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诗意的功能主义

——德国格瓦斯·昆·昆建筑师事务所专辑

GEWERS KÜHN+KÜHN

李保峰 译

中国建筑工业出版社

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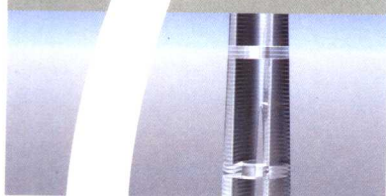
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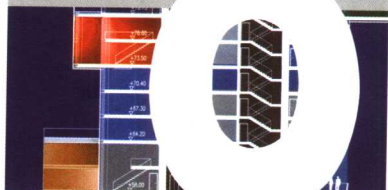
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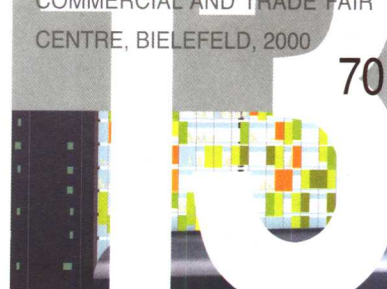
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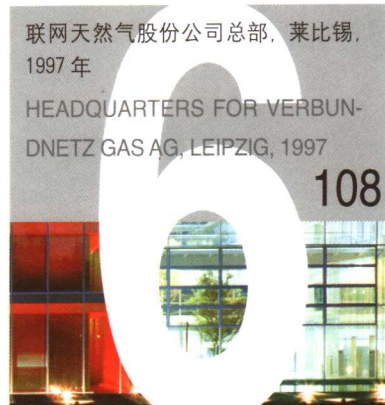
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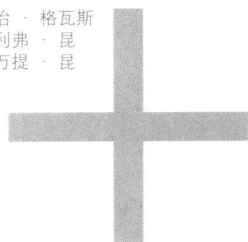
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前言

如果成就就可以创造出对新梦想的渴望，那么经验能走向新的起点。这种想法促成我们出版这本作品集。这些呈现的作品凝聚着我们的心血，我们十分珍惜。

15 + 10 反映了竞赛入围方案、建筑概念设计以及建筑项目。这些设计（尤其是在某些新的探索领域中）极大地挑战了我们的创新潜质，拓展了先前的设计语汇，并激发了我们不断寻求解决问题的最佳方案的热情。

这是一种十分个性化的汇编。我们当然希望所有的项目都得以实施。但是，我们并不把实施项目的多少作为评价我们成绩的惟一标准。

我们寻求创造性的挑战。我们希望在纷繁复杂的要求下寻求完美的解决方案，从而赋予建筑形象。我们为之努力，我们有不灭的热情。

PREFACE

Experience inspires initiative if one's own achievements create a longing for new dreams. This thought prompted us to publish a book dedicated to those things that make our work worth while and valuable to us.

15+10 is a reflection on competition entries, architectural concepts and projects which, to a high degree, have challenged our creative potential, broadened our formal language and promoted our passionate undertaking of finding the best possible solution, especially if this process encouraged the exploration of new areas.

This compilation is a very personal choice. Naturally, we would have loved to have realised all of these projects. However, we do not measure our achievements solely by the number of projects actually realised.

It is the creative challenge that we seek, the wish to find the perfect solution that inspires us to fill our architecture with form, content and spirit against the background of various demands. This is what we are striving for. With unbroken enthusiasm.

访谈

你们这本出版物的标题是“Unreleased—Released 15 + 10”。那么请问是什么促使你编辑这本以15个未发表的方案和10个发表过的项目来代表你们设计团体的书？

乔治·格瓦斯：

设计是我们工作的基础。但是并非我们所有的设计方案一定都能进入到最后的成果阶段。于是我们利用“15 + 10”这样一个很好的机会介绍那些未被介绍的设计方案。

奥利弗·昆：

建筑一般是建造起来并且是要被看到的。如果设计的一座建筑没有最后建造完成，这样的设计就被束之高阁。这并不意味着它没有价值。许多设计被证明太优秀以致于不能在当前付诸实施。我们经常从一开始就被抛弃的方案中重新拾起这些设计想法。因此，我们决定出版“15 + 10”以展示我们建筑的实验性以及建立在其实验性上的设计过程。

很明显，“创新”已经成为你们创作的中心。你们在新建筑和想像中非常传统的建筑两方面一次又一次成功地飞出了解决方案。“创新”对于你们来说到底意味着什么呢？

斯万提·昆：

到底什么是真正的创新？是寻找另一个更疯狂的形式？不！所谓创新就是在任何既定的设计过程中超越常规以寻找正确的解决方案。在商业开展中，方盒子的造型经常被认为是惟一可行的解。不，并非在任何时候都是方盒子，而是与设计过程相适应的，反映公司识别性的外形。创新就是寻求有效解答、超越常规之路。

乔治·格瓦斯：

创新也可理解为“发现”和“创造”，在发现之旅中寻找新的空间和组合新的建筑材料。2005年日本世博会爱知展馆就是一个很好的例子，它的空间是以前从未被体验过的。创新也被看作是一种在技术上和构造上受欢迎的挑战。举例来说，迪拜之塔是一个和SBP工程事务所（Schlaich, Bergemann与合作者）一起合作的项目。通过推进静力学的极限和应用新的构造方式，迪拜之塔达到了至少440米的高度。

奥利弗·昆：

创新是非常多层面的，它能运用到任何地方。创新能够影响材料的使用、形态和设计。它能够带来令人惊讶的智能功能统一体。富士通自动数控公司机器人总部项目展现了对智能商业再设计的创新。关于设计过程我们知道什么？在何种

程度反映建筑的真实形态？建筑如何根据商业需求在尺度上进行扩大或者缩小？当前传统的“形态化”和“蜻蜓点水”对我确实不再有帮助。然而，一座在尺度上可变的建筑，运用适宜的结构技术支撑能够缩放到正确尺度，这种交互式的进展是一种真正的创新过程。它不是一种实验式的造型过程，而是一种引导新解的分析方法。

技术的进步并非总是与当今社会的发展同步。对于这些不同的发展步调以及随之而来的问题，你们是怎样处理的？建筑师经常抱怨被强加给创新太多的社会约束。

奥利弗·昆：

不同于许多其他建筑师同行，我们并不抱怨现实过程中的很多约束。正好相反，我们相信由不同的当权者以及客户的要求的诸多规范为创新提供了一片丰富和肥沃的土壤。在那些大众真心出谋划策的国家会有创新的建筑，比如在瑞士，在荷兰这样一个高度多元化的市民社会国家也会找到。英国是另一个

例子，而德国正在迎头赶上。但是我们没有在美国、俄罗斯和中国找到。创新的推动力只能产生于一种相互关联的、许多利益群体共同承担享有的多元化体系中，而不是在一个“诸事走开”，单一因果关系的、格律诗般的、缺乏民众关心所支配的体系中。

包括建筑师在内的很多人观察到当前的变化发生如此之快，以至于个体无法承受这种变化带来的压力。他们认为通过创造对过去时代产生回忆的空间以减缓这种变化就是建筑师的任务。你们是不是觉得建筑师应该对这种飞速的变化做出某种补偿？

乔治·格瓦斯：

同十年前相比，我们的确面临着一个带着更多复杂问题的复杂世界。建筑也变得非常多元化，不仅需要高水平的工作团队，而且需要新型的交流构架。这里不需要任何怀旧形式主义的东西。

斯万提·昆：

我确实不愿推荐通过建筑的方式试图减缓城市发展的脚步。复杂性既然已经存在，那么我们所有人就日复一日使用全部的技术解决它。然而，我相信我们需要简化复杂性，以便于我们深入认识问题，更好地解决问题。因此这个问题的答案不是倒退到所谓“昔日好时光”

中。我们需要一种进步的方法，承认当今东西的优点。然而，我们希望能使它们更为简单化和更容易理解。

在建筑师工作中相互沟通这一点上，你们似乎在追求着更强的竞争力。为了把握当代的复杂性，你们以学科交叉团队的方式工作。

奥利弗·昆：

学科交叉可以催开灵感之花。这种交叉是我们一个重要的着力点。关键是各专业配合！例如，在巴洛克艺术中，专业配合是无所不在的。在巴洛克教堂的建造中，没有建筑师会担心后来的画家和雕塑家出现在室内装修中，也没有画家和雕塑家会担心后来的风琴弹奏者用音乐修饰教堂。正相反，来自不同学科背景的人们团结起来，协同工作并产生对每个其他专家的作品共鸣般的信任。这就是我们今天所需要面对的。建筑并不是单独的一个专家的事情，我们探究团队设计的真正本质。

在讨论柏林当代歌剧与音乐中心的设计时，我们清楚地认识到我们需要将作曲家、音响工程师、乐队指挥和音乐家纳入到设计过程中。我们也需要咨询筹款者、基金会、文化部门和编辑。最后的结果总是更完善，并且比起我们曾经的单独行动，我们都感觉这样的团队

努力要好很多。

你们几次强调，从一个项目的初期阶段开始就纳入各种艺术家。事实上，许多你们的同行故意避免与艺术家协商而自己去创造一件艺术作品。请问你们这样的态度背后的动机是什么？

奥利弗·昆：

这样的建筑师确实有很大的错觉！确实有建筑师不允许他们的住户悬挂任何私人照片，担心会坏他们的“艺术作品”毁坏。他们确实没有理解建筑的本质。建筑是为他人建造的。是的，我们是明白某种设计想法的那类人，但是设计的着眼点在于他人和公众。我们行业协会名誉的降低应该归咎于这种过分的傲慢。如果建筑不能充分证明允许他人的介入，那么它无论如何不太可能走到最后。你只需要从头到尾地思考整个过程。与艺术家合作，我们总是寻找到能够发展强烈而独立的想法。宫廷马厩广场就是这样空间的一个很好案例。奥拉维尔·埃利亚松已设法正式改善它并为其增加协作的价值。

乔治·格瓦斯：

我们的许多项目一开始就和艺术家们合作设计。与艺术家早期的对话是一面有趣的镜子，将我们的想法反射给我们自己。现在职业所

及的范围未被清晰地定义；所以一座理想的建筑应该是所有艺术的产品。

如果建筑师和画家、雕塑家以及当今的图形设计师、灯光艺术设计师以及来自许多其他学科的人合作我不会感到困扰。

斯万提·昆：

另一方面，社会中的设计作品和情感价值的联系越来越多，甚至建筑上的情感层面也变得更为重要。我们需要触发情感的层面，并与超越建筑物边界的影响相联系。艺术家们以不同的角度观察事物，也是我们将他们纳入项目设计团队的另外一个原因。我们建筑师的任务是全局性地推进设计过程，而艺术家们人物单纯，特立独行。

你们十分开明，允许其他人参与你们的设计。你们似乎也对后来的住户怎样使用建筑十分放心。

斯万提·昆：

音乐能够打开和关掉。你也会选择去参加一个艺术展览会或者错过它。艺术几乎总是互动的，然而建筑未必这样。你不能简单地关掉建筑，而是不断地在触摸它。一栋受欢迎的建筑能让你进入并与之交流。然而，那些不能被感触的建筑物根本就不能引人入胜。建筑必须适于交流。我们设计的建筑欢迎住

户入住，并且按照他们喜欢的方式进行改变。

奥利弗·昆：

一旦第三方涉入，一个人对事物的最初想法就会得到重新阐释。我们常谈论波尔坦斯基，他就是一个研究这个现象的艺术家。他将空盒子放在房间里，鼓励来访者将自己的故事作为艺术家已有叙述的延续去填充这些盒子。重新解释就这样作用于我们的建筑。它创造了一个能被每个个体重新思考的世界。我认为正是这样赋予了我们建筑的乐趣。建筑能被个别解释了，这种立场与所谓的理性主义者形成鲜明对比，他们声称“建筑不应留有解释的余地。我们的观点坚如磐石，那就是尽头”。

你们书中的设计案例并不遵循一种固定的设计模式、形态模式或者色彩语言。我们看到不同的设计有着不容否认的个性品质，这些个性品质总是被赋予多样化的涵义。请问这是如何产生的？

斯万提·昆：

我们三人有共同的背景——我们都是在英国获得我们的专业技能。进一步分析，我们所有的设计都有一个普通且十分苛刻的结构图式，合乎逻辑的原则指导着所有设计。接着就是我们的不同之处。乔

治是一位雕塑家，我在美国学习美术，奥利弗则在圣迦南大学就读管理学。于是我们都从另外的领域吸取灵感。并不只有建筑，我们心中另外的世界丰富着我们。

奥利弗·昆：

我同意。尽管我倾向于分析方法，但还是会对那些唤醒我或者让我有某种暗示的事物作出非常直觉的反应。自从我们成为三人团队以来，从不同的领域吸取灵感对于我们所有的人都非常重要。我们最初通过大量图像界定设计项目，然后发展出共同工作的导则。有时候从任务而来的图就已经清楚了，有时候从应用的技术、印象或者我们为设计制定的任务说明书等而来。在任何案例当中，图像必须保证每个人都能很好地理解消化。结果从各个不同设计发展出毫不妥协的设计原则。

从你们的设计案例和众多的讲演中可以发现，你们认为建筑必须大于其他各部分之和。即使是一个工业预制建筑应该富有可感觉的个性和某种程度上的知觉。但是协

同设计理念并不正是要求相似的建筑表达，允许置换到世界任何地方么？

乔治·格瓦斯：

协同设计不是给出“标准答案”。它更倾向于针对不同项目寻找特别方法。毕竟，我们是在特殊的场所为有希望的、特别的客户建造。

在绘制第一张满足客户和场所要求的图纸之前，我们考虑自己对功能的“消化作用”以努力了解到尽可能多的手头上的设计任务。

这个过程对于我们非常重要。通过不断结合最初的设计任务和现实条件，我们才能提出高质量的解决方案。当今的客户和住户都在寻找较之以前更多的个性化的接触，同样适用于工业构筑物。平庸的方盒子不会使任何人愉悦，即使这样的建筑是新的，它们也并不动人。我们的城市确实需要个性和世故，战后德国的城市并非典型的美的范例。

奥利弗·昆：

我相信与建筑及其所在地相关的情感联系是很重要的。老房子应有自己的名字！在今天这个数字化的年代，我们对于个体情感局限有着更为强烈的渴望，而这种情感与具体的个体和场所紧密结合。这样，建筑重新获得那些久违的独特性和

真实性。对个性的渴望既不能由新“国际式”实现，也不能指望某些建筑师设计的、能够在世界任何地方出现的“标签式建筑”。我们一再强调“某个房子只能属于某个地方，在这样的环境中它是独一无二的”，这很重要。

许多建筑师谈到他们的建筑所拥有的某种个性。但是个性是一个纯粹个人的术语，它是个体的、主观的、自圆其说的。建筑没有主观性，它只能为社会和沟通提供空间，这个空间也许满足一个人对于个性的需求。在最好的案例策划中，住户易于识别建筑。在这个意义上，你们如何看待你们的建筑？

奥利弗·昆：

建筑个性的主题贯穿于公司员工互动式沟通的始终。举例来说，“居家的感觉”和“取得联系”的主题在建筑中具有重要和基本的意义。在我们的设计中，富士通自动数控公司项目在平台上设置一处日本式庭园，以鼓励他们全体职员轻松交流。“Sophie—Gips—Hofe”项目提供了一些不同类型的人们可以约会的公共场所。宫廷马厩广场上的外部公共空间，对于我们来说甚至比建筑本身更为重要，用于放松和交流的中庭和内部全景在法兰克福项目中得以体现。人们可以在这些地方交流相处。建筑的可识别性

独立产生于社会互动式交流，人们的聚会和与所在地相结合的个人体验。慕尼黑宫廷马厩广场得到重建，最后的结果公布于众，人们拍手称赞。有位年长的女士说她又成为了在炸弹摧毁慕尼黑之前的那个小女孩。建筑师具有催生如此情感体验的力量。这些主要因素决定了人们接受或拒绝某个地方，这是一个场所的灵魂，它赋予场所超越全部的商业功能的价值，这就是为什么建筑在我们的社会生活中如此重要的原因。

乍看之下，在参与全球化设计和地方性设计的建筑之间，在工业化、合理优化和建构独特个性之间存在矛盾。怎样定义当代建筑个性呢？

乔治·格瓦斯：

工业化预制并不是必然意味着更少的个性。由工业化预制构件建造的一些建筑诚然是令人厌烦的，但是发展一座有着特殊品质的、在个性化范畴内的建筑，人们希望有着个性的建筑更多的是一个拥有正确精神的、关于知性地掌握现代结构方法的问题。我们非常高兴地将20世纪60年代的“国际式”和80年代的“后现代主义”抛诸脑后。今天，更为个性化，赋予建筑某些特质成为建筑师的目标。通过一座建筑可以给人感观效果、不同特性、

感染力和情感的凝聚。

斯万提·昆：

我们需要清楚地把握场所的确切性质。当然，为贝塔斯曼这样一位全球性角色建造展馆不必限于特定的场所。它的建造地点也不是真实的场地，这个展馆不是公司的家，而是一个公共陈列窗口用以展示公司的个性与形象。在某种意义上，这个展馆本身已成为一个场所：这个独立的地标处于汉诺威郊区，它的本质和联系只不过在反映特定的企业文化上是明显的。

然而，“Sophie-Gips-Hofe”庭院则位于一个非常具体的地方，这是个被遗弃的、讨人喜欢的地方，这个地方还一度成为小镇的一部分。我在这里坐了一天时间来观察所有的旅行者和当地居民，我自己想：“我在这里坐下来看那些真正喜欢小镇的人，过了一会儿他们就占据了这个地方，似乎这里就是他们的家”。这是一种难以置信的愉悦感。

奥利弗·昆：

我特别喜欢这种区别。什么是一个设计项目的家园？在那里建造建筑，它是一个企业、企业形象或者它是建造建筑的真正场所。对我而言，“全球的”和“个体”之间或“个性”和“工业的”之间没有矛盾。大规模的装配、加工的数字化生产线和全球联盟很久以前就成

为任何产品生产过程的伴随因素。它们限定了我们的时间并决定了我们所使用的成套结构工具，它们也创造出新的选择。让我们看看在华沙的“垂直的宫殿”，目前那里有一支跨国的设计团队和横贯大陆的金融家。但是，仍有一个十分明确的、拥有20世纪70年代建成的居住街区的场所。这个场所是独特的，但实际上是城镇的老区。尽管对这样一个建筑通常所有的高科技是十分必要的，结果成为一种展示波兰和华沙进入欧盟的特殊开发案。虽然不同的国际利益团体参与到这个项目中来，但这个建筑并不能够在世界其他任何地方得以建成。正如个体的环境一样，在全球化中我们需要更为关注可识别性、天才的思路和项目的个性。这正是将个体的建筑持续到未来的机会。

克劳斯·开普林格 采访
格瓦斯·昆·昆

INTERVIEW

The title of your publication is "Unreleased – released 15+10". What prompted you to compile a book of 15 unreleased and 10 released projects representing the work of your partnership?

Georg Gewers:

Design is an essential part of our work. However, not all the projects we design necessarily enter into the production process. "15+10" is a great opportunity for us to present those projects that would normally not be shown.

Oliver Kühn:

Architecture is there to be built and to be seen. If a building is designed but doesn't end up being built its design disappears in a drawer. That doesn't make it valueless, though; many ideas prove just too good to be carried out at the present time. We have often resurrected ideas contained in projects that had initially been discarded. Consequently we have decided to publish "15+10" to show the experimental aspects of our architecture as well as processes that are based on one another.

Innovation has obviously always been a central aspect of your work. You have succeeded time and again in producing architectural solutions to both new and supposedly very conventional constructions. What does innovation mean to you?

Swantje Kühn:

What indeed is innovation? Finding yet another wild shape? No! Basically innovation is about finding the right solution for any given production process be-

yond convention. In commercial development box shapes have often been regarded as the only viable solution.

No, it doesn't necessarily have to be a box all the time but rather a shell suitable to the production process, reflecting the company's identity. Innovation is the path of finding efficient solutions beyond conventional methods.

Georg Gewers:

Innovation is also about "discovering" and "inventing", about finding new spaces and combining new building materials that take you on a tour of discovery. The AICHI Pavilion for the EXPO 2005 in Japan is a fine example of experiencing space as never experienced before. Innovation also poses a welcome challenge in terms of technology and construction. Take, for example, the Dubai Tower, a project shared with "Schlaich Bergermann + Partner" Engineers. By pushing the limits of statics and by applying new construction methods the tower reaches a height of no less than 440 metres.

Oliver Kühn:

Innovation is extremely multi-layered and can be applied anywhere. Innovation can affect materials used, form or design. It can also bring about a surprisingly intelligent composition of functions which develop into new synergies. The FANUC project displays innovation as an intelligent business reengineering. What do we know about the production process? To what extent is it reflected in the actual shape of the building? How can the building be scaled up or down in size according to business needs? Today's conventional 'morphing' or

'blobbing' doesn't really do it for me.

However, the interactive development of a building variable in size, one that can be zoomed into the right scale with the help of a suitable supporting structure is a truly innovative process. It's not an experimental shaping process, but an analytical approach which leads to new solutions.

Progress in technology isn't always synchronous to the developments in our society today. How do you deal with the different pace of those developments and the problems resulting from it? Architects often complain about the many social restrictions imposed on innovation.

Oliver Kühn:

In contrast to many of our colleagues, we don't complain about the many restrictions in the realisation process. Quite the opposite, we believe that the extensive regulations imposed by the various authorities as well as the clients' demands provide a very rich and complex soil for innovation. Innovative architecture is found in countries where the opinion of the public really counts, such as in Switzerland. It's also to be found in Holland, a highly pluralistic civil society. England is another example and Germany is just beginning to catch on. However, we do not see it in the USA, Russia or China. The impulse for innovation can only be generated in an interconnected pluralistic system with a number of interest groups partaking rather than in a system where "anything goes", where mono-causal, metrically oriented structures dominate without any public input to speak of.

Many people, including architects, observe that nowadays change takes place at such a high pace that it puts an unbearable strain on the individual and they reckon that it is architecture's task to slow down this pace by creating spaces reminiscent of a past era. Do you feel architecture should somehow compensate for the rapid pace of change?

Georg Gewers:

Compared to 10 years ago we certainly are facing a much more complex world with much more complex procedures. Architecture, too, has become extremely multi-dimensional and not only requires team-work of the highest standard but also new structures of communication. There is no need for any kind of retro-formalism.

Swantje Kühn:

I really wouldn't recommend trying to slow down a city's pace by means of architecture. Complexity already exists and we all support it with all the technology in use on a day to day basis. However, I believe we need to simplify it, so that we can deepen our understanding and make better use of it. Therefore the answer to the problem cannot be to step back in time pretending that "things were better in the old days". We need a progressive approach which acknowledges the high quality of many things today. However, we want to help to make them even simpler and more comprehensible.

You seem to be pursuing a higher degree of competence as architects on a communicative level through your work. In order to master today's

complexity you work as an interdisciplinary team of experts.

Oliver Kühn:

Inspiration blossoms where disciplines overlap. This kind of overlap is an important issue to us. Keyword: synergies! In baroque art, for example, synergies are omnipresent. No baroque church would have been built had the architect been afraid of the painter or the sculptor who would later on decorate the interior. And neither painter nor sculptor would have been afraid of the organist who would later fill the church with music. Quite to the contrary, people from different disciplines were drawn together in order to form synergies and synaesthesia trusting in each other's expertise. This is exactly what we should be aiming for today. Architecture is not solely a specialist's concern. We ought to explore the very essence of the project together as a team. When discussing the design for a contemporary opera house in Berlin it was clear to us that we needed to involve composers, sound engineers, opera directors and musicians in the process. We also needed to consult fundraisers, foundations, cultural movements and editors. The final result is always much better and we all feel better about such a team effort than we would have done had we gone "solo".

You have repeatedly made a point of involving artists right from the very early stages of a project. What is your motivation behind this attitude, considering many of your colleagues deliberately avoid consulting artists and proceed to create a work of art by themselves?

Oliver Kühn:

Such architects really have delusions of grandeur! There are even colleagues who won't allow their tenants to put up any private pictures in fear of having their "work of art" ruined. They have surely failed to comprehend the essence of architecture. Architecture is produced for other people. Yes, we are the ones realising an idea, but the focus is on other people and on the public. Our guild's dwindling reputation is due to just this kind of arrogance. If architecture doesn't prove robust enough to allow for the intervention of others, it is unlikely to last anyway. You only need to think the whole process through from beginning to end. Together with artists we have always sought to create spaces that can develop into something truly strong and independent. The Marstallplatz is a fine example of such a space. Olafur Eliasson has managed to both improve it formally and to add synergistic value to it.

Georg Gewers:

Many of our projects are initially designed in cooperation with artists. An early dialogue with artists is an interesting mirror in which our own ideas can be reflected back to us. Nowadays areas of competence aren't defined all that clearly anyway: a building should ideally be a product of all the arts. It really doesn't bother me if architects

collaborate with painters and sculptors and nowadays graphic designers, lighting artists and people from many other disciplines, too.

Swantje Kühn:

There is yet another aspect to it. In a society where every product is increasingly associated with an emotional value, the emotional layers on architecture become even more important. We need layers that trigger feelings and associations that extend the impact of a building beyond its metric boundaries. Artists see things differently and that's another reason why we involve them in our projects. They are exclusively content-orientated and independent, whereas our task as architects is to guide and manage the process as a whole.

You are surprisingly open-minded towards letting other people contribute to your projects. You also seem very relaxed about how your tenants actually intend to use the building later on.

Swantje Kühn:

Music can be switched on and off. You may choose to go to an art exhibition or you may choose to give it a miss. The arts are almost always interactive whereas architecture isn't. You can't simply switch it off, you are constantly in touch with it. A well-received piece of architecture allows you to step right inside and to interact with it. However, buildings that are objects which mustn't be touched don't go down well at all. Architecture must be fit for dialogue. The tenants in our buildings are welcome to settle in and make changes if they like.

Oliver Kühn:

As soon as a third party gets involved, one's own vision of things gets reinterpreted. The other day we talked about Boltanski, an artist who works with exactly this phenomenon. He places empty boxes in a room encouraging the visitor to fill these with their individual stories as a personal continuation of the artist's own narrative. That's how it is with our architecture. It creates worlds which can be rethought by everybody individually. I think that's exactly what gives us pleasure in architecture, architecture which can be interpreted individually. This stands in striking contrast to the so-called rationalists who claim, "Architecture should not leave room for any further interpretation. Our view is cast in stone and that's the end of it."

The projects in your book do not follow a fixed planning pattern, model form or colour coding. We see different designs each of which have an undeniable individual quality always endowed with multiple meaning. How does this come about?

Swantje Kühn:

The three of us do have one thing in common – we all acquired our skills in England. On closer examination there is a generic and absolutely stringent structural diagram common to all our designs, a logical principle governing all. And then there are our different personalities. Georg is a sculptor, I studied Fine Arts in the States and Oliver read Management at the University of St. Gallen. So we all draw inspiration from additional fields. It is not architecture alone. There are other worlds in us that enrich us.

Oliver Kühn:

I agree. Although I generally tend to an analytical approach I react quite intuitively to things that remind me or let me have an inkling of something. Drawing inspiration from different fields is very important to all of us, since we work as a trio. We initially define a project via a number of images. Then we develop a guideline which defines the direction we want to go together. Sometimes an image is already clear from the task on hand, sometimes it evolves from the technology used or from a vision or "mission statement" which we develop for the design. In any case, the image must always remain comprehensible to everybody involved. The result is a clear, uncompromising design guideline from which various highly differentiated designs are developed.

In your projects and your numerous lectures you adopt the position that more than ever before architecture must be more than the mere sum of its parts. Even an industrially pre-fabricated building ought to be of a tangible individual character and possess a certain degree of sensuousness. But doesn't the very idea of Corporate Design demand a homogeneous architectural expression which will allow for a translocation to any place in the world?

Georg Gewers:

Corporate Design isn't about giving "standard answers". It's rather about finding unique solutions to different tasks. After all, we build on specific sites for, hopefully, specific clients. We consider ourselves functional "contextualists" striving to learn as much as

possible about the task on hand before drawing the first design tailored to both the client's and the site's needs.

This process is very important to us. By reconnecting to the initial task and situation we are able to come up with high quality solutions. Nowadays clients and tenants alike are looking for that individual touch more than ever. This also applies to industrial construction. Banal boxes won't make anyone happy. Such buildings are often unoccupied even if they are new. Our cities really could use a touch of individuality and sophistication. German post-war cities aren't exactly prime examples of beauty.

Oliver Kühn:

I believe the emotional attachment to a building and its location is very important indeed. Houses used to have names! Today, in the age of digitalisation, there is an even greater yearning for emotional bonding which is individual and locates us concretely. In this way architecture regains those long-lost qualities of uniqueness and authenticity. This longing for individuality cannot be fulfilled either by a new "International Style" or so-called "Signature Buildings" attributed to certain architects, which could stand anywhere in the world. It is important to be able to say once again, "This house could only be in this place, in this context – it is quite unique."

Many architects speak of a certain identity that their buildings possess. But identity is a purely personal term related to the individual, subjective process of finding self-reassurance. A building cannot be a subject, it may only offer space for socialising and communicat-

ing which may support a person's quest for identity. In the best case scenario the tenant will identify with the building. How do you see your architecture in this perspective?

Oliver Kühn:

The theme of identifying with a building through communicative interaction of a firm's employees, for example, the theme of "feeling at home" and "getting in contact" are of great and fundamental importance in our architecture. Take a look at our designs: The "FANUC"-project entails a Japanese garden on a platform encouraging their members of staff to socialise freely. The Sophie-Gips-Höfe project offers several different public places where people can meet. The external public spaces on Marstallplatz were almost more important to us than the buildings themselves. The atrium and the Inside Panoramas for relaxation and interaction offered at our Frankfurt project – these are all places where people can get together. Identification with a building is generated exclusively by social interactions, by meeting people and by individual experiences which bond one with that place. When the Marstallplatz in Munich was reconstructed and the result finally unveiled people applauded, and there was an old woman who said, she had once again become the little girl she had been before the bombs destroyed Munich. An architect does have the power to generate such emotional experiences. These vital factors determine whether people accept or reject a place. It is the soulfulness of a place which endows it with values beyond its general commercial function. This is

what makes architecture so important to our social life.

At first glance there seems to be a discrepancy between being a global player on the one hand and creating architecture for a very specific place on the other, between industrial prefabrication, rational optimisation and buildings of a unique individual character. What defines individuality in architecture nowadays?

Georg Gewers:

Industrial prefabrication does not necessarily mean less individuality. Some buildings made of industrially prefabricated elements are admittedly very boring indeed. But developing a building with special qualities, with scope for individuality, one that people want to identify with is more a question of having the right spirit, about mastering modern construction methods intellectually. We gladly left behind that "International Style" of the 1960s and the "Post-Modernism" of the 1980s. Today, more individuality is the goal of architects, giving a building something unique. This is perceptible through a building's sensuous effect, well-differentiated features, charisma and an emotional density.