



Hilmer & Sattler – Buildings and Projects / Bauten und Projekte

With an introduction by Stanislaus von Moos. 248 pp. with ca. 250 ill., 242 x 297 mm, hard-cover., English/German
ISBN 978-3-930698-77-6
Euro 78.00, sfr 138.00, £ 52.00, US \$ 89.00, \$A, 148.00

»Designing has less to do with inventing than with recombining stored architectural memories.« By saying this, architects Heinz Hilmer and Christoph Sattler are trying to express that they are not inclined to give in to the hope that is especially raised in Modernism of being able to invent something really new, but that instead they consciously take their bearings from constantly recurring forms of architecture and urbanism. They neither desire nor aim to design a quite different building or a quite different town, but to develop the building and the city as well as they possibly can from their particular context, literally building on the experience of the past.

Another of the two architects' credos is that architecture is an independent discipline with its own laws, and that therefore it should not draw on other areas: »A building is neither a cave nor a tent, neither a tree nor an umbrella, neither a stand nor a machine, neither structure nor construction. A building is a building.«

Leafing through this book about Hilmer and Sattler's work over the last 25 years – from their first private house, built for philosopher Jürgen Habermas, a reflection on the white, cubic architecture of early Modernism, via the block-edge development in the centre of Karlsruhe and the picture gallery in the Tiergarten in Berlin down to the urban design for the area around Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, which helped to gain acceptance for the principle of the European city as a living tissue of buildings, streets and squares rather than an ultimately city-hostile agglomeration of high-rise buildings in this part of Berlin – what is conveyed as well as precision of detail, diversity and proportionality is above all the self-confidence of these two architects who are so sure of themselves.

Stanislaus von Moos is professor of art history at Zurich University. He was the »inventor« and first editor of the magazine *archithese*, which succeeded in becoming one of the most important architectural discussion forums from a standing start. Works on Le Corbusier, Venturi and Rauch and the *Esprit Nouveau* have a particular place among Stanislaus von Moos's published books.

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