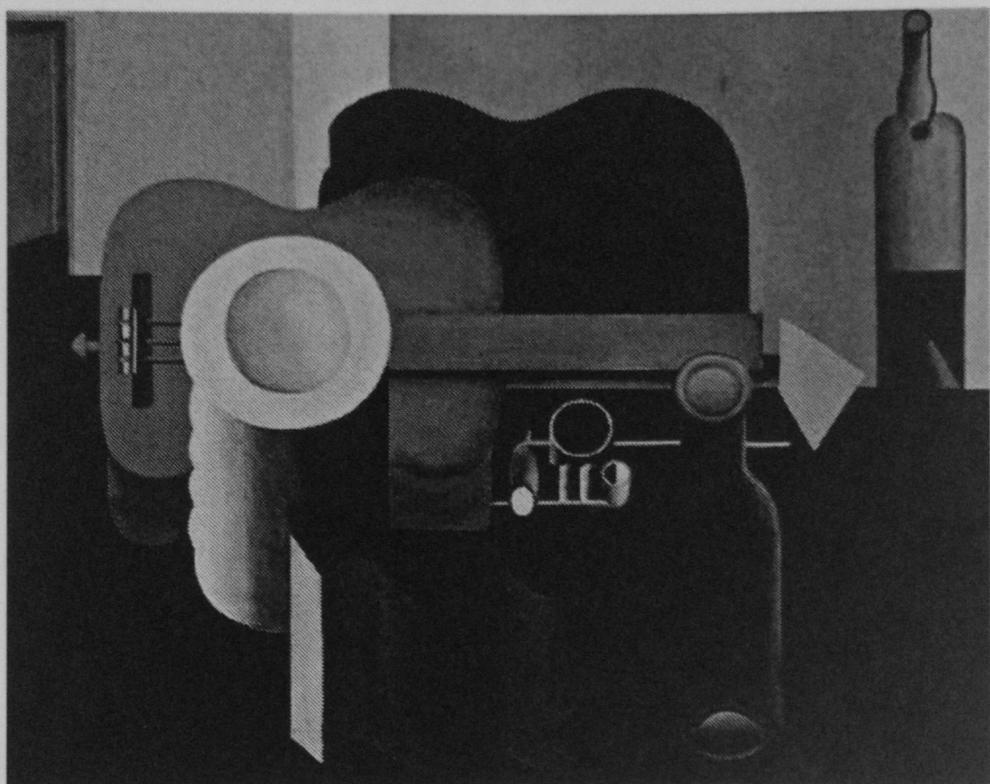


Fig. 12 - Nature morte à la pile d'assiettes et au livre, 1920
published at '<http://www.maihuaw.com/?article-67.html>', sourced on
20th June, 2014

Yet, even with the Purist layering effect, the work should not appear fragmentary.¹⁸ The Purist space must give an impression of the whole,¹⁹ via the primary forms which “*discipline the groups of its masses, and locate its capital points.*”^{20a} No element of space should ‘appear’ to receive greater density of light and/or shade than the next,^{20b} which is achieved through a ‘method of weighting’. A Purist art work should appear to remain indifferent.²¹ This light and shade constant is to prevent any accidental sensations and again maintain form as the focus. Form is ‘the architectural achievement’.²²

18. Ibid., p60

19. Richards, S., *Le Corbusier And The Concept Of Self*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003, p70

20a & b. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p60

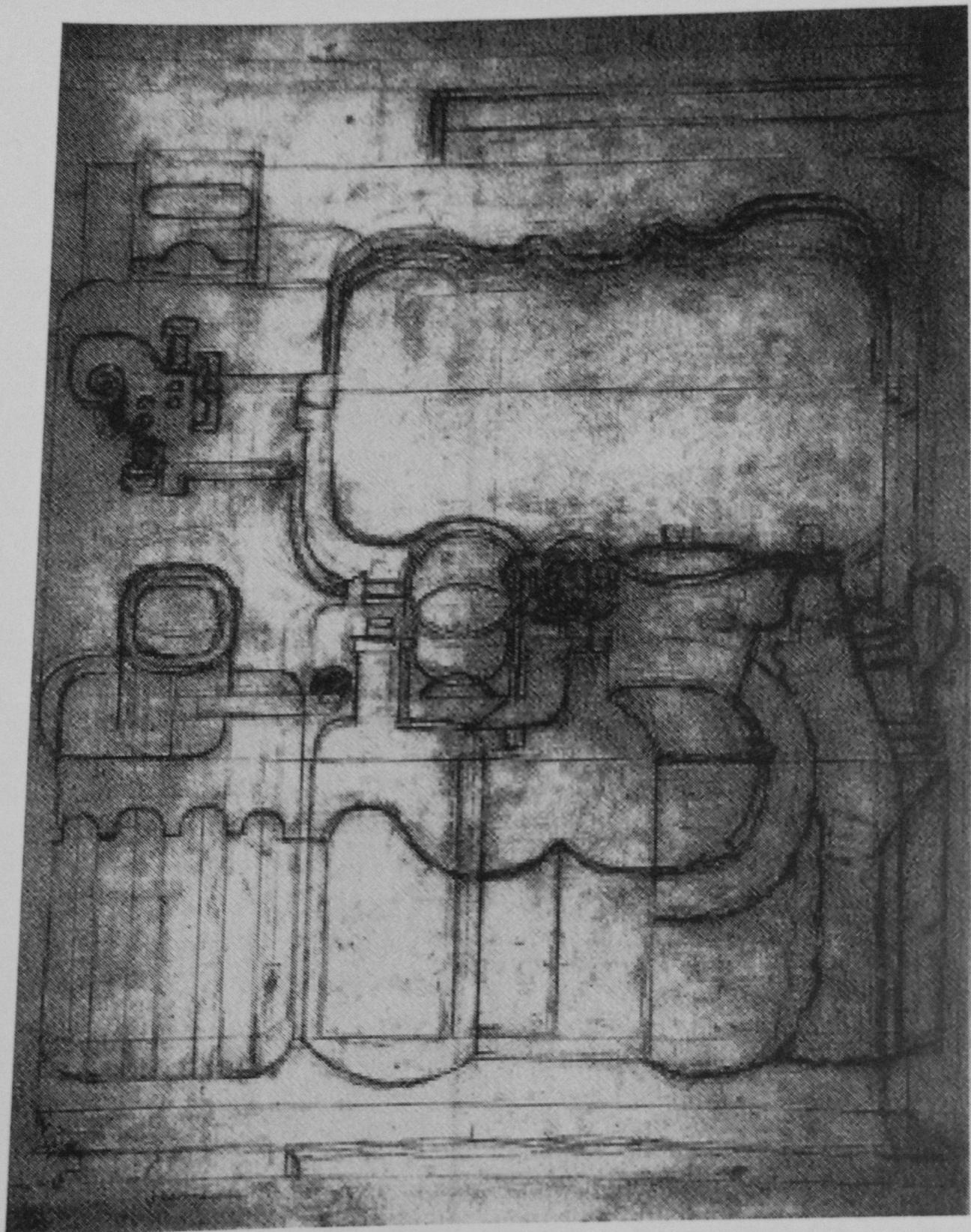


Fig. 13 - Feuillantines. Etude pour violon et bouteille, 1926
published in Richards, S., *Le Corbusier And The Concept Of Self*,
(New Haven & London: Yale University Press), 2003, p86

21. Ibid., p61

22. Ibid., p64

1.4 Modulation and Relationships



Fig. 14 - The Greek Musical Scale
published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, (New York: Rizzoli), 1991, p12

Modulation is seen as the greatest technical device to implement order, letting “*the smallest element measure the largest*,”²³ as geometries are manipulated into precise relationships.²⁴ This is the proportional system that completes the Purist syntax.

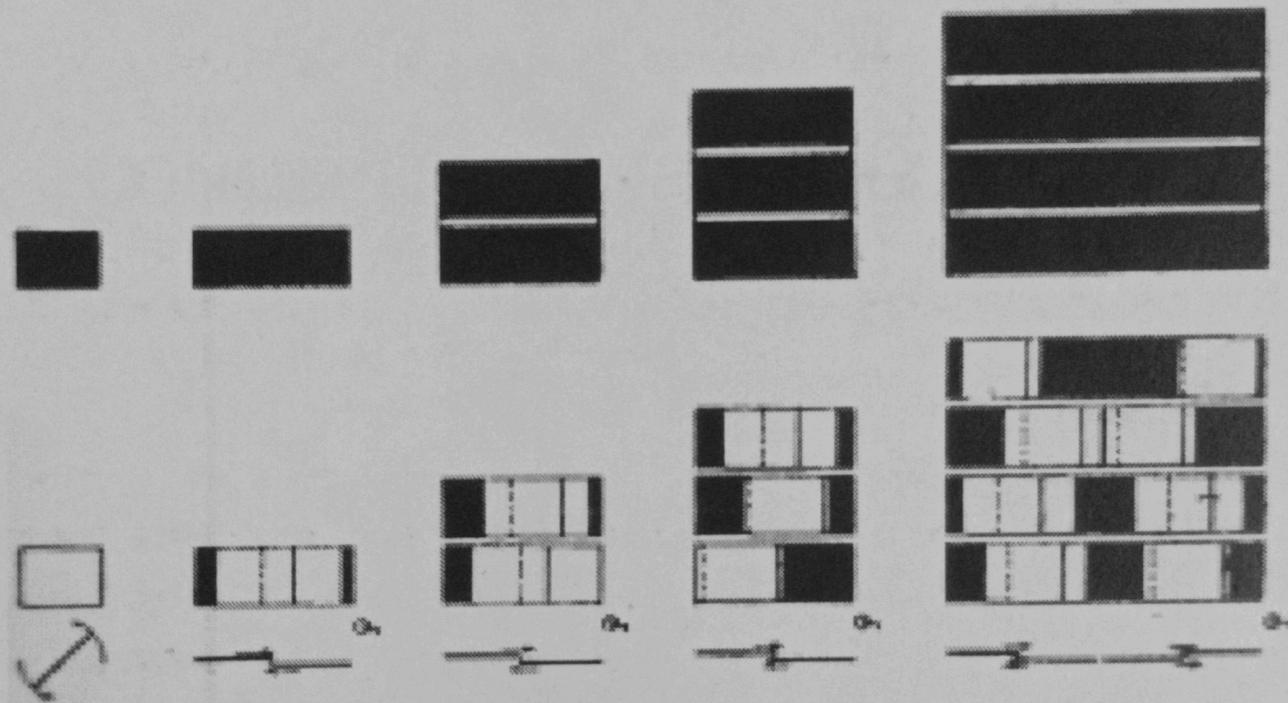


Fig. 15 - Standardised Sliding Windows Relationship to Framework published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, (New York: Rizzoli), 1991, p41

23. Ibid., p61

24. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p248