and Kevin Rhowbotham’s generative notion of ‘spatial collage’ (p55): all bear the marks of descent, however indirect or unwitting, from Dadaist ancestry.

**POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is, of course, a political thing. No movement with this kind of pedigree could possibly be otherwise. Nor is the kind of dynamism and sheer kinetic energy that so characterises the New Spirit even accessible to those who are concerned merely to find a new aesthetic sensibility to play with. Its restless agitation of space and unpredictability of form are built metaphors of the thought processes involved. For some the forms are highly significant, even necessary; for others they are almost incidental. But either way it is the thinking that matters: the hard-edged individualism in a world of passive consumerist homogeneity, the determined rejection of the conformist ideals that the Establishment would have us adopt, and the refusal to be manipulated by the huge anonymous forces of authority. There is a fierce defence of the ordinary—the found object, the despised material, the unloved environment—and a defiant proclamation of the right of the ordinary human to seize back power from the experts and reassert control over his or her own life.

This, at root, was what punk was all about (Rambali, p32). It underlies Leplastrier’s studio near Bellingen, NSW. (p48) which, despite its meticulous craftsmanship exhibits a queer sprightliness of form and a love of unmitigatedly ordinary materials (plastic, ‘Canite’ and corrugated iron); Eduard Samso’s quirky but stringent minimalism (p42), Zalotay’s stoic self-build (p60), Alfredo Vidal’s tough, grimy KGB (p46) and Himmelblau’s defence of the street.

There is, of course, no creed or manifesto—not could there be in a movement (if indeed it can be so termed) whose base-line is individual diversity and freedom. Some of the protagonists of the New Spirit are anti-materialist, some are not. Some are consciously subversive, some are not. Some would not even call themselves political. But the political implications are there to be read.

What will come of it all is anyone’s guess. It is possible that the New Spirit may meet the same fate as befell Modernism; understood and imitated as form, not philosophy. (It is one of the dangers of the kind of dialectical approach to history outlined above that it may seem to lend a spurious inevitability to the unknowable, making the end seem certain and encouraging this sort of premature acceptance of defeat.)

It is possible, but unlikely, for such timid passivity is emphatically not a part of the New Spirit’s make-up. Diverse it may be, and by no means unanimously optimistic of the future, but it has at least, at last, outgrown that crippling fear of the present which so unmistakably marks the current architectural scene. The New Spirit can be strange, wily, even at times subversive, but it is unfailingly vigorous, exploratory and, although it takes no heed of fashion, very much an architecture of now.