



▲ The Frankfurt Kitchen, a milestone in domestic architecture.

1923, many people sought salvation in the cities, which became almost impossible to control. Communities and trade unions attempted to counter this with new settlement projects that simultaneously touched on ideas of architectural modernity. In Berlin and Magdeburg it was the concepts of Bruno Taut (see page 60), and in Stuttgart it was the Werkbund housing project in 1927.

In Breslau, the development of small and medium-sized, affordable apartments for the general population was prioritized. There, the Ledigenheim (home for single people), designed by architect Hans Scharoun, offered little individual space but generously sized common areas. Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school, also demanded: “Make the apartments smaller and the windows bigger.” And in 1929, Dutch architect Mart Stam wrote: “The right dimensions are the dimensions that are sufficient with the minimum of effort. The measure of our objects should therefore be a human measure. Representation is not a human measure, it is excess, it is wanting to impress, it is wanting to appear to be more than the truth.”

The 1920s and early 1930s were witness to this grand experiment of new living—it was the most

European industrialization turned the world and concepts of living upside down.

1970 was prevented thanks to fierce protests that eventually led to a preservation order.

In England during the late nineteenth century, the city planner Ebenezer Howard came up with the idea of installing gardens formed in circles around inner cities. The idea also found resonance in Germany in the Margarethenhöhe residential neighborhood of the Krupp steel works in Essen from 1911 and in the garden city of Hellerau in Dresden from 1908, although its realization proved extremely complex and costly.

After the First World War, the housing situation in Germany became even more precarious. During the period of hyperinflation that lasted until

pressing issue for architects and designers. As Friedrich Nietzsche, Rudolf Steiner, and the Lebensreform (life reform) movement demanded at the turn of the century, it needed to become a reality for all people: the free man, healthy in body and soul, socially minded and democratic, function-oriented, self-determined, and cosmopolitan.

In this respect, one of the most radical and comprehensive projects was “New Frankfurt”, initiated by the social-liberal mayor Ludwig Landmann. The idea was to reimagine and reinvent the city as a whole with the help of modern design. From 1923, an art school based on Bauhaus theory set out to develop new concepts, and under ►

▼ The exterior of Ricardo Bofill’s Walden 7. The project implements some of Bofill’s earliest ambitions and addresses the problems of space in modern city living.

