not especially distinguished in terms of light, proportion, details or materials. A certain quaintness and neutrality were probably intended but one misses the nobility of Kahn’s Kimbell or Yale museums. The tough critic will say that the Stuttgart galleries are rather too intimate to the nineteenth-century rooms but without the benefit of nineteenth-century mouldings. The diagrammatic pediments with stumped numbers on them and caned pseudo-pilasters under them are not everyone’s idea of rigorous detailing. The green of the ceiling light grilles presumably represents an attempt at carrying the lime glazing theme through the interior, but the colour contradicts the aim of restraint. The final room of the sequence (the first if coming from the old building) contains a fine collection of Schiöner’s portraits from the Rauhaus ‘mechanical ballet’. Here Stirling handles the special occasion with skill. The steep perspective of the bridge funnels the space sideways past a single marble column (again the one for a major transition) and through the excavated Classical mouldings of the old building’s wall. The diagonal fire screen and receding stairs of the skylights contribute to the steep perspective while the marble column pars with the stage of the most prominent of the puppets. The free plan is at last allowed to introduce the room with a spatial dynamism that helps to handle a crucial juncture of major intentions.

When he is seeing a real problem with sophisticated means, Stirling is really much tighter than when hitting you over the head with the label from Post Modernism’s sales department. Another example of this is found where a diagonal pitch rate between the music department and the back of neighbouring flats: the cream plaster wall, with its finely scaled windows, breaks into a wave which softens the line, channels the exterior flow, bends to interior pressures, symbolizes the function in a piano-like shape, echoes curves elsewhere, and gives precise shape to the flange theme: only then does it involve the obvious Nazi/Austrian references, which have not been falsely imposed.

THE MANSHIP’S SYNTHESM

The Staatsgalerie is surely Stirling’s most ambitious building to date. Very many intentions and devices have been crammed in. Poltrocity is based on a major command and in the drum which must be counted a major invention. But there are still a number of ideals too (which cannot be excused on the grounds of deliberate dimness) as when his fragmentation interferes with the unity and contextual sensitivity of the design at the back. Some moves are even under-regulated. Drum and wings work together better than drum and free plan and free plan and wings. The first visa promises a richer dialogue between the mechanical extrals and the memory cavity from is actually drawn through the interiors.

What Venturi has called ‘difficult unity’ requires both fragmentation and the domination of a Gesamtkunstwerk. Stuttgart’s basic idea is still strong enough to achieve this tension; in fact the recollection of the building’s contours, basic intentions and the memory would have been quite enough to generate a ‘difficulty complex’. This quality is achieved in the spatial semblance of the drum and in the play of the main volumes seen from road and terraces. It is also achieved in those details that resolve a dozen problems at once with an assured and economical flourish, like the ingenious glazing over the entrance. But sometimes all Stuttgart Stirling has worked with. If you use a real architect, Stirling’s problems and solutions are not essentially embedded in the

CLASSICAL REFERENCES

While the Staatsgalerie is not a classical building, there are some classical references. The pedimental pediments of entrances and interior galleries are based on and diagrammatic: ornament occasionally reads as a toby appleyard rather than correctly building ideas, in a clear and sharp way. We all know that the references are supposed to be for quotation marks, that is the tension to one transmuting self parody, but Stirling: very neatly and successfully being truly shown with some of his work. The architecture of the most of the orders is a covering of the new.

If the entrance to the office wing is the most pronouncedly Art Deco, the visitor is immediately shown with a new building and the entrance has a rather complex, but not too complex way to the offices of the Schiöner gallery towards the bridge into the old building.