LE CORBUSIER
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INTRODUCTION

- Le Corbusier was born as Charles-Éduoard Jeanneret-Gris. He was an architect, designer, painter, urban planner, writer and one of the pioneers of what is now called modern architecture.
- He was born on 6th October, 1887 in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland. He died on 27th August, 1965 in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, France.
- EDUCATION: Bauhaus
- ARTWORK: Still Life with Space, Abstract Composition, Villa à Vaucresson, France, Unités d’Habitation de Meaux,Untitled, Still Life.
- AWARDS: Royal Gold Medal, AIA Gold Medal.
- His career spanned 50 years and was dedicated to providing better living conditions for the residents of crowded cities. His buildings were constructed in Europe, India and America. He was a pioneer in studies of modern high designs.
- He was awarded the Frank P. Brown Medal and AIA Gold Medal in 1961.
BIOGRAPHY

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION (1887-1913):

- He was attracted to the visual arts and studied at the La Chaux-de-Fonds Art School. His architecture teacher in the Art School was architect René Chapallaz, who had a large influence on Le Corbusier’s earliest house designs.

- His trip to Italy and his employment at the office of Auguste Perret began to form his own ideas about architecture. During his visit to the Charterhouse of the Valley of Ema between October 1910 to March 1911 that influenced his architectural philosophy profoundly for the rest of his life.

- He believed that all people should have the opportunity to live as beautifully and peace fully as the monks he witnessed in the sanctuaries at the charterhouse.
EARLY CAREER (1914-1930):

- He taught at his old school in La Chaux-de-Fonds during World War I, not returning to Paris until the war was over. During these 4 years, he worked on theoretical architectural studies using modern techniques. Among these was his project for the Domino House this design became the foundation for most of his architecture over the next ten years.

- In 1918, he met with Cubist painter Amédée Ozenfant, who encouraged him to paint.

- In 1920, he adopted the pseudonym Le Corbusier which was an alter form of his maternal grandfather’s name, Le Corbésier. He adopted the pseudonym reflecting anyone could reinvent himself.
PERSONAL RELATIONS:

- In 1929, he met with entertainer and actress Josephine Baker on board the ocean liner Lutétia. He made several nude sketches of her. Soon after his return from South America, he married Yvonne Gallis who died in 1957.
- He took French citizenship in 1930.
FORAYS INTO URBANISM:

- His modern architectural forms, he believed, would provide an organizational solution that would raise the quality of life for the lower class citizens who were contributing to the growth of Parisian slums. His Immeubles Villas called for large blocks of cell-like individual apartments stacked on top of one another.

- Not satisfied with the housing blocks, he soon moved into studies for entire cities and in 1922 presented his scheme for a ‘Contemporary City’ for three million inhabitants. Norma Evenson had put it, “The proposed city appeared to some audacious and compelling vision of a brave new world and to others a frigid megalominically scaled negation of the familiar urban ambient.”

- After World War II, he attempted to realize his urban planning schemes on a small scale by constructing a series of ‘unités (the housing block unit of the Radiant City) around France. His most famous unite was Unité d’Habitation of Marseilles.

- He constructed Union, Territory Chandigarh, the new capital for the Indian states of Punjab and Haryana and India’s first planned city. He also designed many administration buildings, including a courthouse, parliament building and a university.
DEATH:

- Against his doctor’s orders, on 27th August, 1965, he went for a swim in the Mediterranean Sea at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, France. His body was found by bathers and pronounced dead at 11 am. It’s assumed that he may have suffered a heart attack.
- He was buried alongside his wife in a grave he had designated at Roquebrune.
- His death had a strong impact on the cultural and political world. Homages were paid worldwide, even by some of his worst artistic enemies such as Salvador Dali.
IDEAS

Five points of architecture

It was Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoye that succinctly summed up the points of architecture he had elucidated in L’Esprit Nouveau and the book Vers une architecture which he had been developing throughout the 1920s.

- He lifted the bulk of the structure off the ground, supported by reinforced concrete stilts called pilotis.
- A free façade; non-supporting walls that could be designed as the architect wished.
- Open floor plan; the floor space free to be configured into rooms without concern for supporting walls.
- The second floor of the Villa Savoye includes long strips of ribbon windows that allow unencumbered views of the large surrounding yard.
- Roof garden; to compensate for the green area consumed by the building and replacing it on the roof.
Modulor

- Le Corbusier explicitly used the golden ratio in his Modulor system for the scale of architectural proportion. In addition to the golden ratio he based the system to human measurements, Fibonacci numbers and the double unit.

- He placed systems of harmony and proportion at the centre of his design philosophy, and his faith in the mathematical order of the universe was closely bound to the golden section and the Fibonacci series, which he described as rhythms apparent to the eye and clear in their relations with one another. These rhythms are at the very root of human activities.
Open Hand

The Open Hand (La Main Ouverte) is a motif in Le Corbusier’s architecture, a sign for him of “peace and reconciliation. It is open to give and open to receive.”
Furniture

Le Corbusier began experimenting with furniture design in 1928 after inviting the architect Charlotte Perriand, to join his studio. His cousin Pierre Jeanneret also collaborated on many of the designs. Before the arrival of Perriand, he relied upon ready-made furniture to furnish his projects.

In 1928, Le Corbusier and Perriand began to put the expectations for furniture Le Corbusier outlined in his 1925 book L’Art Décoratif d’aujourd’hui into practice.

In the book he defined 3 different furniture types:

- Types-needs
- Type-furniture
- Human-limb objects
Some of his chairs were:

- LC-1..... Fouteuil grand confort, petit modèle
- LC-2..... Great comfort sofa, small model
- LC-3..... Great comfort sofa, large model
- LC-4..... Long chair.

The LC-2 and LC-3 are more colloquially referred to as the petit confort and grand confort.

In 1964, Cassina S.p.A of Milan acquired the exclusive world wide rights to manufacture his furniture designs. Today many copies exit but Cassina is still the only manufacturer authorized by the Fondation Le Corbusier.
Since His death, Le Corbusier’s contribution has been hotly contested both between different schools of thought and among practicing architects. At the level of building, his later works expressed a complex understanding of modernity’s impact yet his urban designs have drawn scorn from critics.

The public housing projects influenced by his ideas are seen by some as having had the effect of isolating the poor communities in monolithic highrises and breaking the social ties integral to a community’s development.
INFLUENCE

- Le Corbusier was at his most influential in the sphere of urban planning and was a founding member of the Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne.

- Throughout the years, many architects worked for Le Corbusier in his studio, and a number of them became notable in their own right such as Nadir Afonso, who absorbed Le Corbusier’s ideas into his own aesthetics theory.

- Le Corbusier was heavily influenced by problems he saw in industrial cities at the turn of the 20th Century. He was a leader of the modernist movement to create better living conditions and a better society through housing concepts.
The Fondation Le Corbusier was established in 1968. It is a private foundation and archive honoring the work of architect Le Corbusier (1887-1965). It operates Maison La Roche, a museum located in the 16th arrondissement at 8-10 square du Dr Blanche, which is open daily except Sundays.
MEMORIALS

Le Corbusier’s portrait was featured on the 10 Suisse francs banknote.

The following place-names carry his name:

- Place Le Corbusier, Paris
- Le Corbusier Boulevard, Laval, Quebec, Canada
- Place Le Corbusier in his hometown of La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland
- Le Corbusier Street in the partido of Malvinas Argentinas, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina
- Le Corbusier Promenade along the water at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin
- Le Corbusier Museum, Sector-8 Chandigarh, India
PALACE OF ASSEMBLY, CHANDIGARH, INDIA
RONCHAMP CHAPEL
SECRETARIAT BUILDING
SOURCES

- Google
- Wikipedia