

Constructive Provocation Contemporary Architecture in Vorarlberg

February 5 thru March 28, 2005

Press conference:

Thursday, February 3, 2005, 11.00 a.m.

Opening:

Friday, February 4, 2005, 8.00 p.m.

“Constructive Provocation” is an exhibition that examines the architecture built in Vorarlberg since 1960.

The French show “Une provocation constructive – architecture et développement durable au Vorarlberg” was initiated by the Institut français d’architecture (IFA), Paris, now La Cité de l’architecture et du patrimoine, in collaboration with the Vorarlberger Architekturinstitut (vai) and developed as a touring exhibition for France.

“Constructive Provocation,” which since its opening in the summer of 2003 has been quite successful in France, will now premiere in its German-language version at the KUB Arena of the Kunsthaus Bregenz.

The KUB Arena was launched by the Kunsthaus Bregenz as a platform for art and communication in 2003. It is run and maintained in conjunction with the KUB partners Montfort-Werbung and DMG. Located in the entrance foyer of the Kunsthaus, the KUB Arena defines itself as a space for dialogue, as a basis for exploration, where educational work can take place and be made formally and thematically visible.

The core of the exhibition “Constructive Provocation” consists of seven wooden modules. In order to achieve the most effective presentation of the existing exhibition system of modules in the KUB Arena, three Vorarlberg architecture firms were invited to participate in an idea competition: cukrowicz.nachbaur, Philip Lutz, and Marte.Marte Architekten. The latter won



Kunsthaus Bregenz

Karl-Tizian-Platz
Postfach 371
A-6901 Bregenz

Telefon

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-0

Fax

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8

E-Mail

kub@kunsthaus-bregenz.at

Web

www.kunsthaus-bregenz.at



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

the competition that called for addressing the themes of the exhibition and the specific site of the Kunsthhaus as well as reflecting on the thematic type of discourse. The architectural solution of the winning project by Marte.Marte Architekten adds two notable aspects to the exhibition concept: an original truck tractor symbolizes the setting out for new horizons and the compact arrangement of the modules reflects the concentrated thematic view of history. The new will be given as much space as what went before. In addition, a great illuminated ceiling defines the arena as a space where an impressive range of educational activities and events can be offered.

The program of accompanying events was developed by Kunsthhaus Bregenz in collaboration with the Vorarlberger Architekturstudium (vai) and Robert Fabach (architect and architecture journalist). For the duration of the exhibition, issues on Vorarlberg architecture will be discussed in a broad cultural context at a lecture series held every Tuesday evening. As a supplement to the educational events in the KUB Arena, two excursions will also be offered which will take visitors to the different sites and explain the selected architectures from various perspectives.

The Exhibition

Vorarlberg is regarded as a center of contemporary architecture in Europe. Although the problems here differ little from those in neighboring countries (urban sprawl, radical economic and social change, gradually increasing disintegration of social and cultural structures), in recent decades it has proved possible to avoid a downgrading of architecture policy in the name of short-term economic interests. As a consequence, new architecture that is ecologically sustainable and innovative in both technological and design terms still remains a valid maxim between Lake Constance and the Arlberg.

The movement began in the 1960s with a relatively small network of intellectuals, who formulated alternatives to the local ways of life and also really lived these alternatives. Their conceptually radical timber buildings followed the principle of intensive participation by the client during the planning and construction process. Together with daring clients and talented craftsmen, the Vorarlberg architects worked hard to breathe fresh air into a quotidian architecture. Despite considerable local resistance, this approach soon gained widespread acceptance throughout the region.



KunsthauB Bregenz

The next generation of regional architects to come out of this movement achieved international recognition as the “Vorarlberger Baukünstler.” By the end of the 80s, these young architects had won several architecture competitions – most of them for large public building commissions. With the pivotal shift from an alternative architecture scene to a modern influential culture, the Baukünstler were able to make the decisive step out of the domestic house and housing estate genre. This was also the beginning of a growing and dynamic architecture scene that brought forth an increasing local density of high quality buildings.

The exhibition “Constructive Provocation” makes the directly experientiable density of contemporary architecture in Vorarlberg clearly visible and examines the origins of this development. It describes architecture as an element within a living building heritage with all its various technical, design, social, ecological, and craft-related aspects. Rather than focusing on the works of specific architects and explaining individual buildings using models and plans, the exhibition tells the story of the beginnings and the growth of a broad movement that infused an architecture with an added quality of life for both individuals and society. This architecture’s greatest potential comes from the interaction between the living spaces of nature, work, home, and public life.

Thematic Gateways Through the Exhibition “Constructive Provocation”

The show consists of a series of thematic gateways. The modules – each measuring 220 x 300 x 50 cm – were designed by Atelier Reinhard Gassner. They are ostensibly simple, but upon closer examination reveal a high level of complexity in terms of spatial effect, functionality, and execution. These modules may be read on different levels, so that the visitor can go from a general understanding to an in-depth study. The first level consists of the large-format photographs by Ignacio Martínez on the front of the modules; explanatory texts provide brief information on the module’s specific theme. A second level consists of display drawers that can be pulled out and pull-down wall elements that reveal further details and depict related architectures.

Thirteen thematic gateways lead through the topography of Vorarlberg society, through a network of protagonists and events: “Radicalness of Cornerstones,” “Intelligence of Austerity,” “Planning Together – Building Together,” “Places for Play, Spaces for Learning,” “Nature as a World



Kunsthau Bregenz

Experience,” “Modernity of Ecology,” “Culture of Cooperation,” “New Craftsmanship, New Industry,” “Texture of the Periphery,” “Quality of Living Space,” “Revitalization of Resources,” “Primary Urbanity,” “Architecture as the Pride the People.”

Brief texts explain the theme of each gateway and show how groups and ensembles of buildings apply to the architectural themes: the dialog between old and new, the balancing and tension between different uses, the dialectics of the inside and the outside, of town and village. The buildings are not shown as isolated structures but as part of the landscape and embedded in their spatial and societal context.

“Radicalness of Cornerstones” describes the pioneer projects of the 60s. A small group of committed clients, architects, and artists became active independent of the universities. The first and second generation of the Vorarlberg Bauschule (School of Architecture) was opposed to the traditionalism and formalist regionalism of the post-war era. The concepts of the maximization of minimal resources were a reaction to the economic situation. With its “Intelligence of Austerity,” simple, constructive modernity created spaces of functional and intellectual abundance. Around 1980, a generation of architects came of age whose objectives focused on social development. The motto “Planning Together – Building Together” underscores this very economically oriented approach to an ecologically functional architecture that calls for a cost-efficient allocation of work to the future residents and the cooperative running of communal spaces.

After the school building boom of the 50s, the next wave of new schools and extensions of existing buildings began in the late 80s. In this category of primary places of experience – “Places for Play, Spaces for Learning” – four dozen such buildings have sprung up in Vorarlberg since then. The image of “Nature as a World of Experience” and historic towns is the basic capital of the tourist industry. Far removed from alpine kitsch or flashy designer knickknacks, the Bregenzerwald and Arlberg show a new awareness of nature and different alternatives to stereotypical mass tourism. For “Modernity of Ecology,” the initiatives of the Baukünstler were the role models. Since 1990, the Vorarlberg Energieinstitut has made environmentally sound building a political issue in the region.

In the age of globalization, communities and companies began to foster a “Culture of Cooperation.” The long abandoned textile mills embedded within provincial structures became centers with new cultural, social, and



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

commercial uses. Desolate areas were converted into postindustrial ensembles. The theme “New Craftsmanship, New Industry” reflects a recent development that saw countless woodworking businesses setting up shop in Vorarlberg: light-flooded production halls with spacious offices and communal rooms, experimental constructions with an excellent output in terms of energy and ecology.

Lustenau’s “Millenniumpark” is one example of the “Texture of the Periphery.” This high-tech complex on the periphery of town is an interface of housing agglomeration and nature. It is embedded in an attractive green zone, is docked into the public transportation network that connects the federal states, and was planned with a holistic approach by the community and private companies. Essential to the “Quality of Living Space” is the establishment of an extensive public transportation network. Launched in the late 80s, the Dornbirn Stadtbus (city bus) was followed by other city buses and recently by the “Landbus” (country bus), which links various lines into a complete network.

Just three decades ago, old timber buildings – remnants of a livestock farming tradition – were torn down without a second thought. Today, the “Revitalization of Resources” offers young architects new challenges. In addition, it supplements and further develops the skills of traditional trades with the help of new technologies. Based on the trend of integrating new public, cultural, and social uses into old town centers, a “Primary Urbanity” has developed. It all started in the late 80s in places like Klaus, Mäder, or Schlins with a few parish and community halls, and in the 90s the functional and architectural accentuation of the village core became a trend throughout the region. In the early 90s, the new symbol “Architecture as the Pride of the People” was built on the steep slopes of the Pfänderhang. Glittering like pearls in the midst of still intact farms is a string of dream houses with a view of the lake.



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

An exhibition by the vai Vorarlberger Architekturinstitut in cooperation
with La Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine – Département IFA
(Institut français d'architecture)

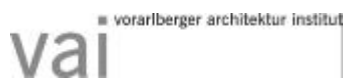
Curated by Marie-Hélène Contal

Concept and expert guidance: Otto Kapfinger

Scenography: Adolph Stiller

Gateway photos: Ignacio Matínez

Exhibition graphic design: Atelier Reinhard Gassner



CITÉ DE L'ARCHITECTURE ET DU PATRIMOINE
PALAIS DE LA PORTE DORÉE
WWW.CITECHANELLOT.ORG



Kunsthaus Bregenz

Kunsthaus Bregenz

Venue:

**Kunsthaus Bregenz
Karl Tizian Platz
A-6900 Bregenz**

Director:

Eckhard Schneider

Curator:

Rudolf Sagmeister

Press and public relations:

Birgit Albers

Press queries:

Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-13

Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8

b.albers@kunsthau-bregenz.at

Art Education:

Winfried Nußbaumüller

Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-17

Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8

w.nussbaumueller@kunsthau-

bregenz.at

Publications:

Katrin Wiethege

Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-16

Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8

k.wiethege@kunsthau-bregenz.at

Opening hours:

Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Press photos to download:

www.kunsthau-bregenz.at

The Kunsthau Bregenz would like to thank its partners for their generous financial support and the cultural commitment that goes along with it.

Sponsor of the
KUB Arena

MONTFORT WERBUNG

DMG

Main sponsor
of the *Kunsthau Bregenz*



Hypo Landesbank

ZUMTOBEL STAFF

Sponsored by

Amt Vorarlberger Landesregierung, Abteilung Wirtschaft

Bundeskanzleramt, Sektion Kunst

Julius Blum Beschlägefabrik

legrand

VEG – Vorarlberger Erdgas

VKW – Vorarlberger Kraftwerke