SEHN SUCHT

DIE walVERWANDTSCHAFTEN
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CORDULA RAU EBERHARD TRÖGER OLE W. FISCHER

Desire – German Pavilion – Biennale di Venezia 2010

A three-dimensional portrait of the sensibility of contemporary German architecture

The German Pavilion's theme of "desire" represents a fundamental emotional driving force of architectural activity. The focus of the exhibition is therefore on direct sensory impressions. Instead of representative models, plans or photographs, the pavilion itself is interpreted as exhibit number one and elevated to a place of yearning. As an oasis of sensibility adorned with a representative selection of collective desires by German architects it serves as an atmospheric rest area, although it can function just as well as an arena for controversial debates. Like some contemporary salon it is a place of stimulation, communication and personal exchanges on the grounds of the Biennale. The main room functions as a central common room that is surrounded by five theme cabinets which make for an inspiring tour. They lend the pavilion a temporary new identity, trigger trains of association, and provide something to talk about in the salon.

Description of the rooms:

Portico (teaser and reception)

The portico functions as a reception room and proclaims the theme and message of the German Pavilion to the outside world. A shimmering gold curtain over 8 metres high suspended between the pillars beckons invitingly. As a playful element it reinforces the external appearance of the pavilion as a properly constituted place of sociability. The covered outer room creates a mildly enclosed intermediate space between inside and outside. The neon sign "Desire" above the entrance door underlines the club atmosphere as one enters the Red Salon.

- Over 8-metre high curtain between the pillars of the portico
- Neon sign "Desire" above the entrance door to the Red Salon (Jakobine Meyer)

Red Salon (main room)

The main room exudes the atmosphere of a salon. As a common room it invites one to linger and pause for thought. It is a stimulating rendezvous for exchanging views on the Biennale grounds. The walls and furniture are covered with soft red fabrics, which give it a cosy feeling. Comfy mobile armchairs beckon invitingly. The walls are covered with hand sketches, framed in high-quality dark wood, of the architectural desires of selected architects, critics and other experts. As a "panorama of the sensibilities" of today's architectural profession they are supposed to stimulate talk of personal

la Biennale di Venezia
12. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura
Partecipazioni nazionali

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desires. These fleeting sketches constitute a snapshot of the current state of the German architectural scene. The sketches will receive a separate publication. Acoustic soundtracks reminiscent of Goethe's *Italian Journey* make it possible to experience directly absent rooms and places via the sense of hearing. The Red Salon can be furnished, as required, for events such as symposia, workshops or concerts on the theme of desire.

- Continuous red textile wall coverings to a height of approx. 5.40 metres
- 50 red-covered armchairs
- 182 framed sketches on the walls
- 8-channel sound system (U5 artist collective)

Hall of Mirrors (Large Cabinet, to the left)

The room to the left of the entrance places the visitor himself in the centre of perception. Instead of objects and representations, such as plans, photos, models or renderings, it is people themselves that are the centre of attention. Due to the complete lining of the walls with mirrors the visitor is faced with the original lamps of the Palace of the Republic hanging overhead and the architecture of the Pavilion. The room dissolves and the visitor is endlessly duplicated under a firmament of lamps.

- Surrounding walls lined with mirrors to a height of about 5.40 metres
- Original lamps from the Palace of the Republic, Berlin

Room with a View (Small Cabinet, to the left)

In reverse analogy to the Hall of Mirrors all the walls in the Room with a View are kept white. For the first time in the history of the German Pavilion and indeed of the entire Biennale grounds a view of the lagoon is permitted. From a French window with Venetian-style shutters one can see from there a romantically located vantage point overlooking the sea. The high white fluttering curtain further emphasizes the window in the Room with a View and is associated with the theme of "desire". Instead of encouraging inward reflection the room is open to the outside. A new-laid path to the vantage point overlooking the sea reinforces this outward link.

- French window with shutters
- High white curtain (in association with Siegrun Appelt)

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Dark Room (Small Cabinet, to the right)

In contrast to the daylight in the Room with a View this room is plunged in nocturnal blackness. A black fitted sheet at the level of the cornice darkens the room further and emphasizes its intimate character. Turned away from the visitor is a tall cupboard, which opens towards the corner. It holds a secret. If one draws closer one finds there is a model in it illuminated by a lamp bulb. It is a slightly altered copy of the German Pavilion. From out of the cupboard a voice can be heard speaking alternately in German, English and Italian. The imaginary speaker tells a fantastic story in connection with the presentation of the model. The room is pervaded with an air of mystery.

- Cupboard with model and lighting (Gottfried Müller in association with Kaiserslautern Technical University)
- Black colour of the wall
- Black fitted sheet

The Void (Large Cabinet, to the right)

In this empty room pictures are replaced by texts. The words generate personal associations in the mind of any visitor. Hanging on the wall is a large painting with an artistic projection which renders tastefully overlaid shades of colour. The LED installation uses the latest technology to create images associated with desire. In order to create scope for interpretation and, at certain time intervals, planned interaction, the room is otherwise empty and maintained in its original state as an exhibition space of the German Pavilion.

- Writings on the wall (Milch+Honig Designkultur / Rafael Dietzel, Christina John)
- Computerized LED installation on the wall (Siegrun Appelt)

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