

ARCHITECTS
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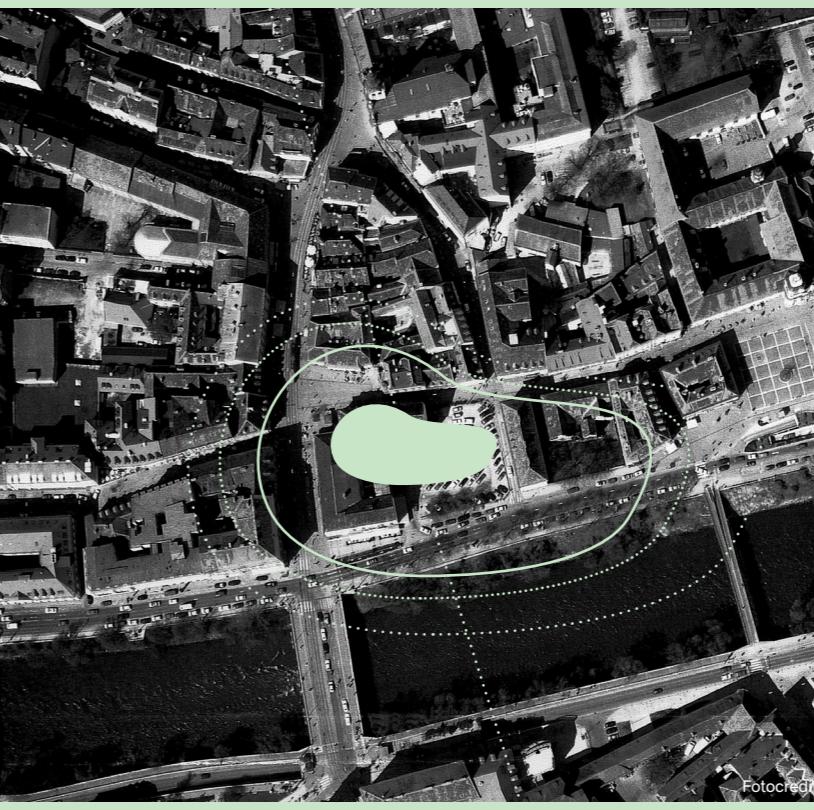
BUILD TIME
Competition: 1999
Start of construction:
Autumn 2001
Opening: 27 September 2003

COST
Plot: approx. 8 million euros
Construction costs:
approx. 40 million euros

AREA
Usable floor space: 11,100 m²
Exhibition space: 2,500 m²



ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS
Height of Kunsthaus: approx. 23 metres
Bubble: span approx. 60 metres
Weight: 3.9 million kg
Needle: approx. 40-metre long and 4-metre wide viewing platform
Travelator: two moving walkways, each approx. 30 metres long
Skin: 1,288 blue acrylic glass panels, each panel made individually
BIX Façade: 926 circular fluorescent lamps on the front of the Kunsthaus, controlled individually
Nozzles: 16 light openings, one looking towards the Clock Tower (Schlossberg nozzle)



BACKGROUND & LOCATION

THE IRON HOUSE
Back in the 1980s, there were already hopes of building an exhibition venue for modern and contemporary art in Graz. In 1998 it became clear that Graz would be European Capital of Culture in 2003, and so a competition was again held for an "independent museum of contemporary art with its own distinctive identity". The location was moved in the plans to the right bank of the River Mur, with the aim of linking the two halves of Graz, and above all to revitalise the then much neglected neighbourhood between the Lend and Gries districts of the city.

ARCHITECTURE



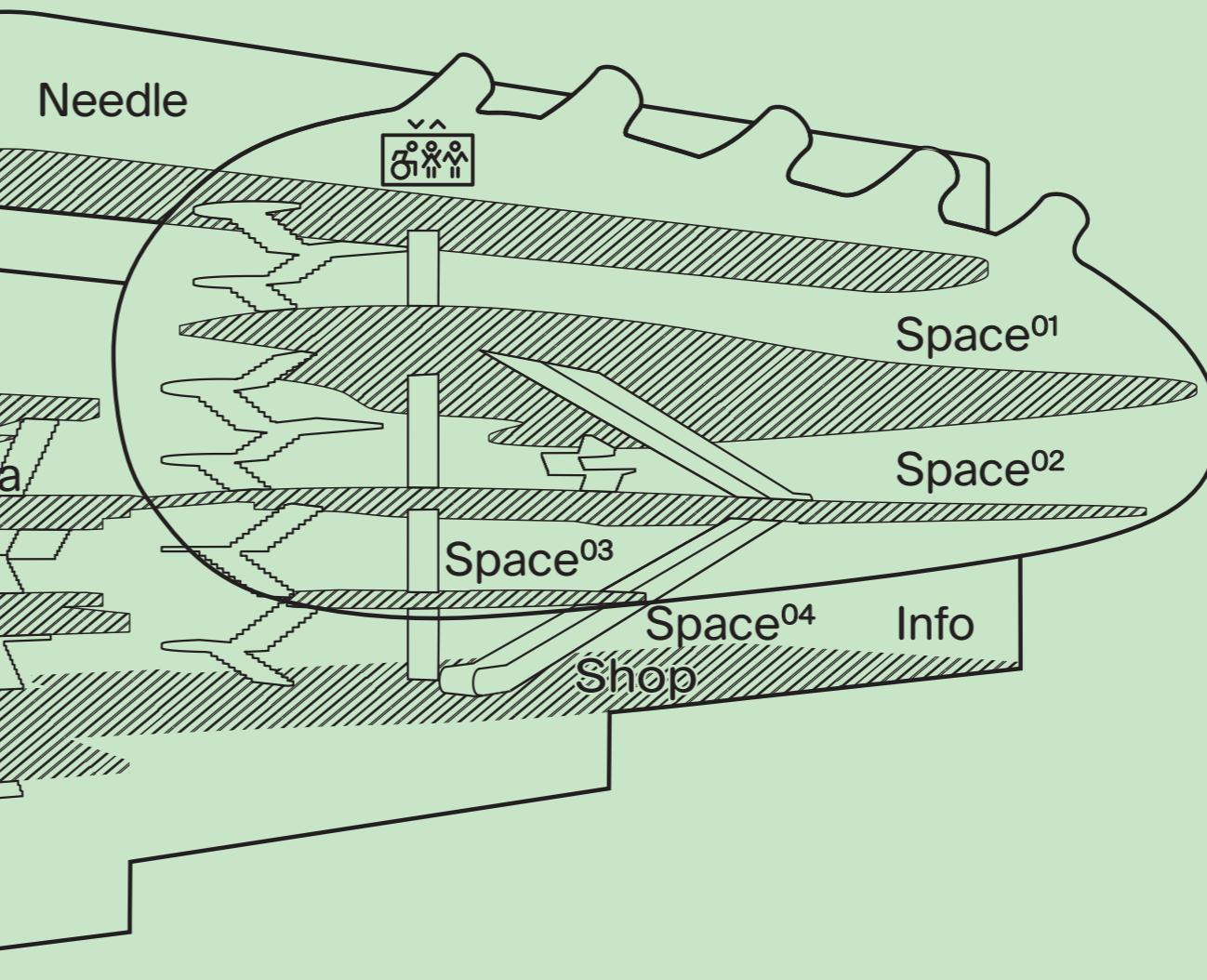
A FRIENDLY ALIEN

The nickname given to the Kunsthause, the "Friendly Alien", comes from its unique shape. Known as biomorphic, this kind of architecture takes its inspiration from organic forms and living things. These free-flowing designs were made possible by the new software technology at that time. Biomorphic building forms in urban spaces were already a well-developed vision in the 1960s.

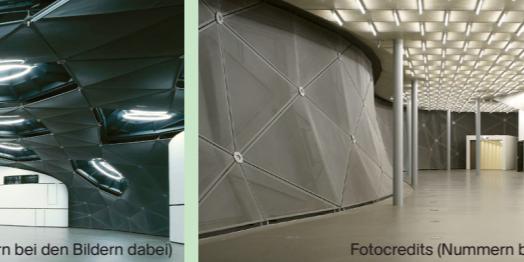


DIVISION INTO SPACES

The blue bubble of the Kunsthause is divided into four floors, numbered from top to bottom. The Space04 event room forms part of the foyer. From here, a travelator carries visitors up into Space02, the first large exhibition space. The Space03 art education room lies between them. Right at the top, beneath the imposing domed ceiling, extends the Space01 exhibition space. The Needle rests on the building at the very top.



Space⁰¹



Space⁰²



Space⁰³



Space⁰⁴



SPACE⁰¹

The Nozzles in Space01 project out up to 8.5 metres above the floor, which sits like a tabletop on the columns of the space below. They can be used to adjust the amount of daylight entering the room. The stretching and flowing form of the architecture shapes the space.

SPACE⁰²

The wall curves outwards and is called the Skin. The grey, fine-mesh wire-weave of the walls reflects the basic structure of the building in triangular sections. Inside, the space is only divided by load bearing columns. A view of the outside is only possible through three hidden windows.

SPACE⁰³

Space03 is the art education space, and provides a base for all of the education formats offered. Visitors can climb up the sloping walls of the suspended steel structure and, by experiencing the space get a better understanding of the architecture.

SPACE⁰⁴

On the ground floor, Space04 serves as a versatile event space. The glass front on the inner courtyard offers a view of the facade opposite, featuring a geometric abstract mural by the artist Esther Stocker.

NEEDLE

The Needle is a glass viewing platform that rests on the top of the building. It seems to float about 24 metres above the ground and is only fixed to the steel construction at its centre. Just like a needle it sticks into the blue bubble while stitching the Kunsthause into its surroundings, so that it blends in visually.

BIK

The BIK media facade (BIK = Big Pixel) was designed by the Berlin-based architects realite:unit. It is made up of 926 individually controlled fluorescent tubes that can be switched on and off up to 24 times per second. Its changing displays often created by artists offer an important medium of communication and interaction with the city. It is powered by a photovoltaic system, meaning that the sun determines how long it will stay lit.

Needle



BIK

