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Socialist Modernism: Buildings That Defy Tradition

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Architecture in the socialist countries of East and Central Europe and the Soviet Union from 1955, just after the death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin until 1991, when the socialist experiment ended, is called "socialist modernism." Influenced by space travel and modern technology, as well as the cleaner lines of international architecture, it was a response to Stalinist classicism with its imperial style and ornamentation. The structures were built using new construction materials and methods. They are quirky, creative, optimistic and sometimes literal - like the palace of weddings in Georgia that suggests the marital night. They are often impractical, not to mention downright unattractive, and they have not been well-preserved. But there is something appealing in their outrageous forms that defy tradition and nature. Welcome to the brave new world.

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