



Opus 31

Steidle + Partner, Wacker-Haus, Munich

With an introduction by Gottfried Knapp und photographs by Stefan Müller-Naumann. 60 pp. with 65 Abb., 280 x 300 mm, hard-cover, German/English

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Otto Steidle acquired international recognition for his extraordinary early residential buildings in Munich and for exemplary solutions for school and office buildings. His office and residential complex for Wacker-Chemie in Munich is a lively accent on a particularly conspicuous site in architecturally conservative Munich. Individually balanced buildings are arranged along the block perimeter in Prinzregentenstraße, the most important east– west axis in the inner city, diagonally opposite the Haus der Kunst, and in Bruderstraße, which leads to Lehel, a traditional residential area. Steidle has not packed the different functions in layers one above the other, as is usual in commercial projects of this kind, but has separated them cleanly from each other. The office building on the noisy carriage-way of Prinzregentenstraße takes the curve to the narrow side-street in an elegant sweep, with the glass skin suspended in front of the corner giving the building an almost Mendelsohn-like verve. The series of residential buildings in Bruderstraße is given a different quality by Berlin painter Erich Wiesner's strong colours and the projecting and recessed façades. And as here too the normal Munich scale is considerably exceeded – the three residential towers placed diagonally to the courtyard rise eight storeys high – there is a surprising amount of room for publicly accessible gardens inside the block, designed by landscape architects Latz + Partner, and also scope for revealing the torrential Stadtmühlbach in a spectacular fashion, which used to be covered, but now shoots directly past one of the windows of the sunken cafeteria and then under the entrance hall of the office building, before playing at waterfalls as it gushes into the Englischer Garten at the other side of the road. Thus Prinzregentenstraße, as a mile of museum and government buildings, and the Lehel residential area have acquired an architectural attraction of elemental impact in the shape of the Wacker building.

Gottfried Knapp is responsible for architectural reporting as cultural editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in Munich. He has written on contemporary architecture and urban development in almost all the specialist publications in Germany. Stefan Müller-Naumann studied at the Fachakademie für Fotodesign in Munich and then turned to architectural photography. His work includes photographs of buildings by Kurt Ackermann, Tadao Ando, Thomas Herzog and Uwe Kiessler.

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