

21ST-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE II

I myself have moved in this direction. In my own work as an architect, I have intentionally set out to produce structures with this level of detail, this complexity of centers, and this love of color. Slowly, now, there is a growing appreciation of the buildings which I make. People have begun to say that there is something there, something previously unattained and not even attempted in 20th-century art.

I believe the rebirth of understanding which must go with this change cannot be emotional or romantic, as it was a hundred years ago when William Morris tried to do something similar. In his case, I believe, and in the case of the artists who surrounded him, there was a romantic appreciation of medieval art: but there was neither the understanding of the real structure present in their minds, nor the active spiritual force present in these works so that the structure could be made to live.

In our own time, I see something different. I see the beginnings of an attitude in which the structure may be understood concretely and with a tough mind and with an emotional heart—not weak-minded romanticism. I see the rebirth of an attitude about the world, perhaps based on new views of feeling, ethics, truth, and ecology, which will give us a proper ground-stuff for the mental attitude from which these works can spring.

I do not believe that these works will resemble the Turkish carpets in the literal sense. But I believe the same primitive force, and the same knowledge of structure, and the same desire to make a work in which the work carries and illuminates the spirit will be present. I am almost certain that in the 21st century ahead, this ground-stuff will appear.

From A Foreshadowing of 21st Century Art