

SIDE GALLERY

LE CORBUSIER & OSCAR NIEMEYER

Influences and counter influences on modern design (1929-1965)

October 1st – December 29th, 2018.

@side.gallery.bcn

BARCELONA – 1 OCTOBER 2018 - Bringing together two of the greatest architects of all times, Side Gallery navigates through time on a dialogue between two masters of modern architecture. **LE CORBUSIER & OSCAR NIEMEYER Influences and counter influences on modern design (1929-1965)** opens this fall at Side Gallery, Barcelona.

*"After so many years of purist discipline and loyalty to the right angle, Le Corbusier caught wind of the premise of a new baroque from elsewhere, and he seems to have decided to leave aside the honest right-angle."
(Amedee Ozenfant)*

Oscar Niemeyer was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1907. At age 23, he enrolled at the Escola Nacional de Belas Artes in Rio to study architecture, graduating in 1934. Early on, he joined the office of the architect and town planner Lúcio Costa, one of the few modernists practising in Brazil at that time. Costa invited the celebrated Swiss Modernist Le Corbusier to Rio in 1929 and then again in 1936. By the time of the second visit, Costa had promoted Niemeyer to the team formed to design a new ministry of education building. As a result, Niemeyer spent much time with Le Corbusier and was permanently influenced by his vision of a new architecture.

Niemeyer swiftly learned to design according to Le Corbusier's five principles: full-width strip windows; rigid sun shading; roof gardens; pilotis; and most importantly, free-forming plans within a grid of columns. Taking this into account, Oscar added to these advantages a tremendous exploitation of free form, greater perhaps than that deployed by the master himself. As Le Corbusier observed years later: "From the outset Niemeyer knew how to give full freedom to the discoveries of modern architecture."

White concrete, graceful curves, and primary-colour accents are signatures of Oscar Niemeyer. He designed numerous houses that are masterworks of mid-century modernism with a magical combination of lushness and spareness, and some spectacular high-rise housing and museums. He also played a major role in the design of the United Nations' headquarters. His masterpiece though, is the great city of Brasilia, the capital city in the undeveloped center of Brazil whose layout was created by Costa but whose iconic architecture was all designed by Niemeyer. Created between 1956 and 1960, Brasilia is profoundly flawed, profoundly beautiful, and profoundly moving—a testament to an entire nation's belief that the 20th century might truly create a utopian city and that modern architecture could serve as the symbol of Brazil to the world.

Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, worldwide known as Le Corbusier, was born in Switzerland in 1887. Architect, urban planner, painter, writer, designer and theorist, his designs combine the functionalism of the modern movement with a bold, sculptural expressionism. He belonged to the first generation of the so-called International school of architecture and was their ablest propagandist in his numerous writings.

Le Corbusier placed systems of harmony and proportion at the centre of his design philosophy. His faith in the mathematical order of the universe was closely bound to the golden section, which he

explicitly used in his Modulor system for the scale of architectural proportion. After World War II, Le Corbusier sought efficient ways to house large numbers of people in response to the urban housing crisis believing that his new, modern architectural forms would provide an innovative solution that would raise the quality of life for the lower classes.

His visionary books, his startling white houses and his progressive urban plans set him at the head of the modern movement in the 1920s. From the beginning of his career until the very end, he was dedicated equally to thinking space differently. Le Corbusier was one step out of his time: an innovator in several different niches, he has contributed to general development of modern architecture and design greatly. His work ranges through approximately 400 projects to 75 buildings in twelve countries. His most famous architectural works include the Villa Savoye, Unité d'Habitation, the Chapelle Notre Dame du Haut, in Ronchamp and the spectacular city of Chandigarh in India.

They were not exactly contemporary, but the two architects delivered, within the space of less than a decade, two of the world's architectural jewels. Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer had a point of intersection in their careers that make them unique, they both designed an entire city from a drawing table: Le Corbusier bequeathed to humanity in 1951, the Indian Chandigarh; and Niemeyer, raised alongside Lúcio Costa, the capital of Brazil in 1960.

It is well known these enormous personalities had contributed greatly to modern architecture. Both in their own and unique way: one by using the curve line; the other by employing the straight angle. Whether one agrees or not with their principles or fume at them, their influence on contemporary architecture cannot be overemphasized.

Niemeyer was among the last of a long line of Modernist true believers who stretch from Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe to the architects who defined the post-war architecture of the late 1940s, '50s and '60s. Le Corbusier on the other hand, is well known as the founder of modern architecture and his important contributions cannot be overlooked. Working alongside each other, they have both influenced one another facing the world with unique, unprecedented interchange of human values and a remarkable debate of ideas on a worldwide scale on the development of the Modern Movement. They revolutionized architecture by pioneering on the invention of a new architectural language.

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Side Gallery, established in Barcelona, works with international design of the twentieth century as well as contemporary design. The gallery focuses on Latin American historical design from countries such as Brasil, Mexico, or Venezuela, primarily concentrating on the work of Oscar Niemeyer, Lina Bo Bardi, Luis Barragán, Clara Porset, Antonio Bonet, Gonzalo Córdoba, Miguel Arroyo and Joaquim Tenreiro, but also with a special sensibility for Spanish design of the past century and rare pieces by relevant architects worldwide; a criterion of diversity pursuing a transversal proposal in the design market.

For its contemporary design projects, the gallery invites international designers to re-think design and handcraft traditions, proposing a dialogue between two centuries to develop limited-editions works, commissioned and produced exclusively.

When

October 1st– December 29th, 2018.

Where

Enric Granados, 80
08008, Barcelona.