

The „Stille Örtchen“¹ that re-conquers the world!

„The sickness of today's cities and settlements is the disappointing result of our disability to put human basic needs over economic and industrial requirements. “ (Walter Gropius)

We all know it: the old-fashioned kind of toilet made of a wooden shad or appearing in an unadventurous plastic look. Most of the time one wouldn't be delighted to stay for a longer time. Along the lines of "Scheiß drauf"² one is urged in the basic meaning of the word to relieve himself. As a consequence one is sitting, in a sparsely illuminated environment and should be glad not to observe the details as a consequence of the dimmed light. „Let's get out of here!“ one thinks by himself. This is because it is always embarrassing to stay at this place.

It's a pity that the very place that is the most frequented in the world gets in consideration of design, optics and also its event-character that less attention. To make the inevitable "march to the toilet" a special event should be the declared ambition. To create a place where one feels comfortable and invited to stay and where one can leave the world behind him.

The adequate presentation of the „quiet place“ - as Austrians call the restroom too - will be made possible by using a combination of larch-wood in "Holzriegelbauweise" and "Ausfachungen" in transparent glass. The glass is to guarantee the flow-through of daylight and gives a feeling of tidiness. The matt-white glass is kind of voyeuristic like a shadow-light "galanty show". One can see the contours of man 10 cm behind it. All the rest will be totally invisible from outside – the user normally doesn't want to be a mannequin. However it keeps a touch of eroticism but avoids voyeurism.

A feeling of freedom, nativeness and life in close touch with nature creeps over someone. It seems as one lies under the plain sky on the green grass in a sunshiny meadow but invisible to the others. The privacy will be kept perfectly. It's a construction that might seduce one to experience it as adventurous using the toilet and not only as simple defecation. It's a great peace of freedom that wants to be re-conquered and definitely can be captured. A very natural and humane necessity can classy be satisfied and by the use of a flush serviced by rainwater one seems to be merged with nature.

¹ restroom

² "Fuck it" in German means „shit onto it“

Architectural debate

Louis Sullivan created the thought of functionalism in architecture in his oeuvre. Purely esthetical principles of creation are of lower importance than the form of the intended use. A contemporary beauty in architecture and design results of its functionality. The functional consistence of the transparent toilette derives from the challenge or purpose of planning: To create a friendly, light, clean as well as atmospherically attractive „quiet place“ which also has a rational design. This stands without hiding or laminating anything. It means to provide the basic human needs with function and space - without any denials. Thus dispassion and purpose of design arises. It is the quest of purpose, of material and construction and of the resulting design.

The purpose should be a toilet that's shown open and very well integrated in the environment. That's why the architectural structure of a prism with a monopitch roof remembering an old fashioned wooden pit latrine. This should represent on the one hand side brightness, transparency and pureness and on the other hand side it should provide one with a place for retreat. It's furnished very simple and functional by the use of a hanging toilet and a vanity.

The materials for this construction are wood and white-transparent glass. Light and transparency are provided by a white and transparent heat protecting glass without allowing too many insights. The glass creates hereby a functional shell without negative effects. Its white colour is the embodiment of pureness and distributes a beautiful and pleasant light. The surrounding surfaces like the pitch of the roof and the exterior walls are carried out of glass except the small surfaces which contain the installations for the hanging toilet and the vanity. The remaining surfaces consist in a slightly red solid larch-wood that perfectly goes with the milky white environment and symbolises heat as well as natures freedom.

Construction becomes form and will visibly be shown. The structure will be dismantled in posts and glass – it results a wooden framework. It's a supporting wooden frame that consists of a cross-tie, a post, a „Schwertung“ and a reinforced plate. One could name it a skeleton, also for civil engineering reasons, which is necessary to carry out the supporting function. In between rests only milky-white glass.

Beside functionalism also objectiveness, the notion of quality, dignity, and sustainability plays a central role. This is similar to the former German „Werkbund“. Finally the cooperation between the planner, trade and business and finally the industry is also of great importance.

Hermann Hesse wrote in 1912 about the „Werkbund“: „Within the German Werkbund artists work side by side with craftsmen and fabricants to fight trash and to promote quality work. This is alike the Ruskin' circle of thoughts but only in a modernised form, more practical and not that narrow determined. It's about taste as a moral category, but moral means national economy.

Finally it's the further development of functionalism in the classical modernity of Bauhaus as Walter Gropius stated:

"The sickness of today's cities and settlements is the disappointing result of our disability to put human basic needs over economic and industrial requirements."

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