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## **ARCHITECTURE IN THE RINGTURM II**

### **Space for Art**

**Artists' ideas, projects and creations**

**8th October – 13th November 1998**

**Press tour:** Wednesday, 7th October 1998, 12.00 am

**Opening:** Wednesday, 7th October 1998, 6.00 pm

### **Exhibition site**

Wiener Städtische Allgemeine Versicherung AG

Ringturm Exhibition Centre

A-1010 Vienna, Schottenring 30

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**Curator:** Prof. Edelbert Köb

**Assistance:** Mag. Herbert Abrell

**Layout:** Mag. Adolph Stiller

In cooperation with the Kunsthaus Bregenz and  
Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux

### **Opening hours**

Monday to Friday: 9.00 am to 6.00 pm; no entry fee

### **Public transport**

Underground: Schottenring U2,U4

Tram: Schottenring 1, 2, 31, 32

Bus: Schottenring 3A

### **Press officer**

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**When discussing museums and exhibition space, the conversation always comes back round to the conflicting views of architects and artists. The discussion seems to be dominated to a large extent by the point of view of the architect, but artists and architects have completely divergent ideas about exhibition space. The “Space for Art” show in the Ringturm exhibition centre of the Wiener Städtische offers its contribution to the debate.**

Donald Judd, the American sculptor and minimalist artist, once made the observation that museums are so rarely built on functional lines these days. The trend is more towards creating a showpiece for the architect who designed them, giving rise to the question why artists or sculptors are not asked for their input.

The “Space for Art” exhibition presents a selection of artists’ works, including drawings, designs, sketches, videos and text, which as a whole attempt to answer this question.

**The background:** this same issue about the functionality of the newer museums designed by architects, and how appropriate they are for contemporary art, was also the inspiration behind the exhibition “The museum as imagined by the artist” (Le musée imaginé par les artistes), put on in 1997 by the Espace de l’Art Concret in Mouans-Sartoux, southern France (with works by Max Bill, Daniel Buren, Christoph Haerle, Marcia Hafif, Gottfried Honegger, François Moreelet, Bernar Venet). The Kunsthaus contributed to this exhibition with pieces by Helmut Federle, Donald Judd and Franz Erhard Walther.

In the context of the collection of concrete and constructive art in the Espace de l’Art Concret, these artists were invited to provide statements and ideas for museums and exhibition spaces and to define what “Space for Art” means to them, in their unique position as artists. Based on the museum for a small town by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1942), the artists were set the challenge of creating a well thought-out, modestly-sized museum for concrete art – the point being to come up with an idea, a vision, a utopia, rather than elaborately detailed plans.

The theme was continued in June of this year when the Bregenz Kunsthaus teamed up with the Espace de l'Art Concret and exhibited in Bregenz. At the invitation of the Wiener Städtische, "Space for Art" is now being presented to the Viennese public, in the critical wider framework of the recently opened Ringturm exhibition centre.

Also on display are museum projects which have already been realised, or are well on the way: drawings and photographs by Max Bill (project for a Lausanne museum, 1991), Donald Judd (Marfa project, Texas), Erwin Heerich (Insel Hombroich museum, Germany), Per Kirkeby (Museum project in Aars and Aarhus, Denmark), Gerhard Merz (projects from 1995 - 1998), Franz Erhard Walther (Kunsthalle Ritter, Klagenfurt), Cornelius Kolig (Das Paradies, Carinthia).

**Art and space:** a recurring theme in the analysis of the work of art and the space it is presented in, is the relationship between the two, and the tendency of many artists to see the setting of a piece as a vital element - especially with their own work. Only with further consideration will the presentation concepts of museums allow the museum to become a space for art.

Architectural space as an artistic creation is another link in this chain of thought. At its pinnacle, space is perceived as a tool for synthesis of the arts, uniting life, work and oeuvres.

Defining the difference between a tool for synthesis of the arts and pure presentation space involves examining the artistic concept and the value placed on the space which is to contain the piece; this distinction also reflects the area of conflict between artistic creation and spatial arrangement. The space becomes a constituent part of the work of art. Gerhard Merz, Erwin Heerich or even Peter Wigglesworth make no differentiation between the space and the piece; both contribute equally to the artistic result. Merz completes this approach, merging the space, the location and the piece into one inseparable entity.

The artists' original statements about museum exhibition space occupy an important place in the exhibition. They make it possible to gain an insight into the very diverse thoughts of the artists and to compare and contrast their differing approaches to artistic space, and also provoke reflection on the areas of conflict between art and architecture.

**The catalogue:** together with the anthology being published this autumn by the Kunsthaus Bregenz (publishers Walther König, Cologne), the colour catalogue accompanying the Vienna exhibition (publishers Anton Pustet, Salzburg) represents a unique and comprehensive record of the topic (articles by the exhibiting artists plus Rainer Ganahl, Richard Serra, Frank Stella, Peter Weibel, Heimo Zobernig and others).

The artists: on show will be works by the following artists, largely original pieces, as well as models, photos and texts:

Georg Baselitz

Max Bill

Daniel Buren

Heinrich Dunst

Helmut Federle

Christoph Haerle

Marcia Hafif

Erwin Heerich

Gottfried Honegger

Donald Judd

Per Kirkeby

Cornelius Kolig

Gerhard Merz

François Morellet

Walter Pichler

Ulrich Rückriem

Franz Erhard Walther

Bernar Venet

Peter Wigglesworth

Heimo Zobernig