

THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS

to launch such an innovative project is extremely courageous and at the same time extremely important in order to actively shape our common future.

It would be a great honor for me to be able to contribute to this visionary project: The New European Bauhaus. With great interest I have followed the announcements in the press. As an architect and convinced European, I would very much like to make a substantial contribute to this process of designing and formulating the objectives of this challenging project. With my profession and my expertise in the field of architecture, design and art for over 20 years, I think I could support this exciting project in many respects and I would like to describe my approach to this project and my expertise in the following.

First of all, the project is amazing and the name is already so much the concept. The Bauhaus 100 years ago was a movement developed out of her time.

In it´s time, the Bauhaus tried to provide an answer to the pressing questions of its time, industrialisation and the post-war period, and developed a holistic vision of shaping our living environment with the new possibilities that permeated all areas of life. By combining the various arts with handcrafts and new materials and manufacturing processes, a common vision emerged to create a liveable environment for people and thus actively shape the way we live and the future.

We are currently 2020 in an extreme period of change: digitisation, climate change, extreme global interdependence, links and impacts and a change of materials towards sustainable materials. To deal with this it needs a common vision again and a real movement in society to create the future. In order to really ignite and promote this movement in society, reflection from different professional perspectives is necessary. This interdisciplinary exchange can develop the basis and the most important guiding themes, offer solutions for our designed environment and everyday life in order to actively shape our future.

To this interdisciplinary exchange my contribution at the discipline architecture, art and design could be on the following key topics:

- dealing with **our cultural heritage** in Europe for the future
- linking climate protection with **building culture**

As an architect and a member of the BDA - Bund Deutscher Architektinnen und Architekten / Association of German Architects - and a member of the ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites - my expertise is primarily in working with our cultural heritage and the context of our built environment. For over 20 years I have been working with historic buildings and transforming them contemporary, into the 21st century. I would describe this process to recognise what we have found, to decipher it and to reinterpret it in a contemporary new way and equip the buildings and their surrounding for the future.

Transformation of existing buildings

As a first step, I would see this process as one of the most sustainable approaches to architecture for the future and I could make a significant contribution to this crucial area. Implementing the "Green Deal" and meeting the climate targets by 2050 will only be possible if we work with the buildings that already exist and convert and retrofit these buildings. We will be able to build fewer new buildings over the next 30 years than we will be able to use, maintain and appropriately reuse existing buildings. In order to be able to continue to use the existing buildings efficiently, to continue to equip them, we need foremost architects and, moreover, architects who have the competence to deal with existing buildings in a technically and architecturally appropriate way and who generally have high design standards. We have to find a way to transform our cities like Paris, Brussels, Rome and Berlin, developed over centuries, with their history, their identity, their urban qualities and their existing building envelopes, into the 21st century, the century of renewable energies, to continue to write our cultural history in connection with the parameters and goals of the "Green Deal". In order to achieve a climate-neutral building stock by 2050, we can neither build new cities from e.g. wood or bamboo, nor equip our historic buildings completely with photovoltaic panels.

This transformation process with existing buildings and the addition and densification with new buildings (e.g. consideration of a joint energy balance, neighbourhood joint consideration old/new) should primarily be developed and controlled together with architects, in cooperation with the construction industry and engineers for renewable energies, but also beyond that together with politics, with representatives of the economy, with cultural workers, sociologists and humanities scholars in a transdisciplinary process - the task is an overall social one.

Building culture

Furthermore, I think that certainly the choice of materials for our built environment, for new buildings, for architecture in general is crucial for our future. Here it is indisputable that we are moving from our previous habitual materials, especially of the 20th century, the steel-concrete age, into a new age and declaring the 21st century a century of sustainable, renewable materials, such as wood and other natural materials. Of course, it is also crucial to think more strongly in cycles and in the value chain, as well as to turn away from the sharp increase in the use of composite materials in recent decades. The use of pure, natural and local building materials should be the focus and the development of new materials with the latest technologies, also with the help of digitalisation and pre-fabrication to decisively reduce the costs and the construction period.

A decisive factor in how we build in the future is a combination of sustainable building with sophisticated architecture with a high design standard. Our built environment shapes us very strongly, consciously and unconsciously, the responsibility in architecture is great and the influence of architecture for our cities and for our society and every individual is very strong. The task is linking climate protection with building culture.

Architecture is all about space, material and atmosphere

My everyday professional life is developing concepts and designing space in my atelier in Berlin in a transparent, continuous exchange with the clients and the building companies and I am used to developing visions and bringing them to reality.

One project I am currently working on is the further development of an urban planning concept for a listed industrial site in the south of Germany. With my atelier I won the competition for transforming the 100-year-old industrial site in the heart of the city of Göppingen into the 21st century and I am currently researching and developing how the essence of this cultural heritage can be preserved, how it can be energetically upgraded and how it can be further developed in a contemporary way for industry 4.0.

The tools of an architect to develop space are the shaping and modelling of space, the appropriate proportion, the use of suitable materials, the joining of materials, the use of light (daylight, artificial light) and the use of renewable energies. But above all, there is the crucial question of the effect on us, on us human - the spatial effect, the atmosphere - for all we create is the question of what atmosphere is created, how are our senses touched and how do we feel?

And so we find ourselves back at the central question that the Bauhaus already asked itself: how can we create an environment worth living in for us, for the human.

What atmosphere are we creating. We create all our designed environment only for us. Thus, the human being should really be at the centre of all considerations. This reference to the human being, the human scale, which should always be the point of reference.

In addition to my architectural projects, I have been working for almost 20 years in the European art and culture industry, designing stage sets for major opera and dance productions at the most renowned theatres in Europe, e.g. for the 100th anniversary "Le sacre du printemps" by Stravinsky a new interpretation with the choreography by Sasha Waltz 2013 at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, 2007 the Berlioz opera "Roméo et Juliette" with the National Ballet at the Opéra National de Paris and 2012 at the Teatro alla Scala Milano. 2014 a new interpretation for Wagner's "Tannhäuser" at the Staatsoper in Berlin. Here, too, the human being, his body, is directly related to the created space and the decisive factor is the narration, the interpretation of this cultural asset and the atmosphere that is created with the built and transforming space over the entire piece - a creation of worlds in which the audience is immersed.

In the context of an interdisciplinary round table, I could make a decisive contribution to defining and maintaining a high design quality of our built environment on the basis of my expertise: dealing with our cultural heritage and linking climate protection with building culture in terms of high quality in the field of architecture, space, material and atmosphere. Together design guidelines could be developed that can be communicated in a generally understandable way to bring the relevance of architecture for our perception and well-being back into the general consciousness - in order to shape our common future.