

Back to zero

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Roberta Weiss-Mariani: Back to zero

The titles of the works produced by the artist pair stöckerselig often have to do with process, with rhythms, with transition and transit. Of course, this can mislead us into believing that in their artistic approach, too, they seek seamless transitions between individual works, repetitions of – and variations on – already achieved pieces. This would mean that no actual original beginning need be defined piece by piece. Which is not at all the case. Every time Annette Stöcker and Christian Selig get started

on a piece, “the initial values are set back to zero” and the factors “time, space and persons are always reanalyzed anew”. Closely tied in with their own biographies, this results in complex works linked to their era. And it is their “total beginning” approach that serves as a common denominator to all their works – whether room installations in exhibition halls or museums, art in public venues, photographs, drawings, videos or still other forms.

Christoph Schläppi: LWB Felsenau: Art intégré

Marco Graber: During the architectural competition we had no contact with artists, but once things got going, we suggested calling in someone as soon as possible. We decided on Elisabeth Arpagaus, someone who would be working here on a scale rarely available to her as an artist. Architecture became so to speak instrumental to her art.

Thomas Pulver: Generally, designs are drawn up with an eye to the space available, or to the question of what functions combine where, how the spaces are structured, the light sources, and so forth. What is really amazing to notice, however, is how important the final touches to a project – the last details and paint layers – are to how it comes across. Indeed, more important than any other criteria. Whatever gets done “last” – in this

case the color – is what makes the greatest impact, even if this was not foreseen in the original design.

Things really get interesting in those cases where the color scheme and the architecture are closely tied in with each other. This may explain why our construction has met with such success, since its “archetype” is taken up, strengthened and intensified by its color.

The French “art intégré” (integrated art) is a far better definition of our design concept than the German “Kunst am Bau” (architecture-related art) or what the Bernese term “art in public spaces,” both of which imply art as something applied, added from the outside. This need not be the case.

Elisabeth Arpagaus: LWB Felsenau: An Approximation of a Possible Concept

What I seek to achieve is accomplished once I’ve found a new sculptural equilibrium in which the individual elements are not equal but of equal value.

Our two-year long collaboration began with a meeting: the architects Marco Graber and Tom Pulver invited me to their studio. Here, with the help of blueprints and scale models, they painstakingly explained to me their design project for the train-

ing establishment in Bern. Together we visited the future construction site, the Felsenau – a physically but also historically stratified site nestled in a bend of the Aare. We went as far as the existing workshops in the Shedhallen. Thanks to that sunny day filled with inspiring discussions and first impressions, I was able to set down my ideas on paper, accompanied by a few sketches.