

ATELIER BRÜCKNER

PRESS RELEASE

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HALLO HALLE! – WAGENHALLEN PROJECT IN STUTTGART COMPLETED

HISTORIC LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT AND 9,500 SQM FOR ARTISTS

"Hallo HALLE!" – This is the slogan that the artists of the Kunstverein Wagenhalle e.V. (artists' society) will be using to greet their new studios in the Wagenhallen (railway coach halls) in Stuttgart next weekend from Friday the 9th of October to Sunday the 11th. Visitors will be able to view the different, individually designed work spaces of more than 100 creative artists and, for the first time, will be able to appreciate the true size of the freshly renovated, historic locomotive depot. Out of a total area of 14,000 square metres, 9,500 square metres are for the artists' society. The remaining areas are shared by Eventbetrieb WAGENHALLEN STUTTGART (event organiser), which opened at the end of September 2018 (around 4,000 sqm), and the Tango Ocho dance school (450 sqm).

"The handover to the artists marks the beginning of a new epoch for the Wagenhallen", said Michel Casertano, chief architect of ATELIER BRÜCKNER who is responsible for the renovation of the Wagenhallen. Commissioned by the city of Stuttgart, the Stuttgart architects' office had refurbished the historical structure from 2016 onwards and made it fit for different uses. Now that the artists's studio have been installed in the historic halls – on behalf of the artists's society –, the project has now been completed from an architectural point of view. "New layers of chronology will be created by the users – Time and life move on!", said Jörn Küsters, architect of ATELIER BRÜCKNER, who planned and supervised the installation of the artists' studios.

The Wagenhallen in Stuttgart were erected at the end of the 19th century in order to take some of the pressure off the main railway station at the time. They were initially used for locomotives and later for buses as a maintenance and repair depot. After being converted and extended several times, the Wagenhallen became established as a location for cultural uses from 2003 onwards.

ATELIER BRÜCKNER extracted the original shape of the Wagenhallen from the existing ensemble and aligned the historically grounded structure with the current uses of the building. For example, the design and positioning of a newly inserted firewall, which delineates the project room of the artists's society, are a reference to a former outer wall of the Wagenhallen.

The building is now accessed from the south again, along the original course of the rails. At the side, new spaces have been formed: in the west, the main entrance of the event organising company; in the east, that of the artists' society. The space occupied by the artists' society is flanked by a building

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wing, the height of which has been increased to what it originally was – inside, there is some new space for artists' studios – as well as a two-storey new building, covered with historical clinker brick on the outside. This studio building, which offers ideal spaces from paper and media artists, runs parallel to the Wagenhallen and is respectfully distanced from the old existing structure.

The materiality is especially important for the architects. The original structure of the building has been lovingly restored, traces of the past have been uncovered and the living surfaces retained. In terms of the materials selected and implementation of the plans, the new installed space and structural additions contrast with the clinker walls and the old steel structure.

The studio rooms inside the Wagenhallen are conceived as inserted function cubes in the form of wood constructions – sustainable and economically efficient. The positioning and the proportions are oriented to the use-based former layout of the locomotive depot.

The appearance of the spacious hall area, which is six to ten metres high and is characterised by steel supports and rhythmic skylights, has not been altered. Once again, the original spatial impression and its volume can be experienced in full. The skylights once served to illuminate the repair stands and have been faithfully reconstructed to appear how they used to be.

Visually speaking, the installed spaces look like a covered studio village, 3,800 sqm in size, and are thus directly analogous to the container city that was created in years past directly in front of the Wagenhallen – originally conceived as temporary quarters for the artists during the renovation and restoration work.

The studio cubes are based on a modular principle and can be used as workshops, storage spaces and offices. As the ground plans and surfaces of the cubes can be individualised, a space of possibilities exists there – a living, art-infused place for creative artists.

Mayor Fritz Kuhn emphasised that "another star lighting up the sky of Stuttgart culture" was completed this year. "We can look forward with anticipation to how this exciting area will develop in the future, given that, in terms of culture and urban planning, we still have a lot of plans and ideas for development of the Rosenstein quarter."

The programme for the opening weekend "Hallo HALLE!" can be found at: www.kunstverein-wagenhalle.de

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