

## Abstract

The New Vision for the New Architecture: Czechoslovakia 1918-1938 is the first presentation of the significant group of architectural photographs made as a collaboration between avant-garde architects and photographers in the 1920s and 1930s. Depicting key modern buildings as well as lesser-known work and organized according to individual building type, these images communicate a vision that continues to inspire today. The images also confirm Czechoslovakia's leading role in the modern movement in architecture and photography between the wars.

Le Corbusier's definition of architecture as "the masterly, correct, and magnificent play of masses brought together in light" highlights the role of perception and representation of architecture in architectural practice. These two closely interconnected issues imply the question "How is architecture mediated?" which is increasingly important, if not central, in the present age of new media and the information revolution. In a broader historical context, it was the use of photography and photomechanical reproduction that paved the way for the current omnipresence of media and its role in both the reception and production of architecture.

This book explores the significant body of architectural photography produced in Czechoslovakia in the period of the 1920s and 1930s. In these important years, both architects and photographers saw themselves as participants in the creation of a new world, pursuing beliefs in social and technological utopias. Practitioners in the two fields shared and stimulated each other's vision, fostering interplay that consisted of mutual influences, parallels, and affinities.

This relationship was highly developed in Czechoslovakia where special conditions existed for the reception of the modern movement in both architecture and photography. The process of modernization as well as the creation of nation states and the rise of the middle class started later in Central Europe than in Western Europe. With its young middle class, the new Czechoslovak

state eagerly embraced modern ideas and recognized in architecture a powerful tool for expressing its goals and ideals. For this reason, Czechoslovakia became one of the centers of the modern movement in architecture in the 1920s and 1930s. (From the introduction)

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## **Author Info**

Jaroslav Anel Received his M.A. and Ph.D. in art history from Charles University (1972 and 1982) in addition to an M.F.A. in photography from the film and television faculty of the Academy of the Performing Arts in Prague (1973). Anel has lived in New York since 1982 working as an independent curator and consultant, educator, and author of numerous publications on the visual arts. The subject matter of his publications ranges from painting, architecture, and graphic design, to artists' books, photography, film, and

new media. In 1990 he was named Fulbright scholar for Czechoslovakia and initiated and co-organized an international lecture series on nationalism in Central Europe for the Institute of Sociology at the Czechoslovak Academy of Science. Anel was Visiting Associate Professor at Columbia University in New York in 1993-94. In 1994 he lectured at the School of Arts in Canberra, Australia, in addition to giving lectures in France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia and organizing an international conference on the archeology of new media in Prague in 2002. From 1996 to 1998 Anel was the director of the National Gallery's Museum of Modern Art in Prague. He organized and co-organized numerous exhibitions, including the first comprehensive exhibition of Czech modern art in English-speaking countries, *Czech Modernism 1900-1990* (Houston, New York, Akron).

He organized *The Artistic Avant-Garde in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938* (IVAM Centre Julio Gonzalez, Valencia, Spain, 1993), the first in-depth exhibition on the subject, and co-organized the first large exhibition of Czech modern art in France, *Prague 1900-1938: Capitale secrète des avant-gardes* for the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, and the traveling exhibition *Painting the Universe: Frantisek Kupka, Pioneer in Abstraction* (Dallas, Wolfsburg, Prague, 1997-98). Anel's most recent books include *Avant-Garde Page Design 1900-1950* (New York: 2002), *The Avant-Garde across Media: Josef Bartuka and the Group Linie 1931-1939* (Prague: 2004), and *Photography: A Story of a Modern Medium in the Czech Lands, 1840-1950* (Prague: 2005, 2006).