



Hoffmann lecturing,
end of the 1930s

Hubert Hoffmann

From the Bauhaus to Graz

Symposium

Friday, 27 March 2015, 10 am – 5 pm

Neue Galerie Graz
Joanneumsviertel

Universalmuseum Joanneum

Symposium
on occasion of the exhibition

Hubert Hoffmann
All Architecture Is Spatial Art
27 March until 7 June 2015
Neue Galerie Graz
Universalmuseum Joanneum

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Marion Starzacher, Anselm Wagner

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Introduction

Hubert Hoffmann: From the Bauhaus to Graz

Peter Peer

The symposium, part of the programme of the exhibition *Hubert Hoffmann. All Architecture Is Spatial Art*, is one element in the international research, education and exhibition project 'The Bauhaus—Networking of Ideas and Practices' (BAUNET), with the participation of scientific institutions of museums and universities from four European countries: Croatia with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, which has also assumed responsibility for the project, Slovenia with the Museum of Škofja Loka, Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo and Austria with the Neue Galerie Graz at the Universalmuseum Joanneum.

The first part of the symposium—in line with the main emphasis of the research project—is concerned with the lives and *œuvres* of Bauhaus students from Central and South East Europe with the focus on the former Yugoslavia, and with tendencies which, based on the Bauhaus or in conjunction with its ideas, helped shape specific locations of architecture and art before and after the Second World War. Such influences affected the Croatian architectural scene in the interwar period, for example, which was shaped by Gustav Bohutinsky among others, as well as the group EXAT 51, Zagreb's most important artists' initiative immediately after the war. Also to be seen in the context of the Bauhaus is the work of August Černigoj, which occupies a central position in the Slovenian avant-garde. Especially after the war, Bauhaus theories played a significant role, one example being the reconstruction during the 1940s and 1950s of the destroyed city of Berlin, in which Selman Selmanagić and Hubert Hoffmann were equally involved, for instance. Hoffmann and Selmanagić were to remain in contact over the decades, with Selmanagić often in Graz at the invitation of Hoffmann, where he held lectures at the Technical University Graz. Thus the inclusion of Hoffmann in this geographically somewhat specific research focus is not unusual, bearing in mind that the Bauhaus was above all a place of networking, too. Not least of all, Hoffmann himself pushed through the reconstruction of the Bauhaus in Dessau post-1945, attempting to bring together the members of the Bauhaus—at least on the level of intensive correspondence—by means of painstaking research.

The second part of the symposium deals extensively with Hoffmann, who took up an invitation to the Technische Hochschule Graz (today's Technical University) in 1959, where he assumed the position of Full Professor for Urban Development and Design, and Head of the Institute for Urban Development and Regional Planning. From the outset he participated in the urban planning matters of Graz. In keeping with his understanding of the role of a university professor, he saw it as an important obligation publicly to pass

busses, and the route network was reduced in stages (by 2002 its routes measured just 29.7 km). By the end of the 1960s the historical old town began to be opened up to motorised traffic and plans were also developed for longer routes, for motorways. The priority was to create a north-south link through urban Graz. Hubert Hoffmann was one of the crucial voices in the discussion about the Graz construction section of the Pyhrn motorway and co-initiator of the tunnel that was eventually built. My talk contains a comparison of the most varied arguments and planning, letters to the editor and leading articles, which were concerned with this discussion that lasted for years and which can be found in Hoffmann's estate. Like today, at that time the protection of the environment and of Graz's citizens from emissions were important topics in politics and in urban planning. Using the decision-making process for the 'right' motorway route through Graz, I shall trace an important part in Graz's city history.

Panel discussion

Hubert Hoffmann and Graz

Panel discussion with Eugen Gross, Heiner Hierzegger, Heinz Rosmann and Anselm Wagner, led by Markus Bogensberger

In 1959 Hubert Hoffmann took up an invitation to the Technische Hochschule Graz (today's Technical University), where he assumed the position of Full Professor for Urban Development and Design, and the leadership of the Institute for Urban Development and Regional Planning. From the outset he became involved in urban planning matters in Graz. In line with his understanding of the role of a university professor, he saw it as an important obligation to pass critical judgement publicly on topical issues. Thus on account of his engagement, long-term, far-reaching interventions in the cityscape could be averted, including the demolition of historical buildings in Graz's old city or the erection of high-rise buildings in the city centre. Hoffmann also submitted proposals for the reform of the study of architecture. The most important of these was setting up a preparatory course similar to that of the Bauhaus, with which the general competence of the prospective architect was to be tested. Hoffmann always linked his teaching with the demand made of the student to seek out his abilities and creativity within himself, above all, however, to approach the profession of architect with the greatest sense of responsibility. For, according to Hoffmann, 'over and above the expertise itself lies the responsibility both towards oneself and towards society'. The podium discussion concerns Hoffmann's role as architect, urban and regional planner in Graz and in Styria, as well as his work at the Technical University Graz. Light is shed on the question of Hoffmann's importance for Graz and for the permanence of his work.

deep sense of ethical, social and ecological responsibility. Hoffmann was shaped by the Dessau Bauhaus, where between 1926 and 1929 he studied under Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky and Herbert Bayer among others, and to where he returned at the beginning of the 1930s as assistant to His interest in urban planning developed around this time, with which he was engaged throughout his life both in terms of theory and practice, and in which he set numerous standards. Throughout his long and eventful life Hoffmann remained closely committed as an architect and urban planner to the Bauhaus and the idea of the Bauhaus. An 'idea', as he said himself, 'that moves like a thread through all areas of art and life, and not least of all merges at the point where art and life connect'. Hoffmann himself offered the best example for this fertile synthesis.

Andrea Contursi

Hubert Hoffmann as Architect and Urban Planner: Between Bauhaus Tradition and Critical Regionalism

Architect, urban planner, painter, writer, typographer, political person, musician, dancer ... Hubert Hoffmann was a multi-faceted personality both professionally and privately. He encountered a range of cultural movements and came into direct contact with several ideologies in the course of his life. To look for a clearly delineated basic concept or a completely coherent basic attitude would be to no purpose in the case of Hoffmann. Rather, his working method was eclectic, as throughout his life he latched on to various currents of thoughts without subscribing to any one in particular. Nonetheless, in architecture and urban planning two constants can be recognised in Hoffmann's work: one of these was the tradition of Bauhaus modernism, whereby the strongest influence on Hoffmann's work was exercised especially by Hannes Meyer's scientific methodology and Hilberseimer's urban planning theories. The second constant is Hoffmann's increasing conviction over time that contemporary architecture has to take local and regional elements into account, too. The talk will point out the most important biographical stages in Hoffmann's life on the one hand, and shed light on the relationship between Bauhaus, regionalism and Hubert Hoffmann's architectural and urban planning work on the other.

Marion Starzacher

Citizen Participation as an Engine for Sustainable Urban Development!

Vital to the growth of a city are the routes, the access roads. In 1946 the shape of Graz's street network was star-like, in that phase prior to the sharp rise in individualised motoring. The main means of transport in the city of Graz at that time was the tramway, whose network still stretched to 41.3 km in 1950 and likewise was marked by a star-shaped outline. In the course of motorisation and modernisation too, the trams were replaced by

critical judgement on topical issues. Thus due to his involvement, long-term, far-reaching interventions in the cityscape could be averted, including the demolition of historical buildings in Graz's old city or the erection of high-rise buildings in the city centre. Hoffmann also submitted proposals for the reform of the study of architecture. The most important of these was setting up a preparatory course similar to that of the Bauhaus, with which the general competence of the prospective architect was to be tested. Hoffmann always linked his teaching with the demand made of the student to seek out his abilities and creativity within himself; above all, however, to approach the profession of architect with the greatest sense of responsibility. For according to Hoffmann, 'over and above the expertise itself lies the responsibility both towards oneself and towards society'. The symposium concerns Hoffmann's role as architect, urban and regional planner in Graz and in Styria, as well as his work at the Technical University Graz. Thus light is shed on the question of Hoffmann's importance for Graz and the permanence of his work.

My thanks are due to my colleagues at the Universalmuseum Joanneum who have been involved in making this symposium come about. Moreover, we offer thanks to our previously mentioned partners in the BAUNET project for the pleasant and fruitful collaboration during the project phase that has lasted nearly two years now. Finally my gratitude is due to our local project partners: the Technical University Graz Archives for the extraordinarily generous assistance with this project, the Haus der Architektur (HDA) for their contribution to the contents of the symposium, as well as all those who have contributed to the success of the project with numerous suggestions and much information.

The symposium has been organised in cooperation with the Haus der Architektur and the Technical University Graz.

Symposium participants**Dr. Aida Abadžić Hodžić**

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo

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Head of House of Architecture, Graz

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Freelance architect, Cologne

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Freelance architect (Werkgruppe Graz)

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Former Head of the Department for Spatial Development, Infrastructure and Environmental Planning at the Technical University of Vienna; freelance architect

Dr. Nataša Jakšić

Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb

Vesna Meštrić

Senior curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

Dr. Peter Peer

Head of Department Modern and Contemporary Art, Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz

DI Heinz Rosmann

Former Head of the Office for Urban Development, Graz

Prof. Dr. Karin Šerman

Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb

DI Dr. Marion Starzacher

Faculty of Architecture, Technical University Graz

Barbara Sterle Vurnik

Museum Škofja Loka

Jadranka Vinterhalter

Museum advisor, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Anselm Wagner

Head of the Institute for Theory of Architecture, Art and Cultural Studies, Technical University Graz

far as his latest implementations in contemporary practice, which is why his contribution carries on in the work of Dragan Živadinov and Sanela Jahić—two progressive, internationally renowned, multimedia artists from Slovenia, who build on the legacy of Černigoj and carry it forward.

Karin Šerman, Dubravko Bačić, Nataša Jakšić Funktion*Bauhaus and the Interwar Croatian Architecture: Correspondence of Sensibilities*

The paper examines the impact and significance of the Bauhaus for the development of architectural thinking in Croatia between the two World Wars. It thereby points to some interesting correspondence and simultaneities of the two cultural milieus. It registers the indicative similarities in formats of the respective academic frameworks, but also a convincing synchronicity of the compared architectures. The architecture of Zagreb in the late 1920s and early 1930s reveals telling overlappings with the contemporary works of the Bauhaus teachers and students, not only in terms of the date of their appearance, but also in terms of their aesthetics, expressions, materials, effects and forms. This closeness might be explained by the early appearance of the Bauhaus thought in Zagreb—by way of Bauhaus publications, recurrent visits of Bauhaus masters and students, and direct participation of Croatian students in that avant-garde school. But regardless of such essential direct contacts, the key moment in understanding the genuine closeness of the two creative environments might be some deeper correspondence of their artistic sensibilities, i. e. the already formed proclivity of Croatian architects towards creative approaches and procedures that were cultivated by the Bauhaus. The paper examines these conditions and focuses on a specific protagonist, the architect Gustav Bohutinsky, a Bauhaus student himself, with an intriguing Zagreb oeuvre that testifies to the local presence of the Bauhaus thought.

Peter Peer*Hubert Hoffmann. From the Bauhaus to Graz—Biographical Notes*

In 1959 Hubert Hoffmann followed an invitation to the Technical University Graz, where he accepted the position of head of the Institute for Urban Development and Regional Planning. He played a significant role both for the teaching of architecture at the university as well as for the development of the city. Through his expertise and personal commitment he made an essential contribution to preserving the city appearance and quality of life of Graz. So among other achievements he campaigned energetically for the preservation of Graz old town and developed resident-friendly transport concepts. At the university he introduced a far-reaching induction period for prospective architects so as to determine their abilities and aptitude for the profession. All this reflected a notion of architecture that was marked by a

path and life beliefs. Selman Selmanagić was one of the leading names in the reconstruction of Berlin after World War II, a member of the famous *Planungskollektiv Berlin*, headed by Hans Scharoun (1945–1950). In 1950 Selmanagić was appointed professor at the prominent Weißensee School of Art, where he was head of the Department of Architecture for twenty full years, and where he permanently influenced generations of students with his specific work methodology and teaching content defying the dominant style of socialist realism, in the middle of the ‘debate against formalism.’ The architectural and design opus of Selmanagić, as well as his pedagogical work in post-World War II Berlin and in the divided Germany, offer a paradigmatic example for the analysis of the reception of the Bauhaus and modernist architecture in the strictly controlled social-political and ideological context of the GDR. Through the relationship of the Bauhaus towards tradition, the modalities of the shaping, interpretation and representation of the state identity of the GDR in the context of the Cold War can be followed. From the beginning of the 1970s, Selmanagić was likewise a frequent guest-lecturer at the Technical University Graz, at the invitation of his Bauhaus colleague, Hubert Hoffmann.

Barbara Sterle Vurnik

Between Utopia and Contemporary Practise. The Rediscovery of Avgust Černigoj's work

This talk concentrates on the museological challenges in rehabilitating the almost lost legacy of Avgust Černigoj. As a starting point for reflection, we chose two sample works from Černigoj's oeuvre, as they represent an important part of this process, and we were able to follow them from their creation, their being-forgotten, then their reconstruction through to their contemporary interpretation and definitive incorporation into the museum. Our concern is with Černigoj's key series of constructivist works from 1924, and the output of the Trieste Group, which represents the essential work of the Slovenian avant-garde. The constructivist atmosphere of the Trieste Group, of which Černigoj was the leading light, is represented by Giorgio Carmelich, Edvard Stepančič and Josip Vlah. The works were created under the immediate influence of the author's own experiences gathered at the State Bauhaus in Weimar, the international school for architecture, design and visual art where he had been accepted at the beginning of the year 1924. Although none of these works from 1924 have been preserved, as they both suffered the fate of the demise of the avant-garde as well as a shroud of silence over the very existence for several decades, they nonetheless became an important symbolic starting point later on for the revival of the memory of Černigoj as well as for the ‘interrupted history’ of the Slovenian avant-garde. The Slovenian avant-garde —and with it Černigoj—is present today in permanent museum collections, thus enabling even greater chances of more lasting inscriptions in the collective memory, which luckily do not end here, however. Černigoj's influence continues, namely: it extends as

Programme

10.00 am

Registration of participants

10.15 am

Words of welcome and opening of the symposium

10.30 am – 1.00 pm

Part I. Artists and architects from the countries and the region of the former Yugoslavia

10.30 am

Jadranka Vinterhalter
*Schooling at the Bauhaus.
Spreading of Innovative Ideas and
Educational Methods in the Region*

11.00 am

Vesna Meštrić
*Legacy of the Bauhaus in Zagreb
and Ljubljana: EXAT 51 and the B
Course*

11.30 am

Aida Abadžić Hodžić
*The Bauhaus in the GDR: The
Role and Significance of Selman
Selmanagić*

12.00 noon

Barbara Sterle Vurnik
*Between Utopia and Contemporary
Practice. The Rediscovery of Avgust
Černigoj's work*

12.30 pm

Karin Šerman, Dubravko Bačić,
Nataša Jakšić
*The Bauhaus and the Interwar
Croatian Architecture.
Correspondence of Sensibilities*

1.00 pm – 2.00 pm

Lunch

2.00 pm – 5.00 pm

Part II. Hubert Hoffmann. From the Bauhaus to Graz

2.00 pm

Peter Peer
*Hubert Hoffmann: From the
Bauhaus to Graz—Biographical
Notes*

2.30 pm

Andrea Contursi
*Hubert Hoffmann as Architect and
Urban Planner: Between Bauhaus
Tradition and Critical Regionalism*

3.00 pm

Marion Starzacher
*Citizen Participation as an Engine
for Sustainable Urban Development!*

3.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Interval

4.00 pm

Hubert Hoffmann and Graz
Panel discussion with Eugen Gross,
Heiner Hierzegger, Heinz Rosmann
and Anselm Wagner, led by Markus
Bogensberger

5.00 pm

End of the symposium

Jadranka Vinterhalter

Schooling at the Bauhaus. Spreading of Innovative Ideas and Educational Methods in the Region

The artists and architects from countries of former Yugoslavia and the region, who are the main subject of the project *Bauhaus—Networking Ideas and Practice*, chose to educate themselves at the Bauhaus due to its contemporary and innovative educational program, the renowned professors who held lectures and workshops, and the international and progressive ideas promoted by said School. The first student of the Bauhaus from this region was Slovenian artist Avgust Černigoj, who came to Weimar from the Art Academy in Munich in 1924. Although his stay at the Bauhaus was brief, his artistic activity was strongly marked by the influences of Constructivism he had familiarised himself with at the School. Having attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, three Croatian students continued their education at the Bauhaus during the period of its activity in Dessau. Otti Berger enrolled in 1927, attended the textile workshop led by Gunte Stölzl, graduated in 1930, and stayed at the Bauhaus to lead the workshop and hold lectures on textile design in 1931–1932. Ivana Tomljenović spent two semesters at the Bauhaus (1929/1930) on professional training at the Department of Photography led by Walter Peterhans, and her most significant photographic oeuvre and the unique experimental documentary film were created that same year 1930 in Dessau. Gustav Bohutinsky attended the Bauhaus during the summer semester of 1930, when Architecture and Urban Planning was lectured by Ludwig Hilberseimer, and he completed his studies at the Ibler School of Architecture in Zagreb. Selman Selmanagić from Bosnia and Herzegovina came to Dessau through Ljubljana, where he had graduated from the Crafts School, and enrolled in the Bauhaus in 1929. He studied architecture under Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Hilberseimer, and is the only student from former Yugoslavia who obtained a diploma in Architecture in 1932 under Mies van der Rohe. Berlin-born Hubert Hoffmann, previously educated at the School of Polytechnics in Hanover and the Art Academy in Munich, spent the period from 1926 to 1929 at the Bauhaus in Dessau. Being of broad interests and versatile talents, he studied architecture under Hannes Meyer at the Bauhaus, learned carpentry with Alfred Arndt, and studied typography, advertising and exhibition design with Joost Schmidt. At the invitation of the Graz University of Technology (Technische Universität Graz), he came to Graz in 1959 and continued his activity as renowned architect, urban planner and lecturer in architecture.

The aforementioned artists and architects knew and were on good terms with each other, and participated in the activities of the Bauhaus. They attended the preliminary course led by Josef Albers and László Moholy-Nagy, lectures on the elements of visual art, colour and form led by Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, and underwent professional training in specialised

workshops led by renowned professors. The knowledge and experience they received at the Bauhaus strongly influenced the formation of their artistic attitudes and expression. Therefore, the ideas of the Bauhaus were interwoven into their artistic and architectural activity, and the educational methods of the Bauhaus were transmuted into courses that were subsequently led by some of the former students, now lecturers themselves.

Vesna Meštrić

Legacy of the Bauhaus in Zagreb and Ljubljana: EXAT 51 and the B Course

One of the key events in Croatian art after the Second World War was the foundation of the group EXAT 51 (Experimental Atelier) that brought together young artists, architects and designers with progressive views, whose activity was based on the legacy of geometric abstraction, Russian Constructivism, De Stijl and the Bauhaus. The beginning of their collaboration was marked by the reading of the Manifesto in 1951, with which the signatories Vjenceslav Richter, Ivan Picelj, Aleksandar Srnc, Vladimir Kristl, Božidar Rašica, Bernardo Bernardi, Zdravko Bregovac, Vladimir Zarahović and Zvonimir Radić clearly defined the basic viewpoints and goals of action, thus establishing new relations on the field of architecture, sculpture and painting. Their practice, based on the experimental and research approach to implementation of pavilion architecture projects, was developed not only on the aesthetics of the Bauhaus, but also through collective approach, thus connecting art, architecture and industry with the principles of liable artistic design. As regards the field of education, the foundation of the Academy of Applied Arts in Zagreb in 1949, the teaching concept of which followed the structure and principles of the education programme of the Bauhaus, proved to be of utmost importance. It is important to note that the courses at the Academy of Applied Arts were held by two members of the group EXAT 51, Zvonimir Radić and Vjenceslav Richter. In this developmental chronology, the line leads towards the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana, at which the distinguished Professor Edvard Ravnikar established the new experimental design study programme in 1961, the B Course, which would go on to develop the very legacy of the educational models of the Bauhaus.

Aida Abadžić Hodžić

The Bauhaus in the GDR: The Role and Significance of Selman Selmanagić

Selman Selmanagić (Srebrenica, 1905 – Berlin, 1986) is the only architect from the territory of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia who graduated from the Department of Architecture of the Bauhaus school in 1932. The spirit of the Bauhaus—the openness for research and experimentation, independent solution finding, the social responsibility of art and architecture, social sensitivity, team work, interaction of different areas and disciplines, cosmopolitanism and antifascism—have permanently marked his artistic