

The exhibition is being held as part of the “HeimatModerne” project, a joint initiative by various Leipzig institutions and groups, supported by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes. The sponsoring organisation Experimentale e.V. is joined by: Forum zeitgenössischer Musik Leipzig e.V, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, Büro für urbane Projekte, General Panel and raum4.

Models appeal to the power of the imagination – what would and could something be or look like? But models also serve for re-construction. Reality can be staged and imagined on a small scale. The artists in this exhibition examine in models the models of architecture and urban planning that constituted modernism in the East and West during the fifties and sixties. The exhibition goes into the visions and utopias, as well as the failures of these models. At the same time the artists handle the material of modernism as still having contemporary potential for the discussion around urban planning and visions of life, and the future of our cities in how they treat history. All the artists handle the possibilities of the model in different ways.

Karsten Konrad in his work “Stadtplaners Workshop” focuses on the Prager Straße in Dresden and its GDR-built slab buildings, the Rundkino (round cinema), the department store and the Paradedstraße. Today the original structure of the ensemble no longer exists, as the architecture of the post-GDR period has made the ensemble unrecognisable. Konrad builds replicas of buildings from the Socialist era and confronts observers with inordinately large models that can be walked into. The model here serves as reconstruction, examination and investigation of a recent past. Konrad recycles old GDR furniture for his purposes and it forms the fabric for the models it exemplifies, in part no longer standing today.

Inken Reinert’s large-format drawings take up the idea of recycling. With pencil and ruler the artist draws the lines and squares of huge socialist modernist buildings on paper, buildings on the Stalin-Allee – now the Karl-Marx-Allee – the Haus des Lehrers, the Palast der Republik, the Haus des Buches, the Augustusplatz in Leipzig. She draws a monument to them. Reinert’s prefab designs often go so far that the huge buildings threaten to overturn in their scale and it suddenly seems as if one is looking at an inordinately large pattern or the plan of a small cube. In her building portraits Inken Reinert crosses out the megalomania of homogenisation and standardisation in which living and working seems impossible. At the same time Reinert’s buildings fly through an uncertain, timeless nothingness, since she takes all the attributes of the political past away from them and lays them open to a new examination.

The Frisch fashion label (Jürgen Frisch and Ulrike Dorn) in its collection “Maisonette” shows an examination of the Hansaviertel in Berlin. In 1957 with the Interbau exhibition the district represented an architectural response to the building development on the Stalin-Allee in the East of Berlin (see Inken Reinert and Karsten Konrad). Over thirty internationally known architects built 1300 dwellings in the Hansaviertel in the functional style of modernism. Frisch has dedicated a collection to Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Oskar Niemeyer and others. The collection by Frisch speaks of a modernism that can be worn on the body, but yet remains exclusive and model. “Maisonette” will be shown in the display window of the Neubau. The window installation was realised in close collaboration with the photographer Marc Räder.

Terence Gower has reconstructed five pavilions from former world fairs in corrugated cardboard and mounted them together on a platform. Some of the architects with which Frisch deal in “Maisonette” are also the focus of Gower’s interest, among them Alvar Aalto, Oskar Niemeyer and Mies van der Rohe. Terence Gower films a virtual tour around the buildings which more or less draws the observer onto the platform as in a computer

animation. We begin mentally to involve ourselves in a transfer of time and scale: here is the simulation of a meeting of temporary building types in their own exhibition. Mies van der Rohe's German Pavilion in Barcelona (1929) runs into Alvar Aalto's Finnish Pavilion in Paris (1937) and so on. A poster in the display cabinet in the outer area of the GfZK announces the film in the inner area and corresponds with the pavilion architecture of the GfZK Neubau. The exhibition here finds its protraction in the outer area. The facade becomes an exhibiting wall.

Anna Meyer expands the exhibition with her Tokyo models and paintings which investigate our modern city life. From perfume bottles, lipsticks, CDs and many other things Meyer builds dense, colourful, effervescent city models, which form a loud and lively counterpart to the functional modernism in the other works of the exhibition. Meyer constructs objects which can also be read as a model of any contemporary city of millions. Anna Meyer herself says of her cityscapes: "The universal complexity of cities, in which a glittering consumer frenzy is transformed effortlessly into rubbish and back again, shows us that everything is interconnected." The artist investigates reality and its circulation in the cities and through the addition of fantastical elements such as the "Erdlogo" gives them something surreal, utopian and future-oriented. Observers of her work can take mental strolls through skyscrapers of consumer rubbish.

"ModellbauerInnen gesucht!" (Model makers wanted.) was the call to all Leipzigers in the runup to the exhibition. In a competition they were asked to illustrate or construct as a model their vision of the so-called "Brühlbebauung" building complex in Leipzig. The models will be on display during the exhibition and will be able to engage in a dialogue in their proximity to Karsten Konrad's Prager Straße.

"Deckenplan" (Ceiling Plan)(working title): Annalena von Helldorff (graphic designer) and Julia Schäfer (curator of the exhibition) have together implanted a communicative plane in the exhibition alongside the art works. In this the ceiling serves as a floor plan and model for the exhibition. Visitors will find themselves walking through the model. The ceiling, whose position is already diffuse given the colour and height concept of the Neubau's architects, gains a new significance in its role as a communicator of additional information. As with the works in the exhibition, visitors are time and again challenged to define their viewpoint and perspective anew and form connections between the works. The ceiling plan is intended as an aid to this.