

Spaces of Negotiation

Three Projects by ifau + Jesko Fezer

Exhibition: May 24 – June 1, 2008
Opening: Friday, May 23, 2008, 7 pm
Negotiations: Saturday, May 24, 2008, 6 pm

Ludlow 38
38 Ludlow Street
New York 10002
www.ludlow38.org

Spaces of Negotiation

ifau + Jesko Fezer understand architecture as a site of everyday actions and negotiations. They develop spaces open for appropriation, thus allowing for multiple forms of interpretation and patterns of use. Hermetic and specialized programs are rejected in favor of flexible possibilities of configuration and deliberately indeterminate proposals of use. Here, the architectural design does not figure as an ultimate solution, but is rather understood as a detailed articulation of a problem. Intentionally introduced complications and superimpositions are to provoke the articulation of conflicts in a productive way. Consequently integrated forms of appropriation and practices of the everyday construct relationships to urban reality which constantly question the social relevance and political competence of architecture.

Architecture today is extensively the result of highly controlled propositions. Functions and resulting spatial programs are precisely described and measured; form and presentation are aimed at the uniqueness of the architectural design and largely follow the principles of marketing strategies. Predetermined images are the foundation of a goal-orientated planning culture that produces massive shortcomings by operating on the paradigms of the optimum and the exclusive. To be informed rather by the everyday and its practices as a starting point for the production of city and architecture and to investigate a process-based understanding of the built environment, could contribute to the re-invention of architecture as a communal space – as a space of negotiation, that explicitly stages the demands and potentials of its use for debate.

The three projects by *ifau + Jesko Fezer* presented at *Ludlow 38* are characterized by their function as cultural institutions and by their confrontation with the historical substance of the respective buildings. Both parameters meet with the aim to design an architecture that, in its deliberate indeterminateness, is open for negotiation: as sites of communication and confrontation, exhibitions reflect, discuss, and stage social positionings. One inherent aspect of exhibition-making is to examine its own social function and to permanently re-define its use of space. Moreover, the design of the entrance of *KW – Institute for Contemporary Art Berlin*, the conversion of *Kunstverein München*, as well as *Palais Thinnfeld* in Graz, Austria, are modifications of buildings with a history of more than a hundred years. The found typologies offer simple, traditional patterns of action and structures of use whose essentially open qualities resist a functionalist specialization of space. These characteristics of under-determination become the starting point of architectural revisions and re-interpretations that foster a productive confrontation with new usages and enable the free appropriation by programs, as necessitated by the everyday practices of art institutions.

Planning and designing public cultural institutions in this sense qualifies as an ideal field of experimentation for the development of an architecture open for appropriation. The projects in the exhibition should be understood as an occasion to discuss the possibilities of translating the described demands to other fields of architecture. How can architecture be designed in a process-oriented way, open for use, and, ultimately, as a social space. What strategies and typologies can be conceived and realized today? Besides the projects by *ifau + Jesko Fezer*, further 'responding works' from the field of architecture will be on display to provide the context for discussions which will be staged with invited guests during the course of the exhibition.

Spaces of Negotiation **Three Projects by ifau + Jesko Fezer**

Exhibition: May 24 – June 1, 2008
Opening: May 23, 2008, 7 pm
Negotiations: May 24, 2008, 6 pm

Ludlow 38
38 Ludlow Street
New York 10002
www.ludlow38.org

Exhibition Concept

The exhibition *Spaces of Negotiation* by the Berlin based group of architects *ifau + Jesko Fezer* consists of three interrelated parts: parallel to the architectural projects by *ifau + Jesko Fezer*, “responding works” and texts are on view which serve as references and starting points for the discourse triggered by the exhibition theme. Moreover, the exhibition serves as an occasion to discuss the possibilities and potential of a social architecture, open for appropriation, with guests from the fields of architecture, architecture criticism, art, and sociology. These “Negotiations” make up the third part of the exhibition.

While the projects of *ifau + Jesko Fezer* are presented through plans and models in the center of the exhibition spaces, the “responding works” will cover the walls. This structure aims neither at overemphasizing references nor at positioning itself within certain lines of tradition. Rather, a loosely connected collection of photographs, illustrations, plans, and texts emerges, which is of continued relevance to the work of *ifau + Jesko Fezer* and which is constantly discussed in the process of their work.

Responding Works

The following projects and texts will be presented in the exhibition in different forms and formats:

Horst Rittel: Bewertungsprobleme in der Bauplanung; Charles Jencks: Adhocism; Christopher Alexander: A Pattern Language; N. J. Habraken: Sar-Model

Alison und Peter Smithson: Economist Plaza, London; private kitchen, London; Ottokar Uhl: school, apartment, cupboard, ZKM, Karlsruhe; Hermann Hertzberger: De Schalm, Deventer

Patrick Bouchain, La forêt des délaissés; Anne Lacaton / Jean Philippe Vassal: Place Leon Aucoc, Bordeaux; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Atelier Bow-Wow: Electric Passage; Tezuka Architects: Roof House; Klaus Overmeyer / U.C.: Neuland; K77: Kastanienalle 77

Nicolas Moulin: Vider Paris

Negotiations

ifau + Jesko Fezer would like to take the exhibition as an occasion to discuss “Spaces of Negotiation”, the claims and potentials inherent in that notion, with invited guests: How can architecture be designed in a process-oriented way, open for use, and, ultimately, as a social space. What strategies and typologies can be conceived and realized today?

ifau + Jesko Fezer started *Negotiations* as an ongoing series of discussions with changing subjects in Berlin in December 2006. After Vienna, Graz, and Stuttgart, New York will be the last station of the series. All *Negotiations* will be documented in a forthcoming publication.*

* *Negotiations* in Berlin and Vienna were part of *Spaces of Negotiation - Three Projects by ifau + Jesko Fezer*. Talks in Graz were part of a workshop on aesthetics and use at Steirischer Herbst 2007. Guests were: at framework Berlin: Anne-Julchen Bernhardt (BeL, Cologne), Arno Brandhuber (AdbK Nuremberg, bk+), Susanne Hauser (UdK Berlin), Nikolaus Kuhnert (archplus), Jörg Leeser (BeL, Cologne), Riklef Rambow (psychologist, Berlin/BTU Cottbus) and Andreas Ruby (architectural critic, Berlin); at Architekturzentrum Wien: Hermann Czech (architect, Vienna), Oliver Elser (architectural critic, Vienna), Florian Haydn (00y0 architects, Vienna), Gabu Heindl (architect Vienna, TU Graz) and Marion von Osten (cultural scientist, AdbK Wien); at Festivalzentrum The Theatre in Graz: Hannes Böck (artist, Vienna) Riklef Rambow (psychologist, Berlin/BTU Cottbus), Christian Schmid (sociologist, ETH Zurich) und Eilfried Huth (architect, Graz). Roland Lipuner (geographer, University of Jena) lectured on the occasion of the opening of Künstlerhaus Stuttgart in November 2007.