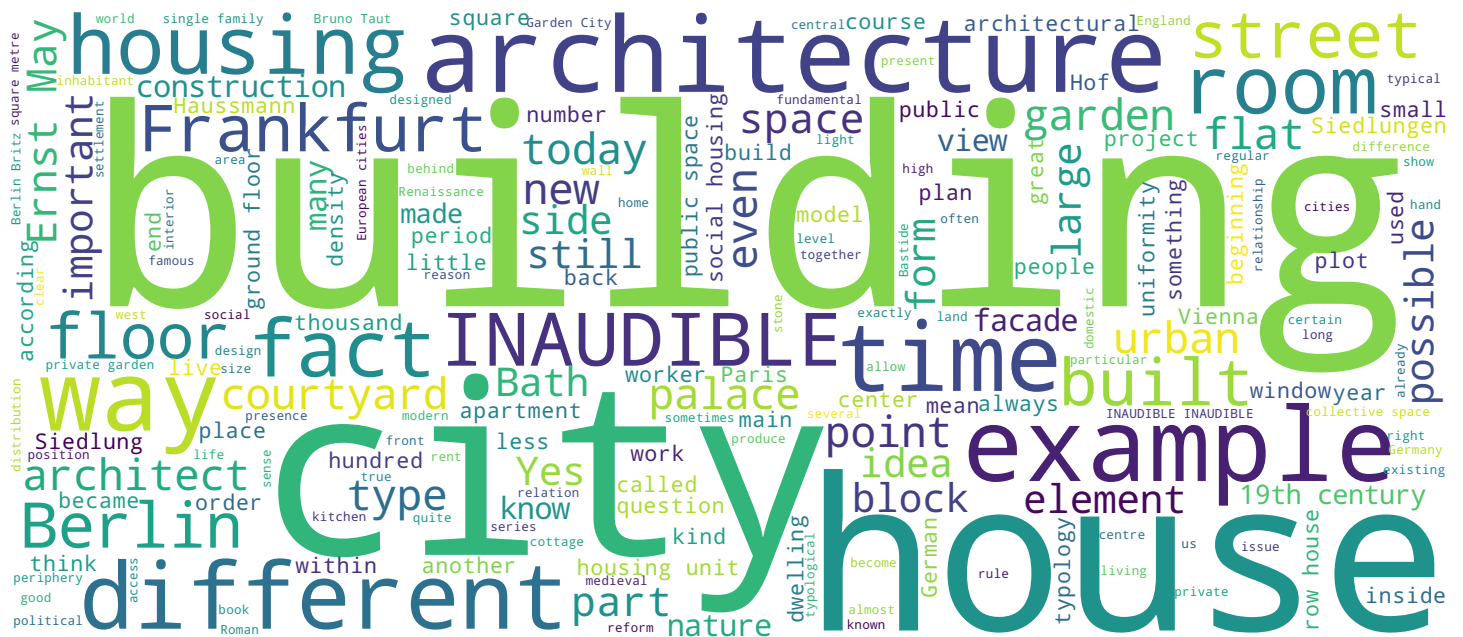
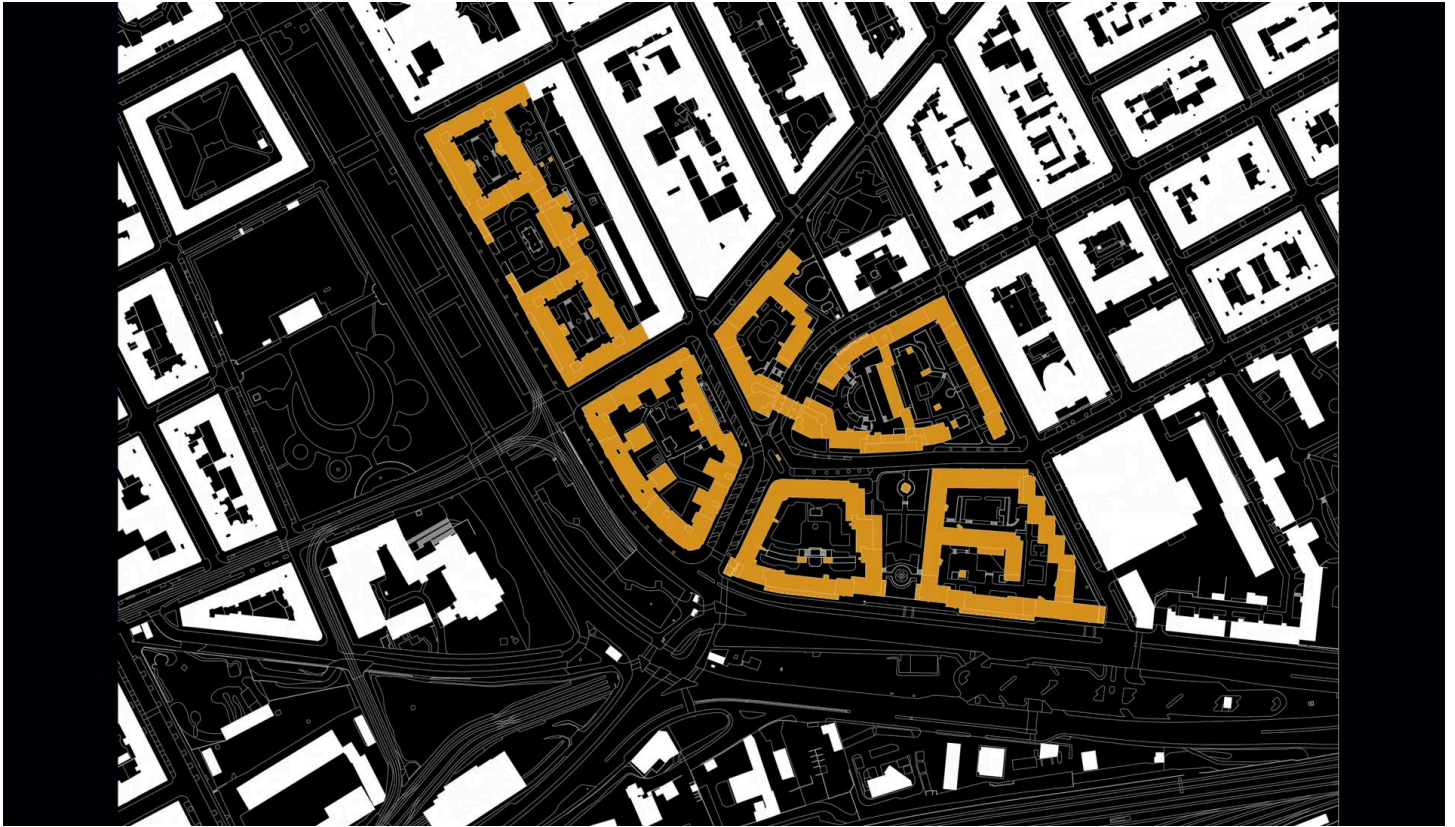


**a Housing and Cities course video**



**EPFL**



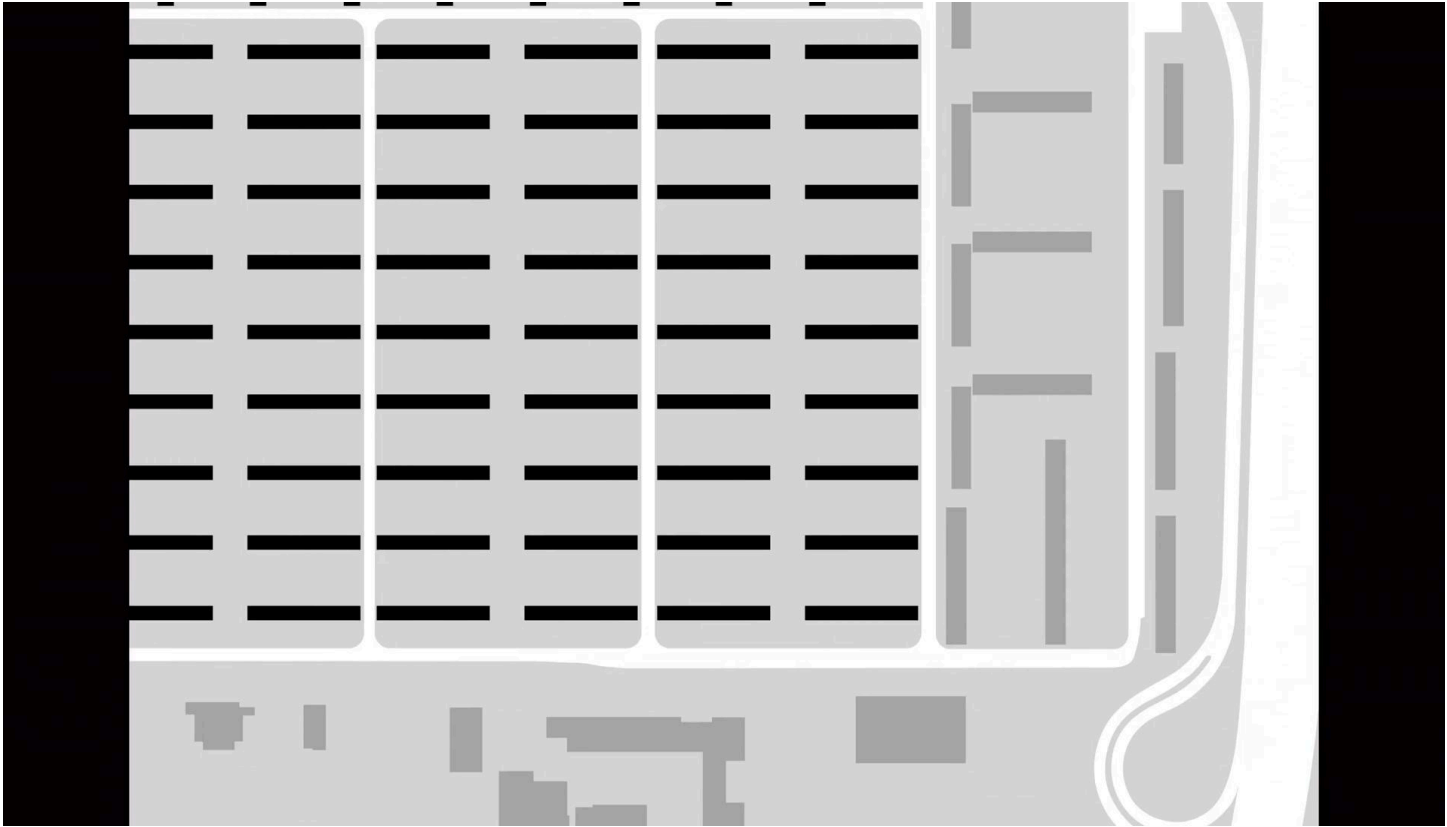
During the 1920s, building a significant quantity of housing for the working classes with high quality standards was a priority in several European cities. Social housing was a major theme from modern architecture. A wide range of Architects worked on this challenge and made important contributions and innovations. In red Vienna, around 63000 housing units were constructed, meaning that around three hundred and twenty five thousand people were housed. In Berlin, around 12000 housing units were constructed between 1924 and 1933. Under the direction of architect INAUDIBLE, and in Frankfurt 15000 between 1926 and 1931 under the responsibility of architect Ernst May. These were very difficult economic times. But the question of housing was made a political priority. The two types of responses to social housing, Höfe, or Siedlungen were discussed amongst the German and Austrian architects.

Notes

Summary

0m 33s





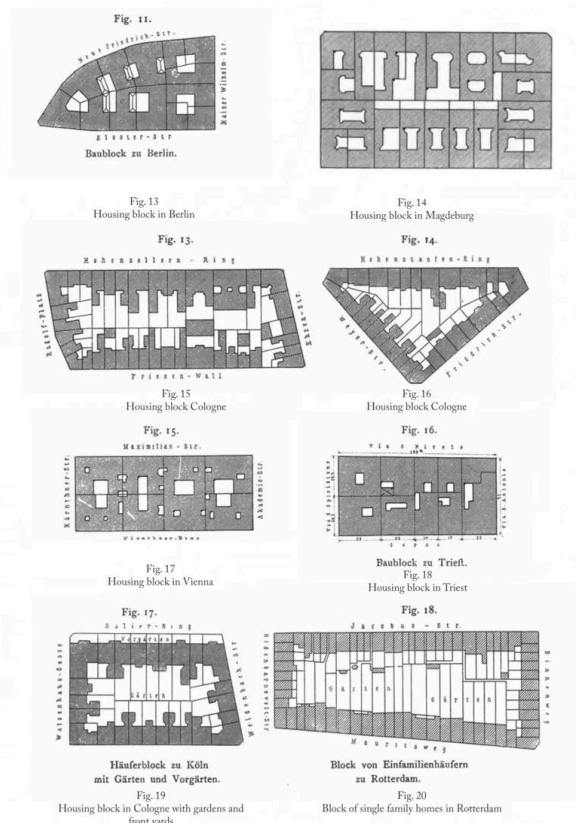
While Hof as in Vienna refers to courtyard type blocks, Siedlung is a German word which means more or less a newly founded residential colony or settlement, in practice often located on the periphery of the cities.

Notes

Summary



1m 50s



The Siedlung is characterized by functional architect and building arrangements in a vertical slab or sometimes called a ribbon formation mainly oriented according to the sun. The Frankfurt building Director Ernst May visited Vienna in 1926 for the international town planning and housing Congress. He was impressed by the exemplary efforts made in Vienna to resolve the critical housing shortages. May also voiced the following criticisms about the lack of uniformity, a rational approach to construction and private gardens. It is exactly the low wage earner who has worked hard all day. Who needs contact with nature in his free time. He cannot offer him anything better than a small garden at home. But the modern housing politicians in Vienna should be mostly affected by the complete lack of attempts to rationalize the actual building process. Apart from the debate around the Hof or the Siedlung approach to housing in both cases, architects agreed on one thing.

Notes

Summary



2m 04s





A severe criticism of the 19th century industrial capitalist city which gave rise to appalling living conditions for the workers. The Hof and the Siedlung alternatives greatly improved living conditions but implied however a lower density. In the 1920s, Numerous social housing settlements or Siedlungen were built in Germany. Air, sun, collective space, gardens and the presence of nature. These were the elements used to construct the city and to improve the housing problems arising in European cities. Sites offering these qualities were located generally on the outskirts of the city. The Siedlung in Berlin Britz, built between 1925 and 1933 is an icon both of modernity and of the social conviction of architects INAUDIBLE and Martin Wagner. It comprised 8963 housing units destined to house around 5000 residents. The characteristic image of the Britz ensemble is the Horse Shoe Shape central space that gave the Siedlung its name: the INAUDIBLE-Siedlung This public space then turns into private gardens which are arranged on the ground floor and assigned to the adjacent flats. The rest of the Siedlung was organized in parallel building roads with a rich mix of housing types.

Notes

Summary

3m 11s





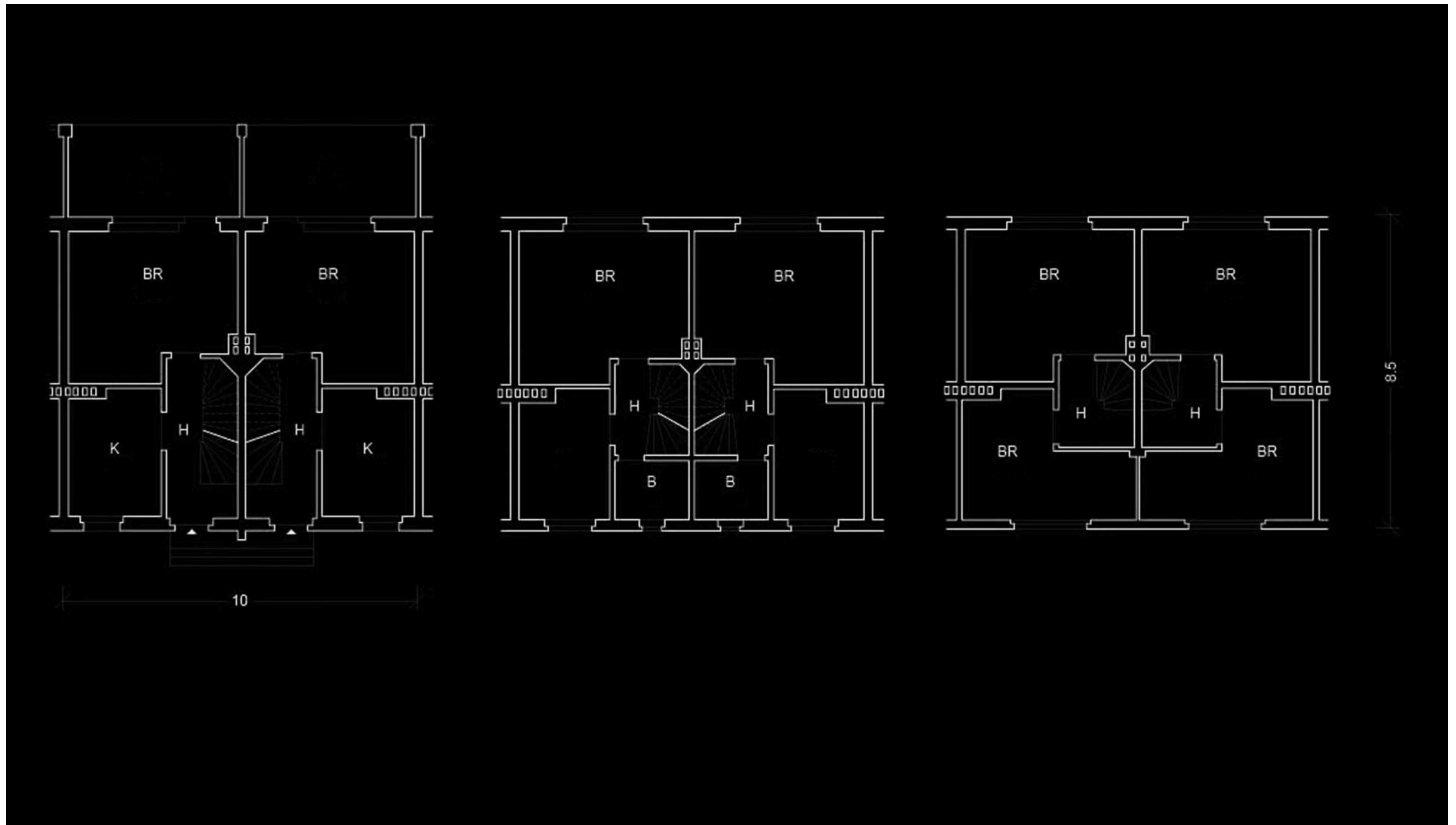
Long three storied blocks of flats and slab formations to define the outer edges and in the shielded interior. Two storey single family row houses with gardens. This is called Mischbebauung in German, that is mix buildings, referring not only to the different house types, but also to the construction types and volumetric organization. In this sense, the INAUDIBLE Siedlung can be seen as a fusion of the courtyard and Siedlung principles due to the simple geometric volumes and the lodges as well as a rich variety of collective spaces. Despite the relatively low density, the articulation of these spaces gives the Siedlung an urban character But in Berlin we have also combination, hybrid combination of bars buildings and courtyards. The most famous example is the Berlin Britz Siedlung by Bruno Taut with this typical horse shoe cottage, which is one of the most meaningful example of the difference between the 19th century city and the modern possibility of living in an urban space where nature is a central and very present, so, sun, fresh air for everybody, but naturally the price that you have to pay in order to have this is the fact that the density is much lower in Berlin even in Britz than here in Vienna.

Notes

Summary

4m 47s





A characteristic trait of Bruno Taut is also the use of color which he applied to accentuate and enrich the otherwise almost minimalistic form of treatment. Together with Hugo Haring and the Swiss architect INAUDIBLE, Bruno Taut also design Siedlung Unkel Tom's Hütte between 1926 and 1931. It's in one of the outer areas of Berlin on the edge of the Grünwald forest. The Siedlung comprises eight thousand nine hundred and fifteen housing units of which 1106 are within blocks of flats and 809 a single family row houses of three floors. Again, the row houses are shielded from the Basile streets by the blocks of flats. The single family houses were placed symmetrically so that there is a main public access on one side and narrow pedestrian private lanes between the gardens. House type too with three and a half rooms and eighty five square metres similar to the houses in Britz was the most common type. There are also some examples of more spacious houses type three with four and a half rooms and a hundred and two square metres.

Notes

Summary

6m 46s







The Siedlung is characterised by the use of a carefully chosen color palette, which Taut claimed had the same architectural force and impact as a form itself. In the article entitled Color, architectural historian Julius Posner said: "Taut interpreted his ideas of town planning by use of color color treatment does not break the uniformity in the north to south streets. It is implemented in such a way that the walls facing west are painted a warm brownish red, and those facing east on the other hand are painted green. This scheme corresponds to the warm light of the afternoon and the cold light of the morning. Here, we recognize Taut principle of multiplicity and uniformity and this multiplicity is not arbitrary. It corresponds to the natural conditions, the conditions created by light. The uniformity is emphasized by the red paint of all the doorway beams above the front doors." The urban design also included landscape planning. Trees were carefully located to increase proximity to nature. In Frankfurt a remarkable public housing development took place under the leadership of Ernst May, within which 15000 housing units were built in the space of just five years.

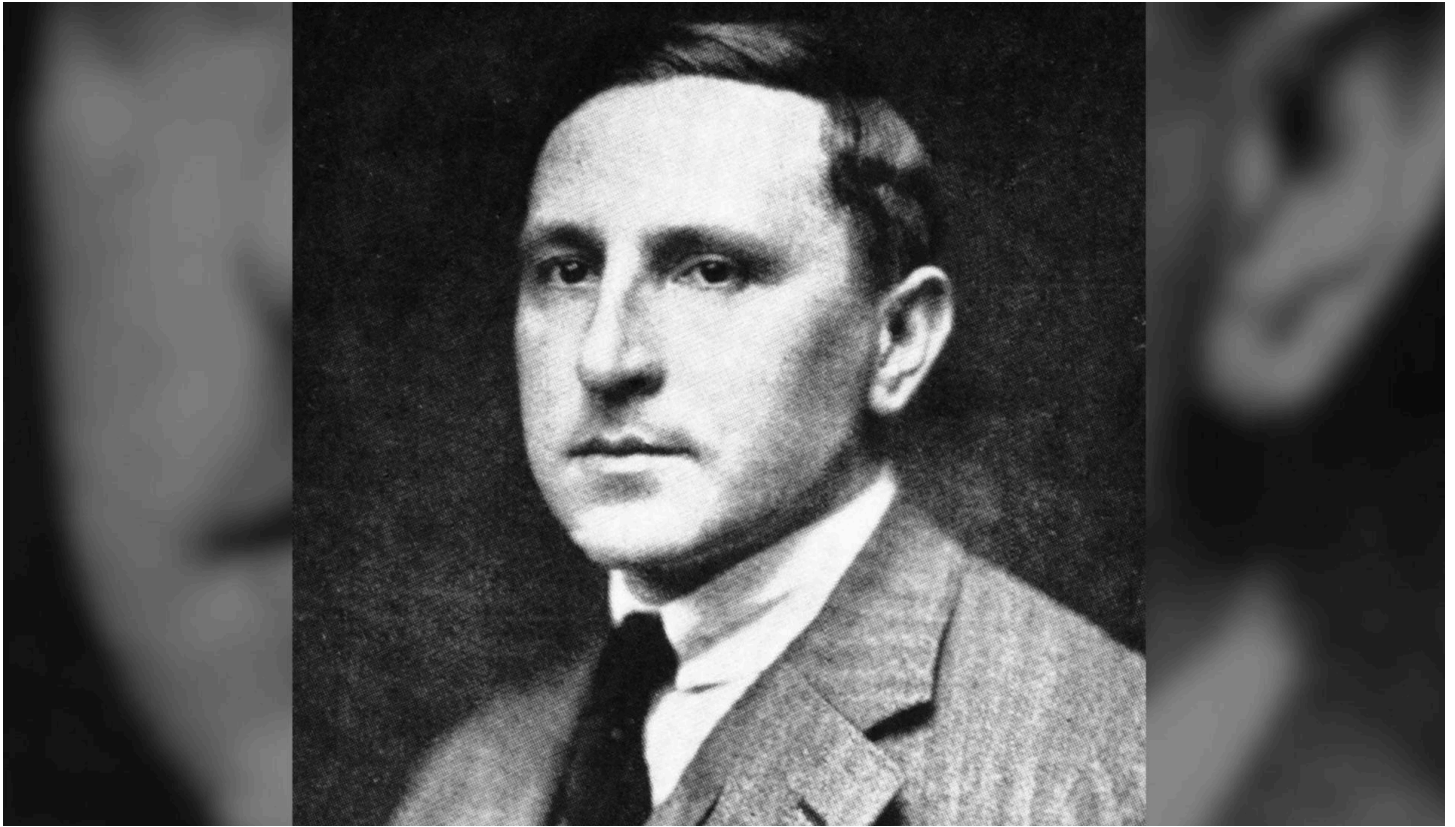
Notes

Summary



8m 08s





The mayor of Frankfurt Ludwig Landmann was a social democrat elected to the position in 1924 already had ambitions of a new era of reform. A controlled capitalist development embracing culture,, economy education, quality of life, sport and science, in essence, the rebirth of Frankfurt. He became well known for his infrastructural improvements and also for his promotion of an extended residential production and mobility circle around Frankfurt. The latter was called INAUDIBLE literally city ring or circle. In 1925, the young architect Ernst May was hired by Landmann as Frankfurt city planner, officially a municipal magistrate for architecture and urban construction. May was in charge of all building activities in the city of Frankfurt.

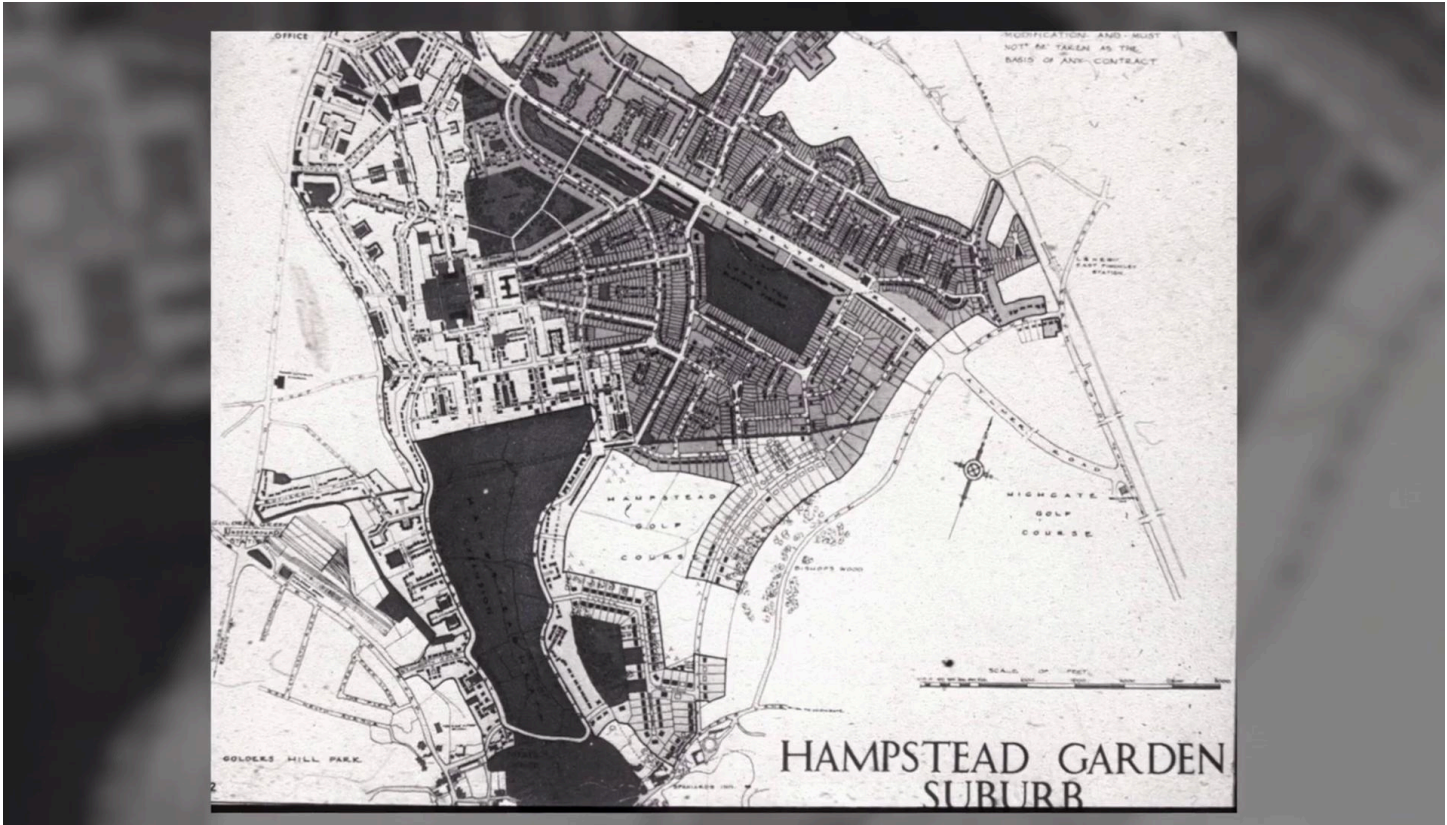
Notes

Summary

9m 34s







Parker and Unwins Hampstead Garden Suburb for example was just being completed during May's time in the office.

Notes

Summary

10m 54s





PARKER & UNWIN'S  
ORIGINAL PLAN OF  
LETCHWORTH  
GARDEN CITY,

AS FIRST PUBLISHED  
(APRIL 1904)

Key to Plan

- A. Main Avenue
- B. Goods Yard and Sidings
- C. Central Square
- D. Sites for Public Hall, Museum, etc.
- E. Sites for Schools
- F. Sites for Places of Worship
- H. Sites for Hotels
- K. Open Spaces, Greens, or Parks
- L. Site for Post Office
- M. Site for Municipal Buildings



The project for neighbourhoods and small towns developed by Parker and Unwin were highly influential to the theory and practice of the Siedlungen.

Notes

Summary

11m 03s







Weeks after his appointment in 1925, Ernst May presented an expansion plan for Frankfurt housing and construction began in 1926. Looking of the 1930s plan of Frankfurt, we can recognize the historical center, the imprint left by the city wall, the concentric development the nineteenth century city, and the areas along the valley of the Nidda River, where Arnst Meyer developed many of the Siedlungen.

Notes

Summary

11m 13s









This meant an interruption of density between centre and periphery and that the Siedlungen had a mix of urban and rural characters. Efficient transport systems connected them to the center. This was an urban revolution, a real alternative to the concentric development of the industrial city where the density diminished according to the distance from the center. This is one of my favorite places in Römerstadt, this viewpoint from which it was possible to admire the Nidda River at the time of the construction of the Siedlung, and far away the skyline of the city of Frankfurt. This is the very fundamental point of this so-called Trabantenprinzip, the idea elaborated by Ernst May concerning the decreasing of density from the city center to zero point and a new density concerning the Siedlungen. In fact according to Marco Demichelis, this Siedlung dealing with two different characters very well combined: The urban character, because in fact this settlement has nothing of a rural settlement and in the very center you can really deal with high rise building, there is a school and commercial activities. And the nature, the wild nature and the domesticated nature, a nature corresponding to the gardens.

Notes

Summary

11m 55s





The gardens were developed in collaboration with the INAUDIBLE, a very important but unfortunately not very well known garden architect, landscape architect with a very strong vision concerning the relationship, the possible relationship between nature and architecture. By the way, he used to collaborate. not only with Ernst May here in Frankfurt, but also with Bruno Taut in Berlin, in fact in Berlin Britz, in the huge collective central space. INAUDIBLE proposed a completely new relationship between collective space and private gardens. This is a very important point because today we see that there is a completely new sensibility concerning the need of nature within architecture and within the city. At the same time, that is from 1926 to 1931, Ernst May initiated the avant garde journal Das neue Frankfurt. It documented and discussed current architecture and design, social and political ideas as well as other art forms such as graphic design, theatre and photography.

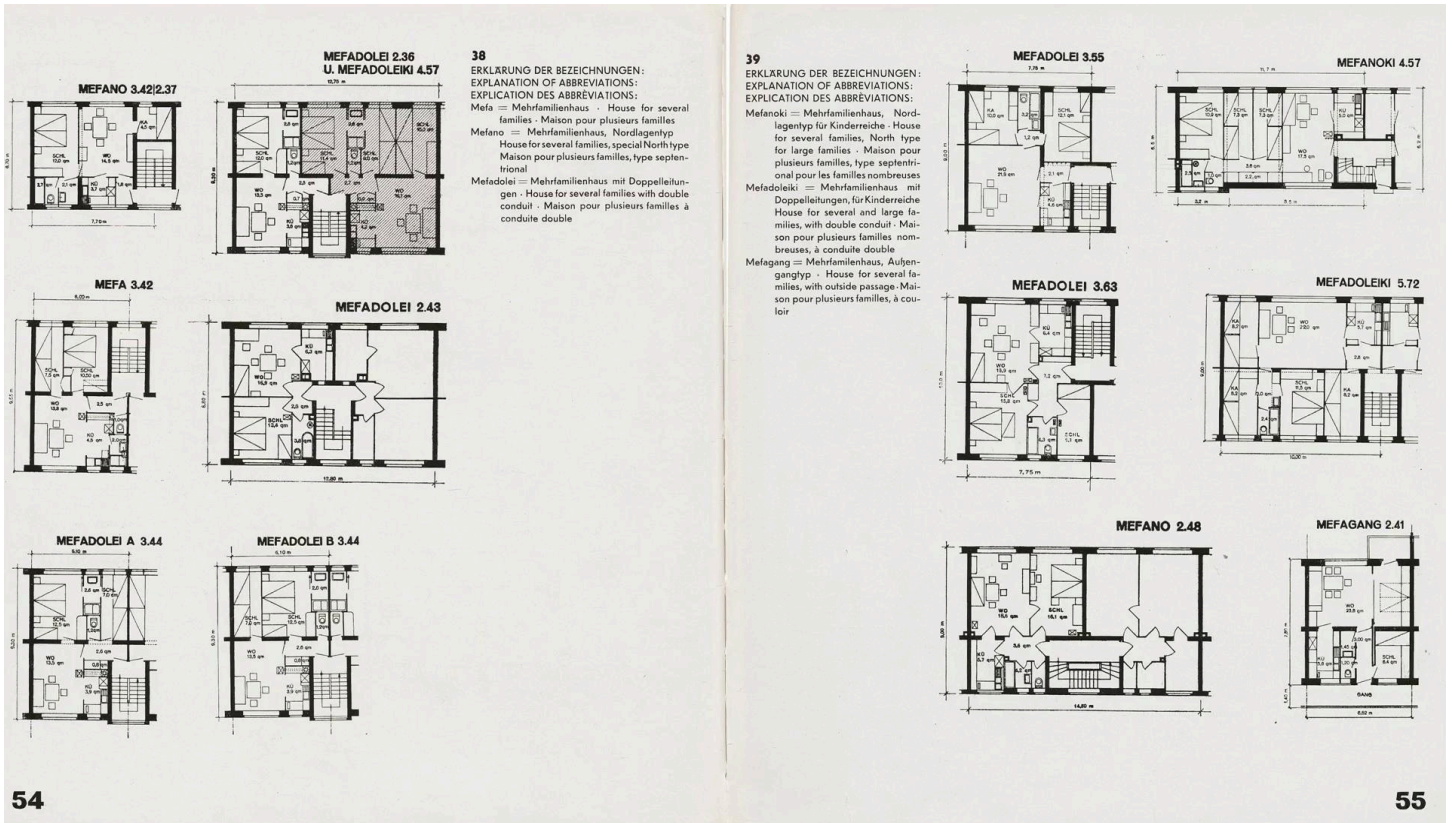
Notes

Summary

13m 39s







54

55

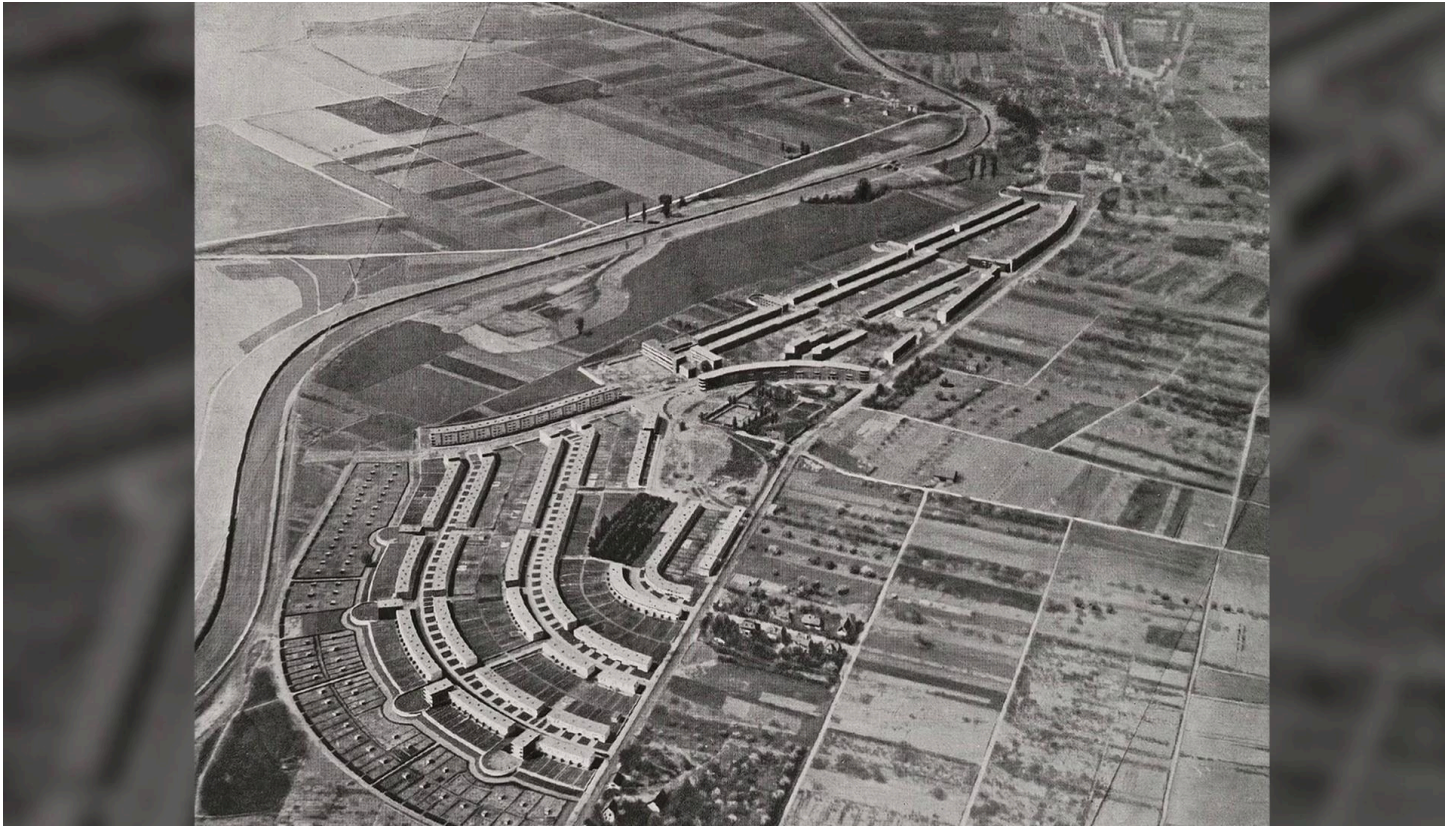
Its subtitle means monthly magazine for the problems of modern design. The magazine aimed to construct a theoretical system based on the practical results of Ernst May, his collaborators and other contributors. In a summary edition of the five years of construction for example, projects were documented in such a way as to enable comparative analysis. According to the important objective of lowering construction costs, these tables give information on the type of housing, the number of rooms, the numbers, of each type, the fit out and the monthly rent.

Notes

Summary

15m 12s





The Siedlungen themselves are different in character ranging from the more spacious and differentiated to the more rational.

Notes

Summary

15m 53s





This is an aerial view of the three well known Siedlungen: Praunheim, constructed in three stages between 1926 and 1929 with 1441 housing units.

Notes

Summary

16m 05s







Römerstadt, completed in 1928 with one thousand one hundred and eighty two units. And Westhausen along the valley of the secondary river Nidda, a compact Siedlung built between 1929 and 1931 with one thousand one hundred and sixteen units.

Notes

Summary

16m 17s

