English summaries

Rainer Zuch: The castle motif in surrealism

Surrealism is a hitherto unexplored area of the way castles are presented. Castles and palaces are a recurrent theme in the writings, paintings and films of surrealist artists of the 1920s and 1930s. Artists such as André Breton, Max Ernst, André Masson, Man Ray and René Magritte were the successors to the romantic traditions and the gothic novels of the 18th and 19th centuries. Castles appear as places charged with psychological symbolism. They are magic places of wonder or fantasy (Breton). Particularly important are ruins and ‚haunted castles‘. They function as metaphors for the struggle between a civilization in the process of disintegration and human yearnings which surrealism seeks to unleash to liberate mankind (Ernst, Masson). In addition there are the pictorial analogies between architecture and the human – in particular, female – body (Man Ray) and their use in semantic puzzles (Magritte).

Fritz Laupichler: Castles in comic strips – an iconographical survey

Hitherto there has been no satisfactory survey of the presentation of castles in comic strips. The author analyses fifteen comic series about knights and the Middle Ages which have appeared in album format in the German-speaking area since 1945. No uniform pattern emerges: Hal Foster (Prince Valiant) presents an eclectic fantasy world of castles with authentic, realistic set-pieces, while Hansrudi Wäscher (Sigurd; Falk) draws schematically unrealistic or romantically transmogrified castles. Willy Vandersteen (The Red Knight) and Craenhals (Roland) combine elements of the Arthurian epics of the fifth century with the history of Flanders in the 14th century. Hermann (The Bois-Maury towers) draws anonymous idealised castles as the setting for an adventurous saga. Dufossé (The Franks) also lays no claim to historical authenticity. Kraehn (Les aigles décapités) and Cayman (Gottfried of Bouillon) present highly imaginative reconstructions or examples of fantasy military architecture and Mitterlehner (Armin), too, is historically inaccurate because he shows the castles of Austria's Waldviertel as they appear today. By contrast, it is evident from the series (drawn by) Vance (Ramiro), Palacios (El Cid), Chaillet (Vasco), Jarbinet (Mémoires de Cendres) and Teng (Shane), that the artists have undertaken considerable research and acquired a substantial knowledge of architectural history. They have produced artistically high-quality historical comic strips providing a virtually authentic picture of known or identifiable castles and fortresses in a specific historical era.

Franz Pütz: The Nazi *Ordensburg* of Vogelsang

Between 1934 and 1941 three so-called ‘Ordensburgen’ were built on the instructions of Robert Ley, ‘Führer’ or leader of the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German labour front) and ‘Reich training officer’ of the Nazi party: Vogelsang in the Eifel, Crössinsee in Pomerania and Sonthofen in the Allgäu. They were intended to give the future leadership elite of the party ideological and character training.

Vogelsang was planned by the Cologne architect Clemens Klotz. After the completion of an initial phase in 1936, Ley became increasingly demanding and the rest of the castle became larger and more monumental. Although the war put an end to the building work in 1941, the plans continued to be developed with the castle ultimately assuming megalomaniac proportions.

Although the buildings of the first phase largely fitted in with the landscape, the castle later came more to resemble a monument. The buildings reflect the stylistic mixture of recreated vernacular and New Objectivity typical of Klotz as an architect.

Since 1950 Vogelsang has been the centre of a large army training area administered by the Belgian army, although the army is to move out by 2006. The land is intended to become the ‘Eifel national park’, while the future use of the former Nazi castle is still under discussion. Since it is a prime example of genuine national-socialist architecture, it will clearly have to be preserved as an ancient monument. The main problem in the immediate future will be to find an appropriate way of presenting it as such.

Gerd Geburtig: Fire protection in castles and palaces

If there is a major fire, the flames and the accompanying gases can very rapidly cause injuries to persons and damage to properties - particularly in the case of historical buildings which fail to meet fire safety standards. The situation is aggravated by the variety of problems; for example, at castles and palaces there is the question of access for fire appliances. In general, a modern fire assessment for buildings classified as ancient monuments should be based on a fire protection concept tailored to specific conditions and protection objectives so as to determine the requisite preventive and protective measures. Technical measures indicate approaches to the fire protection of historical buildings which, if properly applied, are more effective than pointless alterations to the fabric. Fire detection systems are essential features of many historical buildings with wooden structures or with specific uses such as museums, and they are a means of detecting a fire at an early stage. Bus-based systems are available as all-in communications systems for complex fire detection installations. Smoke-removal and heat-dissipation devices or safety and excess pressure ventilation systems are now standard. The effect is to leave escape and rescue routes smoke-free in the event of a fire and to facilitate the evacuation of persons and access by the emergency services. Suitable alternatives for protecting cultural assets are low-pressure spray devices or gas-based fire extinguishers. They minimise or eliminate the costs of consequential fire damage. Well thought-out systems mean a more careful approach towards the historical fabric of buildings.