

HEDGEHOG, FOX, CHAMELEON

STAAB ARCHITECTS: THE ELEGANCE OF PRECISION

With *Kindred Objects* the Staab architectural office offers an intriguing look at its work methods and ways of thinking. The Berlin architect's buildings are not distinguished by their unique, instantly recognizable signature; it's the exploration of issues, such as the reason for a building and its relevance, that defines the architectural designs.

Berlin, January 24, 2017 – Whether it's the Albertinum in Dresden, the Museum Georg Schäfer in Schweinfurt, or the Richard Wagner Museum in Bayreuth—for the Berlin-based Staab architects, the process of examining urban planning issues not only marks the beginnings of a concept, but their approach to design also encompasses relevant social, functional, cultural, and economic aspects. In short: how does context define the form a building takes?

In discussing the “signature” that defines a renowned architect, one needs to distinguish between two kinds of signatures. In 1978 Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter divided the world's architects into two fundamental groups: foxes and hedgehogs. “They hold that while hedgehogs follow their path with consistency (or obstinacy), writes Florian Heilmeyer in his essay for the book *Staab Architekten | Kindred Objects*, “foxes work in leaps and bounds, changing their forms and strategies more often and in general letting themselves be guided more by the project and the location.”

In this dichotomy Volker Staab would definitely be a fox—or, even better: a chameleon, because his designs blend so well into their surroundings. Since winning the competition for the Neues Museum in Nuremberg in 1991, his office has realized forty-four projects. The conscious rejection of a visual “signature” leads to a greater individuality of design for each project. This approach could be called “hardcore contextualism,” according to Heilmeyer, who goes on to say that Staab doesn't override the environment with something new and dominating, but instead adds another layer to what is already there. The complexity of existing sites is expanded or even reinforced, because their buildings fit so well into their surroundings, creating a link to them.

Anyone who mostly appears to lack a recognizable style, however, has to prove himself: Staab has won nearly all of his commissions in competitions. The designs often take an astonishingly simple form; their multiple layers are only recognizable upon second glance, within the immediate context.

Staab Architekten | Kindred Objects presents fifteen very distinct projects in a journey of architectural discovery through Germany, from the Museum für Kunst und Kultur in Münster, to the Museum der Bayerischen Könige in Hohenschwangau, all the way to the Kunstmuseum in Ahrenshoop.



**STAAB ARCHITEKTEN
KINDRED OBJECTS**

Graphic design by fernkopie, text by Florian Heilmeyer, Staab Architekten

English
2016. 352 pp., 500 ills.
clothbound
30.00 x 28.50 cm
ISBN 978-3-7757-4205-4

68,00 EUR

ABOUT HATJE CANTZ

Hatje Cantz is a groundbreaking international publishing company specializing in art, architecture, and photography. Since 1945 Hatje Cantz has been using its profound expertise and enthusiasm for craftsmanship to produce and publish books of the highest quality. We currently release around two hundred new titles annually.

Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION GERD HATJE as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

www.hatjecantz.de
www.editiongerdhatje.com

PRESS CONTACT

Sara Buschmann
Head of Press Department
s.buschmann@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-08

Jennifer Berndt
Junior PR-Manager
presse@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-23

**HATJE
CANTZ**