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From Medieval to Modern: The Relationship Between Gothic and Modern Design in English Architecture

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History

The Gothic movement in England began in the mid 12th century, drawing inspiration from the Gothic movement happening in France during roughly the same time. Abbot Suger, a French abbot and historian, is often considered one of the first Gothic architects. His renovations to the Basilica of Saint Denis in Paris are said to be the first example of a truly Gothic-style building. In England, the Gothic movement is split into four periods: Norman Gothic, Early English Gothic, Decorated Gothic, and Perpendicular Gothic.

The Modern movement (20th century) brought with it many radical ideas about design. Modern structures were often built with open-plan interiors, and careful attention was given to the materials used. One of the most influential architects of the Modern movement was Le Corbusier (1887-1965). His extensive writings on modernism and public housing greatly impacted English Modernism—especially after World War Two. Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe were also prominent figures in the movement.



Canterbury Cathedral, Kent, England



Lincoln Cathedral, Lincolnshire, England



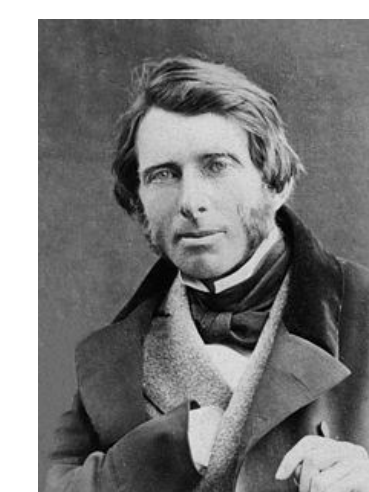
Wells Cathedral, Somerset, England



Wells Cathedral, interior



Abbot Suger



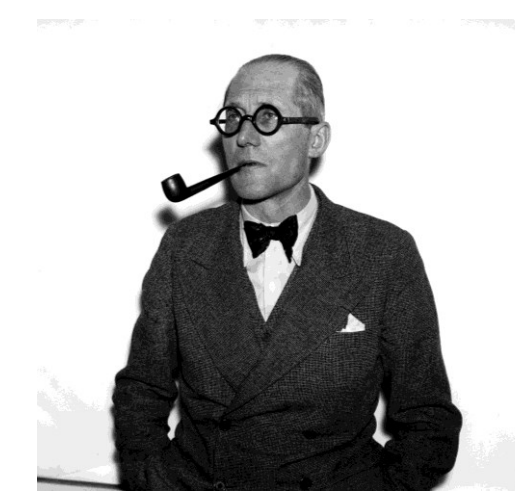
John Ruskin



Walter Gropius



Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin



Le Corbusier



Mies van der Rohe

Gothic Characteristics

- Height
- Flying Buttresses
- Pointed Arches
- Ribbed Vaults
- Vaulted Ceilings
- Pointed Spires
- Light and Airy Interior
- Emphasis on Decorative, Ornate Style

Gothic Revival

The Gothic Revival (19th century) was born out of rebellion against the Industrial Revolution. This movement combined characteristics of medieval architecture with the more advanced building techniques of the late 19th century. Function was very important in Gothic Revival architecture, and great emphasis was placed on how buildings fit into their surrounding landscape. Some prominent architects and writers of the time include: Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin and John Ruskin.

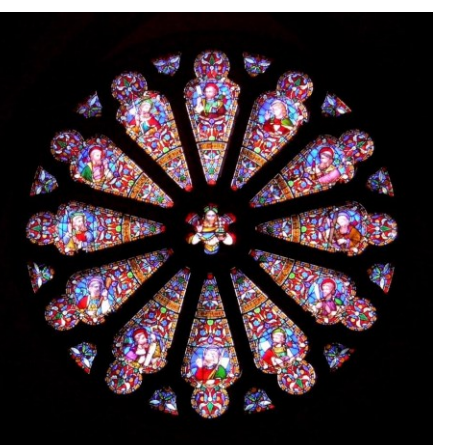
Modern Characteristics

- Inspired by Function
- Simplicity in Form and Design
- Asymmetrical Compositions
- Linear
- Bold, Flat Roof Lines
- Windows As Design
- Open Floor Plans
- Focus on Materials
- Absence of Ornament

Materials

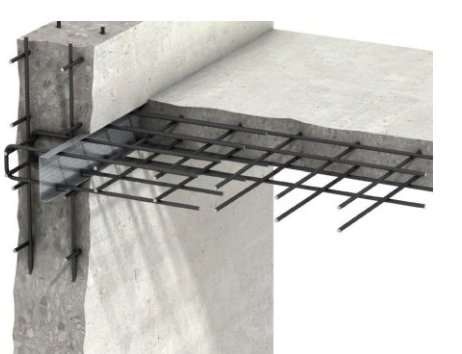
Gothic

- Masonry
- Marble
- Granite
- Stained glass



Modern

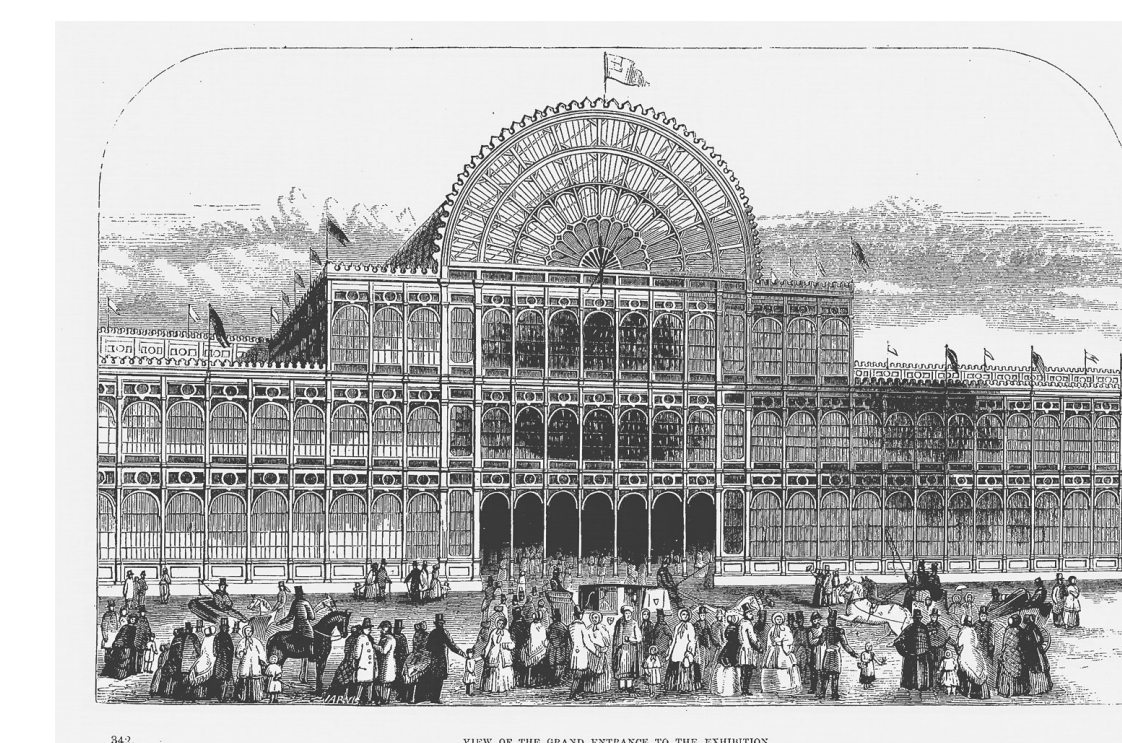
- Reinforced concrete
- Metal and glass framework
- The use of cubic and cylindrical shapes
- Colors: cream, pale blue, earthy red
- blond wood



Royal Horticultural Society Building, interior



Royal Horticultural Society Building, England



Crystal Palace, London, England



Upper Lawn Pavilion, England