

Hans Hollein unpacked: The Haas-Haus

SammlungsLab #4

Exhibition: 13.06-19.08.2019 | Gallery

Press conference: Wed 12.06, 11:00

Opening: Wed 12.06, 19:00

Even before and during its construction the Haas-Haus directly opposite St. Stephen's Cathedral caused many a controversy. On the occasion of Hans Hollein's (1934-2014) 85th birthday we open up his archives and offer insight into the conception of what is probably his most famous building.

35 years ago Hans Hollein was commissioned to undertake a conversion study for the Haas-Haus. This conversion became a new building that opened in 1990. This once controversial building has, in the meantime, become a feature of the inner city of Vienna. What remains is the question, what can and may contemporary architecture achieve in the historic city centre?

The exhibition 'Hans Hollein unpacked: The Haas-Haus' presents both the discussions of the time and the development of the project on the basis of impressive items that include many original drawings and models. For the first time, visitors to the Az W will be able to follow the individual steps in Hollein's working process – the discarding and re-retrying of different variations, his meticulousness and the search for a solution for this specific location. Although Hollein rejected the term postmodernism as a media construct and resisted the usurpation of his architecture by it, he is considered one of its forerunners. By harking back to historical consciousness and making direct references to the past, he takes a stand against the dogmatism of classical modernism.

Hollein had already attracted attention in the 1960s and 1970s with his early projects for Vienna, such as the Retti candle shop and the Schullin jewellery shop. The prominent location and scale of the Haas-Haus ultimately enabled Hollein to actively shape the cityscape for the first time. By this time Hollein was already an internationally acclaimed architect with commissions around the globe. To this day, Hollein is the only Austrian to have received the Pritzker Prize.

In Austria, many people were sceptical about the Haas-Haus project. Public pressure was enormous. Citizens' initiatives and a 'proponent committee' headed by the architect Walter Jaksch demanded the retention of the existing postwar building. Heated discussions were not only held among experts, everyone seemed to have their own opinion on this inner-city development. Hollein received political backing from the then mayor of Vienna, Helmut Zilk. The Haas-Haus has been a listed building since 2012.

The exhibition 'Hans Hollein unpacked', on the Haas-Haus, the fourth in the SammlungsLab series at the Architekturzentrum Wien, makes part of the huge holdings of the Archiv Hans Hollein, Az W und MAK, Wien accessible to the public for the first time.

The exhibition

The exhibition begins with an introductory excursion into the history of the city, from the camp for Roman legionnaires to the imposing Philipp Haas & Söhne premises, built between 1865 and 1867 by August Siccard von Siccardsburg and Eduard van der Nüll, and the second Haas-Haus by Carl Appel, Max Fellerer and Eugen Wörle, completed in 1953. Under the heading 'Divided Opinions', the second section presents the discussions surrounding Hans Hollein's project, before the exhibition concentrates on the formal genesis of the Haas-Haus with a wealth of material. At the Atelier Hans Hollein, variations and studies for the Haas-Haus were created side-by-side, stacked, contrapuntual and in succession. The continuous declination of each version and its verification on paper, with models and using photographs and collages was part of the time-consuming workflow. The exhibition creates completely new connections with an overview of different objects from the collection covering the entire design and construction phases. The scope of investigations ranges from urban planning issues to the design of the fence around the construction site. The finished building is shown in the last section of the exhibition. Photographs of the façade and the interior as well as a 'visual construction protocol', showing the demolition of the previous building and the erection of Hollein's Haas-Haus in time-lapse mode, make the traces, some of which no longer exist, visible. Changes and alterations to the building since its construction are thematised, from the dismantling of the complex atrium in 2002 to the present day.

Architekturzentrum Wien Collection Archiv Hans Hollein, Az W und MAK, Wien

The Architekturzentrum Wien has at its disposal the most comprehensive architecture collection of the 20th and 21st centuries in Austria. A unique cooperation between Austrian collections was established in 2016 when the "Archiv Hans Hollein, Az W und MAK, Wien", an major part of Hollein's archives originally acquired by the Republic of Austria and passed on to the MAK, was entrusted on permanent loan to the Az W for reappraisal. The extensive material on display in the exhibition 'Hans Hollein unpacked: The Haas-Haus' shows only a fraction of all of the holdings on the Haas House project. This in turn represents only about 1.5% of all of the material in the Archiv Hans Hollein.

Curator: Mechthild Ebert, Az W
Exhibition design: Alexander Barina

The Haas-Haus Issue

Opening & Panel discussion

To accompany the exhibition 'Hans Hollein Unpacked: The Haas-Haus'

Wed 12.06., 19:00, Az W Podium

Admission free

At the opening of the fourth SammlungsLab, we pursue the question: What can and is modern architecture allowed to do in the historical city centre? What impact has the Haas-Haus had on subsequent new buildings in the inner city?

Hans Hollein's prominent building on Stephansplatz was opened in September 1990. Paragraph 85 of the Viennese building regulations, which covers the coexistence of the old and the new, had been modified three years earlier. What has been completed in the 1st District since then? What is actually possible? What significance is ascribed to new buildings in a culture-political context and in the culture of building? A broadly based discussion engages with the role of and the possibilities for modern architecture in the inner city of Vienna.

Welcome address:

Angelika Fitz, Director Az W

Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, General Director MAK

Guests:

Maria Auböck, Landscape architect, President of the ZV

Mechthild Ebert, Az W

Lilli Hollein, Director of Vienna Design Week

Franz Kobermaier, Department Head of MA 19 – Architecture and Urban Planning

Hannes Swoboda, President of the Az W

moderated by Christian Kühn, Architekturstiftung Österreich

Accompanying Programme

Guided tours

Guided tour by the curator:

Wed 10.07. & 07.08., 17:30

Guided tour of the exhibition:

Sat 15.06., 15:00 & Wed 31.07., 17:30

Excursion

Designed by Hans Hollein

To accompany the exhibition 'Hans Hollein Unpacked: The Haas House'

Fri 05.07., 15:00, Duration: 2h

Meeting point: Kohlmarkt 10, 1010 Vienna

Reservation required from 03.06.: anmeldung@azw.at

A walk in the city for the fourth SammlungsLab leads through the inner city of Vienna to significant buildings by Hans Hollein in a tour that takes in five decades of his architectural creativity.

The walk leads from the striking aluminium portal of the former Retti candle shop (1966), past the Schullin jeweller's shops (1974 and 1982) to the Haas House (1990), which was controversial at the time of its construction, and on to the Tabak Trafik tobacconist (1992), then to the Christa Metek fashion boutique (1967) and closing with the Albertina entrance area (2003). Hollein's projects transcend the boundaries between design and architecture and have been listed since the 1980s, ensuring the preservation of these extraordinary 20th century Austrian architecture manifestos in urban space.

In dialogue: Lilli Hollein, Director of Vienna Design Week, and Mechthild Ebert, Az W

The press release as well as high resolution, rights free press photographs are available for download at www.azw.at/presse

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