

SCHWEIZWEIT

il n'y a pas
une
architecture
suisse

arc en rêve centre d'architecture bordeaux



SCHWEIZWEIT

The exhibition, curated by Andreas Ruby, director of the S AM, is presented in Bordeaux by arc en rêve centre d'architecture in partnership with **SAM**, the museum of Swiss architecture in Basel.

exhibition organised in Bordeaux by
arc en rêve centre d'architecture

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Making of

Andreas Ruby

I have been following developments in Swiss architecture with great interest for over two decades now and am fascinated by the extraordinary building culture of this country which, thanks to the efforts of countless excellent architecture firms, demonstrates an impressive level of craftsmanship that has become rare in this day and age, a solid vocational training system to back this up and, not least, an exemplary culture of competition, with all of these aspects combining to ensure a consistently high standard. Like many other people, I marvelled at how Switzerland began to assume a leading role in world architecture in the 1990s a role that it continues to fulfill admirably to this day. At the same time for some years now I have noted how this permanent success story, which was significantly facilitated by the rise of minimalism to become a kind of 'international style of the post-post-modern era, has generated a form of increasing cultural jet lag between the image and the reality of Swiss architecture. Today, the image of Swiss architecture is still very much characterised by the 1990s. The protagonists who became internationally renowned at that time - such as Herzog & de Meuron, Diener & Diener Architekten, Peter Zumthor, Peter Märkli or Mario Botta - are still perceived, at least internationally, as *pars pro toto* for Swiss architecture. In contrast, the architects of the generations that followed, who have been actively involved since that time, are known to a far lesser extent. Similarly, there is little awareness that the minimalism that has become the international brand of Swiss architecture was and remains primarily anchored in the German-speaking regions of Switzerland. Architectonic activities in other parts of the country such as French-speaking Switzerland and Ticino tend to always lie somewhat below the radar of discursive attention.

SCHWEIZWEIT is therefore attempting a stock-taking of recent architecture in Switzerland. We are striving for a cross-section of the present, a contemporary archaeology of sorts of what is being built today. We want to know which architecture firms have emerged, what and where they are designing and building as well as which issues and themes they consider of importance. Are they still primarily focused on good design, ingenious construction and taking the mastery of materials to extremes? What role is played in their thinking by social themes, such as the function of architecture in the process of generating public space, the role of spatial planning in an increasingly sprawling territory, or the necessary balance between preserving the existing and creating the new? Is there a genuine interest in sustainability beyond politically-correct

lip service? What role can and should architecture play in the make-up of social culture, which in Switzerland has long been fed by diverse local sources but which, in view of the increased significance of migration, is now not only to be found within the country itself? Is there such a thing as an agenda in Swiss architecture? And is it even possible to talk about 'one form' of Swiss architecture, in view of the extreme diversity of the construction culture in relation to the modest proportions of the country?

With **SCHWEIZWEIT** we go in search of the programmatic aspects of construction in Switzerland. We were aware that we would not be able to create such a panorama of architectonic activity on our own, but would require the co-operation of the architects themselves. For this project we consequently wrote to more than three hundred architecture firms in Switzerland and invited them to collaborate on the exhibition in a curatorial capacity. We asked them to nominate one image each of three projects in Switzerland (built or unbuilt): (1) one project from their own office that they consider most relevant for the discussion of architecture in Switzerland, (2) a project of similar relevance by another office (the office need not be Swiss, but the project should be located in Switzerland) and (3) an example of vernacular construction in Switzerland that has inspired them in their architectural approach.

Over 160 architecture firms responded to our invitation, with often remarkable reactions. This interaction was both illuminating and challenging for all those involved, as familiar routines of daily architecture communication were often suspended. The central starting point of this exhibition lies in the fact that we have no preconceived thesis concerning Swiss architecture that merely requires articulation. Instead, we regard the exhibition as the instrument of research itself, a means of arriving at a thesis or perception, much in the manner of Michel Foucault, who once said that he did not write a book because he knew something, but because he wanted to know something.

The result reveals a surprising and new image of Swiss architecture, which is far more diverse and heterogeneous than we had assumed. **SCHWEIZWEIT** formulates a topography of architectural work in Switzerland, manifestly documenting the positive architectural potential opened up by the cultural, historic, linguistic and geographic differences that characterize this country so strongly. It suggests that it is almost impossible to reduce architecture in Switzerland to a common denominator, and that its true identity may lie therein. This would be anything but an

inability to deliver a clear definition, as history illustrates. In the 19th century the French poet Arthur Rimbaud issued his immortal dictum '*Je est un autre*' (I is another), bending the rules of grammar to illustrate the complexity of any attempt at self-description. In the 20th century the Belgian philosopher Luce Irigaray developed the idea of a differential identity in the feminist discourse with her work '*Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*' (This sex which is not one). And perhaps it would be a contemporary approach in determining Swiss architecture not to reduce it to an essentially-conceived core, but instead to acknowledge its differences as its most original characteristic.

Perhaps a description such as this would in turn up for further development. Who knows how Swiss architecture will present itself in ten years? If we look at the results of the snapshot that we regard **SCHWEIZWEIT** to be, we can certainly anticipate some surprises. I think that the current generation of architects between the 30- and 40-year-olds and those currently in training are likely to drive an impetus for change that we cannot yet foresee today. If this exhibition helps strengthen the confidence of this generation with regard to their ability to achieve change, then I think it will have fulfilled one of its key objectives.

Just as the British architect Cedric Price regarded his architecture as an 'enabler' for those that used it to establish their everyday spatial existence, we see **SCHWEIZWEIT** as an enabler for Swiss architecture, allowing it to further develop discussion regarding the conditions and requirements of the present. In this respect, the exhibition is not the conclusion, but rather the beginning of a project that can only be wholly brought to fruition by Swiss architecture itself. The exhibition merely serves as a trigger.



- 3 ADRIAN STREICH ARCHITEKTEN
- 5 AGPS ARCHITECTURE
- 7 ALDER CLAVUOT NUNZI ARCHITEKTEN
- 9 AMREIN HERZIG ARCHITEKTEN
- 11 ANDREAS FUHRIMANN , GABRIELLE HÄCHLER ARCHITEKTEN
- 13 ANGELA DEUBER
- 15 ARCHITEKTUR STUDIO RÖTH
- 17 ARCHITETTI LUCA PESSINA, SIMONE TOCCHETTI
- 19 ATELIER ABRAHA ACHERMANN
- 21 ATELIER ARCHIPLEIN
- 23 BAKKER & BLANC ARCHITECTES
- 25 BASERGA MOZZETTI
- 27 BAUMANN LUKAS ARCHITEKTUR
- 29 BAUR KLOTT ARCHITEKTEN
- 31 BAYER KLEMMER
- 33 BEER+MERZ ARCHITEKTEN
- 35 BERNATH+WIDMER
- 37 BHSF ARCHITEKTEN
- 39 BISCHOF FÖHN ARCHITEKTEN
- 41 BLÄTLER HEINZER ARCHITEKTUR
- 43 BLUE ARCHITECTS
- 45 BOEGLI KRAMP ARCHITEKTEN
- 47 BOLTSHAUSER ARCHITEKTEN
- 49 BROCKMANN STIERLIN ARCHITEKTEN
- 51 BRÜHLMANN LOETSCHER ARCHITEKTUR & STADTPLANUNG
- 53 BUCHNER BRÜNDLER ARCHITEKTEN
- 55 BUNO ARCHITECTES
- 57 BUOL & ZÜND
- 59 BUR ARCHITEKTEN
- 61 BUREAU A
- 63 BURKARD MEYER ARCHITEKTEN
- 65 BUZZI STUDIO D'ARCHITETTURA
- 67 CAMPONOVO BAUMGARTNER ARCHITEKTEN
- 69 CAPAUL & BLUMENTHAL
- 71 CHRIST & GANTENBEIN
- 73 CIRIACIDIS LEHNERER ARCHITEKTEN
- 75 CONEN SIGL ARCHITEKTEN
- 77 CONRADIN CLAVUOT
- 79 CORINNA MENN
- 81 COTTING JOSSEN ARCHITECTES
- 83 DB DUBAIL / BEGERT
- 85 DEMUTH HAGENMÜLLER & LAMPRECHT ARCHITEKTEN
- 87 DFN +DARIO FRANCHINI
- 89 DREIER FRENZEL
- 91 DUBACH UND AGREITER ARCHITEKTEN
- 93 DUPLEX ARCHITEKTEN
- 95 DURISCH + NOLLI ARCHITETTI
- 97 E2A
- 99 EDELAAR MOSAYEBI INDERBITZIN ARCHITEKTEN
- 101 EM2N
- 103 ENZMANN FISCHER PARTNER
- 105 F.A.B. – FORSCHUNGS- UND ARCHITEKTURBÜRO
- 107 FELIPPI WYSSEN ARCHITEKTE
- 109 FIECHTER & SALZMANN ARCHITEKTEN
- 111 FOCKETYN DEL RIO STUDIO
- 113 FREEFOX ARCHITECTURE STUDIO
- 115 FREILUFT
- 117 FRUEHAUF HENRY & VILADOMS
- 119 FRUNDGALLINA
- 121 FUTURAFROSCH
- 123 GAYMENZEL
- 125 GIGON/GUYER ARCHITEKTEN, ANNETTE GIGON
- 127 GIGON/GUYER ARCHITEKTEN, MIKE GUYER
- 129 GIRAUDI RADZUWEIT ARCHITETTI
- 131 GIULIANI.HONGER
- 133 GRABER & STEIGER
- 135 GRABER PULVER
- 137 GRIGO PAJAROLA ARCHITEKTEN
- 139 GROUP 8
- 141 GUIDOTTI ARCHITETTI
- 143 GUNZ & KÜNZLE ARCHITEKTEN
- 145 HÄBERLI HEINZER STEIGER ARCHITEKTEN
- 147 HALTMEIER KISTER ARCHITEKTUR
- 149 HARRY GUGGER STUDIO
- 151 HERZOG & DE MEURON
- 153 HHF
- 155 HOLZHAUSEN ZWEIFEL ARCHITEKTEN
- 157 HOSOYA SCHAEFER ARCHITECTS
- 159 HUBER WASER MÜHLEBACH
- 161 HURST SONG ARCHITEKTEN
- 163 HUTTERZOLLER ARCHITEKTUR
- 165 IDA BUEHRER WUEST ARCHITEKTEN
- 167 ILAI
- 169 INÈS LAMUNIÈRE
- 171 ISEPPI/KURATH
- 173 JAN KINSBERGEN
- 175 JESSENVOLLENWEIDER
- 177 JOM ARCHITEKTEN
- 179 JÜRGENSEN KLEMENT ARCHITEKTEN
- 181 K. KNAPKIEWICZ & A. FICKERT
- 183 KÄFERSTEIN & MEISTER
- 185 KARAMUK KUO ARCHITEKTEN
- 187 KILGAPOPP ARCHITEKTEN
- 189 KIT
- 191 KLOSBRUNECKÝ
- 193 KNORR & PÜRCKHAUER ARCHITEKTEN
- 195 KOCHER MINDER ARCHITEKTEN
- 197 KUMMER/SCHIESS ARCHITEKTEN
- 199 KUNIK DE MORSIER ARCHITECTES
- 201 LANDO ROSSMAIER
- 203 LEMMEN MAZZEI
- 205 LILITT BOLLINGER STUDIO
- 207 LOELIGER STRUB ARCHITEKTUR
- 209 LUCA SELVA ARCHITEKTEN
- 211 LUKAS LENHERR
- 213 LUSSI+PARTNER
- 215 LÜTJENS PADMANABHAN ARCHITEKTEN
- 217 LVPH
- 219 :MLZD
- 221 MADE IN
- 223 MAEDER STOOSS ARCHITEKTEN
- 225 MALTE KLOES & CHRISTOPH REICHEN
- 227 MANETSCH MEYER ARCHITEKTEN
- 229 MANSARDE 3
- 231 MANUEL HERZ ARCHITEKTEN
- 233 MARTINO PEDROZZI
- 235 MASSON TARSOLY ARCHITECTES
- 237 MATTI RAGAZ HITZ ARCHITEKTEN
- 239 MICHAEL MEIER UND MARIUS HUG ARCHITEKTEN
- 241 MIJONG ARCHITECTURE ET DESIGN
- 243 MILLER & MARANTA
- 245 MORGER PARTNER ARCHITEKTEN
- 247 MÜLLER SIGRIST ARCHITEKTEN
- 249 OLIV BRÜNNER VOLK ARCHITEKTEN
- 251 OLIVER BRANDENBERGER ARCHITEKTEN
- 253 OST ARCHITEKTEN
- 255 PARK
- 257 POOL ARCHITEKTEN
- 259 RAHBARAN HÜRZELER ARCHITEKTEN
- 261 RAPHAËL NUSSBAUMER ARCHITECTES
- 263 RAPHAEL ZUBER
- 265 RESSEGATTI THALMANN
- 267 RK STUDIO
- 269 ROMAN HUTTER ARCHITEKTUR
- 271 RUCH & PARTNER ARCHITEKTEN
- 273 SAAS
- 275 SAUTER VON MOOS
- 277 SCHEIBLER & VILLARD
- 279 SCHNEIDER STÜDER PRIMAS
- 281 SKOP – ARCHITEKTUR & STÄDTBAU
- 283 SMARCH
- 285 STAEHELIN MEYER ARCHITEKTEN
- 287 STAUFER & HASLER ARCHITEKTEN
- 289 STEREO ARCHITEKTUR
- 291 STUDIO FORMAT
- 293 STUDIO INCHES ARCHITETTURA
- 295 STUDIO WE ARCHITETTI
- 297 SUPERDRAFT STUDIO
- 299 THEO HOTZ PARTNER ARCHITEKTEN
- 301 THINK ARCHITECTURE
- 303 THOMAS DE GEETER ARCHITEKTUR
- 305 TOBLERGMÜR ARCHITEKTEN
- 307 TOM MUNZ
- 309 UNDEND
- 311 VÉCSEY SCHMIDT ARCHITEKTEN
- 313 VINCENZO CANGEMI ARCHITEKTEN
- 315 VON BALLMOOS KRUCKER ARCHITEKTEN
- 317 VUKOJA GOLDINGER ARCHITEKTEN
- 319 WESPI DE MEURON ROMEO ARCHITETTI
- 321 WÜLSER BECHTEL ARCHITEKTEN
- 323 ZACH + ZÜND ARCHITEKTEN
- 325 ZIMMER SCHMIDT ARCHITEKTEN

(1)
WHICH OF YOUR PROJECTS DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST RELEVANT FOR RECENT ARCHITECTURE PRODUCTION IN SWITZERLAND?

(2)
WHICH CURRENT PROJECT BY ANOTHER ARCHITECT DO YOU FIND SEMINAL IN THIS RESPECT?

(3)
WHICH VERNACULAR BUILDING OR SPATIAL SITUATION DO YOU FIND INSPIRING FOR YOUR APPROACH TO ARCHITECTURE?