

Eastern Europe



1



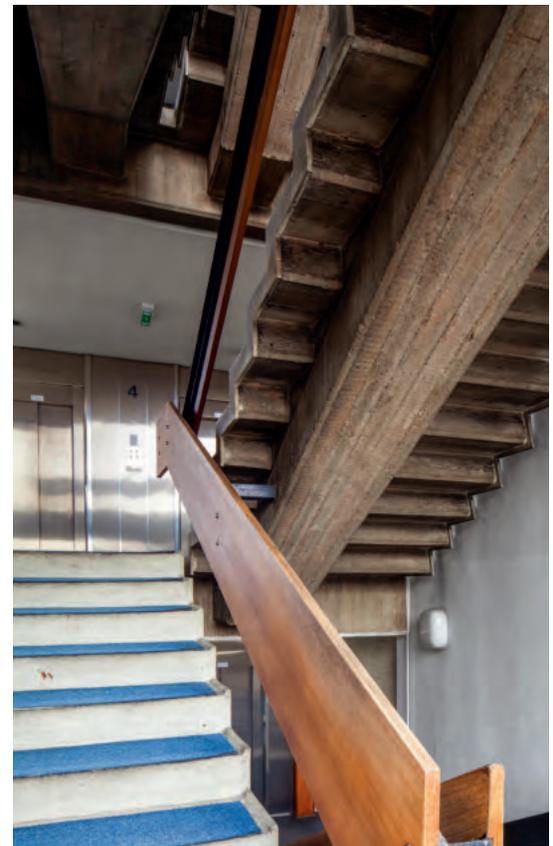
2

4



3

5



1, 2, 4
Photos: Wolfgang Thaler, 2017
3, 5, 6
Photos: Relja Ivanic, 2016



6

The Institute of Urban Planning in Belgrade was completed in 1970 at a time when building activity in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reached its peak. The city district of New Belgrade was conceived after World War II as a showcase of the ambitious state, as well as its new power and government center. The City Hall was realized by Branislav Jovin and Stojan Maksimović (1961^D–1975), whose careers as architects were launched with this building.

Opposite New Belgrade, in the historical center on the other bank of the River Sava, Branislav Jovin was able to put his ideas into practice on his own account with the Institute of Urban Planning building. The institute was founded in 1947 and, among other tasks, prepares site analyses, feasibility studies, development plans, and building regulations for the city authorities, as well as for investors and citizens. The building is located at the junction of the quiet and leafy Palmotićeve Street and the busy traffic axis Bulevar despota Stefana. In the east, it borders on the Botanical Garden. Instead of the usual approach of emphasizing the corner situation by means of super-elevation, Jovin moves the building back from the building line on the Palmotićeve, making it hover over the ground by designing the building's ground floor partially as an open-sided story, creating free

space for the entrance area; we come upon green spaces, ramps, and steps. Jovin's projects, and this is the case for the Institute of Urban Planning too, are marked by a clear division of function and access, as well as by exposed constructions and materials. The north-south aligned complex is a reinforced concrete skeleton structure with exterior double supports in the 12 × 12 meter grid. On the top floor, Jovin employs protruding balustrades as a protection against the sun. One peculiarity retained to the present day are the small washrooms each located between two offices, which at the time was intended for washing out ink drawing pens. But the building was changed in the entrance hall: Offices were put in along the generous glass façade, blocking the views. Skylights were closed for climatic reasons, using plaster-board or plastic panels; instead of integrated convector heaters, we now see extra radiators in some corridors, and aircon devices have been attached to the façade. These changes do not impair the overall effect of the building, however, which is seen as a well-preserved building of 1960s and 1970s Serbia.

Vesna Vučinić

Bibliography

Đorđe Alfirević, "Conversation on Brutalism: Interview with architect Branislav Jovin," *Arhitektura i urbanizam*, no. 42 (2016), pp. 67–71

Mihajlo Mitrović, *Arhitektura Beograda 1950–2012* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2012)