Modern Architecture: Continuity and Change

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00-2:50
Room: 166 LA

Introduction
This course will examine Modern Architecture, focusing on significant built and theoretical work from the period of approximately 1890 to 1990. Key buildings by architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Giuseppe Terragni, Alvar Aalto, Louis Kahn, Carlo Scarpa, Robert Venturi, James Stirling, Jorn Utzon, Fumihiko Maki, Tadao Ando and others will serve as exemplars for the ideas that have defined Modernism from the period before the WWII, to post war developments primarily in the United States, Europe and Japan.

Analysis
This approach will be to attempt an understanding of the work through the artifact itself. This will involve the analysis of key buildings through the examination of architectural documentation (plans, sections, etc.) including diagrams which will attempt to distill the principles and elements that animate each one. From this perspective, visual literacy and familiarity with modes of architectural representation will be critical.
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Readings
In addition the course will require readings by key critics of Modernism which include Colin Rowe, Christian Norberg Schulz, Kenneth Frampton, Reyner Banham, Robert Venturi and others who have provided important insights into the underpinnings of this body of work. Movements within the larger context of Modernism will be explored such as “Cubism, Futurism, Neo-Plasticism,” “Organic” Architecture, New Brutalism, Post Modernism as they have influenced key buildings and defined the work of master architects.

Requirements
The format of the class will be weekly lectures that will incorporate at least one building analysis from the masterworks explored. Students will be required to keep a notebook that will incorporate sketches as well as text that records the lectures. The final project for the course will be to select a work from a list of modern buildings and to document and analyze that work in teams of three.

Provisional Topics and Schedule

1. Introduction: Modern Pioneers
2. Modern Architecture to 1900

3. American Architecture and FLW
4. Le Corbusier and Towards and New Architecture

5. European Modernism: DeStijl, Futurism, Expressionism, Rationalism
6. The Bauhaus, Gropius and Mies

7. Le Corbusier, Italian Rationalism
8. Urbanism

9. Alvar Aalto
10. FLW: Fallingwater, Guggenheim Museum

11. Postwar Le Corbusier
12. Carlo Scarpa and Nuanced Modernism

13. Louis Kahn
14. Robert Venturi and Post Modernism

15. James Stirling, Ticinese Architects
16. The New Architecture of Japan