



Pierre Thiébaud

Old Buildings Looking for New Use. 61 Examples from Europe

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The regions of Europe have an architectural heritage that is a thousand years old; today's challenge is to integrate this heritage into contemporary life in a sustainable way.

From the first, architecture has always aimed to adapt to the way of life of the society it serves, but few buildings have come down to us intact and as they were originally designed. Since the second half of the 19th century the speeding-up of history has increased the rhythm of change and has led to continual restructuring, extension and conversion.

These changes have brought about the use of more and more innovative techniques, based on flexibility and reversibility, but the weight of materials, the time needed to implement these programmes, financial constraints and cultural compartmentalisation have deferred many of these projects and left us with a museum heritage frozen in time and quite unrelated to the original purpose of the buildings.

What can be done with buildings looking for new use – a fortress without an army, a château without a lord, a workshop without an artisan, a factory without workers, or even an abbey without monks or a church without a congregation?

The rise of a new national or international style or the creation of innovative techniques does not necessarily damage the integrity of a place. Modern techniques and materials, such as glass and steel, have a transparency, lightness, flexibility and reversibility that make them highly suitable for integrative undertakings.

The examples presented in this book all demonstrate a desire to be considered as »local« projects and to take their place in an evolutionary interpretation of history. After more than a century of conflicting debate on the subject of rehabilitation, it seems that the aims expressed in the Charter of Venice have borne fruit by giving rise to quality and personalised buildings that themselves are a contribution to this debate.

Pierre Thiébaud studied architecture in France and in the USA (where Louis Kahn was one of his professors), and is also a graduate in planning of the Institut d'Urbanisme de Paris and the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris. Prior to his present activity as a writer of articles and books on architectural rehabilitation and teacher at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris La Villette, he was an Architecte des Bâtiments de France heading the Service Départemental du Patrimoine du Conseil Général de Seine et Marne.

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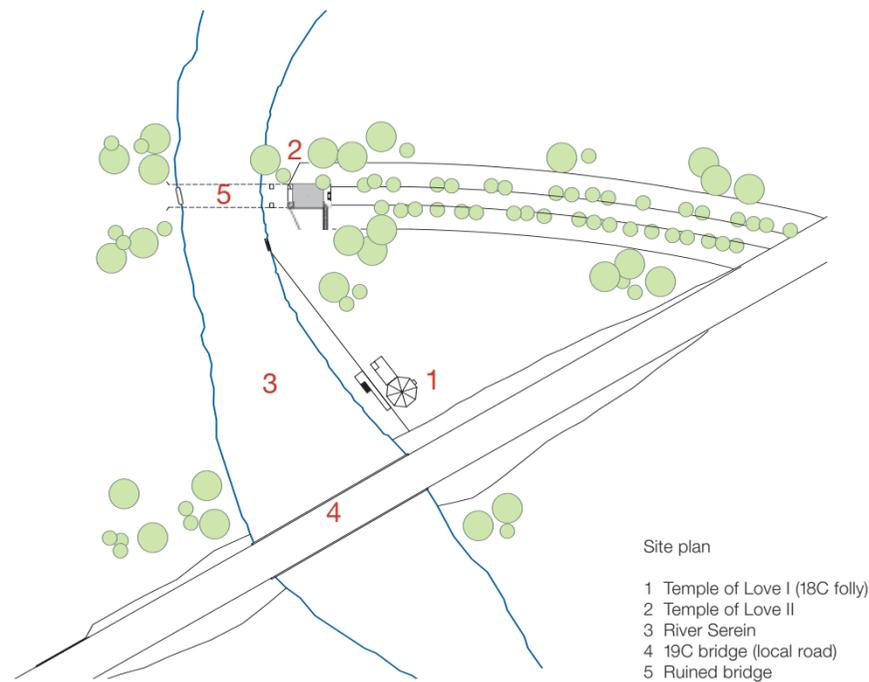
A bridge, a canopy, a temple of love in Burgundy

Temple de l'Amour,
Isle-sur-Serein, France

Architects:
Dirk Jan Postel (Kraaijvanger Urbis)



On the edge of the park of the old château a converted 18C folly is devoted to the romantic memory of the meetings between the Princess of Orange and her lover.



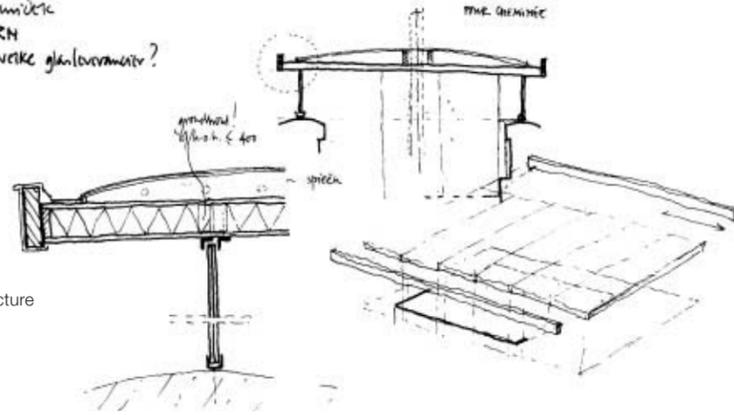
A few paces from there, on the abutments of a ruined 19C bridge, the words of a new Temple of Love.





The trap door in the ground leading to the cellar, now glazed, makes this modest space bathed in reflections full of a luxuriant vegetation mingled with the babbling of the river still more intangible.

- uniditc
- RN
- wieke glasvermeer?



Detail, roof structure

The pier of the old bridge houses a low vaulted room serving as a dwelling, with the square pavilion above;



The smooth, slightly ochre concrete surface blends with the tones of the original parapets of local Massangis stone, even though differing in texture. The light roof clad with metal is placed simply on its supporting walls of laminated glass braced by small panels of toughened glass.