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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Designing Community

Interior Design for *Homosexual Initiative Linz*

The 40th anniversary of the riots in New York's Christopher Street was the best date for the opening of a centre for the lesbian and gay movement in Linz, Austria. A four floor building has been constructed in the city centre of this year's Cultural Capital of Europe - situated between Bruckner Concert Hall, State Gallery and Lentos, the museum for contemporary art.

Pudelskern Space Agency designed the interior spaces of the new social center for the HOSI Linz (Homosexual Initiative Linz) - an association of activists for lesbian and gay rights in Austria. The three creative heads designed spaces for communication and translated the glass architecture of the building into an openness of the community using the house. The members of the initiative should identify themselves with their new home and the urban environment should feel invited to take part.

A café and a small auditorium are located at the ground floor. Those are the main spaces of interaction between public and the association. In the café different areas have been arranged to allow multiple usage - as a lounge, a restaurant or a bar. At a central position a pink upholstered seating object is a bench from one side and a lounge sofa from the other. The guests come close on it and flirting is a easy thing. The ambience in the café is coined by a lit bar and by a tapestry on a long wall. The tapestry as well designed by Pudelskern is readable on different levels. From afar it looks like a classical pattern on stripes, coming closer one can see world maps, twisted, mirrored and turned around. In some places the tapestry is torn and spots are left open for hand written messages. The auditorium was furnished with maximum flexibility. Another big tapestry shows structures of connections and constellations of single units. Overlaying on multiple levels the structures create a spatial depth. On the first floor the LGBT movement finds its new communication centre - a meeting room, spaces for counseling and offices. A media centre is the interface for public users. Pudelskern created a good working environment for everyday life.

Pudelskern designed an interior that is open to its users to let them identify themselves with it, leaving mental scope but giving content through images, symbols and colours. Involving the community beforehand was an important task for the designers. Furthermore they have run a workshop for youth to help them create a space of their own. „The project mirrors sociopolitical questions in its handling of space and design. The centre should work for people coming from the community as well as for every interested citizen.“

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Attached: images of café, auditorium, media centre. All images by Markus Bstieler.