

Österreichischer Beitrag / Austrian Contribution
Biennale Architettura 2014
7.6. – 23.11. 2014

PLENUM. *PLACES OF* POWER



The team	3
La Biennale di Venezia	4
President of the National Council Mag.a Barbara Prammer on the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale 2014	5
Federal Minister Dr. Josef Ostermayer on the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale 2014	6
Commissioner Dr. Christian Kühn on the exhibition concept "Plenum. Places of Power."	7
La Biennale di Venezia 14th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice	8
Biographies	9
Quotes	13
Press images	15
Public partners and partners	17

Commissioner

Christian Kühn

Concept and design

Christian Kühn, Harald Trapp

With contributions by

Auböck/Kárász, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Kollektiv/Rauschen, Institut für
Architektur und Entwerfen - Technische Universität Wien

Exhibition team

Thomas Amann, Vera Kumer, Florian Sammer,
Kathrin Schelling, Markus Zimmermann

Project assistants and researchers

Katharina Brandl, Doris Grüssinger, Daniela Hahn

Photographer

Andreas Balon
office@andreasbalon.com
www.andreasbalon.com

Graphic design

buerobauer – Gesellschaft für Orientierung und Identität mbH
office@buerobauer.com
www.buerobauer.com

Press

A B C Ana Berlin Communications
press2014@labiennale.at / +43 (0) 660 47 53 818
www.anaberlin.com

Event management and communication

toikoi_erzählende räume
Isabelle Blanc, Chiara Riccardi, Ilaria Vernier
toikoiwien@gmail.com
www.toikoi.com

Biennale Office Vienna

Belvederegasse 14-16/M4, 1040 Wien
office2014@labiennale.at, +43 (0) 676 491 46 31
www.labiennale.at

Realized on behalf of The Federal Chancellery of Austria – Arts Division

BUNDESKANZLERAMT  ÖSTERREICH

La Biennale di Venezia
14th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice
“Fundamentals”

7 June to 23 November 2014
Opening of the Austrian Pavilion, Giardini: 6 June 2014

Press Office Architektur
Akkreditierung

Ca' Giustinian, San Marco 1364/A,
30124 Venezia
infoarchitettura@labiennale.org
T: +39 (0) 415218849, F: +39 (0) 415218812

Opening times

Giardini and Arsenale, 7 June–23 November 2014, 10.00–18.00
Closed Mondays (except for 9 June and 17 November)
Arsenale grounds: 10.00–20.00 on Fridays and Saturdays
until 27 September

Tickets

Giardini and Arsenale (Campo Tana): 10.00–17.30
Special 2days: €30 (pass valid for two successive days for both exhibition venues)
Special 2days: discount for under-26s: €22 (pass valid for two successive days for both exhibition venues)
Standard tickets: €25 (pass valid for single admissions to both exhibition venues, not necessarily on successive days)
Advance sales: www.labiennale.org
Booking, information, guided tours:
T: +39 041 5218 828, Mon–Fri: 10.00–17.30

Catalogue

Marsilio Editori

Website

www.labiennale.org
www.labiennale.at

President of the National Council

Mag.^a Barbara Prammer on the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale 2014

It is a fascinating, exciting idea to make Parliament the subject of the Austrian contribution to the 2014 Architecture Biennale. By focusing on all national parliament buildings, this demonstrates that architecture always has a political function too. From this is derived a responsibility which far transcends purely functional, technical and creative aspects.

Whether or not parliamentarianism is possible and works depends on a number of factors, first and foremost on an organisational framework of constitutional law and the various stakeholders. And it requires a suitable location where social conflicts can be resolved in a civilised manner, where discussion takes place, where balance can be achieved in the form of workable compromises. In order to be able to engage in fair debate, it requires a democratic atmosphere which conveys a sense of security, respect and equal rights.

Austria is fortunate to have a parliament building that is outstanding in several respects. On the one hand, it is situated in one of the most beautiful sites in the country, in architectural harmony with the developments along the Ringstraße. This emphasises the prime role of parliament as a central haven of democracy. The building was situated at the point of intersection between imperial and middle-class Vienna, thereby embracing the whole breadth of society and embodying its function as a political unifier.

While the house conveys a sense of self-confidence, it is not showy. From the overall concept down to the details, the architect Theophil Hansen succeeded in creating a parliamentary location which not only encourages committed, passionate debate and political discourse, but also urges moderation in the common interest and compromise.

This quality of the house is palpable, both outwardly and within, which implies a special responsibility for this valuable heritage. The resolution passed by all six parties in the National Council at the start of the year to completely refurbish the building can be seen as evidence that politicians are well aware of this responsibility.



Fotocredit: Foto Wilke

Mag.^a Barbara Prammer
President of the National Council

Federal Minister Dr. Josef Ostermayer

on the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale 2014

I am pleased to note that this year's Architecture Biennale will be curated by a profound expert on architecture, Christian Kühn.

In his contribution called "Plenum. Places of Power", Commissioner Kühn takes up the general theme proposed by Biennale Director Rem Koolhaas for the national pavilions: "Absorbing modernity 1914–2014". The Austrian exhibition centres on a typology of parliamentary buildings of different nations, mostly built in the past one hundred years.

The exhibition demonstrates vividly how different power is manifested in architecture by looking at examples of the Austrian parliament on Vienna's Ringstraße and Coop Himmelb(l)au's suggestions for the Albanian parliament in Tirana. Parliament buildings as democratic institutions which encourage identification are decades-spanning symbols of political discourse and beacons of hope for whole generations, regardless of when they were built and under what political circumstances.

The Biennale di Venezia is central to the discourse on historical and contemporary architecture, their relation to each other, and thus to creating a broad acceptance of new and unexpected architecture.

Architecture is more than just building. Architecture implies an examination of people and their lives. Having an open mind for changing spaces and encouraging familiarisation with new perspectives are important aspects in the domain between architecture, science, art and everyday life.

For the ninth time, Austria is now making a major contribution to the international architecture discourse, thus consolidating its outstanding international renown in this sphere. This year again, the Federal Ministry at the Federal Chancellery is providing 400,000 euros for the concept and realisation of the Austrian exhibition.

I would like to congratulate the participants in this year's Architecture Biennale and look forward to good attendance and a high level of national and international acceptance.



Fotocredit: BKA/Johannes Zinner

Dr. Josef Ostermayer
Federal Minister of Art and Culture

Commissioner Dr. Christian Kühn

on the exhibition concept “Plenum. Places of Power.”

The subject of the Austrian contribution to the 2014 Biennale is parliament, i.e. the place where the power of the people has found its home. The idea of democratic legitimization of power is so widespread today that no nation can do without building such a place, at least in name, for a representative popular assembly. What do these places look like? And how are they connected to a public whose trust in democratic formation of will seems to be dwindling around the globe?

The exhibition at the Austrian Pavilion sets out to find answers to these questions from various vantage points. The main room of the pavilion displays all two hundred or so national parliament buildings from around the world – a parliament of parliaments – each documented by models on a scale of 1:500, site plans, and facts and figures about the various buildings. This plenum shows which messages are often thrust upon architecture when it comes to building parliaments: national identity, permanence, conformity with historical exemplars, but also compulsive representation of a new beginning. The models are mounted in a stringent grid, seeming to grow out of the wall. Arranged in such a mass, the monuments become an ornament.

In contrast to these abstract monumental architectures reduced to form, architecture is presented in the two side-rooms of the pavilion not as an accumulation of objects, but as a singular sequence of conditions. Here we see examples presented in detail: the Austrian parliament on Vienna's Ringstraße and two projects by Coop Himmelb(l)au, the design for the Albanian parliament in Tirana and the conference centre in Dalian/China, built as a venue for the Asian version of the World Economic Forum in Davos. These projects are showcased in the context of their political history. The focus here is on conflicts, value judgments, partiality, in a word: on the development of society in the medium of architecture. Architecture is not an object. Architecture is making architecture.

The exhibition continues to explore this topic in the pavilion's courtyard. A densely-planted garden planned by the landscape architects Auböck und Kárász replaces the rationalist square grid of the floor panels, bringing the disordered green of the surroundings into the show. Here, away from all monumental architecture, the focus is on new phenomena of democratic representation. Transported by a volatile medium, a sound installation developed by the Kollektiv/Rauschen group: the garden speaks through small loudspeakers, in quiet separate voices, but also in the swelling chorus of the impatient crowd.

La Biennale di Venezia

14. Internationale Architecture Exhibition in Venice

The Venice Architecture Biennale has become the world's most important exhibition of contemporary architecture over the past years. Founded in 1980 as a "filler" between the art biennials which had been taking place since 1895, the Architecture Biennale is today a major cultural event, already attracting as many as 178,000 visitors and 3000 accredited journalists in 2012. Fifty-five nations presented their own national contribution. We can expect to see a further increase for the forthcoming Biennale in 2014, with the duration of the Architecture Biennale being levelled up to that of the art biennials and thus almost doubled.

Under the overall directorship of Rem Koolhaas, this year's Biennale focuses on "architecture and not architects". Koolhaas Himself is curating a show entitled "Fundamentals" in the central pavilion, which will be about the basic elements of architecture: foundation, stairs, floors, walls and roof.

Koolhaas has suggested the theme "Absorbing Modernity 1914–2014" for the national pavilions. The aim here is to explore the effects of "modernism" as a principle and style in architecture over the past one hundred years.

If the idea is successful, this Biennale will not be an exhibition of architectural production from the last two years, but will instead offer the opportunity for scrutiny of the architecture system.



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon

Christian Kühn **Commissioner, concept and design**

Born in 1962, graduated from Vienna University of Technology, PhD at ETH Zürich; post-doctoral thesis at Vienna University of Technology in 2001; Professor at the Institute of Architecture and Design at Vienna University of Technology, emphasis on educational architecture. Architectural critic for "Die Presse" and for specialist journals including Architektur- und Bauforum, archithese and ARCH+. 1995–2000 Board of the Austrian Association of Architecture, since 2000 Board of the Austrian Architecture Foundation. Member of the Advisory Council for Architecture in the Federal Chancellery and the Monument Preservation Advisory Council. Since 2008, Dean of Studies for Architecture at Vienna University of Technology.



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon

Harald Trapp **Concept and design**

Born in 1960, studied sociology (Munich), architecture (Vienna, London, Stuttgart), exhibition architect (MAK, Künstlerhaus Vienna, Kunsthalle Bonn, Venice Biennale, among others), Assistant Professor at the Institute of Architecture and Design, Building Theory department (Vienna University of Technology), PhD (Vienna University of Technology), teaching assignment at the School of Architecture (University of East London).



Fotocredit: Peter Reischer

Auböck + Kárász

Landscape architects and architects

International activities in landscape and garden architecture. Cultural science studies, film projects, exhibition concepts and designs. www.auboeck-karasz.at

Maria Auböck

Studied Architecture at Vienna University of Technology. Teaching assignment at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, since 1999 Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts Munich: "Design in Free Space".

János Kárász

Studied architecture and social science in Vienna. Teaching assignment at universities in Vienna, Munich and Budapest.



Fotocredit: © Manfred Klimek

Wolf D. Prix

COOP HIMMELB(L)AU

Wolf D. Prix, born in Vienna in 1942, Design Principal and CEO of COOP HIMMELB(L)AU. Studied architecture at Vienna University of Technology, at the Architectural Association in London, and at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) in Los Angeles. Wolf D. Prix is regarded as one of the inventors of the deconstructivist movement in architecture. The invitation to the exhibition "Deconstructivist Architecture" at the MoMA in New York in 1988 was the international breakthrough for COOP HIMMELB(L)AU.

COOP HIMMELB(L)AU was founded in Vienna in 1968, since when the company has been operating in the spheres of architecture, urban planning, design and art, headed by Wolf D. Prix. Another studio opened in Los Angeles, USA, in 1988. COOP HIMMELB(L)AU currently employs a staff of more than one hundred from nineteen countries. www.coop-himmelblau.at



Fotocredit: Kollektiv/Rauschen

KOLLEKTIV/RAUSCHEN

The KOLLEKTIV/RAUSCHEN group was founded in Berlin in 2010 as part of an exhibition project and consists of four artists from the sphere of fine arts and music. As KOLLEKTIV/RAUSCHEN, they work on projects that enable an extended space of sound, combining elements of performance, installation, sculpture and concert.
www.kollektivrauschen.org

KOLLEKTIV/RAUSCHEN are:

Sebastian Bauer [*1977, D] studied at the universities of Erlangen and Vienna (history, theatre studies); Christian Schröder [*1979, AT] studied at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (media art); Samuel Schaab [*1981, D] studied at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (media art); Markus Taxacher [*1980, AT] studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (sculpture, digital media).



Fotocredit: Vera Kumer

Vera Kumer

Vera Kumer (*1979/AT) is Senior Scientist at the Institute for Architecture and Design at TU Vienna with a specialization in digital media in architecture. Since 2013 she is member of the "International Consortium for Repository Discourse" founded in 2011 by Dennis de Bel (*1984/NL) and Philipp Teister (1982/DE) in Rotterdam and Vienna. In its work, the consortium focuses on the relationship between scientific and artistic research and applied methodology. ICFRD is involved in research on privacy/control of virtual and physical spaces, anonymity, (virtual) off-spaces and non-spaces.

Fotocredit: Markus Zimmermann



Markus Zimmermann

Markus Zimmermann (Berlin, D), studied Computer Science (Berlin, D) and Architecture (Vienna, Buenos Aires and Shenzhen).

Since 2009, he contributed to the HB2 Media Lab at Vienna University of Technology exploring experimental usages of moving images and digital media in the process of form and spatial definition methods, where intensive use of digital video, new media and efforts in cinematographic experiments as a new toolset for and within the architectural design phase were put into practice. His work is situated at the interface between media art, movie making, programming and digital architecture. Projects / Exhibitions / Lectures: Trimarchi DG (Mar del Plata, ARG), 2007; Maispace (Vienna, AT), 2008; Lead Award Hamburg (DE), 2009; Witte de Witt / Festival Opening (Rotterdam, NL), 2010; Coded Cultures (Vienna, AT), 2011; Future Fluxus, Donaufestival (Krems, AT), 2011; ORF Kunstradio, Radiokulturhaus (Vienna, AT), 2012, Nassauischer Kunstverein (Wiesbaden, DE) 2012.

Institute of Architecture and Design, Vienna University of Technology

With more than 27,000 students and some 4500 members of staff, Vienna University of Technology is Austria's largest research and educational facility for natural science and technology. In keeping with the maxim of "Technology for People", Vienna University of Technology has been a hub of research, teaching and studying for almost two hundred years. Vienna University of Technology thus combines pure and application-driven research and research-driven teaching at a high level of quality.

Students of architecture from various classes were involved in the exhibition on show in Venice. The foundations for construction of the roughly two hundred models of national parliament buildings were developed as part of the exercise "Specialist fields of building theory" (supervised by Florian Sammer, Kathrin Schelling, Prof. Christian Kühn). The Austrian parliament was studied and documented in image sequences in the laboratory exercise "Photographic dissection of performative spaces" (Vera Kumer / Prof. Gerhard Steixner).

Statements on the Biennale and the Austrian contribution 2014

"Architecture is a medium of social development. That is to say, architecture reflects, but also influences society.

This applies particularly to spaces of political representation. Today, the monuments of democracy are often seen as ornaments, as decorations concealing other powers. In the exhibition, we experiment with different perspectives, with outward opening, with different forms of speaking and being heard."

— **Christian Kühn**

"The crisis of representation is equally a crisis of architecture, its reduction to symbols. The spaces of power are no longer apprehended by architecture, the new media encourage spontaneous formations of opinion and societal movements. But the people organised in this manner come together in urban places, in parks or in squares. The Austrian pavilion becomes a plenum of places of power."

— **Harald Trapp**

"GARDEN: FREE SPACE

Unlike the architectural pathos of traditional democratic representation, the courtyard of the Austrian pavilion pans out an aleatorically encoded grove: a free space that obeys different principles of development. The result is a landscape of subtle sound whose division evolves from different density, filters and views. Inside the courtyard walls, colours, scents and textures envelop visitors. The garden is a metaphor, framework and background for current swarm-like forms of formulating political aims and forming opinions: atmospherically charged, temporarily limited, growing out of contradiction."

— **Auböck + Kárász**

Statements on the Biennale and the Austrian contribution 2014

"Clearly demonstrating sociopolitical contexts is certainly an important step for the Architecture Biennale in order to make invisible architecture visible."

— **Wolf D. Prix**

"Our sound installation transforms the garden of the Austrian pavilion into a swelling and subsiding flow of words. The composition is based upon text fragments of digital communication in the context of political events. The cool architecture of the main building is linked to the dynamic and disordered structures of the plants in the garden by means of an acoustic axis. A Twitter account set up especially for the Austrian pavilion forges a link with the outside world, with people being able to send tweets to the address of the pavilion. Integrated into the composition, they become part of the installation."

— **Kollektiv/Rauschen**

"The work presented in the exhibition follows the method of "photographic dissection". Sequential photographic recording of movement in space dissects space step-by-step as in an architectural section. This process of moving a scalpel through the architectural body is followed by a process - situated between film and photography - of merging the sections according to the spatial trajectories used before."

— **Vera Kumer**

"The work presented in the exhibition juxtaposes material from two architectural worlds separated by 140 years: the Austrian parliament in Vienna designed by Theophil Hansen and the parliament project for Tirana/Albania and the international conference center in Dalian/China, both designed by Coop Himmelb(l)au. Videos, photographs and sketches are integrated into a multi-screen video-performance, a continuous image stream that challenges the visual capacities of the observer."

— **Markus Zimmermann**

The press images and further information can be downloaded from www.labiennale.at.



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon

Fotocredit: Andreas Balon



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon



Fotocredit: Andreas Balon



Public partners

Institute of Architecture and Design, Vienna University of Technology



Main sponsors

Autodesk
BAI – Bauträger Austria Immobilien
BIG – Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft
Vasko & Partner
Wagner-Bíro
Wolf Theiss Rechtsanwälte



Sponsors

Bauunternehmung Granit
Wienerberger



Special sponsors

buero bauer – Gesellschaft für Orientierung und Identität mbH
Bundeskammer der Architekten und Ingenieurkonsulenten
Fritz Egger – Holzwerkstoffe
General Laser
Kalbeck Media
Kallco Bauträger
Nicera Nippon Ceramic
ÖSW – Österreichisches Siedlungswerk



Media partners

dérive – Verein für Stadtforschung
UmBau – Theorie der Praxis
Austrian Society for Architecture
Insidereri

