

# Analysing villa savoye essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Swiss-French writer, painter and mostly self-taught architect Le Corbusier was one of the pioneers of what is now called Modern architecture or the International style. He is best known for his architectural projects and theoretical thought. (Liukkonen, P.

2008. Creative Commons Nimea-Epakaupallinen-Ei muutettuja teoksia 1.0 Suomi. ) Believing that architecture is a combination of simple forms and utilitarian needs he created “ a machine for living in”. (MATTHEW, K.

1994. GREAT BUILDINGS COLLECTION. Artifice, Inc. ) Figure 1: Le Corbusier (JSVisuals. 2010. Mtanga.

JSVisuals. ) Figure 1: Le Corbusier (JSVisuals. 2010. Mtanga. JSVisuals. ) In one of his books Le Corbusier wrote “ Working by calculation, engineers employ geometrical forms, satisfying our eyes by their geometry and our understanding by their mathematics; their work is on the direct line of good art.

” (LE CORBUSIER, 1946: 8) In the following essay I will discuss Le Corbusier’s five principles and how they are applied to the Villa Savoye, how these reflect cubism and how space time relationships, three dimensional qualities and circulation is influenced and incorporated into the Villa Savoye. FIVE PRINCIPLES OF LE CORBESIER: Figure 2: The Villa Savoye facade showing pilotis (WASSMANN, C. 009. Anarchitecture. Creative Commons Attributue. ) Figure 2: The Villa Savoye facade showing pilotis (WASSMANN, C.

2009. Anarchitecture. Creative Commons Attributue. ) The volume of the structure is supported by pilotis. This lifts it off the earth and frees up the

stretch of lawn below. This allowed for access of motor vehicles, which were parked below the house making the ground floor merely an elaborate garage and servants' quarters.

The curvature of the trajectory is reinforced by the crescent arrangement of the glass wall which forms the entrance. This dramatizes the entrance.

Figure 3: Roof Garden (House Design Idea. 2010.

House Design Idea. ) Figure 3: Roof Garden (House Design Idea. 2010. House Design Idea.

) The next point would be to create a roof garden by taking the building as a mechanical slab and lifting the structure (this is done as mentioned above). Then a garden would be planted to compensate for the loss of functional space on the ground floor. The roof terrace serves to link the interior and exterior space. This puts the building into perspective with its surroundings. Resembling a Greek temple it allows the occupant to feel the significance of the backdrop and almost to remind them of their insignificance compared with their environment.

The facade is freed by removing load bearing interior walls using columns that are situated within the structure rather than along the edges. This allows for the Villa Savoye to appear as if it is a “floating” box. The solid slabs seem to be hanging loosely, joined only by the windows in between. The transparency of the windows dematerialises the structure. This arrangement permits ribbon window.

They turn around the corners creating a panorama or uninterrupted view of the horizon. It also provides sufficient illumination and ventilation. Lastly an open floor plan is required. Internally placed columns provide the structural support and a free form plan. This offers a flexible and versatile interior space. (Au, F.

2008. Le Corbusier. Gather Inc. ) (COHEN, 2006: 43-47) CUBISM THEORY: Cubism started out as an intellectual rebellion. It stood against the artistic communication of earlier periods.

Paint texture and colour, subject matter with emotional concepts, the use of light on form, movement, atmosphere, and the illusionism that was created though natural perspective. Rather an analytical system wherein the three-dimensional subject was fragmented and reproduced as a flat object, often in collage form. In cubism right angles and straight lines were preferred and colour schemes were often monochromatic. Cubism was a conceptual theory, often linked to the closing of one's eye and remembering the object. It was about the experience of the painting or the journey through the house. (INFORMATION PLEASE.

2000. Cubist Theory. Information Please Pearson Education. ) Cubism or purism is reflected in the Villa Savoye by its relation to a cubist painting. It had scattered, versatile spaces, sharp edges, smooth-surfaces, geometric volumes are used. In the villa Savoye this is translated through rectangular blocks of concrete, steel, and glass.

Also in the fact that the Villa Savoye was designed to be viewed in multiple perspectives, like a cubist or purist painting that was fragmented into

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various segments to show the multiple views. Cubist painting should be viewed as several experiences placed together to show a sequence of events. Much like the Villa Savoye, this was meant to be experienced like a motion picture. Uninterrupted frames of contrasting, flexible rooms. You were meant to walk through and experience it as a whole, whilst appreciating the individuality and versatility of each space.

The continuation of the transparent materials, applied in the ribbon windows and sliding doors is a feature also seen in purism or cubism. As well as creating regularity of geometric shapes. The purity in the sense of colour and ornaments within the Villa Savoye also represents Cubism. The plain white exterior walls and generally neutral colour scheme on the interior is typical of purism; Le Corbusier's interpretation of cubism.

Clean, subtle, simple elements make this Cubist villa stand out in Le Corbusier's architecture. (Au, F. 2008. Le Corbusier.

Gather Inc. ) SPACE-TIME EXPERIENCE, THREE DIMENSIONAL QUALITIES ;  
& CIRCULATION: Figure 4: Curved Glass Wall (Sullivan, M. A. 2006. Villa Savoye. Bluffton.

Figure 4: Curved Glass Wall (Sullivan, M. A. 2006. Villa Savoye. Bluffton.

The Villa Savoye was carefully designed with consideration for how the spaces would be experienced and how it would interact with the environment, its users and their activities, needs and lifestyle. Located not far out of the small village of Poissy it was set in a lush meadow and surrounded by trees. This made it important for Le Corbusier to be conscious

of the site and to reflect and use it to its full potential. Without disturbing the natural environment, he wanted to merge the house with its surroundings and thus emphasise the importance of the earth.

This also created a majestic backdrop and setting. The approach to the house would be convenient as it was designed to suit the Citroën automobile as well as encouraging good circulation and motion early on in the design. This “fluid” approach gives the viewer a glimpse of what is to be expected of the rest of the villa. As well as being significant and unique in its curvaceous form of the ground floor and its individuality to the rest of the Villa Savoye exterior. This distinctiveness is reinforced with the curved glass wall along the ground floor.

The glass factor is however repeated through the ribbon windows. This allows the interior and exterior to be linked and the three dimensional properties are not only relative to the interior but also to the surroundings or the bigger picture. The rectangular first floor is supported by narrow and delicate pilotis. This makes the box like structural seem to float and appear light and airy. (BRASELL, E. 2008.

Villa Savoye in Poissy France by Le Corbusier. Suite101. ) Figure 5: Spiral Staircase (Object. 010. Villa Savoye Spiral.

Object. Figure 5: Spiral Staircase (Object. 2010. Villa Savoye Spiral. Object. Upon entering the Villa Savoye you are presented with the choice of stairs or ramps, which facilitate for vertical circulation.

Le Corbusier believed that stairs interrupted the flow of movement and separated spaces. Ramps on the other hand linked spaces by encouraging continual movement or motion, so as to not break the flow or circulation. By having ramps one could view the space in one continual movement, like watching a motion picture, it would have no interruptions. It extends to the second floor terrace, leading your eye straight through the structure and again towards the outside and up towards the sky.

The cylindrical staircase, along with some of the other features resembles a ship or “ machine for living”. Figure 6: Ramp (Benton, T. 2009. The Courtauld Institute of Art.

Art ; amp; Architecture. Figure 6: Ramp (Benton, T. 2009. The Courtauld Institute of Art. Art ; amp; Architecture.

(COHEN, 2006: 43) Once on the first floor public and private areas are clearly divided by the “ L” form. Narrow hallways lead to the bedrooms and main bathroom clearly sending the message that these are private areas. The bedrooms have a grandeur feeling to them, almost like the Parisian mansions of the 18th century. The bathroom is well illuminated with a top light.

The curves and colour of the bathroom suggest water and relaxation. The private areas seem to have a greater traditional influence. This is possibly done to make the occupants feel more at home and comfortable in the private areas. Figure 7: Interior (de Lama J. P. 2008.

CA 0910/c. Universidad. Figure 7: Interior (de Lama J. P. 2008. CA 0910/c.

Universidad. Figure 7: Interior (de Lama J. P. 2008. CA 0910/c. Universidad.

Figure 7: Interior (de Lama J. P. 2008. CA 0910/c. Universidad. The path of the circulation moves through into the living area.

More than half of this space consists of the patio which opens up to the terraced roof garden. Being separated by a continual horizontal window wall that can open up completely, the transition and circulation is effortless and the interior and exterior are in perfect harmony. (COHEN, 2006: 44) The circulation throughout the Villa Savoye is encouraged with curvilinear shapes, large, open plan and minimally furnished spaces. The geometry of the villa is designed so that the occupants can naturally and gracefully move through the spaces, experiencing the harmony and unity between the forms, light, interior and exterior. (BRASELL, E. 2008.

Villa Savoye in Poissy France by Le Corbusier. Suite101. ) CONCLUSION: The villa's simplistic style reinforces the link to the exterior as well as the influences from the architects before Le Corbusier. " More is less". It perfectly incorporates the five points of Le Corbusier and well as maintaining unity and harmony, through logical circulation.

The unique form of the structure creates a truly captivating three dimensional experience throughout the villa. As well as putting a new aspect into the relationship between space and time. Le Corbusier's designed allows the occupant to smoothly navigate through the villa and creates a journey by combining space and time to this immaculate form! He has thus crafted and machine for living that has stood the test of time and still today is a



recognized as very modern, sophisticated and technologically advanced for its origin.