Architectural history

Architecture is not just about designing buildings, it consists of three main elements: architectural design, architectural history and technical studies. In this essay I will be focusing on architectural history and looking at two different periods of architecture: the renaissance and the Bauhaus. The study of architectural history can tell you about the culture, economy, politics and technology of a given time period.

Renaissance architecture emerged in the early 15th century and marked the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern era. Renaissance architecture was characterised by precise symmetry and proportion, it produced some of the worlds most treasured monuments, for example the Florence Cathedral developed by Fillipo Brunelleschi as one of its lead innovators. Brunelleschi had no prior architectural training however he won a design competition to design the buildings main dome. Whilst the construction of the dome was in progress, Brunelleschi innovated many new technologies to aid in the creation of the dome. One of these technologies invented was an amphibious boat that could be used on land to transport the large pieces of marble to prevent them being damaged when being unloaded off the boats. I think that the dome is a remarkable feat of engineering, and advanced for the time period, since it is still the largest masonry dome in the world.

In a different era, the Bauhaus was the start of the greatest forces that shaped the 20th century modern design. It did this through the idea of Gesamtkunswork, which translates to "a total work of art" meaning the idea of removing the distinction between different kinds of art forms. The school taught many different subjects, some of which included sculpting, photography, cinema, ballet and textiles. The Bauhaus knew if they wanted to have a large impact in the 20th century they would have to focus on machine and mass production. Designers to this day are producing products that are functional and aesthetically pleasing for the general society and not only for the wealthy, because of the design philosophy put in place by Walter Gropius, an architect who founded the Bauhaus. I think the Bauhaus fundamentally changed the way people think about architecture and design as a whole to this day.

In conclusion, I do not believe that I will study architectural history in the future because I am more interested by architectural design than architectural history, however I do find architectural history fascinating.