

Press  
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**PLACES  
FOR  
PEOPLE**



la Biennale di Venezia

**15. Mostra  
Internazionale  
di Architettura**

Partecipazioni Nazionali

Biennale Architettura  
2016  
Austrian Pavilion

# BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2016 AUSTRIAN PAVILION

## Contents

S.2 Team	S.12 Quotes
S.3 Austria's Contribution to Biennale Architettura 2016	S.13 Partners and Sponsors
S.4 Statement from Federal Minister Thomas Drozda	S.14 Press contact
S.5 Places for People	
S.6 Caramel Architekten HOME MADE	
S.7 E00S SOCIAL FURNITURE	
S.8 the next ENTERprise - architects UN/COMMON SPACE UN/DEFINED LIVING	
S.9 Statement from Michael Landau, President of Caritas Austria	
S.10 Portraits	

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Biennale Architettura  
2016  
Austrian Pavilion

Team

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On behalf of the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Arts & Culture Section

BUNDESKANZLERAMT  ÖSTERREICH

[Austria's Contribution to  
Biennale Architettura  
2016](#)

The current wave of refugees, which will probably continue for some time, represents an enormous challenge not only for Europe's public institutions but also for civil society. In the face of this situation, Austria's contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016 not only occupies the pavilion in the Giardini in Venice but also decentrally addresses three locations in Vienna: For the action "Places for People" the commissioner Elke Delugan-Meissl and her curatorial team Sabine Dreher and Christian Muhr from Liquid Frontiers commissioned three architectural and design offices to work together with NGOs to plan and accompany the adaptation of vacant buildings for the temporary accommodation of people while their asylum claims are processed. The objective of these inter-

ventions is to create humane living spaces for those affected, to subject architecture's responsibility for social issues to a reality check and to explore new directions for the development of social housing and the future of communal life in cities. The current stage of the interventions and some of the insights gained from the processes of the past few months are on show in the Austrian Pavilion at 15th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.



Photo: Archive HZ, Georg Petermichl  
Visualisation: grafisches Büro

[Statement from  
Federal Minister  
Thomas Drozda](#)

Where should all the people who have fled to Austria to escape war live: in cities or small villages, in apartments or large shelters? And which forms of living together help with the integration of refugees? These are questions which concern us intensely as a society. Questions which have also been identified, discussed and addressed by those working in the fields of art and culture in the context of the Biennale Architettura 2016.

This year's Austrian contribution "Places for People" set itself the task of identifying new and innovative architectural solutions for people while their asylum applications are being processed. The approach selected by the Curator Elke Delugan-Meissl was bold and positive: bold, because Austria's contribution not only examines these subjects theoretically but also implements three concrete residential projects in Vienna as a means of directly providing politicians, municipalities and NGOs with potential solutions. Positive, because it also addresses the development of social housing and the future of life in our cities – in which protection and a dignified human environment are fundamental to social coexistence.

These issues are all central to the role of architecture. For architecture – as the Biennale Architettura 2016 demonstrates with particular clarity – cannot just be reduced to the external appearance of buildings. Architecture is also always about realising visions and mental images, about reflecting our past and addressing our future. Openness to spatial transformation and the support of the process of adapting to new perspectives are key aspects of the interface between architecture, science, art and everyday life.

With their contribution "Places for People", Elke Delugan-Meissl and her team are responding to Alejandro Aravena's general theme of "Reporting from the Front" by tackling a subject that is currently occupying us intensely in Austria and across Europe and will continue to occupy us over the coming years: the integration of war refugees. The fact that architecture can and should deliver answers in this area is beyond dispute.

By making such a valuable contribution to the international architectural debate for an 11th time, Austria is consolidating its strong international reputation in this field. This year, the Federal Chancellery has once again provided 400,000 euros for the conception and realisation of the exhibition in the Austrian Pavilion in Venice.

I would like to heartily congratulate the participants in this year's Biennale Architettura and look forward to intense discussion, to large numbers of visitors and to the international appreciation and acceptance of this very important contribution.

Thomas Drozda,  
Federal Minister

[Places for People](http://www.placesforpeople.at)

[www.placesforpeople.at](http://www.placesforpeople.at)

## Background and Intention

Offering protection, creating humane places to live and establishing the basis for good social coexistence have always been amongst the central roles of architecture. Austria's contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016 has set itself the task of using the resources of architecture – in the widest sense – to transform properties which are basically suitable as accommodation into dignified places to live which offer ongoing support to their residents. In developing the projects, however, the teams are addressing questions which go far beyond the current refugee situation: questions no less significant than how we want to live together in the future; how our cities, homes and public spaces should be designed and used and, not least, how architecture can continue to fulfil its public duty and remain socially relevant.

## Reference

The title of Austria's contribution is a reference to the Austrian-American architect and designer, Bernard Rudofsky. His writings, buildings and exhibitions focus on such elementary aspects of life as eating, sleeping, sitting, lying and washing, together with the question of how architecture can meet these needs in a dignified way. Here, provisional, improvised and temporary solutions play a central role. Rudofsky's conviction that 'what we basically need is a new way of living' was partly based on his analysis of anonymous architecture and everyday practices in the Arab world. Similarly significant for the "social turn" of architecture, which has recently gained in political importance, is the work of the Austrian-American designer Victor Papanek, who demanded a similar paradigm change in the field of design.

\*Bernard Rudofsky:  
Streets for People. A Primer  
for Americans (1969).

## Participating Architectural and Design Offices

The selected teams from Caramel Architekten, EOOS and the nextENTERprise - architects have been working since the end of last year at three locations in Vienna which, very deliberately, differ markedly in terms of not only such key characteristics as urban location, size and period of availability but also the type of accommodation required. Given the enormous importance of social, cultural, psychological, economic and legal parameters the teams are working in an interdisciplinary process and in constant dialogue with the affected parties and with a range of experts.

## Design of the Pavilion

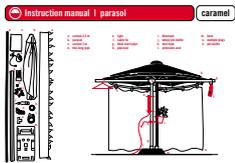
A three-part intervention by DMAA in front of the pavilion, in the main space and in the half-open atrium to its rear are used for both the presentation of the exhibition and for social meeting and interaction. The installation by Heimo Zobernig for Biennale Arte 2015 and the landscape architecture design by Auböck+Kárász for Biennale Architettura 2014 are retained as a frame for the presentation of "Places for People".

The Austrian photographer Paul Kranzler has accompanied the development work of the three architectural and design offices in Vienna in the form of self-contained visual essays. A selection of large-format photographs of Places and People and their manifold interactions is displayed in the main space. A further key element of "Places for People" is a comprehensive free newspaper containing interviews, reportages and essays on the subject in all its dimensions as well as other initiatives in Austria which can be seen as exemplary and forward-looking in the spirit of the intention of Austria's contribution.

[Caramel Architekten](#)

HOME MADE

[www.caramel.at](http://www.caramel.at)



Download:  
[www.ortefuermenschen.at/qr2](http://www.ortefuermenschen.at/qr2)

Caramel Architekten developed a system for an emergency shelter in a 1970s office building based on textile elements which could be installed within just a few weeks with the help of the shelter's 280 residents. Just 52 basic sets, each consisting of a parasol, textile panels and cable ties succeeded in creating privacy and improving the user experience in the sober, open-plan office spaces for an outlay of just 50 euros and 50 minutes work per person.

As the use of the 3,700 m<sup>2</sup> building was originally limited to just four months, a central criterion of the intervention was that all elements could be swiftly dismantled and simply re-erected in another location. Despite such parameters, the team succeeded in offering people a minimum of domesticity and privacy with the help of simple resources and some ingenious detailing.

Similar textile elements were also used to reshape existing communal and external spaces including a dining room, children's playground and area of greenery in such a way that they have also been tangibly improved in terms of both functionality and atmosphere.

In parallel with the development within Haus Pfeiffergasse, the "Home Made"- Tool Set is now also being used by the team in a further range of both professional and private situations. The resulting closed loop fulfils the original aim of the architects to build for not just one special target group but for everyone. For this reason, the instruction manual for "Home Made" is also available online.



EOOS

SOCIAL FURNITURE

[www.eoos.com](http://www.eoos.com)

Catalogue:

EOOS  
SOCIAL FURNITURE – DIT



Published by Koenig Books Ltd

Download instructions at:  
[www.eoos.com/SF](http://www.eoos.com/SF)

The design team EOOS has developed a concept for the adaptation of a former training facility of around 21,000 m<sup>2</sup> close to the city centre which envisages both the production and implementation of an entire range of furniture and the introduction of such new functions as shops and workshops. The building consists of two-bed rooms with showers and washbasins which provide long-term accommodation to 600 asylum seekers but lacked the communal spaces and meeting zones which EOOS is now creating and equipping with the appropriate furniture. However, the focus of the intervention is not only this furniture which, for example, takes the form of kitchen elements for communal use, but also the creation of opportunities to work and to exchange in the form of an in-house communal economy for which a special transaction app has also been developed.

„To mark the development of the “Social Furniture” collection for Haus Erdberg, EOOS published a catalogue - modelled on Enzo Mari’s “Autoprogettazione” – containing instructions on how to assemble all 18 furniture elements from the areas of living, working and cooking. Not only can this furniture be self-built economically but it also supports both the self-organisation of the residents and their opportunities to share and exchange resources in the spirit of a communal economy.

The furniture collection extends beyond the walls of the individual refugee shelter by defining the creation of social furniture as a social issue that can be flexibly scaled and applied everywhere. This reinforces the reference to Enzo Mari’s “Autoprogettazione”, although EOOS has transformed the notion of DIY into DIT – do it together.“

(based on a text by Elke Rauth for  
La Biennale di Venezia)



[the next ENTERprise - architects](http://www.thenextenterprise.at)

UN/COMMON SPACE  
UN/DEFINED LIVING

[www.thenextenterprise.at](http://www.thenextenterprise.at)

The settings for the intervention by the next ENTERprise - architects are the fourth and fifth floors of a partly vacant 1980s office building in Vienna's most populous district in the south of the city, together with the park surrounding the former headquarters building. In line with their interest in activating the potential of the temporary use of vacant space for creating new forms of urban life, the next ENTERprise - architects have developed economically producible infrastructures which each user can take possession of in their own individual way.

As part of their intervention in Kempelegasse, "room-in-room implants" in the internal spaces create hybrid living and working spaces which will be tested in cooperation with Caritas for the next three years in the context of an experimental residential project called HAWI involving refugees and students.

In addition to this, a series of targeted external interventions will open up the originally closed park-like site in order to encourage communication between residents and locals.

These elements are seen as "urban building blocks" due to their ability to be used not only temporarily within existing structures but also in new buildings and, beyond this, in a wide range of other urban situations.

On the socio-cultural level, the architectural interventions are anchored in the commitment of numerous actors who have already been involved in and accompanying a range of forms of participation in the surrounding area for the past two years. In the same way, the appropriation of these "urban building blocks" will establish a basis for social and cultural life.



Statement from  
Michael Landau,  
President of Caritas Austria

### More than just a roof over the head

We are living in fast-moving times. Times, however, in which we can and must, quite literally, also move things ourselves. In the past year, hundreds of thousands of people – men, women and children – who were fleeing to Europe arrived in Austria. Almost 90,000 of them remained. We at Caritas – in common with many other aid organisations – not only cared for and accompanied people but also opened transit and emergency shelters. A lot of long-term accommodation was also created. Today, people are living in former factory buildings and hurriedly equipped offices. They are living in deserted hotels or in converted church facilities - in monasteries, vicarages or abbeys and private accommodation. By working together with countless volunteers, statutory authorities, companies and representatives of the churches and other religious communities much was achieved in these few months. This renaissance of a broad civil society enabled refugees - directly, speedily and unbureaucratically - to find shelter and a temporary home. This commitment prevented homelessness and offered these men, women and children hope.

This means that the first major step has been achieved. Because the most important thing is to have a roof over one's head. At the same time, however, it is clear that if we want to offer not just accommodation in a provisional shelter but also arrival in our society, a roof alone is not enough. We have to ask ourselves how we will organise living together in the future – through the care we provide but also through the accommodation that we build. Or, put another way, integration also begins with the freedom of being able to close a door behind oneself. Is privacy, is peace, possible? Is it possible to offer both hope and perspective? And how can we ensure that both the communal life within the accommodation and the relationship with the neighbours are successful?

Austria's contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016 "Places for People" delivers some very important answers to these

questions. Answers that also resound far beyond the concrete area of influence of the interventions – simply because the subject of affordable living is central not only to refugees, but has long since become an existential question for society as a whole.

It seems to me that Austria's contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016 makes two things very clear: the first is that much can already be achieved with minimal resources. And the second is that the success of the project that we call society is dependent upon the commitment, the energy and the dedication of every one of us.

In the past few months Europe has already made history. But the final outcome depends upon projects like "Places for People". Upon projects that focus on those things that unite us rather than those that divide us. Upon projects that pave the way for both cohabitation in concrete accommodation and cohesion in society as a whole.

Michael Landau,  
President of Caritas Austria

## Portraits

Elke Delugan-Meissl  
Commissioner of the Austrian Pavilion

As a founder and partner of Delugan Meissl Associated Architects Elke Delugan-Meissl is one of few women playing a leading role in the, until now, strongly male-dominated Austrian architectural scene. Although Elke Delugan-Meissl is directly involved in all of DMAA's projects, she continuously devotes some of her capacity to teaching and jury roles in Austria and abroad as a means of making an active contribution to the architectural

debate and promoting the commitment to quality which runs consistently through her work. The oeuvre of DMAA has received many awards and regularly features in international exhibitions. Elke Delugan-Meissl's highest honour to date was the Grand Austrian State Prize which she and Roman Delugan received in 2015 for their "complex and, sometimes, radical work in the field of architecture."

DMAA – Delugan Meissl  
Associated Architects

[www.dmaa.at](http://www.dmaa.at)

The position of the office - which was founded in Vienna in 1993 by Elke Meissl and Roman Delugan, expanded with the appointment of Dietmar Feistel and Martin Josst as partners in 2004 and currently has 25 employees - is that architecture is structured like language in the sense that meaning is derived from the relationship between individual elements. The architectural approach of DMAA demands that conventional spatial boundaries are rejected - both inside and outside its buildings - in favour of sequential experiences with smooth transitions. Despite this

emphasis on the physical presence and physiological effect of architecture the works of DMAA constantly create situations in which the immaterial becomes perceptible beyond traditional gestures of pathos. This extensive, original oeuvre, which stretches from such iconic cultural buildings as the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart, the EYE film museum in Amsterdam and the Winterfestspielhaus Erl to numerous innovative residential buildings, led to the award to DMAA of the Grand Austrian State Prize in 2015.

Liquid Frontiers

[www.liquidfrontiers.com](http://www.liquidfrontiers.com)

Liquid Frontiers is a think tank, design studio and production office with a strong cultural background and a base in Vienna's Museumsquartier. As well as the conception of exhibitions and publications in the areas of art, design and architecture, concrete cooperative projects with architects and designers are a key focus of the work of the company which was formed in 2000 by Sabine Dreher and Christian Muhr. The ongoing collaboration with Delugan Meissl Associated Architects began in 2002, when Liquid Frontiers organised the first exhibition of

the work of the architectural office in the Kunsthaus Meran under the title "State of Flux". Another important joint project was the 2009 book about the Porsche Museum which was published by Springer Verlag and conceived and produced by Liquid Frontiers. Amongst the current results of the cooperation is the "Pfliegewohnheim Donaustadt". Liquid Frontiers has developed a concept for a programme of artistic interventions in this DMAA-designed building based on the special needs of the residents.

## Portraits

### Caramel Architekten

[www.caramel.at](http://www.caramel.at)

Breaking new ground with every project is one of the objectives of the office founded in 2001 by Günter Katherl, Martin Haller and Ulrich Aspetsberger. In the event, the trio and their currently twelve employees have spent the intervening years realising an impressive number of buildings - from self-built projects to university buildings – and have never ceased to surprise with their unorthodox approaches and clever concepts, powerful forms and unusual materials. A lack of respect for convention coupled with an absolute respect for the needs

of users, a distinct eagerness to experiment and deep personal and political commitment are further characteristics of an active and sometimes actionist architectural understanding. The latest example of Caramel's cleverness when dealing with limitations is the Cj-5 House in Vienna which was completed in 2014 and in which the ingenious spatial programme and subtle detailing enabled them to obtain five times as much usable space as the surrounding residential buildings despite the minimal area of the site.

### EOOS

[www.eoos.com](http://www.eoos.com)

The design studio with around ten employees was established in Vienna in 1995 by the three partners Martin Bergmann, Gernot Bohmann and Harald Gründl. Central not only to EOOS' design language but also to its self-image is a research and design approach which the designers themselves describe as "poetic analysis" and which they apply to the entire spectrum of their activities – from the creation of products, furniture and interiors to social design. As the name suggests, this is an approach which combines strict analysis with poetic imagination. The results are reduced,

highly functional and technologically innovative products which are not only anchored in a long cultural tradition but which also embody this same tradition in their form and purpose. The latest result of EOOS' intense examination of both the cultural and social dimensions of design and new and sustainable technologies is a mobile toilet ("Blue Division Toilet") which, as it requires connection to neither a water supply nor a drainage network, is especially suitable for use in developing countries.

### the next ENTERprise - architects

[www.thenextenterprise.at](http://www.thenextenterprise.at)

An explicitly experimental and exploratory approach and the close relationship between theory and practice, architecture and art are trademarks of the Vienna architectural office which has been run by Marie-Therese Harnoncourt and Ernst J. Fuchs since 2000 and currently has a team of six. The body and the city are key areas for research and sources of inspiration for the continuous development of an approach that understands architecture to be, above all, the adventure of the conquering of space. With their complex spatial dramaturgies, dramatic correspondence between

interior and exterior, volume and void and a wealth of surprising details, the works of the next ENTERprise - architects are also invariably a self-confident expression of architecture as an autonomous cultural force. In the "Wolkenturm" (Cloud Tower), a sculpturally-shaped outdoor pavilion in the grounds of Schloss Grafenegg in Lower Austria, the next ENTERprise - architects was able to apply its performative understanding of architecture to a concert and event space and transform this into a catalyst for synaesthetic experiences between space and music, art and nature.

Quotes

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Austria's contribution to this year's Biennale Architettura clearly demonstrates that architecture cannot just be reduced to the external appearance of buildings. Architecture is also always about realising visions and mental images, about reflecting our past and addressing our future.

Thomas Drozda,  
Federal Minister

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In terms of both essence and structure, not only the social and aesthetic but also the autonomous and supportive dimensions of architecture are individual creative acts which require freedom and responsibility in equal measure. These relationships and this room for manoeuvre are at the heart of the three Austrian contributions to Biennale Architettura 2016 and of the entire "Places for People" initiative.

Elke Delugan-Meissl,  
Commissioner of Austria's Contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016

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Austria's contribution to the Biennale Architettura 2016 focuses on those things that unite us rather than those that divide us. The issue here is not only cohabitation in concrete refugee accommodation but also cohesion in society as a whole.

Michael Landau,  
President of Caritas Austria

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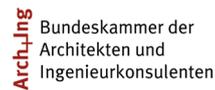
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Press text and photos

[presse.artphalanx.at/en/architektur-biennale-2016](http://presse.artphalanx.at/en/architektur-biennale-2016)

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