



FIGURE 14-4. The Villa Savoye

Wright had strong views on the role of architecture; Le Corbusier was also strong-willed, but had a rather different set of ideals. Whereas Wright worked on the relationship between art and nature:

Le Corbusier invented a proportional system—the “Modulor,” which drew together the Golden Section, a six-foot human figure, and harmonic proportions in an elaborate Corbusian theorem supposedly reconciling mechanization and “natural order.” (Curtis 1996, p. 412)

The Villa Savoye has provoked awe on architects:

Like any work of a high order, the Villa Savoye evades facile categorization. It is simple and complex, cerebral and sensuous. Laden with ideas, it still expresses these directly through shapes, volumes, and spaces “in a certain relationship.” A “classic” moment of modern architecture, it also has affinities with the architecture of the past. It was a central concern of Le Corbusier’s philosophy that a vision of contemporary life be given expression in architectural forms of perennial value, and in the Villa Savoye one recognizes echoes of old classical themes: repose, proportion, clarity, simple trabeation. (Curtis 1996, p. 284)

People may disagree on matters of state, and for some the Villa Savoye may look like a white box ready for lift-off; after all, *de gustibus et coloris non est disputandum*. It is on a different set of considerations, that of its practical value as house, that we may pass more unequivocal judgement. Here Le Corbusier’s clients took a rather different view: