

arcVision Prize
Women and Architecture 2015
Winner

“ *Architecture today is defined less by beauty than it is by ugliness. We should begin architecture with a longing, a desire, an idea. We got lost in the complexity of architecture. Architecture is the backdrop for a piece of life for a society. When we build in the narrower sense, we build our life at the same time in the wider sense.*

We should take the physical boundaries seriously again. Most things we build make our environment not better but worse. We live in a time in which it is predominantly impossible to understand how things are made. We should be able to understand how something is made intuitively. Construction is an underestimated and intrinsic part of architecture, but since we no longer build with our hands, construction has become indirect, remote and alien. My work is an attempt to escape this alienation.

The baseless separation of the idea and the execution degrades architecture. Creation and construction need to be inseparable. As architects, we have a great responsibility in society that we should take more seriously. ”



ANGELA DEUBER – Switzerland

NEW SCHOOL IN THAL

PROJECT DATA

Location

Thal, Canton of St. Gallen, Switzerland

Use of the Building

Primary school and Kindergarten

Construction Period

2009 – 2013

Together with the existing Church, the recently completed school in Thal forms the new center of the village. It stands in the middle of a uniformly sloping plot whose incline adjusts each of the elevations independently. The plot is divided diagonally into an orchard on the lower slope and a paved area on the upper. Seen from the road, the new primary school and kindergarten sits in a green landscape accessible from the street via steps or the natural rise of the site.

The structure consists of a column and slab system split by the fissure created for insulation. The exterior expression is an articulated façade that, united with the internal structure, supports the weight of the concrete slabs. Both carry structural loads and are constructionally interdependent. The classrooms are divided by non-structural slurried clay block walls, which can be removed according to the school's future requirements.

The light grey concrete façade has a strong physical presence. Supported by stout internal columns, exaggerated lintels open up toward the corners and middle of the structural floor slabs, where Larch window frames are allowed to reach the full height of the room. The thickness of the wall and the triangular geometry of the openings produce a spatial experience that is modulated according to one's position in the building: the interiority in the center is relieved nearing the edge, allowing the view to dissolve into the open. The building is a low-energy building. The requirements of future projects influenced the expression of the building. The solution is economical, with both a maximum freedom of use and an adaption for the users, creating a high degree of identity. Materials from the region were used to generate low pollution, as well as pollution-free building materials. Due to the compact volume and the high quality building insulation, little energy is consumed, and is instead produced by the building itself. It has a low demand for land surface and the existing green area was replaced again.



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MULTI-PURPOSE HALL SEEFELD

PROJECT DATA

Location

Buochs, Nidwalden, Switzerland

Use of the Building

Triple multi-purpose hall with stage

Construction Period

2012 – 2014

Situated in the center of the site, the new multi-purpose hall is clearly oriented towards the Seefeldstrasse and the lake. A generous, partly covered plaza marks the main entrance, providing a platform for outdoor events, and its large ramp creates a relationship with a proposed new marina and water sports center. The slender and compact construction integrates itself with a filigree rhythmic roof design in the scale and geometry of the environment.

The entire supporting structure of the roof is built with prefabricated concrete quatercircle elements, used as a supporting and space-forming material. Natural light is admitted from above the curved, almost curtain-like roof structure with its horizontal window openings, assuring a uniform and glare-free daylighting of public spaces, even when the hall is divided. The bearing outer shell of the building takes both the vertical and horizontal loads of the prefabricated roof elements. The floor plate and the resulting base are above the groundwater level and allow significant cost savings. The very economical volume and the proportions of the volume are possible thanks to the simple and efficient floor plan organization. The building will be sustainably constructed as a low-energy building.

The building is organized in a clear and simple way. A central triple hall is bookended by the foyer on one side and by the stage on the other side, all of which can be freely opened and inter-connected. The clear zoning of uses in the plan corresponds to the concept of space, which guarantees a good orientation and maximum flexibility. From the foyer, a curved staircase leads to the first floor dressing rooms and spectators' area. A large structural opening provides an unobstructed view across the lake from the foyer on both levels.



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