



HEILIGE ZEITEN

VIENNESE CHURCH BUILDING AFTER 1945 – FROM RUDOLF SCHWARZ TO HEINZ TESAR

13.12.2007 – 14.01.2008, Halle F3

Opening: Wednesday 12.12.2007, 7pm

The exhibition *Heilige Zeiten* is devoted to post-war church building in Vienna, which occupies a position of outstanding international significance in terms of both quantity and quality. To date not widely appreciated and overshadowed by the pre-war sacral buildings of Otto Wagner, Jože Plečnik and Robert Kramreiter, the key trends in the sector over the past five decades are being shown on the basis of key examples.

From the 1950s onwards, in the course of the Church's liturgical discourse Christian sacral buildings became a central commission undertaken by blue chip architects like Le Corbusier, Oscar Niemeyer or Egon Eiermann. In Vienna the competition held in 1957 for the new *St. Florian* parish church in Matzleinsdorf marked a decisive change of direction to the extent that while the church completed by the old master Rudolf Schwarz still alluded recognisably to traditional buildings of its type with a basilica, the designs submitted by Arbeitsgruppe 4 (Wilhelm Holzbauer, Friedrich Kurrent and Johannes Spalt) already pursued the subsequently dominant concept of the square space with a centrally positioned altar. In the 1960s, on the basis of shared thinking at the time, this position was classified in a variety of ways by Ottokar Uhl, Josef Lackner, Johann Georg Gsteu and Johannes Spalt. The development moved away from an architecturally staged sense of the sacral to a more pragmatic, 'profane' shell of a space that called for and promoted a proactive approach to celebrating Mass. Modular constructions are characteristic of this approach, with the use of pure materials, evenly distributed lighting and, though not always, the integration of prefabricated elements. Ottokar Uhl's architectural and theoretical considerations in particular, with an altar facing the congregation and a more mobile approach to the architecture, are representative of the scope of interest in experimental solutions among young architects, and shows the readiness of the Church as a client to break new ground.

While Fritz Wotruba's church *Zur Heiligsten Dreifaltigkeit* (1974-76) signified a radical departure from the 'Viennese canon', a diversity of approaches to space and architecture was established with the emergence of postmodernism: Häuselmayer's churches (1992-'96) allude to elements of traditional church building, a tower, a barrel-vaulted roof, division with bays and an apse, as well as an hierarchic approach to the Mass, with no centrally positioned altar. Tesar's church *Christus Hoffnung der Welt* (1997-2000) was an attempt to create a sacral environment by means of directed light and Christian symbolism.



The exhibition is the result of a student project carried out in cooperation with the departments for art history and model making at Vienna University of Technology. Conceived and supervised by Ann Katrin Bäumler and Andreas Zeese, and completed in collaboration with Fridolin Welte, eight exemplary postwar Viennese churches, among other exponents, are presented as reconstructions in model form (scale 1:50). The display is supplemented by documentation in the form of texts and images, as well as photographs by Margherita Spiluttini.

Credits

In cooperation with Vienna University of Technology, chairs for art history and model making.

Exhibition and catalogue, concept and coordination:

Ann Katrin Bäumler, Andreas Zeese

Models, concept and coordination:

Fridolin Welte

Models (assistance):

Anita Aigner

Walter Fritz

Armin Strasser

Models:

Maria Aufegger

Benedikt Aussermair

Martina Berlinger

Claudia Brenner

Angelika Buranics

Christina Erlach

Marion Faes

Azo Feick

Julia Frey

Martina Gfall

Andreas Heidegger

Agnes Jozsai

Matthias Kerbichler

Kristina Kiesel



Brigitte Kumpfmiller
Roland Müller
Zuzana Nejedla
David Oberhummer
Marco Pirsak
Marlene Rutzendorfer

Exhibition design:
Maria Aufegger, Zuzana Nejedla (concept and realisation)
Claudia Brenner (assistance)

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication (title in German):
Wiener Kirchenbau nach 1945 – von Rudolf Schwarz bis Heinz Tesar (Eds. Ann Katrin Bäumler, Andreas Zeese), Vienna, 2007. The reader is published with financial support from the Fakultät für Architektur und Raumplanung at Vienna University of Technology.



SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMME

All The Best

Mon 17.12.2007, ca. 9.30pm, Admission free!

As part of the annual 'All The Best' advent stroll the Az W is showing its seasonally appropriate and sensitive side. The stop-and-go path through the 7th District arrives at the Az W towards 9.30pm. Here visitors will be greeted with a guided tour of the exhibition Heilige Zeiten. Viennese Church Buildings after 1945, accompanied by mulled altar wine (glühwein), wafers and music.

begins at 5pm, Hauptbücherei on the Gürtel

Az W: ca. 9.30pm

ends at 10.30pm, Dschungel Wien

a_showcase 05

Heilige Zeiten. Church Building Today

Wed, 09.01.2008, 6pm

Admission free!

Guest speakers: Otto Häuselmayer, Heinz Tesar
Andreas Lichtblau, Susanna Wagner (lichtblau . wagner)

Moderation: Monika Platzer

Otto Häuselmayer and Heinz Tesar speak on the history behind the completion of the churches featured following a brief guided tour of the exhibition by Ann Katrin Bäumlner and Andreas Zeese. This is followed by lichtblau . wagner with models and original material for the Podersdorf parish centre, questioning the role played by the Church as a client. Their project for an extensive expansion of the historic church in Podersdorf won a two-stage competition in 1998. The new space for Sunday Mass, foyer and open spaces, parish hall and parish centre create a perpendicular sequence of interior and outdoor spaces that are discovered on crossing the building instead of being orientated around one viewpoint. That a church is a public building is not just a sound byte but becomes the agenda for the architects, as is manifest both in its functionality and in terms of the urban fabric.