



Le Corbusier: And the Continual Revolution in Architecture

By Charles Jencks

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Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier dominated twentieth-century architecture much the way Picasso dominated painting. His outstanding achievements, his vision of a harmonious machine civilization, his paintings, drawings, sculpture, architecture, city planning, and writing together compose a portrait of the architect as "protean creator." *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture* is a fascinating study of this genius.

Taking into account recent scholarship and new theories of architectural change, noted architectural historian Charles Jencks traces the personal and professional development of Le Corbusier. In association with the Purist painter Amédée Ozenfant, he gained fame in the 1920s, publishing the journal *L'Esprit Nouveau* and four seminal modernist tracts: *Towards a New Architecture*, *The City of Tomorrow*, *The Decorative Art of Today*, and *La Peinture Moderne (Modern Painting)*. Jencks demonstrates the influence of these classic texts by way of the architect's major projects of the period: Villa La Roche, Workers' Housing at Pessac, the Plan Voisin for Paris, Villa Stein, Villa Savoye, and the steel furniture, including the famed *grand confort* and *chaise longue*. Through the 1930s and into the 1940s Le Corbusier embraced a new worldliness that included not only hand-built masonry but also an awakened sensuality and a shift in politics; after World War II, he embarked on yet another transformation, this time towards a new brutalist mode that saw the realization of the controversial Unité d'Habitation and the truly revolutionary chapel at Ronchamp.

Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture presents over two hundred illustrations including architectural drawings, plans, and photographs, as well as paintings, sketches, and publication facsimiles. With this illuminating collection of images and his revealing and provocative text, Charles Jencks has produced a compelling and comprehensive analysis of the twentieth-century master who stayed well ahead of his followers to reinvent the art of architecture over and over again.

Architectural writer and designer

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

It could be said that Le Corbusier was to 20th-century architecture what James Joyce was to its literature: each represents for his discipline an inventively pure, Modernist approach. Postmodern theorist, historian, and architect Jencks presents a critical biography of Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, who took as a pseudonym a variation on his mother's ancestral name, Le Corbesier. Beginning with the architect's early regionalist work, Jencks examines Le Corbusier's growth into the role of master architect and innovator through detailed, original, and illuminating analyses not only of his building designs but also of his drawings and paintings, paying particular attention to his writings. Jencks argues for an appreciation of the deep sensuality in the architecture and its sources. The captions are lengthy and carefully descriptive, but a greater number of plans and color photographs of the higher-quality buildings as well as greater resolution would have enhanced this notable addition to our understanding of this ultimate architect as artist. For subject collections at all academic and larger public libraries. DPaul Glassman, New York Sch. of Interior Design Lib.

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About the Author

Charles Jencks is the author of, among many other titles, *Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture*, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, and *The Architecture of the Jumping Universe*.

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