



THINK GLOBAL, BUILD SOCIAL! ARCHITECTURES FOR A BETTER WORLD

Exhibition: 15.03. – 30.06.2014, Architekturzentrum Wien

PRESS CONFERENCE: THU, 13.03.2014, 11 AM

SYMPOSIUM: FRI, 14.03.2014, 10 AM – 5:30 PM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRI, 14.03.2014, 7 PM

A cooperation between the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) and the Architekturzentrum Wien (Az W)

With the jointly conceived exhibition 'Think Global, Build Social! Architectures for a Better World' the Architekturzentrum Wien (Az W) and the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) direct their attention to the question of contemporary architecture's social responsibility.

Currently, architecture finds itself in something of a crisis. On the one hand there is what is known as 'star architecture' that functions as an image-bearer for a few wealthy, politically influential clients. On the other hand as part of the rampant expansion of mega-cities of Asia, Latin America and Africa an amazing amount of building projects are being undertaken – most of them without the involvement of architects. In addition to which throughout the world increasing numbers of people are living in slums. The pressing question is: what kind of solutions can architecture offer the sector of the world's population that presently has no access to a well-designed environment?

For more than 10 years now the Architekturzentrum Wien has been looking for answers to these questions. Following the Az W exhibitions 'Just build it! The Buildings of the Rural Studio' (2003), 'Jo'burg Now! Construction Site South Africa' (2004), and 'Bottom up. Building for a Better World' (2006), 'Think Global, Build Social! Architectures for a Better World' represents the highpoint so far of a series of exhibitions on this theme. 'Think Global, Build Social! Architectures for a Better World' shows current examples of an alternative, socially committed architecture which, with minimum financial expenditure but a great deal of initiative and creativity, attempts to improve the living conditions of people in less privileged areas of the world. Frequently these exemplary projects, which include schools, public spaces and housing, are created through close collaboration with the future users and incorporate local building traditions. They do not deny the needs of those for whom and with whom the buildings are erected and ensure a mutual transfer of knowledge. Linked to early, pioneering examples of a not-for-profit oriented architecture – as represented, for example, by the Rural Studio (USA) since the early 1990s – these works are an expression of the desire for social change and a responsible architecture.



ON THE EXHIBITION

Curator Andres Lepik chose 22 positions in which the long called-for connection of ethics with aesthetics is made in an exemplary fashion. The focus is on buildings that were erected during the last 10 years and whose concrete impact on their location has already become evident. The many aspects shared in common that can be identified in the different approaches and projects indicate that, far beyond “star architecture”, a very different kind of movement has emerged in contemporary architecture that is directing its attention to the social questions of global community.

Some of the roots of this movement are to be found in Vienna: as part of the preparations for the exhibition ‘Just build it! The Buildings of the Rural Studio’, which was shown in the Architekturzentrum Wien in spring 2003, the Az W invited Austrian architecture faculties to consider undertaking similar projects. This signalled the start of a series of projects in South African townships. The first project, mediated by the Viennese NGO s2arch—social sustainable architecture, was implemented under the direction of Peter Fattinger with the studio design.build of the TU Vienna in the township of Orange Farm near Johannesburg. Since then the design-build movement has developed dynamically further and in the future it will have a permanent position in architects’ university education. Consequently, the exhibition ‘Think Global. Build Social’ in the Architekturzentrum Wien is enriched by the presentation of projects involving Austrian participation. Through Peter Fattinger the TU Vienna is a pioneer in the area of university design-build studios, while Baerbel Mueller heads a laboratory at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna in which the spatial, infrastructural, ecological and cultural phenomena of sub-Saharan Africa are examined. With its project studio BASEhabitat the Kunstuniversität Linz focuses on the utilization of alternative energies in regions with limited access to a public infrastructure. The architecture firm of gaupenraub +/- is developing a series of remarkable projects for homeless people in Vienna, and in the course of the last ten years the association s2arch, founded by Green Party politician Christoph Chorherr, has carried out more than 40 social projects in South Africa.

Curator of the Exhibition: Andres Lepik

Curator of the Austrian Focus and Project Head Az W: Sonja Pisarik

Project Management DAM: Peter Körner, Philipp Sturm

Exhibition Design: Sanaz Hazegh-Nejad and Thomas Kussin, buero8 (Austrian Focus)

Exhibition Construction Az W: Philipp Aschenberger and team

PUBLICATION

A comprehensive theme issue of ARCH+ appeared in conjunction with the exhibition, with contributions by Andres Lepik, Otto Frei, Elke Krasny, Aram Ziai, Peter Cachola Schmal and Dietmar Steiner in German and English, as well as numerous photographs and plans: ARCH+, 211/212, summer 2013, G 5416, ISSN 0587-3452



SYMPOSIUM 'ARCHITECTURES FOR A BETTER WORLD'

Within the framework of the exhibition opening an all-day international symposium will be held in the Az W, which poses questions about the social responsibility of architecture: What solutions can architecture today offer those sectors of the global population that can themselves never be clients? How does architecture, a discipline positioned between artistic, economic and ecological aspirations and demands, define its social relevance? What contribution can architecture make to the design of a better world? In three thematic blocks 'Architecture is Material', 'Architecture is Collaboration' and 'Architecture is Shelter' protagonists from 'Think Global, Build Social!' present their projects and report on their experiences.

Speakers:

Andrés Böppler Ramirez, Escuela para la Vida (CO) / Frédéric Druot, Frédéric Druot Architecture (FR) / Elias Rubin, Project Manager s2arch (A) / Alexander Hagner, gaupenraub +/- (D/A) / Anna Heringer, Architect (D/A) / Line Ramstad, Gyaw Gyaw (NO) / Martin Rauch, Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst (A) / Jenni Reuter, Hollmén Reuter Sandman Architects (FI) / Peter Fetting, design.build Studio, TU Vienna (A)

Moderated by: Anh-Linh Ngo, Editor ARCH+ (D)

Organisation of the Symposium: Karoline Mayer

Programme & Tickets Symposium: www.azw.at/symposium_en

The press release on the exhibition, project lists as well as high-resolution press photos can be downloaded free of charge at www.azw.at/press_thinkglobal.

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The exhibition is supported by: Dr. Strohmayr Stiftung

The focus on Austria in the framework of the exhibition, "Think Global, Build Social! Architectures for a Better World", is supported by: Arch+ features

Az W is funded by: Urban Planning, Traffic & Transport, Climate Protection, Energy and Public Participation, Vienna / Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture

Az W is supported by: Architecture Lounge