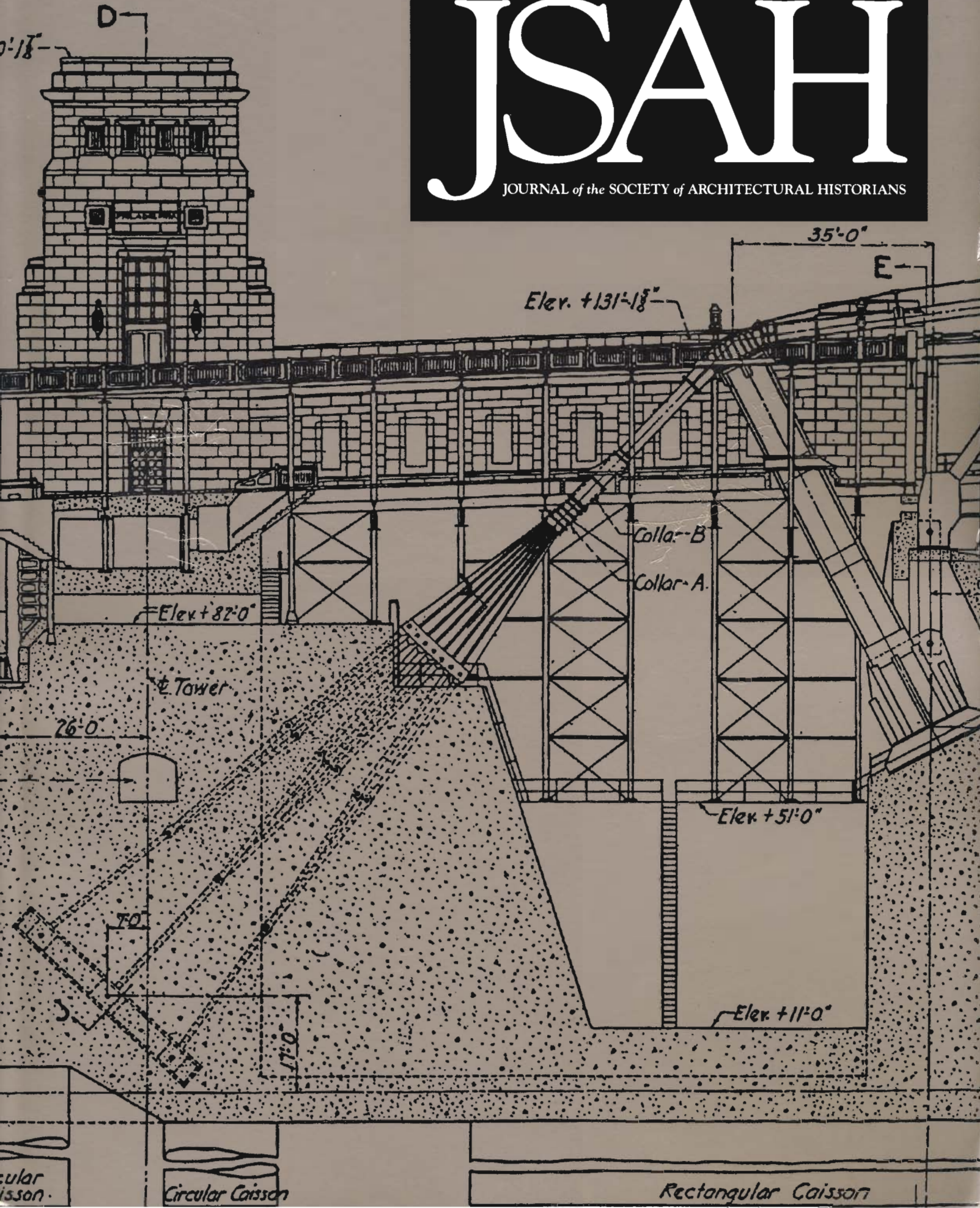


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what one might call the "deep facades" he built for Alexander VII, which are well documented by drawings in the Palazzo Venezia exhibition. The facade of S. Maria della Pace includes a transformation of the piazza and a renovation of most of the interior of the church. Witty, complex, Montanesque, full of episodes within episodes, this tiny urban theater is one of the masterpieces of the European baroque. At S. Maria in Via Lata on the Corso, Cortona combined Renaissance sources with such wit and muscle that they became baroque (Andrea Palladio's Villa Pisani at Montagnana, Peruzzi's Palazzo Massimi alle Colonne, the atrium of the sacristy of S. Spirito in Florence by Cronaca and Giuliano da Sangallo). What had begun as a small restoration by a private citizen became a papal celebration of the house in which Peter and Paul first stayed in Rome, in effect, the first papal palace.

One can spend a profitable day strolling through Cortona's Rome, where much of the architectural and decorative work is still on view. At Palazzo Barberini, after the Cortona fresco in the main salon, one should see the palace theater, originally standing just north of the palace and now moved up the Via Bissolati and converted into a bank. The Cortona portal and windows are quite intact and remarkable. Up the hill at the Quattro Fontane, the fountain diagonally opposite S. Carlino and the door next to it are good examples of the young and still very Tuscan Cortona. The church of S. Nicola da Tolentino, near the Palazzo Barberini, has the Gavotti Chapel, Cortona's last work. Walking from it down to the Corso, one can see the facade of S. Maria in Via Lata, where Cortona's style can be compared with the interior restored by the great architect of baroque Naples, Cosimo Fanzago. S. Maria della Pace is a minute's walk from the Piazza Navona. The dome of S. Carlo al Corso is visible from the top of the Spanish Steps, but the ensemble of apse and cupola is best studied from the rear, from the area around the mausoleum of Augustus. It is difficult to get into SS. Martina e Luca, but if one does, one should not miss the crypt, where the remains of this most pious architect are interred near those of his "beloved daughter."

—Joseph Connors
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Publications related to the exhibition:

Anna Lo Bianco, ed., *Pietro da Cortona 1597–1669*. Milan: Electa, 1997, 511 pp., 241 b. & w. illus., 125 in color. L. 75,000 (paper). ISBN 8-8435-5341-0.

Simonetta Prosperi Valenti Rodinò, *Pietro da Cortona e il disegno*. Milan: Electa, 1997; 280 pp., many illustrations. L. 75,000 (paper). ISBN 8-8435-5980-0.

**MODERNE ARCHITEKTUR
IN DEUTSCHLAND 1900 BIS 2000:
MACHT UND MONUMENT**
Deutsches Architektur-Museum,
Frankfurt am Main

24 January–5 April 1998

Modern Architecture in Germany 1900 to 2000: Power and Monument was the last in a trilogy of exhibitions at the German Architecture Museum (DAM) that explored the complex, contradictory, and experimental heritage of modern architecture in Germany. The first exhibition, in 1992, *Reform and Tradition*, promulgated for the first time a progressive traditionalism that dominated German architecture during the first half of this century (catalogue reviewed in *JSAH* 52 [1993]: 347–349). The second exhibition, in 1994, *Expressionism and Neue Sachlichkeit*, sought to reconcile two well-studied but often contradictory factions of the avant-garde from the decades bracketing World War I (catalogue reviewed in *JSAH* 55 [1996]: 92–93). The last exhibition tackled the vast topic of overt and veiled expressions of power in both the conservative architecture explored in the first exhibition and the progressive architecture in the second. Seeking to be more topical and inclusive than the first two shows, which focused only on the first half of the century, *Power and Monument* surveyed the entire century up to and including current projects for the new capital of reunified Germany in Berlin.

According to Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, former director of the museum, the trilogy sought to do no less than rewrite the history of modern architecture in Germany. As promised, the museum delivered a more inclusive and balanced, less deterministic and ideologically motivated account of the era than is often the case in a Germany still haunted by its past and still adhering to a fairly strict vision of what

constitutes modern architecture. In these exhibitions the broad range of architectures from disparate regimes in Germany's tumultuous political history was hung side by side in a neutral forum without trying to judge or moralize. Modern architecture as defined here included not only examples from the well-known pioneers of the International Style but also all architectures that responded to modernization, including classical and cubic, pitched and flat-roofed, monumental and unassuming.

Although *Power and Monument* purposefully highlighted form, typology, and design over ideological context or patronage, the subject matter inevitably raised the specter of politics and Germany's past. The DAM's head curator, Romana Schneider, the unifying force behind all three innovative shows, sought to confront the debate over whether architectural form can in and of itself be political and express power, or whether, as Hannah Arendt has insisted, power manifests itself only through the people and regimes that inhabit and interpret buildings. Although this question could be raised in all eras of architectural history, it has arguably been the central question since World War II for German architectural historians and critics trying to come to terms with their past. In the late 1990s the debate has been especially acute in Berlin, where controversies seem to erupt daily on how to maneuver around the communist and fascist past of the city. In *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago 1997), Brian Ladd goes so far as to call Berlin a "haunted" city because of the specter of history that perpetually permeates contemporary architectural and urban debates.

An example of the difficulties presented by these layers of memories occurred in the exhibition's presentation of the monumental office block on the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. This Nazi office building was erected in 1936 to house Hermann Göring's Aviation Ministry, after designs by Ernst Sagebiel. After World War II, it served briefly as headquarters for occupying Soviet forces. East German communist officials ratified their constitution and elected their first president in this building and then used it as a "House of Ministries." After unification, it served briefly as headquarters for the Treuhand, the organization that administered the reprivatization of East Germany and its economy. The



Hans Poelzig, IG-Farben-Haus, Frankfurt am Main, 1928–1930, view from garden. Photograph copyright Peter Loewy, 1997

building is currently being refurbished to house Germany's federal Finance Ministry.

The exhibition paired a photograph of the original Nazi building with glossy photographs of the new high-tech interiors, reminding us of the permanence and seemingly unaffected nature of stone and form in the face of political change. With such gestures, *Power and Monument* raised important issues but shied away from conclusions or taking a position. This selective memory and refusal to present comment or analysis are all too often typical of public memory in Germany. Recently, for example, the municipal government of reunified Berlin—dominated by former West Berliners—unveiled a plaque honoring the 1953 East German workers' uprising, which occurred at this same building. The city failed, however, to recognize the victims of the Luftwaffe's bombing campaigns planned in this building. The ominous task of commemorating all the layers of memory almost inevitably elicits criticism of what was not mentioned. And yet it is precisely the multiplicity of memories evoked by so many older buildings in Germany that makes them both unique and so enigmatic for historians and politicians, as well as the general public contemplating their forms and histories in a museum display.

The most contentious images in *Power and Monument* were those relating to the legacy of national socialism. The contro-

versy that can be aroused in Germany by any examination of this sensitive period is clearly demonstrated by the heated discussions that have greeted the German translation of Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York, 1996), as well as the reactions to a recent exhibition in Munich about the crimes of the Wehrmacht. German architectural critics had waited almost a decade for the present exhibition, expecting a definitive, or at least definite, position from Germany's leading architecture museum on the ever-controversial heritage of the Nazi past. As widely divergent German newspaper reviews of the DAM exhibition have demonstrated, however, *Power and Monument* disappointed expectations and continued to provoke debate by expanding the theme of the show to include architectural representations of power by cultural elites from the entire century and from an array of political stands.

An appraisal of the exhibition is all but impossible without taking into account the local and institutional politics that turned the genesis of this show into a veritable saga, from its conception in the late 1980s to the opening reception nearly a decade later. The DAM was founded in 1979 by the city of Frankfurt, with architectural historian Heinrich Klotz serving as director, with the goal of creating a national architecture museum and attracting inter-

national attention to Frankfurt's emerging "museum mile." The building itself was an architectural statement, designed by Oswald Matthias Ungers and built from 1979 to 1984. Klotz's original program called for a forum to discuss architectural and urban issues of national and international concern. The mandate was to promote high-quality, environmentally friendly architecture by both well-known and as yet undiscovered designers. The discrepancies between the city's insistence on relevance to local audiences and the museum's desire to be competitive with other national architecture museums in the rapidly unifying Europe have led to increasing tensions over funding and even exhibition themes. Last year some city council members even proposed closing the museum altogether.

While DAM officials try to maintain their ideals, the city has slashed the budget drastically over the last ten years. As a result, the museum has been forced for the first time to turn to corporate fund-raising, although without benefit of the advantageous tax laws that make this practice commonplace in the United States. For *Power and Monument* the museum abandoned its admirable though expensive policy of showing "originals only." The use of rather poor photographic reproductions of Mies van der Rohe's spare sketches in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and of Hans Poelzig's richly colored drawings housed at the Technical University in Berlin was particularly unfortunate. The drawings of both architects encode the essence of the projects, not just in the represented shapes but also in the very techniques and human touch of the drawings, and were sorely missed in an exhibition emphasizing the emotive power of form.

Controversies generated by the first two exhibitions, as well as the funding problems, led DAM director Wilfried Wang to assemble an advisory board of prominent architectural historians: Hartmut Frank, Friedrich Achleitner, Werner Durth, Simone Hain, Wolfgang Schäche, Winfried Nerding, head curator Romana Schneider, former director Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, and French architectural historian and curator Jean-Louis Cohen. The group was charged with reaching a consensus on the scope and content of the final exhibition, but this proved impossible. The board was divided along the

same battle lines that have long characterized German modern architectural history. Historians who sought a constricted focus and emphasis on political context clashed with those who sought to make broader, polemical comparisons and analyses. Those who insisted on the autonomy and generally apolitical nature of architectural forms, even Nazi classicism, opposed those who refuse to believe that architecture can or should ever be analyzed apart from its partisan and ideological motivations.

After much debate, Wang and the board elected to maintain a generally neutral stance on the politics underlying the wide spectrum of architectural projects selected for inclusion. Images and objects on display were to be accompanied by comparatively little text, and that to be presented was to avoid analysis or criticism. In short, form was to speak largely for itself, without the overt intrusion of the curatorial voice. Although the use of visual images is the primary tool of any museum exhibition, more explanation (be it through other exhibition techniques or text) of the complex politics, patronage, and context of the buildings and their changing uses was sorely missed by this and other reviewers. The problem of presentation and representation intrinsic to architectural exhibitions in museums also seemed to demand more explanation of each object, especially in a show about the relation of form to something as abstract as power. Nowhere, for example, was power defined or elaborated upon.

These decisions affected not only how the architecture was displayed but also the material that could be obtained for the exhibition. Two important German contemporary architects, Ungers and Günther Behnisch, refused to allow their work to be included, unwilling to be associated with any show overtly about politics and power that lacked a clear delineation of regimes. Both insisted that their architecture was "autonomous." Behnisch maintains that his architecture is "democratic," by which he means transparent and without hidden political motivations, therefore "not political," as he says. Such paradoxical reasoning is not uncommon in Germany as architects try to escape the legacy of the past.

Despite these setbacks and the fractious

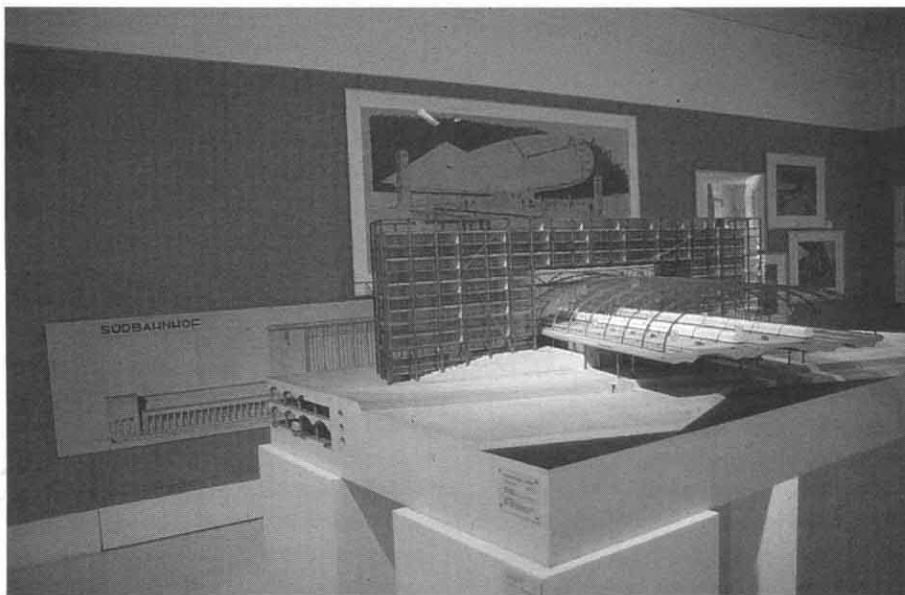
politics of the advisory board, Schneider and her colleagues pulled together a compelling display. The exhibition was divided into four basic groups of building types, one for each floor of Unger's rather inflexible museum. On the first floor, the largest and most provocative section presented government buildings and city-planning schemes as overt manifestations of political and architectural ideology. Among the images immediately confronting visitors were a large oil painting of the Nazi House of Art in Munich (1933–1937), the classically inspired visions for the Marx-Engels Forum in communist East Berlin (1950–1955), and Sep Ruf's Miesian Chancellor's Bungalow in Bonn (1963–1965), the capital of the Federal Republic. Farther on, Peter Behrens's classical embassy of 1912 for St. Petersburg was set beside Mies van der Rohe's sleek design for the Reichsbank of 1934 and Egon Eiermann's pavilions for the Brussels Exposition in 1958. The juxtapositions clearly demonstrated how different governments, indeed two different countries for nearly a half-century after the war, constructed an identity through architecture. They expressed power in widely divergent methods, often without any hint of monument or overt monumentality. Ruf's and Eiermann's intentionally chaste steel and glass cubes, for example, effectively reflected West Germany's intention to overcome its dark past by hiding behind a modest, mute, and transparent facade—one that did not "say" anything.

Arguments within each section were made primarily by the juxtaposition of images, comparing formal aspects of projects otherwise only tenuously related. This use of visual comparisons and contrasts rather than the explicit construction of narratives or arguments harkened back to the discursive techniques used by both conservative and progressive architects in the propaganda wars waged by the modernists during the first three decades of the century. Comparisons, however, are problematic, as they tend to reduce complex architectural ideologies to a few, though potent, ideas. Subtleties are intentionally avoided in favor of stark polarities in order to reach a wide audience. The didactic comparisons allowed the curators to avoid the lengthy and overly specialized texts that frequently accompany architectural exhibitions and

alienate lay viewers. But this approach ran the risk of losing those audiences eager for help in interpreting individual items and making connections between projects.

Each of the three upper floors focused on building types less overtly related to government and politics but nonetheless clearly expressing power. The second floor examined buildings associated with industry, technology, transportation, and the economy. A pair of high-powered binoculars inconspicuously placed at the window begged the visitor to consider Frankfurt's recent skyscrapers as examples of business expressing and asserting its power in the urban landscape. Without supporting text or related exhibitions, however, this important message was surely lost on most visitors. Projects featured in this section included a large model of Max Berg's concrete Jahrhunderthalle of 1911 in Breslau/Wrocław and seductive photos of Ernst Neufert's design for a Dyckerhof cement factory of 1956. A copy of a rendering of the enormous waiting hall of the South Station, planned as the terminus to Hitler's central axis for Berlin, formed a backdrop for a model of the new central rail station currently being planned for Berlin by Von Gerkan, Marg & Partner. The juxtaposition of the two rail stations certainly revealed similarities in the scale and vast spaces central to each project, as well as each government's desire to express elements of its power through architecture. The failure to distinguish adequately between the dictatorial vision implied by the first and the competition and bureaucratic planning that went into the second was deceptive, however, threatening to diminish the enforced suppression implied literally and figuratively in Hitler's designs.

The third floor exhibited buildings dedicated to the social and cultural welfare of society, including beautiful renderings of housing schemes along the Stalin Allee in East Berlin (1952–1958), photos and plans of Gottfried Böhm's church designs for West Germany from the 1960s, and drawings of Hans Scharoun's Kulturforum and Philharmonic Hall in Berlin (1956–1963). Installed a bit too high above expressionist drawings of cinemas by Erich Mendelsohn was a sign jutting out from the wall inscribed with the Nazi law from 12 November 1938 that forbade Jews to attend the cinema. The sign was part of an art installa-



Von Gerkan, Marg & Partner, model of proposed Lehrter Stadtbahnhof, Berlin, 1996–1998 (foreground), and Albert Speer, drawings for proposed South Station, Berlin, entry hall and front facade, 1940 (on wall behind)

tion by Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock that originally hung in the streets of the Schöneberg section of Berlin to commemorate victims of the Holocaust. In the exhibition, as on the streets, the signs documented the removal of Jews from all aspects of German life and society. The intentionally understated nature of this display attempted to mirror the slow and insidious nature of the actual events, but it was also exasperating as one looked for more explanations of architecture's relationship to this process. These signs only whetted the appetite for a view of the controversial projects for the central Holocaust memorial currently being discussed for Berlin, but these projects were rejected for the exhibition as too sensitive a topic to be included in such a broad exposition.

The fourth floor of the museum was dedicated explicitly to commemorative monuments. Among the many projects displayed here were a series of original blue tone photographs of Bruno Schmitz's Völkerschlachtdenkmal of 1898–1913 in Leipzig and collages of Mies van der Rohe's monument to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg of 1926. What should have been the high point of the exhibition became its most problematic part: the solemn, white "House within a House"

space—a conceit of Ungers's museum design. This space was designed by Ungers as the culminating exhibition space, the end point of a complex theoretical exposition about the historical development of architecture that winds its way from a peristyle basement all the way to the freestanding house at the top. The awkward display of a few poorly reproduced photos of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Neue Wache in Berlin, as it was transformed by diverse commemorative uses and different architects over the course of the last century, demonstrated vividly the great difficulty in using this space. One was left wondering whether the exhibition was intentionally imitating the starkness of Schinkel's monument or whether some displays had already been removed. This part of the exhibition, even more than the rest, cried out for some explanatory text. There was clear evidence of power, and of monument, but no connection drawn between them. The void was especially conspicuous in a museum that is being pushed to cater more assiduously to its local, mostly nonprofessional constituency.

The polemical juxtapositions featured throughout the show were supplemented by the catalogue, which includes eighteen essays loosely related to the exhibition. Es-

says by Winfried Nerdinger and Werner Durth highlight formal parallels between the architectures of very different ideologies. Nerdinger makes clear the tendency toward symmetry and the classical massing of structures in a wide variety of twentieth-century architectures, while Durth points out that surprisingly similar utopian longings can be found in politically and temporally divergent city-planning visions. Essays by Wilfried Wang, Jean-Louis Cohen, Hartmut Frank, and Simone Hain deal explicitly with the theme of monumentality, so central to twentieth-century architectural history and only alluded to in the exhibition. Similarly Diane Ghirardo's article on the monumentalized styles in postmodern architecture attempts to provide a larger, international context for many of the important questions about power and form raised by the exhibition.

Power, we are reminded throughout the exhibition and its catalogue, need not necessarily be expressed through size or overt monumentality. The question nonetheless remains as to whether the expressions of power witnessed in the exhibition were evident in spite of, or because of, the silent juxtaposition of potent formal images. Even if the displayed objects inevitably invoked power and politics, at the root of the exhibition was a fundamentally modernist belief in the autonomy of architecture. Although it is possible intellectually to analyze architectural form independently of the politics that went into making it, we cannot ultimately divorce form and content in architecture. Architecture, especially that which deals explicitly with power and monument, as in this exhibition, is a social practice that cannot, and should not, escape the motivated nature of its creation.

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Publication related to the exhibition:

Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 bis 2000: Macht und Monument, edited by Romana Schneider and Wilfried Wang. Frankfurt and Ostfildern-Ruit: Deutsches Architektur-Museum and Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1998, 299 pp., numerous b. & w. and color illus. DM 48 (paper). ISBN 3-7757-0713-1.