ZONE B - Europe and the UK

Introduction

It is important to us as designers to learn the foundations of the designed and built form.

Learning about the architecture and design of buildings around us; those that have been inspired by the past; and influenced by the present; will enable us to make considered design choices; and for some designers, to forge the way ahead in innovation.

Understanding these foundations of architecture and design; offers us a depth of knowledge, an understanding and an appreciation of the history and thus the development of the built and designed form.

On a practical level, understanding the “terminology” and influences of architecture and design helps us to communicate and exchange design ideas. Buildings from the beginning were built to serve a mixture of socio-economic, ideological, political functions, climatic conditions and aesthetic ideals.

Whether we live in the UK, Germany or Switzerland, the history of our past architecture and design continues to influence that of the present. Whether the influence arose from writings, images or the movement of people, these architectural eras continue to reflect the world around us.

From the architecture created during Ancient Greece and Rome, to that created during sovereign and political reigns, each era has continued to influence and build on the next. Buildings were often influenced too by the materials that were available at the time, until transport and the machine age made all manner of engineering, ornamentation and materials available.

From the influence of Roman architecture on Byzantine, to Renaissance on Georgian, each style has been defined by specific architectural features; and whether we examine buildings built of a specific era or those influenced by the era, many styles are revisited – neoclassical, neo-gothic, etc.

From Sir Christopher Wren, one of England’s most acclaimed architects who designed the rebuild of St Paul’s Cathedral after the Great Fire, to Walter Gropius, the German architect, founder of the Bauhaus movement and widely regarded as one of the masters of modern architecture, the rich and diverse work of great architects and designers across the UK and Europe continues to live on. Great buildings were influenced or inspired by those of earlier eras, developed with advancements in engineering and building technologies, the availability of new materials; and of course, great buildings were often, and continue to be, a response to new design ideals and social references and requirements.

NOTE: There are many countries and styles that are not covered within this zone, these are just some examples.
Merrion Square

Location: Dublin, Ireland
Type: Residential
Date: 1765
Style: Georgian Neoclassical

Architect: Various – including Samuel Sproule
Influences: Renaissance
Relevance: Merrion Square is considered one of the city's finest surviving squares. Three sides are lined with Georgian redbrick townhouses

Characteristics:
- Proportioned according to the classical orders with details borrowed from ancient Greece and Rome.
- Classical designs and motifs were adapted to new uses and forms.
- Balance and simple mathematical ratios to determine the height of a window in relation to its width or the shape of a room.

Materiality:
- Brick (Exterior)
- Stone (Exterior)
- Red, tan, or white colours (Exterior)
- Bronze (Interior)
- Brass (Interior)
- Silk (Interior)
- Velvet (Interior)
Old City of Bern - Kramgasse

Location: Bern, Switzerland  
Type: Commercial & Residential

Date: 1705 – 1745  
Style: Baroque

Architect: Various including Albrecht Stürler

Influences: Baroque, Medieval, Classical - Roman

Relevance: Famous street in the medieval city centre of Bern. The Kramgasse and its buildings are a heritage site of national significance and part of the UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Site that encompasses the Old City.

Characteristics:

- Classical vocabulary of Renaissance.
- Arches and columns.
- Symmetrical.
- Opulent and dramatic with irregular shapes and extravagant ornamentation.
- Form, light and shadow, and dramatic intensity.

Materiality:

- Sandstone (Exterior)
- Timber (Exterior)
- Tiles (Exterior)
- Gilded wood (Interior)
- Plaster, stucco (Interior)
- Marble or faux finishing (Interior)
Secession Building

Location: Vienna, Austria  
Type: Exhibition Hall  
Date: 1898  
Style: Art Nouveau  
Architect: Joseph Maria Olbrich  
Influences: Art Nouveau  
Relevance: First exhibition hall in Europe to be dedicated to modern art and widely acknowledged as one of Europe’s finest Art Nouveau buildings. Also home to famous Art Nouveau artist Gustav Klimt’s ‘Beethoven Frieze’. Vienna has a rich Art Nouveau architectural legacy, the main designers of that period being Josef Hoffmann, Joseph Maria Olbrich, and Otto Wagner.

Characteristics:
- Includes a hierarchy of scales in design: architecture, interior design, decorative arts, including furniture, textiles, lighting and a range of visual arts.
- Asymmetrical shapes, exaggerated bulbous forms, arches and decorative surfaces with curved, plant-like designs.
- Flat, decorative patterns.
- Leaf and tendril motifs, intertwined organic forms, lavish birds, flowers, insects and other zoomorphs, as well as the hair and curvaceous bodies of beautiful women.

Materiality:
- Concrete
- Timber
- Metals
- Colours: gold, mustard yellow, dark red, olive, brown, violet & blue.
Großsiedlung Siemensstadt - Housing Estate

Location: Berlin, Germany

Type: Housing

Date: 1931

Style: Modernism/Bauhaus

Architect: Scharoun, Fred Forbat, Otto Bartning, Walter Gropius, Paul Rudolph Henning, and Hugo Häring

Influences: Modernism, Bauhaus

Relevance: Outstanding example of the movement that contributed to improving housing and living conditions for people with low incomes. It has had a considerable influence on the development of housing around the world and is one of the six Modernist Housing Estates in Berlin recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Characteristics:
- Simplified forms with no more ornament than is necessary to function.
- Visual emphasis on horizontal and vertical lines.
- Adoption of the machine aesthetic, with the use of industrially-produced materials.
- Simple environments in which people could live.
- Important contribution of the Bauhaus through modern furniture design.

Materiality:
- Glass
- Concrete
- Steel
St Martins Lane - Hotel

Location: London, England

Type: Hotel

Date: 1999

Style: Postmodern Contemporary/Eclectic

Architect: Philippe Starck

Influences: Postmodern - from the modern to the baroque

Relevance: Very influential contemporary interior, product, industrial and architectural designer who seeks ways to reduce cost and improve quality in mass-market goods. He has designed products for famous brands including Alessi.

Characteristics:
- Brilliant collision of influences — from the modern to the baroque.
- Dramatic and daring with the use of supersizing objects.
- Smart, witty, sophisticated and theatrical.
- Use of technology with interactive light displays that transform the spaces into changing mosaics of colour.

Materiality:
- Multitude of rich modern and traditional materials