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ART IS LONGING FOR GOD.

THE PROJ ECT:

Museum Abbey of Admont: Three museums under one roof. Romanic masterpieces and Austrian contemporary art, baroque masters and insects of natural history: In order to make the multiple collections of the Benedictine abbey accessible to the public, a large museum project of international rank was initiated.

Architecture as a frame, not as a picture. The objective in terms of architecture was as sublime as comprehensive: The aim was to create a museum of contemporary art, art history and natural history under a common roof. Taking into account the historical building substance in the south tract of the monastery, the aim was to create a bridge across the extremely contrasting museum landscape linking pieces of art from nine centuries.

Art – and serving art. The architect's office of university professor Dr. Manfred Wehdorn took up the challenge to turn more than 8 000 square metres of useful area in a historical building shell into the home of the most varied private museum in Austria. A museum that is entirely dedicated to the varieties of art. Therefore this museum is unique in many ways.

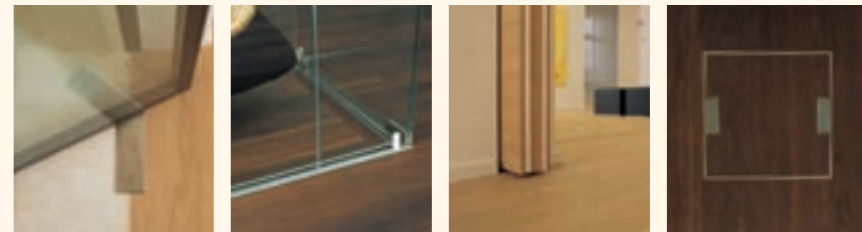




ARCHITECTURE IS A DAUGHTER OF ART.

THE ARC HIT ECT

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A discussion with the managing architect of the large museum project Abbey of Admont, DI Christian Wöhner of the Architect's office Wehdorn, Vienna.

What was your greatest challenge in this project?

There were several! Firstly: the highly dominating historical substance. Secondly: the variety of the museums – to integrate a museum of natural history, one of art history and one of contemporary art as well as a presentation of the abbey into the monastery building. Thirdly: to add something new to the historical building substance using contemporary shape and material. Fourthly: To adapt important technical museum installations (air conditioning, light, safety system, etc.) to the various requirements of the different types of museums and install these invisible to the visitor.

What is the importance of this project for you?

This is the largest project that I have handled so far. Especially since there are many different tasks in the monastery in addition to the museum itself such as the monastery cellar, the office rooms with roof installation, the prelature and the design of the outer facilities. All things considered it was a highly interesting and also rare job for an architect, also in terms of the long construction period of more than 8 years. During this period I travelled 293 km for the distance Vienna-Admont-Vienna, which took me almost 57 days and nights in the car.

What were your requirements for the floor?

If one wants to create a very specific room atmosphere, one should very carefully consider the correct floor. Every floor has its very specific application. This is why there is a wide range of solutions for the various museum sections:

In the museum of contemporary art the requirement was to use a hard-wearing, durable but very bright floor. Oak was the best material for this purpose. The white oiled surface ensures a restraint which is necessary for such an application.

In the museum of art history the room atmosphere should be very discreet but dark, the floor should not have too much of its own life. This is why resistant oak is again used – however smoked.

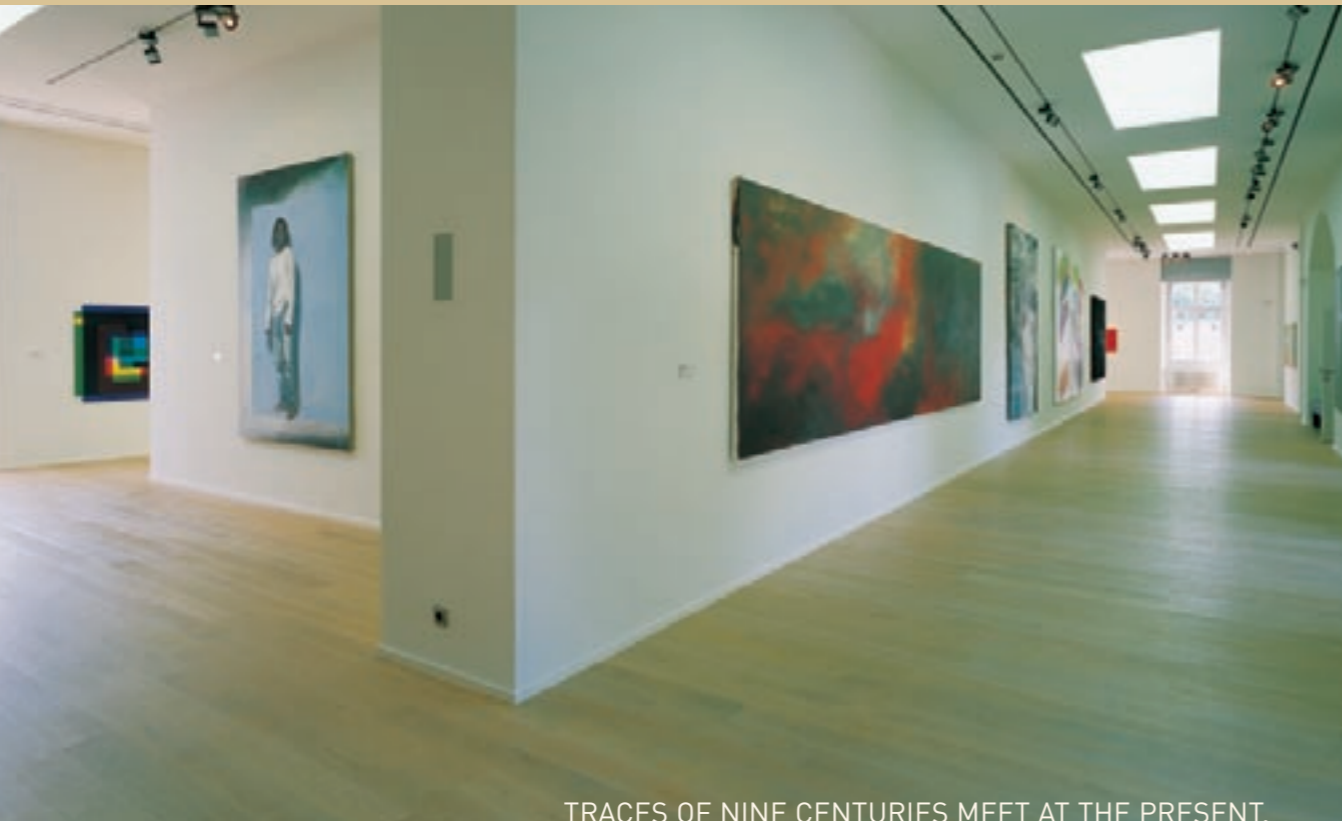
We also wanted to reduce the joints or make them as subtle as possible. We succeeded in doing so through bonding. Consequently the joints occur only at very large distances (expansion joints). These expansion joints are designed level without cover sections and are consequently hardly visible.

What does the architectonic mega trend "minimalism" mean in terms of flooring?

Anything interfering with the concentration on the essential – the homogeneity of the area – has to be solved so that it does not appear. For instance minimising the joint formation and omitting skirting boards: Accurate joint at the edge, closed with silicon joint etc. in the area. The specific characteristics of the materials such as the warmth of the wood but also - if intended – the intensive grain patterns of some types of wood should be openly visible and enhanced.

What will be the future trend of architecture in your opinion?

Difficult question. The continuous research and further development in the area of materials and technology will get very important. This trend is inspired by the architecture itself providing the architect with new opportunities especially in realising complicated shapes. Facades for instance can be developed today from a wide range of materials in many shapes and I am sure we are only at the beginning of an exciting future.



TRACES OF NINE CENTURIES MEET AT THE PRESENT.

THE FLOOR:

European Oak knotty one-strip OAK 3-layer-construction; micro-bevelled edges, top and bottom layers made of same species for improved stability and balance. Coniferous middle layer promotes a flat surface, which enhances durability. Contrasting colour variations are a valued feature. Partially bark ringed knots. Occasional knotholes and shakes are



Smoked Oak knotty one-strip OAK 3-layer-construction; micro-bevelled edges, top and bottom layers made of same species for improved stability and balance. Coniferous middle layer promotes a flat surface, which enhances durability. The special feature of this floor is the uniformly dark colour throughout the top layer, which is achieved by a special smoking process. Occasional knotholes and shakes are professionally filled.

