



Opus 45

Stüler / Strack / Merz, Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin

With an introduction by Klaus Jan Philipp und photographs by Christian Gahl. 72 pp. with ca. 65 ill., 280 x 300 mm, hard-cover, German/English

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When Wilhelm I gave the go-ahead for the building of the Alte Nationalgalerie in 1861, this at last provided an opportunity to develop the Museum Island, which at the time consisted only of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Altes Museum and Friedrich August Stüler's Neues Museum, in the form once dreamed of by Friedrich Wilhelm IV. The Romantic on the Prussian throne had intended to transform the Spree island beyond Schinkel's museum into a »haven of art« and prepared some designs for it himself. Here we also find a building in the form of a temple on a high plinth for the first time. Stüler was commissioned to design the new building, but he died unexpectedly in 1865, even before work had started. His successor was Johann Heinrich Strack, who completed the building and its artistic furnishings by 1876.

But this was not the end of the building history of the Alte Nationalgalerie, which became a national monument because of its triumphal lines. Museum directors like Ludwig Justi and Eberhard Hanfstaengl, new ideas about museums, urgently needed space, war damage and rebuilding in the days of the GDR changed the interior of the building fundamentally. It has now been completely refurbished on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the museum's opening. HG Merz of Stuttgart was entrusted with this commission through his wealth of experience as a museum architect. His concept was to reveal the various historical strata of the building, without turning it into a museum piece itself. The principal protagonist in the Alte Nationalgalerie is 19th century art, not 21st century architecture and service equipment. Careful restoration brought the original decoration of Strack's building to light in some places, and also the small Jugendstil galleries dating from the changes made under the direction of Justi. This has produced a museum that does not deny its origins, but they are not thrust into the foreground either.

Klaus Jan Philipp lectures in the University of Stuttgart's architectural institute. Edition Axel Menges has published his *Um 1800 – Architekturtheorie und Architekturkritik in Deutschland zwischen 1790 und 1810* and *Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Späte Projekte/Late Projects*. Christian Gahl took a photography course and then studied architecture. He has worked in Berlin as an architectural photographer since 1996.

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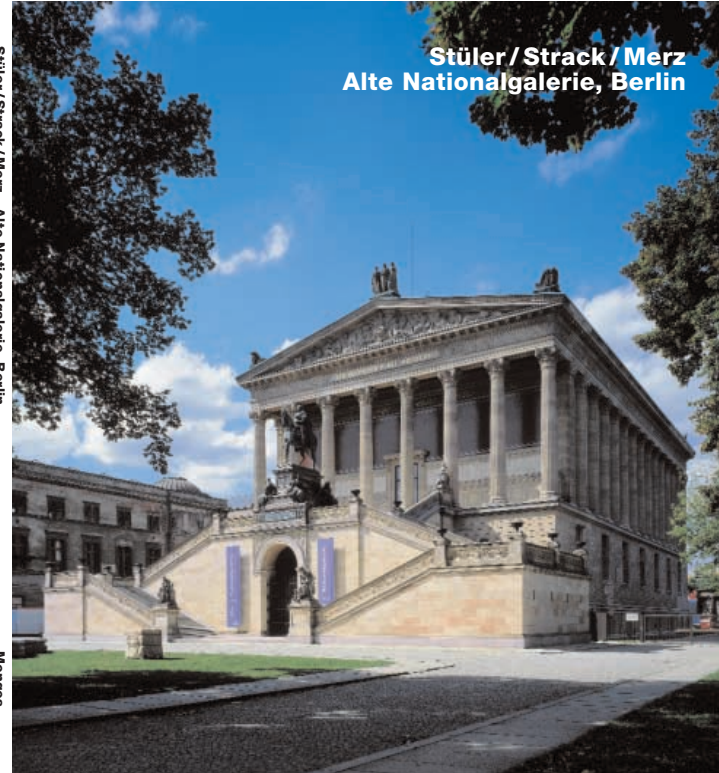
Opus
Architektur in Einzelanstellungen
Architecture in individual presentations
Herausgeber/Editor: Axel Menges

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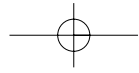
Als im Jahr 1861 Wilhelm I. den Startschuß für den Bau der Alten Nationalgalerie gab, bot sich endlich die Gelegenheit, die Museumsinsel, die damals lediglich aus Karl Friedrich Schinkels Altem Museum und Friedrich August Stülers Neuem Museum bestand, in der Form weiterzuentwickeln, die sich einst Friedrich Wilhelm IV. erträumt hatte. Der Romantiker auf dem zweifachen Thron hatte die Spreeinsel hinter Schinkels Museum zu einer »Freistätte der Kunst« ausbauen wollen und selbst Entwürfe dafür ausgearbeitet. Hier findet sich auch zum ersten Mal ein Gebäude in Form eines auf einem hohen Sockel stehenden Tempels. Stüler, der den Auftrag für den Neubau erhielt, verstarb jedoch unerwartet im Jahr 1855, noch bevor mit den Bauarbeiten begonnen worden war. Sein Nachfolger wurde Johann Heinrich Strack, der den Bau und dessen künstlerische Ausstattung bis 1876 vollendete.

Die Baugeschichte der Alten Nationalgalerie, die durch den triumphalen Giebel auch ein Nationalmonument wurde, war damit nicht zu Ende. Museumsdirektoren wie Ludwig Justi und Eberhard Hanfstaengl, neue museale Konzepte und dringender Raumbedarf, Kriegszerstörung und Wiederaufbau zu DDR-Zeiten veränderten das Innere des Gebäudes grundlegend. Anlässlich der 125. Wiederkehr der Eröffnung des Museums ist das Gebäude nun einer Generalreparatur unterzogen worden. Das Grundkonzept von HG Merz aus Stuttgart, der mit dieser Aufgabe auf Grund seiner reichen Erfahrung als Museumsarchitekt beauftragt wurde, war es, die verschiedenen historischen Schichten des Bauwerks sichtbar zu machen, ohne den Bau selbst zu einem Ausstellungsstück werden zu lassen. Hauptakteur in der Alten Nationalgalerie ist die Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts, nicht die Architektur und die Bautechnik des 21. Jahrhunderts. Bestehende Restaurierungen brachten an einigen Stellen die originale Ausstattung des Strackschen Baus ebenso an den Tag wie die Jugendstil-Kabinette der Umgestaltung unter dem Direktor Justi. Entstanden ist ein Museum, das seine Geschichte nicht verleugnet, diese aber auch nicht in den Vordergrund drängt.

Klaus Jan Philipp ist Professor für Architekturgeschichte an der Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg. Vom ihm erschienen in der Edition Axel Menges die Bücher *Um 1800 – Architekturtheorie und Architektur in Deutschland zwischen 1790 und 1810* sowie *Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Späte Projekte/Late Projects*. Christian Gull studierte nach einer Photographieerlehre Architektur. Er arbeitet seit 1996 als Architekturfotograph in Berlin.

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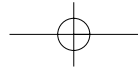


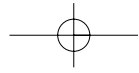


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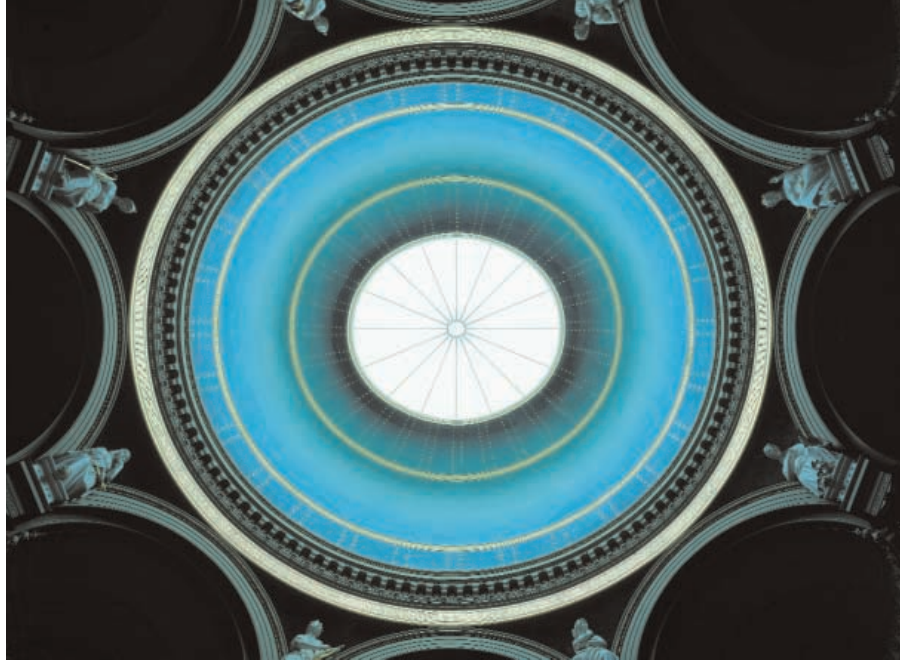


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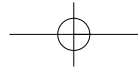
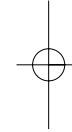
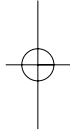


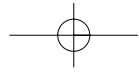


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19. Raum 2.01 in Richtung 2.02.
20. Raum 2.01 in Richtung Haupttreppehaus.
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19. Raum 2.01 looking towards 2.02.
20. Room 2.01 looking towards the main staircase.



21. Raum 2.01. Kuppel.
21. Room 2.01. Cupola.





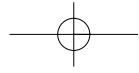
22. Raum 2.06 in Richtung 2.06 und 2.01.
23. Raum 2.15 in Richtung 2.14.
22. Room 2.06 looking towards 2.06 and 2.01.
23. Room 2.15 looking towards 2.14.

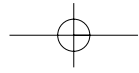


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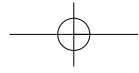
24. Raum 2.02 (erster Cornelius-Saal) in Richtung
2.01.
25. Raum 2.02 (erster Cornelius-Saal) in Richtung
2.03.
24. Room 2.02 (first Cornelius-Saal) looking towards
2.01.
25. Room 2.02 (first Cornelius-Saal) looking towards
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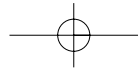




26-28, Raum 2.03 (zweiter Cornelius-Saal)
in Richtung 2.02 (erster Cornelius-Saal)

26-28, Room 2.03 (second Cornelius-Saal)
looking towards 2.02 (first Cornelius-Saal)





29. Raum 2.07 in Richtung 2.08.
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