

Az W Programme 2022

The coming year at the Az W starts with a bang: The new Permanent Exhibition will present numerous key objects to the public for the very first time, shifting them onto the horizon of the present. From March, the first comprehensive exploration of the relationship between architecture and gaming is on show under the title 'Serious Fun'. And in the autumn, the freshly announced Best Buildings from the whole of Europe are to be seen. While the headline-hitting exhibition 'Land for Us All' is currently on tour throughout Austria.

The Architekturzentrum Wien has used the time of the pandemic to work intensely behind the scenes on the new Permanent Exhibition. From February, this work is to yield an insight into the most significant and extensive collection on Austrian architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries. Under the title 'Hot Questions – Cold Storage', seven current issues (Hot Questions) bring silent storage to life, from the impact of globalisation on our towns and villages, via the question of how we want to live, to the contribution that architecture can make to our survival on this planet. Core to the new Permanent Exhibition, too, is the question behind all of the work at the Architekturzentrum Wien: What can architecture do?

What kind of architecture is reflected in doll's houses? What are the guidelines for the growth of cities in computer games? And, what kind of buildings offer first-person shooters protection from their assailants? The exhibition 'Serious Fun. Architecture & Games' shows and enquires into both analogue and digital architectural games. Starting in March, it invites visitors to marvel, to play and to reflect – because games not only work with architecture, they also hold up a mirror to it. In the autumn, Europe's Best Buildings move, as it were, into the Az W again. It will be exciting to see how the highly distinguished jury – this time chaired by Tatiana Bilbao – responds to current issues ranging from housing to the climate crisis with its selection. Until 7 February, the architecture of the jury's chairperson features at the Az W in the exhibition 'Tatiana Bilbao Estudio'. Her projects are characterised by an approach towards co-existence. They begin with ideas for better ways of living together and extend as far as the links between nature and the buildings concerned. With a wealth of sensual materials, vivid collages and models, the exhibition has become a favourite with the general public over recent months. The exhibition 'Land for Us All' came as a wake-up call for many people last year. It shows the devastating impact of the enormous consumption of land in Austria, and proposes alternative approaches. 'Land for Us All' goes on tour around Austria throughout the coming year, a tour that includes venues in smaller communities. A courageous land policy is needed to stop the progressive sealing over of the land and to secure food security – and this touring exhibition is a wake-up call to the country.

In the coming August, the popular Architektur.Film.Sommer film festival is to populate the Az W courtyard with its audience once again. All year long, a dense outreach programme provides events for the general public and specialist groups alike. Much of this will find its way into the Az W's Media Channel, which, during the pandemic, has come to include a new and far more international audience. Excursions to new buildings provide a 1:1 experience of them on location, while guided tours provide background information to the exhibitions, and workshops also acquaint even the youngest of our visitors with architecture.

Looking Back at 2021

In a prolonged difficult situation with the pandemic, the exhibition 'Land for Us All' came at just the right moment. It has been addressing issues of concern to many people, such as, for example, the climate crisis or a lack of food security due to the increasing sealing over of land, or the rising cost of housing due to land speculation and 'concrete gold'. With clearly presented facts and figures, but also with viable proposals for solutions, the exhibition has been attracting an interested local audience and been met with a broad response in the media. Back in summer 2021, the exhibition launched its tour through all of the federal states of Austria, where it will also be touring smaller communities over the next two years — always with reference to local land policies. With the exhibition 'Tatiana Bilbao Estudio' by the Mexico City-based architect, the Az W then presented another non-European position, this time also with a strong focus on built justice and building in harmony with nature.

For more than two years, preparations have been underway in the background for the new Permanent Exhibition, which is to replace the 17-year-old 'a_schau' on Austrian architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries. While developing new curatorial approaches for the presentation of an architecture collection, the opportunity has been taken to upgrade the spatial infrastructure and to take steps towards becoming a 'green museum'. In addition, significant new acquisitions have been made by the Az W Collection, from historical milestones, such as a set of Haus Rucker Co drawings, to very recent positions by Anna Heringer or gaupenraub +/-.

Lockdowns and visitor restrictions continued to drive the development of digital and hybrid formats to include lectures, symposiums, exhibition tours and webinars for schools. Even if the digital realm can only partially replace physical exchange, it is still gratifying when over 1000 people participate simultaneously online, as they did at the recent symposium 'It's getting hot! City in Climate Change'. The Architektur.Film.Sommer was fortunately able to take place on our premises in August and was fully booked out on all four evenings, as were the popular excursions to new architectural projects or to classic locations such as Villa Beer.

"In 2021, too, the pandemic has posed a major challenge for cultural institutions. We hope that these conditions do not become persistent and that the museum can soon re-establish itself as a concrete experiential space and a place for personal encounters. Of course, we shall be taking with us the advantages gleaned from the digital realm as a parallel line. Our thanks go to all public funding partners and private supporters who have stood by us, but above all to the excellent team at the Architekturzentrum Wien."

Hannes Swoboda, president of the Az W
Angelika Fitz, director of the Az W
Karin Lux, executive director of the Az W

Exhibitions 2022

Hot Questions – Cold Storage

The new Permanent Exhibition at the Architekturzentrum Wien

From 03.02.2022, Exhibition hall 1

Opening: Wed 02.02.2022, 19:00

The Architekturzentrum Wien opens its new permanent exhibition in February 2022, providing insights into the most significant and extensive collection on Austrian architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries. At the centre is the investigation of key holdings, among these being prominent and less well known exponents. Seven Hot Questions bring the Cold Storage to life.

The Architekturzentrum Wien is the only museum in Austria devoted solely to architecture. The new Architekturzentrum permanent exhibition replaces 'a_show', a brilliant chronological narrative of building in Austria that ran from 2004 to July 2021, and which still had to rely predominately on reproductions. However, over these 17 years the Collection has grown to include over 90 living legacies and architect's estates as well as extensive project collections. Many of these original exponents will be shown to the public for the first time in the new permanent exhibition 'Hot Questions – Cold Storage'. A selection of models, drawings, furniture, fabrics, documents and films develop new cross-references in seven thematic chapters. Each chapter is introduced by one of the hot questions of the present context, from the impact of globalisation on our towns and villages to the question "How do we want to live?" to the contribution that architecture can make to our survival on this planet. At the same time, 'Cold Storage' allows visitors to take a glance behind the scenes at the work that goes into the Collection.

Building in Austria, with all of its cultural, social, economic and technical implications, is shown in a striking manner. The contents covered range from the special significance of Red Vienna to architectural pedagogic experiments in the wake of the 1968 movement or architectural revolts in Vorarlberg, to historical and current examples of environmental re-thinking. The exhibition also engages with the ideological instrumentalisation of architecture and spatial planning and the active collaboration of architects in authoritarian systems, as well as their resistance. At the same time, the exhibits challenges deficits in the canon of Austrian architectural history, for instance from a perspective of gender equality. New protagonists are brought into play, light is shed on little-known sources and the focus lies on multiperspectivity rather than a national historical narrative. This plurality is also reflected in the design. A sheer variety of landscapes for the exponents make a visit to the exhibition both a sensual and a rich atmospheric experience.

The aim of the Architekturzentrum Wien is to show and ask: What can architecture do? Similarly, this is the background to the new permanent exhibition. At the same time, we ask: What can collections do? Museum collections are far more than mere accumulations of the flotsam and jetsam of history, their social relevance is shown with enquiry and visual representations, in the connection between the mandate to undertake research and to maintain a collection. The new permanent exhibition 'Hot Questions – Cold Storage' takes a critical approach to its own practice, proactively contributing to a museum of the future.

Concept: Angelika Fitz, Monika Platzer

Curator: Monika Platzer

Curatorial assistance: Sonja Pisarik, Iris Ranzinger, Katrin Stingl

Producer: Andreas Kurz

Assistant: Barbara Kapsammer

Exhibition architecture: Michael Hieslmair und Michael Zinganel / tracing spaces

Graphic design: Christoph Schörkhuber, seite zwei

Serious Fun. Architecture & Gaming

17.03.–05.09.2022, Exhibition hall 2

Opening: Wed 16.03.2022, 19:00

We are all familiar with the classic architecture games, from building blocks that become daring structures to board games where the players compete for spatial-strategic advantages. What are, though, the architecture narratives invested in doll's houses, along which guidelines do cities grow in computer games, and what kind of buildings shield ego-shooters from their assailants? The exhibition 'Serious Fun' shows and examines architecture games and toys, inviting you to be astonished, to play and to reflect.

Architecture games and toys are a part of our cultural and technical heritage. They come made of wood, metal or cardboard, others are played on computers or consoles. Hybrid variations turn the city itself into a gameboard, creating an interface to parallel worlds. These games and toys are a part of social history, too. As a deeply expressive form of popular culture, they convey how we perceive our built environment and different ways of imagining it. Unlike representations with images, which we view from a distance, games can develop a strongly immersive character: Whoever participates in a game becomes part of it himself. This captivating power is not without ambivalence. On the one hand, the miniature scale is inviting, so people can actively participate in the development of buildings, towns or situations that they would never otherwise have had any access to in reality – which has made games popular as a tool in participatory processes. On the other hand, it is the developers who influence or manipulate the course and outcome of the games. Their decisions not only build whole worlds, they also shape world views.

The exhibition presents games and reflections on games. The exhibits, many of which are interactive, were created by architects, artists and game developers. The visitor's gaze is frequently drawn to specific, sometimes strange but frequently innovative aspects of architecture games. What are the utopias and dystopias that they evoke, what are the values and ideas they convey, criticise or endorse? What kind of places, themes and ways of life are frequently left out, and which games fill these gaps? Visitors can take an alternative city tour through a videogame environment, they can dabble on the virtual London property market, experience doll's houses as lurid minidramas or emancipatory narratives, stimulate the spatial experience of a blind person in a purely acoustic videogame, or develop eco-friendly city districts in collaboration with others.

The exhibition 'Serious Fun' invites visitors to play and to ponder. It provides an opportunity to become immersed in both familiar and in less familiar games, while it also encourages people to take a step back and to take a critical look at the world of games and the constructed worlds that they create. Games can both celebrate and trivialise architecture, they can delimit and they can de-limit whole worlds. They do not only integrate architectural practice, they also hold a mirror up to it.

Curator: Mélanie van der Hoorn

Project coordination Az W: Katharina Ritter

Exhibition design: DWARS ontwerp (Mark Schulte & Miriam de Lange)

Europe's Best Buildings. European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture. Mies van der Rohe Award 2022

06.10.2022–22.01.2023, Exhibition hall 2

Opening: Wed 05.10.2022, 19:00

Every two years, the exhibition 'Europe's Best Buildings. European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture. Mies van der Rohe Award' focuses on outstanding architectural projects from Europe and has, in the meantime, become very popular with the general public. The prize is awarded to projects whose visionary character serves as orientation, if not a manifesto, for developments in contemporary architecture. In recent years, the prize has undergone a remarkable change: The view has broadened, going beyond iconic new buildings and searching for an approach towards existing buildings with potential for the future. After all, rebuilding and continuing to build is an important contribution on the path to a CO2 emissions-neutral society.

Tatiana Bilbao Estudio

Until 07.02.2022, Exhibition hall 2

The exhibition provides, for the first time in Austria, an insight into the working methods and philosophy of Mexican architect Tatiana Bilbao and her eponymous office.

Tatiana Bilbao (b. 1972, Mexico City) researches and interprets the historical culture and building traditions of Mexico as well as each project's immediate context. The exhibition explores various dimensions of 'landscape', which give direction to the studio's work – from natural or urban scapes to the 'inner landscape' of each individual building.

Bilbao's work is highly diverse and frequently produced in collaboration with other architects, landscape architects and artists: from a pilgrimage route in Mexico via botanical gardens in Culiacán, to housing developments. Her projects are driven by environmental and social thinking, but also by great poetry. As Tatiana Bilbao says: "When you come from a country where many people have very little in the way of economic resources, you are used to not wasting them."

The exhibition presents large format installations both in the space and outdoors. A landscape of models spans the entire venue, which is lined by 'cabinets' filled with samples of raw materials, working models and sketches. Collages produced at Estudio Bilbao relating to various facets of the landscape are shown in a dialogue with exponents from the Architekturzentrum Wien Collection, selected from its 25 years of exhibition history.

The exhibition is a cooperation with the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark.

Land for Us All **The exhibition tours Austria**

Two mobile variations of the exhibition 'Land for Us All', curated by the Architekturzentrum Wien, are touring Austria from May 2021. At the Az W the exhibition was on show from 09.12.2020 to 19.07.2021. Land policy impacts on us all, and the touring exhibition is intended to wake people up while presenting alternatives.

Land is our most precious resource. The Earth's surface is limited. A careless or purely capital-driven treatment of this resource has been changing the shape and function of our towns and villages in recent decades. The progressive sealing over of the soil is contributing to the climate crisis while speculation in land and its hoarding are pushing up the price of housing, threatening public space and hampering transport policies that makes sense. The displacement of urban manufacturing is promoting monofunctionality and threatening jobs. Outside the major centres, weak or unenforced spatial planning legislation have resulted in a landscape of shopping centres, chalet villages and a broad carpet of single-family homes while town centres are becoming deserted, traffic is exploding and the loss of agricultural land is threatening our food security. Politicians and local authorities are urgently called upon to act in order to achieve a balance between individual interests and the common good.

We are so close to finding the key to an environmentally friendly and resource-conserving use of our Earth even though this remains somewhat abstract in a context of our everyday lives. The use of land is determined by multiple political, legal and economic factors. With the exhibition 'Land for Us All', the Architekturzentrum Wien sheds light on the thicket of backgrounds, fields of expertise and the responsible agents involved. How does grassland become building land? Why is the price of land rising? What does all this have to do with our lives and dreams? Comparisons between different countries illustrate strengths and weaknesses in the existing system, while examples of international best practice present us with viable alternatives. A collection of existing, workable new tools points the way to spatial planning that conserves land as a resource, mitigates climate change, helps with housing issues and facilitates good architecture. We are all being called upon to think and act along new lines – and this exhibition is preparing the way.

Curators: Karoline Mayer, Katharina Ritter

The two-year exhibition tour through the federal provinces is made possible by a grant from the Department of Building Culture of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts, Civil Service and Sport (BMKOES).

Venues and dates in the provinces:

vai Vorarlberger Architektur Institut, Dornbirn, until 22.01.2022
Stadtgalerie raumimpuls, Waidhofen/Ybbs, 15.01. – 27.02.2022
afo architekturforum oberösterreich, Linz, 04.03. – 11.06.2022
Gemeindezentrum Kobersdorf, Burgenland, 13.03. – 01.04.2022
Gemeinde-Pfarr-Zentrum Laßnitzhöhe, Steiermark, 08.04. – 24.04.2022
Gemeindeamt Kirchberg am Wagram, Niederösterreich, 01.05. – 20.05.2022
aut. architektur und tirol, Innsbruck, 01.07. – 22.10.2022

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

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MA 18 – City of Vienna Administrative Group for Urban Planning, Traffic & Transport, Climate Protection, Energy Planning and Public Participation

MA 7 – City of Vienna Administrative Group for Cultural Affairs and Science

Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport

Sponsor: Architecture Lounge