Maison de Refuge (Salvation Army Hostel)

Le Corbusier

Paris-1932-1933
12. rue Cantagrel - 75013

The first large building commission for Le Corbusier, as an architect, which serves as an asylum for the Salvation Army. The building has a reinforced concrete skeleton and steel window frames. In front of the long main building there are some separate geometric constructions: a bridge connects the cubic entrance building with a cylindrical admission building, and a residence space. Behind the fully glazed main facade are bedrooms and other facilities for 1500 people.

The Salvation Army Hostel, whose glass facade was badly damaged in the 2nd World War (and even more badly repaired), was a fantastic piece of planning, with elaborate interior automobile and pedestrian ramps, a library, dining and sleeping facilities all contained within a narrow, slab-like building on a rather complicated site. The airtight glass facade could be washed by men standing on a platform that was suspended from a trolley travelling back and forth along the edge of the roof garden—a forerunner of a similar mechanism installed at New York's Lever House when it was built after the 2nd WW. To ventilate the whole building air-conditioning was installed, but later it appeared to have insufficient capacity.
Maison de Refuge (Salvation Army Hostel)

Le Corbusier

New Facade which had been remodeled after the World War II

Picture of the Building Model

1. Architect Name
Le Corbusier

2. Type of Project
Building Type

3. Date Completed
Dec. 7, 1933

4. Distribution of Functions
B1: Driveway for Trucks, Conference Room & Kitchen
L1: Lobby, Restaurant, Cafeteria & Offices
L2: M&F Libraries, Bedrooms & Conference Rooms
L3-8: Bedrooms, Daycare Center, Roof Terrace

5. Structure
Concrete & Steel
Window Framing

6. Bibliography
Le Corbusier Vol. 3
1931-1935
(Oeuvre Complet)
p. 56-71

Architecture and Urbanism 1962
Feb. n2 (137)
p. 15-15

Serial Design.com
designers/salvationarmyhostel.htm

The Salvation Army Hostel is much more glassy, much more metallic in detail than most of Corbusier's buildings before or since. In addition to plate glass, Corbusier sparingly used a glass block (or brick) - one of the few instances in recorded architectural history when that hideous material was used well. One reason was the French glass block, unlike that produced in the U.S., was small and rather handsomely patterned. Although though the Salvation Army building was full of elegant detail, it suggests in retrospect Corbusier was at his best when he stresses reinforced concrete in all its possibilities.

a. small courtyard in front of restaurant
b. driveway to basement
c. street facade
Maison de Refuge (Salvation Army Hostel)  

**B1 Plan**  
basement with conference room, kitchen, and driveway for trucks

**L2 Plan**  
bedrooms, roof terrace, and man & woman's libraries

**L3-6 Plan**  
bedrooms and daycare center

**L7-8 Plan**  
balcony, bedrooms for family and men
Maison de Refuge (Salvation Army Hostel) 

The Salvation Army Hostel, whose glass facade was badly damaged in the Second World War, was a fantastic piece of planning, with elaborate interior automobile and pedestrian ramps, a library, dining and sleeping facilities all contained within a narrow, slablike building on a rather complicated site. The air-tight glass facade could be washed by men standing on a platform that was suspended from a trolley traveling back and forth along the edge of the roof garden. To ventilate the whole building air-conditioning was installed, but later it appeared to have insufficient capacity to stop the rooms from overheating in the summer.