

Kunz und Mösch

Quart Publishers **Anthology 21**

Anthology 21 – Notat
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In a recent interview, the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk spoke of anger as a moral and political entity. I suspect that meanwhile architects – and I am thinking for example of Philipp Kunz and Renato Mösch here – benefit from this emotion in a positive way and are even driven by it. Anger about the unbridled mediocrity of many buildings but also displeasure in view of the superficial, individualistically-designed forms and the wide variety of forms.

The two Basel architects founded their own architect's office in 2001 at a comparatively young age, shortly after they had completed a diploma in architecture in the class of Miroslavik at ETH Zurich. A semi-detached house in Basel and a weekend house in the French Alsace region were their debut works. The semi-detached house is located in a petit bourgeois housing development from the 1950s and demonstrates what analogue architecture is capable of achieving. The building blends quite naturally into the settlement and strengthens the structure and character of the garden city. The over-sized, classically aligned windows, the gradual elevation of the storeys and the continuous, calm appearance of the facades, which is created by "merging" the two buildings – all of this enhances and refines the quality of living in this location as well as the building itself. In the case of the weekend house, the architects have reduced the style typical of this kind of building to create one single room, allowing for oversized window and door openings, which give the structure a surprisingly spacious appearance. These small inventions, which are unspectacular but rich in content, can also be found in the later, high-quality building designs. This applies for example to the congress building in Interlaken (2010), in which utilisable levels and autonomous spatial structures have been integrated into the three dimensional outer shell of the building, which is in harmony with the surrounding environment. In this way, a form of spaciousness is created on the interior that is quite rare. Or for example in the project for the criminal justice centre in Muttenz, in which the number of storeys has been sacrificed in favour of a dignified appearance.

Lucerne, in March 2012

Weekend Home, Bendorf F (2004)

The site is located on a gentle slope in the Alsation village of Bendorf, near Ferrette. The location is characterised by a hilly site with densely planted fruit trees. The client requested a simple house that meets the needs of a short stay in the countryside. The building was developed according to the typology of a simple one-room house with a gabled roof. The alignment of the windows and the pilaster surrounds distorts the familiar scale of a rural residential building. A high level of abstraction is achieved in the interior with the help of a monochrome colour scheme and reduced materials. In a certain light, the walls and the corners of the room seem to dissolve. The view outside has been emphasised: the windows frame the bordering countryside, providing a clear view of lively, constantly changing scenarios.

Semidetached House, Allschwil (2003)

The theme of the basic style of semi-detached house is questioned here. Instead of two identical houses reflected across an axis, a solution was sought that blurs the traces of each of the units. Both houses have been nestled against one another so that they merge to create a spacious whole. Each of the floorplans have a completely different layout in order to create the highest level of living comfort possible within the units. This is shown particularly by the location of the living rooms – in one building the living room is on the ground floor, aligned towards the garden, while in the other building it is on the second floor with an adjacent terrace.

The architectural expression of the building, with themes such as bow fronts, pilaster surrounds, wooden window frames, blinds and a copper roof, makes reference to unpretentious role models.

Pavilion St. Johannis-Park, Basel (2007)

St. Johannis Park is situated directly by the River Rhine in the most northern part of Greater Basel. The St. Johannis-Park pavilion is located as a freestanding structure in the existing network of paths. The café, which is surrounded by paths on all sides, opens up onto an enlarged, piazza-like area. The space allocation programme is spread across three storeys. All the rooms can be accessed from outside via an open stairway and on the inside via elevators. The exterior staircase begins directly next to the entrance to the foyer. It supplements the existing network of paths like a ziggurat and provides access to the spacious roof terrace on top of the pavilion. From here there is a panoramic view of the park and the river area.

Five Residential Buildings, Riehen (2009)

Five residential buildings line a spacious area of allotment gardens near the River Rhine. They are intentionally screened off from the street and benefit from the clear view into the green countryside. The ground floor overlooks the garden while the first

storey also has views towards the east; in the attic storey there are views towards the east, west and south on the roof terrace. The buildings are made of glazed, exposed concrete. The dark colour unifies the five buildings to create one ensemble.

Villa, Richterswil (2010)

The rear of the building structure is buried deep in the steep moraine slope with the strength of a retaining wall. An enclosure of space reveals a spectacular view of Lake Zurich. The square basement storey that consists of a guest room, cellar and garage forms a platform for the main storey above. This storey accommodates the living room, bedrooms and bathrooms. On the roof of the basement storey, a spacious terrace extends out towards the lake. The precise contours of the building fit snugly into the plot of land. All the exterior walls have been constructed in warm, sandy-ochre exposed concrete. By narrowing the floorplan, a separation has been created between the living room and the bedrooms. By opening up the interior façade, fascinating views between the rooms are created, which extend out towards Lake Zurich.

Congress Centre, Interlaken (2010)

A reflective volume is situated in the park next to the listed congress centre. The vertically structured chromium steel building envelope reflects and distorts the different facets of the surroundings. The funnel-shaped entrance leads to the lobby area on the ground floor. The foyer on the upper storey with its view of the “Jungfrau” can be reached via an open stairway. From here, two solid oak doors lead to the stepped, multifunctional hall oriented towards the Aare River. Both rooms – the foyer and the hall – are dominated by a folded roof.

Detached House, Binningen (2011)

The site is located on the elevated plain of Binninger Hill, in a quiet, very sought-after residential area. The plot of land is located in one of the streets in this district, which nestles against the site, curving at a 90-degree angle. The building functions as a pivot for the angular alignment of the urban setting. Perimeter walls and corner solutions characterise the floorplan and the appearance of the façade. The constellation of the rooms on the ground floor – the living and dining room – are also based on this principle.

In an effort to achieve a maximum extension on the diagonal axis, small individual rooms have been merged to create a larger whole. The pergola with an exterior chimney lengthens the dining room and visually extends the living space. The basement storey, entrance stairs, pergola and carport are made of concrete and form a contrast to the geometrically painted building structures.

Centre for Criminal Justice, MuttENZ (2014)

The centre for criminal justice in MuttENZ combines the law courts, law enforcement authorities and prison all under one roof. The north side of the elongated plot of land runs alongside the SBB railway tracks. In the south it is bordered by a heterogeneous development designed for commercial and industrial, as well as residential use. The five-storey new building expresses this ambiguity. The volume has a linear alignment along the railway tracks while on the south side it interlocks with the environment, extending deep into the space. The bends on the south side mark the entrances. The circumferential façade responds to the industrial character of the location with an elegant gown of supports and strips. The linking of pairs of storeys distorts the scale of the building and underlines the public character of the ground level with its courts of law. The urban aspect of the building is balanced out on the interior. In the area of the bends, the floorplan opens out, creating space for two atriums that extend right through to the top storeys.

Nursing Home for the Elderly zum Park, MuttENZ (2015)

A building with three wings supplements the existing nursing home for the elderly, named “zum Park” (park view). The new, seven-storey building occupies the northwest corner of the Holderstüdeli park. The north wing connects the new building to the street. The broad spread of the east wing extends out into the park and incorporates the entrance. The west wing forms a link between the old and the new building. The three wings of the building spatially interlock with the park surroundings. The glazed, storey-high ground floor leads the visitor to the Holderstüdeli park. The building rests on a solid, main core made of exposed concrete, which is supplemented by a secondary core on the ground floor. The refectory, multipurpose hall, café and reception area are located on the ground floor. Above them is the administrative storey, which accommodates offices, wardrobes and meeting rooms. 20 rooms for residents are located from the second to the sixth floor.