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Vienna's Rooftop and Roofspace

Cultural heritage in developed countries is in danger. Economic pressure, urban development and changes in use are the forces of social development. The dwindling significance and decreasing value of architectural heritage and the dominance of modernity and a modern lifestyle as aspects of social prestige represent major factors that are endangering such heritage. The seduction of tech-

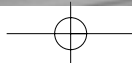
nology, materials and design is obvious. In this context it seems ironic that it is not a lack of money that is a risk to architectural heritage, but rather the abundance of money. This means many investments in architectural works are against the interests of heritage preservation and conservation. One of the most noteworthy which has evolved as a field of its own is roofspace development.

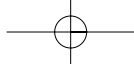


Vienna, Gumpendorfer Strasse
(2002)

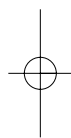
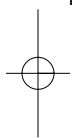


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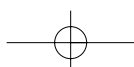


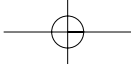


Vienna, Inner City

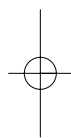
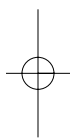


Vienna, Neuer Markt, Hotel Ambassador (2001-2002)

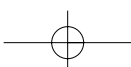


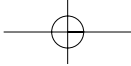


Vienna, Neuer Markt, Hotel Ambassador (2001-2002)



Vienna, Michaelerplatz, Palais Herberstein (2002)

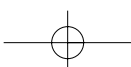
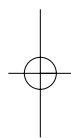
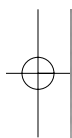




Vienna, Neuer Markt



Vienna, Praterstrasse, Project



In particular, this has started to give Vienna a new face. Until the beginning of World War II, Vienna grew in area. Apart from the war damage, most of the rooftops, the roofscape, remained intact. It is only in the last few decades that the use of this space has taken place, showing dramatic effects in the past few years. This has resulted in new types of construction in the rooftops of Vienna. The 'city above the city' indicates how this newly discovered building zone is being dominated by the affluent society and their representatives and is in this sense an expression of social and economic strength. This means that socially and economically privileged groups shape the city. The 'city above the city' is in a sense a sort of 'gated community' which is located more than in a metaphorical sense 'above' the social and economic lower classes. Draufsetzen (to set up on), the name of an exhibition in Vienna in 2004, more or less presented this new building activity in a positive and animated way.

Viennese law supports this expansion if this type of construction is not subject to heritage laws. In certain circumstances, three levels are permitted above the cornice and it seems that official policy has supported this development up to now.

The only effective measure against this building activity would be the legal protection by heritage authorities (according to the Austrian Denkmalschutzgesetz – heritage legislation). But Austrian heritage law is primarily geared to single structures, and the protection of complexes, which would be the logical purpose, is therefore long needed. The legal protection of the urban environment and urban space is not effective enough.

Discussions about the Historic Centre of Vienna World Heritage property (Wien-Mitte) have resulted in a shift in this liberal policy. In the centre of the core zone of the World Heritage site, a reduction in the three floors which may be added has been achieved for future projects. But many applicants who applied before the introduction of this new policy are still permitted to carry out the additions according to the earlier three-floor rule. Negative results in roof expansion must therefore be expected.

Buildings that have been affected by these extreme additions are mainly those built during the second half of the 19th century. Although not usually subject to heritage laws, these historic buildings have without doubt fulfilled an important role in the city. With such roof additions, Vienna's general appearance with these buildings' original façades would lose the city's sense of continuity. A mixture of architecture would strongly disturb its built harmony and ruin the general historic authenticity that the city conveys.

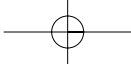
Salzburg

During the final editing of the *Heritage at Risk* Report the demolition of the Kleines Festspielhaus in the centre of the World Cultural Heritage zone in Salzburg began. This building is (or better was) a symbol of the world-famous Salzburger Festspiele and was planned by Clemens Holzmeister who was the congenial partner of Max Reinhardt, the founder and soul of this wonderful annual festival. This icon of Salzburg has now been destroyed. The reason for this unbelievable action was in the end to obtain a few dozen more seats. The irony of this is, that according to Austrian preservation law this demolition is regarded only as a mere alteration, because another part of the building complex of the Salzburger Festspielhaus still exists.

ICOMOS Austria

Salzburg, Neues Festspielhaus,
demolition in October 2004





Vienna, Albertina, Museum of Graphic Arts. Fifty metre long overhanging roof, designed by the Austrian architect Hans Hollein, a symbol for the "roof-mania" in Vienna.

Vienna, Falkestrasse. The artificial initial of the "roof on roof" development in Vienna, erected 1984–1988 by the architects Coop-Himmelblau.

