Polska. Architecture

Created by: Edgar Radz in cooperation with Sylvie Chotin, Steve Tomkins, and the Design Museum of Poland

Architects in Poland are exploring a variety of new forms and materials, and are creating buildings that are not only functional but also visually striking. The designs of many of these architects are inspired by traditional Polish architecture, but they also incorporate modern elements to create a unique style.

The exhibition "Polish Architecture" is a great opportunity to see some of the most exciting designs currently being created in Poland. The exhibition features works by architects such as Anna Kula, Piotr Grabowski, and Marcin Kowalczyk, who are pushing the boundaries of traditional architecture and creating structures that are both beautiful and functional.

The exhibition is currently on display at the Design Museum in Warsaw, and runs through the end of the year. If you're interested in Polish architecture, or just want to see some amazing designs, be sure to check it out!
My country settles in and makes itself comfortable, like newfews in their first home.

- "How many times can you rearrange the furniture? All you ever do is move things around. You are scratching the Boot! Now the armchair goes here, then you get a new lamp. So modern! Wall-to-wall glass and metal." "I just like to change my mind. And it's not about trends, I'm not mindlessly copying the West. There, look. I've kept a couple of Granny's knick-knacks."

- "Oh you're looking for your own distinctive style, I can see that. But you're losing sight of functional details. Why don't you view the house as a whole, as a place where you spend your time, your daily hours should be made easier."

- "But that is exactly how I see our place! I look at the things they've been building here lately, and I can't help thinking you could produce them in miniature as trendy living room decorations. What would you say to a mini Shakespeare Theatre next to the mantelpiece?"

- "You are my one-man theatre."

Where does this drive towards modernity come from? Is it universal? Post-1989, during the system transformation, we started to think about ways to change Poland and make up for the years of neglect and aesthetic chaos. It was like bigos, our national dish — a bit of this, a bit of that, all things mixed together: Remnants of old tenements, well past their prime; and typical Eastern Bloc housing estates spoiling the view across the yard, and so on. And so the office buildings started to appear — the mythical "glass houses". The Polish writer Stefan Żeromski wrote of them in the 1920's that they would provide a functional, modern human environment. To him, the complex steel constructions symbolised the perfect homeland — teeming with affluence and human solidarity. Today, almost a century later, the new buildings and the old ones stand side by side, as an attempt to bring his vision to life. Sounds idealistic? Let us hear what our newfews have to say.

- "Oh, but architecture is idealistic! Right from its classic premises of adherence to the principles of durability, utility and beauty, it dares to aim for what is almost impossible. It strives to delight, to make life easier, and to stay with us for ages. Difficult goals, particularly since political systems, tastes and expectations of inhabitants keep changing, don't you agree?"

- "OK, I agree here. You could also question the concept of state or nation as a collection of random people inhabiting a certain area under the same law. Pure utopia."

- "Well, I'm just trying, here in our home, to make this bigos digestible."

- "Good to see you so eager to do the cooking..."

- "Why spend so much time thinking of a difficult art, it's academics, it's fortune telling, it's insatiable. Well and yet, the latest architectural projects in Poland reflect the drive towards modernity seen as an attempt to combine history with futurism."

- "That's because it is as difficult to entirely relinquish tradition and the memory of places, ideals and social groups, as it is to ignore the innovations in construction engineering."

- "And that is why Żeromski's 'glass houses' are among other things, a bold reference to our national aspirations for a little romantic vision, a bit of utility and inspiration, combined with pragmatic execution. Yes, this is typical of your country. You see? Not only can I decorate, but I can make literary references as I am approaching."

- "Well, to be honest, I'd prefer a little less literature and more inspiration to complete your decorating."

We are getting better and better at arranging our home. We may still argue about the style of individual objects, but what would a marriage be without arguments? Boring, besides, architecture has to stir emotions, otherwise it becomes but a structure devoid of human element. And buildings are there to serve people and designers in Poland do their best to keep that in mind.
The centre is dedicated to propagating the ideas of the Solidarity social movement, whose actions led to the fall of communism in Poland and initiated further changes in Europe.
An icon of contemporary Szczecin, one of the most recognisable and beautiful concert halls in Europe. In 2015 it won the EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award and the Grand Prix in the LIFE IN ARCHITECTURE competition, awarded by the President of Poland for the country’s best project from 2013-2014.
This walled construction with an impressive retractable roof refers both to the genesis of European theatre and to the London theatres of Shakespeare’s day, principally the famous Globe.
The revitalisation of the landmark 19th-century station and the boldly executed contemporary square are achievements worthy of Wroclaw, the 2016 European Capital of Culture.
This office building, modern in design and featuring characteristic hand-made bricks on its elevation, forms a coherent whole with a nearby neo-Renaissance palace and elements of Kieży Młyn, a 19th-century factory and industrial complex.
Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Centennial Hall was built in 1913 for an exhibition presenting the history and economic significance of Silesia. Added in contemporary times at the northern entrance to the hall, the pavilion maintains the spirit of Modernist solutions, while having its own original style.
This football stadium, built as part of the preparations for the Euro 2012 football championships organised in Poland and Ukraine, was designed to call to mind a gigantic piece of amber from the Baltic Sea.

Футбалният стадион изграден в рамките на подготовките за Европското првенство во Европа EURO 2012 организирано во Полска и во Украина – посетува, согласно заложбите на проектантите, на голема грутка балтички килибар.
New buildings welcome visitors to the birthplace of Poland’s most famous composer, one of the world’s most important creators of the Romantic era.
Along with a city square and a boulevard open to the water, the new City Marina forms a spectacular public space, as well as one of the most beautiful corners of Bydgoszcz. It was built as part of the revitalisation program for Młyńska (Mill) Island, which lies at the confluence of the Brda River and the Bydgoszcz Canal, whose construction at the end of the 18th century allowed the opening of a water route from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.
This reserved structure of hand-made bricks contains a concert hall whose acoustics are among the world’s best.
ПАТНИЧКИ ТЕРМИНАЛ НА АЕРОДРОМОТ ЛУБЛИН, ШВИДНИК
AIRPORT PASSENGER TERMINAL, ŚWIDNIK

The Świdnik Airport was named an architectural “Favourite of Poland” in a nationwide online contest in 2012, becoming the unrivalled calling card of the south-east of the country.
The Cricoteka Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor plays the role of a "living archive" of the world-renowned artist – a painter, set designer, poet, actor, performance artist and man of the theatre. The architects' inspiration for the form of the building was provided by one of Kantor’s drawings, “Man Carrying a Table on His Back”.

"My work is my work. The painting, the stage, the stage."

— Tadeusz Kantor

"Man carrying a table on his back."

— Tadeusz Kantor

"Man Carrying a Table on His Back" by Tadeusz Kantor
The form of the building perfectly expresses an organised, coherent workplace. The building holds an international BREEAM quality certificate.
Познањската порта е туристически-културен проект што има за цел да направи улогоата ѝ одиграч на Тумски остров во формирање на полската државност.

Porta Posnania is a tourism and cultural project with the goal of demonstrating the role that Ostrów Tumski island played in shaping Polish statehood.
This cultural centre in Kraków, a city that’s a favourite European tourist destination, has won 18 architectural prizes, including the Association of Polish Architects prize and an award from ArchDaily, the world’s largest architectural portal.
НАУЧНО-ИНФОРМАТИВЕН ЦЕНТАР И АКАДЕМИЧКА БИБЛИОТЕКА, КАТОВИЦЕ

SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION CENTRE AND ACADEMIC LIBRARY, KATOWICE

Seen from afar, the building’s elevations appear to be a monolith. From up close, the rhythm of stone tiles appears, and the joints turn out to be windows. The building’s colourisation and order refer to local Silesian traditions from the 19th century.
This city-centre residential construction on a post-industrial plot in Poland’s capital is largely made up of one- and two-room apartments and is proving hugely popular, especially among Warsaw’s younger residents.
The new museum arose on the grounds of a former coal mine and is an element of the process of revitalising post-industrial areas. Placing the main hall of the museum underground is read as a romantic reference to mining traditions.
The architecture of the building refers to the terrain formations and the natural landscape of the Vistula River's bank. The purpose of the interactive Science Centre, which includes a planetarium and a roof garden, is the promotion and popularisation of science. It is one of the most popular sites in Poland's capital for both residents and visitors.
The most distinctive element of the building is the wave-like internal passage, which calls up associations with the parting of the Red Sea. The curved walls, 20 meters tall and with a surface of 2,000 square meters, were described when the building opened as the largest project of its kind in the world.