

1 Twentieth Century Stained Glass by Patrick Reyntiens

Though it is a pretty hardworn cliché by this time, it is still true to say that there has been a great revival of interest and practice in stained glass in the twenty odd years since the war ended. But what is still an interesting question is how far the art of stained glass has been incorporated into the development of the modern movement in architecture in this country. The end of the Gothic Revival, which could be placed in the mid-fifties, might have spelt the end of stained glass, not only because the formal reason for stained glass had diminished in architecture, but because there has been, since then, a progressive drying up of the traditional motive for having stained glass, namely elevated sentiment. This drying up, I hasten to add, isn't at all a bad thing, but the point is, that any alternative conviction on which to base any commission of stained glass has been a very long time coming forward. Any alternative conviction in the building of churches, come to that; it is partly because there is no settled policy in church building that the inclusion of stained glass looks as though it survives as a more or less sporadic phenomenon.

The enormous popular success of Coventry Cathedral has not really altered this situation in the slightest. Coventry remains, as perhaps unwittingly it was intended to remain, an isolated instance, not merely isolated in the context I am describing, by reason of its use of stained glass, but because it has failed to influence or inspire the course of church architecture. From the modern point of view, Coventry Cathedral could be called the last *bonne bouche* of the Gothic Revival feast. I believe that the intention of the architect was the same as any nineteenth-century church architect, that is to create a kind of all-embracing *gesamkunst* and by this means, in calling on all the talent available to contribute, to produce an overwhelming effect on every spectator of mystical inclusion, a summing up of a nation's aspiration for atonement. Coventry has this quality in common with many national shrines put up after the first world war, the Stockholm Town Hall, and the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle amongst them. In practice the artefacts contributing didn't work out that way; instead of contributing to the unity of the building they tended to stand out as individual experiences of various degrees of intensity which pulled the spectator away from the contemplation of the building as a whole. In fact, twentieth-century individuality was asked to play a rôle in a nineteenth-century scheme of *gesamkunst*, and the result was to tear the spectator this way and that.

The younger generation of architects are determined to avoid this kind of contradiction: so much so that they are extremely suspicious of anything that is not pure architectural form; colour they only admit in furniture, carpets and occasionally in a painting on the wall. Most young architects are highly suspicious of what in the addendum column of the quantity surveyor's documents are called 'art works', and it

is a fact that the buildings that get the highest praise nowadays, like the Stirling and Gowan Department of Engineering at Leicester University, and the Smithson's *Economist* Building in St James's are splendidly non-art. They are only too aware of the destructive effect of the physical limits and individuality of a particular work of art. However, as Vincent Scully has pointed out, most English architecture in the last ten years has been better on the outside than on the inside. England has usually excelled in architecture seen from the outside. It is in the manipulation of interior space that there is at present in England a general sense of everyone waiting for something to be done; no great creation of interior space has taken place here so far to compare with achievements in America or Germany. Whether the creation will take into account all the possibilities remains to be seen, but there is a real hope that churches will be put up that will be a direct contribution to the modern movement in the way of interiors: the kind of thing that has been hinted at in structures as diverse as Ronchamp, La Tourette, and the Berlin Philharmonic Hall. It is in the manipulation of spaces such as these that stained glass should make a contribution, though not in the individualistic way of Coventry, and most probably not using the medium of lead or concrete as we know it today. It largely depends on church authorities picking on those young architects who realize what an interior as a work of art can be within the framework of the modern movement in architecture.

2 The Cinema: Prognosis – Hopeful by Maryvonne Butcher

It may sometimes seem to the disenchanted observer that the health of the cinema is never very stable, alternating feverishly between lysis and crisis, with crisis inevitably the more newsworthy of the two precarious conditions. All the same, the troughs of lysis may well be more productive of a higher general level of cinema, the fallow periods permitting the second rank of directors to catch their breath and consolidate the advances made by the Antonionis and Bergmans of this world.

At the time of writing it would seem that 1964 comes into the category of a non-crisis year though, since we go to press before Venice has revealed its treasures—among them the first film Antonioni has made in colour – it is perhaps rash to predicate too sweepingly and too soon anything about the quality of the year as a whole.

At Cannes this year, certainly, there was nothing like the breath-taking eruption of 1959 when the new wave of young French directors swept in, virtually obliterating the memory of any more conventional films shown here that year. The winner, Jacques Demy's *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, was streets ahead of anything else in its sheer originality and imaginative use of the medium; but there was no overlooking the fact that it had been seen widely before the Festival ever opened. All the same, the way in