Visual arts in the urban environment in the German Democratic Republic: formal, theoretical and functional change, 1949–1980

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Abstract

Since the unification of East and West Germany in 1990, most of the urban fabric of the former East Germany has been altered beyond recognition or completely dismantled. However, during the four decades of the German Democratic Republic, public spaces and the works of visual arts within them were the subject of intense critical discussion, and formed the basis for the development of theories on the socialist character of art and architecture, which evolved from the late 1960s as *Komplexe Umweltgestaltung* "Complex Environmental Design".

This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by making visible and elucidating the cultural-political significance of that urban visual culture, dematerialised and dispersed since the fall of the Berlin Wall. It examines the political, social and artistic function of murals, paintings, sculptures, applied arts, form design, and visual communication within East German architecture and public spaces, and seeks to complexify the commonly understood historical narrative which traces a rupture from the doctrine of an extravagant Socialist Realism to a form of impoverished Modernism. This change is better understood as a gradual and halting evolution, in which art as a medium for projecting the ideal of socialism was displaced by an understanding of design as a means of sustaining the experience of it. Furthermore, the narratives, formal and material qualities of some of the works examined – overlooked even in contemporary re-appraisals of East German art history – rather than being marginal to Socialist Realism, actually opened up spaces for its development.

The thesis centres on forms of public art during and after the transition to the industrial mass production of architecture in the mid 1950s. The early phase in the 1950s is illustrated through the two first industrial cities, Eisenhüttenstadt and Hoyerswerda, built to serve iron and coal production respectively. The "scientific and technological revolution", proclaimed by SED first secretary Walter Ulbricht in the 1960s, was to accelerate the process of modernity, in the understandings of the function of urban planning and the role of design for planning, architecture and consumer culture. This change saw a move towards functionalist-oriented planning for Halle Neustadt (from 1964), the centre of new chemical and synthetics production, and a radical move to modernity in the re-construction of city centres up until 1969. This radical change exposed the conception of architecture as an art (*Baukunst*) favoured by traditionalists in the Bauakademie in particular, to challenges by modernisers who held that art should be considered as primarily functional and thus separate from art.

Complex Environmental Design, as this work will demonstrate, gradually replaced the Socialist Realist ideal of *Baukunst* and the "synthesis" between art and architecture, and became established by the mid 1970s as an interdisciplinary practice in which all visual art forms – architecture, fine arts, crafts, form design, graphic design and landscape design – were to be integrated within the complex planning of the built environment. I shall argue that this inclusion of all artistic disciplines in the design of the built environment formed a compromise between competing ideas between "synthesis" or the separation of art and architecture. Halle Neustadt was key in the conceptual transition to complex environmental design.

The thesis goes on to look at how the artistic conception of the 1973 World Festival Games took up a form of complex environmental design, which functioned as both

a new form of monumentality, as well as opening up a space for more democractic forms of public art.

Methodologically, the research seeks to understand the influence of key actors in the field who were not resistant to the cultural political framework but sought to mediate change within it. Interviews with architects, critics, artists and designers, including architectural critic Bruno Flierl, architect, Sigbert Fliegel, artists Willi Neubert and Manfred Vollmert, designers, Rolf Walter, Lutz Brandt and Axel Bertram together with analyses of their work, and how their ideas were represented by themselves and others, particularly in professional fora, form the basis for an examination their influence. By looking at historical moments in different loci, it becomes apparent that what I term "clusters of influence" formed which pushed forward conceptual transitions. Key sources are the professional journals in which art and architecture were discussed (*Deutsche Architektur*, *Bildende Kunst*, *Form und Zweck*, *Farbe und Raum* and *Neue Werbung*) as well as some news and features aimed at the general public such as *Neues Deutschland*, *Neue Berliner Illustrierte* and *Für Dich*. Archival research has focused on the seminars and congresses organised by the professional institutions, the *Verband der Bildende Künstler* (Artists Union) and the Deutsche Bauakademie *(German Building Academy)* as well as the records of the local SED in Halle and a number of offices for architectural art which were established across the GDR in the late 1960s.

The search for socialist character both in content and form which had an impact on the visual arts of the built environment in the GDR was informed by shifting definitions of the concepts of "function" and "beauty", in which historical legacies, in particular, the Bauhaus, were critically appropriated in a way which served the sometimes involuntary and sometimes intentional interplay between artistic disciplines. The research reveals how these concepts and legacies were drawn

together, and plays particular attention to the way in which colour and ornament emerged as central in serving the need for the constituent parts of the urban landscape to be socialist, functional and beautiful.

Contents

Introduction

In March 2011, local councillor in the Saxony town of Plauen, Dr. Lutz Kowalzick, was invited to inspect a newly renovated primary school. Dismayed to discover the existence of a mosaic which remained from the GDR era, he asked:

"Does the town administration believe, that it serves the basic free and democratic educational mission of the school to put on show symbols of a totalitarian organisation and state without commentary?"[1]

The mosaic, created by artists Lothar Rentsch und Rolf Andiel in 1965, depicts the narrative, then well-established, of the first two decades of the German Democratic Republic. Unusually reading from right to left: rising from the devastation of war, East Germany reconstructed itself as an anti-Fascist state with the attendant architecture – by way of peace, socialist youth organisation, agriculture and industry to the era of space travel led by the Soviet Union, and modern communications. The contemporary moment for 1965 shows a young couple in tracksuits and headphones bending over a radio or tape recorder.

Sensing a story, journalists pursued local artists and politicians for their opinion on the matter, and the issue rumbled on in the Plauen press for several weeks. Whilst no other politicians saw the mosaic quite in same terms as Dr. Kowalzick, some argued for "ideology free walls" or at least a plaque to explain why the mosaic was there. Teachers complained that they had more important things to worry about,

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1 Torsten Piontkowski and Martin Reißmann, "Debatte um Wandbild aus DDR-Zeiten", vogtland-anzeiger.de, 25.03.2011 [downloaded 25.03.2011]; Dietrich, Nancy,"DDR-Mosaik sorgt für Wirbel", *Freie Presse*, 14.03.2011

and when one of the two artists, Lothar Rentsch, was finally persuaded to give his opinion, he downplayed the significance of the work, saying of the hammer and sickle and FDJ symbols. "That was the era. That was the way it was."[2]

The outrage of Dr. Kowalzick, echoed the inflamed debates about East German art in the years following German reunification, but the more moderate responses or even indifference of most asked were much more in keeping with the historical moment over two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall. By 2011, a Socialist Realist mosaic in a primary school had become detached not only from its original political meaning, but also from the emotions of the early 1990s; Kowalzick, more than the mosaic, seemed out of step with the times. None of those asked – not even the artist – however, defended the material or artistic quality of the work, referring only to its possible value as a historical document. The mosaic was at most an anomaly, in fact surviving only due to the late renovation of the school. Politically it was defunct, and the council allowed it to remain, without a plaque.

The primary school mosaic in Plauen is in fact something of a rarity. Since the unification of East and West Germany in 1990, most of the urban fabric of the former German Democratic Republic, its architecture, and the works of art and design which were integrated within those spaces has been lost due to industrial change, demographic shifts and modernisation programmes, as well as the political dynamics dominated by a comprehensive rejection of the socialist state. The GDR's political and material legacies have been intimately connected: as the state and its ideology has been discredited, the material has been deemed either dangerous, as in Dr. Kowalzick's assessment, or worthless.

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2 "Plauener Künstler hält Debatte für überflüssig: DDR-Wandbild seit Wochen Stadtgespräch", Das Online-Magazin für Plauen mit Nachrichten und Informationen aus der Spitzenstadt. 29.04.2011 [downloaded 29.04.2011]

i. Research topic

This research takes as its subject a largely eradicated visual culture, the works of art and design which were so intimately a part of the GDR's architecture and urban spaces, but which were alien to the new planners and owners of the formerly socialist urban spaces. The scope of the subject matter refers to works of art, crafts and design in exterior and interior public spaces, as well as three dimensional works set within the built environment, and finally also event design. Architecture and its production, inseparable from the topic of "architecture related art", play a central role in this discussion.

Thousands of individual works of *architekturbezogene Kunst* ("architecture related art") as it was most commonly known, and scores of "complex ensembles" were produced over the four decades of the GDR. Hotels, sport and leisure facilities, shopping centres, pedestrian routes, gable walls, government, Party, union and administrative buildings, housing complexes, nurseries, schools, universities, factories and workplaces, canteens and restaurants, hospitals and clinics all bore works of architectural art.[3] Those examined here are chosen for their representative qualities, in terms of pictorial languages, genre and function. Through piecing together the "complex artistic ensembles" of East German towns, identifying hundreds of works of art, design and the applied arts, the research makes a contribution to making visible that dematerialised and dispersed visual culture. The body of this research is not, however concerned with a preservationist agenda but with the evolving political, social and artistic function of paintings, sculptures, applied arts, industrial and graphic design in East German architecture and public spaces.

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[3] The legal basis for allocation a percentage of a building budget for art was taken from the pre-GDR period. The sum varied between 3% but was reduced to 0,5% in the 1970s housing programme. As "complexes" took the place of individual works of architecture, the budget for art was not assigned to buildings but to all the buildings and open spaces between them. Works may also have been financed from other budgets, for example party, union and church funds.

ii. Hypothesis

During the four decades of the German Democratic Republic the relationship of art and architecture was the subject of intense critical discussion, which centred on the socialist character of art and architecture. This thesis traces the developments both in theory and practice, focusing on three key moments of change: in Hoyerswerda in the 1950s, in Halle-Neustadt in the 1960s and in East Berlin in the 1970s.

This thesis argues that Socialist Realism had a sustained influence on architectural art. Its aesthetic qualities were characterised by the application of ornament, popular, authentic (*Volkish*) and optimistic narratives, pedagogical intention, and the use of craft techniques. Equally, the Socialist Realist claim that architecture was an art form, and should strive for a synthesis of architecture with art was to have a lasting influence on the course of architectural art. These conceptions were intended not only to distinguish the socialist built environment from its capitalist counterparts, but were also invoked as having the potential to support the happiness and well-being of the population.

In spite of the rupture brought about by the call in 1954 by the Soviet leader, Nikita Krushchev for "faster, better, cheaper" building,[4] the Socialist Realist ideal persisted well beyond the industrialisation of building production. As "synthesis" of art and architecture gave way to the model of Complex Environmental Design in the early 1970s, the value of art in the environment and its specific narrative and formal characteristics was contested but never lost. In this respect, a study of this design theory contributes to an deepening understanding of the particularity of architectural modernity in the German Democratic Republic.

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4 Kruschev's speech delivered at the All-Union Conference of Builders and Architects in Moscow on December 17th, 1954 'On the extensive introduction of industrial methods, improving the quality and reducing the cost of construction,' demanded an abandonment of unnecessary ornamentation in favour of economically rationalised building methods.

Research undertaken for the thesis reveals that tensions between economic, social and ideological requirements resulted in an ongoing, if variable interdependence between artistic disciplines in the conception of the built environment in the period of study from 1949 to the late 1970s.

A secondary theme which runs through this thesis concerns the role of prominent practitioners and theorists, who did not simply navigate changes in cultural policy but were to a great extent the authors of them. The research reveals how networks of key players, formed what I term "clusters of influence" who were able to push forward their ideas, whilst operating within the constraints imposed by the political framework. These clusters were institutional and locational: the development from craft to design in the mid to late 1950s was theorised in the Institute for Applied Arts in Berlin, and developed in practice at the art schools in Berlin Weissensee and Burg Giebichenstein in Halle. The development of the conception of *Baukunst* ["the art of building"] towards *Komplexe Umweltgestaltung* ("Complex Environmental Design") centred around Hans Schmidt and Bruno Flierl at the *Deutsche Bauakademie* (German Building Academy) in the 1960s, and within the *Zentral Arbeitsgruppe für Architekur und Kunst,* or *ZAG,* (The Central Working Group for Art and Architecture),[5] in the 1970s and 1980s. The re-assertion of the role of art in the built environment in the late 1960s grew from the *Verband der Bildende Künstler* (The Artists Union), and architects active in Halle. My concluding chapter demonstrates how the motivations and ambitions of the collective in East Berlin working on the design of the *X. Weltfestspiele* (World Festival Games) proved to be exemplary for more democratic forms of public art which followed in the 1970s and 1980s.

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[5] Formed in 1968 as working group of changing members between the two unions, the Bund der Deutsche Architekten (BdA) and the Verband der Bildende Künstler, VBKD and after 1971 the VBK DDR) and continued until 1990.

<u>iii. Mapping the field: the changing research context and emerging literature.</u>

The research topic opens up a new field for post-1990 GDR research, which has considerable potential for future scholarship, and this dissertation is a contribution to mapping out new territory. I will seek to explain through an examination of the developing research context, why there is so very little literature on this subject, hence the difficulty with an orthodox "literature review". This discussion establishes the uncertain place of my subject matter within established art and architectural discourses.

<u>Scholarship on GDR murals</u>

Towards the end of the GDR period, historicisation of its art and architecture was already taking place, and the distance of a generation to the early GDR years allowed, if not for a revision, for a critical appraisal of that period.[6] Hermann Buchner's 1983 diploma and 1990 doctoral thesis[7] were the first to provide a comprehensive and critical overview of the four decades of developments in murals in the the GDR. The most important post-1990 work on the history of murals and other forms of art in public space is Peter Guth's 1995, *Wände der Verheissung*[8] (Walls of Promises).This remarkably dense volume offers a detailed biography of public art in East Germany. Its strength – detail– is also its weakness however: it is hard to tease out an overall argument other than a critique of GDR socialism as failing to deliver on every front. Whilst highly critical, Guth's text is at the same time charged with a desire to preserve the legacy of GDR public art, thus reflecting

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6 Kuhirt, Ullrich, Kunst der DDR 1945–1959 (Seeman: Leipzig, 1982) is prefaced with the remark that the first decade and a half of art in the GDR has become art history, p.9.
7 Büchner, Hermann, "Reflexionen zur Wandmalerei der DDR", Diplomarbeit, Humboldt University, East Berlin, 1983 (supervised by Bruno Flierl and Harald Olbich); Büchner, Hermann, "Die Entwicklung der Wandmalerei in der DDR" , Humboldt University, East Berlin, published 13.09.1990. Büchner's work is clearly heavily influenced by Bruno Flierl.
8 Guth, Peter, *Wände der Verheißung: Zur Geschichte der architekturbezogenen Kunst in der DDR*, (Leipzig: Thom Verlag, 1995)

an ambivalence between loss and anger not untypical amongst intellectuals in the post-Wende period. Nonetheless, this remains the only piece of scholarship which deals with the subject matter of my research. Guth's book is even written as though it is the last word, almost a signing off of this history. During the period of writing, I have become aware of three other doctoral research projects which are also establishing this research field, something to be entirely welcomed.[9]

Documentation of GDR murals

Post-1990 preservation and documentation of public works of art and design is sporadic and confined to a handful of local initiatives. These include, the Berlin-Marzahn housing area documentation, *Kunst in der Großsiedlung*, Isolde Schmidt's *Kunst in Rostock Schmarl: Spurensuche*, an inventory of architecture-related art in Leipzig, researched before 1990, Antje Kirsch's ongoing research project centred on the work of the former Dresden collective "PG Kunst am Bau", the documentary work of the Hoyerswerda local history association, a catalogue of works of public art published by the town of Schwedt, and an early post-Wende, unillustrated documentation on Berlin murals, *Bilder auf Wänden in Berlin*.[10]

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9 Two of the works as yet unpublished focus to a greater extent on the art historical perspective: Anja Jackes is working on a dissertion with the provisional title "Kunstwerke in der sozialistischen Planstadt Halle-Neustadt – Eine Analyse zur komplexen Umweltgestaltung im Städtebau der DDR und der Bedeutung der bildenden Kunst.", University of Paderborn. Mtanious Elbeik at the Institut für Künste und Medien, Potsdam University is due to complete his disseration in 2014. It traces the art historical evolution of murals in East Berlin, 1948–1990, in relation to the easel painting ("Tafelbild"); Torsten Lange at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London is completing his thesis entitled, "Komplexe Umweltgestaltung/complex environmental design: architectural theory and the production of the built environment in the German Democratic Republic 1960-1990".

10 Goldberg, Thorsten, Ellena Olsen, Martin Schönfeld and others, Kunst in der Großsiedlung: Kunstwerke im *öffentlichen Raum in Marzahn und Hellersdorf: Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin: Bezirksamt von Marzahn-Hellersdorf, 2008); Schmidt, Isolde, *Kunst in Rostock Schmarl: Spurensuche*, (Isolde Schmidt: Rostock, 2004); Hocquel, Wolfgang and others, *Architekturbezogene Kunst: Bezirk Leipzig, 1945-1990 : Standortinventar* (Büro

für architekturbezogene Kunst und Denkmalpflege: Leipzig, 1990); Projektgruppe, "Kunst am Bau", (Berndt Havenstein and others) *Bilder auf Wänden in Berlin*, (Edition Luisenstadt: Berlin, 1994); Antje Kirsch has developed the premises and archive of the former Dresden group, "Kunst am Bau" in to a space for exhibitions and seminars relating to GDR architectural art, particularly in Dresden. Kirch, Antje, *Produktionsgenossenschaft Kunst am Bau, Dresden, 1958–1990* is an overview of the history of the collective; Biernath, Peter, *architectour hoyerswerda, stadt.bau.kunst*, (Kulturbund Hoyerswerda e.V: Hoyerswerda: 2005); Doris Schulze, Rosemaria Zillmann, *Kunstführer der Stadt Schwedt/Oder: Kunst im öffentlichen Raum sowie Kunst und Design am Bau*, (Stadt Schwedt/Oder: Schwedt, undated, approx 2012) offers a comprehensive compendium of still existing works of art and design from the GDR period as well as post-1990 works.

At a workshop organised in 2008 on the question of the heritage from the GDR of "Kunst am Bau" – part of a series of workshops on art in public space in general –, there were several calls for at the least a documentation and inventorisation of works from the former GDR.[11] This has not taken place, although this would be within the remit of the sponsors of the workshop, the Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Planning.[12] A different government department, the Ministry for Education and Research funded a three year research project (May 2009 to October 2012) *Bildatlas: Kunst in der DDR*,[13] which documented over 20,000 works of fine art from the GDR, but this confined itself to painting commissions and public collections: architectural art does not fall within this remit.

Phases of discourse on the East German historical and material legacies

My claim that Dr. Kowalzick's outrage at the discovery of an East German mosaic in a Plauen primary school is outmoded, is based on my assessment of the historical moment, a generation on from reunification, in which it took place. Today's university students and young parents have had no direct experience of the GDR, the younger generation of 1989 have adapted to the social and economic

11 Those who made the case for inventorisation were Thomas Topfstedt, Sigrid Hofer, Silke Wagler and Berndt Sikora. Other contributions emphasised the ideologised context of production and hence doubtful artistic or heritage value. The high profile historian Rainer Eckert – who was persecuted in the GDR and has been involved in several of the official bodies re-writing East German history, commented: "I would only be in favour of preserving selected examples of East German art, or rather kitsch. Pure propaganda should be contextualised with an explanatory plaque." *Kunst am Bau als Erbe des geteilten Deutschlands: Zum Umgang mit architekturbezogene Kunst der DDR,* Workshop Documentation, (Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau- und Stadtentwicklung: Bonn, 2008).
12 The 2013 website of the subdepartment, the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, claims "Art on buildings (Kunst am Bau) is an integral element of the Germany's building culture"
13 The project also gathered biographical data on artists and opened up themes for discussion in events and on its website. Cooperating partners were the Technical University, Dresden, Kunstarchiv Beeskow, Staatliche Kunstsammlung, Dresden, Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam. The results are being made available in an online archive as well as in a printed "Bildatlas". Although the project did not include murals and works in public space, the major summary exhibition "Abschied von Ikarus. Bildwelten in der DDR – neu gesehen" in cooperation with the "Klassik Stiftung Weimar" did include the works of Jose Renau, a contribution of the doctoral candidate, Oliver Sukrow, Heidelburg University. Sukrow's doctoral research which focuses on the theme of the utopian in art and architecture, will also make an art historical contribution to the study of East German murals.

conditions of democratic, capitalist Germany, and those whose working and family lives were spent in the GDR are today's pensioners. The remaining few once powerful and influential in the GDR are now the very elderly. The German Democratic Republic has disappeared. Immediately on reunification, the state and economic apparatus was dismantled, in the following decade and a half its material manifestations were gradually lost, and now a dissolution of the immaterial, the subjectivities which were born of that state is taking place.

During the course of my period of research from 2009–2013, there has been an evolution from the second to the third phase. The GDR of any public discourse over two decades after its collapse, is a product more of the post-GDR historical reception of the socialist state, than of the direct experience of the GDR, a fact which is underlined by that there is rarely any periodisation in such discussions, which implicitly compress the closing phase of intense state surveillance, social incohesion, and economic disintegration as representative of a forty year history. Informal commentaries, for example on newspaper blogs, youtube videos or flickr pages, which both attack and rise to the defense of the GDR, often appear to be a response to the post-reunification reception of the GDR. As an object of discourse the history of East Germany moves ever deeper into the realms of archival searches and last chance eye-witness interviews.

The developments in scholarly and other discourse about the GDR since 1990 reflect the trajectory of the three phases described above and thus must also be historicised. Early post-1990 writing focused on the mechanisms of the state, and GDR artistic production was viewed through this lens, with the ensuing *Bilderstreit* – the arguments about paintings, "Auftragskunst", (commissioned art) and "state artists". This was brought into sharp focus through the physical removal of East German paintings from museums and public buildings, and even more sensationally, their re-hanging in the 1999 exhibition in Weimar, *Aufsteig und Fall der Moderne*, (*Rise and Fall of Modernism*) which drew a line from pre-war Weimar,

through the Third Reich to the GDR, thus suggesting a very brief rise of Modernism and a long fall, and inevitably reinforced the notion of equivalence between the Third Reich and the GDR – some of the catalogue contributions made such comparisons explicit.[14] East German paintings were hung frame to frame against a vinyl tarpaulin, visually disqualifying the works as art by most curatorial conventions. In the same year, fifty-eight artists, dealers and critics signed a petition condemning the invitation to the former GDR artist, Bernhard Heisig, to submit a work for the Reichstag; in 2001 another of the so called "Big Four"[15], An eightieth retrospective birthday celebration in the Germanic National Museum in Nuremburg for Willi Sitte was cancelled indefinitely as the curators got cold feet about honouring the work of a former communist party member.

Works which were a product of an ideologically laden programme, could only be understood as documents of that ideology – and the historian's task was to comb through artist's biographies in order to establish the extent to which they were "compromised" as lackeys of the state or worse still agents of the state security service, and thus arrive at a conclusions on the way in which art "reflected" state policies.[16] Eckert Gillen's *Das Kunstkombinat DDR,*[17] published by the Federal Centre for Political Education was promoted with the promise that it:

"…describes like a crime novel the ruptures of the encircling around creative freedom and individual responsibility between the artists and functionaries. It looks

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[14] Bothe, Rolf and Thomas Föhl, *Aufstieg und Fall der Moderne*, (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 1999); for a discussion of the exhibition and Achim's Preiss' curation, see: Kristina Bauer-Volke, "*Aufstieg und Fall* - Der Eklat in Weimar. DDR-Kunst im Nachwende-Deutschland" (Jonas: Marburg, 1999)

[15] The term commonly given to the most internationally known of the GDR painters: Willi Sitte, Bernard Heisig, Werner Tübke and Wolfgang Mattheus who were exhibited at the 7th Dokumenta in Kassel.

[16] See, for example, Hannelore Offner, Klaus Schroeder, *Eingegrenzt, ausgegrenzt: bildende Kunst und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR 1961-1989*, (Akademie Verlag: Berlin, 2000); Paul Kaiser and Karl-Siegbert Rehberg's *Enge und Vielfalt – Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR*, (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999) (Narrowness and Variety: Commissioned Art and Art Support in the GDR.) The title is an inversion of Honecker's stated policy for the arts in 1971 of 'breadth and diversity'. It attempted to deconstruct what had commonly become known as ""Auftragskunst" (state commissioned art), by examining the different systems of support for artists in the GDR.

[17] Gillen, Eckhart: *Das Kunstkombinat DDR. Zäsuren einer gescheiterten Kunstpolitik*. (Art-Combine DDR: Ruptures of a Failed Art Policy.) Publisher Museumspädagogischer Dienst Berlin, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (Cologne: DuMont, 2005.)

behind the expectations of the cultural bureaucrats in which the theorists give the artists their solutions in advance [...] in the manner of a service factory. [...].[18]

The art of public space did not enter public discourse at a national level in quite the same way, tending to be more localised and centred on individual works which in discussions around demolition, alteration or maintenance rehearsed the same arguments familiar from the discussions on museum works. Overtly political works were removed as part of the assignment of a new German unity, for example the replacement with some large stones of the Lenin statue in Berlin's *Leninplatz* (re-named, *Platz der Vereinigte Nationen*). Often works were simply removed in order to "modernise" or commercialise a space. Willi Neubert's enamel frieze on the Press House at Alexanderplatz in Berlin quickly disappeared in 1991 behind the cladding of a steak house; the interior ceiling sections of his work were removed to allow for thematic re-fit. Modernisation was slower to affect areas of the East which did not attract investment, or the projects requiring large budgets , and works were left standing, often vandalised, or concealed by overgrowth. The privatisation of housing stock and subsequent building insulation programmes saw the removal or covering of hundreds of external works in residential areas. Where a preservation interest for an architectural work was established, the accompanying mural could also be preserved, as for example, Walter Womacka's 1964, *Unser Leben*, a 125-metre long mosaic which wraps around Hermann Henselmann's *Haus des Lehrers* on Alexanderplatz, Berlin, and Gerhard Bondzin's monumental *Der Weg der Roten Fahne* on the Dresden *Kulturpalast*, though the latter is in 2013 still concealed by a grey veil, and not restored. The early phase of reception also saw some commenting of works, as suggested for the school mural in Plauen. Max Lingner's 1953 porcelain tiled mural, *Aufbau der Republik,* was offset by a countering work of art, the *Memorial for the victims of 17th June, 1953,* by Wolfgang Rüppel, commissioned in 1993 by the Berlin Senat. As Lingner's mural itself was

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[18] http://art-service.de/article/das_kunstkombinat_der_ddr_zasuren_einer_gescheiterten_kunstp.html, downloaded 27.04.10

commissioned to replace a National Socialist propaganda work, the post-reunification piece countered a work already designed to counter another.

However, the reception of art in public space was further complexified since, independent of the discussions on the ideologisation of art, this kind of artistic output was not even comprehended as art. The elements of "Complex Environmental Design"– architecture, murals, sculptures, play apparatus, surface finishing and decoration, were, I will argue, specific to the social, political and cultural complexes of the GDR. Therefore it is not surprising that they were alien, or even invisible to the post-reunification planners and purchasers of spaces and buildings. To art and architectural historians schooled in Modernist ideas of the autonomy of the art work, art should not only be free of ideological constraints, but also of architecture or function. Complex Environmental Design was not simply about artworks situated in public spaces but was intended as integral to the social structures, and modes of life enacted in public spaces. This planned artistic environment was predicated on a model of collective interests, of predictable life patterns, where constraints were understood as security. The complex designed environment was a part of these apparently stable social structures and collective interests.

One of the consequences of the lasting influence of Socialist Realist ideals in the GDR, in which architecture was viewed as art (Baukunst), was that even when most architecture became a manufactured product of a building, the artwork was supposed to be ideally in "synthesis" with it; the utilitarian object was supposed to come into unity with the expressive possibilities of art. This concept was already challenging for Modernism-orientated architect in the GDR. In re-united Germany, slab architecture bearing narrative works of art disrupted expectations of this kind of architecture. Decorative works could be more easily understood in this context, but such works have struggled for legitimacy as "art", where art is understood as a conceptual, expressive and unique. In the GDR too, this posed a problem: art was

charged with carrying ideological content, and whilst decorative works, and works of applied arts were intended as integral to architecture, decorative, crafted, narrative work could not be considered as art, and were problematised, or as in the example of Womacka's *Haus des Lehrers* mural, critical reception stressed that the work was not simply decorative.[19] After reunification, works of applied art which furnished building interiors, often entirely unpolitical in expression, were actually the first to be destroyed in the wave of refurbishments. Hand made works in glass, metal, ceramics, and wood were torn out to make way for contemporary re-fits. East German paintings that were removed from museums after 1990 were not destroyed, but put into depots, suggesting that they might eventually have a place in German art history. Destruction of paintings would have of course been too ugly, resonant of the *Entartete Kunst* campaigns in the Third Reich. Destruction of works of applied arts, however, passed by virtually unremarked in the early 1990s.[20] An exception to this observation is works of stained glass, which, perhaps for their sacral associations, were sometimes exceptionally preserved – Walter Womacka's stained glass windows in a former kindergarden in Eisenhüttenstadt, in Humboldt University in Berlin, and in the former Ministerial Council building in Berlin are all still in place.

The discourse around East Germany and its art in the first decade and a half since reunification was part of the process of re-inventing Germany for the second time within fifty years. Narratives which disrupted the fairy tale story of the oppressed people rising as one to throw off the shackles of a universally hated dictatorship,

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19 Kuhirt, Ulrich, "Schmuck und Aussage Zugleich", in BK, 10/1964, p. 510. Kuhirt, art critic, wanted to counter architect Hans Hopp's proposal for a separation of architecture. Hopp: "Either the art has to take on the geometric form of the architecture, which would lead to closed or open structural forms of an ornamental character, or you increase the contrast between the geometric form of the architecture and the organic form of the artwork." (Hopp, V. Kongress of the VBDK, quoted by Ulrich). This debate continued throughout the 1960s and was addressed in depth by Fritz Donner in the research project led by Kuhirt at the Institut für Gesellschaftswissenschaft at the ZK of the SED.in the latter 1960s which was published as *Bildkunst und Baukunst : zum Problem der Synthese von Kunst und Architektur in der DDR* (Dietz: Berlin 1970). Donner's contribution was based on his doctoral dissertation: Fritz Donner, "Architektur und dekorative Kunst", Humboldt University, Berlin, 1969.
20 For example, all the buildings on and around Alexanderplatz including the Kaufhof, the Interhotel, Haus des Reisens, Haus der Presse, the post office, housed mosaics and decorative works which were stripped out during re-furbishment.

such as East German "state artists" defending their art, and tales of "normal" life in the GDR had to be somehow be marginalised and discredited (hence *Streit*) in order to achieve a consensus on the past which could form the basis for a stable reunited Germany. [21] Historian, Gerd Dietrich, proposed in 2001, that there were also competitive interests driving the *Bilderstreit*: "The fronts are well established, the cold war still goes on. Of course this is also a proxy war and political agendas on the contemporary art market,"[22] thus implying that the prolonging of these controversies served the careers of established West German artists.

In the second phase of scholarship and wider discourse, from around 2000, the material remains of East Germany were rapidly diminishing, and at the same time the experiences of East Germans presented a more complex picture than originally assumed. Notably, much of this more differentiated research was taking place outside Germany, where scholars were distanced from the political controversies and heightened emotions in the country itself.[23] Within Germany, the leading research which shifted from the totalitarian model developed at the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung (ZZF) (Centre for Contemporary Historical Research) in Potsdam.

The second phase was characterised by an shift in attention to social histories, in particular "everyday life". Oral history was key in this development, not only as a formal research tool, but also simply the possibilities of open exchanges with citizens of the former GDR that allowed the development of more complex histories. Whilst these need to be problematised according to the general political

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21 For an excellent summary see: Eley, Geoff. "The Unease of History: Settling Accounts with the East German Past", History Workshop Journal, 2004, 57(1):175-201

22 Gert Dietrich, commenting on the Bilderstreit in his review of Ulrike Goeschen's: Vom sozialistischen Realismus zur Kunst im Sozialismus. Die Rezeption der Moderne in Kunst und Kunstwissenschaft der DDR, Zeitgeschichtliche Forschungen, Issue 8, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2001), on H-SOZ-U-KULT (H-NET), 2001.

23 Harsch, Donna, *Revenge of the Domestic, Women, the Family, and Communism in the German Democratic Republic*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008 was a key work introducing the notion of "agency" in the GDR. Gender and cultural historians who already had begun to research this area at the Gender History Group at the Humboldt University in the 1980s Ina Merkel, Hildegard Maria Nickel, Irene Dölling, also contributed to a differentiated picture of experience in the GDR.

climate in which they took place, they offered differing experiences and subjectivities of individuals and social groups, and sought to better understand the relationships which helped to sustain the GDR for forty years[24]. A new nucleus of social history research formed around Mary Fulbrook's history department at the University of London, which as Fulbrook herself has testified was enriched by the arrival of a number of students from the former GDR.[25] Their combined research project "Ein ganz normales Leben",[26] the title of which was inspired by assertion of citizens of the former GDR, "we led perfectly normal lives,"[27] was followed by Fulbrook's development of the concept of "normalisation" in the GDR.[28]

These studies complexified the mechanisms of power from one of oppression and aquiesence, and also have opened up new fields of enquiry into cultural history, to include material culture, areas less highly charged than art. In this period, intertwining narratives of 'interventions' into the urban culture and experience, combining visual and informal narratives with primary sources were seminal in developing a form of design history of the GDR and other former socialist countries. *Socialist Spaces, Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*[29], edited by David Crowley and Susan Reid and David Crowley's *Warsaw*[30] took this approach; Susan Reid's, *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*[31] and Betts and Pence's *Socialist Modern: East German Everyday*

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[24] For example: Madarasz, Jeanette*, Conflict and Compromise in East Germany, 1971-1989,* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003); Madarasz, Jeanette, *Working in East Germany: Normality in a Socialist Dictatorship 1961-79*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); von Richthofen, Esther, *Bringing Culture to the Masses: control, compromise and participation in the GDR*, (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009)

[25] Fulbrook, Mary, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (Yale University Press, 2005, preface

[26] *Behind the Wall: 'Perfectly Normal Lives' in the GDR?, is a documentary film project* about GDR history, society and culture *undertaken by Fulbrook and her students.*

27 Fulbrook, Mary, *The People's State*, preface

[28] *Power and Society in the GDR, 1961-1979: The 'Normalisation of Rule'*? published in 2009, based on joint research with Alf Lüdtke and the ZZF in Potsdam looks at the way power structures were internalised and perceived as normal, thus stabilising the state.

[29] Crowley, David, and Susan E. Reid *Socialist Spaces: sites of everyday life in the Eastern Bloc* (New York: Berg, 2002)

[30] Crowley, David, *Warsaw* (New York: Reaktion Books, 2004)

[31] Crowley, David and Susan E. Reid, *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*, (New York: Berg, 2000)

Culture and Politics[32] also offered innovative studies of the cultural interactions between ideology, visual and material culture. Eli Rubin's study *Synthetic Socialism*, by organising his research around the history of a material, sought to explain cultural and social change through the needs and desires of citizens and the attempts of the state to meet these. Through this he also examined the rise of functionalist design.[33] Greg Castillos, "Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design"[34] also firmly places design and consumption as the propaganda weapon of the Cold War ideological fronts, thus raising the profile of design as a field of culture often overlooked, but which was central to power relations across systems and between governments and citizens.

In Germany itself a new, popular phenomenon had emerged towards the end of the 1990s: "Ostalgie". This was partly a response to the distance which had grown between remnants of East German culture and the realities of life in East Germany. Nostalgia for the East became the stuff of light entertainment, merchandising, and popular publishing, which itself became a source of controversy and fascination. The ingenuity of the play on words, "East" and "nostalgia" lent the concept itself an agency which academics were keen to deconstruct[35], but which in general parlance remained so undifferentiated that any serious engagement with the culture of East Germany in public discourse had to be prefaced with the obligatory disclaimers that it was "not an exercise in Ostalgie". Nonetheless, the new climate in which it

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[32] Betts, Paul and Katherine Pence, (Eds.), *Socialist Modern: East German Everyday Culture and Politics*, (Michigan: University Press, 2007)

33 Rubin, Eli, Synthetic Socialism: Plastics & Dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2009)

34 Castillo, Greg, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design*, (Minnesota University Press: Minnesota, 2009)

[35] Ostalgie has spawned its own literature. See, for example, Saunder, Anna, "'Normalising' the Past: East German Culture and *Ostalgie*" in German Culture, Politics, and Literature Into the Twenty-first Century, pp. 61–75; Betts, Paul, 'The Twilight of the Idols: East German Memory and Material Culture', *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (September 2000): 731–765 (seeks to explore the privileged place of ex-GDR consumer objects within East German cultural memory, paying specific attention to how and why they have emerged as new historical markers of socialist experience and identity.); Merkel, Ina, 'From Stigma to Cult: The change of interpretation in the East German culture of consumption', paper delivered at, *Knowing Consumers: Actors, Images, Identities in Modern History,* conference at the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung in Bielefeld, Germany, February, 2004; Polzin, Christine, edited by Thomas Kunze, Thomas Voge, *Ostalgie – a Part of a New East German Identity?,* Grin 2003; *Ostalgie international: Erinnerungen an die DDR von Nicaragua bis Vietnam*,

was no longer taboo to express a sense of intangiable loss in relation to the GDR, influenced too the treatment of remaining works of art in public space.

The second decade following reunification occasionally saw re-habilitation of, and engagement with works of art in public space, – sometimes private initiatives – as the administrations of East German towns, struggling with industrial decline and population losses after reunification[36], saw at the least the possibility of salvaging some heritage value from public art from the GDR period. Given the rapid dematerialisation of the fabric of East Germany, the occasional rehabilitation of an artistic remnant could offer a compensatory function for the loss of those landscapes in which people's biographies were enfolded.

Sigbert Fliegel's twenty-metre high concrete *Fahnenmonument* in Halle old town offers an illustration of this process. Originally conceived in white in 1968, workmen acting to a Party order in an overnight action painted the monument red before its unveiling, to ensure the appropriate association with the red flag.[37] The colour faded over the years, and in the 1990s, the spiraling concrete form became a canvas for spontaneous artists interventions, typical of that era in which the alternative modes of life offered a counterpoint to the rhetoric on German unity which seemed remote from reality.[38] Such free-spirited statements could not be allowed once the area was set for modernisation, as the destiny of the monument had to be fixed according to the new order. As the result of a competition in the early 2000s, the monument was again re-painted, with a pixelated orange and white pattern.

36 The process known as "Stadtumbau Ost" (Urban reconstruction in the East.) Population losses and the consequent "Rückbau" (demolition) of new build areas has been also affected by the choice made by many to move in to suburbs built since the fall of the Wall. The new build areas of the former GDR have been the most affected by the internatonal "shrinking cities" phenomenon.
37 Information from the architect and artist, Sigbert Fliegel, in interview with the author.
38 See Rosenfeld, Elske, http://fzz.cc/issue07FAHNE.html [downloaded 21.10.2012]

The 2000s saw the retrieval of some works from storage too: In Thale, a tiny town in the Harz Mountains built on iron and enamel production, CDU mayor, Thomas Balcerowski, negotiated the loan from Suhl of some monumental enamel works of Thale's "most famous son", Willi Neubert which had been removed from Suhl town centre. They were installed around former factory works "as a milestone in Thale's earlier history".[39] In Marzahn, North East of Berlin, works in and amongst the pre-fabricated housing which had survived the renovations of the 1990s could be given a new status through their integration with post 1990 art works, and thus help to promote the area as an visually interesting place to live. Halle Neustadt, which also had one of the most extensive public art programmes, now features its many fountains as of being of touristic interest. In the former heartland of petro-chemicals and paper production, Schwedt, the new owners of the housing blocks in chose to retain the series metal artworks on the sides of the buildings following renovation: the themes were agriculture and science, the linear forms typical of reduced Modernist graphics of the 1960s. Besides offering some visual interest, as in part of their original intention, architectural art could also serve a compensatory function as many former GDR citizens began to re-form an emotional attachment to the vanishing material culture. By restoring a work of art, investors could respond to the feelings of biographical and cultural loss which began to replace what had appeared to be a unanimous rejection of the GDR.

Individual works rarely survive the demolition of a building as the funding for such preservation must be found from private and charitable sources. Ronald Paris' 1969 mural "Lob des Kommunismus" in the former House of Statistics on Alexanderplatz was acquired by the highly popular and profitable GDR museum situated on the Spree in Berlin and now graces the cafe there. Effectively it is transformed as a tourist attraction.

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39 Letter to the author in response to my enquiries about the retrieval of Neubert's work.. Thomas Balcerowski, Mayor, 08.03.2011

Now, as these works have become rarities, there are several examples of works being uncovered or restored: such stories are reported in the press as "happy end" stories. The same newspaper which reported Dr. Kowalzick's outrage about the primary school mural, was able to report the incontestibly good news under the headline, "No red flags or peace doves", that a mural by the artist Will Schestak in the Technical University in Chemnitz had been discovered, which presented "relics of the good old days before the war"[40]. Exactly which good old pre-war period or place is referred to was not clarified, but a university press release, also ventured that the work contained an oblique critique of the regime in that it showed fruit not available in the GDR.[41]

Shortly after Walter Womacka's death in 2011, one of his murals was carefully removed, piece by piece, from the former building of the Building Ministry on Breite Strasse in Berlin. At its 2013 unveiling on a newly restored nearby building, the owner, the Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Berlin Mitte, (local housing association) "could not stand by and watch the work of a prominent artist who had helped to design much of the east of the city, fall victim to demolition... the restoration was a homage to Walter Womacka." [42]

Recent restoration work at the Berlin Kunsthochschule Weisssensee during which the 1954 Aula by Selman Selmanagiac has been fully restored, has brought to light a number of Socialist Realist murals made at the same time, Kurt Robbel's "Fischereihafen", Arno Mohr's mural on the theme of agricultural collectivisation, and more recently Bert Heller's flora and fauna (painted over in the GDR era). Selmanagiac's architectural and design work of the Aula was fully rehabilitated in the surrounding discourse of the Mart Stam society and the Wüstenrot Stiftung which financed the restoration work. Selmanagiac, who had studied under Mies van

40 Müller, Michael, "Ohne rote Fahnen und Friedenstaube", Freie Presse, 23.11.2013
41 Steinebach, Mario "Eine Renaissance nach 45 Jahren"
42 Heinke, Lothar, "Walter Womackas Wandbild feiert Comeback", Tagespiegel 16.10.2013

der Rohe at the Bauhaus, could be re-inserted in to the Modernist canon[43], even though the Aula design is clearly also influenced by Socialist Realist interior architecture, whilst the murals, conceived as part of the whole ensemble were not quite so unequivocally embraced. Whilst complete erasure today would likely be rejected as an uncritical engagement with heritage, the solution at Weissensee and elsewhere is to "quote" the murals within the architecture, cutting out sections which offer historical traces, rather than conceiving the mural as a work of art historical value[44]. The *Berliner Zeitung* solicited opinions of students at the art school on the future of Bert Heller's flora and fauna mural, and found that "Some raved about the colours and the technique and would like to make the whole art work visible again, *as though it is an art work*. For others a few visible sections would suffice."[45] [my italics]

The Socialist Realist themes of these works, and the context of the political era in which they were produced, means that in their re-contextualisation they serve a decorative and referencing function, rather than being celebrated in the way that GDR architectural works which have an aura of The Bauhaus can now be re-habilitated.

Both the removal of works of art in public space *and* their retrieval have served to try and build a consensus for a reunited Germany. In 2013 it is possible to re-incorporate some aspects of the artistic heritage, as evidenced by these examples, as well as the *Bildatlas* project. Museums and exhibitions have also had a major role to play: in 2013 East German history, as it is delivered into the public domain via the work of museums, largely offer a truce between demonisation and idealisation, mixing a fascination with a vanished material culture, the validation of eye witness accounts, alongside representations and installations of the mechanisms and

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43 Kasiske ,Michael, "Auf Hochglanz getrimmt: Selmanagic's Aula an der Kunsthochschule Weißensee", Bauwelt, 8/2012, pp 2–3; A seminar at the art school focused on this reading: "Wiedereröffnung der Aula der Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee" (Berlin, 3 Feb 12) full ref?
44 An invisible Heritage: on the re-discovery of a mural.
45 Strauss, Stefan, "Fische aus den Fünfzigern", Berliner Zeitung, 25.10.2013.

manifestations of state control and repression.[46] This represents a form of official
"consensus" on the GDR within public discourse. Although polarised views on the
GDR can still be found (for example on blog comments), the officialisation of
historical interpretation in projects such as in the a six-year-long government-led
official investigation of the 'history and consequences of the Socialist dictatorship
in East Germany' made in the early 1990s,[47] or in the activities of the Haus der
Geschichte (House of History) which has just opened its Museum of Everyday Life
in the GDR in Berlin[48], proposes that somehow a consensus on the GDR past can be
arrived at which is broadly satisfactory, and fulfill their function of settling the past.
Historian, Martin Sabrow, writing on the process of institutionalising consensus
suggests that it poses a threat to academic independence, and "tends […] to codify
mainstream interpretations and commonly accepted principles of coming to terms
with the past."[49] However, although there are attempts to present a mainstream
interpretation as a general consensus, it is also evident that this can shift as a
response to public differences.

The "return to the Modern" narrative of East German art and design history.

Finally, an important narrative has emerged in the writing about East German art
and design history which is also partly a response to its early wholesale
condemnation. These narratives emphasise "the other story", the way in which

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46 This is the approach of the privately owned DDR Museum on the Spree initiated by the popular history
writer and former member of the East German alternative history society Stefan Wolle. The new "Alltag in der
DDR" museum in the Kulturbrauerei in Berlin, is effectively the response of the Federation (Bund) to the many
privately owned museums. Although filled with items from the former Collection of Industrial Design, it uses
them to re-create an idea of "everyday life" in the GDR,
47 'Enquete Kommission des deutschen Bundestages Aufarbeitung der Geschichte und Folgen der SED-
Diktatur in Deutschland', 1992-1998. It was headed by Rainer Eppelmann, former GDR dissident and member of
the West German CDU.
48 Now a quarter of a century after the last years of divided Germany this project seems strangely belated:
"everyday life" in West Germany could equally be the subject of an exhibition by the "Haus der Geschichte".
49 Sabrow,Martin, 'The Use of History to Legitimise Political Power: The Case of Germany', in *Politics of the
Past, The Use and Abuse of History*, Eds. Hannes Swoboda and Jan Marinus Wiersma, 2009, (Vienna: Renner
Institut, 2009), an initiative of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament. p. 102

Modernism "pushed through", and overcame Socialist Realism[50]. Hermann Raum's history of GDR art, subtitled "The Other Modern" is a history told from the experience of one of those artists who was at the forefront of a movement against the constraints of Socialist Realism within the GDR.[51] Raum was a key player in the 1964 Artists Union Congress where Socialist Realism was openly challenged. The most important work on East German art history and criticism written since reunification is, in my view, Ulrike Goeschen's *Vom sozialistischen Realismus zur Kunst im Sozialismus*,[52] which traces the way in which Modernist traditions, which had their roots in the pre National Socialist avant-garde, were gradually reestablished:

[…] by establishing certain conceptual terms – which were always a compromise between doctrine and the endevours of the artists– certain traditions of modern art and also certain tendencies in contemporary art were gradually justified. The arguments to legitimise the change were developed not only by artists but also by art historians and even by a few functionaries…[53]

Goeschen demonstrates how throughout the four decades of the GDR, artists and critics were able to make arguments for Modernism by adopting acceptable terminology and conceptual frameworks. However, whilst Goeschen does also trace some counter arguments, the overall thesis suggests a kind of inevitability about the "return to Modernism". She refers to "extreme positions" but there is a latent implication that Socialist Realism was born only of doctrine, whilst

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50 This interest in Modernist architecture and design in the GDR is part of a wide revival in interest in Modernist architecture. See for example: Wolfgang Thöner; Peter Müller, Bauhaus-Tradition und DDR-Moderne: Der Architekt Richard Paulick" (Deutscher Kunstverlag: München). However, the focus on the Bauhaus and Modernist influences in the GDR already began during the late GDR period. Heinz Hirdina's "Gestalten für die Serie. Design in der DDR 1949-1985" (Verlag der Kunst: Dresden, 1988) does not refer to the influence of Socialist Realism.
51 Raum, Hermann, *Bildende Kunst in der DDR: die andere Moderne ; Werke, Tendenzen, Bleibendes* (Edition Ost: Berlin, 2000)
52 Goeschen, Ulrike, Vom Sozialistischen Realismus zur Kunst im Sozialismus. Die Rezeption der Moderne in Kunst *und Kunstwissenschaft der DDR* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2001) (From Socialist Realism to Art in Socialism : the Reception of the Modern in Art and Art History of the GDR).
53 Goeschen, Ulrike, 'From Socialist Realism to Art in Socialism: the reception of Modernism as an Instigating Force in the Development of Art in The GDR', in Third Text Vol. 23, Issue 1, January 2009, pp 45–53.

Modernism was more authentic. My proposal is that Socialist Realism's lasting influence even through the 1970s period of "breadth and variety" in the arts, is evident in the forms and subject matter of East German art. Whilst there was a huge change in East German art and design from the 1950s to the 1980s, there remained a preoccupation with human themes and with figurative art right to the end. East German art, and art in public space, did not ever correspond to developments in West Germany, even where, for example in the 1980s gable painting movement, the languages of visual expression came close.

Interest in alternative art practices in the GDR have also demonstrated similarities between movements in the West and some pockets of activity in the GDR. It is of course also in the professional interests of still active artists to exclude from their biographies connections to state-sponsored practice in the GDR.[54] Karl-Heinz Adler, one of the members of the Dresden collective PG Kunst am Bau, has in recent years established himself as an artist in the tradition of Konkret Kunst, a movement which ran completely counter to realism, and according to his biographer[55] wished to exclude his prodigious output in structural reliefs (which were arguably a form of konkret kunst) in the GDR from a monograph on his life's work.[56]

The narrative that East German artists and designers "overcame" Socialist Realism to achieve a Modernist art, design and architecture, is also focused on artists and designers' concerns, in a way in which marginalises the whole idea of a connection between art, design and "ordinary people" which was central to GDR artistic policy particularly in the Ulbricht era. Picking up the threads of pre-Third Reich Modernism was not a given in West Germany either, where many felt modern art was "aberrant and morally wrong." There too, public resistance to modern art,

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54 Many former GDR artists' websites are thin on information about artistic activity in the GDR or begin their biographies in 1990.
55 Neils-Christian Fritsche, Lecture: Karl-Heinz Adler: Konkrete Kunst In Der Ost-Moderne, Hermann Henselmann Stiftung, Max Lingner Haus, Berlin, 28.11.12.
56 Ingrid Mössinger, Sabine Tauscher, Karl-Heinz Adler Werke 1942 – 2010 (Wilhelm Fink Verlag: Munich, 2012)

which did not have its roots only in the campaigns of the national socialists, had to be overcome in the name of equating Modernism with democracy.[57] In design, Modernist form and the Bauhaus myth was pushed through as part of the re-invention of West Germany's post-war identity.[58] East German designers also had to confront popular taste to raise an appreciation of Modernist design as much as they did the aesthetics of Socialist Realism. In respect of the relationship between art and its intended audience, the research of Jerome Bazin, is interesting as he seeks to understand the art (including murals) of the GDR within its own remit by examining the relationship of "realism" and "equality".[59]

The difficulty of finding an art historical paradigm with which to understand the art and design of countries of the former Eastern bloc countries is examined by art historian, Piotr Piotrowski, in his article, 'How to Write a History of Central-East European Art,'[60] where he demonstrates the dangers of interpreting work at the level of aesthetics and making assumptions based on similar generic trends in the West. He argues that the Western paradigm of currents of art, from Cubism to Conceptual art, and furthermore the concept of a canon, can not be applied to Eastern European art. The canon, he argues, in Western art, has been criticised, for example by Marxist, queer and feminist viewpoints but as a model remains essentially in tact. However, 'such a Western canon of artworks should be rejected, since it does not reveal historically rooted values and meanings'[61]. Although

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57 for an account of this process, see: Stonard, John Paul, *Fault Lines*, (Ridinghouse: London, 2007) pp 91–135, Here p. 96
58 See: Betts, Paul, "Die Bauhaus-Legende: Ein Amerikanisch-Deutsches 'Joint Venture' des Kalten Krieges" [The Bauhaus Legend: An American-German Cold War 'Joint Venture' in Adelheid von Saldern, Inge Marssolek and Alf Lüdtke, eds., Amerikanisierung? Traum und Alptraum im Deutschland des. 20 Jahrhunderts (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996), pp. 270-290; Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith, Joes Segal *"Divided Dreamworlds?: The Cultural Cold War in East and West"*, (Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, 2012)
59 Bazin, Jerome, 'Égalité sexuelle et réalisme prolétarien en RDA' Corridor, Revue de sciences humaines et sociales, Université de Picardie Jules Verne, n°3, December 2009, p115-133; 'L'altérité du réalisme. Comment comprendre les œuvres réalistes produites dans les pays socialistes?' in Ligeia, n°93, December 2009, p181-190; " Réalisme et égalité. Contribution à une histoire sociale de la peinture et des arts graphiques en République Démocratique Allemande (1949-1990).", (unpublished doctoral thesis, Université de Picardie Jules Verne, 2011, due for publication by Presses du Réel, Dijon.)
60 Piotrowski, Piotr, 'How to Write a History of Central-East European Art?', Third Text Vol. 23, Issue 1, January 2009, pp 5–14.
61 Piotrowski, 2009, p. 6

Piotrowski's discussion examines alternative practices in a number of former East European countries, his argument about the canononical model of art history is relevant also with respect to narratives which try to integrate the trends towards Modernism, such as for example, the appropriation of the Bauhaus, in East Germany into a Western model of Modernism.

Historiographical positioning of this research

This research is intended as a contribution to design history, where design overlaps with the fine arts, architecture, urban planning and the applied arts.

My historiographical approach is neither to understand the works of art in public spaces as indices of an ideological programme imposed on recalcitrant populations, nor to try to divorce the works from their intended political functions. Public art in particular was intended to manifest the cultural political agenda: this was not a space in which an alternative practice might have developed: most public art went through a process of commissioning and review before a work could even begin to be realised. To receive a commission for public art, to plan public spaces, or to contribute to the development of theory within the professional fora of artists and architects, a GDR citizen had necessarily to conform at least publically to certain political expectations.

My aim is to try to understand the functions of these works within the cultural and political framework of the GDR, but further, in relation to Modernist ideas (both conceptually and aesthetically) outside and pre-dating the GDR, particularly around the notion of "functionalism". Rather than looking for an "alternative Modernism"[62] which would relativise the GDR cultural output against an assumed

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62 The recent seminar, which consciously tried to move on from the "Bilderstreit", claiming that there was now greater objectivity in the understanding of East German art, asked the question whether its could be

"standard", this work is an attempt to understand its object both on its own terms and within the international context in which it nonetheless operated.

There are many important and valid lines of enquiry not pursued here, which remain open for further research. A study of the marginal position of women in this history, either as practitioners or critics would not only a contribution to the still underresearched question of gender relations (not to mention the representation of gender[63]) in the DDR, but could tell us more about the structures which enabled certain individuals to become influential in the highest echelons of power. Further, a potentially illuminating, if problematic area to research is the public reception of works of art in public space, an area which proved to be beyond the scope of this work. At the same time, my research deals less than I would have liked with the narrative content, construction, aesthetics and material qualities of the works themselves. This in part is because the primary source material around public art rarely takes one into this line of enquiry, since debates about the *relationship* of art and architecture dominanted, something which also inhibited the development of any "genre" of murals or public art in the GDR. It has been more relevant to try to situate the development of the visual arts in public space in the GDR as spanning across several disciplines – applied arts, fine arts, architecture, form design and urban planning. "visual arts", rather than "murals" is the most accurate term for this range of practices, located between the critical functions of painting and sculpture and the aesthetic functions of the ornamentation of building.

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understood as "the other Modernism". The seminar was part of the long term project, Bildatlas: Kunst in der DDR", and the exhibition in the Weimar Neues Museum "Abschied von Ikarus. Bildwelten in der DDR – neu gesehen", 19.10.2012 – 3.2.2013)
"Die andere Moderne? Bildwelten in der DDR – Perspektiven einer Neubewertung" which took place in Weimar BMBF-Verbundprojekt „ und Klassik Stiftung Weimar in Kooperation mit dem Dresdner Institut für Kulturstudien e.V.
63 I only know of two works published on this topic: Irene Dölling's "Der Mensch und sein Weib: Frauen- und Mannerbilder : geschichtliche Ursprunge und Perspektiven", the culmination of a research project started in the GDR period. (Dietz: Berlin, 1991, and the short but insightful Helga Möbius, "Zeichen für Vitalität und Schönheit. Frauenfiguren im städtischen Raum der DDR", in "Blick-Wechsel: Konstruktionen von Männlichkeit und Weiblichkeit in Kunst und Kunstgeschichte". Vorträge der 4. Kunsthistorikerinnen-Tagung, September 1988 in Berlin., Lindner, Ines, Sigrid Schade und Silke Wenk.

Part II: Legacies and continuities

The founding of East Germany in October 1949 saw the consolidation of the demarcation of "East" and "West" as political entities, a division which was to have a profound influence on artistic culture on both sides of the ideological divide. That the ideological polarisation of communism and capitalism was also consolidated on the cultural stage is well known. In both the Federal Republic of Germany and the SZO/German Democratic Republic[64], cultural renewal after National Socialism and the trauma and devastation of war, meant a search for an art and culture which could be identified with the respective new order, and distanced from the art politics of the Third Reich.

The widely understood opposition of post-war Modernism as a liberal form of art and design signifying freedom for the arts in the West, and Socialist Realism as a doctrine imposed by the Soviet Union on all Eastern Bloc states which quashed Modernism and any artistic autonomy, is a historical over-simplification, itself a product of the Cold War polarities. This historicisation in the German context is periodised as the burgeoning of Expressionism in pre-war Germany, followed by "neue Sachlichkeit" (the new Objectivity) in the arts, condemned as "degenerate" under National Socialism, with the post war divide seeing a return to Modernism in the West, and the Soviet imposition of Socialist Realism in the East. Closer analysis of these histories has complexified this picture, revealing, for example, the political manoeuvres[65] behind the emergence of post-war Modernist art and design in the West, as well as both public resistance and to Modern art in West Germany, evident

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64The SZO (Soviet Zone of Occupation) refers to the name given to what was to become the German Democratic Republic after the division of Berlin in to four sectors in 1945 under the Potsdam Agreement. It ended with the founding of the GDR on October 7th, 1949. The Federal Republic of Germany had been founded on 23 May 1949.

65 Frances Stoner Saunders has documented the infiltration of the CIA into leftist cultural activities and elicit propagation of abstract expressionism as against realism in USA and in Europe in order to promote Western abstraction as the language of freedom for the arts. See: Frances Stoner Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999)

also in the resonance in Germany of Hans Sedlmayr's 1948 conservative critique of Modernism, *Art in Crisis*.[66]

The conflation of National Socialist artistic policy, and sometimes along the same reasoning, of Socialist Realism with backward-looking aesthetics, either neo-classical or folkish, is also too simple: in National Socialist Germany there were continuities from the Weimar period in design thinking, where clean, "rational" design was promoted in support of the work ethic.[67] Socialist Realism also shared some traits of Modernism, in its search for the authentic, its visionary mission and moralising tone. Furthermore, much of GDR art and design history was a dialogue with Modernism, in design, fine arts and in architecture. The influence of the formal innovations of Modernist painting, in particular the visual languages of Picasso, is particularly evident in some East German murals which nonetheless were still framed as Socialist Realist. Socialist Realism, even as it evolved from the early 1950s was sustained as a concept much longer than in other Eastern Bloc countries. In 1983, President of the Artists' Union (Verband der Bildende Kunstler der DDR), Willi Sitte explained Realism as an "expression of an attitude towards reality [...] and since reality is constantly in movement, in development, so the appearance of realistic art also changes [but] it can not be exhausted like other "isms" and styles."[68] It was not until the last Artists' Union Congress in 1988 that the term Socialist Realism was officially dropped in favour of "art in socialism".[69]

The exclusive affiliation of Modernism with Western democracy is undermined by its multiple manifestations internationally, as well by as the universalising,

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[66] Hans Sedlmayr, *Art in Crisis: The Lost Centre* (1957), first published as *Verlust der Mitte. Die bildende Kunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts als Symptom und Symbol der Zeit*, (Otto Müller: Salzburg, 1948). Between 1948 and 1958 over 100 000 copies were sold in Germany and Austria. (extended edition, Transaction: New Jersey, 2007), xv.
67 See Betts, Paul, *The authority of everyday objects : a cultural history of West German Industrial design* (Univ. of California Press: Berkley, 2004), pp 35–55. The contradictions of modernity, technology, and "Volkishness" in the Third Reich are also addressed in Robert R. Taylor, The Word in Stone: The Role of Architecture in the National Socialist Ideology.
68 Sitte, Willi Paper on Realism at tthe IX congress der VBK-DDR 1983, AdK: Künstlerbiografien, Willi Sitte
69 See Kunstkombinat,p. 190

excluding, nature of the Modernist project itself which, its critics argued, made an exoticised "Other" of all cultural manifestations which did not fall within its paradigm.[70] Modernism as a twentieth century cultural phenomenon is subject to competing intepretations: Clement Greenberg's mid-century determination of Modernism as a purely aesthetic preoccupation with form – *formalism*– provided a negative which was to reinforce its opposite in the art which was consciously *Parteilich* (party minded, ideologically committed and not neutral) in Socialist Realism. *Parteilichkeit*[71], one of the central tenets of Socialist Realism, which expresses a progressive role of history to advance the cause of the working class, and signals fidelity to Marxist-Leninist ideology, was not considered incompatible with the idea of scientificity,– in fact scientific objectivity was insisted upon because Dialectical Materialism represented itself as a science[72]. But even before the ideal of value-freeness was contested by post-Modernist critics, early manifestations of Modernism were driven by social political agendas, by manifestos, and the idea of constructing a new world, which were far from value-neutral and sometimes anything other than democratic in intent.

The tenacity of "Modernism" as an all-embracing concept, in spite of its contradictions, may partly be explained through the distinctive formal characteristics of the art forms which have come to define it, and which allowed a set of reformist ideas at the turn of the 19th century in the 20th, eventually to crystalise as a "style", particularly in the United States.

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70 "Modernity is the idiom through which the dominant groups in these societies sought to distinguish [themselves] from the European past and from the dominated groups of the present – the Other within." Social anthropologist Vassos Argyrou, 'Tradition, Modernity and European Hegemony in the Mediterranean',
71 *Parteilichkeit*, in German, *Party-mindedness* in English. The other central tenets were "ideological committedness" and "national/popular spirit". Heller, Leonid, "A World of Prettiness" in Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko (Eds.) *Socialist Realism Without Shores* (Duke University Press: Durham, 1997). pp 51–55.
72 'There can be no ideological neutrality, (research and teaching) are always part of the ideological struggle between materialism and idealism, between scientific and unscientific thought, and we must take sides in this struggle' Bollhagen in *Einfuehrung in das Studium der Geschichte*, Eds. Eckermann and Mohr, Berlin (East) 1966, quoted in *German History*. Dorpalen continues: 'Any pretense at neutrality would deny the existence of objective truth, lose itself in relativism, and accord equal validity to religious, fascist and scientific materialist interpreations.' p. 46

Modernist design aesthetics do stand up to a broad definition: they are characterised by secularity (absence of spiritual or religious references), human-centredness, rational planning, clarity and simplification of form, exposure of the mechanics of production, absence of local or traditional vernacular codes, absence of decoration or excess, often primary colour and geometric forms, authenticity, truth to material, and masculine rather than feminine connotations.[73] "Design" itself – and the departure from "craft"– as a self-conscious practice, as a form of rational planning and production in which the object world and constructed environment is optimised for the activities of human beings going about their "modern" lives, is central to the formation of Modernism.

Socialist Realism, popularly dismissed as a propaganda tool which used chocolate box paintings of bright eyed children adoringly gazing at the Father Stalin to conceal the horrors of reality,[74] has also become an object of critical discourse since the 1980s. One of the most influential writers to revise the easy dismissal of Socialist Realism was Catherine Cooke, who insisted on the reading of Socialist Realism as method and not a style.[75] Katerina Clarke's seminal *The Soviet Novel. History as Ritual*"[76]sought to understand the codes which operated within the Socialist Realist novel, thus focusing on the innate logic of its form.

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73 The gendered connotations of Modernism (and indeed of socialist realism) deserves more research. Feminist writing on gender and the visual arts from the 1980s challenged the gendered hierarchy of the arts and the exclusion of women from a masculine definition of "Art", notably Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker in: *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (Pandora: London, 1981) *The Subversive Stitch: embroidery and the making of the feminine* (Women's Press: London, 1984), and Linda Nochlin's seminal "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" first published in ARTnews January 1971: 22-39, 67-71. However these studies did not address the cultural category of Modernism specifically, although they contributed to undermining it.
74 For example in, Gardner, Parsons, Zwicky: *Stories of the Century*, Duval House Publishing, Toronto, Ontario 2003
75 See, for example, Cooke, Catherine, "Socialist Realist Architecture: Theory and Practice", in in *The Art of the Soviets: The Art of the Soviets: Painting, sculpture and architecture in a one-party state, 1917–1922*, Manchester University Press, Machester, 1993, pp 86–103
76 Clark , Katerina, *The Soviet Novel. History as Ritual* (Chicago and London, 1985) [1981]

Boris Groy's in his influential *The Total Art of Stalinism*[77] took the opposite view, that the origins of Socialist Realism should be understood as a product of elitist thinking and stood not in opposition to, but was the culmination of the Russian avant-garde artistic project, its important claim being to be "superhistorical" which guaranteed novelty through the novelty of its content and significance. Groys argued that form and content have been too easily conflated, and that the aesthetic similarity of Socialist Realism with 19th century painting focus misses the essential similarities of the avant-garde and Socialist Realist projects. Both were supposed to be life itself, and both were supposed to be "visionary."

Irina Gutkin proposed that the cultural origins of Socialist Realism lay in a desire for cultural stability following the overthrow of the positivist mentality that had dominated the Russian cultural and political discourse for most of the second half of the 19th century, and thus was not primarily political or aesthetic but was an "aesthetic ideology."[78]

The differentiated interpretations of Socialist Realism reveals it to be almost as elusive as Modernism. The focus on the origins of Soviet Socialist Realism has broadened to analyses of its manifestations in many other socialist countries. The collection of essays in *Socialist Realism Without Shores*[79] demonstrates that Socialist Realism in its many manifestations was far from monolithic and homogeneous.

77 Groys, Boris, The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic, Dictatorship, and Beyond (originally published in German as Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin (Carl Hanser: Munich, 1988); Groys, Boris, "Socialist Realism and the Russian Avant Garde" in Günther, Hans, The culture of the Stalin period, (Palgrave; Houndmills, 2003)
78 Gutkin, Irina The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic: 1890–1934 (Univ of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1999)
79 Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko (Eds.) *Socialist Realism Without Shores* (Duke University Press: Durham, 1997)

The place of "beauty" in Socialist Realist and Modernist discourses.

"Beauty" was to come of age in the 20th century as a ideal which did not have to be sought in nature but which could be politically and materially constructed. One of the recurring themes in this thesis is the way in which the concept of "beauty" was sustained through the shifts in ideas about what constituted Socialist Realist, or socialist architecture and visual arts. The relationship between "beauty" and "function" was at the centre of developments away from 1950s Socialist Realist conceptions of socialist architecture being defined as "art", towards the design-oriented conception of Complex Environmental Design, which began to be established from the late 1960s through the work of Bruno Flierl and others. The stakes were high in the inculcation of an appreciation of beauty, for, as Castillo has shown, "Socialist Realist beauty defined the beholder" because the ability to truly appreciate beauty was defined a mark of political consciousness.[80]

Beauty proved a remarkably resistant ideal, even as many of the characteristics which defined Socialist Realism in the 1950s were relinquished. It was a medium which through which a set of ideas could pass through and emerge newly defined but with the socialist principles in tact. It is not surprising that beauty was equally at the service of Modernist ideas, given that both sets of ideas they shared the "utopian desire to create a better world", an aim defined by Christopher Wilk as one of the defining characteristics of Modernism.[81]

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[80] Castillo, Greg, "East as True West: Redeeming Bourgeois Culture, from Socialist Realism to Ostalgie", Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History, Volume 9, Number 4, 2008, pp. 747-768, here, 775.
81 Wilk, Christopher, introductory essay: "What was Modernism?" in Modernism: Designing a New World : 1914–1939 to accompany the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 06.04.–23.06.2006. (V&A Publications:London, 2006), p. 14

Legacies and influences in the early years of the GDR

The necessarily brief overview above, of the complexities of two apparently straightforwardly oppositional cultural histories sets the ground for the discussion which follows. The discussion is not intended as an in-depth or comparative analysis of two systems or cultures in any general sense, but this introduction is intended explain the aesthetic and artistic cross-referencing which took place in East German public visual arts. Whilst history offers useful markers, such as the "imposition" of Socialist Realism in East Germany in the early 1950s, these sometimes overlook continuities and contradictions.

Socialist Realism, whilst formed in the Soviet Union, was established in East Germany by a number of communist artists as well as by cultural officers of the Soviet Military Administration and the newly formed Sozialistische Einheits Partei (SED).[82] Differences and factions between German communist-leaning artists were already forming in the 1920s and 1930s between those artists and writers who favored a realistic, *parteilich* (Party-minded) orientation, and others who favoured experimental and avant-garde forms.[83]

A key figure in this process was Alfred Kurella*, a writer with a career which took him from avant-garde beginnings in the Soviet Union in the 1920s – he was a founder of the Soviet avant-garde group Oktbjar– to become one of the most fervent advocates of Socialist Realism as a member of the SED cultural establishment. Johannes Becher, the writer, Kurt Magritz*, painter and architect are also examples of expressionist and avant-garde artists who reversed their artistic orientation.

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82 The SED Party, (Socialist Unity Party) was formed through a forced merger in April 1946 between the KPD, Kommunist Partei Deutschland and the Social Democratic Party, effectively disabling the SDP.
83 See Goeschen, p. 13–23 for a full discussion of Alfred Kurella's influence amongst left-wing artists and writers in rejecting the avant-garde in favour of socialist realism from the 1930s onwards.

Three work of three artists who play a part in my discussion, Walter Womacka*[84], Willi Sitte* and Willi Neubert* demonstrated both engagement with the genre paintings of realism and the formal experiment of Modernist art. Womacka, in his 2004 autobiography, wrote of the different factions of artists, influenced by differing backgrounds and political outlooks, in the early SOZ/GDR years, and how he chose to ally himself with the pro-Realists.[85] All three artists came from working class backgrounds.

The painter, Willi Sitte who became a major figure in the re-orientation of Socialist Realism in the 1960s and head of the Artists Union in 1974, recounts in his 2003 autobiography[86] that he had to draw in secret as a child since, since his days were spent working. Willi Neubert started his working life at the age of fourteen in 1934 to support his family. From his workplace in the steelworks in 1950, Neubert was delegated with a scholarship to the Burg Giebichenstein School of Art in Halle.[87] He was eventually able to establish himself as an artist "until I was one of them"[88]. The opportunity of an art school education may have also fostered loyalty to the system which provided it.

In the case of public art there was a confluence not only of legacies and influences but also artistic disciplines. Public art, as I will demonstrate in the course of this discussion, did not ever develop its own genre or style. The works which were commissioned and realised as public art were heterogenous in form, scale, material and narrative content. Public art in the GDR was a product of on ongoing discourse about the nature and function of architecture, and had to find its place within that. Individual works may have born no relation to the architecture in which they were

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84 Biographical details of individuals marked with a star are given in the appendix.
85 Womacka, Walter, *Farbe bekennen. Erinnerungen eines Malers* (Das Neue Berlin: Berlin, 2004)
86 Schirmer, Gisela, Willi Sitte. *Willi Sitte*, (Faber & Faber: Leipzig, 2003)
87 See: Monhaupt, Marie, "Arbeiter und Professor, Willi Neubert in Thale – Eine Recherche", in Karl Siegbert Rehberg, Wolfgang Holler, Paul Kaiser, *Abscheid von Ikarus: Bildwelten in die DDR– Neu Gesehen*. (Walter König: Köln, 2012) pp 185–191;
88 "Gradually I became well known until I was one of them." (meaning accepted as an artist alongside prominent GDR artists). Willi Neubert in interview with the author, March, 2011.

situated, indeed this absence of "synthesis" between architecture and art work was central to discussions around public art between 1955 and 1970. Nonetheless, it was developments in architecture that dominated the course of public art.

In the 1950s there were two strands of development in what I have until this point rather generally termed "public art", one which developed from painting and the other from architecture.

Attempts to develop an East German muralism derived from painting and influenced by *Muralismo* in Mexico, was fairly short-lived. Both the idea of collective painting was condemned for its avant-garde associations as "an attempt to latch on to actionism of the Weimar period,[89] and the stylised forms evident in some of the early works was to fall victim to the Formalism debate from 1949–1951, and in several cases murals were removed or painted over. The 1948 expressionist mural by Horst Strempel in Friedrichstrasse U-Bahn, was removed after a Party led press campaign against it, as were a large, decorative painting by Erwin Hahs in the Mensa of the Chemical works in Buna, 1949, (destroyed some time afterwards), and the interior decorations of the newly opened Weimar state theatre which were concealed (and later re exposed). This phase, and in particular the well known *Wandbildaktion* (mural action) at the 2nd German Art Exhibition in Dresden in 1949, has been comprehensively discussed by Martin Schonfeld[90] and Peter Guth.[91]

My research concentrates on the sustained development of "architectural art". The terminology for art integrated in to architecture, and within the built environment, developed from its beginnings as "Kunst am Bau", (building art) which could refer to reliefs, sculptures and decorative elements within architecture.

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89 Gute, Herbert, "Wandbilder sind keine Gelegenheitsarbeiten", *Neues Deustchland*, 11.10.1949
90 Schonfeld, Martin, Von der orientierenden zur richtungsweisenden Ausstellung: die Wandbildaktion der 2. Deutschen Kunstausstellung in Dresden 1949. in Paul Kaiser and Karl-Siegbert Rehberg's Enge und Vielfalt – Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR, (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999), 291–307
91 Guth, Peter, pp 71–93

This term, which to become in the 1960s mainly known as *"architekturbezogene Kunst"*, (architecture-related art). The term Complex Environmental Design, which established itself from the early 1970s was intended to reflect the many forms of creative practice which taken together could be understood as Complex Environmental Design. The term *Wandmalerei* translates as mural-painting, whereas the more general term *Wandbild* could refer to other techniques such as tiled ceramics, sgraffitto, fresco, reliefs in stone, plaster, brick, or other materials, mosaics and new techniques (from the mid 1960s) using enamel, silikat, and electrostatic processes of pigment blasting. Even this list is not exhaustive, and art in public space also encompassed figurative sculptures and by the latter 1960s, ornamental, abstract structures (*Strukturwände*, *Formsteine* or *Durchbruchstrukturen*), fountains and even play apparatus. Free standing or free hanging interior works, paintings and tapestries were also refered to as "architekturbezogen" when they had been commissioned for a particular space. Stained glass, and abstract works in wood, ceramics and metal and glass also defied easy categorisation and by the 1960s came under the general term architekturbezogene Kunst. The changing terminology in East Germany was a product of disputes over the proper course of art and architecture which will be discussed in this thesis. The general term I use, "visual arts and design in public space", is intended to encompass the full historical range of artistic manifestations; public space refers to both interior and exterior spaces which were accessible or partially accessible to the public.

1.

From Eisenhüttenstadt to Hoyerswerda: the development of Socialist Realist architectural art during the transition to industrialised building in the 1950s.

Walter Ulbricht's conviction that Socialist Realist architecture of the "national tradition" would be central to defining the superiority of East German reconstruction, confidently set out at the Deutsche Bauakademie in 1951, was, by the end of the decade, decidedly less certain. The status of architecture as art, and the synthesis of art and architecture were defining characteristics of Socialist Realist architecture. This chapter looks at the fate of architectural art as it rode the rupture in architecture brought about by the switch to more economical construction methods in the mid 1950s, in line with the change in priorities announced in the Soviet Union in 1954[1]. It asks how architectural art developed over the planning of the two industrial towns, the steel town of Stalinstadt, and the brown coal mining town of Hoyerswerda, named the GDR's first and second socialist cities respectively: one of the most enduring responses to the first experiments with serialised building was the work of the collective "neue form" formed in Hoyerswerda in 1958, whose members unproblematically embraced the functional object as an art form.

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1 Krushchev's speech delivered at the All-Union Conference of Builders and Architects in Moscow on December 17th, 1954 'On the extensive introduction of industrial methods, improving the quality and reducing the cost of construction,' demanded an abandonment of unnecessary ornamentation in favour of economically rationalised building methods.

The role of art in Socialist Realist architecture

In 1954, the Soviet art critic, Fjodorov Davydov lectured to a packed hall at the Deutsche Akademie der Künste in Berlin[2] on the role to be played by reliefs, sculptures and decorative works (murals, mosaics, ceramic works) – in synthesis with architecture, in imbuing architecture with socialist meaning. Whilst architecture itself could only make a general statement about the present, the synthesis of architecture and decorative arts could "make a much more concrete expression of the socialist spirit of the present: it has a narrative and explanatory character."[3] He named the palatial Moscow metro and the Lomonosov State University in the Soviet Union as exemplary. Monumental art was intended not only in the sense of statues, such as the monument to the Soviet patriots, but also in the sense of grandeur. This was only possible in socialism, he argued, because of the public ownership of the urban space which allowed for the complete planning of architectural ensembles. "The task of architecture and fine art...", Davydov concluded, "is to make people's lives happier, more beautiful, and more comfortable; furthermore, the synthesis of the arts represents a superb medium for the propaganda of progressive ideas, the meaning of creative work, the supremacy of socialism, and the idea of peace between the peoples."[4]

Davydov's speech summed up in essence the function of art within architecture in the early phase of Socialist Realist architecture of the "national tradition", the formula set out in from 1951, in which architecture was to be "national in form and socialist in content"[5]. The concept, "national in form", was intended to allow each of the newly socialist East European states to reference its national historical

2 "Die Zusammenarbeit von Architektur und Bildende Kunst" (the cooperation of architecture and art), a lecture from Professor Fjodorow Dawydow at the Deutsche Akademie der Künste, 15.10.1954, *Deutsche Architektur*, 6/1954, p 269.
3 Ibid
4 Ibid
5

traditions, for which in East Germany the work of the Prussian planner and architect, Karl Friedrich Schinkel. (1781 – 1841) provided appropriately grandiose models. Setting out the tasks for German architecture at the newly re-opened Deutsche Bauakademie in 1951, First Secretary of the SED, Walter Ulbricht also drew attention to the Academy's "noble task of retrieving the honor of architecture as an art and developing German architecture as a German art of building [*Baukunst*]."[6] The guidelines published for the future of architecture positioned architecture as "the highest form of art."[7] This definition of architecture as a form of art – to be "retrieved", in other words to restore the unity of art and architecture – was one of the ways in which Socialist Realist architecture and planning sought to define its difference from Modernist and avant garde tendencies, which were comprehensively rejected by Ulbricht in his Bauakademie address, and it was to have a profound and lasting influence on the development of architectural art and art in public space in the GDR.

Art in the showpiece ensembles of the early 1950s

The first new architectural ensembles in the GDR – Berlin's Stalinallee, Leipzig's Ringbebauung, Dresden's Altmarkt and Grunauer Strasse, Rostock's Lange Strasse, Magdeburg's Breiter Weg as well as ensembles in smaller towns, and individual architectural projects such as culture houses,[8] arguably "showpiece" architecture intended to primarily mark out the difference from the Modernist architecture which was being re-instated in West Germany, – all sought in their architectural form to adapt formal elements derived from German historical precedents.

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6 Das Nationale Aufbauwerk und die Aufgaben der deutschen Architekur (Berlin: Amt für Information der Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1951), p. 8

7 Liebknecht, Karl, President of the Deutsche Bauakademie and Collein, Edmund, Vice President of the German Building Academy, Guidelines set out at the first German Architects' congress, Berlin, December, 1951, published as "Fragen der deutschen Architektur und des Städtebaus" (Questions of German Architecture and Urbanism), Henschelverlag, Berlin, 1952.

8 See Simone Hain, Stephan Stroux, Michael Schroedter: *Die Salons der Sozialisten: Kulturhäuser in der DDR*. Ch. Links, 1996

Situating the newly socialist states within a longer "national tradition" was particularly significant in the East German case during the 1950s as there was a political claim to the aim of a reunited Germany. Artistic elements such as sculptures and reliefs or decorative techniques often exchanged one set of narratives for the new socialist narrative, or simply gave a decorative enhancement to buildings, to "make people's lives happier, more beautiful" in Davdyov's words. The illustrated examples show there was how a continuity of artistic type and techniques, yet with an entirely new narratives. In all these narratives forward-looking tone was set: the new anti-bourgeois role of women, education, trades, and agricultural collectivisation were emphasised as representing the new order. Some motifs, such as the family unit, politically organised youth and the centrality of work offered continuity with the central motifs of National Socialist propaganda. None of these are triumphalist or utopian images, however, and they exude a quietness rather than an exultation of ambition. The scenes are not of a radiant future, but refer to everyday situations, even though these might in some cases be interpreted at a metaphorical level, for example the image of the child experimenting with flight, the woman carrying harvest bounty, or the mother figure representing the symbolic category of motherhood, rather than the intimate sphere of the family. The figure of womanhood foregrounds the robust, slightly androgynous woman worker, the female learner or teacher, whilst occasionally referencing a romanticised femininity in which the woman's preoccupation with her appearance is offered up to the viewer, such as in the reliefs at the Altmarkt in Dresden. The female figure is occasionally put in a leading position, as with one of Alfred Thiele's terracotta reliefs in on the Ringbebauung in Leipzig, where the female is leading an explanation to the male labourer.

Artistic and decorative interventions were, however, not confined to these showpiece ensembles but widely applied on buildings which were not necessarily intended to demonstrate the superiority of socialism to the West. The traditional techniques of the decorative artist, particularly sgraffito were applied to carry the

new narratives of socialism in housing and simpler architecture than the central ensembles, and in some case were added in a fairly ad hoc fashion to existing pre-war buildings, perhaps due to the necessity of repair work. Again the propoganda value of these images is not triumphalist to the outside world but rather more addressed to the ordinary population, to generate a sense of home and belonging (*Heimatsgefühl*), and creating an identification with a place – nonetheless within the framework of new socialist relations. In one example, figures in regional costumes (*Tracht*) from both East and West Germany towns are shown, indicating the extent to which the separation of Germany was considered a temporary condition.

If we recall the central aesthetic categories of Socialist Realism – as set out by Andrei Zhdanov in his 1934 speech to the first Soviet Writers Congress, – they demanded an active "Partymindedness" [*Parteilichkeit*], or tendentiousness, a "truthful and historical correctness of potrayal [...] combined with an ideological remolding and education of working people in the spirit of socialism", and that the "life and experience of working men and women" should form the basis of the subject matter. Optimism and realism were not considered mutually exclusive since "Realism should not mean a true representation of the immediate reality, but "reality in its revolutionary development."[9]

In "A World of Prettiness" Heller sums up the central aesthetic categories as "Party-mindedness,", "ideological commitment" and "national, popular spirit." He compiles as schema of "Stalinist predicates of aesthetic judgement" based on an analysis of Soviet journals from 1948–1952[10] in which he identifies the main positive attributes as: identifies the positive attributes, "beautiful", "sublime", "naïve", and

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9 Heller, Leonid, "A World of Prettiness: Socialist Realism and its Aesthetic Categories"
10 Ibid, p. 63

"picturesque". These aesthetic categories recur, in particular "naïve", a "child's vision of sorts",[11] recur in architectural art in the GDR.

The portrayals in these sculptural reliefs mainly followed these basic tenets. If we take the portrayal of womanhood as an index of the penetration of the new relations into artistic representations, here they did not entirely take leave of bourgeois notions of femininity, but this contradiction of the socialist image of emancipated working woman, "equal to men"– always alongside her role as mother–, and the woman as object of display or as a passive onlooker was even more evident in the paintings exhibited at the national art exhibitions in Dresden.[12] At the third national art exhibition in Dresden in 1953, which saw the rigorous assertion of Socialist Realism against Modernist tendencies, a study of the paintings of the female figure shows a reduction in the number of representations of women in bourgeoise roles, as nudes, in moments of self contempation and as sufferers, all of which were highly represented in the 1946 and 1949 exhibitions. These traditions are less evident in 1953 where she appears as the masculinised worker, but mainly she is a passive onlooker to the active males in the workplace or represents a sentimentalised image of girlhood. More often, she is entirely absent from the industrial settings. If these readings can be taken as one indication of conformity to the tenets of Socialist Realism of the art works in public space, the differences would suggest that the pedagogical function of the new order penetrated more deeply into representations in public space than in easel painting, where bourgeois traditions as they related to gender representations persisted. Female figures were also used in public art and easel paintings to represent bounty and fertility, as in the illustrations shown from Schwedt.

The works in public space, necessarily simplified in form through the constraints of materials, were a primary means by which the important *Leitbilder* of the new

11 Ibid, p. 65
12 These remarks are based on my analysis of works selected for the exhibition catalogues of those years.

socialist order were played out. Typical figures were the members of youth organisations (Free German Youth, [FDJ] or Young Pioneers [JP]), teachers, learners, farm and factory workers, activists, and even in the 1950s sometimes chemistry workers. Another typical figure was the former Capitalist landowner in the carriage, sometimes accompanied by a lady, as a way to represent the difference between the past conditions of exploitation and the new conditions of collective ownership. In amongst these representations, nature in the form of animals and flowers in ornamental arrangements were sometimes used to increase the decorative effect, as were abstract patterns and identifiable symbols, such as the GDR insignia, symbols for industry and agriculture, though not the hammer and sickle, unless as part of the Soviet flag.[13]

The extent to which these narratives conformed to the pedagogical and ideological demands of Socialist Realism suggests that the artists understood the function of these works as to carry ideological content in a simplified, easily readable form, and may have viewed them primarily as a source of income. "Decorative painters" were those who would primarily work to commission for architectural decoration, differing from artists who would also maintain a studio practice as well as undertaking architectural commissions, However, this distinction is not always clear cut as it was common (or even compulsory[14]) to undertake a training in a craft skill before attending art school and many artists who started off learning a craft skill then went on to an art school education. However, whilst for a practitioner the distinction may have been inexplicit, the difference can be read though the concerns of the two journals, *Farbe und Raum* and *Bildende Kunst*. *Farbe und Raum*, a trade journal for decorative painters did not address the ideological content of work and rarely entered into discursive territory in the 1950s; ideological questions were confined to the status of painters as tradespeople, whereas

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13 These observations are based on a study of over a hundred images of the period from the Ruth Pape collection which is the most extensive documentation of GDR architectural art, housed in the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Other sources are still existing murals in former towns and villages of the GDR.
14 In the Burg Giebichenstein school of art and design a training in a craft skill was a necessary prerequisite to acceptance for the study of art.

Bildende Kunst was concerned primarily with the content of artwork. However, whilst the narrative content of the art works within architecture appeared in this period to conform even more than studio painting to the tenets of Socialist Realism, the formal qualities of many public artworks began to move towards the use of more stylised traits borrowed from Modernist art and design, which conversely was less acceptable in studio or easel paintings.

A useful comparison of this change can be made by comparing the developments of architectural art in Eisenhüttenstadt, officially East Germany's "first socialist city" and Hoyerswerda, its second.

Decorative art and architecture in East Germany's first socialist city, Stalinstadt[15]

The building of Stalinstadt as the "first socialist city" can be read as a narrative of the contradictions and difficulties faced in the endeavour of defining a uniquely socialist architecture on the scale of an entire town.[16] The early phase, from 1950–1951, in the planning and construction Stalinstadt which was to serve the new steel industry of the Eisenhüttenkombinat, was beset with delays reflecting the contradictions between Modernist predilictions evident in initial plans from architects, Hermann Henselmann and Josef Kaiser, and the political need to achieve a clear differentiation from contemporaneous practices in the West – alongside economic realities. The socialist difference was predicated on the composition of the urban plan which adhered to the July 1950 "Sixteen Principles of Urban Planning"[17], and to a great extent on architectural detailing. Walter Ulbricht

15 "Furstenburg, first socialist city" from 1950, "Stalinstadt", 1953–1961, "Eisenhüttenstadt" from 1961. The city was given the name Stalinstadt a few days following Stalin's death in March 1953.
16 An extensive, detailed reconstruction of this is given in *Ostkreuz* pp. 356–414
17 The sixteen principles of urbanism, 27. July 1950 published at the same time as the Aufbaugesetz, The Reconstruction Law, of 6th September, 1950, (reproduced in Bolz, Lothar, Anthologie zum Städtebau, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Katia Frey and Eliana Perotti. Berlin.) East German architects and planners made a study trip to the Soviet Union in 1950 on which the principles were based. (Simone Hain, Reise nach Moskau, Berlin 1995; Jörn Düwel, Baukunst Voran!, Berlin, 1995). A detailed analysis of the extent to which

followed the plans and progress of the architecture and intervened personally to make "corrections."[18] The "taste and dignity" of the working people who were to live in the new housing, who apparently had protested at the sparsity of the initial designs,[19] were invoked as reasons for more decorative detailing in the architecture. Detailing was specifically praised by Kurt Leucht, the director of the Deutsche Bauakademie, as a response to the criticisms of working people.[20]

In spite of the careful attention paid by Walter Ulbricht personally to the Socialist Realist details and urban plan of Stalinstadt, the art component was initially neglected. There was no artistic collective assigned to Stalinstadt, and the decorative elements around doorways or around lintels were probably the work of the aforementioned decorative artists. In 1955, Walter Womacka, following an exhibition of fifty of his works in the Berliner Kulturbundhaus, was proposed by Oscar Nerlinger as the artistic consultant for Stalinstadt.[21] But it was not until 1958, that Womacka's first major interior mural appeared, a mosaic commissioned for the "House of the Parties and Mass Organisations". Womacka also created the stained glass windows for the staircase in a kindergarden. Called *Unser Neues Leben*, (Our New Life), the first mosaic was a precursor to the much larger external work *Unser Leben* (Our Life) which was to become a part of Hermann Henselmann's 1964 *Haus des Lehrers*, the first prestigious Modernist building of the GDR, which marked the entrance to Karl Marx Allee in Berlin. Reading from bottom left, across the top, and down to the right, the Eisenhüttenstadt mosaic follows the narrative of the devastation of war and the triumph of socialism, marked in the centre with the group around the red flag. The mosaic was celebrated with a DEFA film,[22] which emphasised the relationship of the work to the new life of people which was

Eisenhüttenstadt adhered to the sixteen principles is made by Schmidt, Marco, " Eisenhüttenstadt – die erste sozialistische Planstadt der DDR: Eine Analyse der 16 Grundsätze des sozialistischen Städtebaus, Grin, 2012
18 January 1952, Ostkreuz p 394 and May 1953.
19 These criticisms were voiced within Neues Deutschland and within the factory newspaper in 1951 which put forward the viewpoint of the worker who did not expect to live in "egg boxes" Ostkreuz P 372 Vol 1.
20 DA/1954
21 Walter Womacka biography, www.fkww.de
22 1958: Ein Bild aus 100.000 Steinen (Dokumentation der Arbeiten zum Mosaik im Rathaus Eisenhüttenstadt, DEFA')

emerging in the city. At this time, the artist was not given any special status or even named, but was considered alongside the technical workers who created the art work and constructed the building.

The interior murals commissioned for Eisenhüttenstadt (Stalinstadt) at the end of the 1950s followed the same simple narratives as the works discussed above, however, with an increasing tendency to emphasise the pleasurable activities which were set out as part of socialist reality. Young people in particular, were featured in such works where shifted from the emphasis on factory work and the collectivised farm towards more leisurely images. Kurt Heinz Sieger's* works for what was by then Eisenhüttenstadt demonstrate this change. The lightness of colour too signifies the departure in to a lighter tone in content.

Hoyerswerda: the first experiments with industrialised building and architectural art

Kurt Heinz Sieger's biography gives as a useful insight to the difficult journey faced by many artists of his generation whose childhood and youth were marked by war, social upheaval and poverty. Sieger, (b. 1917) spent his childhood passing through over a dozen foster families and institutions. Refusing to join the Hitler Youth, he had not had the opportunity to attend art school, but in the 1930s trained as a decorative artist, signwriter and restorator.[23] It was not until 1950 that Sieger was was able to attend art school in Dresden, where he specialised in mural painting and fine art painting. Graduating in 1955, he was delegated by the Ministry of Culture to the "Aufbaustab" (construction team) in the new town of Hoyerswerda. Arts graduates at this time were commonly designated to a particular town, where it would be their role to develop cultural and artistic life in close connection with

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23 Biographical information from Lau, Maria, "Das Brigadebad" des DDR-Künstlers Kurt Heinz Sieger: Östliche Kulturpolitik in Auseinandersetzung mit westlicher Prägung. Masters Dissertation, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, 2005, and conversation with Sieger's widow, Brigitte Sieger in Sieger's former atelier on Usedom, August 10th 2012. Maria Lau is also related to Sieger.

the working classes, a practice which anticipated the Bitterfelder Weg, the programme set out in 1959 and again in 1964 in the industrial town of Bitterfeld designed to "overcome the cleft between artists and working people" in which artists and writers were assigned to work in a factory.[24] Sieger thus became one of a collective of artists recruited to Hoyerswerda at this time, alongside others from Berlin Weissensee, Burg Giebichenstein School in Halle, and the Fachhochschule for Angewandte Kunst in Heiligendamm. Their task, however, was not to work in the factory, but to use artistic means to enhance the new urban spaces. These group of artists, organised themselves as the collective "Produktionsgenossenschaft neue form" [written in lower case] in 1958, which was to become one of the most important contributors to the architectural art of GDR towns right up until 1989, as I shall go on to discuss.

It was just in this period as the Aufbaustab for Hoyerswerda was created that Socialist Realist architecture was entered a period of contradications and uncertainty in East Germany by the message from the Soviet Union delivered by Krushchev in his speech to the *All-Union Conference of Builders and Architects* in Moscow,[25] in which he called for the elimination of ornament in architecture which he described as "peversions". The call for the stripping of unnecessary additions to architecture appeared in a single blow to deny the future of architecture of the Soviet Union and its satellite states its uniquely socialist character.

The removal of the palette of architectural forms and detailing derived from the national tradition following Krushchev's 1954 speech, not only left architects in East Germany with a difficult lacuna as to the characteristics of socialist architecture, which was within the Deutsche Bauakademie and the pages of *Deutsche Architektur* initially bridged with a concentration on the technical questions of

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24 "Bitterfelder Konferenzen". In: Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch. 2. Aufl. Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1978
25 "Faster, better, cheaper", Krushchev's speech delivered at the All-Union Conference of Builders and Architects in Moscow on December 17th, 1954 'On the extensive introduction of industrial methods, improving the quality and reducing the cost of construction,' demanded an abandonment of unnecessary ornamentation in favour of economically rationalised building methods.

industrialised building[26], but also left open the question of the function of art and decoration within architecture. Krushchev's speech did not represent an embrace of Modernism as a cultural category, or the abandonment of Socialist Realism in art or form design, but was rather a pragmatic shift to more economical forms of architectural production. The changes were driven by social and economic necessity, but Catherine Cooke has argued, were reabsorbed in to the Socialist Realist narrative, even if the physical appearance of the new architecture came closer to the contemporaneous Modernism in the West.[27]

In the years 1955–58, the Deutsche Bauakademie offered no clear line on the function of art within architecture. Indeed, initially, President of the Academy, Kurt Liebknecht, argued that the GDR architecture did not suffer from the problem of overbearing decoration,[28] and that the priority was "the struggle of our people towards unity and the maintenance of the national culture," and that "in our conditions the struggle against Formalism [...] is far from over"[29]. For Liebknecht, the proximity to West Germany justified a continued assertion of Socialist Realist difference of architecture and planning. By the end of 1955, however, the architecture of Stalinstadt was subject to a rhetorical turn in public discussions of architecture and was criticised by Kurt Leucht as "wasteful" and "superflous.[30]

It was in the midst of these uncertainities that the second socialist city of Hoyerswerda was planned, under the first chief architect, Ferdinand Rupp, and thus was to be a testing ground for the new architecture, which had to define a path between the potential excesses of Socialist Realism and the potential monotony of unadorned, serially produced architecture. In the competition for the urban plan in

26 In the Soviet Union too, there was a focus too on how to solve the technological challenges of serially built, typed architecture. See Cooke, Catherine (with Susan Reid), "Modernity and Realism: Architectural Relations in the Cold War", in Susan Emily Reid, Rosalind P. Blakesley, eds. *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007 pp 183–186
27 Cooke, Catherine Modernity and Realism...
28 Liebknecht, K., X. Plenartagung of the German Building Academy, re-printed in Neues Deutschland, 11.02. 1955 p. 4
29 Ibid
30 Kurt Liebknecht, Neues Deutschland, 18.12.1955, quoted in *Ostkreuz*, p. 400

Hoyerswerda 1955, Leucht referred to previous urban planning practice of creating avenues, corridors, and the years of efforts to create dominants and central squares as "misunderstood romanticism", and "gigantomania", "cramped and exaggerated sensationalism around dominant buildings."[31]

Before the 1954 resolution to transform Hoyerswerda into an centre of the brown coal mining industry, it was a small medieval old town, with a population of 7000.[32] By the 1980s its population peaked at around 70 000, and the town had expanded to a total of ten living complexes[33]. Hoyerswerda, was planned 12 km east of the new brown coal processing plant called "Schwarze Pumpe". In the words of its second chief architect, Richard Paulick in 1960, Hoyerswerda was to "make the leap from being at the back of the forest, to becoming an energy centre."[34]

Hoyerswerda is located in the Lausitz region, historically the territory of the west Slavic ethnic group, the Sorbs, and the 1955 plans identified an untapped resource within the ideological parameters of Socialist Realism, and sought to take into account "the significance of the Sorbian national question". Sorbian cultural buildings and "Sorbian ornament" were planned within the architecture.[35] This attempt to draw on an ethnic specificity was in line with the policy of *Kulturautonomie* (cultural autonomy), for ethnic groups guaranteed since 1945.[36]

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31 Leucht, Kurt, "The Industrialisation of Construction and its effects on the urban planning of Hoyerswerda", *Städtebau und Siedlungswesen*, Heft 2, 1955, in *Ostkreuz*, p. 491
32 Paulick, Richard, Hoyerswerda–eine sozialistische Stadt der DDR, DA 6/1960 p 355
33 In 2012 the population is about half that figure. Source: Staatliche Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, accessed on Wikipedia.
34 Paulick, DA 6/1960
35 Suggestions for taking account of the Sorb question in the buiding of the large processing plant "Schwarze Pumpe" in the area of Hoyerswerda, established by the federal committee of the Domowina, Bautzen, in September 1955, in *Ostkreuz*, p 492
36 The DDR Leninist conception of ethnic inclusivity within the party: see *Der Beitrag der sorbischen Werktätigen zur Gestaltung des entwickelten gesellschaftlichen Systems des Sozialismus – Ausdruck der schöpferischen Verwirklichung des Vermächtnisses Lenins* : Protokoll Konferenz des Sekretariats des Bundesvorstandes der Domowina und das Institut für sorbische Volksforschung zu Ehren d. 100. Geburtstages von W. I. Lenin am 10. April 1970 in Hoyerswerda, Ref also: *Die sorbische Volksgruppe in der Lausitz 1949-1977 : ein dokumentarischer Bericht*, Rudolf Urban, Marburg/Lahn : Herder-Inst., 1980); Ref. The Sorbs had been persecuted under the National socialists. Plan for the Sorbs under Hitler (Gottong, Heinrich, *Die Bevölkerung von Hoyerswerda-Land*, 1940)

Richard Paulick, at the Research Institute of the Deutsche Bauakademie, commissioned a report in 1956 on the potential that could be drawn from the Sorb culture for the first forays in to block building methods [*Blockbauweise*].[37].

The report's author, G. Blume, painted an affectionate portrait of a dignified people, who developed their Sorbian culture and art forms in the face of struggles against external oppressors, the Franks, and then the Germans, and specifically then the Junker landowners.[38] The rural architectural manifestation of this folk culture was the wooden *Umgebindehaus*, the form of which derived not from aesthetic considerations but practical necessity. Thus, the author speculated, these kinds of buildings were already a kind of serial building. "How is it, that they [the Sorbs] naturally were able to do something which we have to learn on the basis of complicated research and development work, and still in practice don't often achieve such good results?"[39] The completion of the house depended on various craftspeople.

"Naturally, working with joy, the individual masters as specialists with their years of experience based on those before them, making windows, doors, gates, roofs etc. in line with the taste *Volksempfindung* of the people. These forms enrich and decorate the house, each has its individuality without destroying the unity of the totality, and automatically exclude uniformity. We should try and learn from this form of building today."[40]

Blume then turned to the question of how it would be possible to learn from the Sorbian building culture and apply it to the industrialised methods, and suggested that it may be possible to replicate the ideas of the roofs in prefabricated building methods, in order to connect with existing ideas and feeling for form, for example,

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37 G. Blume, "Ausarbeitung über sorbische Kunst zur Gestaltung der Großplattenbauweise in Hoyerswerda", report submitted, 27.01.1956, Bundesarchiv, German Building Academy, Research Institute for the Architecture of residential building, DH 2/23646
38 pp 1–7
39 Ibid, p. 7
40 Ibid

to roof houses with a saddle roof, and central community facilities such as schools and culture houses with a hip roof. [41]

In assessing the folk arts of the Sorbs, Blume identified potential for the decoration of pre-fabricated building blocks. The Sorbian folk art was mainly dedicated to the ornamentation and enlivening of surfaces. Furniture was mainly hand painted in blue, wine red, a lot of ivory and a little yellow green brown. Tiles were in a Renaissance style, with representations from daily life. These decorative treatments could just as well be used in the prefabricated building methods. "It is easy to produce moulds in which plaster or concrete can be poured. It would be simple then later to colour the background of the slab in the werk, once it was dried." The slabs could also be patterned with the same kind of motifs that were used in the decoration of jugs, which were "not strong and geometric", but had a "charming linearity" with motifs such as waves, circles, rhombuses, patterns and stylised trees.[42] Blume warned against the error of creating empty form in the selection of Sorbian decorative elements, as could be seen as the Sorbian *Miedertucher* (neckscarves), the corners of which were "unfortunately influenced by the schematic copying of bourgeois culture"[43].

Finally, the Sorbian folk culture was exemplary not only in its material manifestions but also in its positive attitude to life, and the collective mentality:

"It would be the right thing, to take this colourful 'yes to life' (*Lebensbejahung)*, into account in the design of the prefabricated housing and develop it…. Again, people will be dependent on each other, in order to achieve something larger" [44]

In Blume's analysis, Sorbian folk culture and aesthetic traditions were the basis for a model of construction that could meet the composite of interests in late 1950s

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41 P 17
42 Ibid P 27
43 Ibid p
44 p. 32

DDR building. The idea of borrowing colour and pattern from the applied arts and applying them to concrete slabs would offer a sense of continuity in regional identity, the adoption of architectural ensembles with central communal facilities, which had a "good basic form but then would grow organically to complete itself"[45] were effectively a precursor to the model of "complex environmental design" which emerged under the architectural critic, Bruno Flierl's influence in the 1960s. The necessary social cohesion of the community was already present, and at the same time, the proposal met the demands for a rational and economic approach to form, based on "simplicity and naturalness". The notion of authenticity and economy of form in the search for a new understanding of aesthetic and social value offered a bridge to a Modernist discourse. That so much cultural and political value could be extracted from traditions of an oppressed ethnic folk group, should have made Blume's recommendations appear the ideal to be an ideal foundations for the development of prefabricated building in the GDR's second socialist city.

Nonetheless, it is hard to imagine how the proposals for a kind of historically referencing, pre-fabricated architecture – as was eventually practiced in the GDR 1980s[46] – would have offered a continuity for centuries old agricultural communities, given the incredible shift in life patterns which were to experienced by the Sorbs. Not withstanding the trauma of the war and years of disorder, farm workers were to transform into industrial workers and to become educated under a completely new social order which radically re-envisaged the role of women as active participants in political and economic reconstruction, and in which farming itself was to be collectivised and modernised. Families were to occupy multi-storey apartments with unfamiliar neighbours. The existence of brown coal in the predominantly Sorbian Lausitz region had affected the landscape and population since 1895, but between 1945 and 1990 more than a hundred Sorbian villages in the

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45 p 33
46 Urban, Florian, *Neo Historical East Berlin*. This will be part of the final chapter.

region were destroyed to make way for industry.[47] The authentic Sorbian traditions disappeared as the populations were transferred to the new towns of Hoyerswerda, Weisswasser and Cottbus, and remained only in a staged, musealised form, eventually to became another theme for Socialist Realist public art.

In the event, economics were to take precedence over culture, and Blume's report was an entirely theoretical exercise. Two days before he submitted the report to Richard Paulick, a meeting on the plans for the first complexes of Hoyerswerda, on 25 January 1956, already concluded that "the Sorb programme" [in general terms] was too costly per head of population, and the concern to avoid monotony had led to too much variety and arbitrary layout.[48]

The first two complexes in Hoyerswerda, (1955–56) which were built in extension to the old town in partial brick building and partial block method under the direction of Ferdinand Rupp, demonstrated early attempts to circumvent architectural potential monony. A "living complex" (Wohnkomplex) was the term used consistently in the GDR to signify a set of housing units and can not be translated as "housing estate", as this term is too closely associated with Western planning. The definition of a living complex, was agreed at a sitting of the Deutsche Bauakdemie in May 1959 as a societal unit, with a unity of material and cultural supply, an urban and architectural unity, and a technical unity.[49] The living complex was not intended as an overspill for housing needs, but as an integrated and planned system for the requirements of everyday life in socialism.

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47 Frank Förster „Verschwundene Dörfer. Ortsabbrüche des Lausitzer Braunkohlerevier bis 1993 (Domowina Verlag Bautzen 1995)
48 Draft for the meeting of the Building council at the Council of Ministers (Ministerrat) of the DDR 25.01.1956
49 Collein, Edmund, Minutes of the Präsidiumsitzung of the Deutsche Bauakademie, 09.03.1959, BARch, DH2/21201. The definition was to be entered in to the German Building Encylopedia, as "sozialistische Wohnkomplex".

Ferdinand Rupp is said, in the accounts available from the first artists to move to Hoyerswerda, to have actively encouraged artists to come to the town[50] and to have been an enabler:

"Above all it was the friendly manner with us of the chief architect, Ferdinand Rupp, who offered us deep insights into the times, and made us feel more secure in our decisions. He was also a sensitive partner for many burdened citizens of this town in a time of change. He also opened the way for us to understanding partner, such as the former mayor, Arno Pinkau [and others]"[51]

The first to join Rupp's collective in 1955 were the sculptor Jürgen von Woyski*, freshly graduated from Berlin Weissensee,[52] the painter, Kurt Heinz Sieger (who remained only until 1960), Peter Bathke,* decorative painter, and Karl Heinz-Steinbruck* from the School of Applied Arts in Heiligendamm, four hundred kilometres north of Hoyerswerda on the Baltic coast. They were joined in 1959 by the metal artist[53], Manfred Vollmert,* who had studied with the Bauhaus artist, Karl Müller at the *Institut für künstlerische Werkgestaltung*, Burg Giebichenstein in Halle. Vollmert was directed to Hoyerswerda through the student work agency in Halle. Vollmert was the only artist of the original group whom I was able to interview.

Peter Bathke, the first of these graduates to arrive in Hoyerswerda in recounted in 2002:

"I had to go to the chief architect and he was happy to have someone who could add a little parsley to the buildings. "Think of something", he said, "Here is a room and you will get a contract. Get yourself some people to help. You can't do it on your own." In the meantime a few other people applied, a painter and a sculptor. I got hold of some blacksmiths. Then we realised what a lot we had taken on. We needed a workshop. As I had a master exam as a painter... I told the Guild in Cottbus, "Listen, we are two painters and two blacksmiths, and I am in charge

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50 von Woyski, Jürgen, "Der Bildhauer und seine Stadt" in Sächsische Heimat Blätter, 4/98, pp 248–255
51 Bathke, Peter, artistic leader of "Kunstlerische Produktionsgenossenschaft neue form", *KPG "neue form"* , (Cultural Department Bezirk Cottbus: Cottbus, 1988) p. 7
52 von Woyski, Jürgen, "Der Bildhauer und seine Stadt" in Sächsische Heimat Blätter, 4/98, pp 248–255
53 A "Metalgestalter" is hard to translate, as the emphasis on the material specialism defies easy categorisation as an artist, craftsperson or designer. Vollmert can be considered to be all of these.

because i have the craft qualification". Then I got my certification... then I was told that because of socialist developments we should become a Produktionsgenossenschaft. (production cooperative) [...] It was a fantastic beginning, but not easy. Very quickly we became very big, and we did interiors, painted facades, all kinds of metalwork, entrances, terraces [...]. We got lots of money off the regional council, said that these were important things that we were doing, and that it improved the image of the DDR, [...] then we got the material quotas we needed. We got everyone from the council on our side..."[54]

The artists of the collective were able to combine their differing specialisms in order to produce applied art works for the new architecture, which departed from the established motifs of Socialist Realism. With a combination of backgrounds in applied and fine arts, their explorations in simple geometric form were the kind of Modernist design forms which until that point had been unacceptable. This evolution of form is evident in the development of the work of Sieger, whose sketches for murals show a clear shift from naturalistic postures and depth of composition to a graphic simplicity and break with naturalism.

Rupp clearly did not expect the artists to reproduce the forms and narratives which had become already stereotypical: von Woyski recalled in 2002 that when commissioned to create his first work in Hoyerswerda, a female figure, Rupp asked for "no heavy-busted activist". Woyski describes *The Dancer*, the bronze which he made, as "a pretty, slight girl, which in the anticipation of a beautiful evening already dances and her skirt swings. Her optimistic mood...shows something of the spirit of those years."[55]

None of the motifs chosen by the artists collective to enhance the new architecture included human figuration: they refered to nature, still life, fairy tales (The Frog King" and "The Hare and the Hedgehog") and sometimes geometric abstract patterns. One of the series has a Jugendstil stylisation with repeated elongated

54 Arielle Kohlschmidt & René Beder *Mit handwerklichem Gruß: Geschichte der letzten 50 Jahre des südbrandenburgischen Handwerks*, CGA Verla, Cottbus, p xx, 2002
55 von Woyski, Jürgen, "Der Bildhauer und seine Stadt"

forms. Only one series by Sieger depicted the coal mining industry, but in a style that was more reminiscent of children's toys than the usual heat, muscles and sweat of the Socialist Realist industrial scene. The expression of each artist is evident in the works, who applied the techniques of plaster relief, mosaic, and glass work across the entrances and around the windows of the new architecture. Hans Sieger created over sixty different designs. The innocent narratives – they would come under the category of picturesque in Leonid Heller's scheme of aesthetic categories in Socialist Realism–, made no reference to Sorb culture. The idea of a "Sorb programme" as originally envisaged in Berlin was abandoned at least until the use of a colour scheme "inspired by Sorbian architecture" in one of living complexes designed by Richard Paulick.[56] However, the works clearly attempted to foster a sense of *Heimatsgefühl* for the new residents, with references to the landscape and wildlife of the Lausitz region. The fairy tale references were not simply an expression of naivety but also were aimed specifically at children to help with orientation, a function of art in repetitive architectural ensembles which was sustained right through to the end of the GDR.

On May 1st, 1958, four members of Rupp's artists' collective formalised themselves as the "Kunstlerische Produktionsgenossenschaft neue form".[57] *Handwerker* [manual or craft workers] were encouraged to collectivise as production cooperatives at this time: it was the *K*, the *Künstlerische* (*artistic*) which marked out the difference of the Hoyerswerda group. The cooperative set up an improvised workshop in at Seidewinkel, later properly built and extended, in which the specialisms in metal, wood, goldsmithing, and enamel were practiced. As Barthke suggested, the search for commissions in the early years demanded creativity, and the members actively played on the state interest in self-representation as they solicited commissions.

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56 The colour scheme is discussed at the 1959 Theoretical Conference, Deutsche Bauakademie, BArch, DH2/212011
57 The four founding members were Peter Bathke, Karl Heinz Steinbruck, Wolfgang Nötzold and Herbert Morys."neue form" exhibition catalogue published in 1988 to commemorate thirty years of the existence of the cooperative.

Neue form was one of only two such artistic cooperatives in the GDR. The other was the "PG Kunst am Bau" in Dresden, which in the 1960s particularly specialised in "Strukturwände" (structural walls, spatial dividers, and geometric elements within architecture). Neue form, besides taking on commissions that brought together craft skills, form design, sculpture, and architectural art, also became a recognised centre for training new artist craftspeople as "annerkante Kunsthandwerker" (accredited artist-craftspeople).[58]

The cooperative produced functional and decorative objects as well as works of public art, but the development of the output reads at the same time as an architectural and design history of the GDR: the commissions for decorative elements to alleviate the plainness of the new architecture which inspired the founding of the cooperative gave way to large pieces, sometimes semi-functional and sometimes autonomous works, to occupy public spaces across the GDR in the 1960s and 1970s: The metal section led by Manfred Vollmert was to produce twenty-six artistic fountains in metal for town centres in the GDR. In the 1980s, as part of the drive to restore sections of old towns to their Gothic, Baroque or Classical historical condition, restoration commissions – decorative metalwork for gates and staircases for example – dominated. It was not until the 1980s though that the work of neue form was explicitly associated with the Bauhaus, and in this period that some of the functional objects most closely resembled the pieces known from Bauhaus metal workshops in the simple geometry of form and quality of material. In 1988, a monograph celebrating thirty years of *neue form*, made explicit a connection between the work of the cooperative and Bauhaus ideas, interspersing Peter Bathke's text with quotations from Walter Gropius, most significantly the famous, "We must return to craft" declaration[59]. The texts in the monograph, nonetheless describe the three decades of developments of neue form

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58 Information on neue form from "KPG neue form", and correspondence with Manfred Vollmert.
59 Architekten, Bildhauer, Maler, wir alle müssen zum Handwerk zurück! Denn es gibt keine "Kunst von Beruf", lines from Walter Gropius' 1919 founding manifesto of the Bauhaus.

as anchored within "the whole societal requirements of art in the GDR".[60] Bathke, one of the founders who stayed with the group until its end in 1990, describes a "fascination" with the new building technology:

> "For us, the results of this new way of buiding was a declaration of the fight against the still dominant 'Weberweise' [reference to Stalinallee] architecture – the showpiece architecture of over-valued ornament. Today we know better than we could have done then, that not everything that was offered, said, and made public, was necessarily pointed to the future of socialism."[61]

Although Bathke appears to use ornament pejoratively here, it was ornament which both formed the foundation for the cooperative and which made up the basis of the latter restoration commissions in the 1980s. The narrative elements within the first living complexes, simple, even naïve, and picturesque, and forms integrated in to the metal railings on balconies and window ledges which followed contemporaneous Modernist form design – flat form and colour, modishly tapered, off-centred, asymmetry, with a pronounced geometrical stylisation, both took leave of the academicism of the "national tradition" but at the same time conformed to Socialist Realist aesthetic categories. The narrative pieces were not pedagogical in relaying the new social order, but some tended to *Volkishness* (popular spirit) in offering connections with the local landscape, with the new industry and with age old fairy tales. Moreover, whilst not grandiose, they were intended to bring beauty to an architecture around which a great deal of anxiety over potential monotony existed.

Bathke's account of the artists' fascination with the new architectural method in 1955 may have been sincere, but it contrasts completely with Vollmert's account made to me in 2013:

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[60] *KPG "neue form"* , (Cultural Department Bezirk Cottbus: Cottbus, 1988) P 5
[61] Bathke, Peter, *KPG "neue form",* p. 6

"I can only say that on my arrival here I was very disappointed. All the models and drawings which I had seen in my studies of "art history", did not correspond to the conditions I found locally."[62]

Vollmert emphasised the connections to the Bauhaus in his education at Burg Giebichenstein:

"Nearly all the teaching staff at the "Burg" at that time came from the Bauhaus. Therefore the influence of the Bauhaus ideas were automatically there."

Vollmert's brief remarks do not reveal much about his expectations or the nature of the art history which he had studied. It can be assumed though that the art history refered to was not the Modernist art history of The Bauhaus or Neues Bauen, or any other avant-garde tendency, as these were still largely taboo in the late 1950s. The "influence of Bauhaus ideas" was something which operated informally in the teaching, rather than part of the institutional programme. From the sources available at the time of writing, it seems that the works produced by *neue form* were all one-off models, and that thus the emphasis on *kunstlerische Werkgestaltung,* Vollmert's area of study at "The Burg" as the Halle school of art and design was commonly known, was understood as an applied arts emphasis on material qualities and techniques which were applied to functional, semi-functional and non-functional works, where function refers to the immediate use value. This definition of function as applying to use-value is of course simplistic, and the more complex value added functions of pleasure or communication increasingly played a role for the art in the increasingly standardised architecture of the 1960s, as we shall see.

In interview, Vollmert did not acknowledge a relationship between his artistic output and the vagaries of GDR art politics.[63] Whilst all the "neue form" artists were

62 Letter to the author in response to written questions following our conversation at the Kulturbund in Hoyerswerda in June, 2013. 17.10.2013
63 Vollmert was not exceptional in this. Other interviewees too, preoccupied with their own work and biographies, were not necessarily consciously engaged in the cultural politics of the GDR, however much these

members of the Verband der Bildende Künstler, it did not follow that they felt directly constrained by the directions set by the congresses of the unions. The work of high profile artists such as Willi Sitte, who had leading functions within cultural politics and whose artistic development and fortunes coincided with broader artistic policy developments in the GDR, was under constant scrutiny; it was renowned artists such as Sitte who came under the spotlight as "state artists" after reunification. For a "Werkkunstler", carrying out commissions from a remote workshop in the province, the claim to not have been affected by art politics need not necessarily be understood as a defensive, retrospective, post-Wende perception. *Werkkunst*, or the applied arts, were nonetheless highly politicised, especially at the time of the formation of "neue form", where it appeared that they had little future, a point also acknowledged by Barthke in the 1988 monograph.[64]

The complex relationship of the work of *neue form* to art, craft and design, reveal the specificity of their production to the needs of the GDR public environment. Not aiming to create works for manufacture, their output is analogue with the early phase of the Bauhaus, something which could be sustained in GDR because of specific requirements for art within architecture, and because the SED acted as not only as a guardian of cultural production but also its guarantor. In the next chapter we shall see how industrial development actually guaranteed a place for the applied arts in the public environment.

The members of *neue form* learnt how to argue their case with administrative bodies, and obtain the necessary funding and supplies, and to carve themselves a secure niche within the art and design commissioning system. At the same time their community in Seidewinkel offered an alternative cultural space for meetings of creatively interested people, for music, literature and theatre, in the absense of a

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were intended to penetrate all areas of artistic activity. This is also evident in the confused periodisation in artists accounts. Certainly none of my interviewees refered to any artists congress or state resolution as key in their artistic development.
64 Bathke, Peter, KPG "neue form", p. 6

developing cultural life in the living complexes, a lack which achieved notoriety through the work of the writer, Brigitte Reimann.* This chapter concludes with the interventions of Brigitte Reimann which were a catalyst in shifting the whole architecture debate away from aesthetics towards questions of spaces of communication and social life.

The mythic status of Hoyerswerda as a failure of urbanity

As the subsequent living complexes Hoyerswerda expanded in the 1960s across the Spremburger river under the direction of Richard Paulick, they were subject to ever greater economies of investment and architectural form. Brigitte Reimann, who moved to Hoyerswerda in 1960 to work in the *Schwarze Pumpe* within the programme of the Bitterfelder Weg, became singly outspoken about the absence of cultural life and forced the opening of a debate on the quality of the new architecture and the urban life which came with it.

Reimann's interventions, such as her open questions in correspondences with authorititive figures such as the architect Hermann Henselmann[65] and Alfred Kurella,[66] suggested a childlike naiveity which belied her intellect, but which evidently captured the sentiments of these paternal figures, including Walter Ulbricht himself[67]. This seeming (or affected) naivety allowed Reimann to ask

65 The letters are published as *Mit Respekt und Vergnügen: Briefwechsel*, Verlag Neues Leben, 1974.
66 correspondance Hoyerswerda, Berlin; 26.05.1963 - 02.05.1965,14.06.63, AdK 2168
[67] In Reimanns account. This was corroborated in conversation with Helene and Martin Schmidt, who belonged to the circle of artists and writers around Reimann and neue form: conversation with Helene und Martin Schmidt 12.04.12, authors of *Brigitte Reiman, Begegnungen und Erinnerungen*, 2006 and *Was ich auf dem Herzen habe, Begegnungen mit Brigitte Reimann* – Zeitzeugen berichten, 2008. The Schmidts were part of Reimann's cultural circle. Together with other young people, eager for the culture that was absent in Hoyerswerda, they founded the *Hoyerswerdaer Kunstverein – Freundeskreis der Künste und Literatur* in 1963 to discuss art and literature. (The Verein still exists in Hoyerswerda and is active in promoting Reimann's legacy.) In spite of (or because of) her high connections, Reimann was subjected to increasing surveillance in Hoyerswerda. The Hoyerswerda architectural experience was the basis for the hugely popular novel, *Fransiska Linkerhand*, published posthumously, Verlag Neues Leben, 1974. The novel is highly critical of East German architecture and loss of culture, and Schmidt who recounted that Reimann left Hoyerswerda because of the

questions publically that perhaps others would not have dared to. In 1963, Reimann shared her boredom and frustration with Kurella at the demands made of her for the Socialist Realist novel and the expectations of the brigade leaders in the factory where she was delegated to work:

> "I can not work in the conditions of the factory, brass music through the loud speakers all the time, and meetings with the workers and functionaries who look for explanations all the time. [...] I am depressed, any maybe you would understand if you lived here for a while or at least once took part in such a discussion as yesterday.... I have a thousand questions and a thousand doubts."[68]

By 1964, four more living complexes had been built and the Hoyerswerda population stood at 25,000.[69] But the new town was losing momentum as an architectural project. Paulick himself said the third living complex, built 1960–61, had "fallen victim to the crane construction technology",[70] which meant that it was budgetary constraints which dictated the path of the crane rather, than planning and architectural decisions, which determined the living complex. With the building of a town centre and cultural facilties continually delayed as resources were re-directed to new town building projects,[71] Hoyerswerda began to take on a mythic status for its "loss of spatial formations and urbanity"[72]. In 1963, Reimann posed the audacious question in the GDR National Council, "Can one kiss in Hoyerswerda?", a question proposing that the new environment was sterile, stimulating a debate in the *Lausitzer Rundschau* and a citizens' meeting[73] in which residents aired their

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extent of the State security surveillance she was subjected to, claimed that it would not have been published had it not been for Reimann's early death.

68 Brigitte Reimann, letter to Alfred Kurella, correspondance Hoyerswerda, Berlin; 26.05.1963 - 02.05.1965,14.06.63, AdK 2168

69 Flierl, Bruno, "Hoyerswerda and the development of Socialist Life" in DA, 13/1964 pp 217–218. This article, written by Flierl as editior of DA, is the first of many public contributions in which Flierl became increasingly critical of the development of art and architecture in the GDR.

70 Paulick, DA, 7/1960, p. 356

71 Flierl, Bruno, "Hoyerswerda and the development of Socialist Life".

72 Topfstedt, Thomas. Städtebau in der DDR, 1955–71, p 36 (Seemann, Leipzig, 1974); Flierl, Bruno, *Zur sozialistischen Architekturentwicklung in der DDR. Dissertation B* "The city is missing social and territorial identity, it is missing historical and contemporary connections, it is reliant on itself." Berlin 1979, p 27

73 reported in *Lausitzer Rundschau*, 27. 08. 1963

discontents over the "bleakness and boringness"[74] of their surroundings. Reimann used a further piece in the *Lausitzer Rundschau* to criticise the trend she observed of withdrawal into kitschy private decoration of the home: "On the walls of the rooms you can read the fault of the social system which has systematically built up this (kitsch) taste" – at the expense of cultural and social activity[75]. In response[76], the architect Rudolf Hamburger, agreed that Hoyerwerda was "the ugly duckling", and agreed with the need to educate taste and develop the cultural offer of Hoyerswerda, but insisted that the problem did not lie in serialised building as a method.

At this point the figure of Bruno Flierl,* architect and critic, should be introduced. As a new architecture graduate, Flierl chose to from West Berlin to the East in 1948, a decision which was politically motivated. Flierl was (and remains today) continually active in questions of urbanism, and in the GDR made the relationship of art and architecture a major focus of his theoretical contributions in the Bauakademie, the Verband amongst other fora. Flierl was (is) diplomatic in his expression, and in spite of his public criticisms of the shortcomings of GDR architecture, he made a career in the GDR as a prominent and influential critic until 1982, when it became clear that behind his critique a more general criticism of the GDR political system had evolved. Reimann's stimulation of a discussion on the character of the new urbanism in 1962, appears to have offered Flierl an opening which he took up as editor of the professional journal, *Deutsche Architektur*, a post he held for two years.

Flierl brought the debate in the *Lausitzer Rundschau* to the attention of his architect colleagues in *Deutsche Architecture*, and proposed that architects should assert their creativity in designing urban ensembles using industrialised methods, to respond to the need for intimate and varied spaces. Nonetheless, he suggested

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74 Flierl, "Hoyerswerda and the development of Socialist Life"
75 Reimann, Brigitte, "Bemerkungen zu einer neuen Stadt", *Lausitzer Rundschau*, 17.08.1963, p. 6
76 Rudolf Hamburger, "Aus dem Baukasten: die neue Stadt", *Lausitzer Rundschau* 30.09.1963

that some of the residents' criticisms resulted from "misunderstandings and undeveloped knowledge." [77]

Flierl also published a highly critical letter to the editor of *Deutsche Architektur* from a resident of Hoyerswerda who addressed the central question of the socialist nature of the new architecture:

> This problem can not be solved through the assurance that we are in in agreement on the general questions, that we unite under the formula: socialist building is economical building, which does not clarify of the question, what is the understanding of economic in socialist architecture? Which are the specifically socialist agencies of architecture? What is the socialist conciousness, the socialist relationships between people, the spiritual life of a people?[78]

Flierl must have been responsble for a certain amount of "staging" of public opinion in this debate, since Hans Kerschek, "ordinary resident" who wrote the letter after attending the 9th Plenum of the Building Academy, was in fact the partner of Reimann, and the views he expresses as an ordinary resident coincide with those of Reimann and Flierl. Reimann's criticism on the new architecture reached influential figures in the GDR, and helped to articulate the shift from the understanding of monotony from an aesthetic to a social question. It was this question that began to preoccupy artists and social theorists in the 1960s.

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77 Flierl, "Hoyerswerda and the development of Socialist Life". Hamburger in his article (note 76) rejected the criticism outright, saying, "We need to develop other urban qualities than gazing in shop windows."
78 Kerschek, letter to the Editor, DA, 4/1964, p 220

2.

Beauty and Ornament, Function and Form: re-thinking socialist beauty.

Three factors drove the changes in design and architecture in the early 1960s. Firstly, economic recovery and the political context of Cold War competition – which lay behind Walter Ulbricht's 1958 promise that the GDR would overtake West German consumption by 1961,[1] – demanded the modernisation of industry, the production of designed goods, and correlating urban expansion. This gave a fresh impetus to arguments around the value of design in functional terms, which then opened up discussions on the nature of architecture and art in public space. Secondly, the need to propagate the consensus and cohesion necessary for the success of the socialist programme meant that there had to be (at the very least) a vision of the attractive and culturally rich nature of collective life and its physical manifestations in socialism, refered to as the "beauty" of life. Thirdly, a cultural-ideological imperative required a theoretical foundation for the *socialist* character of the built and material environment, and these were called upon as the physical manifestation of socialism, as it re-formed through industrial modernisation. These were the challenges posed by the parameters of Cold War competition: for

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1 "The per capita consumption of our working population with all the main foodstuffs and consumer goods will catch up and overtake that of the per capita consumption of the entire population of West Germany."
Ulbricht, Walter, Opening speech at the 5th SED Party Congress, "The Struggle for Peace, for the Victory of Socialism, for the National Renewal of Germany as a Peace-loving, Democratic State" (opening speech) in Minutes of the Negotiations of the 5th Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, 10th–16th July, 1958, Berlin 1959, Volume 1, p. 68.

socialism to seen to be economically and culturally superior to capitalism, but, equally importantly, to be seen to be socialist.

This section of the thesis examines the discussions which took place in the institutions in Berlin which were charged with developing the theories to accompany the new practices in design and architecture. It looks at the way the central idea of beauty served these changes, and how surface decoration and colour were means by which the idea of Socialist Realism, and socialist difference, was sustained. The discussions on the design of the manufactured object within the Institut für Angewandte Kunst, which, also driven by economic necessity, hovered over the subsequent discussions on architecture, which was rapidly taking on the characteristics of a manufactured object.

Constructing beauty in the 20th century

Claims to the socially meliorative functions of beauty were made across the ideological spectrum in the 20th century. The North American "City Beautiful" reformers and John Ruskin in Britain were the first to to make the connection between the idea of a rationalised beauty of the city and social reform with a moral tenor.[2] In a very different form, beauty was also to be socially instrumental in National Socialist Germany in the 1930s..[3] Claims to the social potency of the collective experience of beauty were not limited to gestural architecture of power elites. The early Modernists too, in a spirit of pioneering social reform, embraced the principle of beauty even as they deconsructed its historical codes, whether as in harmony with function, in materials, form, the machine, or experience: Gropius in

2 See, Wilson, William H, "The City Beautiful Movement. Creating the North American Landscape". Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989
3 See Betts, on the Beauty of Labour Bureau established in November 1933, pp 35–55. Under Speer it was created to make "German every day life beautiful"through improvements in the workplace. P 35 Betts argues that in the Third Reich there was an effort "to redeem the German object world [...] The Nazi desire to unify Germans through audiovisual images of collectivity implicitly included the world of objects." P 50

"Der Neue Baugedanke" (1919)[4], claimed there was a yearning for a "fundamentally new world of beauty." Sigfried Giedeon* defined the beauty of a house as corresponding to a life feeling, in terms of "light, air, movement, openness [...] the interplay of functions."[5]

A new beauty in technology (or "the machine") was present in the discourses of Russian Constructivists, avant-gardists and Socialist Realists. For Karel Teige*, beauty arose from the functionality and completeness of the machine, "the more beautiful, the more complete"[6], or even as the "irrational value of the rational product" of the machine. Le Corbusier was preoccupied with beauty as the creative sensibility in *harmony* with the functional, with economics and mathematics,[7] as the result of "labour governed by economy and conditioned by [...] physics"[8], as the "rational satisfaction of the mind."[9] Corbusier defined the forms which were appropriate to this task– unadorned, uninterrupted, primary, geometric forms. The emotional response to beauty had even a metaphysical character, "beyond our senses" resonating with "laws of the universe".[10]

These Modernist discourses on the beauty of industry were equally present within Socialist Realist conceptions of beauty, even if these led to conclusions which were far-reaching for the whole of society. In "The Aesthetic Category of the Beautiful", Nina Dmitrieva in the Soviet Union brought giant industrial projects under Stalin,

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4 Gropius, Walter, Bruno Taut and Adolf Behne, "Der Neue Baugedanke" (*New Thinking on Building*) leaflet for the "Exhibition for Unknown Architects", Arbeitsrat für Kunst, Berlin April 1919, reproduced in Moravansky, pp 408–410

5 "Befreites Wohnen", (Liberated Living),1929, (schaubücher 14), orell füssli verlag, zürich/leipzig 1929, p 5

6 Teige, Karel, "Constructivism and the Liquidation of "Art". First published in Czech in 1925, reproduced from the German translation by Paul Kruntorad, "Liquidierung der 'Kunst'. Analysen, Manifest. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1968 in Moravánszky, Akos, "Architekturtheorie im 20. Jahrhundert: Eine kritische Anthologie", Vienna, Springer, 2003
p.315 Moravánszky suggests that Teige's a somewhat surprising turn in his essay towards the irrational perhaps is a preparation for Teige's turn to Surrealism.

7 For a discussion on Le Corbusiers's conception of beauty, see Schumacher, Patrik "The Autopoiesis of Architecture, Volume II: A New Agenda for Architecture, pp 580–586, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 2012

8 Le Corbusier, Vers une Architecture, first published in Paris, 1923, Here, "Toward An Architecture, Texts & Documents", Translated by John Goodman, Re-printed in English translation by the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2008, p. 158

9 Toward An Architecture p 186

10 Schumacher, Patrik "The Autopoiesis of Architecture", p. 583

formed "according to the laws of beauty" such as the construction of canals, hydroelectric stations, and irrigation programmes as well as industrial installations into the category of the beautiful[11]. Catherine Cooke has demonstrated how in 1930s Soviet Stalinism, the state and its architecture were constructed as aesthetically and conceptionally interchangeable.[12] "Radiant" architecture and cities, embodying wholeness (*tselostnost*), simplicity and clarity (*prostota*), and a distinctive 'image' (*obraz*) were analogous with the promised "radiant future".[13] In the literary mythologisation of the Soviet Socialist Realist Moscow metro, completed in 1935, this exalted moral order was claimed to be demonstrable through material splendour.[14] The beauty and magnificence of the metro was analogous with the victory of socialism.[15] 'Radiance' was literally "an experience of luminosity, shine, and tint of reflective surfaces; the gleam of the polished marbles illuminated by Metro's electric lighting." [16] This transformational metaphor of architectural beauty was largely transposed to the new Eastern European socialist states after 1945.

Conceptions of "beauty" in the early GDR

Given its multiple presence in German historical and Soviet socialist narratives, beauty, from the foundation of the GDR, was assured integral place within the ideological matrix. Both "realists" and "functionalists" were pre-disposed to reinscribing the beauty ideal rather than seeking to challenge its authority, and

11 N. Dmitrijewa, "Kunst und Literatur" 5/1958

12 Cooke, Catherine, 'Beauty as a Route to "the Radiant Future": Responses of Soviet Architecture', Journal of Design, Journal of Design History, Vol. 10, No. 2, Design, Stalin and the Thaw (1997), pp. 137-160, here P 147

13 Cooke, Catherine, 'Beauty as a Route to "the Radiant Future": Responses of Soviet Architecture', Journal of Design P 148
History, vol. 10, no. 2 (Design, Stalin, and the Thaw), 1997, pp. 137–60.

14 Vujosevic, Tijana, Soviet Modernity and the Aesthetics of Gleam: The Moscow Metro in Collective Histories of Construction, Journal of Design History Advance Access published September 30, 2012, p 2

15 Vujosevic, Tijana, Soviet Modernity and the Aesthetics of Gleam: p. 4

16 Vujosevic, Tijana, Soviet Modernity and the Aesthetics of Gleam: p 2

indeed the ideals of "beauty" advanced in the early 20th century were open to these varied appropriations.

In the early GDR, beauty was at once the opulence of high culture the simplicity of folk tradition. A review of the use of the term in the SED Party newspaper "Neues Deutschland", through the 1950s and 1960s reveals that "beauty" was consistently used in descriptions of folk arts, which were framed in terms of the authentic, popular traditions of working people, and yet "other" to the forward-looking socialist Germany. Re-claimed from National Socialist usage, folk arts were not the essence of socialism, in the way that *Heimatkunst* was used to signify a fundamental earth-bound truth[17], but something to be admired and "critically appropriated"[18]. At the same time, beauty was typically identified in the splendour of Socialist Realist ornament, as an expression of the "joy in socialism", in the first half of the 1950s. Ornamental splendour and folk tradition were complementary, indeed the high end of Socialist Realism was ideally inspired by folk traditions. *Neues Deutschland* described in 1950 the architecture of the Moscow metro as an expression of "spiritual and material interests of the Soviet people, the idea of the wholeness, beauty and joy of life in the socialist society", and described how in certain stations traditional Russian building methods and Russian folk art was integrated within the designs.

The protean quality of "beauty" in socialism is encapsulated in this excited report on the Moscow delegation to the 1951 World Festival Games, held in Berlin:

> It was fifteen years ago in Moscow that I realised for the first time in my life, how beautiful colours are, how beautiful the shimmering stone, how beautiful velvet and silk, how beautiful ornament [is]– how beautiful and

17 See for example, Friedrichsmeyer, Sara, The Imperialist imagination: German colonialism and its Legacy, p. 90
18 Heisig, Walter, a speech to a seminar for the designers of industrial products (Tagung der Entwerfer für Industieerzeugnisse) in the Deutsche Akademie der Künste, Berlin 20th January 1953. Institute for Applied Arts, Berlin, 1953. The main problems existing he identified as overload of kitsch, formalist tendencies, and insufficient critical appropriation of the national cultural traditions. P 6

rich life can be. [...] The free people of the Soviet Union have unfolded the full beauty of life. So it is that they could send their delegation with the task: create our richness, create our beauty, make our purity and love – create the splendour of socialism! The splendour of a meaningful, great, strong life has been achieved! [...] The very best – for everyone.[19]

Beauty was present in both the tangible and intangible, but only through socialism would material and cultural richness be made available to ordinary people. Most importantly, working people *deserved* beauty in their lives, and whilst in the early post-war years working people in the East could not "possess" beauty or furnish their homes with it, they could at least experience it, culturally and collectively. The collective experience of beauty was, as in the Soviet Union, a cultural political experience which was also to be manifest in the built and material environment.

It was in the development of the beauty of "things", rather than in the built environment, that the first shift into a Modernist, function-led re-framing of the beauty ideal occured, stimulated at first by the discourses promoted by the Institute of Applied Arts (1952–1963)[20] in Berlin. This was subsequently taken up in architecture and to expand to a wider conception of art, socialist society and public space.

The role of the Institute for the Applied Arts in Berlin

"Beauty", consistently conceived of in a dialectical relationship with "function", remained central to the specificity of GDR socialist culture, even as the production

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19 Inge v. Wangenheim, "On the Beauty of Life and People", Neues Deutschland, 8. August 1951 Jahrgang 6 / Edition 181 / p. 3

[20] Set up originally as the ":::" as a part of the Berlin Weissensee art school under Mart Stam, the organisation went through a number of changes in name, administration and emphasis: Institute of Applied Arts under the Ministry of Culture (1952 –1963), Council for Industrial Form under the Ministry of Culture (Sept. 1962 - 1964), (2)Central Institute for Form Design under the Ministry of Culture (1963–1965), Central Institute for Design under the German Office for Measuring and Product testing (1965–1972),
Zentralinstitut für Gestaltung beim Deutschen Amt für Messwesen und Warenprüfung (DAMW) (1965 –1972).

of the material environment underwent radical change in the 1960s. The relinquishing of ornament derived from national tradition, whether from Schinkelesque architecture, or Sorbian neckscarves, opened a space for the re-negotiation of beauty, beginning in the domain of applied arts and design, and subsequently within architecture and the fine arts. The parameters of Socialist Realism were to shift into something which was broadly a socialist modernism: socialist design needed to be manufacturable, socialist architecture needed to be economically and technologically viable.

At the same time, a challenge to re-define "socialist character" emerged in all areas of visual and spatial production: in industrial design, in architecture, and in the fine arts. This conceptual and material change away from "national" applied art traditions in the latter 1950s was to have an influence on debates on art, beauty and aesthetics in architecture from 1959 onwards. The discourse around beauty and function in turn had an important conceptual and material impact on the visual arts in public space into the 1970s and beyond.

The Socialist Realist conception for the applied arts which dominated until the end of the 1950s was that folk or craft traditions could and should provide models for industrial production. The aspiration was for a return to the values of "authentic" medieval craftsmanship, where the maker was at once the creative form giver and the technical master, a unity which had been distorted by capitalist production which, driven by the profit motivation, had mass produced goods and arbitrarily applied ornamentation to form in order to satisfy a distorted popular taste[21].Thus Socialist Realist applied art did not refer simply to the aesthetic forms themselves, but to the "harmony of form and function" said to be present in a variety of folk

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21 This narrative of the authenticity of the pre-industrial craftsperson, destroyed by the fragmentation of capitalist production, driven by profit and poor taste, and hence the "fall" of the arts and crafts, and thus the task through socialism to create a return to a more authentic, more beautiful, and more moral basis for the applied arts in particular, is the standard public historical account to be prefacing many discussions, such as in Farbe und Raum, Bildende Kunst, in exhibition catalogues and official speeches. See for example, Heisig, Walter, Seminar at Aue on 28.10.60, on "Artistic means of the Applied Arts" Barch, DF 7/3168

traditions as well as in the best examples of Baroque and Classicism[22]. Walter Heisig, first director of the Institute of Applied Arts in Berlin, insisted in the early 1950s that the traditions of folk art should be "re-awakened", as "the basis of all artistic creation", not only for the development of applied art production, but also "artistic industrial production" and "new German realistic art" as the response to the "capitalist un-culture and un-moral."[23] Heisig set out specific expectations regarding desirable aesthetic character: brightly coloured folk art-inspired patterns on textiles were an indication of socialist optimism[24]. Decoration, or ornament, had to be present, but it had to be meaningful and ordered within the contours of the form[25], in other words, ornament had to be rational. Some of the examples given to illustrate the correct course for socialist realist design by Heisig in his 1953 presentation to the designers of industrial products indicated the generality of the concept of "national tradition", (most of them pre-date the German nation): on display were a Lausitz plate from 1690, "a rich imaginative drawing taken directly from nature, the best cultural heritage"; gold edging "the best example of Classicism"; "genuine" or well developed rather than "poorly imitated" Barock from the 18th century, Porcelain from the Meissener tradition, simple form and colour based on Bürgeler Folk Art ("suitable for garden and balcony"), "Romer" glass form, and "Stippens" glass technique.

The Institute researched examples of German applied art traditions which might form the basis of industrial production. The traditions which were explored for their potential were for example wood carving, (*Rhönschnitzerei*), textiles design from fisherpeople from Freest, tapestry, *Klöppelmustergestaltung*, a 400 year old

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22 The socialist realist idea in the Applied arts brought both "high" and "popular" forms together under the hybrid of "national traditions". The task of the designer was to appropriate such forms, and assumed that the population rejected dull colour or no colour and absence of pattern. The repeated Leitlinie was always that popular taste responded to joyful colour and organic pattern, but should be guided away from the excesses of kitsch. Whilst the examples selected as appropriate models for the contemporary designer are drawn from unconnected traditions, there is nonethless a consitency in the arguments.
23 Heisig, Walter, "Volkskunst in der Sowjetunion" exhibition catalogue (1951), p 7, p 17.
24 Heisig, Walter, a speech to a seminar for the designers of industrial products (Tagung der Entwerfer für Industieerzeugnisse) in the Deutsche Akademie der Künste, Berlin 20th January 1953, cited above, p. 7

knotting tradition, which had "national character" and although "deformed by the capitalist profit motive" was once again "good German handwork which meets our artistic expectations today." whilst at the same time acknowledging the increasing demands that were being made for consumer goods, and that it was necessary to raise educational standards and increase the numbers of students in all areas of industrial design and the applied arts.[26] From 1956, the Institute's journal "Form und Zweck", documented and discussed these twin aspirations. The foreword of the first issue of *Form und Zweck* in 1956/7 set out the requirements that given the Politbüro demand for more modern and functional consumer goods, and the "urgent need to find a national style"[27], "beauty and usefulness, fine form and utmost functionality must be one unity".[28]

The interest in traditional techniques was not a desire to return to craft production rather than industrial manufacturing but a search for "harmony" in the aesthetics and production of objects. It was a discourse around rationality and economy, and the recommendations made for the adoption of the visual semantics of these objects revealed the pedagogical function of the work of the institute in the struggle against poor taste.[29] This understanding of design education as an act of reform of popular preferences reveals a further correspondance with Modernist thinking. By the mid 1950s, a waning of interest in the potential of the national heritage was publically expressed, and the Bauhaus (not here conceived as national

26 In 1956 leaders from all the main schools of art and design in Berlin Halle and Weimar request a meeting with Ministry of Culture representatives to express deep concern over the insufficient education of designers and need to develop research. (Present are the leaders of the art and design schools, Heller, Henze, Wittkugel, Vogenauer, Schneider, Michael [sic] –no doubt refers to Horst Michel, Högner, from the Ministry of Culture Schröter, from the Insitute of Applied Arts: Heisig, Buske, Stiemke, Ministry of Culture: Prof Laux), In a memo from September 1958, Heisig writes that if necessary more students should be attracted from abroad. BArch DF 7/3058; This appeal for better education and more respect for the educated designer by industry is also made repeatedly in articles in Form and Zweck of the period, for example Aust, Hans, Gute Form Verkauft sich Gut, Form und Zweck Jahrbuch, 1957/8 pp 7-30. In a speech delivered to the 2. Congress of Young Artists, State Secretary Alexander Abusch also appeals for improved education of artists. "We need good artists, not good social scientists." From "The Young Artists in our TIme". Speech reproduced in ND 28.06.1956, nr. 153,p. 4
27 Form und Zweck, Foreword 1956/7
28 Form und Zweck, Foreword 1956/7
29 For example in Andrä, Erwin, Rhönschnitzerei, Form und Zweck, 1956/7 P 76, but it is an ongoing preoccupation.

heritage) was proposed as "inspiration[…] for what was it if not a protest against the over emphasis on form … and desire to free from tradition?" [30]

Socialist beauty in East Germany could not remain a purely theoretical exercise, but was shadowed by economic constraints and consumer desire. Across the border in West Germany,[31] a bright new world of design was emerging, visible but unattainable. This counter proposal for a material world undermined the research into applied arts as the basis for industrial production: consumer goods had to be produced in sufficient quality and quantity to meet the expectations of the population. As in architecture, the ideal of appropriating "national tradition" was too slow and too labour intensive to meet material needs and expectations. The Institute of Applied Arts exhibition *Industriewaren, Zweckmässig und Schön*[32] 1956 had showcased new directions in design, very few of which were actually available to the public. Hans Aust argued emphatically that well designed consumer products should be available to people to buy[33]. "Working people don't want any old decoration, they want a harmonious unity of form and content, of beauty and utility […] People feel cheated when for all their hard work and doing their duty they are confronted with shoddy goods, as they become more and more conscious of beauty."[34] It was important, Aust argued, to find a harmony between beauty and

30 Bergner, Peter Über das Moderne Form und Zweck, 1956/7
31 Betts, Paul, The Authority of Everyday Objects…Paul Betts describes the concurrent process of creating a "brave new world of postfascist modernity" (p 9) of the immediate post war era which was playing out in West Germany. The new West German culture re-defined Western German identity as conspiciously private rather than public, and played out through the relationships which could be built up between people and their newly designed consumer goods. "The fascist campaign to aestheticize the relations between people had now given way to a postfascist impulse to aestheticise the relationship between people and things." P 16
32 (*Industrial products, functional and beautiful*) Aust, Hans, Gute Form Verkauft sich Gut, Form und Zweck Jahrbuch, 1957/8 pp 7-30
33 The title "Good Form sells well" is a double inversion of the title of Loewy's 1951 autobiography, "Never Leave Well Enough Alone", which was in German translation was given the title "Hässlichkeit verkauft sich schlecht"– "Ugliness does not Sell."(see Betts, Paul, The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German The authority of everyday objects : a cultural history of West German industrial design, p 87)
cit, Aust, p 15, Loewy, Econ Verlag, Dusseldorf, 1953p 68/9
34 Aust, Hans, Gute Form Verkauft sich Gut Ibid p?

function.[35] Just function could not be overlooked, for the sake of beauty, beauty would not be achieved through the form of the material.

The need to satisfy consumer expectations through increased production nonetheless had to be accompanied by theoretical models for socialist aesthetics in order to maintain difference from developments within capitalism. The Institute of the Applied Arts, through two conferences and a series of publications[36], encouraged critical positions on the potential and future of socialist applied arts and design. Horst Redeker, Wilhelm Senff, Sigfried Begenau, all sought to examine and identify socialist aesthetics and the role of design.[37.] These discussions sought to find a solution to the need for a rational approach to design appropriate for the needs of production, which nonetheless retained the centrality of beauty. Horst Redeker, developing ideas first explored by Begenau in 1957[38], achieved this shift through a re-location of beauty outside the physical properties of the object, and in to the pleasure of the work itself. [39]

The form of the product is "beautiful" in the "dialectical unity of its natural quality and function for people," (only) in the condition of a free and "non-alienating" work[40]. Redeker thus adapted a classical ideal of beauty to a new universal and socialist conception in which beauty was the natural and authentic product of non exploitative human labour. From this core understanding, Redeker expanded the

35 Aust, Hans, Gute Form Verkauft sich Gut P 14
36 The two conferences took place in 1957 and 1958 and were accompanied by a series of publications.1957 conference Horst Redeker "Über das Wesen der Form"[36], and Friedmund Krämer "Form und Norm"; 1958 Walter Besenbruch: "Dialektik und Ästhetik". "Theoretische Konferenz im Institut für angewandte Kunst Berlin", Institut für angewandte Kunst, 1957: Participants included Hanna Schönherr, Walter Heisig, Herr (Peter?) Bergner, Horst Michel, Herr (Albert?) Buske, Frau Pöllnitz.
37 The institute produced a series of publications in association with conferences organised by the insitute from 1957 under the leadership of Hanna Schonherr. (list)
38 Begenau, On the beautiful in the applied arts, Form und Zweck Jahrbuch, 1957 (note to self > does this refer to the book Zur Theorie des Schönen in der klassischen deutschen Ästhetik : Versuch über die zentrale Kategorie in der deutschen Ästhetik von Winckelmann bis Herders "Kalligone" / S. H. Begenau. - Als Ms. gedr.. - [Berlin] : Ministerium für Kultur, 1956?) LH 61040 B416
39 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassische Kulturkritik, Die Aesthetik des Ideals, p. 7 in Das Dilemma der Dekadenz, Institut für angewandte Kunst, Berlin 1958
40 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik P 41

relationship of the individual maker to their material, to the relationship of the whole of (socialist) society to nature[41] From this he arrived at an "objective universality" and "historicity of the beautiful."[42] The re-location of beauty into the immaterial was to be central to the re-conception of the built environment.

By locating beauty in human endevour, in an authenticity of the relationship to nature and material, Redeker resisted the idea of beauty as residing within any physical or spatial characteristics. But nonetheless, the "fall" of this ideal, he argued, came through the separation between hand work (applied arts and architecture) and the industrial product, through capitalist industrialisation[43], an established orthodoxy in Socialist Realist critiques. The new demand for accerated production which would necessarily make redundant the craft worker with their authentic relationship to the product thus demanded a way in this *socialist* artistic industrial design could be identified. The answer was partly to come in the socialist conditions of production: with the help of the applied arts, "industry could partially and gradually become the realisation of human creative application."[44] The onus was on architecture and the applied arts to guarantee "the beautiful", to "meet the aesthetic needs of people in socialism" which were an expression of "the human need of self fulfilment and creativity" and thus had an "immediate political function", which was at the core of such production. In this way there could be a new unity of industry and applied art.[45] Effectively Redeker was describing the answer to industrial production which had already been identified by the collective in Hoyerswerda. The difficulty was, that as the industrial production of architecture became increasingly standardised, the hand made works were not so much in harmony, but were additions, presenting exactly the problems identified in Socialist Realist critiques of the decline of art in the industrial revolution.

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41 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 41
42 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 42
43 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 51
44 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik Ibid p 53
45 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 53

The essential shift in thinking opened up by Redeker was the assignment of beauty outside the aesthetics of the object. The functional object, whether material goods or architecture was left without physical manifestations of beauty. The definition of architecture as a functional object was highly contested, however, as we shall see. However, the significance of the developments in design and the applied arts as practices was that they could both be re-invented within architecture, and help to sustain the ideal of socialist content and socialist aesthetics.

Redeker' philosphical argument on the essential socialist beauty reached a rather pragmatic conclusion that "Beauty does not only sell better, it is easier to produce."[46] His tentative case for "the unity of nature, man and technology",[47] possible only in the exploitation-free conditions of socialist production, was radically advanced by the modernisation of industry and material culture announced at the Chemistry Conference in 1959. This event was pivotal in the change in the understandings of beauty and its impact on understandings of the applied arts and design, because it represented a radical shift to modernity, both in terms of material culture and the socialist way of life. The acceleration of industry in turn had an impact on the need to accelerate the production of housing, all of which were to radically alter the conceptions of public spaces and the socialist lives that took place within them

The Chemistry Conference, Leuna, 1958
The "Chemistry conference", held by the SED and the state planning commission at the VEB Leuna Werk, "Walter Ulbricht" in November 1958, was official signal for the prioritisation of science and industry over the preoccupation with traditions as the basis of socialist culture. This emphasis on science and technology, set out at the 5th party congress in October 1959[48] was to define the Ulbricht era of the1960s.

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46 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 54.
47 Redeker, Horst, Die Klassisiche Kulturkritik p 54
48 "The seven year plan for the development of the people's economy of the GDR in the years 1959 to 1965" announced October 1st, 1959.

Walter Ulbricht emphasied the cultural pay off from the investment in the chemical industry: "Chemistry brings bread, well being, and beauty".[49] Whilst fertiliser would improve agriculture, raw materials were to improve industrial production and meet consumer needs, beauty was to be achieved through attractive textiles, design and the "utility and wonderful colours of chemically based products [which would] help to make life more beautiful and interesting."[50] The elevation of butter dishes, bread bins and egg cups out of the private, domestic domain into official socialist discourse, offered a symbolic release from the daily struggle with shortages to a new promise of plenty, of "lifestyle" allied with a new aesthetic culture in the forms of modern homes, products, and furnishings. It was more than modern convenience at stake – these objects were to represent a socialist modernity for men and women both as workers and consumers, which would not be embodied in a vision for the future, but would be materially manifest in the present.[51] In essence, the chemistry revolution would enable a beautiful life. Functionality had been elevated as a key criteria of beauty, a paradigm shift which once it had been introduced, could not so easily be reversed

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49 Chemie gibt Brot, Wohlstand, Schönheit : Chemistry conference of the Central Committee of the SED and the State Planning Commission in tge VEB Leuna Werk. "Walter Ulbricht" 3rd– 4th November 1958 (ZK d. SED, Abt. Agitation u. Propaganda u. Abt. Bergbau, Kohle, Energie u. Chemie]. [Berlin] : ZK d. SED, Abt. Agitation u. Propaganda, 1958.
This was expanded in 1962 to the less catchy: "Chemistry brings bread, scientific and technological progress, high working productivity and a good standard of living for everyone."49 Documents of the 5th conference of the ZK of the SED, Berlin 1962, quoted in Schlesier, 1962, footnote 3, p 282
50 Ibid Walter Ulbricht's address p.9
51 The cultural and sociological significance of plastics in the GDR has been well researched in recent years. See: Rubin, Eli, "Synthetic Socialism: Plastics & Dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2009". (On the promotion of plastics and their reception, see pp 120–164); Ludwig, Andreas Katja Böhme: "50 Years Chemistry Conference of the GDR: Metaphor of a promise and penetration of the everyday", WERKSTATT Geschichte 50, (3/2008); Katja Böhme: "Polymere für den Sozialismus – Vom Werkstoff der Moderne zur Begleiterscheinung im Alltag." Paper given at the Research Conference, 16.04.2012 , Böhme's paper is written in the context of a three year conservation and material/everyday life history research project undertaken at the Cologne University of Applied Science, "Bewahren der DDR-Alltagskultur aus Plaste"; Petruschuiat, Jörg, "Take me Plastics", in in: 75 Jahre Burg Giebichenstein 1915-1990. Exhibition catalogue „75 Jahre künstlerische Ausbildungsstätte Burg Giebichenstein", 2.10.-14.10 1990, edited by Renate Luckner-Bien, Leipzig 1991; Stokes, Raymond G, *Plastics and the new Society: The German Democratic Republic in the 1950s and 1960s*, in "Style and Socialism, Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe", eds Susan E. Reid and David Crowley, Berg, Oxford, 2000, pp 45–56. Stokes proposes that what seemed to be "inferior consumer goods" were instrumental in the GDR's collapse. (pp. 76–77), a standpoint which rather condenses the differentiated development of consumer goods and product design in the GDR and their significance in the disintegration of the GDR. A more immediate connection between the plastics industry and the collapse of the GDR is the significance of industrial pollution in the citizen's movements in the late 1980s.

For Redeker, Ulbricht's November 1958 address at the Chemistry Conference gave the green light for an unequivocal embrace of the contribution to be made by the "form designer" in this decisive "socialist cultural revolution."[52] In his renowned pamphlet, "Chemistry Brings Beauty," published by the Institute for Applied Arts, Redeker credited the First Secretary with the realisation of the scientific endeavour begun by Goethe.[53] The arguments for the socialist qualities of this industrial-cultural shift could easily be identified in the socialist relations of production: in the worker-owned factories, the new durable products would no longer have the quality of obselence exploited by capitalism[54], the machinery would become more efficient allowing for shorter working days[55], and the products produced would serve people in the fulfilment of their longer leisure and home lives[56].

The socialist character of the aesthetic qualities of these new industrial products were more difficult to identify. Redeker conceded that given that the GDR was likely to be an exporter to other socialist countries, the idea of a national style would be necessarily compromised, "since the design will mainly be a result of utilitarian and social purpose."[57] but there would probably be a "socialist style" in the material culture[58]. The answer to this problem, as we shall see, came in the retention of colour and ornament as signifiers of "optimism about the future", one of the aesthetic categories of Socialist Realism. Ulbricht's vision of plentiful, well designed, brightly coloured, plastic objects conjured up a California Modern

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52 Redeker, Horst, *Chemie Bringt Schönheit*, Chemistry Brings Beauty, Insititute for Applied Arts, Berlin, 1959 p 19
53 "The Chemistry Programme, which Walter Ulbricht justified in his speech at the Chemistry Conference in Autumn 1958 is in fact the completion of the revolution of the productive forces and science, which already began in the life time of Goethe, as a part of the realisation of the Faustian vision of the collective and free work of a free people." Ibid P 6
54 p 17
55 p 18–19
56 p 20
57 p 12
58 p 12

aesthetic – a far cry from the preoccupation with weaving, wood carving or glass blowing as the inspiration for manufacturing.

Besides the confident assertion of a new form of beauty that could emerge via this leap forward into a synthetic future, there was another narrative implicit in Redeker's text. Whilst his argument drew on German traditions,in stressing the significance of the research and philosophy of German Classicists, he significantly drew these forward to a confidently German socialist future, a subtle shift in emphasis away from the leading role of the Soviet Union which was eventually to cost Ulbricht his position.The designed goods were no longer to take inspiration from Soviet or any other folk art, but were to be the product of East German art schools, scientists and industrialists, to be designed and manufactured in the East German chemistry triangle and exported to the rest of the Soviet bloc.

The impact on "Kunsthandwerk", or the applied arts.

The 1960s saw several institutional changes which signified the primacy of modern design – practical, economical and technologically-led – as the basis for industrial production. The Institute for Applied Arts in Berlin was re-named in 1963 as the "Zentralinstitut für Formgestaltung" (Central Institute for Form Design), in a definitive move away from a preoccupation with crafts. At Burg Giebichenstein in Halle, the official recognition that the re-orientation to manufacturing and consumption brought with it need develop modern form brought with it the according of the "Hochschule" status as "The School for Industrial Form Design" replacing the "Institute for Artistic Applied Art" ["Institut für künstlerische Werkgestaltung"] (where Vollmert had studied), under the director of former Bauhausler, Walter Funkat, in 1958.[59] This represented a personal triumph for Funkat against attempts within the the Ministry of Culture, to develop Burg as a

59 Walter Funkat : vom Bauhaus zur Burg Giebichenstein
Ute Brüning, Angela Dolgner.
Dessau, 1966.p 106

"Centre of German Applied Arts."[60] Within the Verband der Bildende Künstler, practical steps were taken in acknowledgement of the separation of craft and design, with the interests of craftspeople and designers represented within separate working groups. [61] In 1958, much of the applied arts collection collected by the Institute for Applied Arts was transfered to the Grassi Museum and other collections[62] and in the Fourth German Art Exhibition in Dresden, "Kunsthandwerk" alongside "Industrieform" showed the full span of artistic craft and design objects, from experimentation with modern functional form to decorative wall hanging[63].

As design was established as a discipline, the applied arts needed to occupy a new space. They could not simply disappear from East German culture. *Kunsthandwerk* had a place ingrained within German culture stretching back long beyond before its appropriation in Socialist Realism.[64] Redeker envisaged a separation between applied art and form design in which applied art would become the giver of beauty, in that they "humanise reality, realise the human, its best, most far-reaching characteristics to identify appearance and meaning."[65] Walter Funkat was a key figure in nurturing the future of the applied arts in the GDR. As head of the

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60 The orientation to craft had been urged by the minister Werner Laux in particular. A personal appeal by Funkat to the deputy minister of Culture, Alexander Abusch, secured the schools Hochschule status and development as the Hochschule for Industrial Design. Walter Funkat : vom Bauhaus zur Burg Giebichenstein, Ute Brüning, Angela Dolgner. Dessau, 1966. P 106–107
61 A meeting of the VBKD in 26.4.61 decides that there will be a Section Formgestaltung with 3 working groups: Kunsthandwerk, Mode, Industrieformgestaltung. Meeting protocol 6 mai 1961, BARch Institut für Angewandte Kunste, DF 7/3168 (unpaginated)
62 Sänger, Johanna, "Zur Entstehung der Sammlung Industrielle Gestaltung in der DDR" paper given at Gesellschaft für Design Geschichte, Werkbundarchiv, May 2013
63 The selected exhibits in the catalogue show a general tendency to the simplification of form, and the application of modest surface patterns, both geometric and organic. The objects themselves range from functional to decorative, from Fritz Kuhn's elegantly Modernist metal fence at the Buchenwald memorial, to Günter Reissmann's undecorated cutlery, Ilse Decho's elegant undecorated glass vases, Ernst Precht's solid glass hens and Horst Michel's lightly semi organic, semi geometric forms and decoration of a coffee service. One example of plastics is is selected, a textile by Camillo Sitte. Vierte Deutsche Kunstausstellung, 1958, VBKD, Verlag der Kunst, Dresden.
[64] As Aline Payne notes, the significance of Kunstgewerbe was ingrained within German culture. It was in the DNA of the Bauhaus, particularly through the work of Semper in elevating the status of the object within culture, creating a "Sachkultur." Payne, Alina, *Bauhaus Endgame* in Bauhaus Construct, Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism. Eds Saletnik, Jeffrey and Robert Schuldenfrei, Routledge, Oxon, 2009. pp 258–263
65 Redeker, Horst, "Zweck Sinn und Form: Über Elemente der angewandten Kunst" ("Function, Meaning and Form; On Elements of Applied Art," Form und Zweck Jahrbuch, 1958/9

Association for Applied Art in the Ministry of Culture he became a champion of the applied arts in East Germany, which he argued had an educational role in forming good taste in the population.[66]

Heisig, who had invested so much in the promise of crafts, was never really able to redefine the role of the Institute in the face of these changes.[67] The Institute itself separated industrial design from craft in its parallel exhibitions, "Gute Formgebung – Schöne Industriewaren", shown at the prestigious Berolina House on Alexanderplatz and the "Berliner Kunsthandwerk" shown at the Institute in Clara Zetkin Strasse. In his opening address at the Kunsthandwerk exhibition, Heisig, whilst insisting that "in a socialist state, craft will permanently find a place of nuture,"[68] seemed to reveal his own doubts in his subsequent remarks. Perhaps the new aesthetic awareness that design would bring in ordinary consumers, would also raise their appreciation applied art, he suggested.[69] The GDR government would need to protect the applied arts, and commission crafts for representational uses.[70] Conceding that applied arts had relatively little economic significance, Heisig nonetheless insisted that "The meaning of applied art is expressly cultural political."[71] The Institute for the Applied Arts, Heisig insisted, "will make the effort, beyond its tasks for industry, to represent the contemporary and future significance of applied arts. In a socialist state these tasks are not contradictory but are a unity."[72] In fact, Heisig was proved right, and the discipline known as

66 Funkat, Walter: "We need objects which in their autonomy and function, their form ideas, their materials, their processing and their colour have an aesthetically enriching function in the intimate spatial and social area." Address at Ausstellung Kunsthandwerk der DDR, 1966
67 The meeting protocols of the Institute from 1959–1962 suggest a lack of certainty on the proper direction for the activities of the Institute. There is uncertainty about terminologies to be used, whether Formgestaltung is to be a technical or artistic profession, and the role for crafts. A meeting with the Minister for Culture on the future of crafts is called for August 1961. There is also evidence of disaffection amongst staff, and lack of leadership from Heisig, though this may be unrelated to the uncertainty over the Institute's function. The closure of the border at this time is probably also significant. BARch Institut für Angewandte Kunste, DF 7/3168 (unpaginated)
68 BArch, DF 7/3083, Institut für Angewandte Kunst, Manuskripte zu Vorträgen von Walter Heisig, Berliner Kunsthandwerk Ausstellung, Eröffnungsrede von Walter Heisig, December 1958, draft version. P 2
69 Eröffnungsrede von Walter Heisig, p 3
70 Eröffnungsrede von Walter Heisig, p 3
71 Eröffnungsrede von Walter Heisig P 4
72 Eröffnungsrede von Walter Heisig P 4

"Werkkunst" (perhaps best translated as "artistic craft") eventually thrived alongside industrial design, and was developed in the art schools at Burg and in Weissensee. The cultural political meaning of applied art – in the sense of non-functional objects and decorative arts where the maker is a material specialist – emerged in official terms as the delivery of "beauty", which particularly found applications within the emerging urban landscapes of systemised architecture.

Alongside the production of single objects, artist-craftspeople were to receive public commissions in the making of art for and within architecture. Glass, metal, ceramics and wood based artistic production were all to flourish under the patronage of the public contract giver, partly because these materials were ideally suited for external works, but tapestry and textiles were also routinely commissioned for interiors. The position of "Werkkunst" between art and design made it possible within these genres to push the boundaries of Socialist Realist visual language.

At the same time, new areas of material based exploration emerged and were developed within the Institute and the Burg school such as serialised surface design (Flachengestaltung) which held a cultural-politically ambivalent position, hovering between design and abstract art. These developments will be returned to in later chapters.

Identifying the "socialist difference" of the functional object
Whilst the applied arts could be assigned the twin roles of delivering beauty and cultivating the public taste, there was still a gap to be filled in delivering ideological arguments to justify the new aesthetic culture that looked set to emerge in "form design" and that might be difficult to differentiate from design in West Germany. The term *Formgestaltung* was the term used for what in English would be called product design, three-dimensional design, or industrial design.

For all its obligations to mass production, form design was also expected to deliver a materially tangiable beauty. The most audacious attempt to shake off the decorative, folk culture inspired imperative and re-define the aesthetic norms of that beauty and align them with functionality was made in *Form und Zweck* in 1960 by the Austrian communist, Ernst Fischer. It was this departure that saw the beginning of this journal as a forum which pushed forward a functionalist design discourse.[73]

Ernst Fischer was condemned in the GDR as a"revisionist"[74], but his arguments broke the taboo on the "machine aesthetic" that was presented more equivocally by his GDR contemporaries such as Redeker. In "The Beauty of Things"[75], Fischer defined a beauty to be found in the reductive aesthetic of well designed goods, which he set not against applied arts, but against poor taste as embodied in kitsch. "Kitsch" presented a much less troublesome foil to the appreciation of modern design than folk arts, since kitsch was perceived as the embodiment of bourgeois mendacity, and the deception of the working class. In the period between the age of the craft worker and the new sophisticated industrial age, the bourgeoise had created a material world where "appearance contradicted purpose, the facade the content, and the form the function and material."[76] Happily, the beautiful goods of the new technical age were "luminous in their fresh, cool, bareness."[77] The stripped

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[73] Lange, Torsten, "Spaces for critique in architectural magazines in the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s." Masters Dissertation Bartlett School of Architecture/ UCL, 2008, offers a full discussion of Form und Zweck as a "space for critique".

74 Klaus Weidner, for example, one of the "anti functionalist" art and architecture critics, wrote in Sonntag condemning Fischer's book published in the GDR "Von der Notwendigkeit der Kunst", (On the necessity of art")- Weidner condemned Modernist socialist orientated artists such as Picasso, Guttuso, Rivera, Venturelli, "who knocked at the door of the socialist image of man but did not go through it." "Wherever Fischer tries to extend the definition of Marxist Leninist aesthetics, Realism goes overboard and the dictatorship of abstraction is theoretically justified. We would prefer to stay on top— there is a long journey in front of us, and that is more tempting." Weidner, Klaus, "Symbole Zeichen Realismus, Sonntag", Nr 18, 1964

75 Fischer, Ernst, "Die Schönheit der Dinge", ("The Beauty of Things") Form und Zweck Jahrbuch, 1960 pp 7–13

76 Fischer, The Beauty of Things p 8

77 Ibid

down quality of this new beauty, the "cleansing of superficial additions", and "concentration on the precise and economical" clearly corresponded to a Modernist design aesthetic, for Fischer, but was also morally anchored in "dignity and respect"[78,] truth to the "modern artificial materials", and "cleanliness". The new beauty of the technical age [was] characterised by "economy, streamlining, precision, simplicity, lightness."[79]

Fischer warned against "pure functionalism and constructivism" which was a "one-off extremism"[80]. Function was an element of beauty, but not sufficient alone. The new beauty was not abstract, and whilst Fischer was undecided whether there was a universal beauty, socialist achievement could be identified in the man's mastery of nature;[81] the rejection of ornament and detail would free the housewife from some of the domestic tasks which fell to her, who in modern times had taken the place teams of servants used by the bourgoise.[82]

Nonetheless, given the evidence of the working people's continued desire for kitsch items which the Zentralinstitut für Formgestaltung in Berlin worked so hard to counter,[83] Fischer understood that taste for the modern reductive aesthetic

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78 p 8
79 p 10
80 p 80
81 p 10
82 p 13 Typically, in these dicussions which search for the socialist value within the domestic context as the space of reproduction rather than production, such value can only be identified through reference to the liberation of the woman from her domestic responsibilities, even though the liberation of women is in the Marxist Leninist framework identified as a by product of socialist relations rather than as part of its definition.
83 The Institute was engaged in a programme of direct education of the manufacturers of kitsch items which they inventorised. However, this letter from a manufacturer of lighters and smoke air fresheners near Leipzig to the Institute made clear his customers' resistance to modern design forms: Following your letter of the 6.11.62, I enclose 4 post packets containing 35 smoke removers (Rauchverzehrer) which are from my collection. You will find a number of animal figures and also coloured temples and vase forms. This is what our working population wishes to buy, and what is demanded by the GHGs [traders]. As well as those, there are the sailing ships which were developed in the last years, of which we can not produce enough. (!!!!) [exclamation marks and underlining in pencil, possibly added by the recipient at the institute]. In my opinion we should not deny our working population the pleasure in colourful things and the sailing ships. In recent years I have already taken modern vase forms in to my range which I have included in my delivery, but the

would have to be nurtured, claiming, "working people are mostly grateful when one helps them to perceive the new beauty of things, when the ever-improving intellect persuades their uncertain eye."

Fischer did not quite go so far as to suggest that beautiful objects were the essence of socialism, but they certainly part of the struggle for superiority.

> "We have to learn that creating un-beautiful things and objects contradicts the essence of socialism, and we should take the competition with capitalism very seriously in this area. Those who are building socialist society have the right to beautiful things, and each of these beautiful things is an advertisement for his world."

The vision of a modern socialist design promoted by Fischer, in its appreciation of the naked qualities of form were too close to a formalist position to become orthodoxy, but they indicate a clear move towards an emphasis on function and material qualities as a determinant of the new beauty. It was the task of East German designers to identify the integrally socialist nature of form making which would give rise to this clean, streamlined aesthetic. The product designer, Erich John,* who enjoyed an illlustrious career in the GDR, argued, much in the vein of Le Corbusier and others, that the burden of art had been thrown off in design[84], and the new beauty found for example in "airplanes, rockets and bridges" was the result of "the logical, rational, construction and of the human capacity to understand the form of these visible laws of nature."[85] The specific task and potential within the socialist order, John argued, was the necessity to recognise the cultural value of objects in meeting societal needs:

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demand for this type is, and remains, slight. I would be very interested in the seminar on 29th November and hereby register. (Arno Altner, Rehwagenstrasse 32, Holzhausen SA, Near Leipzig, Herstellung elektrischer Rauchverzehrer und Zigarrenzünder.) "Kitsch" collection, Sammlung Industrielle Design, Berlin, unlisted box of items.
84 John, Erich, "Die Schönheit Unserer Technik," (The Beauty of our Technology) BK/ 1963/1, pp 5–13, p.4
85 John, Erich, "Die Schönheit Unserer Technik" p 5

"If we do not include the satisfaction of cultural needs in the understanding of function, then the functional-material intentions can not create cultural value...Therefore the aesthetic appearance in modern technology, which are the formal expression of applied scientific laws, must be recognised as cultural values..."[86]

This shift to the "cultural value" inherent in the socialist conditions of production and consumption was to become a central argument after the mid 1960s in determining the socialist character of material goods and the built environment, and eventually the basis for the idea of "complex environmental design". In form design Siegfried Begenau[87] and Ekkerhardt Bartsch[88] both pushed for the understanding of the "cultural value" of the work of the form designer, which not only liberated it from aesthetic determination, but also, in the later 1960s wrested it from the risk of functional determination by economics and technology.[89]

The socialist form designer, John argued, had to understand the purpose of their work as meeting societal needs, and that the aesthetic forms of their work would be recognised as a cultural value. Furthermore, only the collective way of working in socialism between engineer and designer created the conditions that would enable the unity of science and aesthetic understanding. On ornament, John, whilst allowing that decoration had a place, on a curtain, for example[90], logical and ordered thinking was necessary:

The industrial form has created a new form of decorative element. They are integral to the simultaneously functional and aesthetical construction of the products, in their inner structure and surface formation, in the composition of the detail in relation to the whole and in their relationship to the environment around.[91]

86 John, Erich, Die Schönheit Unserer Technik p 8
87 Funktion Form Qualität, Institut für Gestaltung, Berlin 1967. See aslo Goeschen for a longer discussion of Begenau's position, Von Kunst im Sozialismus,...
88 Der Gestalter zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft (The designer between art and science) in Form und Zweck, 1967 / 2
89 See Hirdina, Heinz, Gestaltung für die Serie, pp 155–156
90 John, Erich, Die Schönheit Unserer Technik p 12
91 John, Erich, Die Schönheit Unserer Technik p. 11

Ornament was in John's conception allowed a place, providing that it could be rationalised. In this there was continuity with the earliest understandings of the function of ornament, if we refer back to example to Blume's report on the ornament of the Sorbs. Ornament consistently had a place in the surfaces of functional objects, including architecture, but should never become "Selbstzweck", only existing for its own sake.

The backlash against encroaching Modernist form, 1962-3

Perhaps it was the rate of acceleration away from the conception of beauty drawn from the decorative qualities in folk art and "national tradition" that caused the brakes to be slammed on the tendencies towards colourless, raw form and material evident in the designs[92]selected by Horst Michel,[93] including the famous "tube" vases by Hubertus Petrus, at the Fifth German Art Exhibition in Dresden from September 1962 to March 1963.[94]

Certainly, the "formalism" accusations made in the notorious *Hinter dem Leben Zurück*[95] article, would have struck a chord with anti-functionalist critics, whatever the possible views of the general public[96]. Whilst Fischer and others tried, not very

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92 "Industrieform"; "Kunsthandwerk" was a separate category.
93 Michel led the Institute for Interior Design in Weimar. The Weimar Institute for Interior Design under the Ministry of Construction, was less ideologically determined than the Berlin Institute of Applied Arts. For a full discussion of the Weimar Institution and the role of Horst Michel in the development of design in the GDR, see, Grönert, Sigfried, "Horst Michel und das Institut für Innengestaltung: Der Weimarer Beitrag zur industriellen Formgebung in der DDR" in: "Aber Wir sind! Wir wollen! Und wir schaffen!" Von der Großherzoglichen Kunstschule zur Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 1860–2010, Band 2. Hg. Frank Simon-Ritz, Klaus-Jürgen Winkler u. Gerd Zimmermann. Weimar, Verlag der Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 2012, S. 147-174.
94A full account of events is given in *Schmerzliche Ankunft in der Moderne. Industriedesign auf der V. Deutschen Kunstausstellung*. In: Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst (Hrsg.): Wunderwirtschaft. DDR-Konsumkultur in den 60er Jahren. Köln / Weimar / Berlin 1996, S. 96 –103.
95 Neues Deutschland, "Hinter dem Leben Zurück" 4. Oktober 1962, p 273. The title means approximately "Falling behind Life", meaning that socialist life was advancing whilst design had fell behind (falling into Western forms). The event is well documented as a throwback to the Formalism debate of the early 1950s.
96 Katherina Pfützner has pointed out, that remarks in the guest book can not be read as indicative of the taste of most of the population, even if they did reflect the preferences of designers.

convincingly, to take possession of "the new beauty" as a uniquely socialist phenomenon, any mention of the 1920s avant garde – not to mention its stylish post-Weimar reinventions – was conspiciously absent.

For some critics, aesthetic qualities were insufficient as a replacement of the centrality of "art" as the basis of design and architecture. The critic Herbert Letsch[97], consistently and vehemently critcised what he called the "technical aesthetic" or "technicism" that he saw as encroaching in the GDR, and allied it unequivocally with constructivist and Bauhaus thinking,[98] His views were not unique, but represented a vigorous resistance to what was see as a loss of emotional and ideal values both in design and architecture. For Letsch, the replacement of the "artistic", (only in which socialist ideals could be embodied) with an "elemental aesthetic", was a reactionary position which had no place in socialism. Whilst conceding that people may not be conscious of the difference, he argued:

> "It is greatly significant whether people live in a material world which is created according to the laws of beauty of not. We only have to remain aware, that the imperialist society is just more capable of realising elemental aesthetic norms in the process of the aesthetic appropriation of reality, whilst the socialist–communist order can also go beyond that, to formulate the the aesthetic ideal of the perfectly complete person and to objectify (*vergegenständlichen*) it in artistic images."[99]

"Designers expressed the typical Modernist belief that their approach was objectively most appropriate for the people, as well as for society as a whole." Pfützner, Katherina, "Cold, Clean, Meaningless". Industrial Design and Cultural Politics in the GDR 1950–1965", in Edinburgh German Yearbook, Volume 3: Contested Legacies: Constructions of Cultural Heritage in the GDR, Camden House, Suffolk, 2009, pp 106-124, here p 116. Indeed, popular taste in the assessments of designers and design institutions, still favoured excess and kitsch.

[97] Dates?

98 Herbert Letsch, Die konstruktivistische Ästhetik und das Problem der künstlerische Wiederspiegelung der Wirklichkeit, ("The Constructivist Aesthetic and the Problem of the Artistic Reflection of Reality") Deutsche Zeitschrift der Philosophie. Berlin (9) 1961. S. 1102–1118.

99 p 1118

In the last word in the Neues Deutschland debate on the 1962 Art Exhibition, Willi Köhler[100,] the paper's culture editor, once again centred criticism on the Hubertus Petras vases. Such designs, claimed Köhler, fell in to the trap of equating technical perfection with the most primitive, reductive design, and turning this into an art theory.[101]

> "Is the alternative to bad ornament, no ornament? Is there nothing we can learn from the great traditions of Meissen porcelain? Whoever denies that is heading to boringness, poverty of ideals [...] and lifting them up to a dangerous dogma." Industrial design must find "new motifs" from "new areas of life". [...] "The working class has expectations: it strives for beauty and a richness of forms..."

The events of the 1962 exhibition had brought the question of the proper course for socialist aesthetics to a head. When he replaced Walter Heisig as head of the Insitute of Applied Arts in 1962, Martin Kelm – who was to rise up the ranks to eventually assert considerable control over the "correct" design in East Germany[102] – tried to re-position a beauty for socialist design, as "humanist" rather than arising from technology:

> "This is not the technical age, it is the humanist and socialist age [...] design should demonstrate the beauty and richness of our social order and become a source of joy and pleasure."[103]

There should be a

> "...variety of colour and surfaces, and if possible forms, without compromising the need for standardisation."[104]

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100 Willi Köhler, Journalist, 1907-1972
101 Köhler, Willi What are our masters of applied arts trying to achieve? Once again on the Exhibition of Industrial Design in Neues Deutschland, 4. Januar 1963 Year 18 / Edition 4 / p.
102 Kelm headed the institution until 1989. On the influence of Kelm on Modernist design in the GDR, see Rubi, Eli, The Form of Socialism without Ornament: Consumption, Ideology, and the Fall and Rise of Modernist Design in the German Democratic Republic, Journal of Design History Vol. 19 No. 2, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp 155–168
103 "Zur kulturpolitischen Bedeutung der Formgestaltung beim Aufbau des Sozialismus, following the V Kunstausstellung", ("On the cultural political meaning of form design in the building of socialism"). Form und Zweck, p 13
104 Ibid

This was a effectively a compromise between the need for mass industrial production and the need to create a varied and colourful (beautiful) material world. It was a solution which was to find its way into the built environment, where surface patterning and colour and experiment with forms ("Flachendesign") was to be consciously applied to bring variety, to mass produced, architecture based on a range of templates, an economic way to circumvent monotony which also allowed for innovation in surface structures. Whether or not this reflected the creative urges of designers and architects, the surface differentiation through colour and pattern of serialised forms, as it was applied both in design and architecture, can be said to be a definining visual characteristic of the socialist modern in the GDR. It offered both an economic and pragmatic solution to the production drive whilst at the same time retaining the decorative imperative and producing a semblance of variety. The standardised coffee jugs, intended as unadorned forms by their designers, Margarete Jahny*[105] and Erich Müller*[106], were the subject of a variation programme, just as the serialised architecture was to be lent colour and character through both art and surface colour and design.[107]

Kelm's argument, which he also made in *Neues Deutschland* as a direct response to the "Hinter dem Leben" controversy, rested on both of these aesthetic features of a socialist design, which "should increase our socialist life feeling"[108], as well as

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105 Margarete Jahny, born 1923,studied product design under Mart Stam and Marianne Brandt in Dresden, to become one of the most important contributors to Modernist design in East Germany,
106 Müller, worked together with Jahny, also active as a writer, critic and teacher at the Burg School for Industrial design.
107 The designers found the decorative variety that was added to their designs as "dreadful". A section of the Insitute of Industrial design had the responsibility for the "development of motifs which should satisfy different complexes of needs." These were defined as for example, decoration for general cafes and restaurants, customized decor for societal institutions and people's companies, and household-friendly image based designs.
Schneider, Stefan, www.rationell-kännchen.de, 2009 (May 2013)
108 Kelm, Martin, Industrieformgestaltung, ein ideologisches Problem, Neues Deutschland, Di. 26th February 1963, Edition 57, p. 4

placing the significance of design as "the complex design of our socialist life within various areas"[109] within the wider socialist cultural and spatial context.

These arguments around beauty, form and realism continued within *Form und Zweck* into the 1960s. The "proper" aesthetics for the East German material world continued to zig-zag between the radically reduced and ornament-free forms typified in the output at the Ulm School of Design, the leitbild of West German Modernist design, and the Socialist Realist creed of national tradition, colour and ornament. The decision to publish a feature on the work of the Ulm school, in *Form und Zweck*[110], albeit emphasising the contradictions of design in the capitalist system, was, at the insistence of the Minister of Culture, complemented by a laudatory piece on the achievements of Soviet design, which was presented as having solved the problem of a adapting Socialist Realism for serial production.[111] The works presented do differ significantly in form and surface design from those showcased in the same issue from the Ulm School of Design.

The products exhibited at the September 1962 Leipzig trade fair give an insight into the trends in design production which make an interesting contrast to the "good design" selected by Horst Michel for the 5th German Art Exhibition. The works in Leipzig perhaps represent better the ambition for a modern beauty based on tradition – and the First Secretary, Walter Ulbricht, and his wife, Lotta were, it

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109 Kelm, Martin, Industrieformgestaltung, ein ideologisches Problem, Neues Deutschland, Di. 26th February 1963, Edition 57, p. 4 Ibid

110 Krug, Karl-Heinz, "Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm". Foreword. pp 39-59 (the whole piece is written lower case), and "Ulm und Berlin Weissensee– Entwicklungslinien zweier Kunsthochschulen" (Developments in Two Art Schools), Prof. Gustav Urbschat pp 59–79, Form und Zweck. The original foreword in a version given out at a 1962 Messe written by Wilhelm Senff is changed for this under the authority of the Minister for Culture, Patzke, who is present at the Institute's meetings. Patzke tells Heisig and his colleagues that they should turn to Soviet institutions such as . "Muchina Institute in Leningrad" and "Stroganow Institute" in Moscow for ideas. Minutes of Meeting at the Zentral Institut für Formgestaltung, 1 12 1961, Barch, DF 7/3168

111 Pommeranz Liedtke, Gerhard, "Künstlerische Hand und Industrielle Produktion—Neue Methods und Erfolge in der Soviet Unon". (Artistic Hand and Industrial Production–New Methods and Successes in the Soviet Union) Form und Zweck, pp 23-39

seems, very satisfied[112]. Here was the best of GDR design for manufacture and export.

Ulbricht praised the new technologies which created synthetic materials. "The best thing is," he said, looking at textiles, "that you have borrowed from the wonderful colours of the motifs of folk art." However, "Why are bright and beautiful colours only for export?", Ulbricht asked, "Our people want to dress in beautiful and light colours. [...] The people must have the most beautiful..."[113]

"The beautiful colours" of the products of these works and the "many variations" which had be achieved through standardised production, were repeatedly praised by the party leader and his wife. "The designs are stylish and beautiful, even without the usual gold rims. In any case this will save currency by not importing gold."[114]

Ulbricht's preoccupation with colour was not confined to his admiration for designed goods. In painting and architecture too, he insisted on better and brighter colour to indicate the optimistic and joyful nature of life in socialism. Speaking at a conference of artists in Pietznich (Halle) in 1968, Ulbricht exorted artists and architects to use more colour:

"The main problem in architecture and public art is colour [...] Probably chemistry can help us more. [...] In painting colour is becoming better [...] nice colours are coming through now. Before we were struggling with grey and black and black in the paintings. For 15 years there was no painting where the snow was bright. Thats because that is how the affected ones saw it internally were not connected to nature. "

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112 Rolf Günther, Fritz Schröder und Dieter Brückner, Messe widerspiegelt Erfolg der Gemeinschaftsarbeit / Auf dem Rundgang mit Walter Ulbricht ."(The trade fair reflects the success of collective work: on the tour with Walter Ulbricht.") Neues Deutschland, 8.September, 1962, P. 3
113 Ibid
114 Ibid

Here again, though, this was not sufficient to establish difference from the preoccupations of Western Modernism. Internationally, the 1960s was a period of heightened research into the psychological effects and benefits of colour in the environment, and saw the establishment of a number of colour conferences, councils and standardisation programmes.[115] The GDR hosted the Comecon centred international conferences "Interfarbe" in in 1966 and 1968, which mainly explored scientific aspects of colour but also touched on cultural issues, as colour became established as an important area of research and discussion in the built environment. Whilst a West German delegate in Dresden flatly refered to colour as a means to relieve the anonymous condition of work and life experienced by the modern person[116], the GDR conception in the German Building Academy research into industrial slab finishes and decoration couched such needs as:

> "the increased cultural and educational level, the readiness for contact and sensory depth of the socialist personality, in connection to the urge to new forms of communal living, demands all our energy, so that we can create our socialist home so that the citizens of our republic can allow their creative abilities for the socialist human community to unfold."[117]

The importance of colour in the built environment, arts, and material culture was not simply to offset any material or metaphorical monotony, but represented the final frontier for the visual embodiment of socialist optimism.

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115 National initiatives in France and Switzerland from 1957–1962, pre-dated the GDR conference, but the first Western organised international conference of the AIC in Stockholm in 1969 (to which the GDR sent a small delegation) postdated the GDR's "Interfarbe". See Tonnquist, G, The Early History of the Association International de la Couleur, (AIC), AIC Color 77, Proceedings of the Third Congress, Troy, New York, 10-15 July 1977 (Bristol, England: Adam Hilger, 1978), 13-32.

116 Gerlach, Ignaz, Werkkunstchule, Hildesheim, "The Influence of Colour on the Living Experience", International Farbentagung, Dresden, 1968. Gerlach proposed: "in view of the fact that the modern person in the world of work has ever fewer chances to be himself, so it seems all the more important that he can personalize his apartment. ...colour is a way out." The image of the anonymised worker would have been contrary to GDR thinking of the collective beauty of life and work, however, effectively the solutions suggested by Gerlach was practiced by residents in the latter years of the GDR.

117 Lammert, Uli, "Design variations in Industrial Residential Building: Our Living Environment: imaginative and colourful." Bauakademie der DDR, Institut für Städtebau, Barch, DH 2/23582

However, for all the rear guard[118] defence of colour and decoration, a Modernist-oriented conception of unadorned functionality had established its place within the understanding of beauty. It could be materially defined through an orientation towards materials and a reduced function-led aesthetic of form, and at the same time could be re-incorporated immaterially as the "beauty" of socialist life. This easy slippage between the immaterial and material understanding of beauty provided a model that lent itself equally to re-conceptions of the built environment.

The new aesthetic sensibility reflecting practical needs of modern life, was similarly evident in the design and furnishing of interiors, both public and private. Modern interior design, as showcased in the painter and decorator's journal *Farbe und Raum* was characterised by the kind of "Buntheit" (colourfulness), and undulating forms so disparaged by the Werkbund pedagogy in West Germany[119], but also by a restraint in the interior organisation and a geometrical order.

By the end of the 1950s, folk culture references in the decorative painter's journal *Farbe und Raum* were rare. The examples showcased demonstrated how colour, form and pattern manifested and supported the joyful, collective experience of modern socialism, in living, education, culture, and gastronomy. The arbitration of the proper use of colour in socialism cropped up occasionally from architects rather than as editorial line. Hans Schmidt,* the Swiss architect appointed at the Deutsche Bauakademie, whose arguments will become central in the discussion on architecture to follow, warned readers against arbitrary "Buntheit", excess and poor taste: whilst "the modern" was absolutely desirable, it had to be ordered and rational, "clean and beautiful."[120]

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118 Whilst led by the socialist establishment, it was effectively rear guard in chasing actual developments in design and architecture.
119 Betts, Paul, *The Authority of Everyday Objects*...
120 For example, "Farbe–ja, aber richtig– auch in Berlin." ("Colour, yes, but properly, in Berlin too.") In Farbe und Raum, 11/1959. The article is signed only Schmidt, but is almost definitely from Hans Schmidt, who consistently attacked what he saw as colour for the sake of colour, especially if

Conclusion

Whilst surface pattern and colour, whether on coffee jugs or pre-fabricated buildings, were fiercely defended at one level as the providing the basic need for variety within an increasingly serialised environment, to the more lofty rhetoric of allowing the socialist personality to unfold, an important shift had occured, where the functionality and serial reproducibility of the object was to take precedence over forms derived from German historical legacies. The "artistic" nature of architecture was even more fiercely contested, as we shall see in the next section.

Whilst architectural art was not the focus of the turn of the decade discussions on beauty and function, the changes in the conceptions of the visual realisations of public space in the 1960s had their roots in the debates in form design, and as we shall see, serialised architecture. Whether as a design or an applied arts endeavour, the visual conception for public space was to become irreversably defined by the typical concerns of design disciplines (user and spatial functionality, structural and material qualities for example), rather than the fine arts, even though "works of art" remained rhetorically at the top of the hierarchy in delivering ideological meaning.

Cultural and aesthetic developments in the GDR are often framed as belatedly imitating those in the Federal Republic, time-lagged through the "diversion" into Socialist Realism. In his analysis of the preoccupation with consumer interests in the 1960s, Betts has described commodities and domestic spaces as virtually taking the place of public design as the prefered site of socialist cultural identity,[121]

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reminiscent of Bauhaus or Modernist aesthetics. "We must remember, that every facade is part of our city image, and we are working towards making Berlin a clean and beautiful city." P 4
121 Betts, Paul, in, "The politics of post-fascist aesthetics: 1950s West and East German industrial design", in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe*, edited by Richard Bessel, Dirk Schumann, p 310, Cambridge University Press 2003, p 310. The "collapse of public aesthetics" refers to the loss of importance of housing, architecture and urban design as "prefered sites of socialist identity". The use of "public aesthetics" is troubling here as it seems to align

coinciding with "the deterioration of GDR cities as well as the ever-waning effect of the SED's instrumentalization of urban space."[122]

But material beauty in socialism could not simply be a private affair. Whilst perhaps a collective pleasure could be imagined in the proliferation of pastel coloured picnic sets and patterned diderhon dresses, beauty, which was established as a central narrative in East German aspiration and identity, had to be physically evident in the material environment, in architecture, and in public spaces. Whilst there was certainly a tremor in the transfer to serialised type building, there was no "collapse of public aesthetics"[123] nor any waning of political interest in the importance of public space as a site for the consolidation of cultural identity, in 1960s East Germany, but quite the reverse. The 1960s saw a transformation into a socialist modernism and preoocupation with "public aesthetics" which was to become manifest in a complex , societally grounded relationship between art, applied art, architecture and design.

architecture with the public sphere and commodities with the private sphere. This opposition does not hold as commodities were not identified only with private consumption but equally collective life. Good form design was just as much about the design of industrial machines and vehicles as it was with design for the home. Particular emphasis was given to the design of the workplace (as Betts himself notes) as well as all spaces and objects of collective life– schools, kindergartens, clinics and facilities, hospitals, cafes, and so on.
122 Betts, Paul, in, "The politics of post-fascist aesthetics...p 310
123 Ibid

3.

"We will build the most beautiful and the best":[1] manufacturing the socialist built environment.

> "Many architects under the smokescreen of phrases about the struggle against Constructivism and about Socialist Realism in architecture use the people's resources in an uneconomic way...we are not against beauty, but against every kind of excess."[2]

The incontestible idea of "beauty", was a constant in developments in architecture, which, as form design, had to make a shift in its conceptualisation in order to sustain the claim to socialist specificity. This change was in several ways analogous to the developments in form design, but architecture faced an even greater challenge: its task, we will recall, was to "retrieve architecture as the highest form of art,"[3] and the switch to economical building methods had not released it from this task. Architecture, as both the physical realisation and metaphor for socialist re-construction, was the most ideologically laden of the artistic or design

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[1] Hopp, Hanns, paper given at 1959 Theoretical Conference, DH2/21201 1 von 3, unpaginated (also DA)
2 Kruschev, Nikita, "Build better, cheaper and faster." Speech given to the Unions conference of building specialists of the USSR in Moscow, 7th December, 1954. "Many architects under the smokescreen of phrases about the struggle against constructivism and about Socialist Realism inarchitecture use the people's resources in an uneconomic way...we are not against beauty, but against every kind of excess." Schätzke, Andreas, *Zwischen Bauhaus und Stalinallee: Architekturdiskussion im östlichen Deutschland 1945-1955* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1991)
p159
3 Liebknecht, Karl, President of the Deutsche Bauakademie and Collein, Edmund, Vice President of the Deutsche Bauakademie, Guidelines set out at the first German Architects' congress, Berlin, December, 1951, published as "Fragen der deutschen Architektur und des Städtebaus" (Questions of German Architecture and Urbanism), Henschelverlag, Berlin, 1952.

disciplines. The loss of *Baukunst* seemed to be a renunciation of socialism itself. Krushchev's demand to "Build better, cheaper and faster" in 1954 was a directive, not a theory, and in the Soviet Union too, a pragmatism of production did not remove the necessity of theoretical foundations.[4]

In this chapter I examine these debates in which architecture was never entirely wrested from its function of art, a fact which was to have a lasting impact on the artistic conception of the built environment. Again, as in form design, an uneasy consensus was reached over the course of the 1960s, through acknowledging aspects of the Socialist Realist tradition – here in the articulation of public space, and the positioning of works of art to underscore socialist narratives and the collective socialist experience. The emerging concept of "complex environmental design", was in its material manifestations a composite of serialised design and unique works of fine and applied arts, which in a planned and harmonious unity were to reflect and form the "socialist way of life".

As with form design, socialist content and character was re-inscribed both through material means – through the insistence of a synthesis between and architecture and art, but increasingly from the mid 1960s onwards, through attempts to re-locate the socialist meaning outside the object itself.

Resistance to change

For architects, there appeared to be much more at stake than for designers in the drive to serial mass production. Whilst both disciplines required theoretical manouvering to release them from some of the tenets of Socialist Realism, notably the "critical appropriation of national tradition", for architecture it appeared the profession itself was under threat. Hanns Hopp described architects in the late

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4 Cooke, Catherine, Modernism and Realism..

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1950s as "staring like rabbits in to the headlights"[5]. Whilst in the field of design many relished the chance to explore a modernist aesthetic derived from function and materials in the design of objects and machines[6], and applied artists were also to find openings as artist-craftspeople, the ideological significance of architecture as a socialist *art* form was too deeply inscribed within the reconstruction myth to allow for two separate disciplinary trajectories. In the socialist modern architecture of the GDR, which developed in practice in the 1960s, there was a division between the typed building for serial production, and the authored "Sonderbau" (special building), such as those by prominent architects such as Hermann Henselmann or Ulrich Müther[7]. But such a division into two types of architecture could not be theoretically justified, in fact the very definition of socialist architecture delivered from the Soviet Union insisted that "for the first time in centuries the contradiction between the individual work and the serial building has disappeared"[8].

The "art" status and manifestation of beauty in architecture in Socialist Realism.

If we return briefly to the era of architecture of national tradition, we can see again how deeply integral the idea of art was to architecture. Kurt Liebknecht, chief ideologue of the early GDR years, had been central to the embedding this definition of socialist architecture as art in the discourse of the Deutsche Bauakademie,[9] claiming that, "Architecture can not develop without art, and art

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5 Hanns Hopp, quoted by Hans Schmidt in "Baukran und Baukunst" ("Building Crane and Building Art"), manuscript for a lecture at the BdA, 24.03.1959, quoted by Hain, Simone, ABC und DDR, Drei Versuche, Avantgarde mit Sozialismus in Deutschland zu Verbinden, p 441. Footnote 31.
6 According to Rubin, Petruschiat,Pfützner?...
7 Müther, Ulrich, 1934–2007. Müther, a building engineer, gained an international reputation with his shell construction buildings, ("Schalenbauwerke"). Some of the best known are the Lifeguard Station in Binz, the "Teapot" in Rostock-Warnemünde, 1967, the Music pavillion, Kurmuschel Sassnitz, 1987, and the Maple Leaf building in Berlin, 1973 (demolished 2000).
8 Michailow, Boris, "Architecture", The Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 1951, reproduced in Schätzke, Andreas, Zwischen Bauhaus und Stalinallee, Architekturdiskussion im östlichen Deutschland, 1945–1944, p. 131
9 "Architecture is the art with the greatest societal labour, is the art, to create our towns and villages so that their streets and squares, their architectural ensembles and their buildings reflect the optimism of our societal order." Liebknecht, Karl, Questions of German Architecture,First German Architects Conference, Berlin, 1951, Henschel, Berlin 1952

can not develop without architecture."[10] The art of architecture – learnt from the Soviets – was synonymous with "beauty", and ultimately fostered love of the *heimat*, in opposition to "purely functional buildings."[11]

Thus again, the socialist character of architecture was able to turn on its "beauty", which lent itself to both material and immaterial conceptions. The significance of the art status was that a Socialist Realist architecture was to be a constructed manifestation of socialism with the projected capacity to bear ideological meaning. Art was easily conflated with aesthetics and appearance, and thus if architecture no longer took the appearance of what was understood as Socialist Realism, then for many, socialism itself was undermined. A struggle on both fronts, art as a form of societal consciousness, and art as a bearer of aesthetic character, was pre-programmed, and thus for the years between the resolution on the industrialisation of building construction at the GDR building conference in 1955, and the seven year plan of 1959[12] announcing a huge acceleration in residential building without increasing the budget, this dilemma was largely avoided by concentrating on technical questions.

Moving towards a theory for industrialised architecture: influences

That this silence on theory was broken towards the end of the decade is usually credited to the influence of the incoming Basel architect and theorist, Hans Schmidt*.[13] Schmidt had been a pioneer in the "Neues Bauen" movement and co-founder of the manifesto journal, *ABC: Contributions to Building*[14], with Mart Stam,

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10 Liebknecht, Kurt, "Deutsche Architektur" in DA 1952/1, p 10
11 Liebknecht, Kurt, Questions of German Architecture , Berlin 1952: "The people were never contented with purely functional buildings. They have a passionate need for beauty, because beauty creates warmth, comfort, joy in life. Beauty increases the person's joy in work, the love of his home, of his street, to his town and finally it fills the person with with pride in his Heimat." P 12
12 Seven year plan announced at the 5th party congress, Siebenjahrplan zur Entwicklung der Volkswirtschaft der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik in den Jahren 1959 bis 1965" vom 1. Oktober 1959.
13 According to Simone Hain's account, Schmidt described himself as a Vitruvian in this situation, the implication being that he found a mission in bringing together art and science. Hain, Simone, "ABC und DDR", p 441.
14 Hannes Meyer, Karel Teige in Prague, and Lazlo Moholy-Nagy in Dessau all made editorial contributions to ABC. Hain, Simone, "ABC und DDR", p. 430

El Lissitzky and Emil Roth in 1924. *ABC* posited architecture as central to social revolution and put social function at the centre of a new architecture based on order and regulation, in which "sentimental feelings for the piety of production from previous eras and individual form virtuosity" had no place;[15] modern architecture was to be "unconcerned with efforts towards a formal beauty.[16] Like many other Northern European advocates of a new social(ist) architecture, Schmidt had spent a period in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. On returning to his native Basel in 1938, he found himself professionally marginalised through his communist politics, particularly after the supression of the 1956 uprising in Hungary.[17] Thus, his appointment as head of the *Institut für Typenprojetktion* (Institute of Type Projection) at the Deutsche Bauakademie in 1956[18] proved to be a late career and political opportunity. In 1958, Schmidt became director of the *Institut für Geschichte und Theorie* (Institute for Theory and History) at the same institution, and under his stewardship, Bruno Flierl and Kurt Junghanns* put together a proposition for a theory conference on the future of socialist industrialised architecture.[19] Nonetheless, three years had passed between Schmidt's arrival in Berlin and the 1959 theoretical conference on socialist industrialised architecture, which suggests that a gradual change of climate was necessary before new approaches in theory could be tendered.

During these years, the Institute for the Applied Arts had already sought a socialist conceptualisation of form and beauty in relation to function, as we have seen. This re-conception could only work for architecture if it were to be understood as a

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15 "ABC Beiträge zum Bauen", 1924–1928, edited by Mart Stam, Hans Schmidt, El Lissitzky, Emil Roth. Here, ABC, Issue 1, page 1.
16 "ABC", Issue 2, page 4
17 Huber, Benedikt ," Die Stadt des neuen Bauens: Projekte und Theorien von Hans Schmidt", vdf Hochschulverlag AG, 1993, p 83

18 In 1954 Schmidt had, on the invitation of Kurt Liebknecht, participated in the 8th Plenary Session of the Deutsche Bauakademie, with whom Schmidt had worked in Moscow. In June 1955, Schmidt was invited by Secretary of State Gerhard Kosel, also a formed Moscow colleague, to the 2nd Federal Congress of the Bund Deutscher Architekten, where the resolution for the industrialisation of architecture was passed, and subsequently invited by Kosel to head the "Institut für Typung", a position he held until December, 1957.

functional object. However, many architects and critics viewed the analogy of the future of architecture with form design – serialised, conveyor-belt production, which would demand and form new aesthetic sensibilities as a provocation.[20] And yet senior architects in the Bauakademie such as Hanns Hopp and Hans Schmidt were ready to make this claim. In 1959, Hopp confidently projected this outcome for architecture, and with extraordinary prescience, claimed:

> "The artistic expression [in industrialised building] will shift to another level. .. works of art will be more effective than before. Their task will be to directly represent socialist humanism through a sensory idea (Goethe)..."[21]

Perhaps most significant for architects, however, was the publication in 1958 in the GDR of Alexander Burow's "The Aesthetic Essence of Art", first published in the Soviet Union.[22] Although not primarily concerned with architecture, Burow's book was provocative in architectural circles because it "liquidated"[23] architecture from the realm of art, and proposed that it was equivalent to industrial design. Drawing on Kruschev's key 1954 speech[24], Burow claimed "The Soviet people want [...] functional beauty."[25] "We are not against beauty, just every kind of superfluity." For Burow, decoration must not be an end in itself.[26]

The 1959 conference on architecture theory.

In February 1959, Hans Schmidt, Kurt Junghanns and Bruno Flierl put forward a two-week conference proposal to the Deutsche Bauakademie, naming Edmund

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20 Hanns Hopp, discussion at 1959 conference. He claimed that the theorists were less inclined to agree than the practioners. BArch, Theoretical Conference, 1959, DH2/21201 1 of 3, unpaginated
21 Hopp, Hanns, "Die grosse Wandlung im Bauwesen", (The great transformation in construction") DA 2/1959, pp 65–66. Here, p 66
22 Das ästhetische Wesen der Kunst / A. I. Burow. Berlin : Dietz, 1958, incidently translated from the Russian by the conservative art historian Ullrich.
23 Burow
24 See previous ref..
25 Das ästhetische Wesen, p 265
26 Ibid. Decoration must not be "Selbstzweck" (a function in its own right) ,p 266 Burow was also extensively criticised in DA...

Collein* and editor of *Deutsche Architektur* Kurz Magritz, (known for his expressionist graphic work)[27] as other contributors.[28] This was then reduced to a two-day "working consultation", with nonetheless 89 participants from the SED, the Building Ministry, the Bauakademie and the educational institutions. Horst Redeker was invited to speak on "the form of the industrial product", in order to "add depth and also guarantee that the discussion has a clear Marxist character."[29]

For Kurt Liebknecht, such a theoretical discussion was overdue because of "revisionist attitudes influenced by the West" since 1956,[30] by which was meant, the adoption of thinking borrowed from Western Modernism. At the same time Liebknecht explained away the era of the national tradition as characterised by "a one-sided narrow interpretation of particular teachings of Marxist aesthetics and their dogmatic application."[31] The organisers' aim was, in view of the extensive industrialisation to be rolled out by 1965[32] to find a conception in which "architects can create a socialist environment in which socialist life in material and ideals can completely unfold."[33] Thus, already in the conception, there was a move to re-conceptualising socialist architecture in terms of the socialist life within the built environment.

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27 1952 – 61 Editor of Deutsche Architektur.

28 BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, 'Konferenz über Grundlagen und Aufgaben einer sozialistischen Architekturtheorie' "Conference on the basis and tasks of socialist architecture. The idea for a theory conference was not the initiative of Schmidt, Flierl and Junghanns but arose originally from the 35th Plenum of the ZK in which Honecker had claimed that at the Kulturkonferenz in 1957, that whilst the main problems of socialist culture had been clarified (a socialist-realist culture and the first Bitterfeld conference), many particular problems had remained in the background. As a result, the III Congress of the Bund Deustcher Architekten had requested the leading committee of the Deutsche Bauakademie to set up a conference on Socialist Realism in architecture. DA, 1958/I, p. 280. The initiative of Junghanns, Flierl and Schmidt is important in their interpretation of the framework proposed.

29 BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, 'Konferenz über Grundlagen und Aufgaben einer sozialistischen Architekturtheorie' "Conference on the basis and tasks of socialist architecture.

30 BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, Ibid, unpaginated

31 Theses of the First theoretical conference of the German Building Academy. On the socialist solution to the housing question and the recontruction of the destroyed city centres in the DDR. (The fourteen "theses" were reproduced as a Special Supplement DA 10/1960) >check ref

32 In line with the resolutions of the 1955 German Academy Building Conference, II. Bundeskongress des Bundes Deutsche Architekten, 9th – 12th June, 1955.

33 BArch, DH2/21201 ref?

Following consultations with regional groups of the Bund Deutscher Architekten throughout 1958[34], Schmidt, Junghanns and Magritz set out their proposed conceptions for "the theory and practice of the socialist living complex." It was clear from these that the positions were informed by divergent influences in architectural thinking and practice which had formed during the Stalinist Socialist Realist period, but also in the inter-war years thinking on functionalist architecture. It was clear too that a consensus was unlikely.

Kurt Magritz defined architecture as the "extension of the guidelines of dialectical materialism on aesthetics."[35] Whilst the material aspect of Socialist Realist architecture was primary, the secondary "artistic side" was a "product of artistic reflection and design (*Gestaltung*), an object of the artistic view of society, a part of class ideology." The creative principles were "based on the aesthetic expectations of the working class." Thus, the creative aspect of architecture followed the same principles of any other art form using the Socialist Realist method. The turn to industrially produced architecture and the new relationships arising from the socialist ownership of production, the socialist relationship to work, to nature and the state would produce "new aesthetic views of the working class."

For Schmidt, who was to give the main address, the new architecture would be drawn from the new socialist consciousness which was unfolding, and this would be expressed "in the given elemental forms of building". The material production of society was primary, because consciousness could only change in line with "being" (Sein), although both material production and artistic production were "inextricably linked". The artistic forms which Schmidt saw as emerging were based on making beautiful the principle of "truthfulness." Architecture was "a branch of artistic

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34 Ideas and questions for the theoretical conference from regional architects are published throughout the year in DA 1958.
35 Kurt Magritz, proposal for content of the theory conferenceon the theory and practice of the socialist living complex, in preparation for the meeting with Liebknecht planned for 24.5.1958, 05.05.1958, BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, unpaginated

production" in that it had to "serve the ideal needs of society." In Schmidt's conception the aesthetics of architecture, based on classical principles of order, harmony, rhythmn, clarity and so on were effectively separated from the artistic content, which was present in the functional organisation as it reflected societal ideals, and the "new socialist consciousness."[36]

Junghanns' proposal[37], apparently a re-working of Schmidt's, went even further in its emphasis on material production, and did not mention art at all, but only "new forms of expression" arising from the "new socialist consciousness". Junghanns went furthest in embracing the technological aspect of the new architecture, claiming that "false attitudes which see in industrialisation a technical, economical violation" [of architecture] must be "corrected". There was a clear difference (ie no "convergence") from capitalist architecture because the economic and ideological conditions were different.

The conference itself, rather than offering a clear basis for the development of new theory was something of debacle, since most contributions were concerned with negating the positions of others, rather than offering arguments for development. The excerpts and additional contributions to the vociferous discussion published throughout 1959 in *Deutsche Architektur* made it apparent that the subject of whether socialist, or Socialist Realist architecture could still be considered an art, would not so easily be resolved.

What was important however, was that the arguments advanced by Schmidt in his conference address, were the only ones which embraced the realities on the ground, and therefore held the potential basis for the development of a theory for

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36 All quotations from Hans Schmidt, "Proposal for content of the theory conference on the theory and practice of the socialist living complex", in preparation for the meeting with Liebknecht planned for 24.5.1958, 22.4.1958, BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, unpaginated
37 All quotations from Kurt Junghanns, "Proposal for content of the theory conference on the theory and practice of the socialist living complex", in preparation for the meeting with Liebknecht planned for 24.5.1958, 05.05.1958, BArch, DH2/21201, 1 von 3, unpaginated

the new serial production of architecture. For Schmidt, "new media and forms of artistic expression through industrialisation" should reflect the new socialist consciousness" (arising from the socialist relations to production and socialist way of life), which should differ from the "artistic experiences and forms from capitalist countries". It was wrong for theory to "stay stuck in general Marxist aesthetic" (implying as propagated by Magritz). There were "urgent questions of industrial form, colour, urban composition as means of artistic, societal expression."[38]

Bruno Flierl continued Schmidt's argument which rested on a dialectical relationship between architecture and its subject, proposing that: "Production does not only offer a material to meet needs, it offers the material also a need. Production does not only produce an object for its subject but also a subject for its object."[39] In other words, the dynamic relationship was not, as in Magritz's expose, between the architect and the working class, as an artistic "reflection" society, but the new architecture itself would change consciousness.[40]

The appearance of the new built environment.

The arguments proposed by the organisers rested on the socialist "art" content of the new architecture as arising from socialist relations. There was a subtle change from architecture as art, to architecture using artistic means, but what would the architecture actually look like? In Schmidt's description, the important aesthetic characteristics were "simplicity, order, dicipline, clarity and unity".[41] Typed building offered new tasks in "the ordering, plans, physicality, the new surfaces, ornament and colour, not to mention the use of artworks, particularly sculpture."[42] Schmidt's emphasis on "order and clarity" was a way in which the socialist architecture would be different from the urban plans of the Capitalist west, routinely described in GDR

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38 Flierl, Bruno, Referaten draft extracts, unpaginated, DH2/21201 1 von 3
39 Ibid
40 Ibid
41 Schmidt, Hans, Referat, DH2/21201 3 of 3, unpaginated
42 Schmidt, Hans, Referat, DH2/21201 3 of 3, unpaginated

criticism as "chaotic" due to competing free market interests[43]. Such disorder was comparable with Cubism, in particular the painting of Georges Braque; Schmidt viewed Henselmann's plans for the breaking from the grid in the final section of Stalinallee as an example of such an influence. Our task, Schmidt reminded his audience, "is to express the clear, logical and healthy." Beauty was hard to define, he conceded, and it had to begin with functionality (*Zweckmässigkeit*) but he was optimistic that "new forms of building, people's changed way of living, and their new relationship to nature, the changing role of transport, gives us new means and possibilites to develop beauty."[44]

Richard Paulick, chief architect of Hoyerswerda and Schwedt, who was to be appointed chief architect of Halle Neustadt, also drew a comparison with abstract art and the architecture of the Bauhaus. Recalling his own involvement with the Törten estate in Dessau using giant slabs, he recalled the discussions with Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer as to whether this was still art – which Meyer had rejected. The idea published by Gropius, that the "form language of modern architects was already developed through the abstract painting and sculpture, and for architects it was simply the task to to take on this abstract form languages that was already developed" was "a false principle, both aesthetically and politically."[45]

For Flierl too, the "order of socialist architecture as a reflection of our societal life" distinguished it from the chaotic architecture of the west, and socialist society would give this order new quality. In trying to imagine how this might appear, Flierl suggested "I can imagine that we will develop slabs which will allow all sorts of visual representations, even made of artificial materials."[46]

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43 This criticism of the "chaos" of capitalist architecture was also made in the ABC magazine in the 1920s, Chaos in Städtebau also mentioned in ABC p21
44 Schmidt, Hans, Referat, DH2/21201 3 of 3, unpaginated
45 Paulick, Richard Referat, DH2/21201 3 of 3, unpaginated
46 Flierl, Bruno, Referat, DH2/21201 3 of 3, unpaginated

The new architecture was, then, to be ordered, reflecting the order of socialist society, perhaps given some surface colour and articulation, and stood in opposition to any form drawn from Cubism or abstract art.

Resistance to Schmidt's conception

None of this satisfied Magritz. The visual manifestation of order was not enough to define the future of socialist architecture. "The demand for clarity, simplicity and order is no way limited to any particular epoch. It is repeatedly asserted in various epochs," he argued. Schmidt's conception of the new architecture was "entirely unsatisfactory in the specific content of Socialist Realism." Magritz, and others both at the conference, and writing in *Deutsche Architektur*, feared that architecture was going to lose its specific art, and hence socialist, value, and its beauty. For Magritz, beauty had "a primacy in realistic art, and it must be named. It cannot be left to go under... The development of beauty in socialist life is the basis for the blossoming of a realistic art in socialism. Thus, principally all architects have the possibility to create a beautiful architecture in the artistic sense."

For Heumann too, head of the Building ministry, there was a loss of the beautiful in Schmidt's conception:

> "We have to build in such a way that the aesthetic and artistic needs of our working people are satisfied, that further develops the socialist consiousness and its aesthetic sensibility. Our socialist building, the content of which is the life happiness of our society, must also shine joy and pleasure in its external appearance. That means our buildings must be as beautiful as they are purposeful. Therefore, there must be, as said in the discussion, a close connection between architecture and art."

In his summing up, Alfred Kurella, at that time leader of the culture commission of the Politbüro, detected a "puritanical streak" in Schmidt's conception. "But our socialist society is not puritanical and will be even less so in the future." Not

enough had been said about fine art, about painted and sculptural decoration, moving or permanent, wall fixed or free standing. Art in architecture was too important to be left to the decorative painter, Kurella claimed, and mused that it would be nice to find the quality of the Renaissance artists in the GDR.

Consequences of 1959 conference

Schmidt's keynote address was published in a small print run for professional consumption, whilst Kurella's summing up, optimistic about the future of art in architecture, planned for the public in *Neues Deutschland* did not make it to the presses. There seemed to be so little agreement that in the words of Hopp:

> "The only thing we all agree on is that it is our task to build the most beautiful homes and the best apartments, which present the clearest reflection of our new socialist relationships."[47]

The conference could only conclude that further work on the topic was needed. The organisers even suggested a series of small conferences to run every few months, each dealing with a different aspect, something that was ultimately achieved in another form in 1968 with the setting up of the ZAG (Central Working Group for Architecture and Art).

Before the next, much larger 1960 theory conference, Jiří Gočár, President of the Czechoslovakian Architects Union, was invited to speak to members of the Deutsche Bauakademie in Berlin.[48] His speech helped to advance a definition of socialist architecture through its relation to culture, and a defence of "type" as having a historical precedents reaching back to ancient Egypt.[49] Socialist architecture, he argued, was characterised through *Parteilichkeit* (Party-

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47 Hopp, Hanns, paper given at 1959 Theoretical Conference, DH2/21201 1 von 3, unpaginated
48 Gočár, Jiri, "Gegenwartsfragen der tschecholslowakischen Architekturentwicklung" ("Contemporary questions in the Development of Czechoslovak Architecture") A shortened version of his speech was reproduced as a special supplement to DA 9. The speech was given in March 1960.
49 Gočár's case for socialist architecture is fully expanded in " Von den Pyramiden zum Grossglockenbau / Jiří Gočár. Artia, Prague, 1964" translated from the Czech original version.

mindedness), scientific foundations, radical technical change, and emphasis on the cultural side of [our] activity."[50] The first point on the specificity of architecture for socialist life included, for example, principles of collectivity, the provision for simple, comfortable living space for all, and the equality of women. The fourth point dealt with the art/architecture discussion. Gočár placed architecture within "culture [which] is a higher category, in which art is included."[51] "Architecture must be understood as an essential component of socialist culture, as the highest quality of the material milieu of life...lending it the ability to influence the character of those living there in a progressive sense...it must lead to a new art and other areas of culture."[52] The "modern cannot be separated from societal context," Gočár continued: Modern architecture, was not a question of aesthetic questions, modern materials and methods. The architectural heritage was useful, not in the way of the "period of historicism from 1955...but for the technical reasons that influenced the development of forms and order". This was not to deny the significance of artistic means in architecture which could be "analogue to the methods of other arts, using order, rhythmn, heightening, counterpoint, symmetry, asymmetry..."[53] but to relocate socialist meaning within a wider context.

Magritz and other defendants of "Baukunst" found themselves on the defensive. Magritz's *Deutsche Architektur* had been heavily criticised at the 1959 conference and Magritz was relieved from his post as editor. Schmidt, Flierl and Junghanns pressed ahead with their socially rather than artistically derived conceptions of socialist architecture in their presentations for the 1960 conference,[54] The conference was "to define the character of architecture in the socialist society and answer the question of the aesthetic principles of that architecture, its appearance, its objective basis and national particularities. It should be closely related to actual

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50 Gočár, Jiří, "Gegenwartsfragen der tschecholslowakischen Architekturentwicklung" p 7
51 Gočár, Jiří, "Gegenwartsfragen der tschecholslowakischen Architekturentwicklung" p 8
52 Gočár, Jiří, "Gegenwartsfragen der tschecholslowakischen Architekturentwicklung" p 8
53 Gočár, Jiří, "Gegenwartsfragen der tschecholslowakischen Architekturentwicklung" p 2
54 The conference is proposed in 24 12 1959, by Schmidt, Collein, Strassenmeier and Flierl, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3, unpaginated

practice."[55] The 1959 conference did not have enough "scientifically based answers to these questions." It was important to research "the socialist way of life," and "the interrelationship between socialist way of life and socialist architecture in its development."[56]

However, it is clear that the organisers chose to absorb much of the language of the ideals of their critics, and in particular to assert the importance of "beauty" and the role of art. In his written consultation with the president of the German Building Academy prior to the conference, Schmidt, as Redeker in his discussions on the applied arts, emphasised beauty as the product of socialist work.[57] Socialism, he proposed, allowed the city "not only economically, technically and functionally to be fulfiled, but the city as a product of human work to be created 'according to the objective laws of beauty.' (Karl Marx)"[58]

Industrialised building in the conditions of socialism, by contrast:

> "...offers not only the material technical basis for socialist architecture but also represents an important new and contemporary element of the beauty of the city. This new beauty is determined by the beauty of the industrially created product, its functionality, (*Zweckmässigkeit)*, clarity, lightness and precision, and is in harmony with other areas of industrial production which aesthetically form our environment."[59]

Works of art, barely mentioned at the original conference were to be central in the formation of this new beauty:

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55 Planning for the Theoretical Conference, 1960, 24 12 1959, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3, unpaginated
56 Planning for the Theoretical Conference, 1960, 24 12 1959, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3 unpaginated
57 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-
23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3 unpaginated
58 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-
23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3 unpaginated
59 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-
23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3

> "The beauty of the socialist city will also be increased and enriched through works of art."[60]

> Works of art "also fulfil important educational, ideal and cultural functions."[61]

The conference proposal went even further, suggesting that works of art within the urban landscape would take up an ideological function where the industrialised architecture was inadequate:

> "The role of architecture is to express the ideals and ideas of society, and where its has no possibility to do this, it is dependent on the co-existence of art (sculpture, painting) to which falls the task of giving concrete, ideological representative expression."[62]

In the new architecture, the function of art was to become all the more important,

> "as a means of increasing and specifying the ideological and societal expression of architecture [...] the works of art need to be clearly ordered into the construction and urban ensemble."[63]

Here was a tacit acknowledgement that public art was going to take on the visual artistic ideological function where typed, slabbed building seemed inadequate to do so, and furthermore that the positioning of art within urban ensembles was to assist in the "staging" and articulation of those spaces.

The emerging theoretical conceptions did not reproduce the 1920s "Neues Bauen" thinking of a scientifically and materially determined functional architecture, because socialist architecture was charged with giving form to ideology. The

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60 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3
61 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3
62 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3
63 On the consultation on 1 7 1960 with the president of the BDA on the theoretical conference 1960-23 6 1960, BArch, DH2/21201 2 of 3

approach of Schmidt and Flierl was to move away from considering the form of buildings towards the larger conception of the complex of the urban plan, and the functions of buildings and the socialist life that would take place within them. Schmidt argued that, "works of architecture and urban planning become works of art, in that they reflect societal reality, and actively have an effect on the consciousness of people."[64]

> "The task of architecture and urbanism is to create buildings and urban systems for the life of society. Works of architecture and urbanism are the object of material production and are determined by their practical utilitarian purpose, which they offer for society. Works of architecture and urbanism meet the tasks of art in that they artistically reflect the societal reality and actively have an effect on the consciousness of people."[65]

Aesthetically these should nonetheless continue to project a visual socialist difference through the total staging of public space, the accenting of spaces and buildings through works of art, and means of design, and through the direct pedagogical and ideological function of the works of art themselves. This was a considerable demotion for art, as it was to become a functional element amongst many within the urban plan, but it was still an essential part of the new socialist built environment, alongside other elements such as colour, surface articulation, and increasingly as the idea of complexity developed, nature, street furnishings and visual communications.

Schmidt, Neues Bauen and the Bauhaus

Schmidt had altered his stance since his ABC years, where technology, truth to material and economy of form were promoted as the fundament of a social

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64 Hans Schmidt , Sozialistische Industrialisierung des Bauwesens P 38
65 Hans Schmidt , Sozialistische Industrialisierung des Bauwesens P 38

architecture, where form was the product of rational, scientific decisions.[66] The idea of "beauty" in architecture had been expressly disparaged[67]. Schmidt had then followed the argument of Loos and Behne that art had no place in architecture.[68] Influenced by the move to Socialist Realism in the USSR, where Schmidt had remained longer than most of the European avant-gardists, Schmidt then criticised Neues Bauen in its "rejection of symbol and monumentality, the denial of absolute beauty, its incapability of expressing an artistic-ideological task in architecture, [...] an expresssion of the decline in bourgeoise culture."[69]

In the GDR debate in the early 1960s, Schmidt chose not to refer explicitly to the interwar avant garde, but he found himself fighting on two fronts in a discussion on the Bauhaus in the early 1960s. On one front, Schmidt was damning of what he thought was an appeal to sentiment through playful experiment in form and colour, which he criticised expressly in the work of former Bauhausler, the architect, interior designer and furniture designer, Frank Ehrlich,[70] and who was in turn consistently defended by the critic Hermann Exner.[71] On the other front, Schmidt condemned the charges of "Bauhaus technicism" emerging in GDR architecture and design, made by Herbert Letsch,[72] during the 1959 conference and even more virulently afterwards in *Deutsche Architektur*. For Letsch, the work of Bauhaus protaganists was characterised by "extreme formalism, the absolute autonomy of the formal artistic media. The artwork may in no way prove anything beyond itself, it may not represent the objective or the ideal".[73] Letsch saw in constructivist and

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66 Hans Schmidt : 1893 - 1972 ; Architekt in Basel, Moskau, Berlin-Ost ; Werkkatalog, Ursula Suter ; Hans Schmidt ; Verena ; Bruno Rentsch Flierl, 1927-, Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Architektur, Zürich : Gta ; 1993 p. 35
67 See note 19
68 Hans Schmidt : 1893 – 1972 p35
69 Suter, Ursula, Hans Schmidt, "Form als soziale Bedeutungsträgerin" (Form as a carrier of Social Meaning). Ms. 1933, in Beiträge, 93,94. Footnote in blue book, no 52, p.41
70 Franz Ehrlich, architect, 28.12.1907, † 28.11.1984 born in Leipzig
71. Kunst und Gerät LH 78080 E96 (3.OG)
72 Letsch was probably still a student at this time. In 1965 he published his doctoral thesis which is an extended argument against the "technicism" of the Bauhaus. Later, in Ästhetik, Mensch, gestaltete Umwelt, Berlin, Verl. der Wiss., 1982 (Aesthetics, Man, Designed Environment) co-authored with Hagen Bächler and Karla Scharf he moderated his position.
73 Letsch, Herbert, "The Bauhaus: a route to socialist architecture?"

Bauhaus thinking a poverty of ideals, and a fetishisation of technology, and he viewed the theoretical direction proposed by Schmidt as an "encroachment of functionalist and Bauhaus ideas"[74]. Schmidt, however, felt it was his misssion in the GDR specifically to rescue architecture from quota-driven production determined by engineering and economics, to ensure its aesthetic and social realisation.[75]

Exner and Letsch were at two extremes, Exner as bold in his arguments for the rehabilitation of what he considered Bauhaus principles[76], and named them as such, as Letsch was as condemnatory.

In a lecture at the "House of Culture" in Stalinallee, Berlin in 1957,[77] Franz Ehrlich defended the artistic content of architecture, and the right of the working person to beauty and art within architecture. At the 1959 theory conference, Ehrlich had tried to put forward an argument for a "biological" understanding of architecture, arguing that architecture had to be understood not as an external composition but as a physical experience, and importantly, a pleasurable experience. For Ehrlich, the aesthetic function was "the spatial optical experience."[78]. The idea of a architecture determined by something as whimsical as spatial experience, was anathema to most of the leading voices at the conference, who sought an absolute determinant for socialist architecture. Ehrlich was condemned and dismissed as a lightweight, by Schmidt ("in reality he wanted to make an individual artwork in the Bauhaus

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in DA 8/1959, p. 459

74 Letsch, Herbert, "Die konstruktivistische Ästhetik und das Problem der künstlerische Wiederspiegelung der Wirklichkeit", Deutsche Zeitschrift der Philosophie. Berlin (9) 1961. S. 1102–1118

75 Hain, Simone, Hans Schmidt in die DDR, in Suter, Ursula, p. 88

76 Exner argued as early as 1948? (check schätzke) That functionalist architecture should be rewarded with national prizes. Exner promote the Weissensee art school as following in the Bauhaus tradition, and he promoted the work of Ehrlich in Neues Deutschland, for example the Klub für Kulturschaffended in Berlin, and in "Kunst und Gerät", published in 1961 (Berlin, Verlag der Nation) he made an extended case for the removal of ornament from form design.

77 Reported by Hermann Exner in "Zweckmäßiger und billiger bauen: Gedanken zu den Aufgaben unserer Architekten im zweiten Fünfjahrplan" (Build more functionally and more cheaply: Thoughts on the tasks of our architects in the second five year plan.), Berliner Zeitung, 22nd January 1957 Edition 18, p. 3

78 Franz Ehrlich, conference paper, BArch, DH2/21201 1 von 3

recipe, in which function is just an excuse for all possible formalist bits of art...")[79], and in turn Heumann, Kurella, Magritz and Flierl[80].

Franz Ehrlich's humiliation at the conference infuriated Hermann Exner, who subsequently in *Deutsche Architektur* made the most taboo-breaking claim on Bauhaus ideals as the basis for socialist architecture and design[81]. For Exner, there was no separation in the status of designed goods and architecture, and the Bauhaus offered an explicit model for GDR design and architecture, in its understanding of serialised form as the way to produce economical, well designed goods for the whole population, and which proposed an interdisciplinary approach to solving design tasks. Furthermore its search for harmony of form and function the Bauhaus ideal was in fact on a continuum with rural craft traditions which could have formed the basis for serial production, Exner argued.[82]

Hermann Exner praised Franz Ehrlich's re-creation of the interior of the "Club for Makers of Culture" (*Klub der Kulturschaffenden*) in Berlin, as a "masterwork of socialist interior design" without "relying on dead forms [but using] the media and methods of our time", in particular praising the "interplay of colour, space, furnishing forms and the surface structures, which become the basis of the principle of a socialist, economical beauty of the club house."[83]

This "interplay of colour" only brought more derision from Schmidt. In his view, Ehrlich sacrificed functionality for optical effects, and the "aesthetic sensation of the department store"[84], in which "the spiritual emptiness which capitalism has created in people is filled with an equally empty play with the random, illogical and

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79 ref
80 BArch, DH2/21201 1 von 3
81 Exner, Hermann, "Der Weg zu einer sozialistische Innensarchitektur. Eine Erwiderung auf die Artikel von Professor Hans Schmidt und Herbert Letsch" (The way to a socialist interior design: a response to the articles from Professor Hans Schmidt and Herbert Letsch.") DA8/1959, p 458
82 Ibid
83 Exner, Hermann, " Zusammenklang der Elemente", ("Interplay of the Elements") Neues Deutschland, 10th May 1958, Edition 110.p. 9
84 Ibid

spontaneous."[85] This kind of architecture was influenced by "the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier, Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, modern music, parallel with abstract painting, into which the architecture of the so called free world falls in brilliant technique and in a subjective lawless play with the aesthetic pull of colour, light, materials, and so on."[86] Art in socialist society [had to be] "more than playing around with artistic materials and techniques...architecture in particular can not be content with this abstract, pretty play."[87] Even more provocatively, Schmidt refered to the interior as like an atom bomb.

The argument continued with Exner delivering the blow that Schmidt was out of touch with ordinary people: "to appreciate the beauty of Ehrlich's design, no art historical knowledge is required of national traditions." Exner was arguing less for educating people up towards the morality and authenticity of socialist architecture as defined by experts, but proposing that experts might take account of what ordinary people enjoy. This was less an ideological category of "joy" and "beauty" in socialism, and much more a populist idea of pleasurable experience. This reduction of an appreciation culture and "joy" to popular pleasure was not in line with the mid 1960s expectation of the spiritual and cultured development of people, a fact which was seized on by Herbert Letsch:

> "The point is that the worker should be raised to the highest levels of the material and ideal culture. This is the point of the whole politics of the socialist state. It it not enough to develop a 'sense of space' or a 'sense of colour' and so on. We have much higher aims than Hermann Exner! The socialist person is determined by... their high understanding of art."

Schmidt himself was averse to any kind of design and architecture which appeared to be pandering to fashion or popular taste, particularly where he felt it to be imitating Western design. The modish wares in the new Möbelhaus in Stalinallee at

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85 Ibid
86 Ibid
87 Ibid

Frankfurter Tor, were, according to Schmidt, "imitators of Western snobbish and advertising culture"[88], and design would do better to look for for durable socialist forms, inspired by folk forms or Swedish or Bulgarian examples.[89]

In summary, Schmidt's asceticscm and insistence on a rational approach to colour pleased neither those who feared a creeping functionalism, such as Letsch, nor those who understood colour as a means of enhancing the experience of the built environment. However, his arguments for architecture as a functional object laid the ground for the an understanding of public space as one which should serve social needs. At the same time another front opened up: the defence of a new form of ornament in architecture. The new ornament, was not the kind of ornament of botanical flourishes, but something altogether more masculine: the modular ornament formed from simple geometry, built in concrete – in fact the kind of exploration of form that made up the Bauhaus foundation course. This was to develop into whole new genre in architectural art, and provided a chance for creative experiment for both artists and architects.

Definining socialist ornament and colour and in industrialised building

i Ornament

Surface decoration, articulation and colour were to become as important in the socialist aesthetic in architecture as they were in form design. In the 1960 theory conference, Hermann Weidhaus made a plea for ornament as an expression of socialist value.[90] He claimed that the loss of decoration influenced by Adolf Loos' "Ornament and Crime", was still evident in the capitalist world, and that the articulation of building, through decoration, showed that the architect "lives in a world of values, that it is a joy to live in socialism, and also the building art that is

88 Ibid
89 Ibid
90 Presentation of Hermann Weidhaus, 1959 Theory Conference, BArch, DH2/21201 3 of 3

created is an art of joyfulness, emphasis of values, the manifestation of joy, of self confidence of pride, also in the physionomy of buildings."[91] Weidhaus' idea that surface articulation and ornament could express "joy" and "pride", was to compensate for the mechanical character of the unadorned, flat surfaces of the serially produced built environment which, he implied, was not able to bear these values. Whether hand made or manufactured, decoration would demonstrate that there was still a human impulse in this architectural production.

The possibilities of socialist ornament within pre-fabricated architecture were considered an area of such considerable potential, both in terms of technical and formal research, that *Deutsche Architektur* devoted the best part of a double issue to the researches in this area in June/July 1961. A new conception of "ornament", "surface relief", or "structural relief", which used modularised industrially produced elements, experimenting with the application of surfacing materials such as enamel, ceramic, concrete and glass, alongside hand crafted structures, gave architects and applied artists a new outlet for form experiment, similar to concurrent experiments with surface structures and ornament in modern architecture in the West[92], but which could be conceived of as on a continuum with the understanding of ornament as a carrier of socialist value.

At the Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen (HAB) in Weimar, Siegfried Tschierschky, Professor for "the artistic in architecture" actively sought in his early 1960s teaching to research the visual form of a Socialist Realist modern architecture, in particular in the questions of surface relief and colour. Like Schmidt, Tschierschky felt it was possible "providing the societal order permits it" to "achieve a classical architecture [using the means of] industrial building"[93] and

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91 Presentation of Hermann Weidhaus, 1959 Theory Conference, BArch, DH2/21201 3 of 3
92 An illustration from the West German journal "Baukunst und Werkform" 2/1960 of an ornamental façade with a sculpture is given without reference to place in Schmidt's piece, "Architektonische Probleme der Struktur und der Ausbildung der Oberflächen im industriellen Bauen." DA 6/7, P.319
93 Tschierschky, Siegfried, "On approaches to a genuine connection of artistic means in industrialized building.". DA, 6/71961 p 311

offered both theoretical and practical routes to its realisation. The artistic was never to be something additional, but as with classical architecture, an integral part of the structure. "The completeness of architecture can be most clearly read in its relation to ornament,"[94] he claimed. Tschierschky framed his ideas as a development of Socialist Realism, in no way counter to it.

Schmidt rejected Tschierschky's theory as compromising both to architecture and to art – the structural and semi pictorial architectural-structural elements he proposed had surrendered their artistic autonomy in assuming to be part of architecture, but which they were not because they did not really have a structural function. Better examples were those where the art works were completely separate from the building.[95]

Fritz Kühn, the metal designer[96], ("Kunstschmeid"), made a case for ornamental structure, such as his own works in metal, as "additional, but not superfluous" to function. He saw such ornamental works as led by function, and not as independent artworks, justified in the words of Goethe as "from the useful, through truth, to the beautiful".[97]

The three theoretical positions can be summed up as: structural ornament is justified as modernised socialist ornament (Tschierschky), art should be independent of architecture, (Schmidt) and ornament which does not contradict structure can make a contribution to beauty in modern architecture (Kuhn).

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[94] Tschierschky, Siegfried, "On approaches to a genuine connection of artistic means in industrialized building.". DA, 6/71961 p 311

[95] "Architektonische Probleme der Struktur und der Ausbildung der Oberflächen im industriellen Bauen." DA 6/7, 319–326

96 Fritz Kühn (born 29. April 1910 in Mariendorf/Berlin; † 31. Juli 1967 in Berlin) blacksmith/metal designer, sculptor, photograher, restorer and teacher. Kühn's early work (his first in 1929) typically employed organic ornament of natural motifs. In 1959 he described his transformation from "wrought iron" to "designed steel" as determined by the modernisation of architecture which brought a modernisation of form. (Fritz Kühn, Stahl und Metallarbeiten)

[97] Kühn, Fritz, "Metall in der Architektur". DA 1961, 5/6, pp 359–361

Tschierschky died around 1965 but, whatever Schmidt's theoretical reservations, Tschierschky had opened the way for an apparently politically acceptable exploration of abstract form-making by artists as well as architects, which, given the rigid restrictions of architectural production and the demand for realism and narrative within fine art, was undoubtedly welcomed as a space for experiment with form. (The ambiguity of the status of such works were also, however to cause some problems for the artists since, not meeting the SR pre-requisite for public art commissions they could not be financially compensated as art.) Tschierschky was followed in his experimentation most prominently by Hubert Schiefelbein, Reinhard Dietrich and Inge Jastram, (who both later produced brick relief images for housing gables in Rostock-Evershagen and Lichterhagen), and members of the Dresden Kunst am Bau collective such as Bruno Dolinksi, Friedrich Kracht and Karl Heinz Adler. Fritz Kühn, already an established metal artist before the war, was highly successful in negotiating the boundaries between art, craft, industrial design and architectural ornament. His prodigious output was acclaimed in the GDR and in the West[98].

ii Colour

Tschierschky also researched a "Socialist Realist method" for the colouring of building ensembles[99]. He argued that colour in architecture was largely seen only as an aesthetic issue: however whilst the possibility to "write" within architecture was not the same as within art, he argued, it was nonetheless appropriate to approach architecture as art. Both art and architecture were "bildhaft" (pictorial) but in painting there was an *Abbild* (image), and in architecture an *Ordnungsbild* (order

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98 Kühn was the author of over a dozen volumes about his own work published in East and West Germany, and England between 1939 and 1968, for example, "Geschmiedetes Eisen", Berlin : Wasmuth, 1940, and by the same publisher then in Tübingen, Baden Wüttenburg, "Fritz Kühn, Stahl und Metalarbeiten", 1959. " Decorative work in wrought iron and other metals" was also published by Harrap, England in 1968
99 Siegfried Tschierschky , "Zur realistische Methode der Farbgebung im Städtebau" (On the realistic method of creating colour in urban planning), DA 1961/1 p 34–35

of the image) "in which the image character ferments".[100] Tschierschky explained

this difference, that he set out, essentially in terms of primary and secondary

functions: in painting the order followed the image, and in architecture the image

followed the order. (Thus, as with Schmidt's arguments, it was "order" that defined

the artistic task). The closest connections between the two were present in the

application of colour[101]. Through this argument, Tschierschky attempted to wrest

the colouring of architecture from the domain of the aesthetic decisions of

professional decorators – such as the readers of *Farbe und Raum* –, and re-situate it

within the domain of *art*, which was essentially different in being "writable"[102], i.e., it

could be inscribed with meaning, (meaning which would be socialist). Nonetheless,

Tschierschky did not rate the abilities of the fine artist for this task either, since "he

is not good at thinking spatially."[103] For Tschierschky, getting the colour right in the

new architectural ensembles was a matter of direct importance for the new

residents:

"It is essential that the urban conception is made clear through colour, not least
because the observer first has to get used to the proportions which are still
unfamiliar, because only through that can he take part in the artistic experience of
the new."[104]

Tschierschky's method developed at the HAB in Weimar created a "realistic" colour

through modeling and colouring techniques. Thus, in Tschierschky's argument,

colour in architecture could not only be a form of building art, but also could be

"realistic". The description of the method refered to the need to correctly simulate

the final colour within the built environment in the architectural model, which in

being "realistic" could be situated as a method of Socialist Realism.

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100 Ibid
101 Ibid
102 "Beschreibbar", meaning writable, open to description or inscription.
103 Ibid
104 Ibid

In the early 1960s, Schmidt began to develop his theories on "socialist colour," which grew from his criticisms of existing colour schemes that were to be seen on the new housing developments across the GDR. Although Schmidt consistently proposed that the ideal development of industrialised architecture would follow a classical order, in terms of spatial relationships, rhythmn, and the relationship of ornament and colour to volumes, he rarely offered successful examples in practice.[105] His arguments tended to be supported with negative examples, as was usual in accusations of "formalism". At the 1959 conference he criticised, for example, Paulick's application of bright colours to the slab building surfaces in Living Complex 1 in Hoyerswerda, which "led to a tectonic which contradicts the facades, through an unharmonious, unsettled effect."[106] Paulick defended the colour scheme in the name of national tradition ("not even mentioned and often not popular, but must still be relevant as we are talking about Socialist Realism")[107], and argued that the bright colours of the housing in WKI were a reference to the traditional Sorbian architecture of the region:

> "It is incontestible, that this architecture of the people worked strongly with colour and that it is, in my view, completely wrong to exclude colour as a creative element from architecture, and then to create a formula on how it should be painted."[108]

Schmidt, whilst deriding "Buntheit" (bright colours) or fashionable modern colour, viewed colour as a primary means by which a visible beauty would be achieved, and thus a socialist character colour needed to be defined. Although colour in architecture had been propogated in the early 20th century within the Neues Bauen movement[109] and by the *Bund zur Förderung der Farbe im Stadtbild*

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105 Schmidt's prime example of a classical industrially built town was Perret's post war re-building of Le Harvre.
106 DH2/21201 1 of 3, Referat Schmidt P 16
107 DH2/21201 1 of 3, Referat Paulick
108 DH2/21201 1 of 3, Referat Paulick
109 Painting buildings with flat colour had been promoted by prominent architects such as Walter Gropius, Bruno Taut and Adolph Behne, as a form of democratisation and promotion of honest, healthy living in symbolic opposition to the historicising stucco on the buildings of the Grunderzeit. In Summer 1919, Bauwelt magazine published the Aufruf zum farbigen Bauen ("Call for Colourful Building"), which was the result of a

(Association for the Promotion of Colour in the City)[110], Schmidt very rarely chose to refer to this heritage, prefering to examine the colour systems of the Rococco, Baroque or folk architecture as reflective of societal order. The 1920s movements were poor models for the GDR since they were proposed as a means of democratisation – they also stimulated demand for paint production. Whilst, as in the early modern movements for colour in Germany, colour in the GDR was necessary to "overcome the grey, depressing appearance of the towns left by the 19th century"[111], in socialist East Germany, it was necessary neither to promote the commercial interests of paint manufacturers, nor to frame colour as a means of democratisation, since democracy was said to be structurally guaranteed. Furthermore, Bruno Taut, the most renowned proponent and practitioner of colour in architecture in the 1910s and 1920s had claimed that colour could "become a subject in its own right, which does not absolutely have to run parallel to form, but can cross form and be separated from it…"[112] Colour need not necessarily play a secondary, supportive role to architectural volumes.

Colour for the sake of colour, was no better than form for the sake of form ("*Selbstzweck*"), and thus incompatible with a Socialist Realist development for colour theory. Schmidt's vision for colour in the new built environment differed from these heritages in that colour was understood completely as supporting volume within an overall urban spatial composition, and never as an independent means of expression, as Taut had proposed. Schmidt wanted to promote colour as a form of logical expression, to assist in the communication of building functions, spatial organisation and orientation. Together with Flierl, Schmidt advanced a

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survey initiated by by Walter Gropius, Bruno Taut and Adolph Behne of the Arbeitsrat für Kunst (Working Council for Art).
110 The movement for colour in the 1920s had also arisen from commercial interests. Founded on 1st January 1926 it simultaneously promoted the paint industry in proposing colourful painting of all kinds of architecture. Its publication, "Die Farbige Stadt" ("The colourful town" journal), founded in 1926, was rich in advertising for paint suppliers, and supported any kind of colouring of architecture.
111 Schmidt, Hans. *Die Farbe als Mittel des künstlerischen Ausdrucks in der Architektur und im Städtebau; Arbeitsmaterial* (Colour as a means of artistic expression in architecture and urbanism), Working material for the 9. Plenartagung, 1963, Berlin, Deutsche Bauakademie, 1963, p.6
112 Martina Düttmann, Friedrich Schmuck, Johannes Uhl, Farbe im Stadtbild, Archibook, Berlin 1980, pp 18–29 note 37

socialist colour theory, which took colour away from the realm of interior decorating ideas of colour psychology as a way of influencing mood.

In the March 1963 issue of *Deutsche Architektur*, Flierl published Hans Schmidt's "Colour in Architecture and Urbanism,"[113] as well as Lothar Gericke and Jorg Krenke's researches into an East German colour system which would avoid the use of expensive white cement imports[114], and his own report on colour in system built architecture in Romania.[115.]

Hans Schmidt refused to conceive a colour system which took into consideration material limitations or practical difficulties[116]. Whilst the expanding paint and chemical industry would determine material developments, architectural colour was primarily a question of art.[117] Any correlation of flat, painted, architectural colour and the appearance of abstract art was sidestepped, since in Schmidt's conception colour was not autonomous.[118] Nonetheless, Schmidt claimed, "we must respect the boldness to be seen today in graphics, posters, consumer goods and fashion. Abstract artists, have delivered on expressing the new beauty of colour. Mondrian has been an example in the use of pure colour for the contemporary Dutch and some of the English architecture."[119]

Schmidt also wanted to move on from the approach to colour as determined by the insights of science and psychology in terms questions of health and safety:

> "This is important but we cant overlook the fact that colour goes beyond these practical and functional levels. [...] We must use colour as a medium of

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113 Hans Schmidt, "Colour in Architecture and Urbanism," *Deutsche Architektur*, 3/1961, pp 157–161
114 Lothar Gericke and Jorg Krenke, "Colour Circle and Colour in Practice". Working at VEB Projekt, Berlin, Gericke and Krenke, from the School for Applied Arts in Potsdam, developed a new, patented, 18 part colour circle for architects. They tested the applicability of their scale against paintings of greater and lesser known painters, for example Van Gogh and Alfred Hesse, *Lernende Mädchen*. DA/ 3/1963, pp 162–169
115 Bruno Flierl, "Architecture and Colour in Romania", DA 1963 pp 170–172
116 Hans Schmidt, "Colour in Architecture and Urbanism," Deutsche Architektur, 3/1963, p 158
117 Hans Schmidt, "Colour in Architecture and Urbanism," p. 157
118 Ibid, p. 157
119 Ibid

artistic expression in architecture. [...] By artistic we mean in the sense of humanist and universal content, and not simply functional or aesthetic." [120]

Every epoch had a particular set of rules of colour in architecture which reflected the order and values of the era, Schmidt argued: Baroque in saturated red, yellow and green, Rococo in soft pastel tones of pink and purple, and classical era in blue, light ochre and sea green, but above all white. He argued for a *Gesetzmässigkeit*, (set of laws or principles) which would be specific to the socialist society. [121]

Thus, in Schmidt's argument, if each societal epoch had a colour in architecture which corresponded to the power relations, then the new socialist era also demanded such an expression. The obvious, (though not unique to GDR socialism because it recalled the wider Modernist arguments for functionalist, modern building, characterized by light and airiness, liberated from "superfluous" decoration), was to consider socialist architecture as the inversion of the 19th century tenement which was still predominant as a historical remnant in East Germany's old towns. Schmidt argued:

> "The function of colour must be to awaken and embody particular sensitivities and feelings of people which correspond to the nature of socialist society. By this we mean the joy of life, cheerfulness, optimism, but at the same time, clarity, order and the sense of belonging. [...] We have to set this against the depressing image [of the past], not so much brightly coloured, but much more the cheerful and spacious city, the new environment of the socialist era." [122]

Schmidt assigned an important meta function for colour, that of creating order. Whilst colour reflected a joy of life, this was within a clearly ordered and disciplined system which had been determined in line with artistic principles, corresponding to the model of the joyful but disciplined GDR citizen. Schmidt warned several times against the inappropriateness of *Buntheit*, i.e., overly bright and vivid colours, as

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120 Ibid, p. 157
121 Ibid, p. 158
122 Ibid

they could suggest artificiality. Most importantly, for Schmidt, was the point that colours had to be conceived of in terms of schemes for entire building ensembles, for entire living complexes with their schools, kindergartens, sports, cultural and other public buildings. The colour conception should be part of the original architectural ensemble, and not something added on at the end, as though the task was simply to overcome the monotony of repetitive architecture.[123]

Ideological backlash against modernising theories and practice

Around the time of the 5th Dresden art exhibition controversy at the end of 1962, both Schmidt and Flierl were confident in promoting an idea of the built environment that saw it in a positive way as manufacturable along the same principles as form design. If we recall Redeker's theory for form design, we can see how close it was to the developing ideal for the built environment. For Redeker, the designed object was defined through its beauty, function, and status as an art form. The socialist character of the object was to be found in part in relations of production, but also in material culture in its relationship to the "complex of needs", as a reflection of the "moral-societal life stance." Where this aim was eventually achieved, this could be called a "socialist style". Schmidt too said a "socialist style" would emerge in the new built environment.

Schmidt even used the 5th art exhibition to push his idea forward and was emboldened to make a direct comparison between the thinking and production basis of form design with that of serialised architecture. Speaking to architecture students at the TU Dresden in November 1962,[124] he delivered a damning assessment of the *Neues Deutschland* "Hinter dem Leben zurück" report,[125] arguing that crafts clearly had different remit to industrial design. Industrial design, like

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123 p 161
124 Schmidt, Hans, "Kunsthandwerk und Industrieform" (Applied Arts and Industrial Form), The paper was partially reproduced in DA 3/63, pp 178–180
125 Neues Deutschland, Hinter dem Leben Zurück 4. Oktober 1962, p 273

architecture, should be conclusively removed from the domain of art. The objects criticised by Hagen[126], he claimed, had "nothing to do with industrial design. These are Kunsthandwerk (craft)".

> "We have to come to an agreement on the functional (*Zweckmässige*), the correct and the beautiful in the whole of "Werkkunst"[127], from architecture to household goods, which must be recognised by our entire socialist society.[128]

Beauty was to remain central as an ideal, both material and immaterial, and the model of beauty as the harmony of form and function comparable to form design was re-asserted.

Flierl openly criticised the architecture section of the 1962 exhibition. Exhibited for the first time, architecture was faced with the task of presenting well designed buildings at a time when the "beauty" of typed, slabbed buildings was seriously doubted in architectural circles – consequently these were deliberately omited.[129] Flierl criticised the selectors' evident discomfort with the new architecture, and claimed the exhibits rested on a conception of the beauty of architecture "as surface, model, view, but not the experience or true perspective of the user." It made "no connection of representation with reality."[130] Architecture, Flierl suggested, "communicates with people through practical life and experience in the built environment, which you can not show with photographs and models."[131] The solution would be, in Flierl's analysis, to foreground an appreciation of the built environment on an artistic and aesthetic level through the integration of works of art within architecture, and on an immaterial level through the experience of space in every day life. Sound recordings might be a way to represent architecture, he

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126 Kurt Hagen in the report, Neues Deutschland, Hinter dem Leben Zurück 4. Oktober 1962, p 273
127 In this context, best translated as industrial art.
128 Schmidt, Hans, "Kunsthandwerk und Industrieform" (Applied Arts and Industrial Form), The paper was partially reproduced in DA 3/63 P 180s
129 Bruno Flierl on the urbanism in the V Deutsche Kunstausstellung. DA 2/1963, p 124
130 Bruno Flierl on the urbanism in the V Deutsche Kunstausstellung. DA 2/1963, p 124
131 Bruno Flierl on the urbanism in the V Deutsche Kunstausstellung. DA 2/1963, p 124

suggested, thus subtly introducing the question of the way in which public space was experienced.

Flierl may or may not have been unaware of the discomfort which was fermenting amongst the guardians of the Party ideology at the discursive and critical editorial line that he was developing in *Deutsche Architektur*[132]. The Deutsche Bauakademie had refused publication permission for two other articles in the March 1963 "colour" issue: Professor Münter's "Gropius and the Industrialization of Building" and another from Kurt Junghanns, "Architecture in the feature pages of 'The Red Flag'" ,[133] but Flierl probably did not anticipate the severe repercussions of March 1963 issue at the 7th Plenum of the German Building Academy. According to Gerhard Kosel, head of the Building Academy, some architects were losing sight of their brief, and becoming concerned with their own professional vanity rather than the opinions of ordinary people, Kosel pointed to a case in Dresden where an exhibition on colour for planned residential complexes, in which it was written in the caption that the colour was "only to be used by experts, and not for half educated amateurs who are not capable of judging colour compositions":[134]

> "How wrong this attitude is, and how productive is the work of those who are politically experienced, who are closely connected with the struggle of the working class, and closely connected with the lives of our population in cooling the problems of urbanism and architecture." [135]

The Plenum saw the ideological "correction" of virtually all the leading architects – Bruno Flierl, Kurt Junghanns, Hermann Henselmann, Richard Paulick, Martin Wimmer and many others, by the head of the Deutsche Bauakademie, Gerhard Kosel, and Party ideologues. Wimmer has described this event as a symbolic

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132 Besides suggesting that conditions for architects were easier elsewhere, and that young architects felt restricted in their work, Flierl sought a tentative engagement with the German interwar Avant Garde.
133 Statement by Bruno Flierl, 7. Plenartagung, Closed Meeting: "Ideological Questions of Urbanism and Architecture", Berlin 12 July, 1963. Insert in to the Journal, *Deutsche Architektur*, Deutsche Bauakademie, Berlin, 1963, p 23,
134 Kosel, Ibid, p. 9
135 Kosel, Ibid, p. 9

massacre of the young by the Moscow trained old guard, putting the younger generation in its place[136].

Whilst the colour question was only one of a whole range of criticisms addressed to architects at the seventh Plenum in June 1963, and not of greater significance than any of the other topics picked upon by Kosel and his associates, it is notable that when Schmidt developed his colour theory in October 1963 in a more extended paper for the 9th Plenary session of the German Building Academy,[137] the references to positive aspects of abstract art were dropped and folk art was offered as typifying the popular appreciation of colour.[138]

Interestingly, Schmidt was not subjected to the public reprimands at the 7th Plenum in June 1963, a fact that lay probably in his senior and "guest" status – he was pursuing the task at the Deutsche Bauakademie for which he had specifically been invited, "to help push through industrialised building as the new material-technical basis of architecture in the GDR, both theoretically, and as a practical, creative task."[139] Nonetheless, Schmidt took the opportunity to re-assert the ideal of the beautiful in architecture late in 1963, after the 7th Plenum.[140] He underlined again the importance of colour, proportions, spatial composition, all of which which should be derived from the material function and construction of building as the important criteria of beauty. As Schmidt often argued, modular repetition should not contradict the ideal of beauty, but as in many historic precendents would be the basis of it:

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136 Hain, Simone, "Hans Schmidt in die DDR" in Suter, p.91, note 20. Wimmer in conversation with Simone Hain.
137 Schmidt, Hans. Die Farbe als Mittel des künstlerischen Ausdrucks in der Architektur und im Städtebau; Arbeitsmaterial (Colour as a means of artistic expression in architecture and urbanism), Working material for the 9. Plenartagung, 1963, Berlin, Deutsche Bauakademie, 1963
138 Schmidt, Hans. Die Farbe als Mittel des künstlerischen Ausdrucks in der Architektur und im Städtebau; Arbeitsmaterial (Colour as a means of artistic expression in architecture and urbanism), Working material for the 9. Plenartagung, 1963, Berlin, Deutsche Bauakademie, 1963, p. 6
139 Flierl, Bruno, Hans Schmidt in der DDR, Reflexionen in der DDR, in Flierl, Bruno, Gebaute DDR, Über Städtplaner, Architekten und die Macht, Verlag für Bauwesen, 1988, p77
140 Schmidt, Hans, "What is Beauty in Architecture?" Über die Notwendigkeit der Architekturkritik und der Architekturtheorie. (On the necessity of architecture criticism and architecture theory), DA 1963 p 584 October, 1963

"Standardisation and the modular system can as an element of unity and order can completely be effective in the meaning of beauty. The modular system of the antique temple which had its roots to a large extent in technical considerations [...] can be understood as a substantial part of beauty."[141]

Schmidt also took the opportunity to clarify "incorrect" views of beauty. One was the idea of an additive cosmetic styling, which was supposed to somehow correct failings in the architecture. The other, more serious, misunderstanding, was when "beauty, whether explicitly expressed or not, is given priority over function, construction and economy"[142] Such an approach amounted to "incontrollable formalism"[143]. Beauty, unlike function, was not exactly measurable as a science, according to Schmidt, but it was not a question of subjectivity either. Beauty was "societally specific"[144], and it was the task in socialism to create the theory and practice for architecture, in order to understand beauty:

"It is clear that socialist architecture can not [...] just build on the general human perception of beauty in its most developed form. It also has to expect to embody the historically concrete, "modern" perception of beauty of the socialist society."

Thus, beauty was, like the built environment, to be societally constructed, to be formed alongside the conception for socialist architecture. In spite of his many absolute definitions of a socialist architecture, and of correct and incorrect form, Schmidt was exceptional in proposing beauty as a social construct, rather than using it simply as a slippery concept that could justify one position or another.

11. Summary

Schmidt's anti-aestheticising, functionalist and moralistic order of socialist beauty stripped the Socialist Realist architecture of any narrative manifestations. His

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141 Schmidt, Hans, "What is Beauty in Architecture?" Über die Notwendigkeit der Architekturkritik und der Architekturtheorie. (On the necessity of architecture criticism and architecture theory), DA 1963 p 584 October, 1963, p586
142 Ibid, p586
143 Ibid, p586
144 Ibid, p586

negative definitions of what socialist beauty was *not*, ie, Western-imitant, modish, inspired by abstract art, a kind of "nierentisch aesthetic" which had caught the popular imagination in West Germany,[145] in sum, creating a false aesthetic consciousness, did not offer a specifically socialist aesthetic, but a socialist moral order. The relationship of this aesthetic order or "beauty" to socialist society was a correspondance between order, discipline, clarity and "joy," in the sense of the collective joy of the life that necessarily resulted from socialist relations. Importantly, this visual order was a presented as a complete design for the urban environment in which a solution would be arrived at through careful planning and coordination of the social, technical, economic, environmental and artistic functions. Even if the Bitterfeld Weg principle demanded that the active involvement of the public in these plans, the aim was a totality that would meet the entire needs of socialist society – there was no proposal here for any kind of dynamic growth or change within the urban environment and its use.

This new aesthetic order in the built environment, proposed by Schmidt together with Flierl and other colleagues, rested on the idea of a harmoniously composed built environment said to be drawn from "the classical ideal". The fact that this modular production was machine made rather than hand built by craftspeople was viewed only as a technological development. The socialist character of the built environment would be identified visually in the twin attributes of joyfulness and order. The theory conferences of 1959/60 served to push architecture away from the domain of "art", but resistance to this brought these questions more firmly back in to the functionally inclined discourse. Whilst Schmidt claimed that the aesthetic order, or the beauty of the built environment was a manifestation of socialism, the absence of a readable and material socialist narrative remained critical, and was, I propose, the reason why the work of art within the urban

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145 Betts, "The Nierentisch Nemesis: Organic Design as West German Pop Culture," German History 19:2 (May, 2001), pp. 185-217.

ensemble, as the potential carrier of explicit ideological content, was to become an inviolable part of urban planning.

The conservative turn of 1962/3 is evident in the way in which the artistic and technical tasks for this exponential urban construction were re-framed at the 9th Plenum of the Deutsche Bauakademie, of 1963. The author collective was led by Hans Schmidt[146]. The "Socialist Realist method" for "artistic questions" in architecture should be the criteria of "Parteilichkeit", "Volksverbundenheit" (connectedness to the people) and technical mastery.[147] *Parteilichkeit* should be evident in meeting the socialist society and people's expectations of beauty, which should lead to a socialist style of building. *Volksverbundenheit* determined socialist art – so here again architecture was framed in terms of art, and finally the technical mastery would be evident in the functional, technical and economic realisation, "just as in the mastery of the laws of beauty."[148]

The research was highly critical of actual developments in technical construction, serialisation and complex urbanism, which had failed to optimise spatial and structural arrangements for the unfolding of socialist life, and claimed that in the period since the first theory conference there had been a standstill in theory[149]. Having wrested architecture from the domain of art, Schmidt's report now claimed that "the artistic" had been neglected.[150] Criticism "from the population but also particularly from the Party"[151] in relation to "monotony, unsatisfactory serial types

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146 The colletive was under the overall direction of then director for the Institute for Urbanism and Architecture, Peter Doehler
147 p. 65
148 pp 65-66
149 These criticisms are made throughout the report.
150 64 B 2986 "The mastery of industrial building" Die Aufgaben von Städtebau und Architektur beim umfassenden Aufbau des Sozialismus, Arbeitsmaterial zum Hauptreferat für die 9. Plenartagung der Deutsche Bauakademie. P 65
151 Schmidt, Hans, in "Die Meisterung des industriellen Bauens", "The mastery of industrial building" Die Aufgaben von Städtebau und Architektur beim umfassenden Aufbau des Sozialismus, Arbeitsmaterial zum Hauptreferat für die 9. Plenartagung der Deutsche Bauakademie. Author Collective:, Professor Hans Schmidt, chief architectu of the Institute of Urbanism and Archicture, H. Mertens, deputy director of the Institute for Urbanism and Architecture, J.Näther, deputy chief architect of VEB for type projection, K. Leucht, Institute for Urbansim and Architecture, W. Weigel, Departmental head at the IUA, H. Kirsch, Departmental head at the IUA,

and colour" were common, but Schmidt insisted that "architecture is defined through its social and societal content"[152] which will determine "not just technical questions but artistic ones, and that these bring new aesthetic approaches, that determine the characteristics of socialist architecture such as "functionality, clarity, order, simplicity, variety." Specifically, artworks – even mosaics and frescos – should be separated from the building and set within the urban composition as whole; bold, large scale solutions, respective of the scale and life in the new urbanism, should be tried, thus realising the Leninist idea of monumental propoganda.[153]

The statement managed to address all the competing questions around the beauty, function, the socialist nature of architecture, the role of art and the problem of monotony in serialised building through a careful balancing act between societal and aesthetic definitions. Architecture was re-asserted as a genre of art, "or design, to use the more common expression"[154] in its societal functions which demonstrated "the character of societal life and the condition of the material and ideal society.[...] Beauty is not only functionality and completeness, [but] uses artistic means of expression such as harmony, spatial compostion, colour...[155] [However],"it is the societal content...which determines the aesthetic, artistic side of architecture.. which must become the artistic expression of building."[156] In spite of the call for bold statements of monumental propoganda as set out by Lenin, the descriptions of the visualisation of urban spaces and their social relations corresponded to a developing ideal of "complex environmental design" rather than propoganda and statues of heroes. The plans in Magdeburg, where open spaces were to be used for sculptures and fountains in metal design by Fritz Kuhn were

Published by the Deutsche Bauakademie, 1963 Die Aufgaben von Städtebau und Architektur beim umfassenden Aufbau des Sozialismus,Sonstige Beteiligte: Peter Doehler, Arbeitsmaterial zum Hauptreferat für die 9. Plenartagung der Deutschen Bauakademie Verlag: Berlin : Deutsche Bauinformation bei d. Deutschen Bauakademie 1963
152 p 41
153 pp 78-79
154 p 66
155 p 66
156 p 67

praised[157], the emphasis also made on green spaces, a "a friendly landscape stimulation"[158] and again the emphasis on colour for the "environment of a joyful life and optimism"[159] all pointed to a new emphasis on the arts in and design of public space as moving towards an experiential orientation, a joyful place in which socialist collective life could evolve. This is not to say that there was no place for directly agitational propoganda, but such works were viewed as an element to be used on an appropriate scale in an appropriate location.

The "ideological reinforcement" of artists, designers and architects in the period 1962–3 perhaps represented a braking mechanism on cultural change being driven by networks of actors rather than determined by central policy, at a time when major economic and structural changes were being introduced. The period was shadowed by Cold War political tensions[160] and jostling for power within the ZK of the SED[161]. At the 6th SED Congress in January 1963, Ulbricht introduced the NÖSPL (Principles for the New Economic System of Planning and Management of the National Economy)[162]. This was to see the prioritisation of expertise over political loyalty in senior appointments, something met with resistance by ideological appointees[163], as well as a new emphasis on education and skills, and "fitful attempts at liberalisation"[164] (resisted by Erich Honecker) in youth and cultural policy. Ulbricht set as the fundamental cultural task, "the spiritual forming of people within the socialist society and the development of a socialist national culture".[165] The socialist culture was to be embodied in the socialist way of life, socialist consciousness and socialist personality. Industrial and cultural production

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157 p 79
158 p 78
159 p 77
160 These years following the building of the Berlin Wall saw for example, the Cuba Missile Crisis in 1962, the negotiations over the new Emergency Law in Bonn, (1962) the murder of J.F. Kennedy, (1963) and the Kafka Conference in Liblice in Czecholoslovakia in 1963.
161 Kaiser, Monika, 331
162 Kaiser, Monika. Reforming. Socialism? The Changing of the Guard from Ulbricht to Honecker During the 1960s, pp 326–331, in Dictatorship as experience: towards a socio-cultural history of the GDR, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch, New York, Berghahn Books, p. 326
163 Kaiser, Monika, 330
164 Kaiser, Monika, 329
165 Kober, Karl Max, Zum Kunstprozess der Sechziger Jahre, Karl Marx Universität, Leipzig, 1984 p

were understood as advancing symbiotically.[166] In the simultaneous planning of the new, reconstructed city centres, alongside the first fully architecturally modern industrial town for chemistry workers, Halle-West, Ulbricht drove forward the key political ambitions – economic and industrial modernisation twinned with the embedding and reproduction of socialist culture. This expansion was economically, and industrially but also extremely symbolically significant (and was to represent Ulbricht's legacy) in representing the unequivocal embrace of material and architectural modernity.

The 5th Art exhibition (1962/3) criticisms and the 7th Plenum of the Building Academy (June 1963) were a shock for those artists, designers and architects directly addressed, and for several there were biographical consequences. However, in spite of the cautionary measures of "ideological reinforcement", for modernising architects, the plans for the 1960s represented one of possibility and unprecedented ambition, a new respect for specialist research, and a genuine belief in a socialist future able to compete with and even surpass the capitalist system.[167] Ulbricht described the task as to "determine the future face of Germany [...] in the truest sense, our future."

In the mid 1960s to the end of the decade this groundwork laid by Schmidt and Flierl developed in two parallel courses, both supported by the Institute for the Social Sciences at the ZK of the SED. One theoretical course (led by Fred Staufenbiel), drawing on the ideal of the "socialist way of life," was developed in

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166 The VI. Plenum set out the means in which socialism was to be fully realised at a societal level. The education system was charged with forming the "universally developed socialist personality" through in depth knowledge and abilities, socialist consciousness, socialist moral behaviour, and an optimistic attitude to life. This intertwining of industrial production and socialist thinking, personality and consciousness was to be achieved through the educational curriculum, moral education, and education within the collective. See: Detjen, Joachim, "Politische Bildung: Geschichte und Gegenwart in Deutschland", Wissentschafts Verlag, Oldenburg, 2007, Pp 202–205

167 The task, Ulbricht described as "the victory in the economic competition with Capitalism. We are not only building for our future, our buildings are going to determine the future face of socialist Germany. In the factories and cities, which we build today, the people in Communism will work and live. These are decisive questions. It is, in the truest sense, our future." (Ulbricht speaking at the economic conference in June, 1963, quoted in "Arbeitsamterial zum Hauptreferat: Die Aufgaben von Städtebau und Architektur beim umfasseden Aufbau des Sozialismus", Deutsche Bauakademie, 9. Plenartagung, Berlin, 1963. 64 B 2986

detail through the social sciences, and through the rising interest in psychology and cybernetics. Here beauty lay in "the beauty of life:" "Beauty is life... as it should be in our understanding" "...a world of the healthy and the optimistic, the ordered and disciplined, the simple and the great."[168] The other course (led primarily by art historians Ulrich Kuhirt and Annelies Wiedner) continued to insist on the primarily artistic nature of architecture, and the essential *synthesis* of art with architecture, as the constructed manifestation of socialism. Although Bruno Flierl rejected the idea of synthesis, he understood the political importance and significance of art within public space and within architecture to a much greater extent than Schmidt, who saw works of art as only potentially complementary to architectural space, such as the free-standing sculpture within a courtyard, and did not promote works of art as a means of confering ideological value. For Flierl, art was an essential sub-system within the built environment, and in the years following the height of Schmidt's influence in the early and mid 1960s, Flierl devoted his work to developing understandings of how art would function within the built environment, as "complex environmental design", an idea which was partially indebted to the Bauhaus ideals, ideals which could not be permanently supressed in the East German socialist Modernism.

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168 Schmidt refered to an article by the Soviet art critic N. Dmitrijewa which appeared in the journal "Kunst und Literatur" 5/1958. Dmitrijewa's comment on this position is that "In reality, the aesthetic abilities and needs of people strive for a full, sensible and blossoming life, for the realisation of its inexhaustible possibilities, for its creative re-forming. In contrast it seems in our eyes completely senseless to set the aesthetic ideal of life in opposition to reality."

4.

The critical re-appropriation of the Bauhaus as a foundation for Complex Environmental Design.

This chapter looks at how Bauhaus ideas were selectively appropriated to serve the development towards a design oriented understanding of architecture and the built environment in which art was only to play a secondary role. The idea of art art as a "subsystem" within the larger system of the designed environment was the basis of the development of complex environmental design. This did not relinquish art as an essential element of the built environment, as a carrier of ideal value, nor its function as a complement to serially produced architecture. This continued significance, albeit compromised, of art in the built environment, distinguishes GDR Modernism from other models, and which has been overlooked in the historicisation of architecture and urbanism in the GDR. This chapter also challenges the simplified understanding that the Bauhaus legacy was belatedly adopted in the GDR as a matter of expediency, and presents a more nuanced understanding of why and how the Bauhaus legacy was appropriated.

The Bauhaus heritage: physical, archival and institutional
The Bauhaus heritage was particularly potent in East Germany not least because of the physical, archival and institutional heritage of the school's sites in Weimar and Dessau, which offered focal points for developing Bauhaus thinking. The HAB, Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen, in Weimar (a follow-on institution to the

Bauhaus when it moved from Weimar to Dessau in 1926) was to become the most important centre for an expanded conception of urbanism and design in the mid 1960s[1], and it was scholars here, such as Karl Heinz Hüter, Fred Staufenbiel, Christian Schädlich and others that pushed forward the academic research around the Bauhaus, as well as by 1976 exploiting its institutional cudos to create a locus for progressive research.[2]

However, the architectural and institutional heritage of the Bauhaus located in East Germany was not the most important determinant in its eventual establishment within Party-sanctioned discourse. The Bauhaus, from its inception a site of conflict and difference, was able to serve cultural ideology on both sides of the Cold War divide, precisely because it was open to such diverse appropriations. Even for those in the GDR, who believed that art and architecture should serve and embody socialist society, it was characterised at one end of the spectrum as "technicism" and as "aestheticism" at the other. Whilst the ideas propagated within the patronage of CIAM or Neues Bauen were also contested, these did not achieve the same mainstream international cultural profile, and importantly, they paid very little attention to the social potential of the arts beyond architecture, which remained central to the GDR cultural model.[3]

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1 Welsch Guerra

2 The 1976 Bauhaus conference, was an initiative of Bernd Grönwald together with Christian Schädlich as part of the HAB department for urban planning . The 1986 "Bauhaus Dessau – Zentrum für Gestaltung der DDR", was also a project of Grönwald who pushed through his choice of Director, Rolf Kuhn, against the candidate proposed of the Housing Ministry. Kuhn belonged to the Weimar alumni and had also worked in close cooperation with Staufenbiel and Bernd Hunger on a sociological research approach to urban planning. Guerra, Max Welch, "Räumliche Planung und Reformpolitik an der HAB Weimar", "Spatial Planning and Reform Policy at the HAB, Weimar". The version of this paper referred to is that of 8. March, 2011, as distributed at the 7th Hermann Henselmann Conference in Weimar: "City planning history as social history: the hidden reform discourse in the urbanism debates in the GDR. Institute for European Urbanism, Bauhaus University, 08. April 2011." (p 29) (already cited?)

3 Mumford, Erich, The Ciam Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960, MIT Press, 2002. In Erich Mumford's account of the topics discussed at CIAM, the question of the arts in the public environment was only occasionally touched upon after the war. At CIAM 7 in Bergamo, 1949, Polish architect, Helena Syrkus tried to put "The struggle for Socialist Realism" on the agenda but was limited to comments. There was also a commission on visual arts, chaired by Gideon at CIAM 8, 1951 at Hoddesdon, England: "The Heart of the City", centered on the MARS group. P 222;

The Newspaper "Neues Frankfurt" the organ of the Neues Bauen movement, rarely discussed art as an environmental concern. In issue 4 of Das Neue Frankfurt, "Wie stehen Baukunst und Malerei zueinander", Amedee Ozenfant exceptionally argued for a better understanding between artists and architects. Ozenfant,

Historicisation of the reception of the Bauhaus in East Germany

The developing fortunes of Bauhaus heritage over four decades in the GDR is often presented as a dramaturgy in three acts, beginning with the early attempts during the Soviet administration to take up Bauhaus educational ideals, (Mart Stam in Dresden and Berlin-Weissensee[4], Hubert Hoffmann in Dessau,[5] Hans Hopp at Burg Giebichenstein in Halle[6], and Hermann Henselmann in Weimar[7] Horst Michel…), followed by the Bauhaus taboo after the 1950 anti-Formalism declaration[8], then followed by re-appropriation and official endorsement of the institution with the introduction of the Bauhaus seminars in Weimar in 1976,[9] and the re-opening of the

Amedee, DNF 4/1928. Following editions did include items on Avant Garde experiment in Photography (DNF 3/1929), Film (DNF 8/1930), Music (DNF 6/1926) and Theatre (DNF 10/1930), but these were not connected with architecture and public space. Reproduced in Neues Bauen, neues Gestalten : Das Neue Frankfurt / Die Neue Stadt ; eine Zeitschrift zwischen 1926 und 1933 / ausgew. u. eingel. von Heinz Hirdina. Hrsg. vom Amt für Industrielle Formgestaltung. - Dresden : Verl. der Kunst, 1984, p 312–313

4 See: Strauss, Gerhard, Mart Stam und sein früher Versuch, Traditionen des Bauhauses in der DDR schöpferisch anzunehmen, Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium vom 27. bis 29. Oktober 1976 in Weimar an der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen zum Thema: '50 Jahre Bauhaus Dessau',1976; Hain, Simone, ABC und DDR, Drei Versuche, Avant Garde mit Sozialismus in Deutschland zu Verbinden in "Kunstdokumentation SBZ,DDR 1945 - 1990 : Aufsätze, Berichte, Materialien" Eds. Günter Feist, Eckhard Gillen und Beatrice Vierneisel (Köln : DuMont 1996) for a detailed account of Stam's four year career from (1948–52) in the SZO/GDR, pp 435–440; see also Drei Kapitel Weißensee : Dokumente zur Geschichte der Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee 1946 bis 1957 / Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee.] Ed. Hiltrud Ebert. Berlin, 1996; see also Castillo, Greg, The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany, in "Bauhaus Culture, From Weimar to the Cold War." Ed Chakraborty, Kathleen James pp 177-180

5 Hubert Hoffmann, Die Wiederbelebung des Bauhauses pp 369-375 gives his own account of his endevours. in Bauhaus und Bauhäusler : Erinnerungen und Bekenntnisse / hrsg. von Eckhard Neumann. - Erw. Neuausg.. - Köln : DuMont, 1985

6 See Hubert Hoffmann, Die Wiederbelebung des Bauhauses nach 1945 p. 371,

7 Hermann Henselmann, Peter Keler, and Gustav Hassenpflug were among those who tried to revive the Bauhaus idea at the Weimar Hochschule für Baukunst und bildende Künste (today the Bauhaus University), see Thöner, p 117. They relinquished the idea on hearing of Hoffmann's plans in Dessau (Castillo, p.)

8 Walter Ulbricht The Five Year plan and the the perspective of the peoples economy. in Minutes of the IIIrd Party Congress of the SED, 20th-24th July, 1950. Band I Berlin (East) 1951, p. 67: Resolution of the Central Committee of the SED against Formalism, March 1951.

9 From 27th to 29th October, 1976, the first "Bauhaus Kolloquium" took place in Weimar. This academic conference, on the initiative of faculty members of the Weimar Hochschule für Architecture und Bauen (HAB), had the title, "The progressive ideas of the Dessau Bauhaus and their meaning for the socialist development of urbanism and architecture as well as for industrial design in the German Democratic Republic." Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium vom 27. bis 29. Oktober 1976 in Weimar an der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen zum Thema: '50 Jahre Bauhaus Dessau'

Bauhaus building in Dessau ten years later[10]. The motivations behind this late re-habilitation have been accounted for in terms of SED political maneuvering, from the desire to situate East Germany in a longer German heritage (Hoscislawski)[11], to the economic imperatives of designing goods for export and producing cheap housing (Betts)[12], and smoothed by the late 1960s "jettisoning the Bauhaus as 'mousetrap Modernism'" in the West.[13] Castillo describes the 1960s as "aesthetic revisionism [which] opened the floodgates to a new appreciation for Bauhaus design."[14]

Bauhaus scholar, Rainer Wick, frames the late (from 1976) Bauhaus reception in the GDR as "the political instrumentalisation of history"[15] and "historical justification of 'real socialism'"[16]. Whilst acknowledging the academic contributions of the 1970s and 1980s seminars,[17] the themes were "forced in to the Procrustean bed of ideologically pre-punched dogma"[18].

In the immediate post-war years, Germany's avant-garde heritage was hardly on the radar of the general population.[19] Nonetheless an idea circulated in the years of

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10 On the 60th Anniversary of the Dessau Bauhaus building, 6th December 1986, the ministerrat of the GDR reopened the Bauhaus. Minister of Construction Wolfgang Junker paid tribute to the progressive achievements of the Bauhaus and explained the future tasks that it would have as a centre for education and research.
11 Thomas Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht : Architektur und Städtebau in der DDR* (Verlag für Bauwesen: Berlin, 1991) The gradual rehabilitation of the Bauhaus predated by about a decade the revision of the German cultural heritage, which did not begin until the Honecker era in the 1970s
12 Betts, Paul, The Bauhaus in the former German Democratic Republic – between Formalism and Pragmatism in *Bauhaus, Bauhaus* / ed. by Jeannine Fiedler (Könemann: Cologne, 2000)
13 Ibid p. 48
14 Castillo, Greg, p 190: "Aesthetic revisionism opened the floodgates to a new appreciation of Bauhaus design, the sensitive topic of the school's political and social history remained off limits until the mid 1970s when the Bauhaus was certified by common consensus in the Eastern Bloc as a "socially progressive" phenomenon."
15 Wick, Rainer, Notizen zur deutsch-deutschen Bauhaus-Rezeption nach 1945, Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium vom 18. bis 21. Juni 1992 in Weimar an der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen "Architektur und Macht", Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift, Weimar, 1992, H. 5/6. Wick prefaces his paper with a promise not to indulge in the "superior attitudes" of Western commentators "who through no doing of their own had the luck not to live under the authoritarian force of a totalitarian system."
16 Wick, Rainer, Notizen zur deutsch-deutschen Bauhaus-Rezeption p.
17 notably, Karl Heinz Hüter, Kurt Junghanns, Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, Christian Schädlich, Gerhard Strauss sought to re-visit aspects of Bauhaus pedagogy, and in the case of Winkler, to re-assess the contribution of Hannes Meyer
18 Wick, Rainer, Notizen zur deutsch-deutschen Bauhaus-Rezeption p.
19 Neues Deutschland explained to its readers in 1947: "Bauhaus was the name of a group of architects which gathered around their spiritual leader Walter Gropius [...] after 1920. Their aim was absolute neutrality and

the Soviet Occupation that a new Dessau Bauhaus would be "one of the first socialist institutions of Germany."[20] The subsequent demonisation in the early 1950s of the Bauhaus and associated interwar avant-garde traditions had the character of a strategy to mobilise popular sentiment in favour of the Socialist Realist cause, which was to stand as testimony of the ruling party's prioritisation of the working person over an intellectual or artistic elite. The potential GDR Bauhaus in Dessau had been conceived by Hoffmann in 1945 as "a centre for the design of our environment."[21] Hoffmann, in his own account, "did not want [the new institution] to share the fate of the old Bauhaus, which was, with a few exceptions, to design some furniture, houses and products for snobs,"[22] and yet its potential elitist character (together with Hoffman's functions under the National Socialists) was the ostensible reason for canceling the plans.[23]

The Bauhaus as a model for the unity of the arts rather than functionalist architecture – the reception of Hannes Meyer

However, the development of the Bauhaus legacy in the GDR was not simply determined by larger political imperatives. The need to theoretically underpin the switch to serialised building and mass production of designed goods did open the way for re-assessments of socially oriented avant-garde movements of the 1920s. But this was more than "aesthetic revisionism", to accommodate architecture and design production. Particular aspects of the avant-garde thinking were highly relevant for developing practices in the GDR, and they were developed and adapted for the new conception of the socialist urban environment which was to draw in engineers, planners, architects, artists, industrial and graphic designers and

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utility in their designs, not only for buildings, but also for all the equipment of daily life. Today Gropius is the leader of the Academy of Building Planning at Harvard in the USA. His book, Rebuilding our Communities, [...] contains practical ideas for modern comprehensive planning and new ways of living." Neues Deutschland, 15. Mai 1947

20 Neues Deutschland, 6. März 1947 Jahrgang 2 / Ausgabe 55 / Seite 3

21 Bauhaus und Bauhäusler P 370, Hoffmann is speaking retrospectively, though the date is not given.

22 Ibid

23 Ibid. Hoffmann's activities as a planner for a Nazi Lithuania (See Nerdinger, Winfried. "Bauhaus Architecture in the Third Reich" in Bauhaus Culture, pp139-152, here 146) also returned to haunt him and were a further disqualification. Castillo, The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany, pp 175-6

craftspeople, as well as social scientists. The Bauhaus offered a basis for a conception of environmental design, but also for the Gropiusian ideal of a unity of the arts and technology. The continuing importance of works of art and ornament in the new socialist Modernist environments is generally overlooked by scholars, perhaps because these environments do not fit the familiar disciplinary paradigms.

The second director of the Bauhaus, the pronounced Marxist, Hannes Meyer, described by Walter Gropius in 1964 in terms of a chameleon who destroyed the institution[24], appears to some scholars to offer the political link by which the Bauhaus could be integrated in to GDR discourse. Ulrike Goeschen suggests that there was an attempt to reduce the Bauhaus to the contribution of Hannes Meyer[25] and his functionalist thinking. Rainer Wick greatly overstates the attention paid to Hannes Meyer in the GDR reception of the Bauhaus.[26] This emphasis on Meyer and functionalism, however, does not correspond to the actual unfolding of the visual design of the environment as it emerged in the 1960s, nor to the position of Meyer's legacy within the GDR.

The following discussion on the reception of Hannes Meyer in the GDR is central to the discussion of the status of art within architecture in the GDR. By looking at Meyer's thinking on art, it becomes clear why Meyer was not in fact the ideal figure to link developments in GDR architecture with the avant-garde legacy. The Bauhaus was a useful model for the "unity of the arts", rather than for a rejection of art in favour of a design approach to the built environment.

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24 "I did not recognise the mask over his face…[he] purposely concealed his views and intentions", wrote Gropius of Meyer in a letter to Thomas Maldonaldo, Director at Ulm, reproduced in the as the publisher's Arthur Nigglis's Epiologue to Claus Schnaidt's monograph on Meyer. The letter is "the last known letter to Macdonaldo" but is undated here. Éva Forgács describes the correspondance between the Maldonaldo and Gropius about Meyer in 1964. "The Bauhaus Idea and Bauhaus Politics" Éva Forgács pp 176–177
25 Goeschen, p 174
26 Wick, Rainer, Notizen zur deutsch-deutschen….1992, p. 5 Wick claims that there were numerous works published on Meyer as an idealised Bauhaus figure. In fact, Meyer was only spradically represented in GDR Bauhaus scholarship, largely through the efforts of Klaus Jürgen Winkler, in the 1980s.

Meyer had been pilloried personally by Ulbricht,[27] with the assistance of Hermann Henselman, a conscript to the anti Bauhaus cause in the early 1950s.[28] Henselmann's 1951 attack on the Bauhaus in *Neues Deutschland* was specifically directed to Meyer's Bauhaus period, as "a systematic declaration of war against architecture as art, indeed of art itself."[29] (Like Meyer, Hans Schmidt too came into personal conflict with Henselmann over their respective understandings and architectural achievements, Schmidt characterising Henselmann as a mediocre diletant and Henselmann Schmidt an "architectural policeman"[30]).

The critical assessments of the Bauhaus in the 1960s were cautious in their assessment of the Meyer legacy. Under Flierl's editorship of *Deutsche Architektur* – possibly influenced by Hans Schmidt – there was an attempt in July 1964 to re-balance the negative reception in the early GDR of Meyer, who had already passed away through illness a decade earlier. Drawing attention to Meyer's focus on production for ordinary people, Kurt Junghanns[31] was nonetheless critical of Meyer's scientific functionalist approach, and of the "exaggerations" and "puritanical traits"[32] for which he was known. Junghanns' assessment was followed by the reproduction of Meyer's 1940 assessment of the Bauhaus under his tenure, published in Mexico.[33] Meyer's account emphasised the turn towards real

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27 Walter Ulbricht singled out Meyer's architecture for the Trade Union Training School in Bernau (Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes, to become the FDGB (Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund) completed in 1930 in Bernau and expanded in 1951) for criticism and claimed that the Bauhaus "claims [note use of the present tense] that ideas cannot be given architectural form and that, in architecture, form, function, and construction take precedence; it went so far that Hannes Meyer, one of the last directors of the Bauhaus, claimed that we can no longer speak of building as an art, but only in general as construction."Walter Ulbricht, Speech to the Volkskammer, October 31, 1951, cited in Schätzke, Zwischen Bauhaus und Stalinallee, p. 145.
28 For a detailed account of the motivations for and architectural materialisations of Hermann Henselmann's turn away and back towards a Modernist architecture, see Flierl, Bruno, Hermann Henselmann, Bauen mit Bildern und Worten. In *Kunstdokumentation* pp 386–412. "through all the transformations of forms and languages of architecture, Henselmann was consistent in his belief of architecture as the art of building." P 388.
29 Henselmann, Hermann, *Der reaktionäre Charakter des Konstruktivismus, The reactionary character of Constructivism*, Neues Deutschland, 4th December 1951 6 / 281 / p 3
30 Hain, Simone ABC-SBZ, p. 442
31 Junghanns, Kurt, "Hannes Meyer und das Bauhaus" (Hannes Meyer and the Bauhaus), DA 7/1964 pp 441–42
32 Ibid, p 42
33 Meyer, Hannes, "Erfahrung in der polytechnische Erziehung" (Experience in Polytechnical Education) published in DA 7/1964, pp 443–46, is a re-publication of Hannes Meyer's essay originally published in "Edificacion", German version, Mexico, Juli-September, 1940, Issue 34.

production and systemitisation in all areas of workshop production, which in some respects correlated with developments in East German design and architecture in the 1960s: the research into serialised forms, the rejection of "meaningless" abstraction, and the relevance of the range of forms of art and design for a larger societal-environmental purpose.

The August 1964 issue was the last issue of *Deutsche Architektur* edited by Bruno Flierl, before he was replaced by Gerhard Krenz. In interview with me, Flierl suggested he was dropped due to his references to the Bauhaus.[34]. Elsewhere, he gives the discussions on the frustrations of young architects[35] in the controversial March 1963 issue as the reason for his dismissal[36]. Although this March 1963 issue was featured prominently in the criticisms made by the authorities at the June 1963 "7th Plenum" on ideological questions, at which Flierl and many other senior architects were forced to give self criticisms, it seems unlikely to have been the direct trigger for his losing the editorship as this did not occur until over a year after the 7th Plenum. At the same time, it is hard to know whether the Hannes Meyer piece, prefaced by the Junghanns' commentary, was significant in the decision to remove Flierl, given that a Bauhaus re-assessment from the Soviet Union had already been published in the GDR in 1963[37]. These events occurred a year after the notorious 5th German Art Exhibition where the form design was criticised as insufficiently socialist realist, and in the same year as the March 1964

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34 "For two and a half years I was senior editor of the magazine Deutsche Architecture. The comrades saw me as a critical person and thought that was good – it was again a moment where we needed to advance and we needed constructive people. So when I did that to my own taste, it was immediately too much again. I wanted to reintroduce the Bauhaus and rebuild the building – all the things I wanted! I wrote it too, and it was not good. So then they threw me out of the magazine." Author's Interview with Flierl, 23.01.20 10

35 "Junge Architekten diskutieren mit dem Minister für Bauwesen" (Young architects discuss with the Building Minister") DA/3/1963. The occasion for the discussion, which took place at the controversial Muggelsee Tower, was the appointment of the new (at 34, also young) building minister Wolfgang Junker. An animosity between Flierl and Junker developed, and it was the latter who was responsible for the charge against Flierl of "counter revolutionary activity" in 1983. The original version of the "Junge Architekten" discussion was replaced by a re-written version in later editions.

36 Bruno Flierl in interview: "Die gebaute Umwelt des Lebens der Menschen: Bruno Flierl zu Architektur und Stadtplanung," Berliner Gespräch, Architektur und Stadtplanung, Edition Luisenstadt, Berlin, 1999, p. 46

37 Pazitnov, L., 'Das schöpferische Erbe des Bauhauses, 1919 – 1933' trans. by Ina Friedenthal, (Berlin : Institut für angewandte Kunst, 1963)

Artists' Congress, a "scandal congress" in which Bernhard Heisig, Fritz Cremer and Hermann Raum pushed for the liberation of art practice from dogmatic interpretations of Socialist Realism.[38] Thus it seems likely that the circumstances of Flierl's removal were part of the more general reassertion of ideological orthodoxy within the internal political manouvering in the SED. However, in these circumstances, it is conceivable that the printing up of the writing of Hannes Meyer – together with a close-cropped angled photograph of him, directly quoting constructivist photography – in particular was considered a direct provocation.

Once again, the Bauhaus was out in the cold, but returned to *Deutsche Architektur* in January 1966 in the wake of the controversy aroused at the Ulm School of Design by its director Tomas Maldonado, who also attempted to re-formulate Meyer's place in Bauhaus history. This controversy was taken up by Karl-Heinz Hüter in a piece entitled "Bauhaus contra Bauhaus" which assessed the first monograph on Meyer, by Claude Schnaidt, published in Switzerland.[39] Hüter offered a cautious re-assessment of Meyer, whilst criticising his scientific orientation and exclusion of art:

> "Meyer believed for a long time in an almost automatic form creation. Form would develop with exact technical precision based on scientifically determined prerequisites." [40]

This attitude, common in the 1920s young architects, was "corrected" already in 1929 in the Soviet avant garde, which moved to a more whole idea of the spatial conception, claimed Hüter. Hüter defended Meyer's handling of the challenges he faced in the political situation in Germany in 1929, and pointed to the difficulty in

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38 For an outline of the three positions, see Goeschen, Ulrike, Von Sozialistische Realismus, pp 144–145
[39] Hannes Meyer : Bauten, Projekte und Schriften / Claude Schnaidt.: A. Niggli, Teufen, Switzerland,1965. As a postscript to Schnaidt's monograph, the publishers included a denunciatory letter about Meyer's "veiled intentions" written by Walter Gropius to Tomas Maldonado in 196... Hüter explains this addition as a kind of political insurance against any pro-Marxist inferences that could be understood from Schnaidt's text. Sigfried Begenau in his review in Form und Zweck, 1/1966, pp 47-48, comes to the same conclusion.
40 Hüter, Karl-Heinz, "Bauhaus contra Bauhaus, Bemerkung zu einem Buch über Hannes Meyer", DA 1/1966. p 55

following the internationally reputed Gropius. But in regard to his architectural thinking, Hüter proposed that the "emotional side was lacking" in Meyer's "functionalist, collectivist, constructivist" understanding of building in the 1920s, and contributed to his dismissal[41] This contrasted, according to Hüter, with Meyer's later programme from 1938[42] where he – undoubtedly drawing from his encounters with Socialist Realism – described architects' task as to "master in totality, in the biological, artistic and historical ambitions...the socio economic, technical constructive and psychological physiological functions of societal life processes."

The following excursion into Meyer's thinking and biography is intended to help illuminate the reasons for the caution around his legacy in the 1960s, and its limited application in the development of a socialist modern urban design.

Hannes Meyer, his thinking and biography

Hans Schmidt and Hannes Meyer, both native Basler Swiss, from bourgeois and working class beginnings respectively, had parallel professional trajectories – but whilst Schmidt was able to find a professional niche within GDR socialism, Meyer died in poverty and obscurity, before he had the chance to publish his own Bauhaus history which he had been preparing. In the interwar years both architects shared a belief in radically functionalist, scientifically driven, architecture and planning, based on utility and economy, drawn from uncompromising socialist convictions. Meyer and Schmidt's professional paths crossed at several points in Europe and in the Soviet Union, but their relationship appears to have remained formal.

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41 Hüter, Bauhaus contra Bauhaus, 1/1966, p. 56
42 Hüter does not give a reference

Meyer was invited to guest edit the 2/1926 issue[43] of "ABC: Contributions to Building"[44]. The issue, in spite of the general anti-art polemic of most of the issues, was devoted exclusively to the exploration of constructivist art – and the new typography propagated by Jan Tschichold – Meyer later complained that he had been hoodwinked into writing about art by the "super functionalists" Schmidt et al[45]. Twenty-five years later, Schmidt told it differently, that Meyer "was interested in the use of new artistic means such as theatre, graphics and photography for propogating new social ideas", but that Meyer represented "an extreme, so to speak 'automatic' functionalism." [46]

For Meyer, following his short, intensive tenure as director of the Bauhaus,[47] as for many other socially committed functionalist architects[48], the Soviet Union in its period of exponential industrial and urban expansion appeared to be fertile terrain for radical functionalist architecture. Meyer formed his own "Bauhaus brigade"[49] parallel to Ernst May's "Frankfurt Brigade", which Schmidt joined in 1932[50]. In the Soviet Union, Meyer was chief architect for major construction projects, including *Standardgorprojekt* and *Giprogor*. Several new towns were designed under his

43 "Abstract Art", ABC, No. 2, Series 2, Basel, 1926

44 Hannes Meyer, Karel Teige in Prague, and Lazlo Moholy-Nagy in Dessau all made editorial contributions to ABC. Hain, Simone, "ABC und DDR", p. 430

45 In 1947, Meyer bitterly complained that he had been betrayed by the editors of ABC who had "signed [Meyer] as editor because the anti-art super functionalists Stam, Schmidt etc officially wanted to distance themselves [from art]" Letter from Hannes Meyer to Paul Artaria, mexico, 3.3.1947. From the estate of Hannes Meyer, Sammlung Deutsches Architektur Museum, Frankfurt am Main, quoted by Möller, Werner, in "Useless Beauty", in Commentary to ABC, Lars Miller, Baden, 1993, p.37.

46 Schmidt, Hans, "Der Architekt Hannes Meyer", Dezennium 2, 20 Jahre Verlag der Künste Dresden, Dresden Verl. der Kunst 1972, P 263. In his account here, a review of Meyer's biography, Schmidt only refers to the special issue of Die Neue Welt, a special issue of the periodical "Das Werk", No. 7/1926, Zurich, a cross section of European Modernism, rather than the special issue of ABC on constructivist art, published also in 1926.

47 The extent to which Meyer was naïve and through his lack of "neutrality" at the school the author of his, and ultimately the Bauhaus' demise, or a victim of the extreme political circumstances, is a point still disputed by Bauhaus historians. See Forgacs, Eva, *The Bauhaus Idea and Bauhaus Politics*, pp 159–181, in particular 173–4; Droste, Magdalene "Enterbung des Nachfolgers", Der Konflikt zwischen Hannes Meyer und Walter Gropius, p 68–88. In *Bauhaus Streit, 1919–2009, Kontroversen und Kontrahenten.*

48 Before his departure, Meyer told the Soviet *Sovremennaja architektura*, 1930 Nr 5, "I am going to the USSR to work where are real proletarian culture is being forged, where Socialism is growing, where the society exists for which we have struggled here in Capitalism." Cit. Pazitnov, p 31–32.

49 Known as the "Red Front". Some of his seven students worked with Hans Schmidt. Huber, p. 46 Schmidt and Meyer do not appear to have been in close contact in the Soviet Union. (see Lena Meyer Berger letters)

50 (together with Dutch Mart Stam and Hungarian Fred Forbat they were the only non-Germans in the Frankfurt Brigade) Huber, Benedikt, "Die Stadt des Neuen Bauens" p 46

direction in the Urals and Siberia[51]. Like Ernst May and Kurt Meyer, Hannes Meyer took part in the competition for the urban plan of Greater Moscow. In 1936, he left the Soviet Union, he claimed for "professional, family and "human" reasons, but also said that as an outsider he was not able to contribute to a national tradition.[52] In 1939, Meyer was invited to work on social architecture in Mexico where he remained until 1949. For Meyer, there was no opportunity to take part in the building up of the GDR after the war, in spite of his keen interest in developments there, and apparent preparedness to accept the methods of Socialist Realism.[53] Meyer's ultimate rehabilitation in the GDR was due to the unrelenting efforts of the scholar Klaus Jürgen Winkler[54], but historical monographs could not be realised until the period of relative publishing freedom of the late 1980s.[55]

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51 Schmidt, Hans, *Der Architekt Hannes Meyer*,, projects, and writings); Winkler, Klaus-Jürgen "Der Architekt Hannes Meyer: Anschauungen und Werk", (Verlag für Bauwesen: Weimar, 1989)

52 See note 67

53 Meyer had extensive correspondance in which he followed events in the GDR with Heinrich Starck and Karola Bloch in the early GDR years. He took a great interest in the idea of the appropriation of the national heritage in architecture, *as a method,* seeing a possibility that it could "reflect the emerging socialist society, its humanist character, its culture and above all its new class content. He also accepted the rejection of the Bauhaus "as a means to create a great national art of building in Germany." Klaus-Jürgen Winkler Der Architekt Hannes Meyer : Anschauungen und Werk, Berlin : Verl. für Bauwesen, 1989, p. 220

54 The first publication devoted to Hannes Meyer in the GDR, "Hannes Meyer, Bauen und Gesellschaft: Schriften, Breife und Projekte" Fundus, Verlag der Kunst, Dresden, 1980 was published by Meyer's daughter, Lena Meyer-Bergner, edited by Klaus Jürgen Winkler, with assistance from Berndt Grönwald and Christian Schädlich – all to become influential as left-functionalists. In 1989 Winkler published a much fuller monograph: Der Architekt Hannes Meyer : Anschauungen und Werk, Berlin : Verlag für Bauwesen, 1989. This coincided with a major retrospective in West Berlin: Hannes Meyer : 1889 - 1954 ; Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer, Werner Kleinerüschkamp, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, West

55 Hirdina, Hans, *Neues Bauen, Neues Gestalten* : Das Neue Frankfurt / Die Neue Stadt ; eine Zeitschrift zwischen 1926 und 1933. Amt für Industrielle Formgestaltung. Dresden : Verl. der Kunst, 1984

The reception of Hannes Meyer after the Bauhaus

Why was the self-pronounced Marxist, Hannes Meyer, the explicit target of the early anti-Bauhaus polemics, whether in the German Building Academy, in *Neues Deutschland*, or in ZK meetings,[56] whilst Schmidt was able to steer his way to a senior position within the GDR by 1956? Aside from Schmidt's fortune in enjoying a career which extended into the late 1960s, it appears that Meyer's reputation had already been sealed by the mark he left on the Bauhaus.

Meyer had attempted to retrospectively promote his work at the Bauhaus in the Soviet Union in July 1931[57] but the course towards Socialist Realism was already set: Meyer's exhibition received a luke warm reception from the critic Mordinov in the Soviet architectural journal, *Sowjetskaja Architektura* who saw the Bauhaus as trapped in a "dead end" between "bourgeois art" and "industrial technology"[58] . "Walter Gropius' school aestheticises technology, Hannes Meyer's discovers technology and turns against all aestheticisation."[59] In the same year as the Bauhaus exhibition, Meyer wrote his "13 Theses on Marxist Architecture" which did not either meet with the agreement of his Soviet colleagues. The first thesis was: "Architecture is no longer an art form. Architecture has become a science."[60]

This caricature of the Bauhaus directors – Gropius the aestheticising formalist, Meyer the anti-art functionalist, was thus already establishing itself in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s where German communists were training, including

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56 Hain, Simone "ABC-SBZ", p. 432
57 "Bauhaus Dessau during Hannes Meyer's Directorship (1928–30), exhibition at the State Museum of new Western Art in Moscow, organised through the All Unions Society for cultural links with abroad, WOKS. Winkler, Klaus-Jürgen, Der Architekt Hannes Meyer, p. 142.
58 A. Mordvivnov, Bauhaus k vystavke v Moskve, Sovetstkaa Architektura, 1931 1/2, cited in Winkler, p, 143
59 Ibid
60 Schmidt, Hans, "Der Architekt Hannes Meyer", p. 264

Ulbricht himself.[61] Meyer's attempts to intellectually accommodate the "necessity" of Socialist Realism did nothing to soften his radical functionalist reputation.

The writing of the Bauhaus history in the West also reinforced this image of Meyer, as "believer in doctrinaire materialism [who] pushed out art"[62], who set his "socialist ideal of practical action in the service of the ordinary person against the principle of the highest possible quality,"[63] or even completely ommited Meyer from the Bauhaus story, as in the 1938 MoMA exhibition in New York, organised by Gropius and Herbert Beyer.[64] Whilst Meyer had indisputably downgraded the status of art within the Bauhaus, it was his indelibly mechanical statements in the Bauhaus magazine "bauen"[65] which re-inforced the elimination of a subjectivity or positioning in art – such as "all art is order",[66] "Everything in the world is a product of the formula, function multiplied by economy. Therefore all these things are not art works. All life is function and therefore unartistic", and "architecture is no longer an art of building... architecture is a science of building" which were to accompany his reputation long after the Bauhaus period. Meyer acknowledged a role for art in architecture only in the avant-garde conception of "proletarian art such as mass cinema, mass demonstration, mass theater, mass sport." [67]

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61 Epstein, Catherine, The Last Revolutionaries: German Communists and Their Century, Harvard, 2003. p85. Ulbricht was active within the Comintern and Radio Moscow in the Soviet Union, preparing for a socialist Germany from 1937 to 1945.
62 Ludwig Grote, curator of the first West German Bauhaus exhibition: "Die Maler am Bauhaus : [Ausstellung, Haus der Kunst München, Mai - Juni 1950]
Ludwig Grote, 1893-1974 ; Leonie von Wilckens, Haus der Kunst München, Prestel ; 1950, p. 10
63 Hans M. Wingler. Das Bauhaus : 1919 –1933 ; Weimar, Dessau, Berlin (Berlin, Rasch, 1962)
64 Mies van der Rohe was invited to represent the final period (1930-1933) under his directorship but was unable or unwilling to do so. Original catalogue published in English (omiting Bauhausler who were then living in Nazi Germany to spare them any repurcussions) by MoMA in 1938. Bauhaus, 1919 – 1928 : [Exhibition opened 8th December 1938 im Rockefeller Center, New York, Herbert Bayer, Walter and Ise Gropius, German re-issue Stuttgart : Hatje, 1955
65 In particular from number 2/3, 1928, edited by Meyer and his associate and ally Ernst Kallai.
66 bauhaus und gesellschaft, published in "bauhaus", Zeitschrift für Gestaltung, Dessau, 3 (1929), I. p 2, re-printed in Berger-Meyer, Lena, Hannes Meyer, Bauen und Gesellschaft: Schriften, Breife und Projekte" Fundus, Verlag der Kunst, Dresden, p 49
67 The first of his "Theses of Marxist architecture". (ref date?) Thesis 9 states that proletarian art such as mass cinema, mass demonstration, mass theater, mass sport...lenin portrait, stalin bust may be realised within architecture, but that the building itself is not an artwork. (Bauen und Gesellschaft, p. 98)

Meyer later complexified his claim for a scientifically rational socialist architecture, but nonetheless the role of art remained ambivalent even in his later post-Bauhaus writings. In an interview with a Czech Journal, *Leva Fronta* in 1935, Meyer was specifically asked about the role of art in architecture, to which he replied, there is no role for art in the urban plan Capitalist city "driven only by speculation" nor in the home of the worker "which represents the means of capitalist exploitation". With no common ideology, there could be no common art. There could be a role for art within socialist architecture. [68] Klaus-Jürgen Winkler at the Weimar School of Architecture and Building (HAB) worked to qualify Meyer's position on art in the urban environment[69]. In the Soviet Union in 1935, Meyer had modified his position, saying that "for the mass of the working people in building socialism it is natural to want to create a great proletarian art, in which murals and sculptures are unified with the art of building, to more significantly artistically form the life of socialist people,"[70] a position, Winkler, writing in the 1980s, proposed "which comes very close to our own understanding of the essence of socialist architecture today."[71]

Meyer's legacy was, whatever his later modifications, understood as the synthesis architecture with life in a way which dispensed with art; Gropius' founding ideal of the synthesis of art and technology, and the practice of mastering craft work, for ultimate ideal of *Gesamtkunstwerk* was to prove more relevant to the competing visions for a socialist art and architecture in the GDR. The idea of a socially functional unity of art, architecture and society, presented itself as the intellectual reference for environmental design in the GDR.

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68 Meyer, Hannes, The Architect in the Class Struggle, replies to the Prague Architect Group, "Left Front" (Leva Fronta), published in Schweizer Städtebauer bei den Sowjets, Hans Schmidt, Hannes Meyer, Verlag Lars Müller, Basel 1990 [around 1935]

69 It was not until 1989 that Winkler's research was to culminate in an extensive monograph of Meyer, "Der Architekt Hannes Meyer, Anschauungen und Werk", VEB Verlag für Bauwesen, Berlin, 1989. It was the first monograph since Claus Schnaidt's less extensive 1965 work but also coincided with a West Berlin re-assessment of Meyer in the form of an exhibition and book, *Hannes Meyer : 1889 – 1954 ; Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer*

Hannes Meyer, 1889-1954 ; Werner Kleinerüschkamp, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, West Berlin : Ernst ; 1989

70 extract from Deutsche Zentralzeitung (DZZ), Moscow, 10, 1035, from 15.01.1935

In Lena Meyer-Berger, "Hannes Meyer, Bauen und Gesellschaft", note 117, p. 404

71 In Lena Meyer Bergner, "Hannes Meyer, Bauen und Gesellschaft" p. 396, postscript by Winkler

<u>The re-establishment of the Bauhaus name and the critical appropriation of its ideals</u>

The integration of Bauhaus by name, rather than implicitly through ideas and practice, into East German historical discourse was a halting process. Karl Heinz Hüter's 2009 account[72] of the ideological walls encountered by scholars, such as Hüter himself, who tried over three decades to conduct and publish research on the Bauhaus, gives the fullest eye witness account to date of the frustrations of repeated obstacles to research, even after 1976 when the Bauhaus was officially absorbed into the cultural discourse of the SED.[73] It became apparent to Hüter that his "Bauhaus Seminars" first founded in June 1961, followed in December 1962, and April 1963, between the Weimar Hochschule für Bauen und Architektur and the Deutsche Bauakademie still faced the "blinkered judgements of the early 1950s"[74]

Nonetheless, again through the innovations of the Institute for Applied Arts, the first full socialist assessment of the Bauhaus[75] came in 1963. A translation from an article first published in the Soviet Union,[76] Pazitnov's "The creative heritage of the Bauhaus" paved the way for three GDR published volumes in the 1960s. Pazitnov[77] followed the established description of the "fall" of art and culture in the 19th century as a result of industrialisation, imperialism and the imprint of bourgeois taste, and presented the Bauhaus as the response to this, as the realisation of "an

72 Dem Bauhaus Bahn Brechen: von den Schwerigkeiten zu erben im Zeiten des Kalten Krieges, pp72– 107, in Höhne, Günther, Die geteilte Form : deutsch-deutsche Designaffären 1949 - 1989 / Günter Höhne (Hrsg.). - Köln : Fackelträger, 2009 (2009)
73 Hüter, who was one of the first to research the "progressive" movements of the 1920s both in his activities at the Weimar Hochschule, and later within the Insitute for Urbanism and Architecture at the German Building Academy finally left the Academy in1978, frustrated at the non publication of his manuscript on Neues Bauen, and refusal of the authorities to grant a visa for research in the West. See Hüter, Dem Bauhaus Bahn Brechen: 78–79
74 Hüter, "Dem Bauhaus Bahn Brechen" p 95-96
75 An attempt to publish a piece on the Bauhaus in 1961 in Deutsche Architecture was pulled at the last minute (Thanks to Torsten Lange who uncovered this information at the Getty Research Institute, LA, Bruno Flierl archive).
76 Das schöpferische Erbe des Bauhauses, 1919 - 1933
L. Pazitnov ; Ina Friedenthal, Berlin : Institut für angewandte Kunst ; 1963 ; 35 S. : Ill
77 Pazitnov p 11

organic synthesis between art and technology, between artistic and material production." This ideal of the basis of craft skills, on which a new unity of art and technology could be built, "to take every artistic production back to its inner unity and to realise a new unity of all creative and artistic disciplines in a new art of building"[78] in which, in the words of Gropius, the ultimate aim was the eradication of the "divisions between monumental and decorative art"[79] was clearly much closer to the still current ideals in the GDR than the radically functionalist architecture which eradicated any role for art, envisaged by Hannes Meyer and many proponents of Neues Bauen. Furthermore, in Pazitnov's account, the Bauhaus heavily emphasised the struggle against a "pure art", where art was separated from working people ...The Bauhaus strove to find a way in which art could be connected to the everyday world of human work and to put it at the centre of production.[80] The art of the Bauhaus, in this account, also followed the principles of Socialist Realism (and more precisely the Bitterfelder Weg) which allied the artist with the worker-producer. The Bauhaus education also prepared students "to design the world of modern technology and its products according to the laws of beauty."[81]

Thus, the ideals of the Bauhaus in Pazitnov's presentation came very close to those which might solve the dilemmas of finding beauty in the imperatives of mass industrial production. But the Bauhaus did not just address these formal and technical questions: there was also an understanding that "fundamentally different social relations" were necessary, although these were "principally irreconcilable" with the "bourgeoise society" in which the Bauhaus operated.[82]

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78 p 17
79 Gropius, Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhauses, Weimar, Bauhaus, 1919–1929, cit Pazitnov, p 17
80 Pazitnov P 18
81 Ibid p 19
82 Ibid 19

Anti-functionalist voices in the West.

Patzinov's proposition that functionalism had emerged as simply an aesthetic language, coincided with concurrent controversy of the sought after "rational" basis for design and architecture in the West, both as a stylistic and a social endeavour. Influential texts such as Mitscherlich's "The Inhospitability of Our Cities"[83] and Christopher Alexander's "A City is Not a Tree"[84] fundamentally challenged the principles of the functionalist city. The CIAM ideal in which modern architecture would provide solutions for society had begun to turn in on itself – architecture was blamed for causing society's ills. Western post-war housing schemes as "hotbeds of boredom, sickness and criminality"[85] were easy prey to a media sensationalism on the failures of modern *architecture*. In 1965, Theodor W. Adorno and Ernst Bloch, as guests at the Deutsche Werkbund conference, both attacked what they saw as German Functionalism in the Reconstruction (*Wiederaufbau*) of the Federal Republic:[86] Bloch's address criticising the way in which "ornament was implicated in the class dynamic of the *Gründerzeit*", and his claim that "asceticism...had become a style in itself, one that had lost its connections to its political and moral origins...a functional fig leaf for social relations that had hardly changed,"[87] made very similar claims to those enfolded in Patzinov's text, which were representative of the stock criticism made also in the GDR; that the "progressive" architecture propagated in the 1920s could not mask class relations. Paris based Marxist, Anatole Kopp claimed too, that Western Modernism had been reduced to a stylistic idiom, trapped by its own class

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83 Mitscherlich, Alexander, original title :
Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte : Anstiftung zum Unfrieden, Edition Suhrkamp
Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp, First published 1966
Die Unwirtschaftlichkeit unsere Städte. Mitscherlich's text was widely read and understood as a denunciation of the mass housing schemes. Recently this has been challenged, by ,,,
84 Alexander, Christopher, A city is not a Tree, first published in Architectural Forum in 1965 (Vol 122, No 1, April 1965, pp 58-62 (Part I), and Vol 122, No 2, May 1965, pp 58-62 (Part II). Alexander argued
85 Speigel cover feature "zukunft Verbaut", "the future misbuilt"on post war architecture: "Es bröckelt "its crumbling" 03.02.1969. It describes West German post war housing as an infections incubator for social, psychic and physical illness.. the collapse of regulating social mechanisms, the betrayal of traditional urban structures, eschewing any esthetically acceptable living environment." 3.02.1969, pp 38–52
86Schwartz, Frederic J. Schwartz, The Disappearing Bauhaus: architecture and its Public in the Early Federal Republic, in Salentnik, Jeffrey and Robert Schuldenfrei, Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism, Routledge, Oxford, 2009. P 61
87Schwartz, paraphrase of Bloch, The Disappearing Bauhaus p. 63

relations.[88] In the United States too, Reyner Banham was exposing the emptiness of the "international style" as "a pretense to scientific rationalism that is more concerned with form and appearance than with technology;"[89] sociologist, Alfred Weber, attacked functionalist architecture as "applied hygiene."[90] These criticisms may have caricatured functionalist architecture[91], but they signaled the gradual abandonment of any social or utopian idealism in relation to what had started as "functionalist" and morphed in to a more generally termed "Modernist" architecture in the West.

In the GDR, the selective appropriation of the Bauhaus heritage was actually less of a taking up of the Bauhaus as a Western cast off, but shared many of the emerging criticisms made of Western post-War architecture.

GDR rehabilitation of the Bauhaus in the 1960s

Subsequent publications in the GDR on the Bauhaus in the 1960s, Lothar Lang's, "Bauhaus: Idea and Reality" (1965)[92], Diether Schmidt's "Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin"[93] (1966), and Karl-Heinz Hüter's politically delayed "The Bauhaus in Weimar" (1966/76)[94], followed the model set up in Pazitnov's assessment in which

88 Anatole Kopp, "Town and Revolution" (Michigan: Braiziller, 1970), 2–5; originally published as Ville et Revolution (Paris: Anthropos, 1967).
89 Michael, Vincent, "Reyner Banham: Signs and Designs in the Time without Style", Design Issues, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring, 2002), pp. 65-77, The MIT Press
90 Weber's speech to the 2nd Darmstadt Colloquia, largely organised by Werkbund members, described by Schwartz, p 65. Date not given.
91 Schwartz's claim, "'Bauhaus Functionalism' was a myth – unnuanced and largely incorrect, but the myth as a historical fact had a profound reality." p 67–68 . Schwartz claims that functionalism was a discursive position. Hans Schmidt defended the actual intention of functionalist architecture in the the 1970s.. ref, saying that functionalism was never about style, even back at the very first CIAM meetings.
92 Lothar Lang, Das Bauhaus, 1919–1933 (Berlin, 1965);
93 Diether Schmidt, Bauhaus: Weimar, 1919 bis 1925, Dessau, 1925 bis 1932, Berlin 1932 bis 1933 (Dresden, Verlag der Kunst,1966). One of Schmidts "Gutachter" (a guarantor necessary for publication) was Wolfgang Hütt, who like Schmidt himself, ran into problems with the authorities. Already in 1959, in Wir und die Kunst, Hütt had written positively of the Bauhaus as "pioneering".
94 Hüter, Karl-Heinz, Das Bauhaus in Weimar, Akademie-Verlag, 1976. Hüter wrote the book in 1966 and in 1968 (significantly as the year of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia one in which censorship increased in the GDR) sent the manuscript to Walter Gropius in the United States for his comments, a move that was to cost a ten year delay in its publication. Hüter's manuscript was intercepted by the authorities, and the originally planned publisher, the German Building Academy, under the directorship of Ule Lammert, took fright as a result of "ideological uncertainities". It was not until 1976 in the more liberal cultural era under Honecker that

the Bauhaus was seen as an essential, but ultimately doomed, intellectual endeavour in order to break the mould of artistic and material production which operated in the interests of and physically represented the upper classes and bourgeoise, in order to achieve both beautiful and sustainable industrial production. The relevance of Bauhaus endeavours to East German ambitions, was emphasised through the publicly owned production of architecture and industrial design over painting or theatre.

Gropius' key legacy was the standardisation of building, according to Diether Schmidt, but much more important was the logical continuation of this "through to societal order". Whilst acknowledging the role of "the artist", Schmidt was making a claim for the the design of society, beyond its material constructions.

It was in this ordering, not only the built environment but in fact of society itself, which could only be achieved under conditions of socialism, that the circulation of ideas which became diversely interpreted as "the Bauhaus ideal", found particular relevance in the GDR. Lothar Lang's work, a more comprehensive study of Bauhaus aesthetics, teaching, specialisms and politics than Diether Schmidt's, tackled the "ideologically loaded arguments on Modern art movements"[95] head on. Lang made the point, (as had others) that the relationship of beauty and function was not a discovery of Bauhaus masters, but could be traced back to ancient times, and was evident in the writing of Goethe. Turning to the anti-functionalist and anti-constructivist arguments of Herbert Letsch[96] and others, Lang accused Letsch ("certainly a philosopher and not an art historian[97]") of generalisations about and ignorance of the Bauhaus. In Letsch's arguments, the Bauhaus meant the

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the Akademie Verlag published the book. Hüter gives his own full account in Höhne, Günther, "Dem Bauhaus Bahn Brechen" in Die Geteilte Form, Deutsch-deutsche Design Affäre, 1949–89, Fackelträger, 2009, pp 101–104
[95] Lang, Die Idee... p 60
[96] Lang drew on Letsch's "konstruktivistische Aesthetik und das Problem der künstlerische Wiederspiegelung der Wirklichkeit"
97 p 61

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dissolution of art into material life,[98] the artist was "replaced by the form designer,[99] and thus the pedagogical role of the artist "to communicate to people about society" was lost. But, argued Lang, the Bauhaus was not "primarily concerned with that art which communicates insights:"[100]

"The Bauhaus wanted to completely form all areas of life, with art and technology as means of design! [...] The Bauhaus, was concerned with overcoming the cleft between fine and applied arts; the broad areas of functionally manufactured products, in which technical *and* artistic laws and media can be applied, should, according to the Bauhaus masters, be just as "beautiful", so aesthetically complete, as that of the "actual", the "pure" art."

Lang rejected the Letschian arguments on the basis that the Bauhaus was not about creating art, at least not art in its mimetic, pedagogical role as conceived in Socialist Realism. Divorcing art from industrial and architectural production was, however, the very issue that concerned Letsch. Lang also made the connection to the contemporaneous concerns in the GDR:

"In our own efforts towards good form design and quality, we also seek a harmonious unity of all technical-functional and aesthetic elements. In practice we evaluate the positive results of the functionalism of the 1920s."[101]

The third Bauhaus volume, published in the mid 1960s by director of the Weimar Museum[102], Walter Scheidig, (from 1940–1967) focused solely on the craft work of the Weimar workshops. The authorisation of Scheidig's volume apparently stood in the way of the extensive archival research planned by Karl Heinz Hüter.[103] "Bauhaus

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98 Lang, p 62 quoting Letsch, Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie 1108 (1961)
99 Ibid
100 Ibid p 62
101 p 63
102 which held material from the Weimar Bauhaus after its dissolution
103 Hüter, "Dem Bauhaus Bahn brechen" p 96

Weimar: Werkstattarbeiten"[104] has been dismissed as an anomaly,[105] but it in fact in its emphasis on the Bauhaus crafts, it makes up the third part of the jigsaw puzzle of the development of the visual arts in public space, as "complex environmental design".

The first element, emphasised particularly by Diether Schmidt, was the imperative of socialist public ownership of land and production and serial construction processes[106] (and hence "failure" of the Bauhaus), which were the basis for a collective model of society. The second, reserved a place for art, although it subsumed it within a larger functional, design process. The third element, referred to the emphasis accorded to the role of craft skills, set out in the original Bauhaus 1919 manifesto, and later in the emphasis on craft as the route to high quality technological production, as set out in the 1926 *Grundsätze*;[107] in spite of the gradual separation of the applied arts and industrial design in the GDR, applied arts – in the sense of material and technique oriented unique works– were to find a new place within complex environmental design.

The Bauhaus "Gesamtkunstwerk" as a model for complex environmental design.
The idea of the unity of applied arts, fine arts and architecture, within an overall societal unity – only possible in conditions of socialism with collective ownership

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104 Scheidig's book was also translated and published in London in 1967, "Crafts of the Weimar Bauhaus, 1919-1924: an early experiment in industrial design", Studio Vista, London, 1967 . In 1959 Annegret Janda had also published a volume on Bauhaus ceramics at the Weimar state art Museum, " "Bauhauskeramik in den Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Weimar", Kunstmuseen der DDR, 1959.
105 eg Goeschen, and others
106 Schmidt, Diether, " Thus the moment is ripe [for] a design of the whole environment of people from the simplest object through urban planning and the land planning, right through to a societal order which guarantees every person a respectable life." P 55
107 Hüter reproduced all the major statements of the Bauhaus masters in his appendix to "Bauhaus. From the 1919 manifesto: The unity of all artistic creation, [...] sculpture, painting, craft and handwork– to a new art of building... "This even if a distant aim of the Bauhaus is the unified art work – the great building– in which there is no boundary between monumental and decorative art." (Gropius) and
the statement for Dessau: "The craft of the future will be realised in a new unity of work in which it is the carrier of modelling for industrial production. The models made in the Bauhaus will be produced in external factories with which the workshops will stay in connection." (Gropius) (Bauhaus Dessau– Grundsätze der Bauhaus Produktion (druckblatt des Bauhauses Dessau, published in March 1925)

and the assumed societal cohesion – and its connection to strands of Bauhaus thinking, was made the most explicit in Karl Heinz Hüter's 1967 study., within the body of his text, Hüter made the most striking claim for the correlation between the Gropiusian "Gesamtkunstwerk" ideal, and the concept of "complex environmental design". Hüter traced the romantic and revolutionary idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, from the early 19th century attachment to the medieval, as a reaction to isolation of art as capitalist production relations developed,[108] which was "a romantic opposition movement"[109], but which was reversed into an ideal for the future in Semper and Wagner, and consolidated by Jugendstil and the Werkbund. Drawing on William Morris' "Art and Socialism", Hüter made a direct connection with the necessity of the socialist basis for the Gesamtkunstwerk. "With the growing influence of the international socialist movement the Gesamtkunstwerk was increasingly interpreted in the sense of complex environmental design." Moving on to the modern movement, Hüter identified the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk as the basis for all the progressive art movements, such as the Working Council for Art, the November Group and in the Bauhaus, but which "remained a utopian vision"[110] because the "the insoluble interchange of specialist problems with the fate of people demanded a social mandate for the unified planning of whole residential areas, sections of towns and territories,"[111] (– in other words, the conditions of state socialism). Moholy's conception of the Gesamtkunstwerk, as "not the total art of work flowing alongside life, but the self constructing synthesis of all moments of life into which all extensive total work of art (life) which rises above every isolation in which every individual achievement is created from a biological need and is merged into a universal necessity,"[112] also correlated to the complex environmental design idea, developing in the GDR

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108 Ibid, p 81
109 Ibid p 81
110 Ibid
111 Ibid
112 (bauhausbücher 8, 1927), quoted in Hüter, ibid

Thus again, the assessment of Bauhaus and other progressive ideas, was clearly a vehicle for advancing contemporaneous ideas in the GDR. The repeated insistence on the necessity of the conditions of socialism in the texts of Patzitnov, Diether Schmidt and Hüter, were intended to form a basis for the development of the arts and public space in the East German conditions, poised as they were between a radical standardisation of the architectural production, with all that that promised in terms of new forms of collective relationships, but over which at the same time hovered the spectre of "monotony", and the sense that the visual arts in public space still had an essential role to play, offering narratives and material qualities which would enrich the experience of collective life.

The Bauhaus writings published in the mid 1960s were critically assessed within the more discursive forum of *Form und Zweck*. Sigfried Begenau praised Lang for making clear the contemporaneous relevance of the Bauhaus, "for the first time the human environment is understood as a totality, from the whole responsibility of people for society as the object of design, an environment that is industrially produced."[113] In 1967, however, Begenau, made a damning condemnation of Diether Schmidt's and Scheidig's Bauhaus monographs in *Form und Zweck*, expressing frustration that the authors did not make the connections to the Bauhaus idea of "to design the environment for people as a whole" to the contemporaneous demands of practice in the GDR[114] It was in this idea of the design of the environment for people as a whole, and the unity of art forms, that the Bauhaus legacy most closely corresponded to the emerging idea of complex environmental design, rather than in any aesthetic correspondences.

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[113] Begenau, Siefgried, Notiert und glossiert "Idee und Wirklichkeit", Form und Zweck, 1/1966 p 43,
114 Begenau, Siegfried, "Aktuelle Reliquie oder Zeitgemässes zum Bauhaus?" ("The Bauhaus, Relic or Relevant Today"), Form und Zweck, 1 /1967, pp 63–64.

5.

Halle Neustadt: "A chance to change the world."

The disagreements outlined in the last section left the status of architecture as art undermined, but at the same time assured the place of works of art within architecture. The manufactured architectural object, the housing blocks built to a series of templates, could be assigned narrative, expression, and decorative enhancement through the addition of murals and applied arts. This solution met economic, social and ideological requirements for the economic provision of housing in particular, and the provision of visual interest in urban space which at the same time carried ideological narratives.

The developing concept of a Complex Environmental Design was to go much further than this idea of the "synthesis" of art and architecture, to conceive the entire planned urban space as a social and artistic entitity, which I have argued, drew on a critical re-appropriation of Bauhaus ideas. This chapter demonstrates how the foundations for this understanding of Complex Environmental Design developed in practice over the course of the construction of Halle Neustadt, where a combination of political and social interests, and conflicts played out over the first decade of its construction from 1964 to 1974. The initial attention paid to the logistical functionality of the town gave way to a re-assertion of the visual arts in the latter part of the decade. This assertion of the arts correlated with the new course from the Politbüro which emphasised "intellectual-spiritual development"

and which signaled a degree of freedom to artists to deliver this. Urban planning itself gradually became re-conceived as a professional design oriented discipline. Within the developments over the course of the decade, we can see how the understanding of public space as a representational space, in which architecture should be understood as art, was left behind with a move towards the creation of the built environment understood as a functional-aesthetic design task – in which the visual arts, murals, sculptures, alongside form design and graphic design, were "subsystems" (Flierl) – which embodied and enhanced socialist life. The first part of the chapter examines the ideals set for the urban planning and the second looks at the way in which the visual, artistic production within public space was reasserted as essential to the production of the socialist built environment.

Halle Neustadt, the last industrial town to be built in the GDR, was a territory of negotiation in the latter part of the 1960s for the future of urban space in the GDR. It was a testing ground for emergent ideas for a socialist and modern "built environment for socialist life" (Hans Schmidt and Bruno Flierl, 1959), a "human environment understood as a totality" (Begenau on the critical appropriation of the Bauhaus, 1966), into which *parteilich* and readable visual arts were fully integrated, both to reflect and enrich the socialist way of life – the "complex design of the environment of the socialist society."[1]

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1 Halle Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt., Schlesier, Karlheinz und Autorenkollektiv (1972): Halle-Neustadt. Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt, hrsg. vom Büro für Städtebau und Architektur des Bezirkes Halle, Verlag für Bauwesen, Berlin. p 11

1. Concept and planning of Halle Neustadt

Construction on the "chemistry workers' town", Halle Neustadt[2], (until 1967 known
as "Halle West")[3] began in 1964, with the first four "living complexes"
(Wohnkomplexen or WK) completed over the subsequent decade.[4] The definition
of the living complex in the report on Halle Neustadt was "a spatially designed
functional urban unit in which a large part of life processes of its residents take
place and in which it is possible to satisfy many material and intellectual needs of
people."[5]

Walter Ulbricht's 1959 declaration that, through chemistry, life would become
"more interesting and more beautiful"[6] required a drive to the education and
housing of those chemistry workers who were to serve the planned expansion of
the chemical industries[7]. The steel, brown coal, and oil industries which produced

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2 Halle Neustadt was, after Eisenhüttenstadt, Hoyerswerda and Schwedt, the fourth and final town built
specifically to service industry and the first planned as entirely constructed using typed, serially produced
buildings (pre-fabricated "Platten" rather than "Grossblockbauwise"). The first phases of housing were all built
using the new "P2" type. (see Bach, Joachim: "Notes on the planning history of Halle Neustadt",
"Stadterneuerung als Prozess demokratischer und kultureller Weiterentwicklung. Perspektiven für Halle-
Neustadt", (Urban Regeneration as a Process of Democratic and Cultural Re-development. Perspectives for
Halle Neustadt) Magistrat der Stadt Halle/Projektgesellschaft mbH, Dessau, 1993, p. 14-40.
3 Halle Neustadt was initially called Halle West and changed to Halle Neustadt in 1967 when it was given its
own administrative status. Bach, Joachim. P. 38
4 WK I (1964–68), WK II (1967–70) WK III (1969–72) and WK IV (1966-69)* Topfstedt, "Städtebau in die DDR,
1955–1971" (Urban Planning in the GDR, 1955–1971), Seemann, Leipzig, 1988. Pp 41–46. Topstedt describes in
detail the changing plans over the decade in relation particularly to the question of required population density
and the resultant changing architectural forms, which went from low density linear planning in WKI to much
higher density, and became more varied in the block formations in WK III and WK IV, in an attempt to
circumvent monotony. * Pretsch gives the dates 1971–74 for WK IV. p 41
5 Halle Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt p 85
[6] Chemie gibt Brot, Wohlstand, Schönheit : Chemistry conference of the Central Committee of the SED and the
State Planning Commission in tge VEB Leuna Werk. "Walter Ulbricht" 3rd– 4th November 1958 (ZK d. SED, Abt.
Agitation u. Propaganda u. Abt. Bergbau, Kohle, Energie u. Chemie]. [Berlin] : ZK d. SED, Abt. Agitation u.
Propaganda, 1958. p.9
7 Halle Neustadt was to serve the VEB Chemistry works in Buna Schkopau, The VEB Walter Ulbricht at Leuna,
The VEB Mineralölwerk at Lützkendorf, the electro chemical kombinat at Bitterfeld, VEB Gölzaplast and others.
The chemical industry had a hundred old history in the region, and was the site of the pre war "chemistry
triangle" which had been dominated by the BASF corporation, around Halle, Merseburg and Bitterfeld. "Halle-
Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt", Office for Urbanism and Architecture of the Council of the
region of Halle, Author Collective under the leadership of Karlheinz Schlesier, Joachim Bach, Rainer Deutloff,
Satish C. Khlurana, Kurt Ludley, Manfred Müller, Richard Paulick, Harald Roscher, Hans Hartmut Schauer. Verlag
für Bauwesen Berlin, 1972; Direktive für die städtebauliche Gestaltung und den Aufbau von Halle-West. - Berlin
: Deutsche Bauinformation bei der Deutschen Bauakademie, 1963 (1963). - 8 S.. - (Arbeitsmaterial für die 9.
Plenartagung) p 3

Eisenhüttenstadt, Hoyerswerda and Schwedt held none of the cudos of the new world of material possibilities to be explored in the chemical industries. Chemistry was the new frontier in the terrestrial cold war, a fact that in itself lent the construction of Halle Neustadt a special status.

As future residents were invited – alongside Walter Ulbricht – to view and give their opinions on the preparatory plans[8] in 1962[9], the then first secretary of the SED in Halle, Bernard Koenen,[10] set the newly modern rhetoric in motion: the broad ideological foundations, were beauty, technology, economy and proximity to the people. [11]

In September 1963[12], the ambition for Halle Neustadt was magnified: no longer was it conceived as a pendant to the main city of Halle: the newly subtitled "Socialist City of the Chemistry Worker"[13] was to come under the aegis of the central goverment and Party. The Bezirk Halle also had a new First Secretary, the forward looking Horst Sindermann[14] who, replacing Koenen[15], established a reputation as an

8 The preparatory plans were made in 1961 by the Planning Office for Area, Town and Village Planning of the Bezirk Halle under the leadership of E. Proske and G. Gröber. Bach, Joachim, "Notate zur Planungsgeschichte Halle-Neustadts" ("Notes on the Planning History of Halle Neustadt"), in " Schmidt, Holger/Carsten Hagenau/Birgit Schindhelm (1993): Stadterneuerung als demokratischer und kultureller Prozess, in: Magistrat der Stadt Halle/Projektgesellschaft Dessau (Hg.). Perspektiven für Halle-Neustadt, Dessau, p 16

9 Koenen, Bernard. "The Planning of Halle West, and Socialist Democracy in Urbanism. An Interview with Bernard Koenen, in DA, 3/1962, p 133; From the Directive for the urban design and the construction of Halle West. DA, 9/1964, P 556

10 Koenen, Bernhard, 17.2.1889 (Hamburg) – 30.4.1964 (Berlin)

11 Political ideological conception for the design of the Chemistry Workers Town, DA/1962

12 Research for a new town began already in 1959 after the chemistry conference. Following the 1963 Politbüro resolution, the basic plans were accepted through the president of the ministerial council of the GDR on 13th August 1964. The urban design was worked out by the council of the region of Halle as the societal contract-giver and the German Building Acadmy which put out the competition for the designs. On the basis of the results the general building plan began in May 1964. Halle Neustadt, Plan und Bau... P 29 The re-conceived basic conception was confirmed on 13 August 1964.
Halle Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt, p. 15; DA 4/67 p 198 Erfahrung bei der Anwendung des neuen ökonomischen systems bei der Planung und Leitung beim Aufbau der Chemiearbeiterstadt , Gossing, Hans

13 Bach, Joachim, "Notate zur Planungsgeschichte Halle-Neustadts" ("Notes on the Planning History of Halle Neustadt"), in " Schmidt, Holger/Carsten Hagenau/Birgit Schindhelm (1993): Stadterneuerung als demokratischer und kultureller Prozess, in: Magistrat der Stadt Halle/Projektgesellschaft Dessau (Hg.). Perspektiven für Halle-Neustadt, Dessau, p 16

14 Bernard Koenen was replaced by Horst Sindermann in 1963, and it was Sindermann who oversaw the development of the project and who was also influential in promoting a liberal cultural programme in Halle, and earned himself a reputation as an enabler – in Halle there was a slogan "Sindermann macht's möglich!"

enabler with a liberal approach to the arts. The new conception for Halle Neustadt, conceived of by the Council of the Bezirk Halle together with the German Building Academy, was to project for 70 000 new residents within a decade, for a "unity of the societal demands, urban-architectural design and rational building processes".[16] Once this more ambitious plan was approved, it was the former Bauhaus associate, Richard Paulick,[17] who was charged with giving shape to this first completely socialist Modernist town in the GDR[18], a model city which would optimise the relationships between housing, work, children, education, food provision, recreation and transportation. Residential areas were separated within commuting distance from the sites of industrial production, and divided in to spaciously arranged "living complexes" in which the daily operations could be met within walking distance, with a central complex to serve cultural, institutional and commercial functions. Each "chemistry worker family" was to be assigned a modest, comfortable, and affordable dwelling unit. The easily accessible communal facilities for childcare, eating and recreation justified the minimal living spaces of the new "Type P2.12" homes[19].

For Paulick and his colleagues, the significance of the town lay in the drive to modernity necessary for the advance of socialism. This meant more than the

(Testomony of Flierl in interview, ref..; Spiegel, obituary, 17/1990, p. 272). Sitte describes the Sindermann period in Halle as a "time of blossoming" where Sindermann fostered "a creative climate" particularly for theatre and literature. (Sitte, Willi, Farben und Folgen, p 103–6). Sindermann went on to take a ministerial position.

15 Koenen died in 1964.

16 Halle Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt, p 29 Plan and Bau

17 Paulick had not actually been able to study architecture at the Bauhaus since it was not offered at the time, but he worked in Walter Gropius' architectural office and belonged to the Bauhaus circle. Paulick spent the years 1933–49 in Shanghai. For an account of Paulick's relationship "between the two great poles and influences" of Hans Poelzig and Walter Gropius, see Thöner, Wolfgang, "Zwischen Tradition und Moderne" in Bauhaus Tradition und der DDR Moderne..." pp 23–45. See also: Kögel, Eduard "Zwei Poelzigschüler in der Emigration: Rudolf Hamburger und Richard Paulick zwischen Shanghai und Ost-Berlin (1930–1955). Dissertation, Fakultät Architektur der Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 2006

18 Paulick was appointed on 15th November 1963, and by December the competition for urban plans was launched.He held the post of chief architect until 1968 when Karl Heinz Schlesier took on the role.s

19 The new P2.12 designed in Berlin and eventually adapted as the "P1 Halle" and "P2 Halle" was the dominant type (Plan und Bau... p. 36, 98) but the range from early Q6 to the WBS 70 much later were eventually built. Pretzch, P 38

In 1959, 11 qm per person was the guideline for the minimum dwelling in the GDR. Note 12, p 118. The average appartment size in Halle Neustadt was 55 qm. Pretzch, Wera, Halle Neustadt, eine sozialistische Planstadt ,P 38.

modernisation of industry and housing – it meant the modernisation of people. Just as Hans Schmidt had observed in the Soviet in 1931 the gigantic task of modernising the Soviet Union as the process of "educating people to sensible work and proper life, and tearing peasants from their miserable villages and leading them to modern collective work",[20] Paulick claimed Halle Neustadt would "get people out of their villages, out of isolation, get educated and participating in political life.[21] With most factory workers spread around in the small villages of the region, the times spent commuting "prevent[ed] the development of socialist life styles and the necessary professional education [and] make participation in societal cultural life impossible."[22]

The significance of the chemistry industry was also planned as part of Halle Neustadt's physical materialisation, with the extensive application of chemical building materials, in particular plastics, including for facade elements. To underline the significance of modern materials in the planned "House of Chemistry"[23], the high level of chemical production was to be evident in the construction itself. One of the first buildings, the "Plasteblock" (plastics block) was symbolically constructed with a high degree of plastic components.[24]

For First Secretary, Sindermann, Halle Neustadt was to be the foundation stone for "all the branches of the revolution of the extensive technological revolution in the

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20 Schmidt, Hans, letter published in "Basler Vorwarts" the newsletter of the Communist Party in Switzerland, reproduced in "Schweizer Staedterbauer bei den Sowjets", (Lars Müller, Baden, 1990) Originally published undated by Genossenschafts-Buchdruckerei Basel, around 1935.
21 Paulick on notes on the competition for HNS
22 Paulick, Richard, From the Directive for the urban design and the construction of Halle West. DA, 9/1964, P 552
23 See Stier, Dietrich: "Ideenwettbewerb Chemiehochhaus Halle-West". DA/7/1965 p. 413. Plans for the House of Chemistry which was intended to serve as an iconic tower were eventually dropped for budgetary reasons. Block 26, a ten storey experimental building with 160 living units was intended to research the possibilities of plastics in industrialised building. The exterior slabs elements, windows, flooring, doors, staircases, baths, basins and roofing were all partially composed of plastic materials. P 234_235. The decorative exterior structural façade was also composed of plastic. The "plastics house" is now in a poor state of repair and unlike many around it which have been renovated, is due for demolition.
DA 4/67

people's economy", and was to "determine with what tempo productivity could be multiply increased through the production of plastics."[25]

Whilst Halle Neustadt in its conception offered the most complete vision for the unfolding of healthy, industrious, and beautiful socialist life, as a model of egalitarian urban planning, it was clearly not unprecedented: the era was one of boom internationally in all forms of Modernist planning – Halle Neustadt was built at the same time as Brasilia, for example. Even the technical endeavour of modularised architecture, in which all buildings could be put together through various combinations of prefabricated elements, had become, by the mid-1960s standard practice in the GDR: the later phases of Hoyerswerda and Schwedt in the 1950s and early 1960s had already employed these methods. One of Halle Neustadt's architects, Karlheinz Schlesier, suggested in 2006 that Halle Neustadt realised many of the aims of Le Corbusier's 1933 Charter of Athens, "if in GDR colours".[26] The 95th point, (and the Charter was considered to be "apolitical"), that "private interests should be subordinated to the interests of the community,"[27] was the very foundation of the new socialist town.

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[25] Sindermann's words on ceremonially laying the foudation stone on 15 July 1964, Halle-Neustadt, Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt... p 11

26 Schlesier, Karlheinz: Zwischen Freundschaft und Kollegialität, in "Bauhaus-Tradition und DDR-Moderne : Der Architekt Richard Paulick" [Katalog zur Ausstellung "Richard Paulick - Leben und Werk" in Dessau (Mai 2006), Ed. Wolfgang Thöner, München Dt. Kunstverlag, 2006.
The functional city proposed within the Charter of Athens did not propose a causal relationship between the population and economic production– which was the case in Halle Neustadt, like Eisenhüttenstadt, Hoyerswerda, and Schwedt–, but rather a dynamic one: "Neither latent wealth requiring exploitation nor individual energy has any absolute character. All is in movement and, in the long run, economics is never anything but a monetary value." (Generalities, Observations, The City and its Regions, Section 4, Le Corbusier, The Athens Charter, translated from the French by Anthony Eardly, (Grossmann, New York, 1973). The economic participation of both men and women and state responsibility for child care was integral to the urban and architectural plans of Halle Neustadt. Another key difference is that Halle Neustadt was planned around walking and public transport as the primary means of getting around rather than separate flows of automobiles and pedestrians.
27 "Article 95: The private interest will be subordinated to the collective interest. [...] Individual rights have nothing to do with vulgar private interests. Such interests, which heap advantages upon a minority while relegating the rest of the social mass to a mediocre existence, require strict limitations. In every instance, private interests must be subordinated to the collective interest, so that each individual will have access to the fundamental joys, the well-being of the home, and the beauty of the city." Le Corbusier, The Athens Charter, translated from the French by Anthony Eardly, (Grossmann, New York, 1973)

But, in spite the many precedents from the first half of the twentieth century which shared similarities in intent and material construction, a mythologisation of Halle Neustadt as a ground-breaking endeavour accompanied its physical growth. Halle Neustadt as at the frontier of socialist urbanism and culture – technologically advanced, worker-oriented, children-oriented, publically owned and collectively experienced – was embedded in rituals film[28], journalism[29], paintings[30] and literature[31] produced in the GDR[32], but this vision went beyond the borders of East Germany. The massive construction site attracted hundreds of international visitors who wanted to witness, in the words of one Canadian journalist, "the civilisation of a new world"[33]. Sigbert Fliegel, another of Halle Neustadt's architects and author of the artistic plan for the fourth residential complex described to me the spirit of the time:

"People felt called to work on building Halle Neustadt. We had foreigners who came especially to Germany, for example, from Columbia, from Bulgaria, from Poland, from Cambodia and Czechoslovakia, who came to us via word of mouth. They were people who wanted to change the world. And Halle Neustadt was a chance to do that."[34]

28 "DDR-Magazin 1971/14", an 11-minute Defa documentary emphasised the centrality of children and art in Halle Neustadt.Children are shown being taught an appreciation of art in an exhibition as well as of public art and should become artistically active themselves.
DEFA-Studio für Dokumentarfilme, 1971, Director Hans Müller.
29 In particular, Jan Koplowitz's reportages which accompanied the construction of Halle Neustadt, "Die Taktstrasse." These enthusiastic documentary reportages by the highly committed Koplowitz offer a fascinating piece of "history of the everyday" on the building of Halle Neustadt.
30 As well as the building of Halle Neustadt, the factories were an important subject in socialist realist painting, Willi Sittes "Leuna 21", tryptich "Brigade Heinicke, Buna", 1964 (BK 11/64)
31 To name a few: Hans-Jürgen Steinmann ("Zwei Schritte vor dem Glück"), Jan Koplowitz ("die taktstraße" and "Die Sumpfhühner"), Werner Bräunig ("Städte machen Leute"), Rainer Kirsch ("Heinrich Schlaghands Höllenfahrt"), Alfred Wellm ("Morisco"). See Bernhardt, Rüdiger "Das Sternbild des Krans:Halle-Neustadt in der Literatur, Zum 40. Jahrestag der Gründung der Neubaustadt", unsere zeit - Zeitung der DKP, 30. Juli 2004
32 The defining narratives of the culture of socialism of the period were brought together in a celebratory publication in 1972. Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt...
33 Reported by Koplowitz, Jan, in his continious reportage of the construction of Halle Neustadt. "One of the friendly visitors was a Candian trade union journalist, Swankey. The large, sinewy grey haired man, clearly of proletarian origins, edited the publication of the Canadian Trade Union, "The Fisherman"...At the end he said, and we should end on this, 'You are building the civilisation of a new world.'". die takstrasse, Nr 10, 20 March, 1967."
34 Sigbert Fliegel in interview with the author, at the Weimar home of the architect on August 1st, 2012.

Joachim Bach, deputy chief architect has also testified to that "optimism ruled" and that Halle Neustadt's planners and architects shared a "pioneer spirit" A team of no more than thirty, they worked round the clock in the first available 2-room flats, two typewriters and large sheets of paper their only equipment. Apart from Paulick, all were inexperienced in planning at this scale – they followed no specific model, certain only that the planning was socialist.[35]

For the planners and architects of Halle Neustadt, the development represented an uncompromised realisation of all precedents for a modern, planned city. Unlike the 1920s Neues Bauen movement, or the post-1934 CIAM, dominated by "apolitical" voices[36], it was not compromised by social democracy, which left Capitalist relations of production in tact. It was not compromised by conflicting architectural and urban approaches, which had curtailed the ambitions of functionalist planners in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s. Halle Neustadt was constructed in an era of political stability and expanding industrial output in the GDR, and thus free of the unrest that had tarnished the image of worker's unity in the building of Stalinallee in 1953. Specifically, it set out to "learn from the mistakes of Hoyerswerda"[37] seen as a false start in the GDR's adventure with industrialised building. Halle Neustadt, was, in the cybernetic modishness of the day, to be almost a self regulating[38] entity of urban production and reproduction[39], in the words of Horst Sindermann, "a city

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35 The GDR architects, he said, did not draw on any particular urban Leitbilder – sthey had their own particular planning criteria, and at the same time they had little information on particular international developments, Bach, Joachim, p. 20-22
36 The agenda for the legendary fourth CIAM conference on the Functional City, initially to be held in Moscow in 1932 and ultimately held on the cruise ship sailing from Marseille to Athens in 1933, proved to be the turning point away from attempts to ally the Modernist project with socialist ideals (promoted by Hannes Meyer, Ernst May, Arthur Korn, Nusim Nesis and Peer Bücking, and others) Arguing that CIAM should make no political declarations – the official position adopted in 1934 – were Le Corbusier, Cor van Eesteren, Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van Rohe, Eric Mendelsohn, Alvar Aalto, Szymon Syrkus and others. See: Mumford, Eric (2009) 'CIAM and the Communist Bloc, 1928-59',The Journal of Architecture,14:2,237 — 254, pp 243–5, as well as for a fuller account by the same author:
37 Ref Topfstedt and others
38 "Durch den Generalbebauungsplan soll die Entwicklung der Stadt so geleitet werden, daß sie sich zwangsläufig mit pulsierendem Leben erfüllt." Bach, Joachim (1966): Der Generalbebauungsplan der Chemiearbeiterstadt Halle-West. Ein Blick in die Zukunft, in: Die Taktstraße, 28./29.11.1966, S. 6-7.
39 Pasternak makes this observation, p. 53

in which to live there means happiness for everyone, in which the past would disappear."[40]

There are clear parallels between this mid 1960s spirit of idealism in the GDR and the utopian optimism of the interwar avant garde. This sense of vision in the harnessing of science and technology for social ideals seems belated when set against the disillusion with Modernist planning ideals beginning to take hold in the West at the same time. The GDR was in the mid-1960s was already a comparitively advanced industrialised state, and had emerged from the immediate post war privations. The echo between the optimism of the interwar avant garde and that which surrounded the era of Halle Neustadt in the mid 1960s was born of the promise of industrial progress, but, more importantly in the GDR, of the intellectual shift which accompanied it. Ulbricht's drive towards a scientific foundation for the advance of socialism in the era eclipsed the quasi spiritualism of the post war faith in anti-fascism. Expertise was to be prioritised over political loyalty in the occupation of the professions.[41] This had important consequences for artists and intellectuals, and fostered the aspiration that the socially progressive and rationally founded ideals of the interwar avant garde could be not only re-visited but fully realised.

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40 "Such conditions for life must be created in which people have the time and leisure for their cultural education, for a meaningfully used free time, a town where living there means happiness for everyone." Sindermann's words on ceremonially laying the foudation stone on 15 July 1964, Halle-Neustadt, "Plan und Bau der Chemiearbeiterstadt..." p 11

41 The period from the industrialisation of architectural production from 1955 up until the house building programme of 1973 were significantly marked by the new status given to scientific experts thinking over that of party hardliners. See: Kaiser, Monika pp 326–331, in Dictatorship as experience: towards a socio-cultural history of the GDR, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch, New York, Berghahn Books, 1999. (330). Ulbricht's emphasis on scientific expertise fostered opposition from those who held senior positions for reasons of political record who feared they "would be overtaken by the dynamic forces unleashed in the economy and society." (331) These groupings around Honecker eventually were able to completely undermine not only Ulbricht's reform programme but also to oust the leader himself. (332–3)

The position of art and its role in Halle Neustadt in the early phase.

The 1963 urban design competition for Halle Neustadt made no mention of artworks. In fact the only references to the appearance of the town in the competition assessment was the importance of avoiding visual monotony.[42] In order to counter this ever present anxiety around monotony, refered to by Paulick as a "childhood illness,"[43] the conception for the visual design of Halle Neustadt in Paulick's 1964 report emphasised the design elements of public space:

"We have to try out new methods for the colour of the buildings and for the use of artistic media. We must start to make plans for colour composition, the positioning of sculptures and murals, for fountains, pergolen, seating terraces, as well as lighting." [44]

But what of the actual works of art which were, at least on paper, still an essential element of the urban environment? By law 1-2% of the building budget had to be spent on realistic art – not colouring, seating or lighting. Whilst Paulick refered to plans to "position" murals and sculptures, what form would these works take, as they sought to meet the exigencies of Socialist Realism and serially produced architecture? As we have seen, the Socialist Realist model had been expanded accommodate the production needs of design and architecture, however, there had been no justification to afford fine artists the same latitude in the early 1960s.

In order to understand the art political context of the art programme for Halle Neustadt it is necessary to review the developments in the early 1960s the understanding of Socialist Realism.

42 See Paulick, competition From the Directive for the urban design and the construction of Halle West.
43 From the Directive for the urban design and the construction of Halle West. P 556 9/1964,   p4
44 From the Directive for the urban design and the construction of Halle West. P 556 9/1964,   p4

<u>The development of Socialist Realism in fine art in the early 1960s.</u>

The 1960s saw a significant, if fractious, move away from the strict formal and thematic demands made of painting and sculpture in the 1950s. These changes were pushed for by artists, in particular Willi Sitte, Fritz Cremer and Hermann Raum, who wanted greater creative freedom within the Socialist Realist paradigm, and defended this development on the basis of the raised educational level of the working person, now in a position to understand more demanding pictoral languages. This argument provided the basis by which the conservative guardians of cultural policy was able gradually to tolerate a "breadth and variety" in Socialist Realism. "Breadth and variety" ("Weite und Vielfalt") was famously to become the mantra for Socialist Realism announced by Erich Honecker at the VIII party congress 1971, but its origins can be found as early as 1964. The route to this greater tolerance was nonetheless a tortuous one and arrived at by political innuendo and the will to formal exploration of some of the leading artists.

During the early 1960s, fine artists, and writers who strayed from the orthodox readability and narrative content of Socialist Realism were also repeatedly subject to criticism and "brought into line". In 1961 in Leipzig, artists had been warned against "spontaneous conceptional processes" and reminded of the centrality of Realism.[45] The works of young artists at an exhibition at the German Academy of Arts from 1961-62 was criticised by art critics Eberhard Bartke in "Junge Kunst"[46], and Peter Feist in "Das Blatt" for "an uncritical application of late bourgeois means" (meaning broadly, Modernist form),[47] Even the exhibition catalogue included "self criticism" by the Artists' Union for selecting artists that were "not representative of societal ambitions".[48] There followed, throughout 1962, an ongoing debate within newspapers and journals on the principles of Realism, with artists criticised for

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45 Ideological Conception on the 6th Art Exhibition of the VBKD, 1961, Leipzig, in Kolber, p. 10
46 Kolber, p.10
47 Kolber, p. 11
48 The Verband der Bildende Kunstler self criticised for selecting artists that were not representative of the societal ambitions. Catalogue "Junge Künstler, Malerei, Graphic, Plastik" Deutsche Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Kolber, p 10

tendencies drawn from "world art" and lack of connectedness (*Verbundenheit*) with the people.[49]

These ideological broadsides directed at artists experimenting with Modernist formal languages came to a head after the 1962/3 Vth German Art exhibition, the same event which had aroused the controversy over Modernist form design. The prominent and controversial Halle painter, Willi Sitte, submitted the painting "Unsere Jugend" for the Vth German Art Exhibition– a work with integrated collage elements which Sitte considered opened new possibilities for Socialist Realism, but which which the jury found to be *spätbürgerlich dekandent*. Furious, Sitte and others criticised the juried selections as kitsch and Sitte said he would no longer exhibit in the GDR.[50] The matter escalated, Koenen in Neues Deutschland, until Sitte and his colleague and friend Willi Neubert were summoned to account for themselves.

Sitte and Neubert, and other artists and writers[51] were subjected to a comrade's grilling by the Halle regional SED leader, Bernard Koenen and other senior Party members[52] – at the same time the artists presented their defence. The artists were held to account for endangering socialism at a time when "in the DDR we have unbelievable difficulties which have never before existed in the world, Just remember what happened in Cuba. We might not be sitting here now."[53] In their defence the artists emphasised their Party loyalty but claimed that there was a need for a discussion on art. Neubert claimed "art cannot only be only for

49 In Sonntag, Junge Welt, Bildende Kunst, Junge Kunst, Weltbühne, Das Blatt and other papers and publications. Kolber, p. 12
50 Schirmer, Gisela, "Willi Sitte, Folge und Farben", Faber und Faber, Leipzig, 2003, p 100–1
51Unfortunately the list of artists and writers present was listed in a separate document, missing in the archive. Poets criticised included Hans Lorbeer, Rainer and Sarah Kirsch (friends of Sitte). Sarah Kirsch who defected to the West in 1974 following Biermans expatriation. Archive Sachsen Anhalt, Merseburg, IV/A-2/3/1 BL der SED Protokolle 1963, Stenographishces Protokoll der Aussprache der Genossen des Sekretäriats der BL mit Künstlern der Berzike Halle am 9 1 1963.
52 Archive Sachsen Anhalt, Merseburg, IV/A-2/3/1 BL der SED Protokolle 1963, Stenographishces Protokoll der Aussprache der Genossen des Sekretäriats der BL mit Künstlern der Berzike Halle am 9 1 1963. The other Party members were Gen. Machacek, Gen. Lang, Gen. Hetschke, Gen. Bruk, Gen. Frost
53 Gen. Koenen, Ibid

educating, without it being possible to educate art itself."[54] Sitte insisted he had "never called for some kind of freedom or tolerance"[55] and that his works were not "decadent and unrealistic [but] more realistic than some other pictures." Sitte sought to sidestep the accusation that he had said he would no longer exhibit in the GDR, saying, "where else could I exhibit other than the GDR?"[56].

What becomes clear in the 36-page protocol of the admonishment of Sitte and Neubert, is how very directly art was invoked as a weapon in the Cold War– and possibly one that needed to be sharpened one given the compromises made in architecture. The realities of "Imperialism" and the international political tensions, and [hence] the need to make art that had a resonance with ordinary people, were repeatedly invoked by comrades Koenen, Frost, Machacek and Bruk – clearly it even modest adventures in painting were seen as potentially alienating ordinary working people, and thus threatening the whole socialist project. (The popularity of easily readable, perhaps " volkstümlich" work had been evident at the The Vth German Art exhibition: Womacka's "Paar am Strand" first exhibited at the Vth, was to become the most popular and reproduced work in the entire GDR history.)

The Party conservatives nonetheless obliquely admitted their dependence on such politically committed artists as Neubert, with his text-book background as a steel worker and connections to industry, and Sitte, as a painter with "a particular influence" who made "outstanding pictures"[57]. However, it was stressed that any kind of compromise would also send the wrong signals to the ever watchful eyes of West German journalists.

These years of interventions against the efforts of some artists' to shift the boundaries of Socialist Realism and explore new formal means, culminated in the

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54 Archive Sachsen Anhalt, Merseburg, IV/A-2/3/1 BL der SED Protokolle 1963, Stenographishces Protokoll der Aussprache der Genossen des Sekretäriats der BL mit Künstlern der Berzike Halle am 9 1 1963. p 21
55 Ibid. p 9
56 Ibid 1963.
57 Ibid. p 27

explosive 5th congress of 1964 where the artists Hermann Raum, Fritz Cremer and Bernard Heisig all openly and vehemently attacked the conservative, academic demands made of Socialist Realist painting[58]. They were in turn strongly opposed by the art critic, Klaus Weidner[59], art historian, Ullrich Kuhirt, and artist, Walter Womacka.[60] Neubert and Sitte did not make public comments on this occasion[61].

Cremer's speech[62] was the most audacious, picking apart every aspect of the Socialist Realist model to date. He called for "a kind of 20th or 21st party congress in the area of culture"[63] and the jettisoning of all terms such as "abstraction", "formalism", "decadence", "mastery", "beauty"[64], "volkstümlich", "volksverbunden"[65] (we know what happened with this blood and earth talk)[66], or the idea of an "optimistic art"[67]. All this, should nonetheless, lead to a new definition of Realism. Cremer's speech was reproduced in the West German FAZ, in response to which Cremer asserted in Neues Deutschland his commitment to socialism "my main purpose is to work on coming to terms with the German past and militarism"[68] On a more private occasion soon after, Cremer re-asserted the equation of socialist art with a humanist position, rather than given principles.[69]

In the main address, Lea Grundig, head of the Verband der Bildenden Künstler, whilst making some cautious attempts to re-assess the formal languages of

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58 For a full discussion of the V. Congress see Goeschen, Ulrike, *Von Sozialistische Realismus*..
59 Weidner was highly critical of any kind of challenge to Realism. Picasso, he said, "As a communist he knocked at the door of the socialist image of man but did not go through it" Weidner, Klaus, Symbole Zeichen Realismus, Sonntag, Nr 18, 1964.
60 Archive of the AdK. VBK Zentralvorstand – 70
61 Parteiaktivtagung" on 10.06.1964, Archive of the AdK. VBK Zentralvorstand – 70, "
62 The speech was re-printed in the West German FAZ, though not, unsurprisingly, in the GDR: "Diskussionsbeitrag von Fritz Cremer auf dem V. Kongress des Verbandes Bildender Künstler" BArch, DF 7/3078, Bandnummer: 2. This copy is held in the archive of the Institute for Formgestaltung.
63 Ibid, P 1
64 Ibid,, P 4
65 Ibid, P 6
66 Ibid, P 6
67 Ibid, P 7
68 Neues Deutschland, 16 4 64
69 Fritz Cremer speech at funeral of the painter, Heinrich Ehmsens am 12 5 64, Archive of the AdK. VBK Zentralvorstand – 70

modern art, condemned "ornamental decorative solutions"[70] in architectural art, where the money being spent was not justified by the results. The socialist art of building "necessarily entails the synthesis of both kinds of art, architecture and realistic art."[71]

Grundig's position was not in any way exceptional or surprising – her address had been approved beforehand by the ideological commission of the Politbüro[72]. The charge was made ever increasingly that architects prefered to engage artists simply to add some decorative elements to buildings rather than search for a "true synthesis" of the work of the artist and architect from the early conception.

For Bernard Heisig, at the time head of the Burg Giebichenstein Art School (a position he lost after the Vth congress[73]), developments in form design and architecture could be the basis for developments in the fine arts. Economic necessity had ushered a tolerance towards modern form design and architecture, "the development of traditions which had developed in late capitalism" not matched in fine arts.[74]

"In the applied arts, architecture, graphic design and industrial design, a type of class indifferent character is granted...More by necessity than desire, in the GDR there is now architecture, which, although is it is actually the aesthetic elevation of

70 Archive of the AdK. VBK Zentralvorstand – 70, Lea Grundig main address, V.Kongress des Verbande der VBKD 24 to 26 March 1964 in Berlin, p 41

71 Archive of the AdK. VBK Zentralvorstand – 70, Lea Grundig main address, V.Kongress des Verbande der VBKD 24 to 26 March 1964 in Berlin, p 41

72 Goecshen, p. 140

73 Although not as a direct consequence of his interventions at the conference...see April

74 Heisig, Bernard, "Von der Parteiaktivtagung zu Fragen der BK in der Möve", transcript of recording,10.06.64, p.2, in Archive AdK, Berlin, VBK Zentralvorstand – 70. The text and all the content of this argument is taken from Heisig's retraction as the orginal speech is not reproduced. His comments, where he was explaining the points he had wished to make, were prefaced with the remarks. "What I said was wrong in several points. I was trying to help. I did not pay enough attention to the Party line. I was not objective and my view was distorted."

a life style, that is the socialist one, soon will not be distinguishable from the architecture of the West."

As a result, Heisig continued, the functionalist and class indifferent means were in fact more driven by economic necessity than any ideological motivation. Fine art, by contrast, came to look like an aesthetic luxury, which was hardly useful in modern architecture.

"This explains the aversion of architects to murals (Wandbilder) and the frequently observed attempt to give the painter at best the role of a decorator or a colour psychologist. To me, modern architecture in its best manifestations today in its clear, functional and also bold forms, seems to come much closer to a socialist life feeling than the conglomerate of styles from the 19th and 20th century which are used in painting."

Heisig may or may not have been familiar with the theoretical efforts in design and architecture which, contrary to his observations, resisted any convergence in design and architecture with Western Modernism, and certainly did not allow for a casual "class free" character. Furthermore, the implication that these clear, bold and functional forms might come closer to expressing "socialist life feelings", amounted to an argument for an abandonment of academic realism in favour of abstract art within architecture. Heisig (like Sitte before him[75]) had to recant, and made it clear that these were misguided and subjective observations.[76] Whilst publically withdrawing his comments, Heisig emphasised his point on the need to break with academic art in Modernist architecture, by producing a series of flat, graphic, compositionally complex interior murals broke with illusionism, as part of a series inside the Hotel Deutschland in Leipzig. In spite of the storm that broke out as a result, in which Alfred Kurella claimed the works constituted an attempt "to smuggle in the whole nonsense of formalist, anti realist, abstract... 'art' under the

75 See Sitte
76 Heisig, Bernard, "Von der Parteiaktivtagung zu Fragen der BK in der Möve", transcript of recording,10.06.64, p.2, in Archive AdK, Berlin, VBK Zentralvorstand – 70.

watchword of 'architectural art.'", [77] these works offered a way forward for Socialist Realism that would have been completely unacceptable had they been easel paintings. [78]

Typically for the way in which change occured in the GDR, orthodoxy was publically reasserted whilst practice quietly developed, subject to periodic moments of censure. The same applied to the consequences of the 5th VBKD Congress, in which it was stated that "all types of dogmatism have been and must be overcome"[79], and again played on the potential of the "new type of person in socialism"[80] born of the technological revolution, "with new relationships to society and to the environment"[81] There was, however, to be no "realism without shores"[82], and there was nothing to learn from the "dictatorship of abstraction in capitalist countries."[83] Enfolded within the reassertion that "Our way of Socialist Realism is the right way", Grundig suggested, "perhaps we can learn from Modernism...Picasso's Guernica was painted against Fascism.[84] This cautious opening was acknowledged by Walter Ulbricht soon afterwards at the 2nd Bitterfield Conference. There was no such thing as "abstract realism". Realism ...is not a copy of reality[85]...[but it could] "help form people".[86] Realism should be understood as "the breadth and variety of our life."[87] The famous declaration of

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77 In Kurella's opinion, the abstracted murals in the Hotel Deutschland constituted an attempt "to smuggle in the whole nonsense of formalist, anti realist, abstract... 'art' under the watchword of 'architectural art.'" Alfred Kurella, "Gedanken über die Wandbilder im "Hotel Deutschland" (Leipzig)," 2/11/65, SächStAL: SED-L 362. "Die Wandbilder im 'Hotel Deutschland' in Leipzig stellen einen ernsten Einbruch des Modernismus... in unserer Kunstleben dar....", In Eisman, April, p. 25
78 Eisman, April, "In the Crucible: Bernhard Heisig and the Hotel Deutschland Murals," in Amy Wlodarski and Elaine Kelly, eds., Art Outside the Lines: New Perspectives on GDR Art Culture. (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2011) 21-39
79 Die Bildende Kunst beim umfassenden Aufbau des Sozialismus in der DDR und die Aufgaben des Verbandes, Resolutions of the V. Kongress of the VBKD, BK 6/64, p 284
80 Ibid, p 283
81 Ibid, p 283–286,
82 Ibid, p 286
83 Ibid,, p 285
84 "Die Wahrheit unseres Lebens sichtbar machen– das ist der Bitterfelder Weg." BK , 4/1964 Pp 171–177.
85 Prinzipienfestigkeit ist nicht dogmatismus. "Firmness of principle is not Dogmatism" From the speech of Walter Ulbrich at the 2nd Bitterfeld Conference BK 7/64, p. 339
86 Ibid
87 Ibid, p. 340

"breadth and variety" as the basis of cultural policy by Erich Honecker at the VIII Party Congress in 1971, was alreadys set in motion six years earlier through the interventions of prominent artists.

This next section looks at the initial programme for the visual arts in Halle Neustadt set up by the council for fine and building art in 1965. This is followed by a return to the theoretical discussions these generated, and finally I will examine the latter artistic realisations which represent a variety of attempts to align the artistic programme with the Modernist ambitions present in the construction of the city itself.

<u>1. Theorising forms of public art to integrate with the manufactured built</u>

<u>environment.</u>

Given the contentious state of Socialist Realism in the fine arts, it can safely be said that the euphoric moment of the early to mid 1960s experienced by the architects and planners of Halle Neustadt (who, even as they surrendered any ambitions they may have nurtured as "auteurs", shared the collective excitement of realising an entire socialist Modernist town), was not matched by any such spirit amongst artists.

Architects were beginning to work on a scale and with materials of which the East German artist had no experience, and as a result there was a sustained public lament on the absence "synthesis" between art and architecture, but there was little critique of the how works of art in public space could develop as a genre in terms of scale, material, or exploration of form and narrative. At the same time, the rush to construction using the new building techniques led to a boom in commissions in the 1960s for every type of public facility – schools, kindergartens, shops, gastronomic, medical and leisure facilities, and housing. Commonly, works were carried out using traditional techniques such as sgraffitto and mosaic or silikat painting and tended to a flat, illustrative, "children's picture book" style. Typical themes showed vignettes of ideal socialist life, and increasingly towards the latter part of the 1960s, space age imagery, cosmonauts and rockets[88].

These works were applied to the plain concrete interior and exterior walls coming to dominate the urban landscape. As such, *Wandbilder* served the functions of describing the function of the building, offering differentation, colour and socialist narratives. The proliferation of such works unquestionably contributed to lending a socialist character and style to the East German built environment, both in their

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88 See Sigfried Hofer Abschied von Ikarus

particularity and narrative content. But they did not seem to meet the excited visions for a socialist built environment, either as set out by Schmidt and Flierl in 1959 or by the planners for Halle Neustadt. Hermann Henselmann played out a different kind of vision in 1962:

"The spacious city with its changing optics. The modern person in this city, rushing, hastening. How do you speak to him optically? An expression of image, static and dynamic, consciously brought into the urban context. Hovering images, sometimes day lit, sometimes night lit. The artist as educator, motivator, admonisher in the colored, glassed, spacious city of communism."[89]

i. Discussions in Deutsche Architecture

In 1962, Bruno Flierl as editor of Deustche Architektur, had promoted some discussion on the possible forms of art in the new built environment, – whether public art should follow a collective model, what East German public artists could learn from the Mexicans, the Soviets, from Baghdad, and how the possibilities of concrete as an artists' material should be explored.[90] In the arts forums, however, discussions revolved around the practical difficulties faced by the freelance artist – brought in after the architectural planning stage, unfamiliar with collective working methods and short of resources and facilities on the necessary scale for monumental work[91]. As we have seen, as early as 1961 the possibilities of structural form designs as a means of circumventing the potential monotony of typed architecture had been researched by Tschierschky in Weimar, although whether

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89 "Strassenbekanntschaft: Oder Kennt Ihr Euch Überhaupt?" "Street acquaintance, or "Do you actually know each other?" by Henselmann p 260 DA 4/51962
90 DA 4/5 1962. The debates were introduced again and pushed forward by Bruno Flierl, editor at that time. Although active for both architects and artists, Flierl was a trained architect and his writing demonstrate more systematic thinking than visual imagination.
91 See for example Womacka, Walter, "Die Bildende Kunst, notwendige Bestandteil der Architektur" ("Fine art, a necessary part of architecture") BK 6/1964, p. 305

this belonged to the category of art was a sensitive question. Attempts to introduce narrative elements, such as Tschierschky's peace dove design, were criticised by the architect Martin Wimmer as a "desecration" of symbols[92]. Geometric solutions were "cleaner", he said, but it was the task of the artist to help the architect "achieve beauty" in the industrially typed blocks.

ii. Seminar on the on the synthesis of art and architecture in 1965

In November 1965, there was an attempt by artists from the artists' Verband, led by Walter Womacka, to re-instate the place of art in relation to architecture.[93] At a working seminar in Berlin, at which a number of senior figures from architecture and construction were present,[94] artists and critics, including Womacka, Wolfgang Frankenstein[95] and Klaus Weidner called for a less technocratic approach to building, better architecture which lent itself to art, and primarily the chance for artists to be fully integrated in the urban planning process, something that was planned to be regulated in a new law. Ludwig Engelhardt opened the seminar saying, there was "a need to talk about art, not just economics", as at the IV building conference which had just taken place. He reasserted the principle of synthesis, and defended "decorative art", not as a genre, but as a function, and claimed that art which tried to work on the scale of the new architecture would be

92 In Wimmer's assessement "perforation sculptures" ("Durchbruchplastiken") from Tschierschky "have a future and can liberate us from those kind of cheap sgraffitos which you can still see scratched into in plaster gables […] However, they do not not satisfy us architects at all. Such symbols as the dove, hammer and compass (the GDR emblem), corn husks... This is a desecration of these symbols." Geometric solutions "as long as the problem of monotony unresolved" are a cleaner solution. DA 4/5, 1962, p 268
93 Edited transcript of the Working Seminar of the Central Committee of the Verband der Bildende Künstler. Beiträge zur Diskussion über die Synthese von Architektur und Bildende Kunst, Contributions to the Discussion on the Synthesis of Architecture and Art. Material for Discussion. 18th and 19th November, 1965.
Getty Archive DDR Collections, Box 169, Folder 2. Unfortunately the transcript does not reproduce any comments or discussions.
94 Amongst those present were: President of the BdA, Hopp, Vice President of the German Building Academy, Collein, Departmental leader in the Ministry of Construction, Kurt Leucht, from the Soviet Union, art critic, Vladimir Tolstoi, and painter, Vladimir Obuch, representatives of the Magistrat Berlin, the German Building Academy, the Bund Deutscher Architekten, and other institutions as well as representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Building. Edited Protocol of the Working Seminar of the Central Committee of the Verband der Bildende Künstler.
95 Edited transcript of the Working Seminar...

a "monstrosity" Artists not only had to adapt to the new conditions, but architects had to "create spaces for the experience of art."

A number of speakers tried to imagine the possibilities that the new architecture presented artists, and to project the same kind of excitement that surrounded architectural re-construction of the city centres. Looking at 20th century precedents for public art, Helmut Heinze from Dresden claimed, "We are building the world of tomorrow, and we ... must think very broadly, and thoroughly creatively. It is not just a question of ticking off a point on the agenda." Bruno Flierl, speaking of the re-design of the centre of Berlin, called for an imaginative response to "the greatest task that has ever been set us." Wolfgang Frankenstein, a Berlin artist who had undertaken major public commissions from the early GDR, gave a bold speech in which he historicised public art within 20th century functionalist architecture, rather than through the standard references to the Renaissance and Baroque. He emphasised the societal functions of mural art movements from the Mexican Muralismo, to 1930s American socialist murals and proposed that Socialist Realism, as an ideologically committed art, was particularly appropriate to modern architecture where it served a societal function. For Frankenstein, it was highly innappropriate that the Unesco building should bear an abstract work by Leger, because the building's function had an explicit societal remit. Nonetheless, he argued, the formal explorations of abstract artists, whilst not qualifying as "art" within Socialist Realism, could be appropriated for the needs of Socialist Realism.

Very few of the artists' contributions reached the wider audience of *Deutsche Architektur* or *Bildende Kunst*. There had been too much implied criticism of the building industry as a technocratic apparatus, as well as of the primacy of the material function of architecture in defining its form. The powerful figures at the conference were certainly not the artists: Edmund Collein,[96] Vice President of the German Building Academy, rejecting the idea of a law to regulate cooperation

96 Collein, Fragen des Stadtebaus und BK

between artists and artists, urged artists to find, "uncomplicated, creative solutions."[97]

These conflicts seemed to be structurally inherent in the unfolding system of constructing the socialist built environment with utmost tempo and efficiency. In a rare piece of architectural comedy Hermann Henselmann, in 1962, parodied the relationship between artists and architects, architects personified as a smart, modern young woman, and artists as a romantic underdog of a young man.[98]

Whilst at the state and institutional level, public art was entrenched in the dilemma of the demand for "synthesis", the difficulties between artists and architects, ambiguities about Realism, lack of dedicated spaces for monumental work, there were localised instances of good working relationships between artists and architects and attempts at collective production.[99] As early as 1960, in Halle itself, Gerhard Kröber[100] the architect responsible preliminary plans for Halle Neustadt, brought together the painter, Wilhelm Schmied[101], graphic artist, Karl Erich Müller[102] and sculptor Gerhard Geyer[103], and in cooperation between the local planning office and local artists union, created a plan for themes and types of

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98 "Strassenbekanntschaft: Oder Kennt Ihr Euch Überhaupt?" "Street acquaintance, or Do you actually know each other?" by Henselmann p 260 DA 4/51962
99 A nucleus of artists at Berlin Weissensee developed under the tutelage of Arno Mohr, Kurt Robbel and Bert Heller, including Ronald Paris, Hilde and Harald Hackenbeck, Horst Sickelbein, Rolf Lindermann, Adam Kurtz, Herbert Bergmann-Hanack, Ingo Kirchner, Dieter Gantz, Hans Vent, Rolf Schubert, Konrad Knebel and others. See Meier, Gunter, "Wandbilder von jungen Berliner Künstlern" (Murals by young Berlin artists), BK 9/1965, pp 456–461. In 1968 Womacka as the new rector of the art school in Weissensee was successful in establishing an "Institute für Baugebundene Kunst" as a section of the art school in some large ateliers in the Monbijoupark in Berlin.
100 Born, 1917 in Halle; † 10. Januar 1998
101 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_Schmied, Lehre als Möbelmaler und Lackierer, Wilhelm Schmied (* 13. April 1910 in Dresden; † 7. Dezember 1984 in Sangerhausen)
102 Karl Erich Müller (* 19. September 1917 in Halle; † 10. Januar 1998 ebenda) war ein deutscher Maler und Grafiker Dekorationsmaler
103 Gerhard Geyer (* 8. Mai 1907 in Halle (Saale); † 9. April 1989 in Halle (Saale)) war ein deutscher Bildhauer und Grafiker.

works for the living complex in Halle Trotha.[104] The range and types of works, which Kröber described as "complex planning" largely precipitated the model which was to become standard in living complexes.[105] In 1964, Schmied and Geyer, together with the architects for Halle Neustadt worked with specialists at the Buna chemical plant to explore a whole range of applications of artificial materials for interior furnishings for latex paint, and for plastic decorative elements within architecture.[106]

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104 Kröber, Gerhard, "Über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen bildenden Künstlern und Architekten bei der Planung sozialistische Wohnkomplexen", ("On the cooperation between fine artists and architects in the planning of socialist living complexes.") DA 7/1960

105 The works decided were: sculpture, "socialist construction", a fountain with figurative sculpture, ceramic sculpture, themes from history of Halle, a garden ceramic sculpture, kindergarden sculpture with an animal theme, a children's game between kindergardens, mosaic with a societal theme, decorative wall design for shops, plaster relief on school with the thems of a polytechnical lesson, milk bar coloured mosaic frieze, mural with the theme "From the life of the GDR" (ambulatorium), cafe with a decorative design, mural "teaching and learning".

106 "Neue Kunststoff für die bildende Kunst". ("New artificial materials for art,") p 502-3 BK, 9/1964. Apart from the "Plasteblock" there is no evidence that these experiments in form making found any real application in architectural decoration. Such initiatives were likely to be limited budgetary and bureaucratic obstacles.

2. Works of art in Halle Neustadt

The actual reality of the early stages of art in Halle Neustadt was distinctly more modest than Henselmann's avant-gardist spectacle of "static and dynamic...hovering images.. in the colored, glassed, spacious city of communism". For the artists there was none of the excitement of "creating a new world" experienced by the architectural team. There was nonetheless an attempt to generate an expansive artistic conception in order to organisational difficulties and an absence of cooperation between artists, architects, planners, engineers, in the form of a "Council for Art and Building Art."[107] (*Beirat für bildende Kunst und Baukunst*) in Halle Neustadt. The art works for Halle Neustadt should not be added on later in an ad hoc fashion without an overall artistic concept, as had occured in Eisenhüttenstadt, Hoyerswerda and Schwedt[108]. The remit of the council was, to ensure the organisational and political realisation of the works, and that each commissioned artist would realise the work "in a high quality, on the basis of his specialist and ideological competence."[109] In this sense, the works of art were to be planned much as the urban plan, but the council was effectively a body for administration and ideological monitoring, rather than a collective of artists working together.

The artworks were to be held together by thematic frameworks, conceived not by the chief architect, let alone artists and designers, but by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, and it was Frank Bruk (one of those from the SED

[107] The members of the council were to be the chairperson for culture in the regional council, the deputy chairperson of the regional council and chief planner of the town centre, the chief representative for art in the department of culture in the regional council, the chief architect of Halle Neustadt (Halle-West as it was still called at that stage), the deputy of the chief architect, the chairperson of the regional group of the Bund deutscher Architekten, the town architect, the secretary of the Verband der Bildende Kunstler, and seven artists, as well as a representative from the Hochschule of Industrielle Formgestaltung Burg Giebichenstein.
108 Flierl, Bruno, Bildkünstlerische Konzeption für grosse städtebauliche Ensembles, BK, 10/66, pp 507–512
109 Hellmuth, Bruno in Beirat für bildende und Baukunst
Möglichkeiten zur Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit zwischen Architekten, Projektanten und bildendern Künstlern beim Aufbau der Chemie-Arbeiterstadt Halle West. BK/1966, p. 98

regional leadership who had held Sitte and Neubert to account in 1963) who drew up the first political artistic conception.[110]

The themes for the living complexes were set out as follows: "Friendship of the peoples" for WK I, "Chemistry brings bread, scientific and technical progress, high worker productivity and wefare for all the people" for WK II, and "Science, art and literature" for WKIII; for the fourth living complex a return to a familiar theme was proposed, "Workers' movement, struggle against oppression and exploitation." Artists were commissioned to create works within these themes, but the actual execution of the works took place in isolation from the architectural planning, with the inevitable result that the works, positioned within or on buildings appeared to have an ad hoc relationship to the surroundings.

The following account of the works[111] which were commissioned and placed within the living complexes and central areas of Halle Neustadt deals with the period from the initial plan up to 1973.[112] It soon became clear, that the themes set out by the Department for Agitation and Propaganda would not be particularly manifest. The theme for WK I, "Volkerfreundschaft" (Friendship of the Peoples), was only explicit in three works, " die Afrikanerin " ("The African Woman", sometimes known as "The African Mother"), a bronze by Gerhard Geyer, "Gaben der Völker "("Gifts of the People", sometimes called "The Earth has Enough Bread for Everyone") a ceramic mural by Irmela and Martin Hadelich, and "Volkerfreundschaft", by Heinz Bebernis.[113] Two works had implicit peace themes: Willi Neubert's industrial enamel

110 Political ideological conception for the design of the Chemistry Workers Town, Halle-West, Halle 18.9.1965, Headed by Franz Bruk, Department of Agitation and Propaganda. LHASA, MER, M 516, IV/A–2/3/83, p.6
111 Sources for information on works: Schlesier, Plan und Bau, Schmidt, Dagmar (1993): Kunst im öffentlichen Raum, in: Magistrat der Stadt Halle/Projektgesellschaft Dessau (Hg.), Stadt- erneuerung als Prozess demokratischer und kultureller Weiterentwicklung. Perspektiven für Halle-Neustadt, Dessau, S. 69-82; Catalogues "Architektur und Bildende Kunst", German Building Academy
112 In subsequent years until 1989 there were many more works produced which reflected the developing forms and ideals for public art. By 1989 there were approximately 150 works of art and design in Halle Neustadt, just under half of those in exterior spacesSource: Schmidt, Dagmar (1993): Kunst im öffentlichen Raum, in: Magistrat der Stadt Halle/Projektgesellschaft Dessau (Hg.), Stadt- erneuerung als Prozess demokratischer und kultureller Weiterentwicklung. Perspektiven für Halle-Neustadt, Dessau, S. 69-82.
113 Heinz Beberniß, born,1920 in Diemitz, † 2012 in Halle, Sculptor, painter and graphic artist.

mural, " Lebensbaum" (Tree of Life), and the bronze relief "Kinderkreuzzug, 1939" (Children's Crusade, 1939), a memorial to the victims of National Socialism, also by Gerhard Geyer.

The other works in WKI were "Die Schwimmerin", (The Swimmer), a bronze by William Fitzenreiter, (later briefly replaced by another by Wieland Förster), "Vater und Sohn", (Father and Son), a sandstone sculpture by Rudolf Hilscher, who also made the bronze sculpture, "Die Taubenflug" (The Dove Flight), "Junges Paar", ("Young Pair"), a bronze by Martin Wetzel, "Ziegenreiterin" ("Goat Rider"), a bronze by Martin Hadelich, and "Sport", a concrete cast by Werner Stutzer.

Interior works – ceramic works, painting on wood, stained glass, for example, Johannes Wagner's "Kinder und Ihre Umwelt", (Children and Their Environment") for three large windows of the 2nd Polytechnic High School (POS) – typically had playful, optimistic themes, and paintings or sculptures of animals were especially used for children's facilities, for example,"The Hare and the Hedgehog", a ceramic work by Klaus Sägerlaub. School children themselves created "Fairy Tale characters" for the entrance to the children's village.

A new departure was the commissioning of some typographic works, for example the typographic signage for the Cafe "Gastronom" by Brade and Schneid[114]. Brade also created a butterfly in metal for the interior of the cafe. The the bold sans-serif, geometric typographic form for Gastronom is in this case coherent with the simple form and clarity of the architecture, whilst the decorative elements around the "G" seem less assured, almost as though Brade felt it necessary to add the pictoral reference to a doily or table cloth to compensate for the "Sachlichkeit" of his typeface. Unfortunately there is no record available of the interior butterfly, but the motif itself would also offer a counterpoint to the inorganicity of the architecture.

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114 Most probably refering to Helmut Brade, the graphic designer and Wilhelm Schneid. The names are penciled on the back of a photo (Getty Archive, Ruth Pape) This is not listed as a work of art.

The artworks, with their generally "picturesque" and often "naive" forms indeed offer a counterpoint to the entire plan for Halle Neustadt. We can see the same process here at work that was evident back in the first ventures of the artists in Hoyerswerda, and even some of the same themes.

In 1971, Erich Enge's[115] "Lenins Worte" (Lenin's Words), a silikat on asbestos mural to honour the 100th birthday of Lenin, was mounted on the gable wall of Block 645, a five-storey apartment block. This was the only work to be put on a housing block, a fact which irritated the architects[116], and was intended, besides honouring Lenin, to bring more colour to the surroundings.[117] This work counts amongst those produced in response to the demand for greater monumentality at the end of the 1960s, to which I shall return in the next chapter. The most important works outside the living complexes, at the education centre, were the panorama, stretching across the swimming pool, mensa and student halls of residence buildings, led by the collective of Jose Renau, the Lenin Bust (K. S. Bojarski, 1970/1), the "Panzerzug" (Armoured Train) (1971)[118] and the and the planned work for the interior of the Kulturhalle by Willi Sitte.

3. The emergence of new genres and materials

Whilst the themes of many the artworks was to repeat the counterpointing of the architecture through their references to precisely all that was not evident in architecture and plan, the folkish, the organic, the natural, the historical, the individual, the spiritual, there were new genres of art which made their debut in Halle Neustadt which in some ways tried to overcome these contradictions. These genres were to become central in the later realisations of complex environmental

115 Biographical note
116 Reported by Joachim Bach, the architect, Barch DY 15/356, p 67,
117 "What is the effect of the artistic ensemble on the residents, in the example of Halle Neustadt, WKI?", Bund der Architekten, ZAG, Seminar "Synthese Architektur und bildende Kunst" vom 18. bis 19. Nov. 1971 in Rostock/Warnemünde, Barch DY 15/356, p 67,
118 Vor dem legendären Panzerzug, mit dem sich 1921 die revolutionären Leunaarbeiter gegen die Hoersing-Polizei verteidigten

design in the city centres and residential developments. They were important because they offered focal points for communication to generate the very urbanity which seemed to be at risk in these planned developments. They also offered artists a chance to explore abstract forms and playful ideas in a way that was not acceptable in the fine arts.

i. Fountains

The sculptures "Junges Paar" and "Taubenflug" from WKI were integrated in to fountains, but subsequently fountains were to become a major artistic genre in their own right throughout the republic. Fountains effectively combined the need for focal points for communication with unique artistic form and narrative content. By 1989 Halle Neustadt boasted another eight artistic fountains: the "Tulip Fountain" (Heinz Bebernis, 1978), the "Women Fountain" (Gerhard Lichtenfeld, 1974), the "Cactus Fountain" (Peter Michael, 1983), the "Sea Fountain" (Hans Rothe, 1983), the "Alchemists' Fountain" (Martin Hadelich, 1974), the "Hodscha Nassredin Fountain", (Berndt Göbbel, 1980) and "Calling and Hearing", (Wolfgang Dreysser, 1989).[119]

Fountains did not only offer a clear social focal point, but for the artist they offered the opportunity to liberally interpret an assigned theme in an experiment with form. The metal artist Manfred Vollmert, one of the original members of the Hoyerswerda KPG "neue form" viewed the fountain as the ideal commission "because it was always placed in the centre where everyone would see it."[120]

ii. Playgrounds and play apparatus

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[119] Source: Schmidt p 101. Dates refer to dates of installation which may vary from dates of production. http://www.halle.de/de/kultur-tourismus/kultur-freizeit/index.aspx?RecID=988
120 Manfred Müller in conversation with the author, Hoyerswerda Kulturverein, 24.07.2013

Otto Leibe's "Spielelefant" (Play Elephant), a concrete cast elephant that served an work of art as well as a play apparatus represented a technological innovation that was also to become a genre in its own right. The design of playgrounds and play apparatus expanded as an area of design research[121] in the 1970s and 1980s, and was given its own department at the Burg School of Design. The optimal conditions of socialisation and childhood was central to the representation of socialism, thus the physical centrality of children, in the new urban spaces was an essential corollary to their ideological significance.

iii. Explorations in modular form and new materials

The possibilities of concrete were also explored in Halle Neustadt in architectural reliefs on the end facades of housing blocks. These were normally the preserve of architects and the first such experiments in Halle Neustadt were by Richard Paulick and Armin Menzel in 1965[122]. "Strukturwände" were commissioned as works of art: Kurt Grohmann and Klaus Fleischmann designed a concrete modular structure to separate a space in the small shopping complex, Christian Brade created an enamel and metal spatial divider in the self service cafe, "Gastronom" and Willi Neubert was commissioned to create two decorative works to visually enhance the through ways which were built into the 385 metre long "Block 10."

Structural reliefs and walls, as first explored by Tschierschky and Schiefelbein, were to proliferate across the built environment of the GDR[123]. These form experiments were carried out in new materials of concrete and aluminium and also occasionally in ceramics. Pure form experiment did not only deliver material content of the

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121 See Clauss Dietel "Schöner unsere Städte: Redaktionsgespraech zu Problemen der Freiraumgestaltung" ink, p. 625;

122 Richard Paulick / Armin Menzel, 1965. / Beton.
123 Martin Malechki catalogue has documented over 600 examples of Formsteine still remaining today in the former GDR.

architecture and open spaces. For Karl Heinz Adler[124] and Friedrich Kracht[125]of the Dresden "KPG, Kunst am Bau", (responsible for the artistic plan of WK III) the serially produced form provided a means to an geometric exploration of form in the sense of "concrete art" (Konkret Kunst), and thus offered an artistic niche within the system of official contracts[126].

The interpretations of the assigned themes

The loose relationship to the themes set out in the 1965 plan was evident in all the living complexes. Only a handful of works related to the science theme, three offering typically socialist realist interpretations, The "Wissentschaftswürfel" honoured historically important German scientists, and the generic, "chemistry worker" honoured their contemporary incarnation.[127] Wilhelm Schmied's panel created a narrative of symbols across the main entrance of the Polytechnic High School in WK II, tells of of the harnessing of nature through chemistry by the modern worker. The "Alchemists Fountain", decorated with comical figures, offers a humourous counterpoint to the overarching significance of chemistry in the town. It was not until later that there were more iconic interpretations of the theme, for example, the steel "Chemistry Fountain" (1981) by Irmtraud Ohme in WKII. In Halle itself, a collective of students under Walter Funkat at the Burg school of art and design designed the steel structure "Benzol Rings" to mark the entrance to Halle Neustadt as well as an aluminium structure, based on the same symbol, to "stretch like a net around the building" of the "House of Education" at Thälmannplatz.[128] The

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124 bio ref http://www.kunst-am-bau-ddr.de/die-kuenstler.html
125 bio ref http://www.freie-akademie-dresden.de/friedrich_kracht?page=0%2C1
126 On the work of Karl Heinz Adler, See for example,.; Karl-Heinz Adler Werke 1942 – 2010; Karl-Heinz Adler Werke 1942 - 2010. Editors Ingrid Mössinger, Sabine Tauscher, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, Munich; Bozena Kowalska, "Adler. Auf der Suche nach Ordnung und Raum", Philo & Philo Fine Arts, Berlin, 2004; Hartmann, Doris, "Konkrete Kunst zwischen Ost und West." In: konkrete kunst zwischen ost und west. Karl-Heinz Adler Thomas Lenk. Ausstellungskatalog. Hrsg. v. Matthias Rataiczyk und Christin Müller-Wenzel für den Kunstverein "Talstrasse" e.V., Halle (Saale) 2008, S. 4-9
127 (see illustrations)
128 "Architektur und Bildende Kunst im Bezirk Halle." Special edition of the Chefarchitekt of the Bezirk, Halle. Editorial board: Karl Heinz Schlesier, Wilhelm Schmied, Artur Jungblut, Manfred Müller, Sigbert Fliegel, (Halle, Date of publication estimated 1969), Archiv Ruth Pape, Getty, Box...p. 13

use of a chemical symbol, abstract and therefore free of ideological charge, allowed for a narrative logic within the design, whilst avoiding a literal visual interpretation of the theme "chemistry". Few of the several hundreds of structural reliefs that became established within the vocabulary of GDR urban design in subsquent decades offered this narrative basis.

i. Ideological connotations of art works

What immediately becomes apparent in this overview of works is the light ideological accent. With the exception of Jose Renau's murals on the student housing and Mensa, and Erich Enge's "Lenin's Words" to honour Lenin's centenary in 1970, there were none that were overtly agitational or propagandistic – the propaganda element was confined to the joyful and optimistic tone of the works, and the choices of historical narratives.

Peer Pasternak, in his sociological analysis of Halle Neustadt, has collated the available data on the themes of the artworks commissioned and realised for the living complexes of Halle Neustadt[129]. Although he does not distinguish between the different phases of art commissioning, his thematic schema, based on the titles of a total of 184 works, reveals:

Political, including history and culture related to politics, 23%;
History, culture, senses, without political reference, 22%;
The world of work; 3%;
Family, leisure and sport, 11%;
Nature, 12%,
Functional art incorporated into the building fabric, 29%.

129 Pasternak, Peer, Zwischen Halle-Novgorod und Halle-New Town. Der Ideenhaushalt Halle-Neustadts (Der Hallesche Graureiher 2/2012) Institut für Soziologie der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Halle/ S. 2012, p 32

In summary he describes the political and agitational works as forming a minority of works, most works making an optimistic, harmonious illustration and affirmation of socialist life conceived to assist the formation of socialist identity[130]. As we have seen, however, these narratives of optimistic, harmonious life in socialism were not a peculiarity of Halle Neustadt, in fact they fulfiled the Socialist Realist requirements for optimism about the future and "realism".

Not only was there little explicit propaganda, there was also little sense of the scientific revolution in the themes and subject matter. In contrast to the claims made for the modernity of architectural production, the works of art seemed to function not to complement this but to anethsetise it. The modern socialist personality, developing a modern socialist way of life, so enthused about in the conception of Halle Neustadt, seemed to be offered a kind of artistic comfort zone of tradition. Even the explicitly political works placed in the town centre, the Lenin Bust, and the "Panzerzug", a work commemorating a worker's uprising at the Leuna chemistry plant in 1921, were commemorative rather than visionary narratives. The embodiment of scientific progress in the figure of Juri Gagarin, who had since 1961 been added to the repetoire of socialist symbols[131] had a modest presence, but was given a children's picture book treatment.[132] The cosmonaut was not depicted as a metaphor of the future, but as a human being taking a journey around space[133]. The same can be said of other cosmonaut images produced in the GDR – in Schwedt, Hoyerswerda, Potsdam and other locations. These contrast with Soviet treatment of the genre, perhaps this was due to political deference to the brotherland, more probably, it stemmed from a hesitancy in breaking away from realism and into monumental metaphor.

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130 Pasternak, pp37–42
131 See Hofer on the development of the theme within painting and architectural art.
132 (see illustrations)
133 Hofer says this treatment was common, because

ii. architectural counter-narratives

This embedding of the familiar within the unfamiliar, the human and organic within the technical and material, the hand made within the serially manufactured, was moderately countered by two trends. One was the proliferation of modular form making within the architecture. Some relief structures on the housing blocks themselves were created by the architects themselves, considered as part of the architectural design. They were also to become incuded within artistic conceptions, to circumvent "the danger of urban monotony", particularly in "the experiential area of the entry zones". These could be constructed with concrete or ceramic slabs.[134] According to the conception, perforated structual walls should also delineate space and offer interest in the areas where young people would congregate, or conceal washing hanging areas. [135]

The other innovations in the art of Halle Neustadt can be seen in the early experiments with non traditional materials. The earliest works are completed in bronze and ceramic, but there were also explorations in the uses of concrete, an electro-static process[136], and industrial enamel. Besides the decorative elements in the "Plaste Block" there do not appear to be any uses of synthetics for artworks.

6. Art political significance of the works of art in Halle Neustadt

If we recall the censure of Neubert and Sitte in 1963 for even modest innovations away from academic Realism, followed by the protests by Cremer, Heiser and Raum at the Vth art exhibition in 1964, it becomes clear that during the

134 p. 21
135 LHASA, Merseburg, M 514, WK III, Freiflächen und bildkünstlerische Gestaltung, 1966 – 1968 Nr. 4797.p. 21
136 Used in a work for the cinema by Fritz Freitag and Doris Froöde, NW 31.10.68 newscutting from AdK archive

"technological revolution" of the 1960s, attitudes had relaxed. Sitte, Cremer, Heisig and other leading artists continued undetered to explore the parameters of Socialist Realism. Sitte described the acceptance by the cultural authorities of his "Chemiearbeiter am Schaltpult" and the simultaneous narratives of "Leuna 69": "The functionaries had gradually got used to my work – I had managed to persuade them and now they reinforced each other in positive evaluations."[137] In anticipation of the VI German Art Exhibition in Dresden, Sitte prepared the public to expect that in the new technologised environment with the scientific thinking worker would bring new forms of representation: "Our fundamentally changed environment demands in art too, new means of expression and representation. The conventional frame of vision has become too narrow for socialism."[138]

i. Explorations in form in the artworks in Halle Neustadt

Not withstanding innovations made by the most prominent fine artists at the Dresden Exhibitions, anxieties remained on the part of the political authorities, and the residents, surrounding the the readability of works of art in public space, and the opposition between realism and abstraction, or even "expressivity". The evidence available on the responses to the works in Halle Neustadt suggests that some in authority were fearful of public reaction to new forms, whilst at the same there were still tremors from the anti-formalism campaign from the early 1950s.[139]

However, just about all of the works installed in Halle Neustadt demonstrate a latitude in the interpretation of Realism, that is to say a departure from a sought after naturalism, or employ a montage of symbols and images with a decorative effect. The figures in Hilscher's "Vater und Sohn" have stylised, blockish form which

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137 Sitte, Farben und Folgen, p 150
138 Sitte, Willi, "Ort der Handlung: Leuna II" ("Site of negotiation: Leuna II) in Neues Deutschland, 30. May 1967, p. 4
139 For a discussion of the commissioning and evaluation processes in Halle Neustadt, see Hütt, Wolfgang Auftragsvergabe und Auftragskunst in Halle-Neustadt 1964–1972, (The giving of contracts and contracted work in Halle Neustadt, 1964–1872) in: Paul Kaiser/Karl-Siegbert Rehberg (Hg.), Enge und Vielfalt. Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR, ("Narrowness and Variety. Contracted work and Support for Art in the GDR") Hamburg 1999, pp. 383–395

express the nature of sandstone as much the human form; the doves of Taubenflug, in playing on the movement of the bird from its stationary position into flight, functions also as a play on the reduction and stylisation of form; Peter Michael's "Blüten, Pilz und Regenwurm" ("Petals, Mushroom and Earthworm") are playfully innovative and modern in both form and material; Neubert's "Lebensbaum", (above) does not adhere to any conventions of naturalism in its organisation of the picture space, but nor is it uniquely decorative. The work calls for a reading, and interpretation at a symbolic level, rather than offering a realistic "reflection" of socialist life or ideals. In its light colours and poetic motifs – the nude woman, the harlequin, fish, animals and the naked child– it stands in complete contrast to his man and machine centred themes for the Press House in Halle (1965). Lebensbaum was even conceived for the centre for building workers, thus this departure was not related to the location of the work, although according to Neubert it had to be re-located due to the damage done by the building workers. It is also possible to read the works as environmental critique if we notice the tree with the dying branch against the factory background. Later in an interview, Neubert refered to the problems of pollution arising from industry, but these were not articulated at the time he made the Lebensbaum mural.[140]

The sketches for a monumental mural by Willi Sitte, planned for the interior of the Kulturhalle, (unrealised, architectural design by Joachim Bach) also demonstrate an increased confidence in – and tolerance of – "expressive" form. Sitte presents an epochal narrative allowing for a sustained engagement on the part of the viewer. Further, the design does not obediently sit within an allocated rectangular space, but envelopes the interior architecture. The interior location allowed for the expression of the painterly medium, but the architectural composition allowed the full effect of the projection of the work on to the outside space. The concept was the result of a successful cooperation between the artist and architect, but like

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140 Hans-Harm Leweke, Ateliergespräch bei Prof Willi Neubert Thale 19 02 77, AdK-VBK-BV-Halle - 147

many building projects towards the end of the Ulbricht era, the cultural centre along with the chemistry tower were not realised due to insufficient budgets and the dominance of the new housing programme from 1971[141]. But the concept of the monumental painterly mural, projected on to outside space through the glass of the building, was one which was later realised in representative cultural architecture, for example, Sighard Gille's[142] monumental "song of life" mural in the Gewandhaus in Leipzig.[143]

This potential for a retreat into the interior offered not only the chance for painters to create durable, monumental works with their familiar medium, it also reduced the sense of an imposition of less immediately readable art in the public domain. Whilst the projection on to exterior space as light and colour would contribute to the feeling of urbanity, the unmeditated contemplation would take place within the context of the cultural surrounding. In this way the mural belonged directly to the building and its function, rather than the facade acting as a canvas to announce ideas and information to the outside world, to become a part of the built environment. This idea did not replace other forms of monumental works, but it was a new solution. Placed within the cultural context, Sitte's proposal for the culture hall in Halle Neustadt, inasfar as we can judge from the sketches available, broke both formally and conceptually with a linear narrative – there are no comparable works in exterior spaces at this time. Sitte also proposed an expressive monumental work for the Rostock congress hall, also not realised. (illustration). It was not until 1976, when the painter Ronald Paris[144] completed his Wandbild in the "reception space" of Rostock-Evershagen[145], that there was an unambigious

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141 See Hütt, 1999, p.
142 Biographical note (b. 1941, Ellenhardt, lives and works in Leipzig)
143 Gesang vom Leben, Deckenmalerei im Hauptfoyer des Gewandhauses zu Leipzig.712 m². /1981
144 Sitte, Neubert, Paris, Erich Enge
Ronald Paris - wahr und wahrhaftig, Karlen Vesper-Gräske, 1959- 3 OG LI 99999 P232 R76
145 The open area of shops and facilities which the pedestrian entered into after leaving the train station which acted as a stage space for the set of works of architectural art within it.

example of a monumental "epochal" work[146] open to multiple interpretations directly in exterior space. In the artist's words the work is comprised of "general metaphors which each person can interpret as they wish", on the basic social relationships, work, love, struggle," Paris wanted to avoid a "propagandistic narrative" in favour of a "humanist expression" and "monumentality within the content", open to multiple readings.[147]

Responses to the works in Halle Neustadt

The degree of tolerance borne by the commissioning authorities, as well as the public, (insofar as this can be assertained by the small amount of evidence) towards formal innovation away from Realism, was dependent on other contributory factors.

The evidence suggests that whilst some viewers were open to being challenged by art, many also appreciated easy readability and familiar, cheerful themes.[148] Heinz Bebernis' "Volkerfreundschaft" was judged by the authorities to be too melancholic

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146 Paris described the theme which was given as an "elastic band theme" 'Der Mensch im Sozialismus'. Das ist natürlich ein 'Gummibandthema', doch läßt es andererseits breiten Spielraum für eigenes Ausdeuten.Sinnlichkeit und Kraft gegen den Tod; Ingrid Beyer sprach mit Ronald Paris über dessen neues Wandbild in Rostock-Evershagen, in Bildende Kunst, Heft 4/1977, S.171

147 Interview with the author together with Mtanious El Beik at Ronald Paris' studio, outside Berlin 09.02.2011

148 The analysis of the reception of work in public space clearly brings with it a different set of problems than the reception of work in the conditions of the museum of gallery, and on the former there is as yet little research.

On the relationship between art politics and the reception of art, see Lindner, Bernd: "Verstellter, offener Blick. Eine Rezeptionsgeschichte bildender Kunst im Osten Deutschlands" (. Köln: Böhlau 1999; Lindner, Bernd, Kunstrezeption in der DDR, in: Kunstdokumentation SBZ/ DDR 1945-1990. Aufsätze – Berichte - Materialien, hg. v. Günter Feist, Eckhardt Gillen, Beatrice Vierneisel, Köln 1996. S. 62-93. Lindner's scholarship offers a comprehensive analysis of the reception of art in East Germany, and is based on surveys and sociological research of public opinions at exhibitions. At the same time, Bazin observes that Lindner's both pre- and post Wende interpretations of the results reflect the political circumstances of each era, with Lindner proposing uncritically that the East German "poor taste" was a relic of the Nazi era. (Bazin, p. 310). Bazin offers a nuanced analysis of workers' and the intelligentsia's responses to realist art, demonstrating a transition which began in the 1960s where it was not so much the worker who was called upon to be the judge of good art, but that the worker's ability to arbitrate was subject to judgement by critics. Bazin, Jerome, "La valeur du public" (pp 296–394), in Réalisme et égalité. 2011. See also: Mülhaupt, Freya, Kulturpolitik zwischen Bildender Kunst und Arbeiterklasse – Zum Problem der Produktion und Rezeption bildender Kunst in der SBZ/ DDR bis zum VIII. Parteitag der SED 1971, in: Kultur und Kunst in der DDR seit 1970, hg. v. Hubertus Gassner, Eckhart Gillen, Lahn-Gießen 1977, S. 61-83.

and was removed to a more discreet location in WKII.[149] Comments made by residents in Halle Neustadt interviewed about the public art in 1971[150] suggest that compromised readability in works in public space could be compensated for by a colourful effect. A factory worker from Leuna described "The Swimmer" as "ridiculous" and "obscene"[151]. The swimming pool mural (above) also provoked some strong reactions, "A slap in the face for good taste" – "You can't tell what it is supposed to be" – "I am not sure if you can call it art. You have to look carefully to understand it", and whether the positioning suited contemplation was also questioned: "Nobody has time to stand and look at this, with both hands carrying shopping" said one respondant of the *Volkerfreundschaft* ceramic outside the Kaufhalle. Praise for some art works only served to highlight environmental deficits: "The colour [of the swimming pool mural] brings some mood into the town." One liked the African mother sculpture, "but not the weeds around it."[152]

Another work was removed even before the residents had had a chance to view it, evidently for cultural political reasons that insisted on the polarity between abstraction and realism. Willi Neubert was commissioned to produce reliefs to flank the architecture at the entrance to Block 10, which in his account were "abstract representations." Neubert related to me:

"I put them up and came back and five days later with my group and they had been removed. Nobody wanted to tell me why. I called the local party person and they didn't want to say anything and so I called the highest culture boss from the ZK, and he said, "We don't want abstract art." But it wasn't purely abstract, it was abstracted. It had objects in it. I spoke to the boss at Halle Neustadt and said, "Listen, ill do something else", and then I did this one with the elements, without

149 Jackes
150 The comments were made by residents interviewed by the Halle SED magazine, "Die Freiheit" "Unser Leben unser Kunst" in 1971 and cited by Czych in a paper "What is the effect of the artistic ensemble on the residents, in the example of Halle Neustadt, WKI?", DY 15/356 BARch, Bund der Architekten, ZAG, Seminar "Synthese Architektur und bildende Kunst" vom 18. bis 19. Nov. 1971 in Rostock/Warnemünde
151 It is not clear whether this comment refers to the original Swimmer by Friedland or the one which briefly replaced it by Förster.
152 As fn 150

any imagery. Then it became form design. I've no idea what happened to my work, no doubt it is sitting in some datscha in Halle..."[153]

Unfortunately there are no drawings remaining of the original. The replacement work was unambiguously ornamental – and modern–, and Neubert developed such other such ornamental works in enamel in parallel to his Wandbilder[154].

Particularities of the *Wandbild*

It is beyond the scope of this research to examine the relationship between artists' easel painting and works for exterior public spaces.[155] The object here is, using the examples under review, to consider the on the one hand the visual function of the works within architectural space, and at the same time to ask whether the conditions of external works and their materials offered artists a latitude not available in conventional painting. Clearly, if we refer back to the controversy around Heisig's interior pieces for Hotel Deutschland. there was an anxiety around this on the part of cultural functionaries[156]. Willi Neubert's flat, bold enamel pieces in Halle, Halle Neustadt, Suhl and later in his home town of Thale (illustrations), allowed a complete break with Realism, and explicit references to the painters of the Western early Modern who achieved the illusion of depth through the juxaposition of graphic forms and colour – Picasso, Leger, Matisse, for example, and such references are also visible in Womacka's work on the Haus des Lehrers in Berlin. Neubert was open about his debt to Modernist painting in his mural works:

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[153] Willi Neubert in conversation with the author at his home, date
[154] Illustration Technology centre Wuhlheide
155 See El Beik, Mtanious, "Das Wandbild in Ostberlin von 1948 bis 1989, seine stilitische und thematische Entwicklung, Beziehung zum Atelierbild und Rezeption" Universität Potsdam, Inistitut für Künste und Medien, projected publication, 2014, see also Eisman, April, "In the Crucible: Bernhard Heisig and the Hotel Deutschland Murals," in Amy Wlodarski and Elaine Kelly, eds., Art Outside the Lines: New Perspectives on GDR Art Culture. (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2011) 21-3
156 Kurella's contention on "abstraction by the back door". (previous note)

The mural has to be a large intellectual conception which conveys the content properly, and then the formal that conveys the form. There is a huge difference [to the easel painting]. I am of the opinion that art in the first place belongs on the street, as there we have a big possibility, directly to make contact with people, and this is what makes up part of our environment, creates an atmosphere.

This flat use of colour is not present in Neubert's or Womacka's paintings selected for the Dresden exhibitions. The "plakativ" effect of the exterior work, its "poster-like" qualities, also allowed for a completely non-natural composition, suspending rules of perspective and scale, allowing for a montage composition. Neubert first tested this in his work "Der Presse als kollektiver Organisator" in the Press House in Halle 1964, where elements of the narrative are enclosed within the central figure – also a formal mode employed by Womacka in his 1965 Eisenhüttenstadt piece "Gemeinschaftsarbeit der sozialistischen Länder". Neubert he claimed to me in interview that he was influenced by Mexican muralism, and we can read a direct similarity in the compostion of the Press House mural with Rivera's[157] These compositions, whilst not academically realistic, were not difficult to read. Like naive art, the graphic art of advertising or propaganda, or the Mexican murals, the use of symbols, visual references, and non-linear narratives, present(ed) narratives and information intended to be deciphered by laypeople. Art in public spaces was thus able to blur the distinctions of realism towards a more graphic readability, and where the formal language used was nonetheless not considered easy to decipher, the "colourful" and "cheerful" effect of the work in the built environment offered a form of compensation, even if the quality of the works as "art" was doubted by some residents.

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157 Neubert recounted: "In that one I was thinking more of painting. After that I was much freer. Because I put these things in the figure which nobody had dared to do. I was a bit inspired by the Mexican. The figure is a symbol for the working class (Arbeiterschaft). It was new to use these different proportions. Yes, at the time there was the critique when Womacka made his "belly belt" [Wandbild on Haus des Lehrers]. They said, "Neubert has in a single work achieved something which others still have not achieved", because it was my first mural... Walter had already done a whole range..." Conversation with the author, 2011

These examples in Halle Neustadt suggest that, regardless of the artist's expressive or intellectual impulse, there was a tolerance of anti-naturalism or lack of readability in murals which which had the latent function of enhancing the overall colour and countering the gridded forms of the built environment.

The limits of tolerance of "the new"

Where a work was not necessarily "unrealistic", but challenged normative categories, or contradicted the "uplifting" function, then tolerance was suspended. Fitzenreiter's "The Swimmer", which shows a stretched female torso which conformed neither to the conventions of bourgeois femininity, socialist motherhood, or of lightly androgynous socialist womanhood[158], (all of which were acceptable within the parameters of socialist realism)[159], had to be removed because "the protests of the residents were so great."[160] That this was probably not a protest against nudity itself, but rather the location, or the stretched form where the head is turned right away from the viewer, confounding both the conventions of the female nude in both art-historical or photo-erotic representations, is evidenced by the reception of other nudes. Gerhard Lichterfeld's[161] "Women Fountain"[162] commissioned in 1971 offers a collection of four voluptuous, well-built, female figures, ostensibly enjoying the water of the fountain and thus in turn coyly exposing each part of the female figure, in a setting of relaxation caused no such protests.

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158 Pictured above, top left and below.
159 Illustrations
160 The reason reported was that the residents found the plinth was much to high. This would suggest that the feeling was that the work was much too visible. Jackes suggests that it was the work itself in combination with its position and location which caused offence, a view which seems plausible in the light of the review of comments of residents on the art works. (note X), Anja Jackes, Kunstwerke in den Außenbereichen von Halle-Neustadt. Eine Dokumentation zur Planung von architekturgebundener und -bezogener Kunst und das Beispiel WK I, MA Dissertation Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Univ. Halle-Wittenberg 2005, p. 48. The sculpture was removed and later installed at the swimming pool "Angersdorfer Teiche."
161 installed in 1975, http://www.halle.de/de/kultur-tourismus/kultur-freizeit/index.aspx?RecID=983
162 Lichtenfeld was a leader in this genre of erotically connotated sculpture, but in the 1970s this theme became very popular, particularly for fountains, where the figures could be considered very much as "on display" rather than as sculptural figure studies. (illustrations)

These figures are not the "natural" unselfconscious nudes of East German visual erotic material, with the pretence of not being seen[163] but are clearly there to present the female body as a beautiful object of pleasurable contemplation or even a fantasy engagement.[164] They are not presented under a mythical guise as in Lichtenfeld's "Muses" in Halle town, (or Reinhardt Dietrich's Seven Sisters in Rostock)... they are simply "women". The fountain is topped by a fifth, her perfect breasts silhouetted against the sky[165]. The figures of the fountain, offered a fantasy image, which rather than being "realistic", or representing the emancipated model of East German womanhood such as "Die Chemikerin", or the sporting figure such as "Die Turnerin", again fell into the category of pleasurability, optimism, and easy readability, and at the same time lent additional respectabilty through its reference to Renaissance sculpture.

The search for "synthesis"

These relationships between art and the environmental complex had already taken on increasing importance in WK II and WKIII, which sought to move away from simply situating artworks within spaces. In WKI, the "complex" planning had been limited since the architecture was based on the pre-Paulick conceptions from Gröber which were already under construction before the artistic council was set up in 1965. For WK III, the artistic conception had been drawn up by the Dresden

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163 Josie McLellan, "Love in the time of Communism" pp CUP Cambridge 2011, Mc Lellan discusses the particularities of East German erotic photography in the East German popular review, "Das Magazin." pp180-188

164 This differentiation in the acceptable and the unacceptable female nude in the public spaces in East Germany has also been noted by Helga Möbius. Helga Möbius, "Zeichen für Vitalität und Schönheit. Frauenfiguren im städtischen Raum der DDR", in "Blick-Wechsel: Konstruktionen von Männlichkeit und Weiblichkeit in Kunst und Kunstgeschichte". Vorträge der 4. Kunsthistorikerinnen-Tagung, September 1988 in Berlin., Lindner, Ines, Sigrid Schade und Silke Wenk: Mobius also gives the example of residents protests' in Marzahn at Emerita Pansowova's somewhat androgynous "Schreitende" which was subject to so much vandalism that it had to be moved.

165 Apparently Lichterfeld had no budget left for the fifth nude so he used one he had existing, hence the proportional misfit. The figure on the top was also installed as "Tänzerin" in Karl Marx Stadt, completed in 1965 and positioned in front of the Schauspielhaus in 1980. von Gerhard Lichtenfeld. See: Weber, Irma G.: Variationen über ein Thema / Irma G. Weber. - In: Bildende Kunst. - Dresden 17 (1974)8, p. 428-431

PG "Kunst am Bau", who produced a more spatially oriented artistic conception to include open spaces based on the architectural plans[166]. The whole of WK III signified an attempt to re-work the serialised architecture into more interesting formations to avoid monotony, and as such was subject to particular critical attention[167]. However, the early involvement of the Dresden group, did not signify any increased influence of the artists on the actual architectural developments or spatial planning. At the same time, comments within the plans drawn up for the placement of works of art and design, suggested that it was difficult to know how to integrate the works of art, before the architecture had actually realised.[168]

At the same time artistic commission (künstlerische Beirat) struggled to keep up with the task as it became more complex, involving more than the commissioning of works of art, but also was hesitant in confirming the artistic programmes.[169] Initially charged with overseeing the translation of themes into works of art, the Beirat was now charged with solving whole complex of creative tasks had to be solved: colour planning, lighting and visual communication. The task which was emerging, to coordinate an arrange of artistic-ideological, and design-functional tasks in a way which assisted the forging and cohesion of socialist communities, was beyond its remit. In a report solicited by the Minister of Culture, Klaus Gysi, Kuban of the Bezirks Council in Halle reported that the Beirat was "overburdened in trying to deal with questions of complex environmental design", and consequently did not have enough time "for the necessary political ideological work with the artists."[170]

166 LHASA, M 514, Büro für Städtebau und Architektur, Nr. 4797, WK III, "Freiflächen und bildkünstlerische Gestaltung", (Open spaces and artistic design.) 1966–1968
167 See Weidner...
168 LHASA, M 514, Büro für Städtebau und Architektur, Nr. 4797, WK III, "Freiflächen und bildkünstlerische Gestaltung", (Open spaces and artistic design.) 1966–1968
169 Letter from Sigbert Fliegel, Rat des Bezirkes Halle, concerning the delays in confirming the artistic conception, 20. June, 1967, LHASA, MER, M 514, vorl. Nr 4791
170 Genosse Kuban, report to culture minister Klaus Gysi, 30.12.69, Berzirksleitung der SED, LHASA MER IV/B-2/9.02/704, p 137–141, here 141

An attempt at a modern synthesis of architecture, design and art in urban space: Sigbert Fliegel's conception for a dynamic programme and reception of artistic design.

With the development of each of the first three living complexes in Halle Neustadt there had been ever greater exertions towards an integration of works of art and functional design within the architectural plan. The fourth living complex was planned as a radical departure, both in terms of architectural planning and in the plan for the visual arts. There was heightened analysis at this time in the potential economies to be made in higher density building, more expensive to build, but offering long term cost savings – and WKIV was planned as an experiment in the use of tower block apartments.[171] The large majority of housing blocks until WKIV were composed of five to fourteen storeys[172]. At the same time, it was calculated that since WKIV was located next to the town centre of Halle Neustadt, it would not be necessary for it to have its own central facilities, an important cost saving. For the first time, there was an attempt to match the pioneering spirit in architecture with a radical re-conception for the art plan where not only the architecture, but the art and design would be optimised for "life processes" within the public space.[173] The architect of this new conception for the visual arts was Sigbert Fliegel, who had been working in the Halle Neustadt planning bureau under Paulick since 1966, and who was also responsible for the area "Thälmannplatz" in Halle, a central area, effectively the gateway to Halle Neustadt. For this space Fliegel and collective designed the monumental works "Faust" (Fist) and ""Fahne" (Flag), in concrete.

171 refs in Plan und Bau, DA etc
172 refs in Plan und Bau, DA etc
173 The collective for the plan for WKIV was led by architect Sigbert Fliegel and sculptor Kurt Grohmann. The idea was based on a dissertation which Fliegel was writing at the time but did not ever complete. (Information from Fliegel to the author.)The other members of the collective were Dziedzinksky / architect, Beinart / garden architect, Grohman / sculptor, Fleischmann / building sculptor, Schmied / painter, Neubert / painter, Weymar / art historian, Schwarz / garden architect, Zaglmeier / architect, and Kokott / engineer. BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV. P 2–3.

Fliegel was interested in finding a way in which the art and design functions could be optimised as a total experience, a complex of politics and pleasure which would animate people to societal engagement through their experiences of public space. By analysing the spatial relations and perspectives in the living complex and the movements of people within and to and from them, Fliegel argued that the artistic content could be optimised for the right audiences, and thus form "a total conception of the emotional experiences which are a part of urban design"[174] By carefully relating each work of art to the societal function of the building or space in which it would be placed, residents would be "inspire[d] [for] the participation in the forming of socialist life, and [become] enthusiastic about creative work in building of socialism."

The plan was intended as a framework, and although the actual works were not specified, there was considerable detail, for example giving themes, proposing artists and describing how the works would be reach "maximum effectiveness" on people. For example for the children's library a tapestry ("Object 25") was proposed which would be "sensitive influence of the spatial atmosphere", its thematic content would the "the future image of the socialist human community", and the creative principle would reproduce literature, active leisure time and self study. The artist Hildebrand was proposed, and the work was to be realistic and figurative[175]

This effectiveness of the works could be measured be in their creation of a socialist personality, in building consciousness, a creative spirit and heroism; they would signify the measure of the "creation of the socialist person: the truth about our way to the victory of socialism in the DDR and the overcoming of difficulties in the way of re-forming of life."[176]

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174 BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV
175 Ibid p.30
176 Ibid p 30

These emotional experiences were categorised in pairings as "urban–spatial, architectural–physical, chromatic–material, lighting design–fluidity", to which was added "planning of open spaces, landscape and the artistic design of experience". The design of the greenery was to be "so intensive, interesting and colourful that the blocks appear to "hang from the sky."[177] In the north, the areas would be quieter and more relaxing, with running water and connecting bridges to pedestrian areas, with fountains, artworks and small architecture, which would converge to the high density areas where the tower blocks were to be built.[178] The "effects" would be "meaningfully coordinated" to allow for an "intensification of the experiences" up to the "culmination area".[179]

The most radical element of Fliegel's conception was "Object 14". Using new projection and electronic technologies, images and film were to be projected on to ideally located architectural surfaces. There would be a "screenplay", "according to the appropriate ideological aims" with a long term programme. The uses for this integrated cinematic experience could range from "advertising, political agitation, festival design, documentaries which would serve the formation of consciousness, aesthetic and musical education, cinema film". In another location a ticker tape of text would be used for news and advertising. The effectiveness of these media would be particuarly useful for shift workers coming and going in the hours of darkness. The use of film as a mass medium of political and cultural education was not new, but that it should be an art form within the residential complex was completely radical. The use of film acknowledged that there was an evolution of communications within the socialist society, and challenged the unique authority of the art work as carrier of artistic ideological meaning within public space. The proposed uses of the film medium between news, entertainment, advertising, and fiction brought together the whole span of means of forming ideological

177 Ibid p 17
178 BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV p 17
179 Fliegel, Sigbert. "Kunstkonzeption: Wohnkomplexe in Halle Neustadt" ("Art conception, Living complexes in Halle Neustadt.") Architektur und Bildende Kunst, Special Issue p 12

consciousness within the public space. It was effectively a form of permanent outdoor television.

This conception was presented to the German Building Academy at the end of 1967,[180] and elaborated in a special edition of "Architecture and Art" published by the office of then chief architect, Karlheinz Schlesier in 1969.

In its more public presentation in 1969, Fliegel described designers (Gestalter) as the "trustees of society" who, in their artistic achievements, were "determined by institutions and emotions". It was necessary to find ways in which "the societal political set of tasks, the search for variants through the dialectical method of making decisions and the formulation of creative form, can lead to optimal compromise results." This convoluted formulation, aiming for an "optimal compromise" appears to refer to the necessity of artists, architects and commissioning bodies to be flexible in their demands and expectations, stretched as they were between economic targets and the creative interests of artists and architects. Fliegel urged a cooperative and collective approach. Thus, artists, together with other creative thinkers, and social scientists, psychologists should work together in the form of a collective in order to achieve a conception which took account of the life processes of people.[181] The artistic conception should be "based on the ensemble and the total effect... individualistic behaviour in the realisation of singular artistic tasks should be avoided."[182]

Fliegel did not use the term "Gesamtkunstwerk". The environment and its art was conceived as an emotional, stimulating experience, which would simultaneously underscore the socialist values. In his conversation with me in 2012, his enthusiasm and conviction was not in the least diminished – only a regret that, "today there is

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180 "Presented in accordance with the Statut Entwurf of the council for fine art and building art, Halle Neustadt, August 1967 § 3 2", BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV
181 Fliegel, Sigbert. "Kunstkonzeption: Wohnkomplexe in Halle Neustadt" ("Art conception, Living complexes in Halle Neustadt.") Architektur und Bildende Kunst, Special Issue p 12
182 Ibid

no unified concept of what people should experience and feel."[183] His ideal for an artistic and design conception matched the ideal of the architecture as an authoritive and positivist manifestation of economic and societal functions, and the optimisation of the fulfilment of those functions, which required not works of painting and sculpture added to the architectural space, but the cooperation of artists and designers in the entire urban plan. In conversation, Fliegel described this process, not intended as "indoctrination", but a kind of "choreography" as in the theatre, or analogous to the "editorial line" in a newspaper[184]. Fliegel was motivated by the idea of infusing the public spaces directly with a cultural and educational content to which residents could respond. This response was a means by which people would become "mitgestalter" (co-formers), rather than simply recipients of societal values. His idea "had its roots in the 1920s...inspired by the idea of Leninist monumental propaganda." Fliegel had read how Chinese army had used large white flags with Chinese characters on to teach people to read[185] and saw the artistic design of living complex as a way in which culture and information could be brought in a direct way to people.

The conception presented by Fliegel and his collective was groundbreaking in several specific ways. Not only did it emphasise the "emotional experience" of the urban space – a radical shift from the calculations on economy and functionality that preoccupied the planners, but it also took on the theme which the living complex had been assigned of "art, science and literature" and proposed, not a literal translation and visualisation, but a metaphorical equivalence. Art and science were to be expressed through the coherence of "spirit" or "intellect" (*Geist*) and "power", or "force", (*Macht*), as a prerequisite of socialist cultural development[186] – the interpretation of which was to be left to the creativity of the artist.[187]

183 Interview with Fliegel by the author, 01.08.2012.
184 Ibid
185 Ibid
186 BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV p 29
187 BArch DH2/PLAN 2854, 1971, Bildkunstlerische Konzeption WK IV p 28

Fliegel moved on from his post at Halle Neustadt before he could nurture his conception to fruition. The re-worked conception for WKIV published in November 1969[188] took on board many of the original ideas, particularly the need to involve all aspects of art and design within the early planning stage – "colour design, light design, advertising, open space design, and works of art" were also planned in the new conception as having "directive character", "complexly designed from the urban spatial concept on the basis of political-ideological and artistic objectives as well as on the material and technical basis." There was no further mention of the open-air film projections or news ticker tape. However this was in all likelihood due to the technological and organisational limitations of the coordinating committees.

The move towards for a more visually communicative approach to the urban design was also present in the ideas discussed in neighbouring Merseburg in 1968 (part of the Halle Bezirk). The Merseburg group led by Gustav Waschkowitz[189] and Krüger[190] proposed a whole range of new carriers for artistic-ideological ideas which could draw on new technologies: a central clock with sounds and music, combined with birdsong sounds ("just as in earlier times wonderful town centre clocks pulled hundreds of people together"), flower clocks for example light pieces, every type of water design. "Litfaßäule"(advertising columns) previously used for advertisting should be restored for artistic designs and agitation. Even volunteers might have some ideas, the memo suggested. The idea of outdoor television projection was also mooted "as suggested by Fliegel" for for WKIV, but had "not

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188 "Zielstellung für die komplexe Umweltkonzeption des Wohnkomplexes IV" ("Objectives for the complex environmental design of Living Complex IV") The new concept was led by Harald Zaglmaier, deputy to the chief architect. Notably the composition included more design disciplines than in the 1965-66 collectives.The collective was composed of representatives of the office of urbanism and architecture of Halle Neustadt, (Zaglmeier, architects. Ebert, Czysch, Dietel, Khurana, garden engineer, Beinert, light designer, Buschendorf), representatives of the VBKD-Halle, (designer, Graul, painters Enge and Schwarz, form designer, Amende, sculptor, Michael), representatives of the Wohnungsbaukombinat, (garden designer, Schwarz, colour designer, Otto, architects Morgner and Menzel) and the contract-giver, Siedel from the HAG. (Hauptauftraggeber). LHASA, MER, P 516, IV/ B–2/ 9.02 / 703.
189 1.Sekretär der Kreisleitung der SED Meseburg
190 Brandt, Edith "Aktenvermerk über die Besprechung mit Gen. Waschkowitz und Krüger, Kreisleitung Merserburg, betr. Künstlerische Ausgestaltung des Rekonstruktiongebiets". (Memorandum on the discussion with comrades Waschkowitz and Krüger, local leadership of Merseburg, concerning the artistic design of the area of reconstruction.) 23.09.68; Letter from Edith Brandt to Genosse Schwarz, Merseburg. 24.09.68, both, LHASA, MER, P 516, IV/ B–2/ 9.02 / 701

been solved technically." Further, Waschkowitz had observed in Salawa in Baschkirien (USSR), the use of the house gables in the entrance to the city as giant posters– perhaps there were posters in the archives that could be enlarged onto entire walls in Merseburg too.

The idea of using existing house gables for poster like art (these would have been original building fabric, not new buidings) anticipated what was to become a designer-led solution to the poor condition of buildings in Leipzig and Berlin in the 1970s and 1980s. The conception was very different to the idea of a synthesis of art and architecture: the idea was rather that poor building substance could be made more cheerful through monumental poster images. The "cache misère" function of art was the converse of "synthesis". The ideas of the colleagues in Merseberg all anticipated new functions for art in public space which emphasised the compensatory function, and the integration of art within functional elements of urban design, and were symptomatic of a shift in mood amongst many planners, designers and artists at the end of the 1960s.

6.

Monumentality and Complexity.

The 1960s witnessed struggles between Realists and Functionalists in which public art acted as a kind of ideological glue which could hold these conservative and progressive tendencies together. This chapter looks at the way in which doubts about the functionalist orientated planning of the construction of the latter 1960s ushered a re-assertion of the importance of art which was taken up with enthusiasm by artists in Halle led by Willi Sitte. Complex Environmental Design was absorbed into official rhetoric as the principle of interdisciplinarity, but at the same time there was a re-assertion from the Politbüro of the importance of the monumental.

For all the promise which the construction projects of the latter 1960s seemed to hold, it seems there was uncertainity about the results which were emerging. The assessments of Halle Neustadt, even as it was celebrated, were full of the same doubts about the formation of social life in the town which had emerged in Hoyerswerda.[1] The answer to the perenial question of monotony (whether this refered to a primarily visual condition or social condition was not usually specified), was to bring in more specialists, to have a "complex" approach to planning,[2] and,

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[1] For example, the commemorative book, "Städte machen Leute : Streifzüge durch eine neue Stadt" ("Towns make People: explorations through a new town,"), Werner Bräunig, Peter Gosse, Gerald Große, Jan Koplowitz, Sigrid Schmidt, Hans-Jürgen Steinmann,1934-1976 Halle (Saale) : Mitteldt. Verl. ; 1969. In spite of its general enthusiasm it asked how would people "live" (leben) and not simply "reside" (wohnen) in Halle Neustadt ; how would Halle Neustadt grow as a collective social entity, how would "spiritual cultural life" develop beyond "a string of good examples?"

2 Horst Siegel, Deputy to the Chief architect of Halle Neustadt", "Die Wohnkomplexe" ("The Living Complexes") DA 4/1967, pp 217–223. Richard Paulick, the chief architect also claimed that the emphasis on technology had led to monotony. Paulick, Richard, DA 4/1967, "Die Städtebauliche Planung für die Aufbau der Chemiarbeiterstadt",

according to Halle Neustadt's chief architect, to achieve a "genuine unity of art and architecture." [3]

The Politbüro reacted to this climate of uncertainity by reasserting the need for socialist distinctiveness and monumentality, as well as a greater role for artists. At the same time tensions between architects, artists, critics and the contract-givers, were aired in public within which systemic critiques were also enfolded.

The twentieth anniversary of the founding of the GDR was to have particular significance for the presentation of the achievements of socialism to the outside world, in this system which marked its forward progress through an ever growing calender of historical markers. The 7th October 1969 was set as a deadline for the completion of the major showcase works what we can call socialist Modernism. Regionally and nationally, exhibitions of the city planning, architecture and art of Halle Neustadt and the re-constructed town centres, stood not only as a metaphor for socialist power and progress, but specifically for the success of the modernisation of the Ulbricht era. A brief look at the political circumstances also explains why so much was at stake.

The instability on the international political stage at the end of the 1960s with anti-Capitalist and anti-Vietnam war demonstrations in the West in the summer of 1968, provided ample material for the shoring up of socialism domestically.[4] In August of the same year, East German artists and intellectuals were invited and pressurised to uphold the "assistance measures" in Prague, as the Soviet-led military intervention in August 1968, which terminated the the period of liberalisation under

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3 Paulick, Richard, DA 4/1967, "Die Städtebauliche Planung für die Aufbau der Chemiarbeiterstadt", (), here p. 209

4 These events were prominent in the East German media. Solidarity with the people of Vietnam went well beyond political ritualisation in the GDR and also became an important subject for artists. See Kenzler, Marcus: Der Blick in die andere Welt: Einflüsse Lateinamerikas, pp 300-306.

Dubček was officially termed.[5] Domestically, Ulbricht was under pressure: his economic reform course known as the New Economic System (NÖS), which de-centralised economic decision-making, and introduced mechanisms of competition was gradually abandoned;[6] behind the scenes, Honecker sought to de-stabilise Ulbricht's postion by manouvering himself into favour with the Soviet leadership, and was eventually in 1970 able to exploit the differences between Ulbricht and the politbüro in Moscow over German-German relations[7].

The VIIth Party congress in April 1967 which preceded the twentieth anniversary celebrations,[8] in the event was Ulbricht's last. He used the VII congress to signal a new course for art. In essence, the case that was argued, was that as a result of the scientific revolution, and the higher level of educational attainment, people were ready for more sophisticated art. In November of that year, a resolution on "The Tasks of Culture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community," stated that as a consequence of the "unprecedented boost in intellectual life and the scientific technical revolution – including the field of ideology, spiritual and cultural life,"[9] there was a much higher intellectual and aesthetic awareness, which required

5 On the international stage, leading artists and critics publically defended the GDR's official positions. Reportedly, amongst the prominent designers and artists: Klaus Wittkugel and Gerhard Voigt in ICOGRADA in Holland, Peter Feist and Jutta Schmidt in AIAC in Bordeaux, and Wolfgang Frankenstein in an AIAP seminar, and within the GDR, Peter Feist and Willi Sitte and Wolfgang Hütt at the 10th Darmstadter Gesprächen". Summary of responses to the events in Prague by Koll. Obst, in "Zweite erweiterte Beratung der ZSL Gebrauchsgrafik, Halle, 03. – 04.12.1968", VBK Zentralvorstand – 5872, Archiv der AdK Berlin, pp 9–10; In his autobiography Sitte describes the discomfort felt by himself and colleagues, Hütt and Feist, where he felt they were "used as punchbags" (by the Western media). Sitte, "Farbe und Folgen", p 140-141; Robert Havemann, Wolf Biermann, Stephan Heym, Brigitte Reimann were among the few who resisted pressure to declare solidarity with the "Hilfsmassnahmen" (assistance measures). See Eisenfeld Bernd, "Hoffnung, Widerstand, Resignation: "Die Auswirkungen des »Prager Frühlings« und seiner Zerstörung in der DDR", Deutschland Archiv: Zeitschrift für das vereinigte Deutschland, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Heft 5/2003, pp 789-807.
6 The second (1965) and third phase (1967, when it was re-named "The economic system of socialism"), re-introduced greater centralism in economic policy, reflecting the growing influence of the conservative grouping around Honecker. See Griede, Peter "The East German Leadership, 1946-73: Conflict and Crisis", pp 164–165, MUP, Manchester, 1999
7 (Context of Brandt's Ostpolitik) See, for example; Griede, Peter "The East German Leadership, 1946-73: Conflict and Crisis", pp 160-183; Maier, Charles S, "Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany", (Princeton, 1997), pp 67-69.
8 17th–22nd April, 1967
9 "Die Aufgaben der Kultur bei der Entwicklung der sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft" ("The Tasks of Culture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community.") Resolution of the State Council of the

"new forms to satisfy the ever increasing aesthetic needs"[10] It was the task of artists to meet this higher educational and aesthetic level. In these new conditions the purpose of the Bitterfeld Weg was to allow for the "accomplishment of new positions in art and life through Socialist Realism"[11]. The way was open to artists to create "works with a distinctive artistic signature, a range of styles, and variety of themes..."[12] Ulbricht also used the resolution to claim that the GDR was "soon to overtake the Federal Republic,"[13] which had nothing to offer in art and architecture but "loss of beauty, the cult of the primitive and the ugly, and the dehumanizing of people"[14], The developed societal system of socialism was "getting closer to that time in which man – in the words of Marx – begins to 'create his environment in accordance with the laws of beauty'..." [15]

In spite of Ulbricht's affirmation of the increasing beauty of the GDR society and its built environment, there was concern at the highest level that the new urban spaces of the town centres and residential complexes required a greater disctinctiveness from the architecture produced in the capitalist West. The importance of monumental art in the ideological struggle between socialism and capitalism was proposed as a primary means of determining this distinctiveness,

German Democratic Republic, 30. November, 1967, Dokumente zur Kunst, Literatur- und Kulturpolitik der SED, Ed Elimar Schubbe, Seewald, Stuttgart, 1972, pp 1310–1315, p. 1311

10 Die Aufgaben der Kultur bei der Entwicklung der sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft" ("The Tasks of Cuture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community.") Resolution of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, 30. November, 1967, Dokumente zur Kunst, Literatur- und Kulturpolitik der SED, Ed Elimar Schubbe, Seewald, Stuttgart, 1972, pp 1310–1315, p. 1312

11 Die Aufgaben der Kultur bei der Entwicklung der sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft" ("The Tasks of Cuture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community.") Resolution of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, 30. November, 1967, Dokumente zur Kunst, Literatur- und Kulturpolitik der SED, Ed Elimar Schubbe, Seewald, Stuttgart, 1972, pp 1310–1315, p. 1314

12 Die Aufgaben der Kultur bei der Entwicklung der sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft" ("The Tasks of Cuture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community.") Resolution of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, 30. November, 1967, Dokumente zur Kunst, Literatur- und Kulturpolitik der SED, Ed Elimar Schubbe, Seewald, Stuttgart, 1972, pp 1310–1315, p. 1313

13 Ibid

14 Ibid

15 "Die Aufgaben der Kultur bei der Entwicklung der sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft" ("The Tasks of Cuture in the Development of the Socialist Human Community.") Resolution of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, 30. November, 1967, Dokumente zur Kunst, Literatur- und Kulturpolitik der SED, Ed Eimer Schuppe, Seewald, Stuttgart, 1972, pp 1310–1315, here p 1314

and this assertion of the monumental was to be a source of tension in the following months.

The November 1967 resolution was followed by several appeals directly from the Politbüro to artists and architects in anticipation of the October 1969 anniversary, revealing a nervousness about the new architectural ensembles. A series of Politbüro exhortations suggested that the preliminary results for the urban reconstruction and new constructions were found to be lacking, and in need of more socialist and artistic content and appearance. Artists, landscape planners and colour designers, should be much more actively recruited into the process of the formation of urban construction. Stressing both the importance of monumentality, and the range of visual artistic practices, Ulbricht wrote a direct appeal to the head of the *Bund der Architekten* (Union of Architects), "Make our socialist fatherland more beautiful and more attractive."[16]

"More than ever is is necessary, by means of building art to contribute to the search of our citizens of our state for a culture full life in beautiful towns and villages, to deepen their pride in the socialist home and to increase the growing international respect for our republic."[17]

The Deutsche Bauakademie was pressed upon to be more active in its partnership with the VBKD, to find practical ways of working together, in order to "bring architecture and art together in a genuine synthesis on the basis of industrialised building."

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16 Ulbricht, Walter "Unser sozialistisches Vaterland schöner und anziehender gestalten. Schrieben des 1. Secretärs des ZK der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR an President of the DBA" Supplement DA1/1968
[17] Letter from Ulbricht to president of the DBA Edmund Collein, Sonderbeilage DA1/1970

Kurt Hager[18] pressed home this point to the ZK in January 1968, insisting that "a GDR typical socialist architecture" must be "an inseparable unity between the mastery of the scientific technical revolution and the development of Socialist Realism" which could only be achieved through the "complex intereffectiveness of architects with scientists, economists, technologists, engineers, innovators and not least artists." [19]

This was followed in April by a new directive from the Politbüro co-signed by Ulbricht and Willi Stolph, which was intended to ensure that the the October 1969 anniversary would be properly reflected by a distinctiveness in the architecture. Again, the work of artists was called upon, "alongside all involved forces, to be included in a systematic socialist communal work", and further there was a call to integrate any existing valuable building fabric into the new town centres, to "take account of "specific characteristics and traditions [and form a].. clear, politically founded... indistinguishable design."[20]

These late calls for socialist distinctiveness, artistic quality, interdisciplinary working, and the incorporation of valuable building fabric into the new city centres and urban conglomerations, absorb the ideas of complexity, and an interdisciplinary approach, whilst at the same time insisting on the "synthesis" of art and architecture and the importance of monumentality. It is necessary here to provide the background to the concepts of monumentality, and complexity, as they emerged in this hybrid form in the memos sent out by the Politbüro in 1968 and 1969.

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18 1954 wurde er Mitglied und 1955 Sekretär des Zentralkomitees der SED. In dieser Funktion war er verantwortlich für Wissenschaft, Volksbildung und Kultur. 1959 wurde er Kandidat und 1963 Mitglied des Politbüros des ZK der SED und Leiter der Ideologischen Kommission des Politbüros
19 Hager, Kurt, speech to the 4. Tagung der ZK der SED made on 30th January 1968, "Ideologische Probleme des Städtebaus und der Architektur." ("Ideological Problems of Urbanism and Architecture") reproduced in BK 1968/4, pp 210–211
20 Direktiv des Politbüro des ZK der SED und des Ministerrates der DDR über die weitere Arbeit an der städtebauliche und architektonische Gestaltung der wichtigsten Stadtzentrenund Siedlungsschwerpunkte in Vorbereitung des 20. JT der DDR. ADK-O 0652

The problem of monumentality and the representation of "socialist greatness" had accompanied the convoluted development for the artistic design of Berlin as early as 1950. The original 1950 urban plan for the centre of Berlin was designed to "give expression to the strength and power of the will to reconstruction and the great future of Germany through monumental buildings."[21] The "Lustgarten" around the ruins of the Schloss was planned for mass demonstrations and displays of socialist loyalty. The 1950s plans for a trinity of a central building, faced by a central square, in which a monument of Karl Marx was to sit, reached by a central axis[22] was continually stalled and eventually abandoned. Nonetheless, the artistic committee[23] ("Arbeitskreis Bildende Künste im Stadtraum"), established in 1964, was unable or unwilling to go beyond listing a hierarchy of heroes, whose statues should be situated in the street or space which respectively bore their name– in spite of protests from some artists that this was a 19th century approach to honouring heroes.[24] However, by 1967, the artistic plan[25] for Alexanderplatz which was to become the focus of attention for the 1969 GDR twentieth anniversary celebrations, had shifted substantially from monumental heroism to a concept entitled *Berliner Luft*[26] (Berlin Air). In this plan, the entire socialist narrative of the triumph of the working classes as enabled by heroic thinkers and leaders dissolved into pleasant vignettes of everyday life; historical and local narratives with gestures to other lands and peoples. This concept was subsequently overturned by Paul Verner, SED First Secretary in Berlin, in February 1968 as a result of the reassertion of

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21 See Walter Ulbricht: "Die Grossbauten um Fünfjahrplan". Rede auf dem III Parteitag der SED, in Neues Deutschland 23.07.1950.
22 "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin – Zur räumlichen Inszenierung sozialistischer Zentralität", Bruno Flierl, in *Kunstdokumentation SBZ/DDR 1945-1990 : Aufsätze, Berichte, Materialien*, published by Günter Feist et al, Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1996. pp 128–139
23 Present: Barthe, Ministry of Culture, Maier, Ministry of Culture, Lüdecke, Deutsche Akademie der Künste, Josten, H. Schmidt (Deutsche Bauakademie), Womacka (Verband der Bildende Künste), Kres (Magistrat Gross Berlin), Erdmann, (Magistrat Gross Berlin), Allbrecht (Magistrat Gross Berlin), and Kern (Berlin SED leadership) BArch/ DH/2/2/387 Arbeitskreis Bildende Künste im Stadtraum, unpaginated
24 Ibid
25 Working on this concept were: Chief architect of Berlin, Näther, from the Verband der Bildende Künstler: Hans Kies, Frank Glaser, Wieland Forster, Inge Hützinger, Karl Lemke, Ludwig Engelhardt, Dieter Gantz, Hans Vent; from the Bezirksleitung SED: Kern; from the Magistrat Department of Culture, Erdmann; from the BMK Ingieneur Hochbau Prasser, Matthes, Bankert, Berlin, 1.12.67, LArch C-Rep 110-03 Nr 30
26 Investment Consortium Alexanderplatz, Concept for artistic imagery, Berlin, 1.12.67, LArch C-Rep 110-03 Nr 30

monumentality which was being reasserted by the Politbüro.[27] Verner spent seven hours impressing on the Berlin Artistic Council (künstlerische Beirat) the importance of "the expression of the great themes of our times, the dominance of our socialist order."[28] In spite of artists' protests against what they regarded as bombastic art, the *Berliner Luft* concept was abandoned. Although the final concept for Alexanderplatz[29], devised by Walter Womacka at Verner's request, promised to "give expression to the greatness of our times"[30] relinquished many of the elements of *Berliner Luft,* and promised a central monument into which just about every founding narrative of the GDR from the triumph over fascism to the rubble women was to be incorporated,[31] in its final realisation Alexanderplatz bore no monumental sculpture[32]. This requirement was finally settled a kilometre east of Alexanderplatz with the unveiling of the Lenin Monument in 1970 by Russian sculptor, Nikolai Tomski, on the occasion of Lenin's centenary.

27 The debate which became a focus of the controversial Deutsche Akademie der Künste meeting in 1968 (previous chapter) resulted from a politburo led assertion for monumental sculpture as against Complex Environmental Design. "In the assessment of the VI art exhibition... in spring 1968 there was an extensive discussion on weltanschauliche and artistic questions, the clarification of which was necessary for the mastery of monumental artistic intention. Amongst some artists and sculptors there were at first reservations and false attitudes, resulting from insufficiently developed Marxist-Leninist historical consciousness and from a lack of understanding for the historical content of the revolutionary transformation in the GDR." Rechenschaftsberichts des Zentralvorstands zum VI congress, AdK, VBK-Zentralvorstand 905,
28 The basis for Verner's assertion of the monumental was the 5th Tagung of the Staatsrates (5th congress of the state council). Reported in *Neues Deutschland* "Architektur und monumental Kunst", 14 02 68, p.4
29 Konzeption für die bildkünstlerische Gestaltung der Freiflächen des Alexanderplatzes, Kunsthochschule Berlin, Praxisbeziehungen, Projekte etc., 1965-75, LArch, C Rep 711 Nr 148
30 Konzeption für die bildkünstlerische Gestaltung der Freiflächen des Alexanderplatzes, Kunsthochschule Berlin, Praxisbeziehungen, Projekte etc., 1965-75, LArch, C Rep 711 Nr 148
31 According to the plan (The central monument has as its main theme: "The socialist human community makes its world" and is to incorporate the following motifs: the triumph over Fascism, a griever, the resistance movement and its victims, reconstruction and the rubble women, the new creative production of people, the trades of bricklayer, cement builder, welder. The humanistic character of the first German peace state symbolised by mother and child in relief. On top there is to be a waving flag, on one side, a symbol of economic, political and spiritual power and unity of workers, and on the other side the personalities of the socialist society.
32 The artistic landmarks of the Platz were Womacka's Freundschaft Brunnen and Erich John's Weltuhr.

Aside from these periodic assertions of the need for monumental statues, or the large scale historical statements on some of the major state buildings[33], there were few works of art in public space in the GDR that could be considered bombastic or directly agitational. The continual cycle of reassertion of the need for a visible monumental greatness through traditional means such as statues of heroes, and then re-planning around more human scale and decorative and functional landmarks, which offered spaces for communication, signifies the tension around the art of major representative spaces. There needed to be unequivocal socialist statements and expressions of power, whilst at the same time there was an understanding of the value of spaces for communication and sociability.

The theoretical development of "Complex Environmental Design."

The idea of complexity and interdisciplinarity which had reached the discourse of Politburo members did not arise from high level policy decisions, but were derived the theoretical foundation which had been worked on by the research group around Hans Schmidt and Bruno Flierl at the Institute for Theory and History at the Deutsche Bauakademie. Their researches were to counter the conservative view of *Baukunst* (architecture as an art form, with the artistic content carrying the ideological value) with a "scientific" understanding of architecture, applying sociological models as well as cybernetics[34] and systems theory. In 1967 they published a working document, "Contributions to Architectural research, Architecture and Art."[35] The overriding idea of the "Contributions" was that architecture was part of a whole system, and was a partial system within the

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33 For example, Walter Womackas, "Unsere Leben" on Haus des Lehrers, his Cosmonaut on the Haus des Reisens, at Alexanderplatz, his stained glass works for the Staatsratgebaude. In Dresden, Bondzin's "Way to the Red Flag" on the Kulturpalast, in Leipzig, Frank Ruddigers (etc) relief on the university building, in Karl Marx Stadt the Karl Marx bust.
34 For a discussion on the reception of cybernetics in the GDR see: Jérôme Segal, "Kybernetik in der DDR - dialektische Beziehungen", in Cybernetics - Kybernetic - The Macy Conferences 1946-1953, Essays & Dokumente, Claus Pias (Ed.), diaphanes, Zürich-Berlin, 2004, pp. 227-251 and Jérôme Segal, "Kybernetik in der DDR - Begegnung mit der marxistischen Ideologie", Dresdner Beitraegen zur Geschichte der Technik und der Technikwissenschaften, 27, 2001, pp. 47-75
[35] "Beiträge zur architekturtheoretischen Forschung: Diskussionsmaterial" (Institut für Städtebau und Architektur, Berlin, 1967)

totality of the "complex interrelationships between architecture, society, and other specific fields of social activity (production, economy, technology, culture, art etc)."[36] The "Contributions" sought scientific theories, which would be applicable to different societal forms, but which in their societal specificity for the GDR necessarily were founded on a Marxist-Leninist model. Therefore, the definition of architecture within the given socialist societal relations of necessity had to locate the ideological content of architecture.

As art was a primary carrier of ideology within the built environment in the "synthesis" model, art had to be an integral part of this re-conception: the thinking was distinct from the attempt to identify an scientific, objective, functional basis for architecture in the sense of the ABC manifestos, or late Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer. This is a critical point, because it helps to explain the ongoing and essential role of art within the built environment, which Bruno Flierl in particular sought to scientifically theorise. The presence of art, and the artistic nature of the built environment were highly charged political questions, given that the idea of a purely "functionalist" architecture was viewed as potentially de-ideologised, Flierl explained the function of works of art within architecture, as "subsystems". Architecture itself was to be a subsystem, within the "built environment for socialist life." The key point to emerge from these ideas was the separation of the ideological function of architecture from its material manifestation. The important concept which established itself in these theoretical contributions was the "environment", the "socialist environment". By re-locating socialist content to a socially defined idea of the environment as the locus of the social production of socialist meaning, architecture itself was free to take any form within its social functions. The function of the works of art within the socialist built environment, nonetheless still had to be defined:

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36 Alfred Schwandt 'Object and method of Marxist architectural theory.' "Beiträge zur architekturtheoretischen Forschung

"The effectiveness of art is within the constructions of public space is in interplay with architecture. It adds ideal and aesthetic meaning to it, which it would not otherwise have. In enriching the environment of people, it lends architecture additional intellectual and cultural meaning. It follows from the fact that the integration of art into the built spatial environment is determined by the relevant overarching system and must be prepared by that system.

However, these internally published theories were destined to reach only a small audience in and around the institutions which published them, and thus Flierl too sought to bring the ideas within *Contributions* to a wider public, and in particular to artists, who, had not formed any active research groups, relying more on loose networks of individual artists (for example Raum, Cremer and Heisig at the Vth Artists Congress) and sporadic resistance to cultural policy. Within the artists' institutions the focus of discussion was always on the practical problems of involving artists in architectural contracts. Public art, whether murals, ornament, sculpture or modular forms, and its material or formal properties were not problematised. Flierl elaborated on his theory that the two disciplines of art and architecture were subsystems within the larger societal system of socialism in the April 1968 issue of *Bildende Kunst*[37] and then at a special plenum of the Deutsche Akademie der Künste in May 1968 called to discuss "questions of art and architecture,"[38] an occasion which brought Flierl once more into dangerous political waters.

Flierl used the conference, a "non public working conference,"[39] to present his ideas on the role of the "socialist human community" in the formation of the built

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37 Flierl, Bruno "Zur Diskussion gestellt: synthese von Architektur und Bildende Kunst im Wandeln." (For Discussion, Synthesis of architecture and art in transformation) (based on the "Contributions to Architectural research, Architecture and Art", published as a Discussion Material by the Department of Theory in the Institute for Urbanism and Architecture of the Deutsche Bauakademie, Berlin, 1967) BK 1968/4, p. 211-214

38 Plenartagung der Deutschen Akademie der Künste am 31.5.1968 zu Fragen der bildende Kunst und Architektur. (Meeting of the German Academy of the Arts on 31.5.1968 on questions of art and architecture.) ADK-O 0652

39 The meeting was opened by Konrad Wolf (the film director) and the delegates consisted of 27 members of the ADK, 13 staff member, and 22 guests who included Paulick, Fliegel, and Bach to speak about the experience of working with artists in Halle Neustadt. The other main delegates were Building Ministry Deputy, Richhorn, Barthke, Alfred Schubert (SED), Lammert, Olbrich, Kuhirt, Gerhardt Schmidt, Wiese, Frankenstein, Woyski, Wittkügel and ADK-O 0652, p.53–54

environment and its art, with a particular focus on the plans for the Lenin and Karl Marx monuments in Berlin, of which Flierl was highly critical. Using a series of diagrams, he demonstrated the overbearing impact these monumental busts would have in public space. Several artists at the conference, most vocally the sculptor, Fritz Cremer, for the gigantesque gesture, with either Soviet or National Socialist connotations.

Flierl went on to advance his theory of Complex Environmental Design. He proposed that art and architecture were "only two elements in the socialist Complex Environmental Design" and "only two elements in the complex of intellectual or spiritural cultural communication,"[40] thus establishing the importance of art alongside architecture, whilst at the same time relativising its significance in relation to the the complex system of design, communication and society.

Flierl's paper developed the ideas from the "Contributions", as well as his criticisms of the literal translations of socialist ideology in to art works, and argued for a more interpretive representation of the ideas of socialism than through the monumental figuration of its heroes[41]. Flierl rejected the established notion of a synthesis of architecture with art, which was not possible since art and architecture functioned in different ways. The functioning of architecture was determined through "complex material-ideal and practical-utilitarian and intellectual or spiritual cultural communication", whilst art was determined "only by intellectual or spiritual cultural communication."[42] In other words there was no utilitarian function for art and therefore it made no sense to search for a synthesis. Furthermore, Flierl, sought to

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40 Introductory statement given by Konrad Wolf, based on Flierl's text. ADK-O 0652, p. 58
41 P 80-84
42 Bruno Flierl, presentation, special plenary meeting on the problems of architecture and art and the German Academy of Arts, 31.05.1968, ADK-O 0652, p. 65

correct the idea that art should provide the expression for architecture, since content was derived from life, not the physical artefact.[43]

Alfred Kurella opposed Flierl's ideas, insisting that historically, before their separation and commodification under Capitalism, art and architecture were in synthesis, and that it was also possible to achieve this in the new technological conditions.[44] He rejected Flierl's understanding as "an extension of functionalism on to urbanism."[45] "Ninety-eight percent of the time the person experiences architecture not as function but as visual experience, spatial experience."[46] Whilst it was minuted that most in the room seemed not to agree with Kurella, when the official report was produced, the only mention of Flierl's entire contribution was described as "the system theoretical views [which] only point to theoretical solutions, but in the form they were given did not give anything new that is not already known."[47]

The ommission of Flierl's entire contribution, which was the basis for most of the discussion, was the result of a Politbüro level intervention. The content of Flierl's paper had been reported to the Building Ministry back by Vice President of the Academy, Hans Rodenburg,[48] as "destructive"[49]. Building minister, Wolfgang Junker, in turn accused Ule Lammert, vice president of the Deutsche Bauakademie, where Flierl was employed, of promoting ideas which contravened cultural policy[50]. Flierl immediately recognised the potentially explosive potential of the accusation and hastily expressed his allegiance with the Bauakademie, distancing himself from

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43 Bruno Flierl, presentation, special plenary meeting on the problems of architecture and art and the German Academy of Arts, 31.05.1968, ADK-O 0652, p. 66
44 Kurella, Alfred, comments on Flierl, ADK-O 0652, p. 26
45 Ibid, p 104
46 Ibid, ADK-O 0652, p 105
47 Information on the Plenartagung, p 25
48 Hans Rodenberg, film and theatre director and from 1969–1974, Vizepräsident der Akademie der Künste,
49 Confidential Memo by Hossinger, head of the ADK, on a meeting with Lammert, Vice president of the DBA, presented to Konrad Wolf. Berlin 29 07 68, The correspondance suggests that this was not a conscious sabbotage on the part Rodenberg. ADK-O 0652 , pp 28–29
50 Protocol of a call from Lammert of the DBA to Hossinger of the DAK 12.07.68, ADK-O 0652, p. 21

the Akademie der Künste, and requested that his contribution should not be published, since it just represented his personal opinions.[51]

The significance of these raised temperatures is that whilst the parameters set out for the advancement of a socialist theory on the built environment required theorists such as Flierl in order to progress in line with the state resolution on the development of the advanced socialist society, and in order to break out of the dilemma of giving ideological content to architecture, if such advances appeared too critical of the authority of the Central Committee or appeared to propose a form of democratisation through the raising the interests of the "societal person", then they were immediately halted. The nervousness caused by the domestic and international political circumstances refered to at the beginning of this chapter may have contributed to this sharp reaction.

In spite of Kurella's challenge to Flierl, the basic conception of "Complex Environmental Design" was clearly established at this conference, and equally became orthodoxy within the Verband der Bildender Künstler, in the sense of integrating all aspects of the design of the environment from art and architecture, to open spaces, greenery, colour, small architecture, visual communication and advertising within an environmental conception. However, the second part of the equation of the conception of "Complex Environmental Design" as a dynamic and socially participatory process was not established. Complex Environmental Design offered a way out of the problem of "monotony", and created new roles for artists and designers. The problematic aspect came in the subtle challenge to the authority of the Party (and thus all organisations in the GDR) as the sole representative of the interests of the population.

Flierl's contribution was a response to the very questions being asked about Halle Neustadt, for example in about the formation of social life and "milieu" within the

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51 Letter from Flierl to Hossinger, director of the DAK 09.07.68, ADK-O 0652, p. 20

planned socialist town. His research opened up the question of who makes the town, and how, and in his discussions on the Lenin and Marx monuments, how should socialism be physically and artistically manifested, just at the point when senior Politbüro members were distributing memos on the importance of monumentality and the socialist distinctiveness of the built environment.

The ambivalent readings of Complex Environmental Design was also evident in the main addresses given at the 1970 Congress of the Verband der Bildende Künstler which had "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design"[52] as its central theme. Whilst Flierl's ideas on monumentality were rejected in the opening address by Klaus Gysi, the Minister for Culture, the idea of interdisciplinarity was embraced.

Minister of Culture, Klaus Gysi's opening address, was a combative and often bombastic re-assertion of the separate and singular artistic development in Socialist Realism, an insistence on the centrality of "monumentality" and "beauty" ("the aesthetic evaluation of reality as the highest form of *Parteilichkeit*"[53]) in socialist art, and a firm rejection of "convergence theory."[54] Gysi re-claimed the importance of the monumental, saying there was a danger of losing sight of the task of monumental art, and tendencies were evident in which "to reduce to structural questions the clarification of ideological and artistic questions of monumental art and the synthesis of building art and image art and thus de-value Socialist Realism." [55]

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52 "Information to all members and candiadates of the Politbüro on the VI. Verbandskongreß" 28. – 30.04.1970 in Berliner Kongresshalle am Alex, (confidential report on the conference, signed Rossow) 02.06.1970, AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469)
53 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), p. 36
54 p 26
55 Klaus Gysi speech at the VI. Verbandskongreß 28. – 30.04.1970, AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), p 13

The address of the President of the Verband, Gerhard Bondzin, which followed, re-affirmed the centrality of monumental, but much of the address was taken up with setting out the tasks of Complex Environmental Design.[56] The design of cities and complexes was increasingly important "for the formation of the socialist way of life."[57] – the conception of the city as the built environment for socialist life promoted by Flierl, Schmidt and others was thus acknowledged:

"Socialist urbanism and the socialist art of building [*Baukunst*] combine all the objective functions of the city for the increasing efforts of our people towards education, varied cultural activity, meaningful relaxation, human contact und sociability. The sum of all functions of the city, even when optimally integrated, do not alone form a city in the sense of the constructed spatial ordering of the socialist way of life and its forming influence on the socialist human community. Beyond this there is a 'plus' in needs which are necessary for socialist society. This 'plus", the aesthetic artistic form of the city, will become the starting point for the artistic work and design"[58]

This idea is quoted in full because it makes such a tidy resume of the thinking which had developed since excited promise which the functionally optimised city seemed to hold the early 1960s, followed by the gradual questioning of the actual formation of socialist communal life within these complexes, and answer here in the increased artistic and design contribution. This solution pointed to an extended form of "optimisation", though better design and better aesthetic solutions.

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56 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), p 43
57 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), p 40
58 Bondzin p 41

Halle Neustadt was held up at the conference as an example of "complex aesthetic design of the residential complexes"[59] Bondzin also called for the "stronger inclusion of crafts and form design."

"From the start it was clear that the cooperation of artists, architects, clients was not sufficient. Today, the point is to include all the disciplines systematically in the aesthetic design of the city: architects, fine artists, form designers, applied artists, garden designers, graphic designers, light designers, and representatives of many other areas can work together only in socialist communal work on the basis of planning which is wide ranging and directed to the designed complexity."

The basis for these changes were once again the November 1967 resolution as well as Ulbricht's letter to the president of the BdA, "Make our socialist fatherland more beautiful and more attractive". Bondzin's address concluded with a reassertion of the potential unity between Socialist Realism and modern architecture.[60] The conference report remarked, however, that "it was not entirely worked out, what the aesthetic consequences for the process of artistic creation would be."[61]

The VIth congress reaffirmed the centrality of Socialist Realism, it placed a heavy emphasis on the continued need to assert socialist *difference,* and affirmed the necessity of clearly visible monumental art in a Socialist Realist tradition, particularly in the town centres. The "artistic design of towns, and architectonic ensembles, of socialist communal institutions and the individual living areas of working people" were to become the central task, alongside meeting the

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59 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), p. 29
60 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), P 46
61 "Information to all members and candidates of the Politbüro on the VI. Verbandskongreß" 28. – 30.04.1970 in Berliner Kongresshalle am Alex, (confidential report on the conference, signed Rossow) 02.06.1970, AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 5469 (906), p. 2

"increasing cultural and artistic needs" of society.[62] In the resolution made following the congress, the increased significance of art within architectural spaces as a form of political and aesthetic enhancement, alongide the functional-aesthetic applications of design disciplines was underlined. Repeatedly "new tasks", and "new understandings" were emphasised. Monumental art should play "a significant role in the complex design of the socialist environmment [creating a] total experience which makes the observer aware of the greatness and beauty of socialist life...All spheres of life of the working people should be aesthetically and artistically pentrated, including art for the home, as for public space, the design of the workplace and societal milieus in every sense, good industrial design, graphic design and works of craft."[63]

By 1970, then, the idea of Complex Environmental Design was clearly established, and the role of the artist, improving the built environment was reinforced. However, it was now officially as much the task of the craftsperson, and every kind of designer from the graphic designer to the landscape designer to contribute to this complex design of the built environment.

Reasserting the role of artists in Halle

The second part of this chapter looks at how artists in Halle took up the signals of the VII Party congress of April 1967, and used it to make the case for a more integrated involvement of all visual artists in the design of the built environment.

In July 1967, leader of the Halle VBKD, Willi Sitte called an "extended meeting" of the Verband.

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62 Bondzin, Gerhard "The postion of art in the system of socialist environmental design" AdK, VBK Zentralvorstand – 906 (5469), 10
63 "Beschluß des VI Kongresses des Vebandes Bildende Künstler der DDR." , VBK Zentralvorstand – 907 (5470), p 3

He called for a "need to rethink the image of the socialist person, [to find a] new adequate optic for our life feeling today..."[64] and proposed new forms of architectural art, cooperations between architects, artists, form designers with engineers and scientists, to research new materials an methods as part of the Burg Giebichenstein school.[65] The same ideas were echoed by the sculpture section of the Verband, who reported that they negotiating with the VEB Chemie Kombinat Buna for more possibilities for material research. In addition, they proposed more collective working methods, the need to "give up on individualism and think collectively with architects, landscape planners, technicians and artists."[66]

The question of the different paths of form design and crafts had been relatively dormant since the separation of form design and crafts in the late 1950s, but the new thinking on the role that art should have within the creation of the socialist environment, also matured into a clarity on the content that could be delivered by crafts and form design within architecture. In these new socialist environments it became apparent that a indisciplinarity was necessary, but that this would also help define the potential of the separate disciplines. The VBKD-Halle (where the Burg school was located) proposed separate sections for form design and the applied arts. For the applied artists and form designers, specific tasks within environmental design could be identified, and for the applied artists, this presented an opportunity to assert their discipline as form of art ("Werkkunst"), rather than as the less respected "craft"("Kunstgewerbe") , with its connotations of preoccupation with methods and materials in producing primarily functional objects[67]. For the

64 Gedanken der Sektionsleitung Maler und Grafiker über die weitere künstlerische Entwicklung in unseren Bezirk. AdK VBK-BV-Halle – 188
65 Gedanken der Sektionsleitung Maler und Grafiker, AdK VBK-BV-Halle – 188
66 Gedanken der Sektionsleitung Bildhauer, VBKD-Halle, " p 2 AdK VBK-BV-Halle – 188
67 Konzeption zukünftiger Verbandsarbit der Sektion Kunsthandwerk/Formgestalter, VBKD-Halle, 21 July 1967 draft version; see also Luckner-Bein, Renate, Hochschule für Industrielle Formgestaltung ‹Halle, Saale›, Halle ; 1968, p. 96

applied arts, the most important new area was building related art, "as the primary societal demand, because through this societal effectiveness is achieved."[68]

Memorandum for "A new synthesis of the arts" and the Burg school

Confident that these conclusions offered a new way forward for the visual arts within the built environment, the artists Willi Sitte, Willi Neubert and critic Wolfgang Hütt worked on a paper on ""Suggestions for improvements in the artistic achievements in socialist urban design." This was developed into a manifesto like "memorandum"[69] called "A new synthesis of the arts"[70]. In this, design was placed alongside art as decisive in the formation of the socialist environment. In making their argument they skilfully drew on several contemporaneous authorities, including the familiar Marxian dictum, "Man forms according to the laws of beauty," Ulbricht's call for "more beautiful and attractive" cities, to Staufenbiel's sociological research on the unity of work and culture, and Richard Paulick's comments on the need to create "life milieus" (*Lebensmilieu*) through the built environment[71]. They also took the same line that Bernard Heisig had argued at the 1964 artists congress, that art should look at the lessons from industry, and from this the profession and discipline of design would grow and have an impact on the socialist environment:

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68 Konzeption zuküntiger Verbandsarbit der Sektion Kunsthandwerk/Formgestalter, VBKD-Halle, 21 July 1967 draft version
69 Working on the Memorandum (Denkschrift) were initially Sitte, Voigt, Neubert and Hünecke. Erweiterte Bezirksleitungssitzung on 21 July 1967, DENKSCHRIFT includes a strukturplan for the institute Baukunst und architektur design.(has the refs at the end of the denkschidrt)
The Memorandum was signed by Sitte, Neubert and Hütt, July 1967. Neubert is most likely to have contributed either simply his support as a largely uncontraversial artist with text book socialist credentials, and probably suggestions for improving practice. There is no evidence of him elsewhere being involved in theoretical questions, in contrast to Sitte and Hütt-
"Suggestions for Improvements In the Artistic Achievements in socialist urban design." 188 -
[70] "Für eine neue Synthese von Architektur und bildender Kunst", AdK VBK-BV-Halle – 188 The authors of the draft version are not given.
71 The concept of Lebensmilieu and Architecture was also the subject of the X. UIA Kongreß in Prague 1967 "Architektur und Lebensmilieu", DA, 7/1968/, and also in the West German Leverkusen Kulturamt "Architektur und Lebensmilieu: 3. - 23. Okt. 1969, Forum Leverkusen.

"In industry it has been clear for years that rational thinking and aesthetics are not mutually exclusive, but rather are interdependent...the creation of the profession of designer, which will be increasingly important, is not only economic but also cultural political, because industrial design is a part of the environmental conditions of people, which have an influence on their aesthetic sensitivity"[72]

The Halle group also took the initiative on the occasion of the 1969 20th anniversary exhibition. An editorial team led by Karlheinz Schlesier published a special edition newspaper called "Architektur and Bildende Kunst" ("Architecture and Art") in 1969,[73] which drew together many of the themes which had become current in the preceding two to three years and it was openly critical of failings in the planning, and the absence of consideration of how to deal with both physical and psycho-social spaces between buildings. It also re-stated the aims of the Memorandum for a new synthesis.

Ostensibly addressed to the general public, the special edition newspaper offered a re-conception between architects and artists in the thinking around urban planning, a discussion on a more environmental approach – here in the comprehensive rather than the ecological sense – taking in the landscape, the spaces of public communication, orientation in the town, colour and lighting, and integrating the work of the artist in to this process. Again the universal lens of "beauty" was applied: the overall task for socialist urbanism and architecture was to "create the conditions for the socialist life of our citizens ever more extensively and more beautifully." The results of Halle Neustadt at that time did not, Schleiser said, fully

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72 Willi Sitte, Willi Neubert, Wolfgang Hütt, " Suggestions for improvements in artistic achievements in socialist urbanism", July, 1967, AdK VBK-BV-Halle – 188
73 "Architektur und Bildende Kunst im Bezirk Halle", special edition published by the Chief Architect of Halle. Editorial board: Karlheinz Schlesier, Wilhelm Schmied, Artur Jungblut, Manfred Müller, Sigbert Fliegel. Getty Research Institute, DDR Collections, Box 300, Folder 8.

demonstrate the functionality for the conditions of a developed socialist life and environment and listed several functional deficiencies.

All these deficiencies proved, Schlesier argued, that planning and architecture were "not artistic decoration, but complex products of complicated optimisation." The solution to these complex tasks lay in "the application of scientific research…through a high measure of artistic intuition." The plans for the next two phases 1971/75 required the involvement of "urban planners, architects and artists." whose "full creative potential" must unfold. The task was to "design the environment as a system".[74] The "design of the environment as a system" was exactly the argument which had been made by Flierl at the controversial German Academy of the Arts congress.

Artur Jungblut, architect at The Burg School of Design, who also had a political function within the culture commission in Halle, formulated the task as "to form our environment, and thus the image of the people and their relationships in accordance with the laws of beauty"[75] He went on to describe this process which would reinforce the feeling of connectedness to the "socialist heimat"[76], which would be achieved through "the forming /design [*Gestaltung*] of life processes, and not only in the forming/design of individual buildings."[77]

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74 Schlesier, Karlheinz, "Aufgaben von Städtebau, Architektur und Bildender Kunst im Bezirk Halle." ("The Tasks of Urban Planning, Architecture, and Art in the Bezirk of Halle.")
"Architektur und Bildende Kunst im Bezirk Halle", special edition published by the Chief Architect of Halle. Editorial board: Karlheinz Schlesier, Wilhelm Schmied, Artur Jungblut, Manfred Müller, Sigbert Fliegel. Getty Research Institute, DDR Collections, Box 300, Folder 8, p. 3–4.
75 Blut, Artur, "Gestaltung der sozialistische Umwelt" (Design of the Socialist Environment") in Architektur und Bildende Kunst special issue, p. 6–7
76 Blut, Artur, "Gestaltung der sozialistische Umwelt" (Design of the Socialist Environment") in Architektur und Bildende Kunst special issue, p 6
77 Blut, Artur, "Gestaltung der sozialistische Umwelt" (Design of the Socialist Environment") in Architektur und Bildende Kunst special issue p 7

"If the aim of our communal efforts should be concerned with beauty, then we must insist on a high intellectual quality, which is not only to be understood as an appeal [*Appel*], but which has a clear set of principles as its starting position"

These basic principles should include the research of sociologists and psychologists, and furthermore evaluate the nature and landscape, evaluate heritage of earlier epochs, integrate works of art and applied arts, and evaluate the best examples of new building in the GDR. In a clear criticism of what was felt as an overbearing economic and technological orientation of the urban planning, Blut called also for a much broader indisciplinary approach:

"If, quite rightly, the demand for the unity of truth and beauty is raised as the typical characteristic of socialist culture, then all those forces involved in the design of the environment must be completely clear, that beauty will only be achieved only as the result of the extensive and complete work of all those involved in a work."[78]

This new thinking proposed that the value of art was the not works of art themselves, though these were an essential to the ideological and aesthetic landscape, but in the combination of an artistic and scientifically grounded approach to the environment. The fundamental change in conception, a transformation made possible through liberal references to beauty, was the shift to an approach to the built environment led not by art, but by design. "Design", as an intuitive and aesthetic approach, which would also draw on the human sciences such as sociology and psychology, was the necessary basis for understanding and creating the built environment. That the discussion was still couched in terms of the unity of art and architecture, was partly because of the historical and ideological

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[78] Blut, Artur, "Gestaltung der sozialistische Umwelt" (Design of the Socialist Environment") in Architektur und Bildende Kunst special issue p 7

anchors which held them in place, but also because design in this sense was new territory, and not only in East Germany.

These initiatives and publications from the group in Halle were not in any way counter to official policy. They interpreted official policy and proposed to realise its aims. The authors of the final memorandum "For a new synthesis for architecture and art." [79] were Willi Sitte, Willi Neubert, Wolfgang Hütt[80], Rosmarie Kuban[81], Gerhardt Voigt[82], and Gottfried Kormann, with the exception of Kuban, were all artists and art critics directly involved in the commissioning processes in Halle and Halle Neustadt. Whilst the boldly declared a "scientfically founded *Kampfziel*, [combat target]" in their Memorandum for a "new synthesis" in art and architecture, all the ideas set out were legitimised through the November 1967 resolution on the development of spiritual intellectual and cultural life, and again interpreted through the lens of beauty:

Art can not be "included", it must penetrate as the materialisation of aesthetic expectations and through architectural and urban solutions the possible and artistic expressions, result of the cooperation of sociological building technical and industrial requirements and with architectural and artistic functions... the individual art work , the wandbild, the sculpture must be part of it."[83]

Artists "must release themselves from traditions". The work of landscape planners, colour designers, and form designers, "for forming industrially finished architecture elements with their own design value" all needed to be integrated.[84]

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79 "Für eine neue Synthese von Architektur und bildender Kunst", AdK Berlin, VBK-BV-Halle – 188
80 Art Historian, http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang_Hütt
81 Rosemarie Kuban was the departmental leader for culture in the bezirks council (information from Sigbert Fliegel in interview)
82 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerhard_Voigt_(Künstler)
83 "Für eine neue Synthese von Architektur und bildender Kunst", AdK Berlin, VBK-BV-Halle – 188 P 4
84 "Für eine neue Synthese von Architektur und bildender Kunst", AdK Berlin, VBK-BV-Halle – 188 P 4

iv. Putting theory into practice

The Halle group reporting on their research in the special edition, "Architektur und Bildende Kunst" had made a number of practical suggestions. There should be a coordinator for architectural design ("*baukünstlerische Gestaltung*"), there should be an "institution for the coordination of research and production" for the future tasks which would become more urgent in the building industry,[85] and, in an implicit rejection of Walter Womacka's Institute for Baugebundene Kunst in Berlin, the authors proposed an "Institute for building art and building design", to develop theory, and material technologies, in close cooperation with practice. In conclusion, they affirmed their political loyalty to the task ahead in assertions: "This certainity is an expression of our unshakeable socialist politics on the 20th anniversary of the GDR, which with our help, is to be designed more beautifully than ever."[86]

As a direct consequence of the feedback from Halle Neustadt, a "Research and Development" centre was set up at the Burg.[87] The areas to be covered were fine art, decorative art, craft, form design, colour design and light design. The material research was to be in metal, enamel, plastic glass, concrete and ceramics. For Sitte this was "the Bauhaus idea in the phase of realisation."[88] Sitte revived production workshops which had been nationalised and had them taken from the jurisdiction of economic leadership and put under the Ministry of Culture, and thus integrated them in the Burg school.[89] Thus hand work or craft traditions and techniques, such

85 Schmied, Wilhelm, "Aufforderung zur Gemeinschaftsarbeit" ("Call for commual work"), in Architektur und Bildende Kunst, special edition, 1969, p. 8
86 Schmied, Wilhelm, "Aufforderung zur Gemeinschaftsarbeit" ("Call for commual work"), in Architektur und Bildende Kunst, special edition, 1969, p. 9
87 "Forschungs- und Entwicklungsstelle". Plans for a research and development centre for artistic building design at the Burg school from 1st June 1970 were confirmed by the Minister of Culture of the GDR. The aim was: "To use artistic and form design to contribute to the efforts of the citizens of our socialist state... to deepen the pride in our socialist heimat and to increase futher the respect for our city. It should follow the laws and resolutions of SED and the leadership of DDR" "Research for the development of ideas in artistic building design in the context of socialist art and environmental design, and its application in the practice of town planning and work, environmental design and industrial building" LHASA_MER, IV/B-2/9.02/706, BL SED HALLE, pp 65–74
88 Farben und Folgen, p. 168
89 Willi Sitte, Farben und Folgen, p. 166

as a stained glass workshop in Quedlingburg, could be put for use in public art and architecture commissions.

There was a precedent for the kind of visual arts and architecture centre that the Halle artists wanted to set up. Wolfram Schubert reported an initiative in Neubrandenburg to create a centre for art, where artists, architects, and designers would all work together in shared studios with technical workshops for ceramic, metal, glass, textiles.[90] Schubert saw a growing role for commercial graphic design as tourism to the area increased, which "needs artists so that it doesn't become some kind of kitsch"[91].

"Through this work we necessarily came in to contact with architects. Before we had to really make an effort to get a meeting with them. We were also supported by the council deputies, but it was after the State Council Resolution [on the interaction of art and architecture] [92] that we could really realize our efforts. It was really strange that suddenly there was a whirlwind from the architects who unpacked their plans on to the table, instead of saying as they always had before: first we have to be completely finished and then you can come. Now its completely different. They come to us and say: we are stuck here, you have to get in here and help with designing the open spaces and so on."[93]

This account shows how initiatives such as those in Halle were not in any way an "alternative discourse",but a skillful interpretation of the parameters set out by

90 Schubert, Wolfram, "Zentrum für Bildende Kunst in Neubrandenburg" ("Centre for art in Neubrandenburg"), in "Architektur und Bildende Kunst", special edition, Halle, 1969, p 5s
91 Ibid
92 "Resolution of the Ministerrat of the DDR of 18th June 1969 on the intereffectiveness of socialist architecture and socialist realist art in urban planning".
93 Schubert, Wolfram, "Zentrum für ...p 5. The artists were successful in setting up the centre, which attracted more artists to move to Neubrandenburg and was able to serve a new tourist industry as planned., "Neubrandenburg schuf ein Zentrum für bildende Kunst" BK 8/196, p 409; Cobarg, Merete,"Die Kunstsammlungen der Stadt Neubrandenburg in Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft" MUSEUM AKTUELL Februar 2005, Kunstsammlung Neubrandenburg, Neubrandenburg 2005; Ruth Crepon: Das Zentrum Bildende Kunst in Neubrandenburg, Neubrandenburger Mosaik. Schriftenreihe des Kulturhistorischen Museums Neubrandenburg (4) 1978, Neubrandenburg, Kulturhistorisches Museum 1978

state resolutions and policy. The Politbüro pronouncements were the authoritative texts, but they were formulated in such a way that they could be used to advance particular interests. In turn, these initiatives fed back in to state policy and rhetoric. All of these discourses, at the Institute for Theory and History, or from the artists in Halle were not in any way counter to official policy, but ideas which, open to interpretation as they were, were periodically halted and interrupted but then gradually absorbed into official rhetoric.

7.

The X. Weltfestspiele in East Berlin, 1973: monumental propaganda, or an opening for more democratic forms of art in public space?

This final chapter turns to an event rather than static art and design in the architectural environment. The X. Weltfestspiele (10th World Festival Games), an international sporting and cultural meeting with a socialist agenda, was hosted by East Germany in 1973. Founded in 1947 as a peace initiative,[1] The Festival had first been held in East Berlin in 1951. The 1973 Weltfestspiele made multiple cultural references, defying easy categorisation. It recalled Lenin's "Plan for Monumental Propaganda"; it included rituals and parades reminiscent of those conducted annually in East Germany on May 1st and the *Arbeiterfestspiele* (week-long cultural festivals held annually in the country from 1959); there were elements of traditional festivals, which proliferated in East Germany;[2] it echoed the Munich Olympic Games held just one year previously, and, as a piece of urban choreography and design, it took up the ideas of Complex Environmental Design, and extended them, giving a new impetus to their application in subsequent housing

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1 On November 10th, 1945 the World Youth Conference, organized in London, founded the World Federation of Democratic Youth. This was convened at the initiative of the World Youth Council which was formed during the II world war to fight against Fascism by the youth of the allied countries brought together for the first time in the history of the international youth movement representatives of more than 30 million young people of different political ideologies and religious beliefs from 63 nations. It adopted a pledge for peace. www.wfdy.org/history. The international Union of Students were co-organisers.
2 By 1989 there were more than 5000 Festivals yearly in East Germany. See Mohrmann, Ute: Lust auf Feste. Zur Festkultur in der DDR. In: Evemarie Badstübner (Hg.): "Befremdlich anders. Leben in der DDR", Berlin 2000.

schemes. At the same time, the Weltfestspiele did not precisely match any of these precedents.

This chapter will explore the nature and impact of the Weltfestspiele on understandings of the visual design as well as the use of public space. As the most significant event for the projection of East Germany's international image, just a few years into Erich Honecker's tenure, for the outside world it functioned as a re-branding of the German Democratic Republic. At the same time the success of the festival as an experience for those involved, including the designers, lay in the opening up of a liminal space in which new forms of communication, both designed and informal, flourished. The concept of "liminality" developed by ethnologists Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner helps in understanding this moment of the "realm of pure possibility"[3] which could be experienced at every level of the festival. The significance of this for this research, is the way in which this opening was interpreted and developed in subsequent forms of art and design in public space.

The event, which became mythologised as "nine days in August" is remembered in eye witness accounts for the brief flowering of openness in public space. The newly completed Alexanderplatz and the streets around became a stage for dancing, music, and the exchange of political ideas, day and night. Deviant behaviours were tolerated, and the intervention of the authorities appeared to be minimum. Some statistics give an idea of the scale of the event and thus what was at stake for the authorities: half a million young East Germans[4], and more than 25 000 foreign guests from 134 countries took part in the event. There were more than 1 500 events[5] with a 142 Million DDR-Mark[6] budget, 15

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3 "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage", Turner, Victor, in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, pp. 93–111. (Icatha: Cornell, 1967) quoted in St. John, Graham (Ed.), *Victor Turner and contemporary cultural performance*, (Berghan: Oxford, 2008) p. 5

4 Klinger, Christoph, *Eine Million rote Rosen zum Dank Die Teilnahme dänischer Jugendlicher an den X. Weltfestspielen 1973 in Ost-Berlin* (Roskilde Universitetscenter: 2006). Statistics on attendance vary and are sometimes misleading. It is hard to assess the number of East Berlin residents who were not officially participating who took part. The oft quoted figure of 8 million (eg in Wikipedia, the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb) and Spiegel Zeitgeschichte) on the streets is a mistaken interpretation of official figures on the numbers of event tickets distributed.
5 BArch, SAPMO DY 30/J IV 2/2J – 4890, Abschlussbericht
6 Klinger, *Eine Million Rote Rosen* p.67

Million Marks raised from public donations[7]. There were eleven hundred accredited journalists from nearly 70 countries.[8]

The scholarly post-Wende readings of the East Berlin X. Weltfestspiele have focused on the manner in which the event was policed and stage managed, and have established a consensus about the Games as a masquerade.[9] It has been described as "a propaganda show"[10,] "window dressing"[11], "a beautiful illusion"[12], which masked the reality of state control and repression[13]. Similarly, readings of the festival culture in East Germany tend to set up an opposition between the population and the agenda of the state.[14] In this analysis, I will make a contrasting reading of the Weltfestspiele as a piece of monumental propaganda, which suggested the possibility of more democratic forms of public art. My research on the X. Weltfestspiele has focused on the two central aspects of the event. The unprecedented nature of the visual design of the city centre and associated paraphernalia, and the unprecedented nature of the use and occupation of public space. In both areas my research relies heavily on eye witness reports, with designers, artists and with festival

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7 *Für Dich*, (Berlin: August 1973)

8 Devlin, Kevin, *Using the Youth*, Radio Free Europe Research prepared for the use of the editors and policy staff of Radio Free Europe, 20 July 1973 (The Open Society Archives (OSA), Central European University, online archive). *Neues Deutschland* reports from the time give slightly higher figures.

9 For example, "Weltjugendspiele in Ostberlin", Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, www.bpb.de/themen/PTENMV,0,0,Weltfestspiele_1973.html; "Das Woodstock des Ostens" in einestages, Zeitgeschichte auf Spiegel Online; Jugend und Kultur in der DDR, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, http://www.kas.de/upload/dokumente/2011/04/mythen/mythen_5.pdf http://einestages.spiegel.de/static/topicalbumdiscussion/2454/das_woodstock_des_ostens.html.

10 Mählert, Ulrich / Stephan, Gerd-Rüdiger: *Blaue Hemden - Rote Fahnen. Die Geschichte der FDJ*, (Opladen 1996.)

11 Ohse, M. D.. "Eine Schaufensterveranstaltung. Die DDR im Glanze der Weltfestspiele". In: *Deutsche Jugend nach dem Mauerbau.* Anpassung, Protest und Eigensinn (DDR 1961–1974), (Links: Berlin, 2003). p. 353.

12 Wolle, Stefan: *Die heile Welt der Diktatur. Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1971-1989*, Berlin: Links, 1998.

13 There are notable exceptions to this general consensus is Ina Merkel's reading: Merkel, Ina, "Im Spiegel des Fremden: Die Weltfestspiele von 1973", in Kulturation 2/2003, Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, 2/2003 (KulturInitiative'89 e. V. Berlin, 2003), which looks at the role of the foreign and exotic for young East Germans at the festival. Ina Rossow's research is also more differentiated.

14 In her comprehensive study of the festivals in twentieth-century Germany, von Saldern accords a particular status to festivals "in a dictatorship" (though it is not clear if this means as opposed to a democracy, given that festivals have a much longer history than democracy) which must "transfer communicative memory into cultural memory", (p 21) because a communicative memory, "anchored in every day situations...in informal public life.", "can not develop freely" (p 45) and thus the festival in this analysis is largely seen as a tool for state representation and the further impregnation of ideology. Adelheid von Saldern (Hg.): *Inszenierte Einigkeit. Herrschaftsrepräsentationen in DDR-Städten*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 2003

participants[15]. Another important source has been the visual material and photographic evidence of the event, made by participants and in official documentations[16].

To understand the Weltfestspiele as a piece of monumental propaganda, and as a opening for urban art and design, it is necessary first to examine "monumental propaganda", as well as the understanding of Complex Environmental Design at the beginning of the 1970s when Erich Honecker took office.[17] At the end of the 1960s the Ulbricht's Politbüro had looked for a reassertion of "monumentality" in public art, but to what extent was public art in East Germany already a form of monumental propaganda? To answer this it is necessary to understand the origins of "monumental propaganda" as articulated in the early years of the Revolution in the Soviet Union.

Tomasso Campanella's short text, "The City of the Sun",[18] sets out a utopian, patriarchal, theocratic order in which hard work, learning, communal ownership and "love of the state" are held in the highest esteem. Published in 1623, the philosophical work offered a reference for the idealised social order which Vladimir Iliych Lenin set out to establish in the Soviet Union. Campanella offered a rich and detailed description of the architectural arrangements of the *civita solis,* which enforced and protected the social order, but most impressively, he described in detail the beautifully painted walls which should offer an encyclopedic visual education in history and sciences.

This idea, that fabric of the city itself could provide a canvas for a visual pedagogy, was, according to the Soviet People's Commissar of Enlightenment, Anatoly Lunacharsky [19],

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15 The testimonials of participants are taken largely from the archive at the "Dokumentationszentrum Alltagskultur der DDR" in Eisenhüttenstadt, which holds research made by Ina Rossow in 1998.

16 Many of these materials are in the Dokumentationszentrum Alltagskultur der DDR which is particularly useful for the informal records and collections of material memories supplied by participants.The Bundesarchiv and the Berlin archive of the Sammlung Industrielle Gestaltung also holds much of the material ephemera, posters and photographs officially produced. It was in an unmarked box at the Sammlung that I was fortunate to find the visual identity guidelines produced by the Weissensee team. After the event, a number of commemorative publications, rich in imagery, were produced in the GDR.

17 On May 3rd, 1971, Walter Ulbricht resigned as First Secretary of the SED and was replaced by Erich Honecker. Honecker took office as leader of the GDR in 1972. (title, and exact date?)

18 Campanello, Tomasso, *The City of the Sun* (Civitas Solis), written in 1602. The version used for reference here is that provided by the Gutenberg project (www.gutenberg.org).

19 Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky (1875 –1933). Russian Marxist revolutionary and the first Soviet People's Commissar of Enlightenment responsible for culture and education. (Source: Wikipedia)

inspiration for Lenin's 1917 plan for "monumental propaganda". It had to be adapted, since, as Lunacharsky acknowledged, the Moscow climate would not really sustain frescoes, and the themes of the works, rather than ultimately bearing scientific knowledge, were to become a promotion for the state itself and its founders, and indeed for the artists themselves. Lunacharsky is said to have announced Lenin's plan to artists in the Winter of 1917 as follows:

He [Lenin] intends to decorate Moscow's squares with statues and monuments to revolutionaries and the great fighters for socialism and a wide field for the display of our sculptural talents. [20]

Christina Lodder has argued that the plan did not simply form the foundations for establishment of Socialist Realism, as proposed by John Bowlt and others[21], in which the form of monumental heroic Tsarist statue underwent a kind geometric simplification inspired by Cubism, whilst remaining essentially an idealised heroic form to serve state ideology. According to Lodder, Lenin's plan equally provided the opening for the Constructivist agitational art in festivals, posters, agitational ships and trains, and made "an imaginative and visionary leap by realising the potential of visual propaganda"[22], even as avant-garde visual languages were ultimately jettisoned in favour of an academic realism.

The conventional mass media for agitation and propaganda – graphics, photography, photomontage or film, even though – or perhaps because – these were the basis for the revolutionary agitational art of the Soviet Constructivists in the 1920s, were not conceived by the authorities of as appropriate means for the Socialist Realist artist in East Germany. The "Department for Agitation" ("Abteilung Agitation im ZK der SED")[23] in the GDR was part of the central committee of the SED, but its remit was to propogate

20 A Lunarcharski "Lenin o monumentalnoi profaned", Literaturnaya gazette, 4-5, 29 January 1933. The earliest date Lunacharsky gives for the conversation is the winder of 1917. Lodder, Christina, "Lenin's Plan for monumental Propaganda", in *The Art of the Soviets: The Art of the Soviets: Painting, sculpture and architecture in a one-party state, 1917–1922*, Manchester University Press, Machester, 1993, pp 16-32, here note 7.

21 Lodder cites Bowlt, John, "Russian Sculpture and Lenin's Plan of Monumental Propaganda" in H.A. Milnon and L. Nochlin (eds) Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics, (MIT Press: London, 1978) 183–93, and Mikhailov "Leninikii plan monumentalnoi propaganda" Iskusstvo 9, 1969, pp 11–22.

22 Lodder, p. 18

23 Abteilung Agitation im ZK der SED, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, (SAPMO), DY 30

ideas through the mass media (the press, radio and television) and to research public opinion, but there was no institutional connection between the arts and propaganda as a form of mass communication.

That the function of public art had become primarily to ameliorate and give socialist character to the uniformity of mass produced architecture, rather than act as a form of monumental propaganda, was tacitly acknowledged by Soviet colleagues too. In 1971, a Moscow symposium "Socialist urbanism and the synthesis of the arts" [24] brought an exchange of ideas on monumental art[25] between East German and Soviet specialists (the DDR delegation included Gerhard Bondzin, Erich John, Jürgen von Woyski, Willi Neubert, Ullrich Kuhirt, Annelies Weidner, Sigbert Fliegel, and Bruno Flierl)[26]. The keynote address of the Soviet delegation relied heavily on the "Leninist Plan for Monumental Propaganda" as a frame of reference for the question of the synthesis of art within serially produced architecture. At this time, "synthesis" was still the dominant model for art and architecture in the Soviet Union. The Leninist plan was described in the main paper given by Y. F. Belashova, Chair of the USSR Artists Union, as it is in Lodder's analysis, as the basis for "the harmony of all plastic and temporary arts".[27] The plan's relevance, where, according to Belashova, the agitational aspect of the "temporary arts" had "quickly become obselete", had become to be exclusively for the architectural contexts, alongside memorial works of which many examples were listed, and of which the East German delegates were taken on a tour.[28] Although Belashova proposed that in the Soviet Union "the time [was] approaching in which that which Campanella in "City of Sun", which Lenin held for "not a naive idea", could be realized...," in detail her description of the content of works, too much "abstract symbolic, allegorical

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24 "Sozialistische Stadtbau und Synthese der Künste" (Sozialist urbanism and the synthesis of the arts), Symposium, Moscow, 1971, Getty Archives. IN 1969 a Soviet delegation had visited Berlin.
Main paper: "The Leninist Plan for monumental Propaganda und the the laws for the development of the synthesis of the arts in socialist urban planning." in Box 289, Annelies Weidner papers, DDR Collections, Getty Research Institute Archives, Los Angeles.
25 (Sculptures and murals in public spaces were given the general term "monunental art" in the Soviet Union).
26 Full list of delegates: DDR: Gerhard Bondzin, Erich John, Jürgen von Woyski, Willi Neubert, Ullrich Kuhirt, Annelies Weidner, Sigbert Fliegel, and Bruno Flierl ... edit
27 "Sozialistische Stadtbau und Synthese der Künste"...
28 One of the delegates (name) gave an uncommented slide show of the works visited on the tour at the ZAG meeting in Potsdam, 26th–27th November, 1970 (check ref, something not right) BArch, Bund der Architekten, DY 15/ 355

composition, schematically represented people" expressed considerable dissatisfaction with both the artistic quality and the functions of art within the massive cities of barely varying housing blocks. "Art must take the hand of technology because technology is not capable of creating a world which is worthy of people and which struggles for it."[29]

The situation described by Belashova in the Soviet Union, in which the function of art within the mass of housing blocks which "may seem chaotic and incomprehensible" served to integrate ideological content, information, variation and orientation, differed little from the situation in the GDR. Belashova even conceded by implication that there was a staleness not only in the solutions, but in the "life milieus", refering again to the questions around "monotony". There needed to be an interdisciplinary approach – "cooperation with architects, painters, sociologists and other experts" in order to rise to this challenge. Belashova thus brought in the question of the actual social life that was played out in these spaces, a question which had preoccupied the East German theorists since the mid 1960s. Bruno Flierl's contribution at the Moscow symposium, drawing on artistic plans for Halle Neustadt, the Jose Renau murals, and Berlin city centre, diplomatically acknowledged the task of synthesis – this was still the generally received term, but at the same time introduced his preferred concept of Komplexe Umweltgestaltung, "Complex Environmental Design". It was Bruno Flierl's contribution to the conference that was printed in the Soviet arts magazine, "Art".[30]

The presentations at the Moscow conference demonstrate that art in public space in the Soviet Union had followed a similar trajectory as in East Germany. For the Soviets, the Leninist Plan for Monumental Propaganda was seen as the foundation for public art, although it was necessary to explain the shift from forms of mass communication employed by the Constructivists to an understanding in which the more traditional art forms, painting and sculpture were subsumed into the needs of mass produced architecture. At the same time, there was in both cases an acknowledgement that the "synthesis" ideal would only work through the bringing in of design-based art forms.

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30 "Art" (искусство), 6/1971

These, however, were not to simply agitate and propogandise, but rather to enhance the experience of urban life, and somehow (though this aspect is not ever really elucidated at this stage), to be part of an exchange process between planners, artists and the users of public space.

If the Leninist Plan for monumental propaganda had, in the Soviet conception, transformed itself into the synthesis of art and architecture, which, as in the East German thinking, was actually coming to refer to the varied aspects of environmental design, there was in neither case a clarification of the role of the temporary arts. The inclusion of the temporary arts, or mass media, and the "revolutionary festival", Lodder argues, "...could be interpreted as a first step towards that fusion of art and life which Marx had envisaged in The German Ideology."[31] These had been excluded by the conservative aesthetic discourse, but, as I shall argue, came to act as a powerful form of monumental propaganda, and even a moment of the "fusion of art and life", in the 1973 Weltfestspiele.

Complex Environmental Design, aside from Sigbert Fliegel's experiments in Halle Neustadt, was rarely claimed to include time-based media or events. However, around the time that Complex Environmental Design was becoming established, in the latter part of the sixties, a taboo on discussion of the Soviet avant-garde in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc was lifting. This coincided with a revival of interest in the West in avant-garde art and architecture of the 1920s.[32] Lenin's centenary in 1970 offered a point of reference, which, in effect, legitimated this revival of interest in the avant-garde as a historical phenomenon. The Soviet magazine Decorative Arts in the USSR *(Dekorativno Iskustvo SSSR)* carried a number of features about the Soviet avant-garde in 1970 and 1971. A article on an exhibition of the work of Gustav Klutsis in Riga in 1970, "The Artist as Agitator," by L. Oginskaya, was described as "a response to the public interest which has lately arisen in regard to the pioneering artists of the 1920s."[33]

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31 Lodder, p 22
32 For a full account see "Building the Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture, 1915–1935" Jessica Jenkins, Design Issues: Volume 28, Number 4 Autumn 2012, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pp. 88–89
33 Decorative Arts in the USSR, no. 162 (May 1971): 34–37. The following year there were features on Soviet constructivist Agit Prop graphics and constructions from 1922-3, Decorative Arts in the USSR, 5/162, 1971

This renewed interest in the graphics and art of the 1920s may have encouraged Klaus Wittkugel,* Professor of Graphic Design at the Kunsthochschule Weissensee in Berlin from 1952 to 1975,[34] when he proposed that during the Weltfestspiele:

Agitation vehicles with politically motivational motifs should drive into the capital where they are needed. They could be used as backdrops for the theatre, street theatre, podiums, points of agitation.[35]

Wittkugel, the "star" graphic designer in the GDR,[36] in the words of his colleague, Axel Bertram, "was completely orientated to photomontage and typography, almost only grotesque."[37] Wittkugel may also have sensed the same fatigue with the built environment which was tacitly acknowledged by architects and at the Moscow symposium, or perhaps with the routines of festivals and parades, such as the May Day parades, and he sought to use the event as a chance to re-kindle the dynamism and immediacy of avant-garde graphic communications. Already, he had hoped to use the 1969 GDR twentieth anniversary celebrations as an opportunity to bring the city to life through design, and yet it seemed to be a wearisome task to some of the designers involved – who also felt that the political leadership was unwilling to offer much support for temporary design elements as their attention was focused on realising the architectural plan in Berlin.[38] The designs for the 1969 twentieth anniversary celebrations, which ran under the banner "Unser Weg ist Richtig" ("Our Path is the Right One") were being planned at the time of the Soviet intervention in Prague in August 1968: designers within the Artists' Union who had criticised the invasion were admonished at length,[39] and it would be plausible to suppose a connection between the lack enthusiasm for the task and a despondency over the signals sent to the rest of the Eastern Bloc countries by events in Czechoslovakia. Wittkugel, himself however, was unwavering in his commitment both to

35 Neue Werbung interview, 1972.
36 Axel Bertram, Wittkugel's student and later his colleague, spoke in interview with the author of Wittkugel's idealism and "naiveity" Interview with Axel Bertram, 6th August 2010. Wittkugel was honoured in the GDR period with a voluminous monograph of his many areas of graphic design work.
37 Ibid. Grotesque, meaning sans serif, the font type developed in Avant-garde design and used exclusively in preference to the traditional serif fonts.
38 "Zweite erweiterte Beratung der ZSL Gebrauchsgrafik", Stenografisches Protokoll, Halle, 03. - 04.12.1968, AdK VBK Zentralvorstand – 5872
39 Zweite erweiterte Beratung der ZSL Gebrauchsgrafik, Stenografisches Protokoll, Halle, 03. - 04.12.1968, AdK VBK Zentralvorstand – 5872

the Communist cause and to the potential of graphic design for mass communication, and appealed within the Akademie der Künste for the use of mass graphic media in the manner of the 1920s avant-garde as part of the city communication and information. He felt that graphics were diminished by architecture and expressed the desire to make Germany a world leader in graphic design again, as it had been in the 1920s and 1930s.[40] For Wittkugel, "monumentality" meant "giving form to the the greatness of ideas which become reality for the first time on German soil."[41] Graphic media were much more powerful than "monumental art".[42]

The designs for the 1969 twentieth anniversary celebrations centred on the motif of the 20th birthday of a young East German together with a flower motif.[43] Whilst the designs represented a successful attempt to apply a graphic idea across the city celebrations, the form of the event broke no precedents. Both Wittkugel's plan of twenty cinema screens in every town square "because you can not put enough content in posters", and Womacka's idea to paint murals on house gables proved unrealisable.[44] The key difference between this crowning event of the Ulbricht era in 1969, and that which ushered in Honecker four years later, was the way in which the Weltfestspiele appealed to a global audience, largely removing the socialist iconography from the designs and re-inforcing the socialist message through the festival programme rather than the visualisations. It is necessary to consider the broad political context of the time under the new regime under Erich Honecker, which was the basis for the extraordinary character of the event.

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40 Plenartagung 31 05 1968 of the Akademie der Kunste, AdK-O 0652. Wittkugel also held Renau in high esteem and proposed him to be honoured as a member of the DAK as "One of the most important representatives of an genre which had its high point in the 1930s. he is a man of world stature, who lives in Berlin as an emigrant." (there was no response recorded).
41 Plenartagung 31 05 1968 of the Akademie der Kunste, AdK-O 0652, p. 110
42 Wittkugel tried to convince his colleagues in the Graphic Design section of the Artists Union in 1968 that graphics must become integral to city planing. Zweite erweiterte Beratung der ZSL Gebrauchsgrafik, Stenografisches Protokoll, Halle, 03. - 04.12.1968, AdK VBK Zentralvorstand – 5872, P 32. He also promoted an action called "AVANT-GARDE" to smuggle anti vietnam war posters into the USA and have them published them there in progressive newspapers.
43 Autorenkollektiv: *Fest der Millionen - Der XX. Jahrestag der DDR in der Hauptstadt*; Fotokinoverlag / Dewag-Werbung; 1000 g
44Zweite erweiterte Beratung der ZSL Gebrauchsgrafik, Stenografisches Protokoll, Halle, 03. - 04.12.1968, AdK VBK Zentralvorstand – 5872, pp 104-116

If the 1960s in the GDR were dominated by attempt to define a distinct socialist urban project, underscored by intense theoretical research under Ulbricht, the 1970s and 1980s, under First Secretary of the SED, Erich Honecker, were characterised by a much more relaxed idea as to what might constitute "socialist" in cultural terms. The political foundation of the Honecker era (1971–1989) was announced at the VIII Party Congress in 1971 as the "Unity of social and economic policy."[45] The emphasis was on an improved consumer offer, family oriented social policy, and above all, the ambitious house-building programme designed to "solve" the housing problem by 1990[46]. As the production of new housing was hugely accelerated, the fabric of the residential areas of the old towns continued to decline.[47] The pace and ambition of house-building programme was to have an important impact on attempts to implement Complex Environmental Design.

The early years of Erich Honecker's tenure as first secretary were marked by significant departures from Ulbricht's international and domestic agendas, and it was largely Honecker's interest in enhancing East Germany's position on the international stage that influenced the form of the Weltfestspiele.

Berlin had first hosted over two million international participants at the Games in 1951 in conditions of extreme material poverty, but nonetheless had offered an extensive sporting and cultural programme[48]. In an explicit attempt to demonstrate the "superiority" of the West, a "Gegenfestival" (counter festival) had been organised in West Berlin with the distribution of free cigarettes, fruit and chocolate to lure participants away from the main East German event.[49] In response, Erich Honecker, then as leader of the Free German

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45 Berlin, 15th – 19th June 1971

[46] For a discussion of the changes ushered in the VIII Party Congress see, for example, Fulbrook, Mary, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)

[47] See, Urban, Florian, *Neo-historical East Berlin; Architecture and Urban Design in the German Democratic Republic 1970-1990* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) for a discussion on the responses to the decline of the historical building fabric in East Berlin.

48 Between 5th and 19th August, 1951, there were over two million FDJ members, at least 35 000 of them from West Germany, where the FDJ had been banned six weeks prior. In addition 26 000 youth from 104 countries attended the East Berlin Games. Ruhl, Andreas, *Stalin-Kult und Rotes Woodstock: Die Weltjugendfestspiele 1951 und 1973 in Ostberlin*. Tectum, Marburg, 2009, p. 13

49 Wesenberg, Wesenberg, Denise: *Unter "operativer Kontrolle", Die X. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten 1973 in Ost-Berlin*, Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Thüringen, Thüringen, 2007. p. 6

Youth (FDJ), had initiated an ill-fated march on West Berlin, an encounter that was nonetheless memorialised as "15th August, 1951", a moment of triumph of socialism over the capitalist Federal Republic.[50]

The 1973 event took place in a very different political era, in what turned out to be just over half time for the East German state. There was a seemingly stable separation of the two Germanys and, whilst the 1951 event had repeatedly emphasised the superiority and leadership of the USSR under the leadership of Stalin, the 1973 Weltfestspiele was a confident expression of the achievements of the GDR as a sovereign state without any ambitions for a united Germany. In 1951, there was monumental propaganda in the form of portraits of the great heroes of socialism - Stalin, Lenin, Marx, Luxemburg and others - carried high as placards alongside inscriptions representing socialist ideals.[51] Berlin's central avenue, Unter den Linden, along which the parades took place, was then in a ruinous state: nine-metre high portable *murals*, by Max Lingner and others, mainly depicting international folk themes and costumes, were used to mask some of the rubble. Souvenirs for the event was also provided: art school students from Berlin Weissensee created small items of merchandise –such as neckscarves and ceramics expressing the theme of peace and internationalism - within the limited means at their disposal.[52] Even Picasso contributed a neckscarf design, in itself a reflection of the Western leftist favourability towards the Soviet Union at the time.

The X. Weltfestspiele was mounted at a time when the Cold War on the Berlin frontline had entered a period of détente . Both Germanys had accepted the existence of the other in the Basic Treaty in 1972,[53] and were due to enter the United Nations later in 1973.

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50 The march was violently dispersed by West German police at the sector borders, and Honecker's lines of marching youth were forced to retreat back to East Berlin. For a full account of the incident and its aftermath, see Ruhl, Andreas, *Stalin-Kult und Rotes Woodstock, pp 20-32*. The event was memorialised in publications, painting, poetry and even children's books.

51 examples (from Ruhl)

52 The decorative designs for the city and the souvenirs were carried out by Weissensee students in all departments under the leadership of Weissensee professors, Max Lingner, Bert Heller, Fritz Cremer and Gustav Seitz. A full eyewitness account of the preparations by art students is given by Eberhard Baumann (68 at the time of interview) and Guenter Gruenzig (69 at the time of interview) in interview with Ina Rossow, March 1998. Dokumentations Zentrum Eisenhuettenstadt.

53 The Social Democrat government in Bonn of Willy Brandt from October 1969 engaged in dialogue with the East known as Ostpolitik. At the same time superpower relations (Leonid Brezhnev in the Soviet Union, Richard Nixon in the United States and Chairman Mao in China) sought stabilisation. In 1971, some travel restrictions were eased. The "Basic Treaty", which, stipulated mutual recognition between the two Germanies came into effect on 21 June 1973, and in September of that year both countries entered the United Nations. Maier, Charles S, Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany, (Princeton, 1997), pp. 25–27;

These agreements fostered the confidence in the GDR's international status which Honecker made a political priority. At the same time, the oil crises showed cracks in the capitalist system and the Vietnam war cast doubt over the moral authority of United States. Internationally, left wing movements sustained the confidence gained in the street protests of 1968 and transformed into anti-authoritarian and alternative lifestyle movements. Whilst such movements had very different aims from the centralised and moralising, authoritarian socialism of the Eastern Bloc states, this wave of anti-Capitalist sentiment was a gift to those states in demonstrating grassroots socialist orientation amongst youth in the capitalist West.

The X. Weltfestspiele, a festival of youth, also coincided with the onset of a new, informal youth festival culture, for example in Woodstock in 1969, in the Glastonbury festivals beginning in 1970, and in West Germany[54]. For leftist youth in West Germany and other countries, a place on a delegation to the East German event was highly prized,[55] even as the East German authorities were highly guarded against the potential influence of left wing organisations from the BRD and sought to manipulate their influence at the Weltfestspiele.[56]

Honecker had secured the right to mount the festival from the Federation of World Youth in September 1971.[57]allowing for a two year phase of national mobilisation and orientation in all fields of activity in the GDR. The festival was not staged *for* the GDR

Badstübner, Rolf et al, Geschichte der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Wissen: Berlin/Leipzig 1984) and others.
54 See Wesenburg on the West German festival culture. P.23
55 See Wesenburg on the West German youth groups, many of them leftist, preparations for participation in the X. Weltfestspiele. Pp. 23-26
56 In particular the West German "Jusos", the youth arm of the SPD, ("Young socialists") and the "Junge Union" the youth arm of the CDU/CSU, were seen to pose a threat and their activities and interventions were closely monitored. Whilst "debate" between youth and youth groups was encouraged during the X. Weltfestspiele, the FDJ participants had been given ideological training sessions months before in preparation to ensure that they were able to give correct answers to questions about the Wall, democracy or freedom in the GDR. Training materials for the ideological preparation for the Weltfestspiele are to be found, uncatalogued, in the Eisenhüttenstadt "DDR Alltagsmuseum". Stefan Wolle also reports on the ideological preparations in "Die Heile Welt der Diktatur", p.164. The debates were in some cases documented by the "Agitationsstab" who were able to report with satisfaction that the FDJ youth had successfully countered all the challenges. Landesarchiv Berlin, C Rep 902, Nr 3779 Arbeitsstab Stadtgestaltung, Agitation.
57 Ruhl P 56. Ruhl documents in detail the phases of preparation for the festival.

youth, but was to engage the entire GDR population[58]. The festival was presented as being *for* the international audience, by the international youth. The political leadership under Honecker understood well the potential of the political historical moment, and resolved, alongside the standard messages of international solidarity, peace and anti-Imperialism, to promote the idea of "Weltoffenheit" (world openness). In the arts, Honecker's renowned 1971 declaration "Taking into account the solid position of socialism, there can in my opinion be no taboos in the fields of art and literature"[59] appeared to spell the end of the Socialist Realist imperative, and the design of the festival was the first major event in which this apparent liberalism would be put to the test. This background of confidence in the socialist message internationally, and the early phase of new social and cultural promises of Honecker's tenure, helps to explain the exceptional nature of the festival as a piece of monumental propaganda, and what seemed to be a fusion of art and life.

The sources I have used in the study of the Weltfestspiele, interviews, a participant's diary[60], and a study of hundreds of professional and amateur photographs,[61] have provided an insight in particular in to the emotional impact of the event. They are not understood as translating into a general evaluation of levels of satisfaction with life in the GDR, but they help to explain the resonance of the nine days of the Weltfestspiele. For my purposes, the impact of the event on subsequent designs for public space is important. Both the designs for the event and the occupation of public space were characterised by a sense of exceptionalism: interviewees spoke repeatedly of a sense of "euphoria" and astonishment at their experience. Firstly, I will look at the visual designs (*visuelle Ausgestaltung*) for the event, and how they broke all precedents in the GDR.

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58 Besides donating money, collective and private contributions ranged from hosting delegates, baking biscuits, to doing extra shifts in the textile factories to produce the festival clothing as well as working overtime and donating the earnings due to the Festival account. The Berlin weekly, Neue Berliner Illustrierte, published over a hundred articles on the subject of the WFS during 1973, Für Dich, the woman's weekly regularly reported on the enthusiastic preparations with an emphasis on female and feminine interests.
59 ref
[60] Diary of Sigrid Engelmann, written August 1973, Dok Zentrum Eisenhuttenstadt. The diary is written on each day of the event by a young Humboldt University student which she describes as "the most beautiful experience of my life." Her diary reveals a kind of love affair with a romantic ideal of another world outside her own but at the same time a strong sense of duty and responsibility within her own.
[61] The official photographs are archived in the Bundesarchiv and my source for the amateur photographs was material held in the Dok Zentrum Eisenhuttenstadt.

The team selected for creating the visual realisations was, as in 1951, drawn from the art school in Berlin Weissensee. Walter Womacka, Rector of the school from 1968–1988, who, like Wittkugel, had on more than one occasion pushed for more gable murals and graphic displays within the city,[62] appointed a young, multidisciplinary artistic committee, with a bias towards designers. Each committee member headed a small team responsible for a different area of the design realisation. For this research, I conducted interviews with Axel Bertram[63], responsible for the visual identity of the event, Rolf Walter[64] and Lutz Brandt[65], responsible for the constructions and the application of the identity in graphic communications and across Berlin. Through these conversations it became clear how important this sense of the collective endeavour with a competitive edge, and indeed the sense of breaking the mold was in the success of the project. There was a sense of possibility and change, just as for the artists around Ferdinand Rupp in Hoyerswerda, the architects around Richard Paulick, and artists around Willi Sitte in Halle Neustadt, and the theorists around Hans Schmidt at the Deutsche Bauakademie, and in each case this drove forward the ideas.

At the early briefings by the organising committee on the task for the artistic collective for the Weltfestspiele there was no reason for the artistic committee to suppose any departure from the norms of the visual design of public space or the routines of festival events. The extensive brief for the designs prepared by the Freie Deutsche Jugend, (FDJ) proposed the familiar themes of anti-imperialist struggle, solidarity with the Soviet Union, international peace and cooperation, and concluded:

62 For example in the campaign, Schmuckt Berlin!
63 Interview with Axel Bertram in his home in Berlin, 6th August, 2010. All subsequent quotations from Bertram refer to this interview.
64 Interview with Rolf Walter in his home in Berlin, 2nd March, 2011. All subsequent quotations from Walter refer to this interview, unless otherwise specified.
65 Interview with Lutz Brandt in his home in Berlin, April, 2011. All subsequent quotations from Brandt refer to this interview.

The motif of the solidarity of youth in the anti imperialist struggle must be drawn through the entire city design like a red thread.[66]

Rolf Walter recalled:

We felt very downcast on receiving these instructions. How could you translate all that visually? Then we began to play with the elements, the world, Berlin, the colours… we realised we could make something happy and inspiring with the colours.

Lutz Brandt emphasised the sense of empowerment felt by the designers commissioned to realise this immensely significant event:

We were aware of our potential, we were the simply the best people in the GDR, in the Berlin region. We were arrogant, we wanted to plan the world. And we had an aim – to circumvent this whole … the whole level of cultural functionaries. They were always on our case, and we had an official contract so they had to take us seriously. It was a mandate. We had possibilities, materials, possibilities to realise…

For the festival emblem, Bertram took the existing flower form of the World Youth Federation and adapted it by brightening the colours and pulling out the petals, literally bringing it into bloom. He also played with the "X" of "tenth" and the form of the Television Tower at Alexanderplatz. This beacon of modern communications and technology, completed in 1969, was integrated into the Game's? identity. Bertram recalled his work on the designs and the realisation with unbounded enthusiasm:

It was supposed to mean the world, the whole world.

The designs still had to be approved by the contract-giver, however (in the first instance, the FDJ, which was organising the Games). Bertram's designs were a radical departure from what had until that date been considered an acceptable visual universe for a public event representing the East German state. Figuration was entirely absent; the rainbow

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66 Design conception, 14th July, 1972, created by the Organising Committee of the X. Weltfestspiele. Meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Council of the FDJ 20.07.72, Landesarchiv, Berlin C Rep. 101-07 Nr. 5574 Magistrat von Berlin

colour scheme could not be identified with socialism. None of the established visual codes or icons of socialist graphic agitation such as flags, joyful marching, handshakes, Marx and Lenin heads were present. Photography, which in the graphic arts had become the preferred means of representing socialist reality in propaganda posters[67], was absent in the basic identity, although there were one or two photographic solutions in the posters realised later. The chosen house font was Paul Renner's 1927 Futura, a classic typeface of Weimar modernism,. The identity norms guide resembled a display of abstract art. Fully aware that they were treading on thin ice, the design committee had a number of tricks up its sleeve. Walter recalled:

Right up until the last minute we had an alternative concept. We knew the whole thing could be cancelled.. [The alternative concept was] Photos of Vietnam, and Chile, whatever the issue was. A graveyard of photos, red banners, like a Chinese party congress. The Party rep from our working group who went to the presentation told us, "Ive got everything in my case. If it gets rejected then we can run the other one straight away."

Bertram recalled how important it was to have the authority of Walter Womacka on their side:

As we began to show around the results of the designs, and it became clear it was going to be really, really difficult with the client. The best method of a designer, who dares to play the highest stakes, is to wait for the very last minute to finish. So there is no more time to change things. The Free German Youth committee were old men. They had imagined completely different. So I went down there with Womacka… Womacka got it cleared. He wanted the success for the school, of course a bit for himself too. He cleared it. Oh, how they squirmed, and no, no, no. It wasn't committed enough for them.

Lutz Brandt too, emphasised the value of Womacka in selling ideas to the ZK, of which he was a member:

Womacka always defended us. He valued us. There were things we designed and built, for example this big flag tower. Womacka thought it was great too. […] He took the model with him in meeting with the ZK. They would not let him in with the thing. There was the absurd situation that particular things were not allowed to be shown to Honecker. This makes it clear that just in the middle down to the lowest level of the cultural

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[67] This is evident in the propoganda posters held by the "Stiftung Plakat Ost", as well as the "Plakatsammlung, Akademie der Künste".

bureaucrats that naked stupidity ruled. Fear, lack of imagination, absolute belonging to the Party. Krenz was in charge of the FDJ and he surrounded himself by yes men.

The rainbow hues of the festival identity were unprecedented in the GDR landscape, but were completely in vogue internationally. East German designers were not isolated from such fashions: not only were there some limited possibilities of organised visits to the West[68], and of course the reception of West German television, but the graphic trends from Britain, Europe, and the Americas were accessible via magazines such as *Graphis* and *Novum* which were available in the art and design institutions in the GDR. In the early 1970s, colour printing and colour television were still novel in the West as well as East, and the potential of these technical innovations were enthusiastically embraced by designers, "Technicolour" was also to become the palette of peace activism, gay rights, hippy culture, and alternative politics.

In the newspaper *Junge Welt* of 1972, Womacka, when asked about the source of inspiration for the for the World Festival Games, replied:

The basis for us were the resolutions of the International Festival Committee, the conference of functionaries of the Free German Youth Movement and other conferences. In the collective we discussed everything and worked through our ideas, and of course learnt from previous festivals and meetings.[69]

There was however a specific precedent for a large scale corporate identity which offered inspiration to the artistic collective, which belonged to the more recent past: Womacka stated in his 2004 autobiography:

I had of course noticed that in Munich the year before, the Olympic Games had also been designed under such a viewpoint [corporate identity], incidently the first time in the Federal Republic. At the same time, we had neither the wish to imitate Munich, nor did the Games provide the idea for Berlin.[70]

Rolf Walter, in his interview was more candid:

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69 Walter Womacka interviewed in *Junge Welt*
70 Womacka, Walter, *Farbe Bekennen…*

"Well of course we were inspired by Munich. Of course you could never say that. Not the designs, but we were inspired by the spirit, the feeling of joy and openness. We wanted to create that."

The chromatic range of the Munich Games was considerably more subdued than the rainbow colours of the Weltfestspiele. The lead designer of the identity, Otl Aicher, co-founder of the influential, Bauhaus-inspired Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm in West Germany, chose a palette of blue, grey and silver which had to be extended to meet the multitude of communication requirements. These were intended to represent the colours of the Bavarian landscape, although more colours had to be added to the original cool tones in order to meet the multitude of applications.[71]

Lutz Brandt expressed the sense of pride and competition with the Munich designers:

Aicher was known to us of course, and we said, 'yes that is it, that's it…',…not exactly the same, but to think in these dimensions. But of course without being allowed to say such a thing.[…] Yes, of course we had pride. I mean we were completely on the same level as the designers over there. Which is always being disputed now. We could not realise to the same extent. […]Many people were impressed with the West, had a belief in the West always thinking it was good there, and it was rubbish here, as its always waved in our faces today.

Aicher's identity for the Olympics was highly standardised and disciplined. The full rainbow spectrum and arch form was used only sparingly, to avoid any "embarrassing" associations.[72] The East German guidelines were open to interpretation, and ordinary people were encouraged to take them up and create their own designs, for example on balconies, in schools and shop windows. The guidelines even stated that "The initiatives of the mass organisations and the citizens as well as the imaginative ideas of the

71 "Das visuelle Erscheinungsbild für die Spiele der XX. Olympiade München, 1972", *Novum Gebrauchsgrafik*, 7/July 1972, p.3 (Novum and Graphis are magazines)
72 Beil, Brigitte, "The Graphic Image of the XX Olympic Games". Beil reported: "To establish a clear dividing line between the mood set by these colours and any possibly embarrassing associations, their use in the form of an arch or bow has been carefully avoided." Graphis 160, 1972, p. 151. It is not clear which potentially embarrassing associations she is refering to, whether this is an oblique association to the gay rights movement or just a general reference to alternative lifestyles.

participants can unfold as part of the main political expression, within the framework of the designs, the standards of which are to be adhered to."[73]

The small East Berlin team, could not oversee how the identity was used in detail as it fanned out across the Republic, and in occasionally local designs reverted to more conservative visual language and typography. Thus the Weltfestspiele identity system was less disciplined and controlled than the Munich Olympics identity.

The Weltfestspiele system, did, however have many other details in common with the Munich Olympics system, and in some ways they had a shared ambition. The task common to both events was to permanently erase the stain of Nazi bellicosity left by Hitler's 1936 Olympics. They needed to manifest the re-invention of each republic respectively, and appeal to an international audience; the visual signifiers of modernity were suited to that process for both Germanys. Modern design was one of West Germany's key agents in the Republic's post-war re-invention as modern and democratic[74]. This allegiance of clarity in form and values was one of the Federal Republic's greatest exports too, not only most obviously to the United States but to South America too. The international appeal of this conglomerate of visual references, modern, youthful, counter-cultural or politically progressive, technologically advanced, was recognised in both cases.

It was not only the visual universes formed by the graphic identities that had this contemporary appeal, but also their applications, all of which spoke of dynamism, popular appeal, and the pleasures of spontaneous, communal experience. The commercialisation and memorisation of the event through merchandising offered the chance to possess something of low material and but potentially high sentimental value. Merchandising was widely used as a form of material commemoration for events or

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73 Article 2. 2.1. Aim of the Design, Leitlinie für die komplexe künstlerische Gestaltung der X. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten 1973 in Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR. Organisations committee of X. Weltfestspiele of Youth and Students. Berlin, 1972/3

74 Betts,

places considered of national, socialist importance in the GDR, but often such objects had connotations of luxury and tradition through their form and material. At the East Berlin Games, the fun, cute, and even disposable qualities of the objects rendered them highly prized and desirable. One eye witness expressed their delight at the sets of plastic cutlery they saved from the Games.

We didn't want to throw away the little plastic cups and knives and forks. We took them home as sensational souvenirs and in some kitchens they were in use for a good long time.[75]

The most widespread souvenir was the neckscarf with collected signatures of participants, thus a souvenir which was given value and uniqueness through the experience and efforts of the participant. Alongside signatures, delegates added their own slogans. Some of those recorded were: "Long Live Peace Friendship and Solidarity, Long Live Indian-GDR Solidarity, Long Live Vietnam, Down With Nixon, Down With the Imperialism, Stop Bombing it Must be Peace"[76]. All these expressions represented the idea of democratic, grass-roots participation, mass communication created by the participants rather than bearing down on them. The avant-garde ideal of the fusion of art and life appeared to be realised.

The radical visual identity of the Weltfestspiele, breaking with all previous visual codes for the visual representation of East German socialism, was re-anchored in the socialist narrative in the East German design press.[77] As in the briefing, the identity was rationalised in accordance with its political function and the designs were re-inscribed with political meaning. In a piece entitled, "The party clothes of the capital city: an expression of the political content of the World Festival Games," the author emphasised the political meaning of the graphics and urban design of the Games.

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75 Eye witness Angela D from the Doku-Zentrum, Eisenhüttenstadt.
76 From the diary of Sigfried Engelhardt
77 The event was featured in Deutsche Architektur, Bildende Kunst, and four times in 1973 in the journal of the DEWAG advertising agency, "Neue Werbung".

It was fundamentally important that the design should go beyond the various political, ideological and religious attitudes of the different delegations and participants, and express the common aim, which was the idea of anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship. This unified political aim is reflected in the symbols of the X. Weltfestspiele, the festival flower the petals of which reflect the five continents, in the centre of which the globe represents the the unity of the common struggle against imperialism, and the colour codes which indicate that here people of all skin colours are united in this political aim.[78]

In his post-event writing up of the designs for the Weltfestspiele, Walter also emphasised that "the political message of the Games was clearly reflected in the variable application of the symbols of the city designs..."[79]

However, his analysis also lifted the identity from the need to directly translate political ideas was an early indication of Walter's ambitions to develop the success of the dynamic design forms of the Weltfestspiele for the longer term environmental design. For Walter, the "lively, dynamic urban situation", necessary for the satisfaction of the "socialist way of life" and "people's sensitivity to beauty" needed to be met through all the areas of the arts, not simply the means of the temporary exhibition.[80]

In Munich too, the Olympics was taken as an opportunity to reflect on design and communicative possibilities in public space. Public space as an arena for the free movement of ordinary people became an explicit part of the character of both events. The design magazine *Novum* reported on the re-thinking of Munich's public spaces during the Games, again with the implication that there would be lessons to be learnt in the long term:

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78 "Das Festkleid der Hauptstadt– ein Ausdruck für den politischen Inhalt der X. Weltfestspiele", *Neue Werbung,* Issue 4, July 1973, p. 2. The author of the piece is "M.B.", not one of the members of the artistic committee or one of the editorial board of Neue Werbung.

79 Böttcher, Manfred and Walter, Rolf, "Die Stadtgestaltung – ein bedeutsamer Beitrag zum Erfolg der X. Weltfestspiele" (The design of the city: a significant contribution to the success of the X. World Festival Games." Neue Werbung, Issue 6, November 1973, Pp 13–23. The whole of the November 1973 issue is devoted to various applications of designs of the Weltfestspiele, from posters, mobile scenery, merchandising, shop window displays, and city decorations.

80 Böttcher, Manfred and Walter, Rolf, "Die Stadtgestaltung – ein bedeutsamer Beitrag zum Erfolg der X. Weltfestspiele" (The design of the city: a significant contribution to the success of the X. World Festival Games." *Neue Werbung*, Issue 6, November 1973, Pp 13–23. The whole of the November 1973 issue is devoted to various applications of designs of the Weltfestspiele, from posters, mobile scenery, merchandising, shop window displays, and city decorations.

The idea was not to present a colorful stage set, as it were, but to give a deeper insight..[to create] islands of personal encounter, information, rest or relaxation, free from any obligation of consumption. ..those centers of communication were to be a permanent feature inspiring new initiatives of urban life.81

It is this aspect, the uninhibited occupation of public space by ordinary people, which defined the East German event, and which has attracted the most attention in the post-Wende scholarship on the Weltfestspiele. As in West Germany, this aspect formed and was planned as part of the identity of the Games in its projection of modern openness and youth orientation. The GDR authorities took a calculated risk putting to the test the "no taboos" ideal on the streets and squares of East Berlin. As in West Germany, the idea was to encourage informal exchange and communication.

The prevention of the outbreaks of violence which had brought the Games in to disrepute in Sofia in 1968 were extensive : A total force of 60 000 for security operations82. Nine thousand individuals were arrested in advance of the festival as a preventative measure against "enemy provocations", and a total of 50 000 individuals who "might possibly come into contact with foreigners" security checked in advance.83

The East German preparation for mass performative liberty was not confined to the prior exclusion of perceived deviants. Participants took part in ideological limbering up sessions in which rehearsed the possible questions that participants may be asked by foreigners. These which reiterated the polarity between the troubles of Capitalism – US aggression, poverty, crime, drug addiction, homelessness, – and the peaceable future under socialism.[84] This conception of the poles of good and evil were quotidian, but for the first time young East Germans would have to defend in public, otherwise taboo subjects such as the Berlin Wall, and press censorship.

81 *Novum*, July 7/1972
82 DY 30/J IV 2/2J – 4902
83 Ochs, Christoph "Aktion "Banner", Operativer Einsatz, Taktik und Strategie des MfS während der X. Weltfestspiele" 1973, Kulturation 2/2003, Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik
84 Training materials for the Weltfestspiele, uncatalogued, Eisenhüttenstadt DDR Alltagsmuseum

On the other side of the Wall, *Der Spiegel* reported in the run up with equally characteristic cold war partiality, describing the festival as a "Soviet-inspired monster show"[85], and a Radio Free Europe report prepared its journalists in terms that stressed the event as the instrumentalisation of the youth for propaganda purposes.[86]

Whilst the participants in lively discussions in Alexanderplatz were partially monitored and even covertly managed by the State security service and the "Agitationsstab", the experience of an open exchange of ideas was completely novel for East German youth. What the authorities did not seek to manipulate, however, were the more intimate and informal exchanges and behaviours between the East German youth and the international delegates – dancing and music making, private conversations, and sexual relations. This tolerance undoubtedly contributed to the memorabilty of the event. Alexanderplatz formed the centre for this, but the extended area of the Marx Engels Forum became the arena for the most relaxed behaviour around the main events. One eyewitness recalled:

We were lying early in the morning somewhere and the police woke us up in a friendly way … There was an atmosphere that before then you would never have thought possible. In the morning at the fountain this huge orgy of washing took place. And nothing happened. They just turned a blind eye. And the amazing thing was that there was food round the clock, everything was working. In the city centre until eight in the morning you could drink, eat, without any hassle, without someone saying, "That's an end to it now". The amazing thing was that people stood around at Alex discussing throughout the night. Not just young people but then also workers from the pub or from their shift… something like that had never happened before.. The police were really like "your friend and helper", just like in a children's magazine" [87]

The relaxed attitude of the authorities towards what would normally have been considered transgressive behaviour delighted many of the eye witnesses, but more

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85 "Sowjet-inspirierte Monsterschau", *Der Spiegel*, 23.07.1973
86 Devlin, Kevin, *Using the Youth*, Radio Free Europe. Research prepared for the use of the editors and policy staff of Radio Free Europe, 20 July 1973 (The Open Society Archives (OSA), Central European University, online archive).
87 Rainer E. Unless otherwise stated, all the eye witness testimonies here are taken from the oral history research undertaken by Ina Rossow in cooperation with the Eisenhüttenstadt Museum für Alltagsgeschichte. The interviewees were self selecting from a call made via local newspapers in 1998. The diary entries were made by the student at the time of the event in August 1973. This diary is part of the inventory of the Eisenhüttenstadt Museum für Alltagsgeschichte and was offered to the museum in response to the call for eye witnesses.

important were the undirected connections to people from other countries and cultures, music and dance, and languages – the taste of the "exotic". The participants delighted in the foreignness which they encountered, but at the same time experienced a commonality of interests as young socialists. The national struggles for liberation in Vietnam, Chile, Palestine, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and so called "young national states" were the contemporary incarnations of the anti-fascist narrative, and their heroes, for whom East Germans were encouraged to sympathise from childhood onwards, were suddenly a vibrant presence on the streets of East Berlin. The "foreign", in the testimony of the cultural historian Ina Merkel, "had a euphorising effect on a youth, for whom political rituals became more and more meaningless."[88] Foreignness also took other forms: there were new things to consume and new modes of consumption: rainbow T-shirts, beat and alternative music, bananas, melons, city picnicking, and the relaxed communal transgression which took place in the hours of darkness: socialism at the Weltfestspiele was undoubtedy attractive. The pleasure evidently experienced at the Weltfestspiele sit uneasily with the idea of the instrumentalisation of youth for propaganda purposes, or "window dressing".

Just as the socialist media made a trite equation of smiling faces with happiness in socialism (underpinned by the promise of a communist utopia), so has critical commentary routinely dismissed displays of happiness in socialism as propaganda masking the grim reality. Writing about the mass gymnastics display in Communist culture, Czech historian Petr Roubal suggests "The power of such displays lay in their capacity to refer, through unproblematic, consensual symbols or signs, like children's smiles, to much more ambivalent claims about social reality, like a happy socialist society."[89] The apparent contradiction between the jubilant scenes manifest in the Weltfestspiele and the repressive state apparatus behind it can not be explained in terms

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88 Even contact with what were called socialist brotherlands offered DDR youth something of the exotic. In Merkel's words: "On the one hand, the GDR seemed much cleaner, more organised, wealthier, and on the other, these countries had something exotic to offer: sun, sea, fruits, folklore, hospitality, relaxedness, temperament, culture and history. The experiences that the East German citizens had in the socialist brotherlands were comparable to those of West Germans in Italy, Spain or the South of France." Merkel, Ina, "Im Spiegel des Fremden…"
89 Roubl, Petr, "Politics of Gymnastics. Mass gymnastic displays under communism in Central and Eastern Europe", *Body and Society* 9, no. 2 (2003), p.17

of "stage management"[90], given that any planned mass event is necessarily stage managed and contingent on exclusions and security measures. Is exclusion, then, significant in quantitive or qualitative terms? Can pleasure be staged? Perhaps it is more important to ask whether participants felt they were being stage managed.

Describing a dance called "kiss dance": one eye witness recalled:

It happened spontaneously, at least we had the impression that it was spontaneous. Maybe that was also somehow ordered, but we can't know that now. But it made a spontaneous impression, you know, somehow when darkness falls, then people start to relax, and then Latin American music and the rest of it and it's all just a colourful melange.[91]

Another recalled:

Sure they were watching everything. I know the Poles did some kind of happening in front of a department store, all jumping around naked. A few police were watching rather amazed, but nothing happened.[92]

Covert security operations were internalised as a fact of East German life; self-control and self-censorship were normalised. Where participants comment on the astonishing freedoms where "nothing happened" they acknowledge the status quo of intolerance of certain kinds of public verbal and physical expression.

In order to understand the nature of the event beyond the idea of "stage-management" or "manipulation" I have found it useful to apply the concept of liminal space defined by the ethnologists Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner. Van Gannep defined three phases of rites of passage: separation, limen, and aggregation.[93] The middle, liminal phase, later developed by Turner, which he applied to rituals as well as rites of passage, represents the crossing of a threshold into indeterminate social space, a transitional period which opens up possibilities, free from the constraints of normative behaviours.

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90 The security operation was "like a net" over the event (Ochs, "Aktion 'Banner'") Franziska Hornbogen asks "How did the GDR leadership stage its World Openness?" ""Halb- Weltsicht". Die DDR- Weltoffenheit während der X. Weltfestspiele" (ref needs clarification) Kulturation 2/2003, Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, 2/2003 (KulturInitiative'89 e. V. Berlin, 2003)
91 Interview with Silvia 43 and Olaf 42, 1998
92 Rainer E., 1998
93 Turner, Victor, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, (Cornell: New York, 1969) p. 94

Secular socialist rituals[94] were well rehearsed in GDR cultural life. At the same time, the conceptualisation of the Games allowed for the inscription of socialist narratives on traditional rituals and folkloric traditions. For example, during the Weltfestspiele, fifteen young couples were joined together in matrimony. Presents from every country were presented to the couples, and then, in a moment of highly charged and rather macabre symbolism, a Vietnamese fighter pilot[95] placed a ring on the finger of each bride made from metal from one of and American aircraft which he had shot down. As a surprise, the wedding pairs were then received by Erich Honecker and members of the Politbüro.[96]

The participants themselves also adapted their own rituals familiar from youth camps and meetings. The collection of signatures on souvenir neck scarves was one of the most commonly photographed acts of the festival – the signing and the photographing of the signings were participant-defined rituals[97]. What seemed like a statement of individual connections, formed itself into a new ritual, just as the "orgy of morning washing" at the fountain. Rituals were built in to the Games through the planning and at the same time new rituals defined by participants emerged. Thus, if we follow Turner's theory, the conditions for liminal space were present. In Turner's description, the condition of liminality generates a sense of *communitas*, or commonness of feeling, and in many senses this was evident in the forms of spontaneous sociability, and heightened emotional experience at the Games. And yet for the GDR citizens, counter cultural proposals (for example as in the hippy culture explored by Turner) could not be articulated at this time.[98] At the same time, East German youth were in their everyday structures quite accustomed to togetherness and equality. The entire mobilisation of the public before the Games depended on stimulating a group identification which could be called communitas

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94 These were adopted to a greater or lesser extent from the Soviet Union which specifically established alternatives to traditional and religious rituals. See Bell, Catherine, Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions (OUP: Oxford, 1997) pp. 225–9

95 Nguyen Duc Soat, a had shot down six American planes in 1972

96 *Für Dich*, report, August 1973

97 This observation is based on the hundreds of photographs both amateur and professional which I analysed from the Eisenhüttenstadt archive and the collection in the Bundesarchiv.

98 As von Saldern suggests, this represents "A community built not on discursive consensus but through collective meaning, ritual and negotiation. Control is not based simply on repression, but also on the symbolic and material offer, which must at least partly orientate itself to those addressed." von Saldern, Adelheid, Inszenierte Einigkeit: Herrschaftrepräsentationen in DDR Städten, (Steiner: Stuttgart, 2003)

at a neighbourhood, work and national level. Those selected to attend the festival as delegates formed, by definition, an exclusive group, necessary for the building of *communitas*. However, eye witness testimonies suggest that it was not so much the sense of togetherness amongst the East Germans, but the taking of small liberties made possible by the sense of common purpose which made the experience of the Games exceptional.[99] The participants thus experienced the communitas familiar from socialist life, but also re-defined it on their own terms.

There were other features of the festival which contributed to the opening up of a liminal space: most explicitly, by definition a festival is set up as a short period of heightened experience. Equally, it is important that this was a mass gathering specifically of *young* people, the period of adolescence in itself being one of possibility and exploration.[100] Some eye witnesses who attended both the 1951 games as young people and the 1973 event as mature adults spoke of the aura of excitement surrounding the experience they attended at the time of sexual maturation being absent at the later event. Travel, too is an identity-forming experience[101]: for delegates traveling to Berlin from the provinces even the journey within the republic was exceptional. But the proximity of foreigners and the chance to use foreign languages made this into a form of virtual travel for East Germans, otherwise largely forbidden from traveling beyond the Eastern Bloc.

These conditions opened up the "realm of pure possibility" in which status reversal – another possibility described by Turner – could also occur. The description of the preparations by the designers incorporate too the idea of status reversal. Lutz Brandt recalled how they were able to invert the relationship between designer and political bureaucrats. The designers felt that they were empowered to make the radical designs, rather than the old men leading the FDJ – they spoke as though *they* had manipulated the

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99 It is interesting to note, that the sense of sameness and equality which Turner defines as characteristic of communitas, is emphasised in retrospect by eye witnesses as contrasting to the less equitable conditions in which they now live (under Capitalism), and is explicitly referred to by a West German activist (Peter Schütt) who took part in the Games at the time as a novel and uplifting experience. (Neun Tage Buch, 1974); The cyclist, Wolfgang Schröder, who took part in the sport programme said retrospectively: Actually I thought it was great. Huge things were achieved that would be unthinkable today, because everyone just asks, what do I get for it? At that time it was idealism. Ohse, M. D.. *Eine Schaufensterveranstaltung*...
100 This is a fact recognised by the SED in its political exertions in channeling youthful energy and potential through the Free German Youth movement.
101 Travel, it has been argued, is an identity forming experience, a significant moment or transitional period in the life trajectories of individuals. See, for example Matthews, A, "Backpacking as a Contemporary Rite of Passage: Victor Turner and Youth Travel Practices". In: St John, G. (ed.) *Victor Turner and Contemporary Cultural Performance.* (Berghahn: New York & Oxford, 2008)

situation to push through *their* ideas. Brandt also recalled in his interview the empowerment of the designers as they moved around the city during the Games:

You know we had real fun! We also made our own identity cards and stuck them on the car. You know we had to get around so fast, that we had to get around quickly, and we painted our own ids and stuck them on the cars! [there follows a long anecdote]. All the cops were speechless what I was doing, wonderful. Such things gave us such a great time.

If the designers and participants felt powerful, the powerful also became ordinary in a way which neatly corresponds to Turner's description of status reversal during the liminal phase[102]. The function of this, he suggests, maybe a kind of "release" from the incumbency of higher office[103]. but serves to reinforce the existing structure. "Humility reinforces a just pride in position", giving "humorous warmth" to the ritual viewpoint[104]. The photograph demonstrates this breaking down of the established order:

Here, Honecker converses with guest of honour Angela Davis in central Berlin. The reversal could not be more complete. She had iconic status at the festival: rather than a dead white man, the communist hero is a living black American woman. The informality in the foreground, the detritus of take away food, and Honecker's casual demeanour and the unusual night time setting is offset by the stiff formality evident in the upper half of the image.

Honecker himself described a sense in which he allows himself to lose control when he joined the crowds on Alexanderplatz:

Instantly there was a throng of young people around us. We were warm heartedly drawn in to the colourful events and into discussions. Jokes were exchanged, songs were sung. We could hardly influence the way we were going.[105]

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102 Turner, *The Ritual Process*, pp. 166 – 203
103 Ibid, p. 201
104 Ibid
105 Honecker, Erich, *Erich Honecker Aus meinem Leben, Biografie* (Dietz: Berlin, 1980) p 333

The liminal phase is also defined by its closure since by definition it is a transitional state. Even without the formal ending of the Games, and the departure of the foreigners, a poignant and opportune event provided the ideal condition for the stripping of the city's party clothes and ritualistic re-assertion of state authority: Walter Ulbricht passed away on the third day the event and after the closing ceremony, the state funeral procession took place through the same central spaces, and East Germans lined the streets of Berlin in the manner typical of the formal state occasions. Following eight days of clear blue skies and bright sunshine, it even began to rain.

The emotional connection with the Weltfestspiele described by eye witnesses and evident in photographs, was not simply stage managed from above but emerged through a new sense of communitas. The success of the SED leadership lay not simply in its security and management of the event, but in the understanding of how to appeal to the generation born after the erection of the Wall, whilst re-affirming socialist values and fostering the sense of collective engagement under under the banner of *Solidarity, Friendship and Peace.* Many of the foreign delegations were engaged in a struggle for socialism: East Germans had it for real. Socialism was once more associated with "the pathos of the revolution"[106]. Accustomed to being the poor relations of the more prosperous West, many young East Germans felt a new self confidence in their own lives.[107] The revolutionary energy of the liberation movements[108], which all demonstrably agitated against the status quo, were, through the simplicity of the paroles?, united with the authoritarian conservatism of GDR socialism. Any potentially disruptive influence of radical political activists like Davis was subsumed into the dominant narrative of solidarity and friendship.

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106 Merkel, "Im Spiegel des Fremden…"
107 See also Ohse, *Jugend nach dem Mauerbau*, p. 354 on East German attitudes to West Germans.
Social research has shown this period in the early to mid 1970s to represent the greatest satisfaction with the status quo in the GDR. See for example, Henderson, Karen, The Search for Ideological Conformity: Sociological Research on Youth in the GDR under Honecker, German History, Vol 10, Nr 3: "By the mid-1970s the group who identified with the GDR comprised more rather than less than half of all young people. By 1979, the figures had sunk back to the 1970 levels, only to go up again by 1983, then to start sinking terminally in the run-up to 1989". (see also Ohse, 2003, Madarasz, Conflict and Compromise, Palgrave 2003).
108 For example from Vietnam, where peace had been declared a few months later, Chile, which was soon after to be subject to a military putsch, Palestine and former colonies (eg Zimbabwe), Laos, Cambodia.

Evaluation of the Weltfestspiele

How can we interpret the Weltfestspiele? If it was "monumental propaganda", then in what sense? If it opened up liminal space then what was the post-liminal state? My reading is that it was indeed a piece of monumental propaganda, in the sense that it projected and embodied a set of beliefs and values through the means of mass communication. It successfully drew on many of the dynamic elements envisaged in Lenin's plan for monumental propaganda as it had been interpreted by avant-garde artists, for example in the temporary art forms, and graphic media, and the integration of these into public space. In scale too, the event can be considered "monumental". Much of the argument about the monumental amongst artists towards the end of the 1960s, described in the last chapter, was concerned with monumental quality rather as opposed to monumental scale. This event in fact had both. The mass communication was not, however, a projection, or pure choreography (even though this form of mass communication was also present in the opening ceremony sport stadium displays and street parades). The mass communication was created by the participants responding to the exceptional conditions in their frequently cited "euphoria". We can allow for the fact that there may have been plenty of people who did not share this euphoria without diminishing the argument. The enthusiastic reminiscences present archival interviews and the happy faces in photographs do not represent a totality, but are nonetheless not inauthentic.

Post "liminal space" and the longer term impact of the Weltfestspiele on public art and design.

The post-Weltfestspiele phase has largely been described as the thud of the dull reality of the GDR and feelings of disappointment, even bitterness, for those euphorised youth that there was infact to be no liberalisation once eyes of the world had turned away from the

GDR. There was "shock at the subsequent closure."[109] Young people "suddenly became aware of the manipulative background of this sudden world-openness;"[110] "hopes were disappointed" and youth were soon "back in rut."[111]

If we apply Turner's anthropological model, this phase would be called "aggregation" or post-liminal "when the ritual subject enters a new stable state with its own rights and obligations."[112] This means that whilst order is re-established, there is new state. There is not an exact return to the pre-liminal phase.

The official conclusions on the longer term impact of the success of the Weltfestspiele claimed there were "changed international power relations in favour of socialism", and that consequently FDJ youth should demonstrate "greater penetration of pride in the socialist fatherland", "more offensive discussion with bourgeois ideology", "deepening of class conciousness" and so on.[113] The 19-point declaration which was to be the basis of the Youth Law in 1974 offered a few 'concessions' to youth[114] in exchange for their ever greater commitment to socialism. Pointedly, the "personal experiences, contacts and discussions of the FDJ members during the festival" were to be "largely used for ideological work." The resolution was a re-norming of the prescribed order where the youth were to take their lead from the authorities.

How this actually developed in GDR socio-political terms is beyond the scope of this research. Cultural liberalisation and re-closure are generally marked out in scholarship through key moments, for example, the above mentioned Youth Law of 1974[115], the

109 Merkel, Ina, "Im Spiegel des Fremden: Die Weltfestspiele von 1973", in Kulturation 2/2003, Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, 2/2003
110 Hornbogen, Franziska, "Halb- Weltsicht". Die DDR – Weltoffenheit während der X. Weltfestspiele, Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, Nr. 16 • 2013
111 Falk, Oliver Quo Vadis? "Jugend und Jugendpolitik nach den X. Weltfestspielen", Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, Nr. 16 • 201
112 Turner, Victor, "The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual Ithaca: Cornell University Press", 1967, p.94)
113 "Weitere Schlußfolgerungen aus der Durchführung der X. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten", ("Further consequences from the X World Festival Games"), Politbüro Resolution, 9th October, 1973. BARch DY/20/JIV 2/2 1471. pp 79–83
114 For example, "more artistic works about the youth", freeing up of budget for the all year round availability of the Pioneer Part Ernst Thälmann.
115 detail

expulsion of Wolf Biermann in 1974[116], the banning of the rock group *Klaus-Renft-Combo* in 1975.[117] Such markers are unable to tell us much about how the Weltfestspiele may have worked on the expectations of the GDR youth, particularly the FDJ delegates. Whilst this is hard to qualify, Ina Merkel's paper, "Im Spiegel des Fremden" offers some important reflections, and it is worth noting that Merkel herself was, as sixteen year-old, one of those who experienced the "pathos of the revolution" and subsequent "unpathologicisation" (*entpathologisierung*) or "de-eroticisation".[118] Merkel points out that the Weltfestspiele generation were the ones who turned their back on the GDR in 1989 – whilst she is not making a causal link, the point is that the raised expectations, Turner's "realm of pure possibility" had to find an outlet – whether in attempts to re-create aspects of the experience, by using it as leverage with the authorities[119] or in feelings of frustration or rejection of the GDR[120]. Thus, normality was not restored, but a new state was established "with its own rights and obligations". The Weltfestspiele became a reference point which could be drawn on to make demands for change in its short term and medium term aftermath.[121]

It is interesting that the official commemoration denied the exceptionality of the event: "What happened there was no phenomenon. Nothing about it was incomprehensible."[122] The event could not be marked as "exceptional" in the official commentary, since the whole point had been to demonstrate life "as it was" under socialism. Perhaps there was already an wariness that these identity-forming experiences may raise the expectations of a generation.

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116 detail
117 Falk, Oliver Quo Vadis? "Jugend und Jugendpolitik nach den X. Weltfestspielen", Online Journal für Kultur, Wissenschaft und Politik, Nr. 16 • 201
118 http://www.bpb.de/mediathek/380/hinterher-war-alles-beim-alten   [accessed 01.11.2011]
119 The event was used as leverage for getting better sports facilities, for example. Wesenburg, Wesenburg ...
120 Lutz Brandt unexpectedly found an opportunity to leave the GDR in 1984 of which he took advantage. Brandt worked on a series of mural commissions in West Berlin, which brought in much needed hard currency for the East German treasury (to Brandt's consternation the Treasury took their share in hard currency and paid Brandt in Ostmarks). After several trips to West Berlin, Brandt made the "not easy decision" on one of these trips not to return to the East. He still works in West Berlin as muralist and artist. (Interview with the author)
121
122 Steineckert, Gisela und Joachim Walther, "Neun-Tage-Buch. Die X. Weltfestspiele in Berlin. Erlebnisse, Berichte, Dokumente. Berlin". (Neues Leben: Berlin, 1974), Inside cover text.

For the artists and designers involved, the empowerment felt in their Berlin collective was something they hoped to sustain in subsequent projects. The unequivocal success of the event in its official commemoration could be used as an argument to reproduce its ideas. Walter Womacka invoked the interdisciplinary working method as an argument for re-structuring his Institut für Baugebundene Kunst (Institute for Building Related art) in Monbijoupark in Berlin, "to bring together different artistic disciplines for the socialist environment." [123] The Weltfestspiele should offer a model for the realisation of the idea of Complex Environmental Design, not simply as interdisciplinary planning, but as a form of communication which should become part of the way of life. This point was taken up by the sociologist, Fred Staufenbiel in a letter of support of Walter's initiative:

It is important to integrate the disciplines even more: it is not just about synthesis but about complex design as part of the way of life in the urban environment.[…] The work of the designer collective for the X. Weltfestspiele was unique in this respect.[124]

For Rolf Walter, the Weltfestspiele were a springboard to his next major project as the artistic director of the ambitious new construction project north east of Berlin in Marzahn. Between 1977 and 1989 almost 60 000 apartments were built as well as 55 kindergärten, 46 sports halls, 46 schools, 2 swimming pools, 9 retirement homes, 9 youth clubs, 18 supermarkets and 15 club restaurants:[125] the new urban area was one of the largest housing areas in Europe and represented the greatest test for the next generation of housing following Halle Neustadt. In the same year as the Weltfestspiele, Walter published his doctoral dissertation,[126] which proposed three levels of visual design in the city, in which 1) existing natural and technical conditions, 2) the applied arts such as crafts, visual communication and form design, and 3) the fine arts in the form of tableaux and sculptures should play a role in the social and aesthetic functionality of public space. Walter's dissertation is indebted to Flierl's ideas for Complex Environmental Design as a

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123 01.10.1973
Correspondance with Hans Joachim Hoffmann, Minister for Kultur, October, 1973, Archive of the Kunsthochschule Weissensee, Landesarchiv, Berlin,C Rep. 711 Nr. 181 1971 - 1975
124 Fred Staufenbiel Feb 1974, Stellennahme, Leiter des Arbeitskreises Kultursoziologie im Wissentschaftlichen Rat für soziologische Forschung der DDR. Archive of the Kunsthochschule Weissensee, Landesarchiv, Berlin,C Rep. 711 Nr. 181 1971 - 1975
125 Kunst in der Großsiedlung: kunstwerke im öffentlichen Raum in Marzahn und Hellersdorf" (Bezirksamt Marzahn Hellersdorf: Berlin, 2008), p 47
126 Rolf Walter, "Zu Problemen visueller Kommunikation in der Stadt", Kunsthochschule Weissensee, Berlin, 1973. Supervisors: Prof Klaus Wittkugel, Prof Fred Staufenbiel, Dr Harald Olbricht

cultural process which in the socialist society "is determined by the mode of production, the socialist way of life and the political-ideological superstructure in relation to the base."[127] Thus the definition of the socialist environment as socialist through the "way of life" as proposed by Flierl was taken up by Walter, but with more emphasis on how this should work through the different art forms and their respective functions.

All the major decision making bodies and discussion forums by this point all took Complex Environmental Design, at least as a term even if there were differences in understanding, as the basis for the future development of the built environment.[128]

Complex Environmental Design was understood by Flierl and taken up by Walter not as interdisciplinarity *per se*, but the "planned environmental design in accordance with whole societal demands." This was not, Walter argued, "about the total aesthetic design down to every last detail… the city grows and has life."

Walter approached the task of creating the complex designed environment of Marzahn using the model of the interdisciplinary working group of the Weltfestspiele. The artistic committee consisted of painters, sculptors, designers, form designers and art critics.[129] The basic artistic conception for Marzahn, published in February 1975, was based on the three levels theory, which Walter elaborated at the 7th ZAG, (the Central Working Group for Architecture and Art) seminar in Dresden in 1973.[130] The seminar, dominated by Flierl, was the first conference to re-examine the question of housing since the new welfare and housing orientated political course set out by Honecker at the VIII Party Congress in June, 1971. A the seminar, a consensus was established that socialist ways of

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[127] Rolf Walter, "Zu Problemen visueller Kommunikation in der Stadt

128 In 1975 the ministry for building and culture organised a consulation on the question of Complex Environmental Design. It was also recognised at the 6th Building conference of the ZK of the SED in 1975, and the 7th congress of the BdA in 1975.; The 7th congress of the artists uniion also focused on Complex Environmental Design; and at the Artists' Union Präsidiumssitzungen, a working group including Flierl and Meuche, the artists union also prepared a statement on Complex Environmental Design in preparation for the Building Conference). AdK VBK Zentralvorstand – 2.

129 Horst Göhler, Peter Hoppe, Heinrich Tessemer, Lutz Brandt, Karl Blümel, Ingeborg Hunzinger, Gunter Wächtler, Wolfgang Weber, Kurt-Heinz Rudolf and Rolf Walter. (as listed in "Kunst in der Grosssiedlung: Kunstwerke in Offentlichen Raum in Marzahn und Hellersdorf: eine Dokumentation", Berlin date. And Guth, *Wände*… note 652, p. 434)

130 Walter, Rolf, "Probleme der Ausarbeitung von Konzeptionen für die komplexe Umweltgestaltung in großstädtischen Bereichen" ("Problems of the realisation of conceptions for the Complex Environmental Design in large urban areas"). 7th ZAG seminar, 14th and 15th November, 1974, Research Archives, Los Angeles. Box 169, Folder 8.

living and thinking did not stand in a cause and effect relationship with the socialist narrative art work situated within the built environment. Walter's artistic concept for Marzahn did not reduce the public art to the what Flierl had termed *Beglückungsideologie*,[131] (the ideology of just keeping people happy), but expressed the need to find a unity between aesthetic, functional and social requirements, with the ideological demands explicitly secondary. The conception rejected "schematism, or too narrowly defined political-ideological requirements" which were not useful "either for the artist or the user" and could lead to "disinterest in the newly built urban environment".[132] Marzahn's art programme was the most extensive in the GDR, and most of the works had only a light ideological touch, if any. As in Halle Neustadt, each living complex was assigned an ideological theme for the purpose of commissioning art works. Walter related in an interview with me , that the de-ideologisation of the art had no negative consequences, because the ideological conception was in place in the themes for each area. "They [the higher authorities] were happy that it was bright and cheerful."133 Walter's plan for the careful development of the three levels was difficult to effect in practice because of the many structural, economic and organisational difficulties. Whilst he insisted that Complex Environmental Design did not aim for perfectionism, and was not "a total city aesthetic, or the city as a work of art"[134] the reality of production made this inconceivable. In interview, Walter referred to the problems of "hectic and debts in the building business" which made the actual realisation of ideas for a variety of living blocks, for more functional elements as part of the urban plan, very difficult.[135] What Marzahn did achieve however, was the acceptance of the *mural*, monumental in scale, which did not have to subordinate itself to the architecture. The sides of housing blocks acted as gigantic canvases for new, popular expressions.

Humourous, surreal, trompe l'oeil murals – non-ideological murals – which were also in vogue in West Berlin and elsewhere as a light-hearted way to brighten up otherwise triste

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131 He used the term in the 7th ZAG seminar
132 "Kunst in der Grosssiedlung…", p. 22
133 Interview on 15 November 2011 with Rolf Walter in his apartment (second interview)
134 Walter, Rolf, Berlin Marzahn "Anliegen und Nötwendigkeit komplexe Stadtgestaltung in Architektur der DDR "10/83, p 600–4
135 Interview by the author with Rolf Walter, 15th November 2011

or faceless urban fabric, became acceptable within the parameters of GDR environmental design beyond Marzahn. According to Lutz's Brandt, works such as his *trompe l'oeil* mural on the highly frequented Warschauer Strasse in Berlin made the authorities nervous, ("They were suspicious if they didn't know what it was about…"),[136] but they offered new landmarks and points of identification in the city which left behind the Socialist Realist stereotypes. The graphic design section of the Artists' Union in Leipzig launched the first of the *Giebel Wettbewerben*[137] (mural competitions) in 1979, an idea that was followed in Berlin. These competitions were pursued by graphic designers in particular, which may have helped the de-ideologisation of the works: conceptualised as within the pre-war Leipzig tradition of large scale painted advertising, these could fall more in to the category of "Gebrauchsgrafik" than art, and were, in the report of the organisers, hugely popular amongst the public.[138] The liberty afforded by such these de-ideologisation was, however, offset by the fact that it was difficult to fit the works within a legislative and funding structure.

Reporting back on similar innovations, as well as contemporary applications of the sgraffito technique seen in Koszalin Poland, in 1978[139], Wolfgang Kil, editor of *Farbe und Raum* from 1975–1983 pushed forward a debate on the purpose of urban art, arguing for the possibility of experiment and the chance to make mistakes, in other words, the freedom *not* to plan and design. Kil was a student of Flierl, and one of the new generation of practitioners/critics who wanted to open up a debate about new understandings of art in architecture. He used the editorship of the trade magazine, *Farbe und Raum*, as a means to this end. "There is pleasure in playful abstraction, and bright colours, in using irony in a pleasing way. There is no relationship to the architecture. It

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136 Interview with Lutz Brandt, cited above.
137 Jury from reps from the council, office of the chief architect and the artists union in Leipzig. Twenty-nine designers submited entries, Farbe und Raum 4/79; Berndt Sikora "Ein Wettbewerb und seine Probleme" ("A competition and its problems") Sikora explained the problems of getting financing for the realisation of the work which depended on sponsors, since the graphic works did not fall into the category of art. The competition was organised by the graphic design section of the Artists Union in Leipzig. 9/79
138 These are referenced by Sikora in his paper at the ZAG seminar "Farbe in der Stadt", 15th and 16th November, 1979.
139 Farbe und Raum, 5/78 Cover photo of Giebelbild in Poland by Klaus Johne

has its effect with people." Kil's arguments and examples provoked a furious response from some of his readership, for whom the examples

"[broke] the basic rules of decorative design on buildings and [tore] apart the organically grown form of the house fronts, [evidence of] the demolition of the architectural form." [140]

In response, Kil argued for a "relaxed engagement with the environment, fresh and uncomplicated, which should be equal to the seriousness with which we occupy ourselves where appropriate." One contribution from a student representative argued that "more important than a place in the lexicon of the building history, should be the happy smile of the residents."[141] Whilst "happy smiles" sounded rather banal when compared to the ambitions for the socialist environment set out by the theoretical contributions of the ZAG meetings, however, "the happiness of the people" had since the VIII Party congress been firmly established within official rhetoric as the highest political aim.[142]

If "pleasure" in the environment was to be invoked as an aim of socialist design, then it had a different quality to the concept of *Lebensfreude*, or joy in life that represented, as David Crowley and Susan Reid have put it, "a kind of abstracted, disembodied higher goal,"[143] which demanded self-denial in the present with the promise of a better future. At the same time, the pleasure that may have been invoked by the new visual languages were not conceived of as subjective, niche experiences, or a relief from the pressures of every day life, but as much a collective experience as the more abstract concept of "joy". Pleasure in this context does not either refer to an unspoken contract of the concessions to materialist desires in exchange for political loyalty.[144] The engendering of pleasure was

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140 Letter to the Editor of Farbe und Raum G Zeugner, Leipzig, *Farbe und Raum*, 9/78
141 Kurt Schönburg, Studienrat, Letter to the Editor, Farbe und Raum, 11/78
142 Honecker declared "the happiness of the people" to be highest aim of the "unity of economic and social policy" when he took office in 1971.
143 David Crowley and Susan E. Reid , Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Bloc, (Northwestern University Press: Illinois, 2010), Introduction.
[144] This kind of contractual relationship is also invoked instudy of Pleasure in Germany's Third Reich: "pleasure … promised far greater returns … than outright repression or indoctrination ever could" Pamela E. Swett, Corey Ross, Fabrice d'Almeida, eds. Pleasure and Power in Nazi Germany. (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2011) p. 3

to become an explicit aim of the design of the socialist environment. Beauty too, remained in place as a central aim of the formation of the built environment, but also in the sense of a more pedestrian experience of the surroundings. Summing up a discussion on life in the immediate areas around housing blocks and on the roofs in Magdeburg Neustadt at the Dresden seminar in 1973, Achim Felz remarked:

None of these things are really earth shifting problems. But I think, it is exactly the simple and also the small things which are particularly important in what we see as the designed environment– because these are the things which make life in the immediate residential area interesting and beautiful.[145]

Pleasure in the art and design of the built environment and the subsequent experience of happiness invoked by commentators at this time can be seen as analogue to the emotions triggered at the Weltfestspiele. I have argued that the positive experiences at this event were not derived simply as an apolitical by-product of the main programme, although it is clear from the accounts that collective and deviant pleasure contributed to the condition of liminality. Part of the pleasure was derived from the sense of validation of socialism through the connections with foreigners who aspired to the same political future. The artistic plans conceived to invoke a pleasurable sense of identification were intended to marry this with the socialist ideal and build on an idea of collective experience which could be justified too in Marxist terms. In 1972, the well established art critic Peter Feist identified this as a key change in art as it moved into the 1970s.

There is a space opening in fine art, in the decorative (wrongly maligned) as well as in the ornamental, […] and the intellectual solution. […] even the most serious, ideologically ambitious and focused art must have something to do with entertainment in the best socialist sense, with the pleasure of the viewer in their connection with the art, must have something to do with the generation of his ability to enjoy.[146]

Feist gave the Marxist justification for the validity of pleasure terms of the surplus time created by increased productivity which allowed for the full "development of the individual", and further that the ability to experience pleasure was seen as a mark of the

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145 Felz, Achim, "Komplexe Umweltgestaltung Magdeburg Neue-Neustadt", Ibid p 15
[146] Feist, Peter H, "Der Mensch und sein Werk", *Dezennium 2* (journal) (Verlag der Kunst: Dresden, 1972) pp 37–38

culturedness of the individual. There was no refusal of pleasure in Marxism, but in fact the development of productivity was also the means of pleasure.[147]

One of the highlights of the urban design of the Weltfestspiele, the use of children's paintings across the Behrens buildings on Alexanderplatz, was also to find an important place in the subsequent opening up of public art. Motifs derived from children's paintings which began to adorn the through-ways between housing blocks in the 1970s tended still to an optimistic visual environment of rainbows, sunshines, landscapes, nature, globes, ships and planes. This infantile genre of imagery was, as Brandt said in his interview with me, "irreproachable." For many artists, the children's picture-book version of Socialist Realism remained a way of shifting the political content of large scale murals in public space, even when on buildings which were ordinary residential blocks, unrelated to children. At the same time, images of "other worlds", the fantasy landscape within the uncompromising masses of concrete in the new housing districts, could equally be interpreted as a "deflection from" rather than a "reflection of" life in socialism.

The Weltfestspiele functioned as a clear marker of a change in what could be characterised as socialist beyond the established ideological values. Another important precedent was the relinquishing of the planability, order and control in the design of public space.

The visual identity guidelines for the Weltfestspiele which schoolchildren, shopkeepers and residents were encouraged to interpret to create their own ideas, made an anachronism of Hans Schmidt's insistence on order and clear visual codes as the proper course of socialist urban space, even if the quasi *laissez faire* attitude was for a temporary event. The Weltfestspiele marked the beginning of an era, where not only the content and expression of the art in public space became much more novel, but also a release from the preoccupation of the unity of art and architecture as the correct course for art in public space.

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[147] Feist cites Marx's *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie,*1857–58: "There is no denial of pleasure, but the development of power, of the ability to produce, and thus also the capacity for and the means of pleasure [...] The saving of working time results in the increase of leisure time, i.e., for the full development of the individual, which itself is then the greatest productive force of work." pp. 599 and further on p 312 'where the ability to experience pleasure is seen as a mark of the culturedness of the individual' (Feist), Feist refers to the Berlin 1953 publiation. Feist, Dezenium...

Conclusion

What was at stake in the latter period of public art where gestural art and architecture had been replaced by something much more ordinary, an art which differentiated, delineated, concealed and decorated the built environment?

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a wave of *Gestaltungswollen* (the desire to create): apartment block residents began painting and personalising their loggias, private house and holiday bungalow owners invested their inventive energies in the creations of ornamental and geometrically designed fences, garden sculptures, undulating pathways, decorated pots, cartwheels, welded letterforms and decorative chains.[148] Artistic activities in the living complexes such as balcony painting, children's art actions, and the painting of transformer buildings were welcomed by the new generation of ZAG participants as evidence of a new, participatory approach to art.

This blossoming of public creativity presented the defendants of complex environmental design with a dilemma. Designers and architects were carefully designing the aesthetic and functional socialist environment for the people to find that residents, sometimes along with other artists who had not been awarded the prestigious commissions,[149] began to make their own unordered interventions. Bruno Flierl, and Wolfgang Kil came down

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148 Köstner, Hein, "Im Zeichen der Muße: Gang durch einen Ferienseidlung", Form und Zweck, 1981. Köstner refrains from calling the examples "kitsch" but it is clearly the unspoken idea in his piece. See also Andries, Nicole , "Land der Grenzen und Zäune," in, Andries, Nicole and Majken Rehder, *Zaunwelten: Zäune und Zeitzeugen– Geschichte zur Alltagskultur der DDR*, (Jonas: Marburg, 2005), p. 73

[149] The "Trafo-Aktion", where the low transformator buildings at the centre of living areas were painted in Leipzig Grunau WK IV in 1982 was a conscious statement by young artists who had not entered in to the commissioning system to undermine the official awarding and carriers of public art. Bernd Sikora reported on the "Aktion" at the 1982 ZAG meeting in Dresden. 14. Seminar aus Anlaß der IX Kunstausstelllung der DDR, (VbK: Berlin, 1982)

in favour of these unordered interventions: Flierl even invented a term for participatory public art: *Burgerbilder* (citizens' paintings).[150] Such interventions could be embraced as people taking ownership of spaces by artists together with ordinary people. This enactment of socialist participation in the formation of the built environment was arguably the logical outcome of Complex Environmental Design.

For Kil, rather than setting works of design in to the urban space, if given a chance, the urban space would become its own artwork[151] – there is parallel here to the occupation of the city during the Weltfestspiele. Flierl also cited the Weltfestspiele as an exemplary example of city design in which the activities people comprise the art: "the city does not live from its coverings, but from the people […] who visibly appear in action […].[152] Kil's 2003 contribution to a conference "Hier Ensteht"[153] went so far to suggest that the brittleness (*Sprödigkeit*) of the slab environments of the GDR "could be seen as the ideal frame in which people as individuals could really realise themselves." He also added that at the same time that such activities were "the only way to stop yourself going mad."

In Peter Guth's 1995 *Wände der Verheissung* took a very different view. For Guth, Flierl's conception of complex environmental design as a social-cultural process which should emerge hand in hand with a "socialist way of life" was an "illusion".[154] Rolf Walter's "three levels theory" applied in Marzahn, which focused on the "artistic-aesthetic" materiality of the environment stood as a "pragmatic alternative" to Flierl's "utopian" idea of the realisation of "an ideal condition free of private property and

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[150] Flierl, Bruno, *Architektur und Kunst*

151 This argument also cost Kil his job after the "scandal"issue of Form und Zweck in 1983 in which featured scenes of spontaneous, bohemiam life away from the order of the slab-built architecture which was the focus of political attention. Form und Zweck, 1/1983, special issue on city centre reconstruction, Kil, Wolfgang, "Kunstwerk Schonhauser Allee?"

152 Flierl, Bruno, "Probleme der komplexen Umweltgestaltung als kultureller Prozeß", first published in 1974, reproduced in Architektur und Kunst, (Fundus: Dresden, 1984), p. 52

153 Kil, Wolfgang, paper entitled "Transport von Heimat – Aus dem Dorf nach Wolfen-Nord" (Transport from home– from the village to Wolfen Nord") at "Hier entsteht" ["ein Diskursraum für Theorien und Praxen sozialer Mitbestimmung, selbstorganisierter räumlicher Aneignung und partizipativen Bauens.] (a discussion space for theories and practices of social participaton, self organised spatial appropriation and participatory building."), 24.06.2003, organised by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

[154] Guth, Wände p. 266

alienation, completely societalised existence of the person in communism."[155] Whilst Guth acknowledged the extent to which Marzahn was the most extensive attempt at cooperation between artists and architects in the GDR, there was no possibility of realising Walter's idea that each phase would represent "a continual social-process of urban development". "A dynamic social-spatial development was impossible."

The only significant change brought about by Marzahn which was the most significant point of the 1970s, according to Guth, was in de-ideologisation of the visual languages: "The political gesture transformed itself substantially to socialising ornament."[156] Architecture related art, Guth summarises, was forced into compensating for all the values not represented in the society "from fundamental democratic norms, to the formation of new urban spaces and the condition of the old towns, to the actual supply situation."[157]

This account of architectural art in the GDR begins and closes with the seemingly banal. The claims for the superiority of socialist art and architecture attached great importance its early days on the details of form; in the closing decade in the claims made for the details of wallpapered balconies, children's paintings, transformer buildings, and litter bins. Whether these actions can be seen as democratisation or not, they undoubtedly represent a diminishing of the original ambitions for art and architecture, as representing the supremacy of socialism.

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[155] Guth, Wände p. 266-7
156 Guth, 269
157 269

Conclusion

The visual arts in public space did not ever develop as a genre of muralism, because they developed as a part of fundamental understandings about architecture, rather than painting. The proximity of architectural art to the development of architecture meant that formal exploration for works in public space was able to take liberties with composition, colour and abstraction that would have been much more problematic for easel painting. The works of art in public space were drawn from each artistic discipline – from the fine arts, crafts, form design and visual communication, which had separated, as I have demonstrated, as a consequence of the needs of economic production. The works which proliferated in the industrially built concrete architecture of the 1960s and the 1970s, were a product of these different disciplines, but were intended to form a harmonious whole. This combination of architecture as a serialised manufactured product, with the hand made, the ornamental, the narrative, and organic, and the contrast of the slab with the socialist narrative detail, gave East German architecture a quality that became as routine in the GDR as it was foreign to Western Modernism, where the work of art was considered autonomous.

The solution to the difficulties of achieving a synthesis art and architecture gave rise to the concept of Complex Environmental Design. This developed as theory of the "built environment for socialist life", but was taken up and understood primarily as an interdisciplinary approach to the design and planning of the built environment. It emerged in practice as a combination of functionalist ideas, which served a re-conception of urban space, with an ongoing need for the readable

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narratives and decorative, hand-made qualities of works of art, in order to maintain the visibly socialist aesthetic character.

The idea that works of architecture and art as an form of representation of socialism were was superceeded by the design as a means through which socialism should be experienced, in which art was just one element. This formula of a composite of elements (or subsystems, in Flierl′s terms) which emerged in the 1970s, was applied rigorously in the subsequent drive to housing production.
In the latter period, even this model broke down, as complex environmental design was subject to ever increasing economies and supply failures.

The mural designer, Lutz Brandt, described the situation in the late 1970s to me as follows:

> GDR house-building was like an enormous warship, and to change its course you need ten sea miles. And we artists danced below, on the upper deck and the captain looked down at the artists and says, "Arent they great?" But we did not really have much chance to influence the direction. Maybe we just made the captain feel older.[1]

The final phase described of a more participatory public art which I have described, was undoubtedly a consequence both of systemic failures (as proposed by Guth) which prevented the full realisation of Complex Environmental Design, as well as a genuinely more open conception of what form public art in the built environment should take.

It is a testimony to the rhetorical and conceptual skills of all those responsible for the art and architecture of the GDR that the radical change in the urban landscape which occurred over three decades was managed without any official departure from Socialist Realism. This is not however, simply a reflection of the adaptability

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1 Lutz Brandt interviewed in his atelier in Charlottenburg, Berlin. April, 2011

of "Party-speak": as I have demonstrated, change occurred as a halting but continual interchange of ideology, theory and practice, and was determined by a complex of factors: the economy, the perception of public expectations, cultural historical legacies and external influences, personal biographies, and of course, most potently, the shadow of the Cold War.

Artists and architects were adept at absorbing and reproducing terms and concepts which were employed to characterise each developmental stage of socialism in the GDR, and using them to serve the ideas they wished to advance. This was a two way process, however, as we can observe how Politburo members also absorbed and reproduced the concepts which were essentially novel to the ideological discourse, such as "breadth and variety", and indeed, "complexity". Beauty, continued as an open ended ideal which could serve different cultural ambitions.

The adaptability of the Socialist Realist ideal for art and architecture, set out in the 1950s, to what can be termed socialist Modernism, was not simply a result of rhetorical flexibility, but equally due to the inherent similarities of the two modes of thinking, both of which born of social and political agendas and aspired to find universal solutions. Socialist Modernism can not be considered an inferior or a delayed version of Western Modernism. The architectural art of the GDR was a product of the dialogue between these two modes of thinking. Built on the model of Socialist Realism which had been formed in the Soviet Union, it was equally the product of legacies and influences which both pre-dated the GDR and stood in opposition to it. It is this specificity which is worthy of this and further research.

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