

***I don't want to change the world. I only want to express it.***

We would be saying nothing new if we state that the horizontal nature of Barcelona's German Pavilion seeks to contrast with the verticality of the eight Ionic columns and that the Pavilion, like all Mies's architecture, shuns expression of its structure. The columns, the pillars and the supports become objects and any obvious reading of the structural system is short-circuited. Whether or not Mies was aware of this, the Pavilion's columns clad in chromium-plated steel are very closely related to classical columns, which were also created to make us believe that they are unaffected by weight and that, far from supporting a load, they seem to emerge from the ground, to soar upwards and open out.

Budgetary restrictions urged me on to create eight or ten columns, cheap to build and yet retaining all the elegance of those of Antiquity. I placed sheet-steel drums, retrieved from chemical waste cemeteries, closely associated with today's city and marked by recognisable signs, on top of each other and simply welded them together. For me they are new column tambours; they are also *objets d'art*, because time has undertaken to strip them of their paint and disfigure them, to de-activate their functionalism, thereby obtaining inimitable effects on their surfaces and in their dents. Classical columns were created undoubtedly to celebrate light and the horizon. In a famous drawing by Le Corbusier the shafts of the Parthenon columns reflect the mountains, the sky and the sea. They are reflecting surfaces that speak of the spirit of the site on which they stand, that multiply this reflection in each of their grooves. The multicoloured row of columns made of cast-away industrial drums also establishes an ironical relationship between the threats of the industrial landscape and the ambiguous, misguided beauty it reveals. Perhaps this would have pleased Mies, who once said *I don't want to change the world. I only want to express it.*