

Blog Metadesign 2008 „Berlin is better“

Torstrasse 166

Fantasies are dreams in a state of awakesness: Phantasien sind Träume im Wachzustand (Franz Schmidberger, german publicist) — this is the Motto of an artistic project in the Torstrasse 166. A deserted building in Berlin-Mitte was transformed by 12 artists to an experience space (Erlebnisraum), which touches all our senses...

Unusual, surprising and thrilling, the installation tangles our perception. Don't miss it! The art event will last till 12. October 2008.

<http://www.torstrasse166.de/>



modern and beautiful?

After the reunification, many new buildings were constructed in Berlin and quite a lot of them provoke a controversial discussion whether modern architecture enriches or rather destroys our cityscape. In particular the shopping mall „Alexa“ close to the Alexanderplatz, which was constructed in 2007, is not well received by everyone. The architects and owners of the complex claim that it follows the classical Art Deco Style and is constructed with much care and attention to beautiful details. The critics can't follow this rationale and call the Alexa a nightmare in pig pink („Alptraum in Schweinchenrosa“) or a subterranean bunker, which was pressed by a tectonic plate movement to earth's surface and painted in pink („durch eine Erdverschiebung nach oben gedrückter Bunker, der Rosa angesprüht wurde“).

<http://www.alexacentre.com/mainsite/common/default.aspx>

<http://www.hauptstadtblog.de/article/2389/haesslich-wie-die-nacht>

However several modern buildings have been constructed in Berlin, which don't polarize options as much – at least concerning their appearance. At the best they give Berlin its identity and the Berliners are proud and happy to see them. Spontaneously I can think of three buildings in the

center of the town:

There is the GSW Headquarter close to Checkpoint Charlie in Kreuzberg. A convex high-riser with 22 stores, called the round "pillbox", was constructed in 1999 to complete an older administration building. According to the plans of the architects Sauerbruch and Hutton, the high-riser is covered with glass lamellae in warm colors. These lamellae are the trademark of the building and depending on the light reflection change in gradation and luminance (Farbton und Leuchtkraft). The building develops a life of its own and isn't just a cool, clean and repellent surface.

http://hueconsulting.blogspot.com/2007_04_01_archive.html

http://www.rotormodels.com/cms/front_content.php?idart=151&idcat=88&lang=1&client=1



Another high-riser, which is pleasant to the eye, is the so-called Kollhoff-Tower on the Potsdamer Platz.

It was built in 1999 in the retro style of New York's brick buildings. The tower of 103 meters is supposed to have the fastest elevator in Europe. The roof terrace provides a fantastic view over the recently constructed area of the Potsdamer Platz and the adjacent Tiergarten park. Unfortunately only ten years after construction the building must be already renovated, but it's still beautiful with its distinctive and pointed shape!



<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kollhoff-Tower>
<http://www.panoramapunkt.de/index.php?id=9>

A successful example of modern architecture in Berlin is also the new exhibition hall, which belongs to the museum of German history in Mitte, Hinter dem Gießhaus 3. It was designed by the Chinese-American architect Leoh Ming Pei, who has the reputation being the „master of light“ and the „magician of space“.

Curved walls and light-flooded, spacious rooms lend the building its special and inimitable character. The visitors feel immediately embraced by the generous entrance area.



<http://www.dhm.de/pei/>
http://www.morgenpost.de/printarchiv/berlin/article225481/Geschichte_ist_modern.html

Last but not least there is the philological library of the University of Dahlem designed by the British architect Norman Foster. This amazing building with an interior shaped as a book gives us hope that also in the future more modern *and* beautiful buildings in Berlin will be constructed.



<http://www.fu-berlin.de/presse/bildarchiv/index.html>
http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philologische_Bibliothek

Have a good time at goodtime

From the outside the rather simple and unimpressive restaurant „goodtime“ in Mitte contrasts with the visual and culinary experience on the inside that you shouldn't miss. The subtle illumination gives the eatery a mysterious aura. The paper hangings are decorated with huge floral

and vegetable motifs. The service is folded like water lilies. The cutlery and the dishes ornate with lovely elements have been carefully selected. Even the patrons are a feast for the eyes. But the clou is – surprise! – the meal isn't just nice to look at but is cooked with fresh ingredients, good taste and an endless diversity. The pineapple shake is a must!



http://www.goodtime-berlin.de/goodtime_main.html

video rental shop

If you're seeking for special movies, classics or art-house films, take a look at the Filmgalerie 451 in Berlin Mitte. A big archive and database, available in the Internet, help facilitate your search.



Filmgalerie 451 Berlin

Torstr. 231

10115 Berlin / Mitte

<http://www.filmgalerie-berlin.de/>

Atelierhaus Panzerhalle

Southwest of Berlin's city limit, closed to the town Groß Glienicke exists a place, which is called „Waldsiedlung“. Despite the peaceful name and the romantic landscape the area of 700.000 square meters was used since the Weimar Republic for military purposes as a barrack. During the Third Reich the barrack was expanded, after 1945 occupied by the soviet army and until 1989 used as a frontier-defence of the GDR. After the reunification the area was selled to a private property

company and most of the buildings were demolished. Fortunately remained the so called Panzerhalle, which could be used for more than 10 years as an atelier and an exhibition place. The hall was huge, cold and drafty, but it had a very special atmosphere and in combination with the environmental forest, which is just beautiful, a stimulating contrast was created.

I visited the Panzerhalle for the first time in 2003 to see the exhibition „Blue Hall – market place Europe“.

Artists from different european countries were invited to realise their idee of Europe, each one using a box of bananas. It was an amazing exhibition with funny, sometimes provocative ideas. The Panzerhalle offered the ideal surrounding.



exhibit from „Blue Hall – Marktplatz Europa“

Last year the Panzerhalle was destroyed, but the people and the spirit, which created the Atelierhaus Panzerhalle still exist. The artists moved to another building belonging to the barrack Waldsiedlung, called now „Neues Atelierhaus Panzerhalle“. The artistic production continues and projects as a sculpture garden are in preparation. It is a great advantage for Berlin and Brandenburg, when this place, which experienced so many different historical changes, can be used also in the future for cultural purposes.



Lothar Seruset, Die Turnstunde

<http://www.atelierhaus-panzerhalle.de/ph/>

Silent Berlin

Walking around in the center of Berlin without a goal or a special target makes you discover the most beautiful and interesting places. These places will never be found in any typical guide and will show you the real Berlin.

Impressive Buildings and sculptures from the 19th and early 20th centuries can be found around

the area of the Charité (a famous and well-established hospital-complex between the main train station and the Friedrichstrasse): <http://denkmaeler.charite.de/site/>. On Sundays the parks of the Charité are deserted and tranquil, so you can experience and enjoy a meditative silence, here you can recover from the sometimes exhausting activities in the capital.



A calm place is also the cemetery „Dorotheenstädtisch-Friedrichswerdersche Friedhof“ in Mitte, which is accessible from the Chausseestrasse 126: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorotheenst%C3%A4dtischer_Friedhof.

The cemetery was built in 1763 and has become over time a place of great importance concerning Berlin's tradition and history of art. Famous people have found here their last resting-place: between the artists Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Johann Gottfried Schadow are the writers and dramatists Bertolt Brecht and Anna Seghers, the philosopher Herber Marcuse, the members of the resistance Klaus Bonhoeffer and Hans von Dohnanyi, the politician Johannes Rau and lots more. Some of the tombstones are really extraordinary.



Grave of Karl Friedrich Schinkel

Not so silent but also quite interesting is the place in front of the ruin of the Palace of the Republic. Here the reconstructed the palace will be built, this was damaged during second world war and finally destroyed in 1950. At the moment excavations are taking place on the former Palace Square

(Schlossplatz):

http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/denkmal/denkmale_in_berlin/de/bodendenkmale/berliner_schloss.shtml

The findings, foundations, walls and everyday items, are a significant source of the original construction of the palace and give an impression of the medieval settlement on this place during the 12th until the 14th centuries. There are plans to integrate parts of the excavation in the soon to be reconstructed buildings.

Cheap Berlin

Berlin is actually one of the cheapest capitals in Europe and without being rich or having a stable income you still have the possibility to find a nice flat in the center of the town and to participate at the cultural life. There are a lot of places and events, where no entrance fee is demanded. Many buildings and monuments can be entered for free, for example the Friedrichwerdersche Kirche http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrichswerdersche_Kirche, the Reichstag <http://www.berlin.de/orte/sehenswuerdigkeiten/reichstag/>, on Mondays the museum Deutsche Guggenheim <http://www.deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de/e/> or the Holocaust-Monument closed to the Avenue „Unter den Linden“ and the Brandenburg Gate <http://www.holocaust-denkmal-berlin.de/>.

The evenings you can walk around and find spontaneous concerts on the road or in the huge public parks, which belong to Berlin. Especially on Friday evenings many gallery openings in Berlin Mitte are taking place, which are accessible to everyone <http://www.galerien-berlin-mitte.de/>. Residents and tourists are guided on special occasions through government department, memorials, historical monuments, universities and other buildings, which are normally not opened to the public:

<http://www.tag-des-offenen-denkmals.de/>

<http://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Bundesregierung/TagderoffenenTuer/tag-der-offenen-tuer.html>

<http://www.city-stiftung-berlin.eu/index.php?id=events&sprache=0>

<http://www.hauptstadtscheckheft.de/>

Mainly during the summertime innumerable festivals and parties on the street are organised.

This unpretentious and easygoing lifestyle is also one of the reasons that many artists are attracted by Berlin, see Reuters-article „Artists flock to cheap Berlin from around the world“ (<http://www.reuters.com/article/inDepthNews/idUSL82287720080806>)



Queen Luise from Prussia and Princess Friederike in the Friedrichswerdersche Kirche, source: flickr (<http://flickr.com/photos/infactoweb/769879872/>)

Datas and facts concerning „cheap Berlin“ as well as an interview with an scottish writer, living many years in Berlin, are coming soon.

Animation Torstraße:

<http://www.kankeleit.de/film/torstrasse.swf>

Interview Ian Whalley:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12epel2FR4w&list=UUYWuqDw33BLfH-FCzyEYS9w>

Interview Kenneth MacLeod:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKdmy3ubYik&list=UUYWuqDw33BLfH-FCzyEYS9w>