

CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE: Contemplating a task you have set yourself can be interesting. These thoughts became built reality with 'Haussicht'. The main objective was to develop a new showcase for Baufritz's expertise in timber construction. It had to be independent, contemporary and unique. That was the challenge.

In the main building, the 'Flagship', the ground floor has a spine as its visual and functional focus: built-in furniture with extensive storage space that runs centrally through the entire length of the building. This piece of furniture acts as both a partition and rear wall. Small rooms are arranged all around it. These rooms become alcoves when the sliding doors are opened. The ground floor is a quiet floor, a private space, not dissimilar to a ship's lower deck. An ark, in the best sense of the word. The first floor is a generous space, flooded with light, containing a kitchen, dining area and front balcony, like the upper deck of a ship. There are no pillars and hardly any solid walls, a kind of open loft with continuous windows. The smallest part of this floor contains a room within a room, an impressive, rotating so called 'Media-Koje'. This terraced seating area acts like a theatre and also serves as a couch and storage space. A bookshelf runs along the external walls at windowsill height, and this also provides seating.

The small neighbouring building, the 'Stöckli' – traditionally a house in Switzerland that farmers move into when they retire – has been designed to serve as a workshop, guest rooms or living accommodation for a grandparent. Smaller in size, it stands on a large column-plinth that houses the entrance, stairs and a lift. The 'Stöckli' deliberately adopts the barrier-free home concept and is an attempt to use this important idea as the starting point for an exceptional design. On an abstract level, this building resembles a small tugboat. It is as if a small harbour has grown up around the lake, a kind of village by the water.

The theme of 'near and far' also plays a key role in this complex. One must focus on the details and then take a step back to see the work as a whole. This constant switch between detail and distance flows from my different professional disciplines. As you move around the complex, your perspective and the relationship between the volumes constantly changes – this adds drama and is also an important design aspect in my other works. In terms of materials I try to limit myself to a mono-material because it is important for me, as a designer, to be able to find the right raw material for each detail. This feel for materials is as deep rooted at Baufritz as the knowledge that our world is growing ever more complex and many resources are becoming more valuable. That's why ecology and building biology are applicable to architecture. We need to acquire new knowledge and special techniques, learn due respect so we can take responsibility for the future: we must redouble our efforts, be vigorous and determined.