



Press Release

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Architectural competition for the extension of the Kunsthaus Zürich opens

The Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, the Stiftung Zürcher Kunsthaus and the City of Zurich announce an international architectural competition for the Kunsthaus extension. Architects are invited to apply for the pre-qualification round as of today. Design work will begin in April, and the winning submission is to be chosen by the end of 2008.

The extension will provide the Kunsthaus Zürich with a showcase for new offerings. As such, it must meet four key requirements. First, it must house new galleries with re-configurable suites of rooms that are flexible in function and appropriate for the display of new media, prints, drawings and photography. Second, it must also contain more classically designed galleries for the Bührle Collection, the basis of the museum's new focus on French painting, as well as accommodating examples of 19th-century art and classical modernism. Third, it must provide the setting for medium-sized exhibitions, staged without affecting the permanent collection. Fourth, the foyer must allow visitors to engage in a direct encounter with art as soon as they enter the building, while at the same time symbolising the museum's greater and more welcoming openness.

The project, of signal importance to Zurich's urban planning in this area, will be located between Heimplatz and the old Cantonal School, both immediately adjacent to Zurich's old town. The project is part of Zurich's University District master plan, which aims to create an appealing "education and culture zone". Its starting point, the square known as Heimplatz, will in the process be better defined and upgraded. A public "art garden" forms an additional element of the competition brief; from there, a series of park-like areas will evolve along the edge of the slope below the ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich).

Part of the new facility, as well as the connection between the extension and the existing building will be underground. Together, the two buildings will constitute one museum: the New Kunsthaus.

The pre-selection, which begins today as announced in architectural journals and relevant online portals, is open to all architects with a dossier of completed work and evidence of both professional and organisational capability. The application deadline is 1 February 2008; relevant documents and an updated list of jury members can be found at www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hochbau .

From what is likely to be a large number of applicants, the international jury (presided over by Walter B. Kielholz, President of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, and moderated by Prof. Carl Fingerhuth) will select 20 suitable teams to take part in the anonymous competition. Provided that Zurich's city legislature approves the project loan of CHF 6.5 million requested, the applicants selected will receive complete documentation in April 2008 and begin work on their projects.

The jury will evaluate the resulting submissions and choose a winner during the fourth quarter of 2008. If necessary, several designs may be selected for a second round of anonymously submitted revisions, to take place in the first half of 2009.

Note: see www.kunsthhaus.ch/erweiterung for the project's current status.

Contact for media

Competition: Urs Spinner, Head of Communications at the Department of Structural Engineering of the City of Zurich, urs.spinner@zuerich.ch, direct line +41 44 412 26 51, Department of Structural Engineering, Lindenhofstrasse 19, P.O. Box, CH-8021 Zurich, www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hochbau.

Project: Björn Quellenberg, Head Press and Communication Kunsthaus Zürich, bjorn.quellenberg@kunsthhaus.ch, direct line +41 44 253 84 11, Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Winkelwiese 4, P.O. Box, CH-8024 Zurich, www.kunsthhaus.ch.