Task 4, Till Schroff

1. Geometrical, exact
2. *Recueil elementaire d'architecture* was written by Jean-François de Neufforge who was a Belgian architect and engraver.

Neufforge lived from 1714 to 1791. He moved to Paris around 1738 and studied engraving under Pierre Edmé Babel and architecture under Jacques-François Blondel.

He was not well known until 1755. At this time Neufforge started a project that would occupy the rest of his life, the eight folio volumes of the *Recueil élémentaire d'architecture.* The Academy of Architecture approved the planned work in September 1757. A month later an advertisement appeared in the *Année littéraire* announcing the work which had 96 plates. Nearly all illustrations were Neufforge’s work. 5 years later four volumes divided into 48 six-page sections appeared. Additional volumes followed in subsequent years. The work was very well received and widely used by architects in the 1700s.

Neufforge’s designs were for a wide range of people, middle class as well as the extreme wealthy.

His designs are over all highly geometrical and engraved extreme precisely. Even designs for gardens are elegant and geometrical. Neufforge was not interested in the practicality of his designs. He was mainly concerned with style and appearance.

Most of Neufforge’s work was in the Rococo style. This style began in France in the 1730s as a reaction against the more formal and geometric Style Louis XIV. It’s an exceptionally ornamental and theatrical style of architecture, art and decoration which combines asymmetry, scrolling curves, gilding, etc. Neufforge’s contact with Jean-Francois Le Lorrain shows influences in the earlier volumes of the *Recueil elementaire* which included all the elements of the Greek revival style. His later work, however, banished these influences and showed that Neufforge had adopted the views of Marie-Joseph Peyre and Andrea Palladio. The later designs, with cubic houses, flat undecorated exterior walls, prostyle porticos and other elements gave clear evidence of borrowings from English Palladianism

*Recueil elementaire d'architecture* shows many different buildings. As we can read in the text on the first page it’s nearly about everything. It shows all kinds of fireplaces, ceilings, chests of drawers, tables etc. as well as doors, bridges, fontaines, gardens and of course buildings for all kinds of people and all kinds of utilisations. There are often a few pages about the same kind of building. Sometimes there are also a few variants of the same kind of building on the same page. But sometimes the book gives you more information about the building. Then there are floor plans, views and sections on one or on even more pages.

1. Background, influences, style