

The historical architecture of Wes Anderson

THE
**GRAND
BUDAPEST
HOTEL**

Olivier Bierens | 4568087

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A number of years ago, while suffering from a mild case of "Scribe's Fever", a form of neurasthenia common among the intelligentsia of that time, I decided to spend the month of August in the spa town of Nebelsbad below the Alpine Sudetenwartz, and had taken up rooms in The Grand Budapest, a picturesque, elaborate, and once widely celebrated establishment. I expect some of you will know it.

Author – The Grand Budapest hotel (2014)

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relationship between architecture and film through the analysis of the cinema of Wes Anderson. The research focuses specifically on the understanding of the spaces which Anderson has created in a historical perspective. First, the relationship between architecture and film is explored through literature research. The articulation of lived space forms the basis and common ground for architecture and cinema. Being both arts of the author, cinema and architecture have the potential to generate emotions, awaken our soul and to shift the attention of the viewer from the inside to the outside. Both cinema and architecture have the ability to construct spaces in the mind, articulate the surface between the world and our own mental experience, where meaning and value are blend.

The architecture, which plays a central role in the films of Anderson, is analyzed. Anderson introduces spaces through the habits, ideals and aspirations of the individual, bringing buildings to life. Anderson balances stories between reality and fantasy, transcending the rules of geometry. The architecture in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014) is analyzed as a case study. The film depicts the glory days and the fall down of a grand hotel in different eras but is above all a story of decay, loneliness and personal loss. Anderson intended to give homage to European Grandeur at the turn of the 19th century on the one hand and communist architecture on the other hand. The observations and research show contradictions and paradoxes in the blend of architectural styles depicted in the film. The conflicts and contradictions between foreign influences and ideological structures are both visible in the 1940s and the 1960s version of the exterior of the hotel. In the interior, the contradictory usage of material on the one hand and the rational floorplan and technological developments on the other hand shows the changing ideas about the function and definition of the hotel. Most important, the hotel resembles the personage of the characters who live in a forgotten and lost world. Anderson shows that spaces can question our narrative and imagination. When architecture can evoke this experience, the true quality of the practice is utilized and a level of consciousness is reached where dream, feeling and emotions reside.



Figure 1: Elevator in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. From left to right: Igor, Zero, Madame D., Gustave H. (Anderson, 2014)

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Figure 2: Exterior view of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014).

INTRODUCTION

The fascination for the films of Wes Anderson forms the origin of this thesis. The way in which Anderson (born 1969) uses symmetry, section and color to create new, idiosyncratic worlds, constantly showing a slightly heightened reality holds valuable lessons for architecture. The worlds of Anderson feel both remarkable and vivid. Step by step the viewer is taken through the world Anderson has created. Every film revolves around a central structure or building: A boat in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2004) or a newspaper office in *The French Dispatch* (2021). Architecture plays a central role in the films of Anderson. He has often been praised for his distinctive visual style. Anderson's meticulously fabricated cross sections and contextualization give the viewer a complete picture of the structure, thereby delivering his personal view on the relation between architecture and film. He argues: "Built spaces come to life when they reflect ideals, aspirations and longings of the individual" (Finn, 2020).

Specifically, *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014) displays a sense of memory, place and lost values which live through architecture. But at its core, *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is a confection. A confection recalling the adventures of a once legendary hotel led by monsieur Gustave, the eccentric concierge in the fictional Republic of Zubrowka. Together with Zero Moustafa, the lobby boy, monsieur Gustave H. becomes the center of a story involving the theft and recovery of a priceless painting. Above all, it is a story of decay, loneliness and personal loss. Based on the novels by Stefan Zweig, the film alternates between periods from the sixties and the thirties. Although the film evokes these different time periods in history, director Wes Anderson does not precisely replicate these periods (Crothers Dille, 2017, p. 184).

This thesis explores the relationship between architecture and film in the films of Wes Anderson. The research focuses specifically on the understanding of the spaces in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* which Anderson has created, in a historical perspective. By deconstructing the world of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the relationship between architecture and film is researched, answering the main question: *How are historical architecture styles displayed in The Grand Budapest Hotel to resemble place, memory and value?* The relationship between architecture and film is firstly explored through literature research. The role of set design and different directors through history deliver different approaches on space and cinema. This provides context to position Wes Anderson within the current cinema and architectural culture and the role of architecture in his films. This research is further developed by researching *The Grand Budapest Hotel* as a case study. The research will focus on different spaces used in the film, both interior and exterior. The decors are analyzed through the film sets, pictures and historical research. Next to film shots, different buildings used in the film as set decorations or inspiration are reviewed and analyzed. The buildings are put in historical perspective and analyzed according to their relating time periods, both architectural and graphical. By revealing the role of architecture and the historical context of the styles used in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the thesis attempts to provide insight into the relationship between place, memory, value and the historical architecture used in the film.



Figure 3: Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany (Höch, 1919)

01 | ARCHITECTURE AND FILM

Films that do not include images of architecture are scarce. The activation of imagination through literature, art and architecture is invaluable. "The presentation of a cinematic event is inseparable from the architecture of space, place and time" (Pallasmaa, 2001, p. 20). The architect and the film director both impose a personal vision on the world, providing context. This chapter explores the theoretical background on the relationship between architecture and film through literature research. The architecture of film sets will be discussed, focusing on the design of the built environment of films. Also, the way film directors have used architecture to reflect ideas and visions of the world will be explored. The chapter is intended to provide context to aid in positioning Wes Anderson as a director in current cinema and architecture.

1.1 Common ground

Interaction of cinema and architecture is multi-sided. Both are art forms with the help of specialists and assistants. They are both arts of the author. A film director is bound to create architecture. Before the medium of film developed, the generation of movement was already attempted by Dadaists through literature and paintings. Examples include the collages of Hannah Höch (1889-197). By collecting images through photomontage, Höch juxtaposed photographs from mass media, critiquing the Weimar Republic both socially and politically (figure 3). The Dadaist movement assumed the tactile qualities of art. Benjamin argues that both film and Dadaism "look like incomplete experiments on the part of art to take account of the way in which the camera has permeated reality" (2008, p. 49). But as oppose to a painting, Benjamin (2008) proposes that architecture and cinema are in fact forms of tactile arts, because they both communicate through the tactile realm. When viewing a film, the observer does this as much with the muscles as with the eyes. When we store images in our memory, architecture provides context, ambience. Personages and architecture interact with each other. Considering this, Chandler (1991) argues that the field of film and architecture overlap when film directors create the context of a particular event, progressing into the field of architecture. Jean Nouvel concludes that "Both architecture and cinema exist in the dimension of time and movement" (Tauttenbury, 1994, p.35).

Observation and experience form the basis for the architecture of cinema. Feelings and emotions are inseparably attached to cinema through true themes, arguably even more than through architecture. This is why the "mental ground of architectural impact" is more subtly recognized by a filmmaker compared to an architect (Pallasmaa, 2001, p. 21). This acknowledgment of architecture can extend to elements such as cutlery, a mirror or keys, which might seem insignificant at first sight, but can pertain architectural qualities in cinema. Importantly, the value of a great film generates emotions, awakens our soul. It shifts the attention of the viewer from the inside to the outside. When architecture can evoke this experience, the true quality of the practice is utilized. "The artistic value of great architecture is not in its material existence but in the images and emotions that it evokes in the observer" (Pallasmaa, 2001, p.36). To experience architecture is to understand, to believe, and to be able to position oneself within the continuum of time and place. This is why cinema and architecture share common grounds; because of their spatial and temporal structure, but also because "both architecture and cinema articulate lived space" (Pallasmaa, 2001, p. 18). Just like culture is stored within our built environment, cinema has the ability to reveal both the era it depicts and the time of its making (Pallasmaa, 2001). They both create experiential scenes of life situations. A film can be made in several ways, like music, like sculpture or as philosophy. "Cinema can be everything at once" (Brody, 2009, p.208).



Figure 4: Split picture with the characters in the foreground in *L'avventura* (Antonioni, 1961)



Figure 5: Mr. Hulot watches the cubicle office in *Playtime* (Tati, 1967)

Both cinema and architecture have the ability to construct spaces in the mind, articulate the surface between the world and the experiencing of oneself, cinema can transcend the rules of geometry. Spaces can resemble structures that do only exist within dreams and the unconscious. Spaces can be arranged independently of the borders of physical time and space. In experiencing space, desire and fear, dream and memory, the perception blends with meaning and value. "We live in mental worlds, in which the experienced, remembered and imagined, as well as the past, present and future are inseparably intermixed" (Pallasmaa, 2001, p. 35).

1.2 Visions of the world

Filmmakers have used architecture and the built environment in different ways to reflect on society. A director who has always consciously displayed architecture is Michelangelo Antonioni (1912-2007). Antonioni used built environments to serve as embodiments of societies. In his films, Antonioni frequently depicts renowned buildings. In *La Notte* (1961) he displays architecture as "the physical soul of modern humanity" (Schwarzer in Lamster, 2013). Architecture shapes the atmosphere in the films of Antonioni, both as the protagonist and antagonist. Antonioni displayed the contrast between modernity and family, traditions and community. In one of his best-known films *L'Aventura* (1960), Antonioni connects the lives of the wealthy people with the weightlessness of palaces and villages. The apathy towards heritage is reflected in the degradation of monuments, objects and people. Architecture is transformed by Antonioni into an object viewed on the one hand, and on the other hand architecture is converted into a frame for viewing. This is exemplified for instance through the use of walls. In the view of Antonioni, walls "illustrate the ability or inability of characters to relate to each other" (Ruthen, 2018). In *L'Aventura* the main characters represent these different notions of a wall, reflecting on the emptiness of rich lives and hollow emotions. The closing shot of the film presents a view, visualizing an evenly split picture between a shot of Mt. Etna (Sicily) on the left and a wall on the right (figure 4). In the foreground, the characters are comforting each other. The question Antonioni poses with this shot is if individuals should live as islands, separated from each other, or accept the confinement of modern society and belong to somebody? A question which summarises Antonioni's search for meaning of the individual in contemporary society.

Modern architecture is also captured in the films of Jacques Tati (1907-1982). In his films Tati commentates on modern society in a comedic way using architecture as the spectacle of the film. Like Anderson, Tati spent a great effort in meticulously designing and building film sets. In *Playtime* (1967), Tati reflects on the impact of modernism on cities and people. The film opposes the totalizing global language of architecture. The film was produced in a period of transition caused by the modernist movement. Tati exhibits public frustration and confusion with the cold, sterile, modernist architecture. The rationality and efficiency of modern architecture are ridiculed through the display of absurd design choices. The narrative tells the story of American tourists visiting Paris, but never arriving in the historic centre, rather finding themselves in hypermodern, glass and metal buildings. Tati captions the anonymity of modern architecture through the display of the almost same architecture for every building, be it a hotel, office or airport. A well-known shot from *Playtime* pictures one of the main characters, Hulot, overlooking a grid of identical cubicles (figure 5). Like the other characters in the film, Hulot loses bearings and orientation. The scene exhibits the failure of human interaction in modern society (Ockman in Lamster, 2013). Tati's cinematic style exhibits chaotic, detailed shots drawing attention to different aspects of a particular scene. This requires the participation of the viewer, but through careful design of scenes both Tati and Anderson construct fictional worlds which appear even more real (Ockman in Lamster, 2013).



Figure 6: Danny plays in the endless corridors of the hotel in *The Shining* (Kubrick, 1980)



Figure 7: House within the cathedral in *Nostalgia* (Tarkovsky, 1983)

1.3 Architecture as an amplifier

Architecture can also serve as an amplifier. In this perspective, a film director who influenced Anderson's cinematic style is Stanley Kubrick (1928-1999). Through the use of symmetrically framed shots Kubrick produced films of different genres. The architectural potential of film is specifically resembled by Kubrick in *The Shining* (1980). In the film, the main character Jack takes on a job as caretaker of an isolated hotel together with his family. As time passes, Jack increasingly becomes uncoupled from reality driving him into insanity. Combining horror and suspense, Kubrick submerges fear in architecture. The architecture of the hallways, stairs and walls, serve as a metaphor for Jack losing his mind. Specifically, the set decors provide an alienating association. The empty hotel, isolated in both time and space, squashes the relation between the individual and the family (Pallasmaa, 2001). The hotel appears immeasurable, marked by the enormous kitchen and dining area. The viewer is not allowed to build up a coherent picture of the structure. The conflicting corridors and stairs create disorientation, combined with the use of artificial lighting during day and night leave the viewer in timeless disillusion. The internal menace of the family is merged with the external threat created by the hotel. The hotel polarizes the internal relations of the family. Particularly memorable is the corridor which is covered with a brown, yellow and red carpet displaying a maze pattern (figure 6). The decors of the hotel have been an inspiration for the 1969 hotel interior in The Grand Budapest Hotel (Dilley, 2017). In its entirety, the hotel can be seen as a maze, where Kubrick created confusion between reality, dream, memory and time.

Finally, Andrei Tarkovsky (1932-1986), a film director who thinks of cinema as poetry, is worth noting. Tarkovsky relates architecture and film, creating images of space and light, opening up views to a empathetic and nostalgic architecture. According to Tarkovsky: "The task of art is to prepare one for death, soften and mould his soul and turn it towards good" (Tarkovsky, 1986). In *Nostalgia* (1983) Tarkovsky tells the story of a Russian poet Andrei, traveling to Italy to collect notes on a Russian composer. Purpose of the journey is for Andrei to write an "Opera libretto" on the life of the Russian composer. The film centres around the themes of alienation and longing for home. Like Anderson, Tarkovsky frequently used symmetrical framing of shots. The camera constantly keeps the viewer at the edge of the image. All spaces in the film articulate erosion and time. The final scene of the film shows a collage of a Russian house inside a cathedral (figure 7). According to Tarkovsky, ruins hold a special place within our memory and emotions, because they question their forgotten narrative in our imagination. The scene reflects on the notion of home and house, longings of a disoriented individual. Tarkovsky reveals a poetic side of architecture often not engaged. It is a level of consciousness where dream, feeling and emotions reside (Pallasmaa, 200, p. 92).

In this first chapter, the relationship between architecture and film has been explored. The analysed film directors all influenced the cinema of Anderson in a different way. Concluding on the relation between architecture and cinema, Benjamin (2008, p. 25) argues that "The film director is the magician who evokes a lived situation from a distance through the illusory narrative of projected images, whereas the architect operates with the physical reality itself in the very intestines of the building which we inhabit." Cinema and architecture, being art, have the ability to function as a platform to project our emotions. As Pallasmaa (2001, p.22) closes: "Real architecture can affect our soul only if it can touch the stratum of forgotten memories and feelings."



Figure 8: Wes Anderson (Left) and Jude Law (Right) on the set of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Seitz, 2015)



Figure 9: Section of the house in *The Royal Tenenbaums* (Anderson, 2001)

02 | WES ANDERSON

Developing on the relation between cinema and architecture, this chapter focuses on the director of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*; Wes Anderson (figure 8). The chapter will outline the components which define the cinema of Anderson by analyzing his film repertoire. Through research of the cinematic style of Anderson, the chapter will position him in the current cinema. The chapter discusses the relation between architecture and the cinema of Anderson, reflecting on the question of how Anderson presents architectural space in his films.

2.1. The Author

Anderson (born 1969) is known for his distinct, recognizable, visual style, constantly balancing stories between reality and fantasy. Frequently returning themes consider memory, nostalgia, family and loss. Anderson creates a mix between significant historical moments and old institutions, such as *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Anderson has been credited for his instant identifiable cinema (Seitz, 2013). Dilley (2017) labels him as an author of cinema, because of his imprinted personality on every film. Anderson was chosen by the National Film Preservation Board as “Culturally, historically and aesthetically significant”. According to Dilley (2017), Anderson establishes a visual and narrative tone with which he captures the zeitgeist. Anderson is considered to be part of the American contemporary independent cinema. There are different characteristics which make the cinema of Wes Anderson so distinctive, all revolving around the central theme of nostalgia. Below, this chapter will explore some of these in depth.

One of the most important characteristics of Anderson's cinema is the creation of artificial worlds within his films (Dilley, 2017). The characters within the films operate according to the rules established by the fictional world. Anderson does this in different ways. For example, in *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001) (figure 9) the house is represented as a dollhouse to invite the viewer into this meticulously created world. Or in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, where Anderson used miniature models to represent the exterior facade of the hotel. Anderson also uses different filming techniques that date back to the earlier days of filming, such as the different aspect ratios to enhance the feeling of the particular era.

Fading Institutions also play a central role in different films. *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is viewed by Zero as an “institution”. The hotel is displayed in various eras, to show the gradual decay of a once established institution. In other films, like *The Royal Tenenbaums*, the family lives in the memory of their own glory days.

Family relations generally form a theme within the different worlds of Anderson as well. Part of this bonding is also explored through masculinity, brotherly relationships. In *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Zero the lobby boy, develops this relationship with his mentor Gustave H.

Another important characteristic of Anderson's cinema is the use of multiple beginnings and endings. Different introduction scenes often carefully expose the world which Anderson has created before the actual main characters come in to play. An example of this can be seen in *The Darjeeling Limited* (2007), which tells the story of three brothers traveling through India by train in an attempt to bond with each other after their father's funeral. Anderson configured three different endings for this film. Also in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Gustave's first film shot is ten minutes after the start of the film. First, the present day is shown through a girl standing by a statue of the writer of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, then the film shifts back to the 1980's, then to 1964, and finally to 1932, the glory days of the hotel. The film ends in reverse time.



Figure 10: Symmetrical shot in *Moonrise Kingdom* (Anderson, 2012)



Figure 11: Symmetrical shot in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 12: Composition of shot in *Isle of Dogs* (Anderson, 2018)



Figure 13: Overhead shot in *Bottle Rocket* (Anderson, 1996)

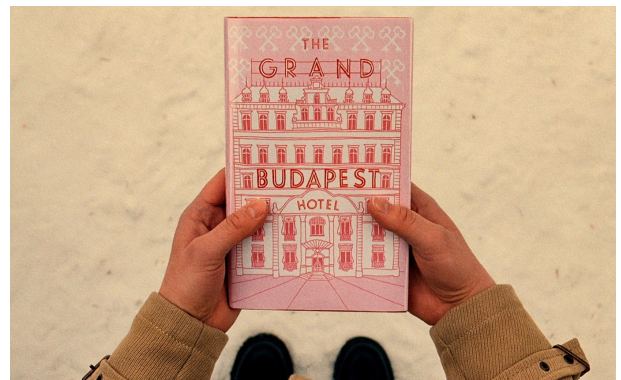


Figure 14: Overhead shot in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 15: Color use in *Moonrise Kingdom* (Anderson, 2012)



Figure 16: Color use in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)

The distinct cinema of Anderson is also visible in his visual style. This visual style comprises of different aspects. Firstly, the composition of shots is very particular for Anderson films. Especially symmetry seems to be a reoccurring characteristic. *Moonrise Kingdom*, a film about a young girl and boy who fall in love and run away together, is one of the films where this compositional technique is used (figure 10). Also, the tent which functions as a safe space of one of the family members in *The Royal Tenenbaums* is constantly positioned in the middle of symmetrical shots. The shots remind one of paintings rather than the dimension of films. The technique of symmetrical shots is also found in different films of Kubrick like *The Shining* (figure 6). The careful composition of shots invites the viewer into the thought process of Anderson and aids the narrative. Next to symmetry, Anderson's shots are further divided, both horizontally and vertically (figure 12).

Another trademark of Anderson's visual style is the use of overhead shots (figure 13). The different angle of filming provides variation in perspective throughout the film. It allows the viewer to see through the characters eyes. In *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the film starts with a overhead shot of a girl opening the book of *The Grand Budapest hotel* (figure 14). In doing so, the viewer adopts the same position as the character of the film, spectator of an unfolding story.

Anderson's films are characterized by the distinct use of color palettes. Anderson tends to dampen dark historical eras with bright, vivid colors. This provides contrast between what the viewer sees and what is actually happening (Vaughn Vreeland, 2015). In this way, Anderson projects his own fantasy onto a bitter reality. Also, the use of color reflects on the role of family and social structure. The use of pastel colors gives the shots a dream-like feeling (figure 15). *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is filled with different tones of pink, making the whole film feel like a confection (figure 16). Anderson explains that the use of pink functioned as a "wedding cake color" to display decadence and upper class (Seitz, 2015).

In his films, Anderson builds his world meticulously. Referencing different cultural periods, sometimes literally and sometimes vaguely, he provides the viewer with context. These references are both large and minute. From the design of an actual currency of the fictional former Republic of Zubrowka to the use of Japanese inspired type fonts in *Isle of Dogs*. Typography functions as an important part of the cinematography of Anderson. It functions as a introduction of characters and framing of time. For example, Anderson uses Archer as a type font to suggest historical influences. This font is used in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Also, Anderson uses Futura in multiple films such as *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001) and *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2004). This font was previously also used by Kubrick. The fonts also provide cultural relevance, which is important to Anderson. Although the films take the viewer into a fantasy world, the details are "Always based on some kind of reality" according to graphic designer Erica Dorn (Hart, 2018). The cultural heritage on which Anderson bases his worlds are found in different references. For example, the "ZZ" emblems on the uniforms of soldiers in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* references the period of the "SS" and the Nazi party. It shows that Anderson is involved in every detail throughout the whole process, classifying him as an author. As Seitz (2013) concludes: "Every detail is part of the grand design"



Figure 17: Section of the boat on set in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (Anderson, 2004)



Figure 18: Architecture in *The Isle of Dogs* (Anderson, 2018)

2.2. The Architect

Architecture plays a central role in the films of Wes Anderson. Whether it is in the use of cross-sections to present a story or the referencing to specific architectural styles, nearly all of Anderson's films involve architecture. Interestingly, most films involve a central building or structure in which or around which the story evolves. A hotel in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* or a train in *The Darjeeling Limited*. The techniques which Anderson uses to allow the viewer to understand the full picture vary from film to film. But central to his way of working is the meticulous unpacking and layering of spaces. In *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2001), Anderson uses a full-scale section of the research ship to display how the different spaces fit together (figure 17). Space by space, the universe of the ship is presented to the spectator. In *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Anderson uses miniature models to display the exterior facade. The whole way of working provides context, leading the viewer methodically through the world he has created.

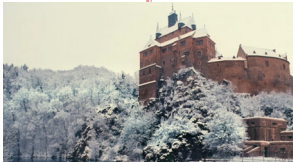
In *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012), architecture is used in a figurative way. The set serves as a vehicle of atmosphere, without taking over. The protagonists in this film are the two main characters. Most of the film is shot in nature. The architecture is discrete and shy, a background to the story. For the *Isle of Dogs* (2018) Anderson and his crew were inspired by Metabolist architecture (figure 18). Notable architects for Anderson were Kenzo Tange and Frank Lloyd Wright. When visualizing the different worlds in the film, namely Trash Island and Megasaki City, different inspirations were drawn from Japanese architecture. Taking examples like the Kabuki theatre and the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Anderson and co-producer Stockhausen find their way into every detail.

Anderson also uses architecture to evoke a certain temporal context. This is the case in *Castello Cavalcanti*, where the architecture of the city lays the foundations of both the plot and the outcome. The decor of the *Castello Cavalcanti* from the 1950s evokes in the spectator an Italian imagination with respect to family and origins. In *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, architecture is used as a point of reference in the film. Architecture actively participates not only in the plot of the film, but also in the intentions of the director. Each space suggests a physical context, reflects the longings of the characters.

Lastly, architecture can also serve as the protagonist in Anderson's films. This is especially the case in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The film traces the life of the hotel from its glory days to its gradual decay. The hotel is therefore not a pretext for the plot, but actually is the plot, and the film strives to bring it to life through the stories born and experienced within its walls. The hotel becomes the main character, and only very rarely steps aside to let the plot run, of which it is much more than the theater. Behind these stories of destinies, Wes Anderson tells us about Europe, the war, these incidences, all this hidden behind the pink facade of a hotel in Eastern Europe. This film serves as a case study in the next chapter, where the architectural historical styles will be researched.

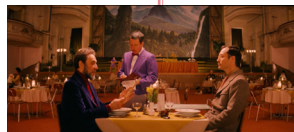
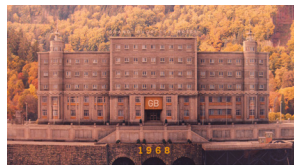
1930s

Grand Budapest Hotel in the days of glory.



1968

Grand Budapest Hotel post-war:



1985

Author in his home with his grandson.



2014

Young girl on the cemetery in the former Republic of Zubrowka.



03 | THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

This chapter will focus on the architecture displayed in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. First, it is important to address the main theme of the film; nostalgia. Anderson, inspired by the books of Stefan Zweig (1881-1942), references different time periods in the film. Zweig, an Austrian novelist, wrote different works including *Beware of Pity* (1939), but his personal memoir *The World of Yesterday* (1942) seems to have been an important inspiration for Anderson. In the book, Zweig recalls pre-war Vienna on the brink of a period that would change the continent forever. The literary influence is visible in the film, which recounts the story of M. Gustave, the concierge of the once legendary hotel *The Grand Budapest*, and Zero, the lobby boy. The adventure, which involves the theft and recovery of a painting called "Boy with Apple", is split into different parts and time periods.

3.1. Synopsis

The film starts in the present day when a young woman walks into a cemetery in the former Republic of Zubrowka. She approaches the memorial of the author of the book *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. She looks down on the book at the picture of the author; the viewer is taken to 1985 where the author is sitting in his home. The author describes the story of how he came to write the book of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The viewer is then taken back to 1968. The author visited *The Grand Budapest Hotel* in that time. The hotel is in a state of decline, residing only few guests. The concierge Monsieur Jean informs the author one day of the presence of Zero Moustafa, the owner of the hotel, sitting in the lobby of the hotel. Later that day, the author meets the Moustafa in the thermal baths of the hotel, where Moustafa compliments the author's work and invites him to dinner. During dinner, Moustafa tells the author the story of how he became the owner of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*.

Part 1 - M. Gustave

The story of Moustafa starts in 1932, during the glory days of the hotel. Zero Moustafa, in his teenage years at the time, first works at the hotel as the lobby boy. The hotel is led by the infamous concierge M. Gustave. In the opening scene Madame D., an elderly woman and frequent visitor of the hotel, is leaving the hotel and saying farewell to M. Gustave. M. Gustave acts as a mentor for Zero, teaching him how to become a lobby boy up to the standards of the institution that is *The Grand Budapest*. Zero also meets Agatha for the first time, the young girl who works at Mendl's, a legendary pastry bakery in the town of Nabelsbad.

Part 2 - Madame C.V.D.u.

While transporting morning newspapers to the hotel, Zero finds out that Madame D. has been found dead in her castle. M. Gustave orders Zero to immediately pack luggage and together with him travel to the chateau of Madame D. While on the train, the viewer can see the first signs of an approaching war, with the closing of the frontiers of Zubrowka. After paying respect to the departed Madame D. in the chateau, Zero and M. Gustave accidentally enter a room where the last will of Madame D. is read aloud. It so happens here that M. Gustave inherits the painting "Boy with Apple" for his kindness towards the duchess. But the inheritance is not accepted by the family and M. Gustave decides that he will take the painting back with him without anyone noticing. Back in the hotel, Zero and M. Gustave hide the painting, but M. Gustave is arrested in suspicion of murdering Madame D. by officer Henckel.

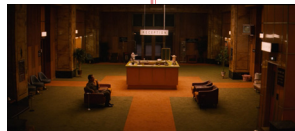
1930s

Grand Budapest Hotel in the days of glory.



1968

Grand Budapest Hotel post-war



1985

Author in his home with his grandson.



2014

Young girl on the cemetery in the former Republic of Zubrowka.



Part 3 - Check Point 19 - Criminal-Interment Camp

M. Gustave is imprisoned in a castle. Zero meets with the executor of her estate, Mr. Kovacs. Zero and M. Gustave suspect that Madame D's family is behind the murder, but the witness of the events, Serge X, has gone missing. Dmitri, one of Madame D's sons, is also searching for Serge X together with his right-hand man, Jopling, in an attempt to assassinate him. In prison, M. Gustave has taken on the role of the concierge of the inmates. This is appreciated by the inmates, and they want to help him escape. They cannot do this without tools so Zero and M. Gustave make up a plan to hide the tools in the pastries of Mendl's which Agatha makes. The plan succeeds and M. Gustave escapes out of prison. He then flees together with Zero and request help from the *Society of the Crossed Keys*.

Part 4 - The Society of the Crossed Keys

The *Society of the Crossed Keys* is an interconnected group of famous hotel concierges. M. Gustave and Zero are rescued from the deserted countryside. They try to find Serge X in a monastery. Meanwhile, Jopling has murdered Mr. Kovacs, and is also trying to find Serge X. M. Gustave and Zero find Serge X, and he tells them about a second copy of a second will which states that Gustave is the rightful owner of "Boy with Apple". Before they finish their meeting, Serge X is murdered by Jopling, who then flees the monastery. M. Gustave and Zero chase Jopling down the hills on a sled and after a wild ride and fight they succeed in pushing him off a cliff. Meanwhile, M. Gustave and Zero turn out to be chased by officer Henckel for escaping prison. They decide to return to *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and find the painting.

Part 5 - The Second Copy of the Second Will

When M. Gustave and Zero arrive at *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, they see that the war has arrived as well. The hotel is occupied by military personnel. Zero has instructed Agatha to enter the hotel pretending to deliver Mendl's pastry but secretly retrieving the painting. Dmitri arrives at the same time and chases Agatha in the hotel. Zero and Gustave follow Dmitri into the hotel to encounter Henckel as well, this turns into a chaotic shootout. Agatha has jumped out of the hotel with the painting, Zero rescues her, retrieving the painting. It turns out the second copy of the second will was hidden behind the painting. Henckel reads the will aloud, vindicating M. Gustave and secondly making him owner of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. M. Gustave, liberated from financial stress, promotes Zero to concierge of the hotel. Zero and Agatha marry in the presence of M. Gustave. Not long after, M. Gustave is shot by soldiers on a journey together with Agatha and Zero. M. Gustave leaves everything he owns, including the hotel, to Zero. Shortly afterwards, Agatha dies together with their first child.

The viewer is now taken back to 1968, where Zero Moustafa and the author conclude their dining session. They head to the lobby together where they retrieve the keys to their rooms and say goodbye. The author remains in the lobby, after which the viewer is taken back to 1985. The author sits in on the couch together with his grandson. The film closes with a shot of the young women in the present, finishing the book *The Grand Budapest Hotel*.



Figure 19: Illustration of the 1930s *Grand Budapest Hotel* (Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2014)



Figure 20: Miniature model of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Seitz, 2015)



Figure 21: Mendl's bakery pastry (Anderson, 2014)

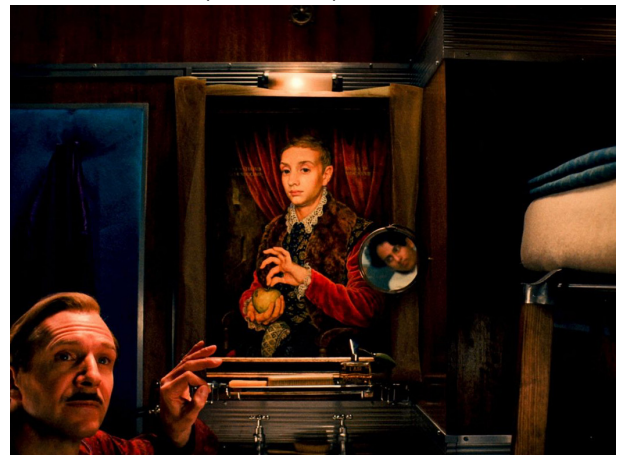


Figure 22: *Boy with Apple painting* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 23 *Giant mountains* (Caspar David Friedrich, 1810)

3.2 Visual language

As with numerous Anderson films, the narrative of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* unfolds within one specific location. The hotel forms the central image of the film. The viewer is taken through the hotel in different eras and different spaces, each one meticulously detailed. Specifically, these interior spaces are the lobby, the Arabian baths, the manager's quarters, individual guest rooms, the lift and the restaurant. The exterior of the hotel is also portrayed in different eras. These different periods were chosen by Anderson: "We're kind of combining the First World War with the Second World War, and mingling it into three periods" (Seitz, 2015, p.34). The first period takes place before the First World War; the second period represents a of fascism and war. Finally, there is a Communist period represented in the film. The different era's combine into a overall vision of an imagined Europe.

When designing the set of the film, Anderson and Stockhausen strived for a balance between stylization and realism (figure 19). This balance provides tension in the film and creates a sense of artificial representation which also is visible in the exterior facade of the hotel, a scale model by Simon Weisse (figure 20) (Seitz, 2015, p. 143). Both the 1930s inter-war version of the hotel and the 1960s Communist style hotel are built as a scale model. For the design of the exterior appearance of the hotel, Anderson and Stockhausen researched a multitude of photochromatic images showing inter-war Europe in the collection of the Library of Congress (Murphy, 2014). Aside from the hotel, multiple other exterior locations have been remodeled. Among these are the observatory center, the funicular and the cable car.

Apart from the architecture, the visual language is also supported by numerous other factors. Cinematographer Robert Yeoman was responsible for the distinct soft and warm light in the film. The different shades of pink, blue and purple, which dampen the dark themes in the film and bring a feeling of optimism. The light and color offers a sense of nostalgia, inviting the viewer to take the spaces and settings as an extension of the character (Boone in Seitz, 2015, p. 143). This is visible in the display of different buildings. For example, the hotel, which is an extension of M. Gustave, has warm tones, plush textures and resembles warmth and luxury. Schloss Lutz on the other hand, which is an extension of Madame D., is barely decorated, has dark hardwood and green walls which are filled with the preserved heads. The castle feels cold, arrogant and oppressive.

Through obsessive details like the artwork of "Boy with Apple" (figure 22) or the perfection of Mendl's pastries (figure 21), Anderson heightens the temporal signifiers. The film was also shot in different aspect ratios to enhance the perception of the era the viewer is currently in. For the 1930s an aspect ratio of 1.37 was used, the 1960s are displayed through a 2.35:1 aspect ratio and the present day was filmed using a 1.85 aspect ratio. The shots collapse and expand through the film, expanding space in turn. The paintings of Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840), a German Romanticist painter, were an inspiration for the landscapes of the film. Anderson and his team based their backdrops for the hotels on the work of Friedrich. The *Giant mountains* painting (figure 23) for example, where Friedrich captured the dawn light, serves as the background in the large painting in the dining room of the hotel.

In portraying a slightly heightened reality, Anderson seems well aware of the imagination of the viewer. Anderson allows the viewer into a world where personal memories, evocations are in some ways more important than facts. To quote Arikan (Seitz, 2015): "The telling matters more than the tale. The feelings experienced by the teller matter even more. The feelings that arise in the reader matter most of all."



Figure 24: Grand Hotel Pupp, ca. 1890 (Library of Congress)

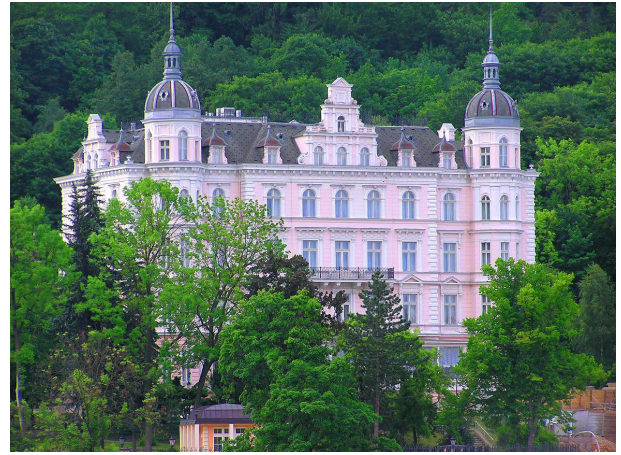


Figure 25: Grand Hotel Bristol Palace (Infocentrum města Karlovy Vary, 2020)

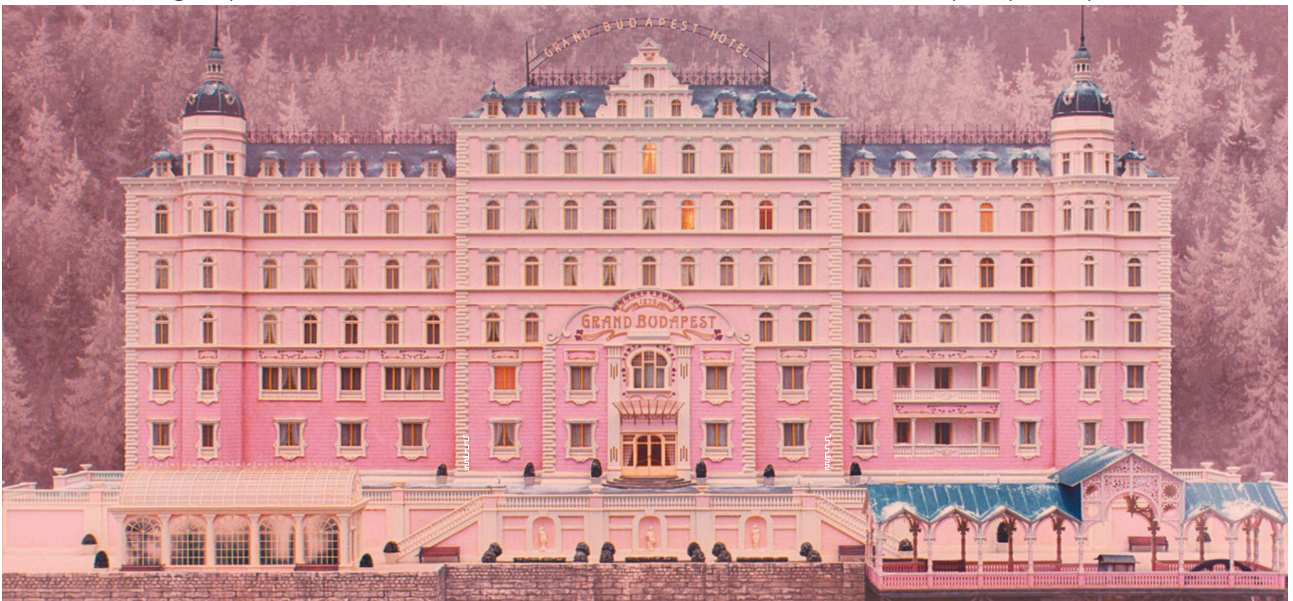


Figure 26: 1930s exterior view of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 27: 1930s entrance of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)

3.3 Historical architecture | 1930s

Exterior

Anderson wanted to display the hotel strongly in two different time periods, the first of which takes place in the 1930s. When modelling the exterior of the hotel, influences from different sources and time periods were obtained. The exterior facade is based on different photochromatic images of Europe (figure 24) and hotels that Anderson and Stockhausen visited before the film. Architecturally, *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is a blend of Neoclassicism, Neo-Renaissance, Neo-Baroque and Jugendstil. Two notable buildings are the Grand Hotel Pupp (figure 24) and the Grand Hotel Bristol Palace (figure 25), both situated in the town of Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic. The modern Grand Hotel Pupp was built in 1892 designed by Robert Přihoda and Josef Němeček. In 1907, the building's facade was redesigned and unified in a Neo-Baroque style by the Viennese architects Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer (Grand Hotel Pupp, 2022). Neo-Baroque or Baroque revival architecture was a style which flourished in the late 19th century. The Neo-Baroque tradition, part of the curriculum of the École des Beaux-Arts, recovered parts of the architecture displayed in the Baroque style, but did not date back to the original Baroque period from the early 17th century (James-Chakraborty, 2014). Main elements of the Neo-Baroque style include grandeur, rich surface treatments and detailing, drama, contrast and twisting elements. Importantly, it is an imitation of Baroque. Bright colors and painted ceilings were applied systematically. The Grand Hotel Bristol Palace, built in the end of the 19th century, shows visual elements of both Neo-Baroque and Neo-Renaissance architecture. Neo-Renaissance was an architectural style which dates back to the period between 1870 and 1900 (James-Chakraborty, 2014). Symmetry, ornaments, stepped gables and repetition were very particular for the architectural style. As with other neo-styles, Neo-Renaissance imitates the renaissance architectural style.

The exterior facade of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, shown in figure 26, shows multiple aesthetic similarities with the two hotels in Karlovy Vary. Especially the Grand Hotel Bristol Palace similarity is evident. The dormers, decorative turrets and stepped gable seem replicated from the hotel, as well as the repetitive window frames and the symmetry in the building structure. The quoins which connect the different facades provide an architectural depth and give the building grandeur. The Neoclassical balustrades and sculptures in front of the hotel add to this feeling of grandeur.

Observing the main entrance of the hotel, a new architectural style becomes evident; Jugendstil. The German architectural movement, part of Art Nouveau, developed around 1890 until 1910. The style represented a modern movement which originated in the applied arts. Characteristics are geometric or vegetative ornaments, traditional building materials, new organic spatial forms and plasticity in buildings (Dyroff et al., 1988). Interestingly, Jugendstil was partly a reaction to the neo-architectural styles. During the late 19th century, the architectural movement wanted to break away from the imitative historical architectural styles. Asymmetry, organic and bend forms are important characteristics of the architectural movement. Production designer Stockhausen notes that specifically Jugendstil was of influence because of the great extent of variation in ornaments and details (Whitlock, 2014). The glass roof above the entrance shows typical Jugendstil curves (figure), whereas the name of the hotel is written in the Arnold Böcklin typeface, a commonly used Art Nouveau typeface (Grafton, 2013). Also, the natural purple leaf decorations on the wall are exemplary for the Jugendstil style. As a whole, the exterior facade of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is an interesting blend of Neoclassical, Neo-Baroque, Neo-Renaissance and Jugendstil architectural styles. Although the contradiction of architectural styles within the facade seems accidental, they do give homage to European Grandeur at the turn of the 19th century.

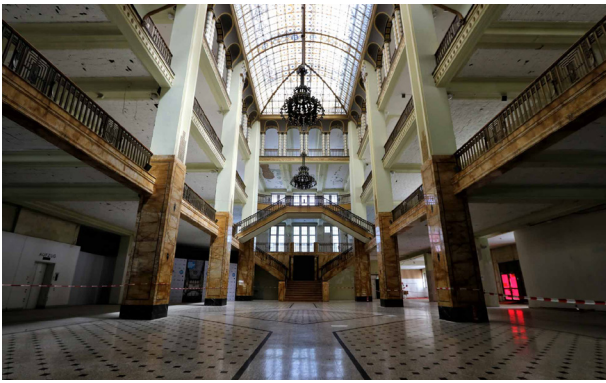


Figure 28: Atrium inside the Kaufhaus Görlitz (Duitsland Reistips, 2020)



Figure 29: Interior detailing in the Kaufhaus Görlitz (Duitsland Reistips, 2020)

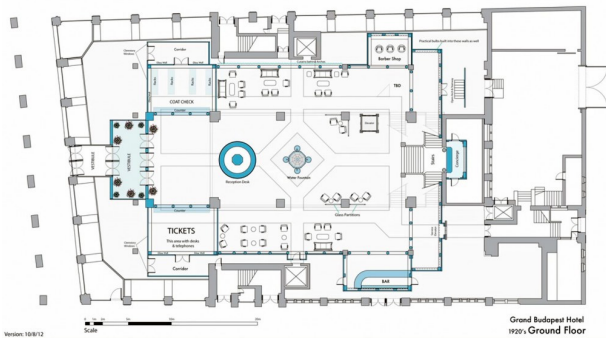


Figure 30: 1930s floor plan (Seitz, 2015)



Figure 31: 1930s lobby of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 32: 1930s lobby of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)

For the production of hotel's interior in the film, Anderson and his crew decided to use the Görlitz Department Store in Saxony, Germany. Stockhausen and Anderson wanted to make the most of the architecture the department store provided (Seitz, 2015, p. 160). The building's shell provides the main background for the interior scenes of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*.

The Görlitz Department Store, built in 1913, is designed by architect Schumann according to Art Nouveau design principles (Stadt Görlitz, 2015). The interior of the building, originally designed as a warehouse, consists of a large atrium spanning 4 floors with gallery areas for retail spaces (figure 28, 29). In *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the transformation of the hotel forms an important aspect of the film. Both these time periods are replicated within the shell of the department store. Anderson and his crew built two different sets. The first set, representing the 1930s period, makes use of the full width, length and height of the hotel (figure 30). In this version of the hotel, guests enter through the vestibule into the central lobby. In the lobby, a central reception desk is placed welcoming the guests. In the center of the floorplan, a fountain with decorative walls is placed, connecting the different carpets together. The concierge's office is located up the stairs, looking over the lobby. The figures on the carpets resemble the figures in the original glass roof of the department store.

Observing still frames of the lobby in the film, different interior architectural styles are visible. The European grandeur which Anderson wanted to display in the 1930s shots, is supported by the building as well as the objects. Chandeliers, interior plants and balustrades provide this sense of grandeur. The use of marble and richly decorated walls and pillars place the building historically within the beginning of the 20th century. The lobby's atmosphere is further supported by the use of color. For the 1930s version of the lobby, red and pink are the dominant colors (figure 31).

In *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the lobby forms the main working space of the lobby boy Zero. Lobbies have always formed an intriguing part of hotels, especially in the two different time periods Anderson displays. During the 1930s, the grand hotel lobbies offered activities to upper and middle classes such as festivities, socializing and dining. At the time, the lobby was the space of a hotel where most of the interaction took place. Hotels became a touristic destination on its own, where guests would stay for over a month. Hotels became an "enclave and a microcosm of the privileged in a rural environment, a backdrop for luxurious, conspicuous consumption" (Avermaete & Massey, 2012).

Interestingly, for the spelling of the word 'Concierge' above the desk of the concierge, an art deco typeface is used (figure 32). The Art Deco movement, influenced by the Vienna Secession but also Cubism, flourished slightly later than Art Nouveau. Art Nouveau, inspired by organic forms, was a reaction on the previous Neoclassical hierarchic structures. The Art Deco movement however is characterized by more geometric and modern aesthetics. Art Deco embraced the wealth development during the early 20th century, technical developments and industrial revolutions (Bayer, 1999). The hotel resembles a forgotten and lost world and most important, the hotel resembles the personage of M. Gustave.



Figure 33: 1960s exterior view of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 34: 1960s entrance of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)

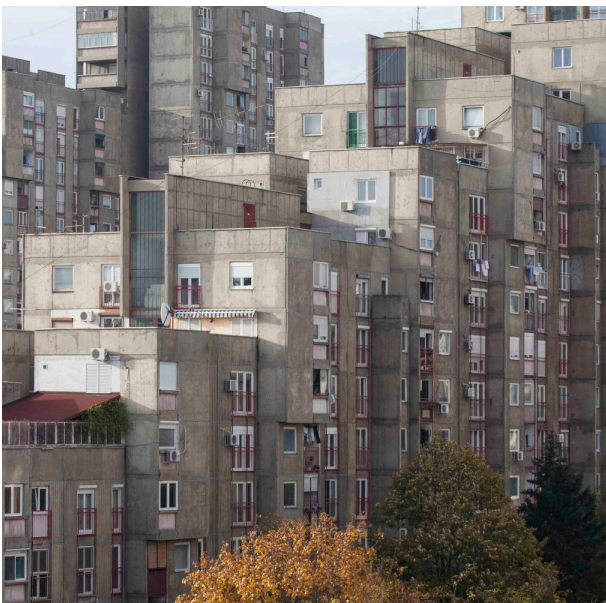


Figure 35: Novi Beograd, Serbia (Ex Eutopia, 2017)



Figure 36: Spa Hotel Thermal in 1977, Karlovy Vary (Spa Hotel Thermal, n.d.)

3.4 Historical architecture | 1960s

Exterior

In the 1960s version of the hotel, the exterior facade has changed substantially (figure 33). The change in ideology projected in the film is reflected in the appearance of the facade. Ornaments, figures, detailing, curves and organic forms have all been replaced with imposing, straight and functional architecture. The balconies have mostly disappeared, the building which shells the cable car is gone. The pink and red colors have mostly been replaced with brown, yellow and orange pastel colors. The building's facade is now constructed with exposed concrete. The old letters on top of the hotel have changed into a modern, functional typeface. In the background, the forest is visible in autumn, resembling the slow decay of the hotel. The author in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* introduces the current state as such: "It was off-season and, by that time, decidedly out-of-fashion, and it had already begun its descent into shabbiness and eventual demolition" (Anderson, 2014).

Observing the entrance, the Art Nouveau letters have been replaced by orange blocks depicting modern font letters (figure 34). Simplified, repetitive murals have replaced the organic flower decorations. The complex window frames from the 1930s period have been replaced with basic window frames. The main entrance has dark tinted glass, hiding what is inside of the building. The walls are still clad with pink paint, but the color is muted. The grandeur of the hotel's entrance has disappeared.

Anderson and his crew took experience from communist-era architecture and Brutalist renovations as an example for the transformation of the hotel (Seitz, 2015, p. 161): "All the details of what Communism does to the architecture, which are not in the script, came out of travels and from looking at things." The question what communism does to architecture is not a question which is easily answered and arguably, no single architectural style can fit the description. Communist architecture is regularly associated with Stalinist architecture, which was prominent in the 1920s and 1930s, and Constructivist architecture, which thrived from the 1930s through the 1950s (Cohen, 2016). Stereotypes like totalitarian housing blocks (figure 35) are often seen as an expression of communism, but Hatherley (2016, p. 4) argues that the connection between architecture and ideology is not easily made. Within communism, spanning across multiple decades, architecture followed a diverse, eclectic and contradictory course. Shifting from modernism to Baroque, classicism to Brutalism and Rococo, the architecture within the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe showed a diverse and sometimes paradoxical pattern (Hatherley, 2016, p. 24). Paperny (2002) defines these opposite architectural styles as "Culture One", representing future-oriented Modernism, and "Culture Two", representing Stalinist architecture. According to Paperny, Culture One embodies fast, dynamic and instant architecture through horizontal, long, low and linear blocks. Culture Two embodies monumental, massive and immobile architecture through verticality, skylines and pyramids.

A particular interesting building in relation to the 1960s Grand Budapest Hotel is the Spa Hotel Thermal (figure 36), located in Karlov Vary, Czech Republic. The hotel, designed in 1964 by Věra Machoninová (born 1928) and Vladimír Machonin (1920-1990), was a demonstration of Czechoslovak architecture (May, n.d.). For inspiration, the architects visited multiple buildings in the UK and Europe. Through the design included furniture and interior of the hotel. Interestingly, Czechoslovakia was occupied in the late sixties. The Communist party changed the nature of the hotel into a sanatorium after criticizing the shortcomings of the hotel. After the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia, the hotel was (wrongly) associated with communist architecture (Spa Hotel Thermal, n.d.). The hotel's exterior displays brutalist architecture according to the Culture One principles, but also shows the unclear and sometimes paradoxical definition of communist architecture.

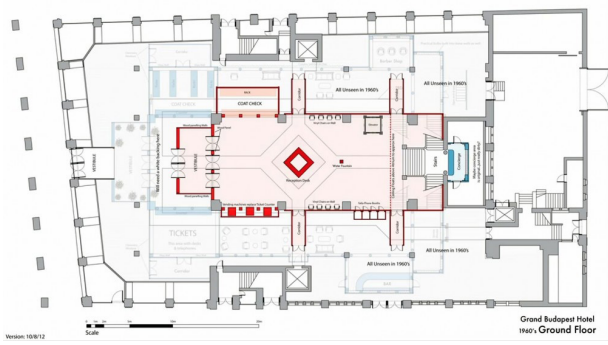


Figure 37: 1960s floor plan (Seitz, 2015)



Figure 38: 1960s restaurant (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 39: 1960s lobby of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 40: 1960s lobby of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (Anderson, 2014)

For the 1960s interior, Anderson and his crew built the set within the 1930s decor (figure 37). The lobby space is reduced, both horizontally and vertically. The lowered, suspended ceiling introduces the visitors to the atmosphere of the hotel. On the walls, the marble is mostly changed into wood panels. The ceiling, lift shaft and reception desk have also changed in material and appearance; the 1930s marble is converted into warm orange and green plastic panels. The water fountain has disappeared, and the Jugendstil furniture has made way for 1960s furniture. Next to the stairs, the painted walls have made room for multiple telephone booths (figure 39). One of the main aspects through which Anderson visualizes the passing of time is the shift in colors. The 1930s red and pink have turned into green and warm yellow (figure 38). Motifs and details are missing on the carpets, rather form and functionality through color difference marks the way to different spaces (figure 40). At the foot of the stairs, the statues are no more, any ornament has been reduced into its bare functional purpose. On either side of the large stairs the paintings are replaced with plastic panels, in front of which different phone boots are placed. Interestingly, different signs have replaced the absence of a lobby boy. Signs mark every single place and instruction in the hotel; the vending machines, reception, telephone booths, lift, concierge, where to register, dining room, thermal baths, dental clinic and check-in times. In the film, the characters move slowly and are mostly stationary and demotivated.

Historically, the status of the hotel and lobby has shifted in the twentieth-century. A redefinition due to mass-tourism changed the lobby from a grandeur space for public activities into a rational, efficient and international identical space (Avermaete & Massey, 2012). Different architectural elements that are part of the lobby such as the reception desk, the stairs and the elevators have also changed in their nature. The reception desk, functioning as a passage site between the public space and the private space. The reception form has changed from a circular form into a square (figure). The 1930s circular form resembles the reception as the center of the lobby around which the visitors and guests' circular movement takes place. Although the 1960s reception in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is still centrally located within the lobby, the rational form in combination with the carpet represent a shift in function (figure 40). Also, the function of the stairs and elevator have changed in the 1960s version of the hotel. The two architectural elements function as a mediator between the lobby and the rooms, between public and private (Avermaete & Massey, 2012). In the 1960s hotel, the carpet on the stairs has been removed. The chandeliers above the stairs have been replaced with rational lighting and due to the lowering of the ceiling, the visual connection with the upper floors has disappeared. The interaction and merging of public and private spheres have shifted.

The 1960s also presented an interesting interior design shift compared to the 1930s. The Second World War caused a shift in the balance of power, also within the international design community. The Modernist movement shifted architecture towards purity in expression and form. During the 1940s, Scandinavian countries developed the Scandinavian Modern Style (Jackson, 2000) and by the end of the 1940s, American designers and furniture producers began to export their visual and popular culture to Europe. This included fashion, advertising, and domestic accessories. The Cold War however degraded the interaction and cross-fertilization between capitalist and communist countries. The conflicts and contradictions between foreign influences and ideological structures is visible in the interior of the lobby of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The marble columns and stairs on the one hand and the rational floorplan, plastic panels and technological developments on the other hand express the changing ideas about the function and definition of the hotel and lobby.



Figure 41: Press shop in Görlitz (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 42: Interior of Madame D's Schloss Lutz (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 43: Agatha working on the pastries at Mendl's bakery (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 44: Chase in the Zwinger Museum (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 45: Gustave H. in prison (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 46: Nazi-like insignia (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 47: Zubrowka high-mountain observatory (Anderson, 2014)



Figure 48: Deer statue on top of rock (Anderson, 2014)

3.5 Historical architecture | Context

The physical context in the film is presented through architecture, cultural references, objects and furniture, both interior and exterior. Since most of the story in the film takes place in the 1930s, this decade provides also the largest part of the context. The central image is the hotel itself, but the physical context in the film is also chosen to evoke different time periods, but most importantly, to bring the nostalgic world of Gustave H. to life.

As with the exterior appearance of the hotel, Anderson also took inspiration from photochrom images of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Prussia for the physical context. The fictional country of Zubrowka is not an entirely accurate description, but merely based on Anderson's idea of 1930s Europe (Seitz, p.102, 2015).

To evoke a sense of location, the town of Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, was of great inspiration for Anderson. *The Grand Budapest Hotel's* location in the film is based on Karlovy Vary. The built environment in Karlovy Vary expresses different architectural styles, from Neoclassicism and Neo-Baroque to Brutalist buildings. The film itself is shot for the most part in Görlitz (figure 41) and the surrounding area of Saxony, Germany. Madame D's castle, Schloss Lutz, was shot using the Hainewalde castle as exterior. The manor, located in the eastern part of Germany, was built from 1749 to 1755 and features Baroque architecture. The interior of Madame D's castle is filmed in Schloss Waldenburg (figure 42). The history of the castle dates back to the 12th century (Donath, 2012). The interior features dark oak with different hunting trophies on the wall. Importantly, these castles reflect on the personalities of Madame D. as an individual.

Another distinctive location is Mendl's bakery. The interior of the bakery was shot in Pfunds Molkerei (Pfunds Molkerei, 2022). The iconic perfection of the pastries and pink pastry boxes make it a true confection. More importantly, this is the location where Agatha, the love of Zero Moustafa, works (figure 43). She symbolizes the perfection in the pastry of Mendl's, but also the ephemeral nature of it. Also located in Dresden, the Zwinger Museum (figure 44) serves as the background for a scene where deputy Kovacs is chased by J. G. Jopling. The museum, designed by Pöppelmann (1632-1736) in Baroque style architecture, was built in 1709, but burned down due to bombing round 1945. It took years and, paradoxically, the support of Soviet resources, to rebuild the building, which was completed in 1963 (Museums of the world, n.d.).

Gustave H. spends part of the story in prison, the so-called "Checkpoint-19" prison. The interior scenes of the film are shot in Castle Osterstein (figure 45) (Sweitz, 2015). The castle was used as a political prison during World War I and World War II (Stadt Zwickau, n.d.). Anderson evokes the period of war and fascism through the use of Nazi-like insignia, changing the "SS" to "ZZ" (figure 46). Rather than precisely replicating, Anderson merely stylizes the different world wars. The intensity is lessened through the use of color (Dille, 2017). Further, for the *Zubrowka high-mountain observatory* (figure 47), Anderson used the Sphinx Observatory in Switzerland as a reference. Built in 1937, the observatory serves as a research platform for various disciplines (High Altitude Research Stations Jungfraujoch and Gornergrat, 2019). In the film, Zero Moustafa and Gustave H. visit the observatory and the adjacent monastery to find Serge H. who is "Hiding in the mountains" (Seitz, 2015). Also, in the film a deer is displayed on top of a rock as a symbol of Nebelsbad (figure 48), the town where *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is located. The deer on top of the rock is inspired on the *deer jump* statue in Karlovy Vary (Dille, 2017).



Figure 49: Closing shots in the film (Anderson, 2014)

CONCLUSION

The relationship between architecture and cinema is multi-sided. The articulation of lived space forms the basis and common ground for architecture and cinema. Being both arts of the author, cinema and architecture have the potential to generate emotions, awaken our soul and to shift the attention of the viewer from the inside to the outside. Cinema can exhibit the subtle quality of architectural elements which might seem insignificant at first sight, revealing the mental ground of architecture. When we store images in our memory, architecture provides context. It is not the material existence which gives architecture its true value, but the evocation of feelings and emotions, both spatial and temporal. Both cinema and architecture have the ability to construct spaces in the mind, articulate the surface between the world and our own mental experience, where meaning and value are blend (Pallasmaa, 2001).

Through his films, Wes Anderson deepens the emotional connection between space and user. For Anderson, architecture serves as an amplifier; through the use of architecture as a tool for telling a story. Nearly all of Anderson's films involve architecture, whether used in a figurative way or to serve as the protagonist of the story. Step by step the viewer is taken through the world Anderson has meticulously created. By introducing spaces through the habits, ideals and aspirations of the individual, buildings come to life. The characters within the films operate according to the rules established by the fictional world. Anderson balances stories between reality and fantasy, transcending the rules of geometry. His distinct visual style and use of color reflects on social structures in different temporal and spatial settings.

Anderson evokes certain temporal contexts in his films, especially in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The hotel is presented in different time periods, reflecting on the themes of decline, personal loss and nostalgia. The 1930s building is an interesting blend of Neoclassical, Neo-Baroque, Neo-Renaissance Art Deco and Jugendstil architectural styles. Although the different architectural styles within the facade seem contradicting, they do give homage to European Grandeur at the turn of the 19th century. The conflicts and contradictions between foreign influences and ideological structures is also visible in the 1960s version of the hotel. The hotel's exterior displays different architecture styles, showing the unclear and sometimes paradoxical definition of communist architecture. In the interior, the usage of material on the one hand and the rational floorplan and technological developments on the other hand show the changing ideas about the function and definition of the hotel and lobby. Most important, the hotel resembles the personage of the characters who live in a forgotten and lost world, a ruin which questions our narrative and imagination.

When we construct films, when we construct architecture, we construct stories. The closing shots in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* show the true protagonists who give meaning and value to these stories; people (figure 49). Anderson shows that stories are not only about the tale, but also about the love of telling it (Washburn in Seitz, 2015, p. 9). When architecture can evoke this experience, the true quality of the practice is utilized and a level of consciousness is reached where dream, feeling and emotions reside. As Pallasmaa (2001, p.22) concludes: "Real architecture can affect our soul only if it can touch the stratum of forgotten memories and feelings."

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