

# Postmodernism Architecture

By Diego Lopez

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# What is Postmodernism?

- “Postmodernism is an eclectic, colorful style of architecture and the decorative arts that appeared from the late 1970s and continues in some form today. *(Postmodernism)*”

# History

- “It emerged as a reaction to Modernism and the Modern Movement and the dogmas associated with it. By the 1970s, Modernism had begun to seem elitist and exclusive, despite its democratic intentions. The failure of building methods and materials (shown in the collapse of Ronan Point, a tower in east London in 1968) and alienating housing estates was a focus for architects and critics in the early 1970s. (*Postmodernism*)”

## FULL INQUIRY ORDERED INTO COLLAPSE OF TOWER FLATS



Mr. T. E. North, Borough Architect of Newham, at the scene yesterday.

### How the tenants escaped

One man in his sixties on the nineteenth floor of Ronan Point slept through the disaster, unaware of what had happened until a fireman smashed down his door.

“He came out in his pyjamas and asked: ‘What the hell is going on?’” a fireman said.

On the eighteenth floor, Mr. John Bruns, aged 21, a gas fitter, was asleep in bed with his wife Jean, aged 20, when the bedroom door shot across the room. Mr. Bruns leapt out of bed and flung himself over the cot containing his baby aged 18 months.

“I heard our last moments had come,” he said. “When the rumbling had subsided we tried to get out as quickly as we could. I had to remove rubble with my

### Three die, 80 families flee from homes

The Home Secretary yesterday instructed a team of experts to report to him by lunchtime today on the collapse of an entire corner of a new 23-storey block of flats in east London at dawn yesterday. Two men and a woman were killed and late last night another woman was still missing. About 80 families escaped.

Mr. Callaghan, who visited the site at Custom House, E., as rescue teams worked among the rubble, said that after receiving the experts' report he would decide what form of inquiry should be held. Earlier he had told the House of Commons there would be an “immediate and full inquiry”.

Experts at the scene said that the signs pointed to a gas explosion on the eighteenth floor. But one elderly man on the floor above was unaware of the collapse until firemen reached him.

### BLOCK OCCUPIED LESS THAN TWO MONTHS

BY THE NEWS TEAM

Terrified families, many barefoot and in their night clothes, poured out of their homes in the block of flats in Butchers Road, Custom House, E., after the dawn explosion shook out an entire corner of the building. In addition to the three dead and one missing, 11 of the 260 residents were injured.

At the scene, in the heart of London's dockland, it was said that the signs pointed to a gas explosion. It had occurred on the eighteenth floor, punched out the walls, and sent the four flats above, and seven floors below crashing to the ground.

The whole corner section, containing mainly living rooms, fell just before 6 a.m. Dressing tables,

had managed to grab during their flight.

Two expectant mothers were taken to hospital because the births were thought to have been brought on prematurely.

Sir Elwyn Jones, the Attorney General, who is M.P. for West South, and Mr. MacDermot, Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, visited the site during the day, as did Mr. Callaghan.

Earlier the Home Secretary was asked in the Commons by Mr. Hogg, the shadow Home Secretary, if he would consider the possibility of a judicial inquiry in public, such as was held at Aberfan. He replied that it was “cer-



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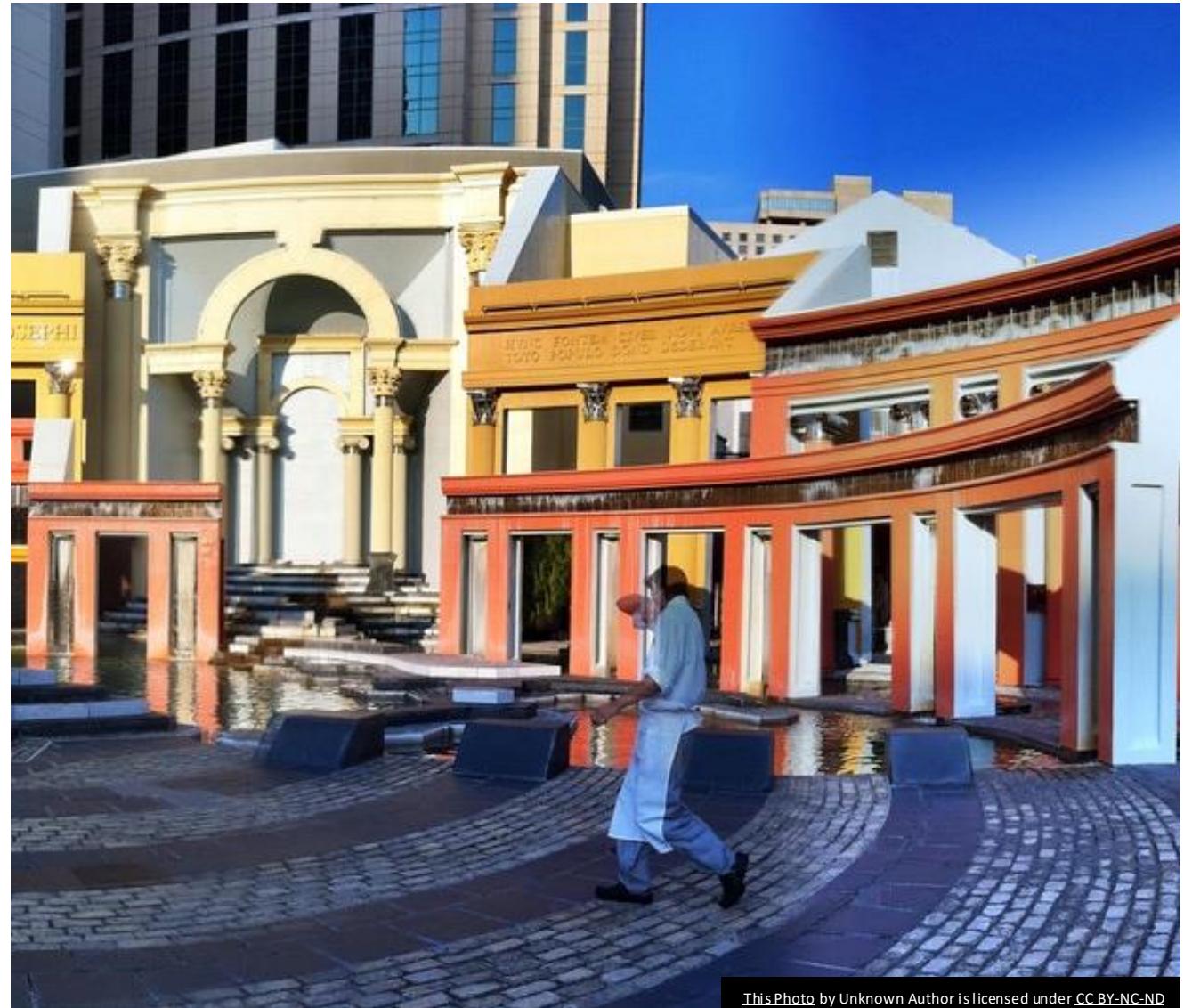


# Learning From Las Vegas (1972)

- “A later work, ‘Learning from Las Vegas (1972),’ deconstructed the signs of the Las Vegas strip and divided buildings into ‘ducks,’ the sculptural buildings that embodied their message within the structure and the ‘decorated shed,’ which used signs to communicate its message. In practice, it meant the rediscovery of the various meanings contained within the mainly classical architecture of the past and applying them to modern structures. The result was an architecture that embodied historical allusion and dashes of whimsy.  
*(Postmodernism)*”

# Key Characteristics

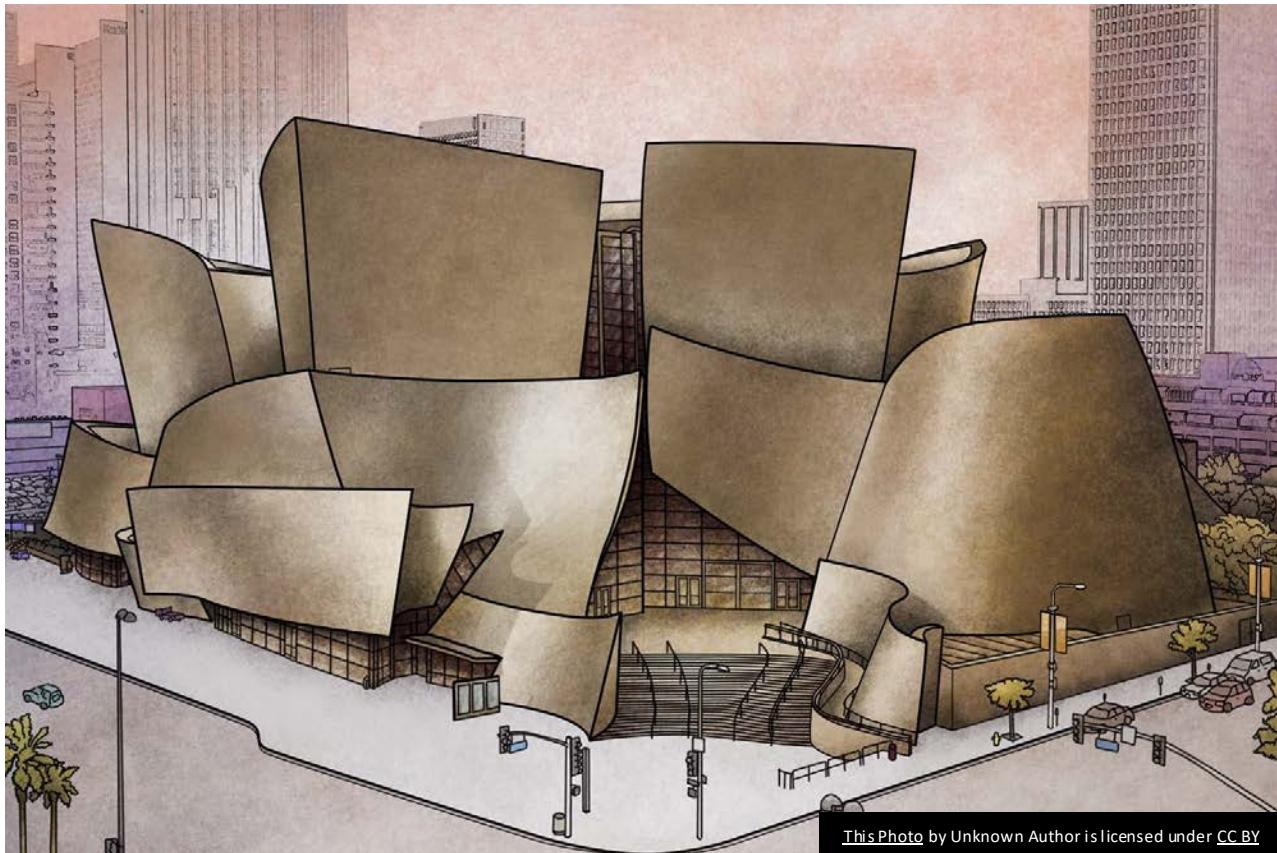
- “Mish mash of architectural styles and periods”
- “Sculptural forms”
- “Frequent embrace of bright color, sometimes in the form of ceramic tiles or colored glass”
- “Liberal use of classical ornamental details taken from past architectural movements often mixed and matched in unconventional ways (Hohenadel)”



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# Key Characteristics (cont.)

- “Use of Abstraction”
- “Characterized by playfulness, whimsy, humor, & irony
- “Use of *trompe l’oeil*”
- “Idiosyncratic rule-breaking forms that defied the dogmatic codes of Modernism (Hohenadel)”



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# Sources

- Hohenadel, Kristin. "What Is Postmodern Architecture?" The Spruce. The Spruce, 04 July 2020. Web. 02 Feb. 2022.
- N, A. "Postmodernism." Royal Institute of British Architects. © RIBA 2022, na. Web. 02 Feb. 2022.