



Le Corbusier was a painter, designer, pamphleteer, planner and, as his centenary exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London, (on until 7 June) has it, 'Architect of the Century*'. The exhibition, using bold colours, light spaces, photographs, models and his own drawings, projects the clarity and frankness that was

the promise of modernism.

One section presents the block of flats he designed at Firminy in central France, in the late 1910s. French workers were badly housed and blocks such as these gave every household sun, a view of the hills, a terrace, and privacy; on the roof was a creche and room for sports.

But fashion has proved more permanent than his social prescriptions: the chair he designed in 1929 with Charlotte Perriand is still in production and very chic. The Firminy block is no longer so popular: many French workers, like their British counterparts, can now afford little houses of their own in the suburbs. •