

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of HORIZON

22 January 1947

IN the name of the CIAM (Les Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne) to which attend the leading modern architects, I would like to communicate to you our disagreement about the way of putting the Lawn Road Flats into a group of ridiculous houses in your December number, 1946. It seems to us absolutely absurd that the building of Wells Coates, erected in 1934 as the first modern building in England after the sleep of three decades, is brought in that kind of relation, and completely inadequate with the literary and artistic line of your highly estimated magazine.

Very sincerely yours,

S. GIEDION,

Secretary-General to the CIAM

To the Editor of HORIZON

10 January 1947

READING the December issue of HORIZON I was baffled to find the Lawn Road Flats near Belsize Park, London, brandished under the caption 'Ugly Buildings Competition'.

I lived in these from 1934-7 and remember the building, which I know very well, to be cheerful and good to live in. Its design—by Wells Coates—is a result of careful study of contemporary living. If the colour of the building should be unattractive at present this cannot veil the basic soundness of this handsome building of which I thought London could be proud.

I fail to understand the point of view of the jury making this derogative award.

Very truly yours,

WALTER GROPIUS

Dear HORIZON

I ALSO think that Lawn Road Flats are hideous. Photographed from the other side perhaps they would be less so. At the beginning of the war I lived in one, and did give it some high marks for practical good ideas and convenience, but it was box-like and claustrophobic with a perpetual smell of cooking drifting in which made me sick.

I think it a pity that when awarding the ugly prize you didn't know the architect, date, etc., since to me the fact that Lawn Road tried so hard and was cracked up to be the best that anyone could produce increased the horror. No doubt it made useful and sensible practical advances but it is monstrous to look at and, after all, the competition was for looks.

JANELIA SINCLAIR LOUITT



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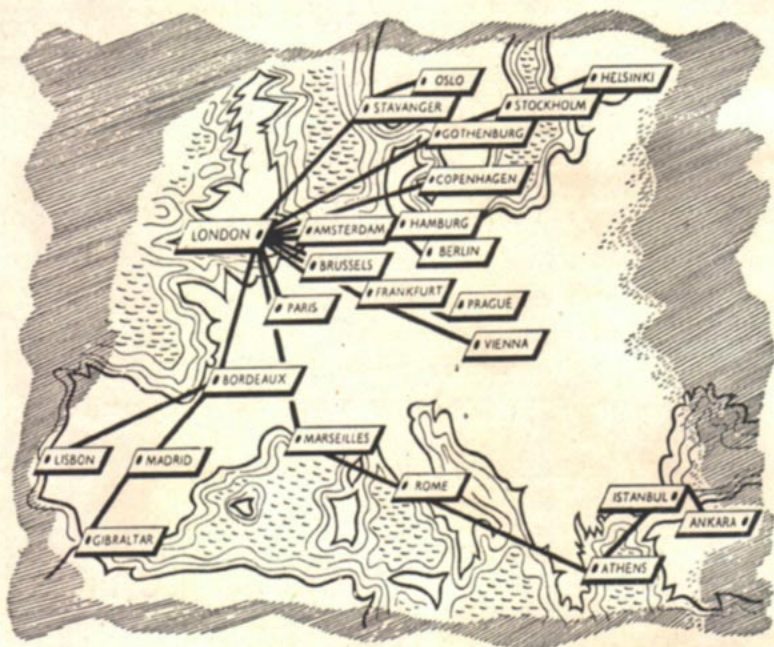
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