



ROBINSON CRUSOE COMES HOME

ISA STÜRME URS WOLFARCHITEKTEN
ART ARMOURY
RAPPERSWIL-JONA / SWITZERLAND



WITH THE SIMPLEST OF MEANS – AND AN EXPRESSIVE ROOF – ARCHITECTURE FIRM STÜRME AND WOLF TRANSFORMED A CENTURY-OLD ARMOURY INTO A MUSEUM.

TEXT KATHARINA MARCHALL
PHOTOS HANNES HENZ

The Kunst(zeug)Haus, or Art Armoury, geographically consolidates the collection of contemporary Swiss art begun 30 years ago by a married couple by the name of Bosshard. On the upper storey, a cabinet rather unusually unites thousands of antique editions of 'Robinson Crusoe' – as if on an island. The former armoury's 'adventurous' character was retained with minimal intervention and

was even underscored via simple modifications. The ground storey's old concrete floor is patched in several places; pipes and cables are laid openly on walls and ceilings, cement-fibre plates clad the new main stairwell. The raw wood of the old beams and pillars was glazed white in the exhibition spaces only. Two offices, a video room, the graphic cabinet and the 'Robinson Library' stand as boxes in the Spartan white exhibition space. 'We worked with what was there,' says Isa Stürm, who speaks of 'as found' as she points, smiling, to a plasterer's trowel that has mutated into a door handle decorating the frame of the entrance.

The sole symbolic new element is the light-band that is carved over the entire length of the attic and arches around itself. This 'scape'

echoes the forms of the hills of the environment. 'The attic connects the communities that just came together. The larger hill belongs to Rapperswil, the smaller to Jona,' says Stürm. The rotation of the roof groin contrasts with the wooden columns' narrow centre-to-centre distance and creates varied atmospheres in the longitudinal exhibition space. A surface in light emerges where the skylight in partitioned polycarbonate sheets expands. Where it narrows to a slit, it serves to indirectly light the artworks. Structurally, it is reminiscent of an unplanked boat, whose keel and ribs are bent into each other. Robinson Crusoe is stranded.

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