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The University of Stirling is the last but one of the 'New Universities' (as opposed to reconstituted Colleges of Advanced Technology and upgraded affiliated colleges) to be found during the period of expansion of higher education in Britain in the '60s. It is the only New University to be founded in Scotland, and has subsequently become the showpiece of Scottish higher education. It's buildings by Sir Robert Matthew, Johnson Marshal and Partners, reflect, more so than the CLASP-built York University, designed by the same architects, an air of 'distinction'. Set in green parkland outside the town of Stirling the university has come upon many of the problems encountered by the older new foundations. Peter Murray discusses these problems, some of which will disappear in time, some will become accepted and some will remain. The buildings and the site seem to work well as architectural

and organisational forms within the terms of the brief, but in the study of such a group of buildings one must question whether the brief was broad enough in scope or in the evaluation of the need for future change. If one believes that a University must play a wider role in society than merely as a place for pursuing knowledge for its own sake – and this would seem an essential belief if one looks at the wider universal intake, the disenchantment with the binary system, the growing need for some kind of *education permanente* and the disillusionment of unemployed graduates and new developments in communications techniques – then a fundamental reappraisal of the brief is necessary. To date, despite their innovations in course-structuring and physical planning, the new universities – except the Open University – have provided little but imitations of the older university organisations.



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A monthly series of articles studying the current situation and future trends in various building categories. This month, Peter Moro traces the development of the theatre from its classical origin, and shows how one

of the main aims of modern theatre design is to rediscover the lost relationship between actor and audience.

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