

“Finishing ends construction, weathering constructs finished” - David Leatherbarrow

Time effects architecture in two ways:

How it presents itself differently over time through weathering + changing context

How we feel about its presentation with the development & change of fashion in architectural styles & technology available.

This essay will look at 3 ways buildings deal with weathering

Unwelcomed Weathering

Modernist buildings are designed to look perfect in a sense. Most require consistent maintenance with any form of weathering deteriorating their new, clean & crisp look. Their simplicity doesn't allow them to deal with weathering very well either as there's no room in their minimalist facades for gutters, downpipes or window cill's. Their monotone white rendered walls detest any visual variation from erosion or sedimentation.

This goes in contrast to the Japanese toilets in Tanizaki's text, in Praise of shadows, which were vegetated rooms separated from the main building with warm natural materials like stone & wood that weren't bothered by dirt.



Timber handrail softened by time

Designed Weathering

There are two ways to deal with weathering, to design elements such as drips, gutters etc “to direct or prevent its effects or to respond to the effects of weather by creating situations that both recognize and utilize the ever changing characteristics of materials as a way of renewing beginnings by allowing refinishing”

-David Leatherbarrow



The Remy Zaugg by Herzog de Meuron is an example of designing to take advantage of the effects of weathering. Rainwater collects in the untreated steel gutter & spills down the downpipeless concrete facade. This building is located in an industrial area where the thought was that the rainwater would absorb some of the pollutants present in the air & deposit them along with the oxidized steel, on the porous concrete facade.



Karlsplatz Hofpavillion by Otto Wagner & Josef Olbrich, Vienna

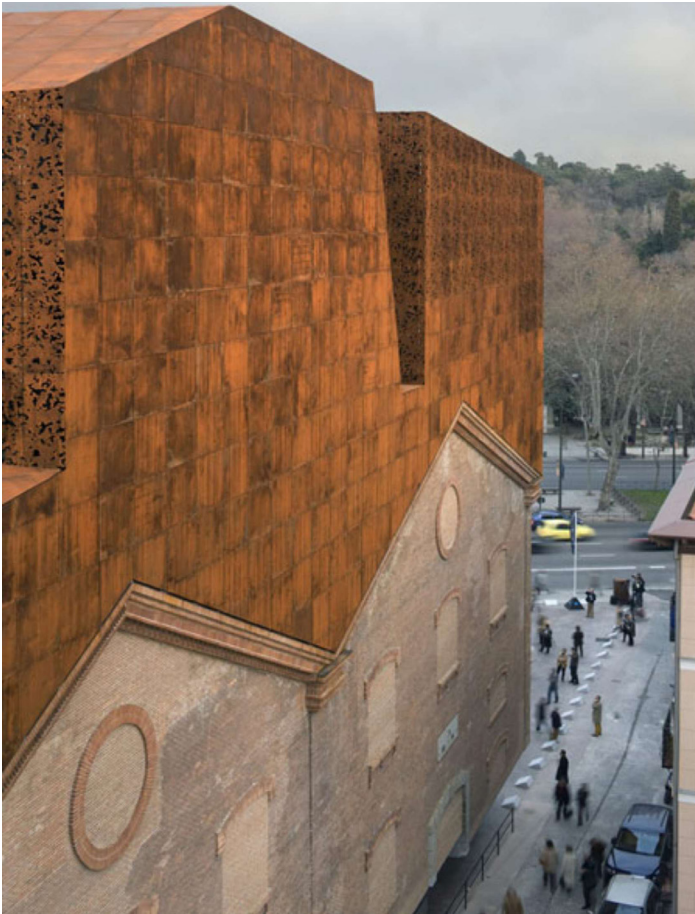
This column footing is another example of designing for weathering. A slightly modified version of it could be seen to delicately release rainwater from a buildings facade through its curved grooves.



Mary Immaculate of Sinners, Rathmines

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An architect may design for a far out weathered appearance but would generally be judged most heavily on its initial unweathered appearance. By using materials like copper, which change appearance over time (shiny brown - muted brown - green) the future appearance is often more important than its appearance in the first few years post construction if the build is to last many decades/centuries.



By using pre weathered materials like corten steel the architect can skip this period of a possibly undesired pre weathered appearance. For the Caixaforum, Madrid this preweathered state lets it settle in well with the existing.



The corten steel on the bridge feels a bit out of place with its sharp edges & newly machined straight lines in its natural setting, surrounded by trees. The bridge is trying to be something its not, old. One would expect for such an old bridge to be weathered more into its landscape and look less rigid.



Rustication: These buildings look as though they're designed to deal with the dirt & chaos of the ground & peel back their defence as they ascend.

Vernacular Architecture

“In the time after construction, buildings take on the qualities of the place wherein they are sited” - David Leatherbarrow

By using local materials combined with simple construction techniques, these vernacular sheds blend in & become a part of the landscape. Unlike some buildings designed by architects, especially with the modernist movement, which try and stand out and impress, ignoring their context. Vernacular buildings often become one element of this context & combine with others to form a coherent unit.

