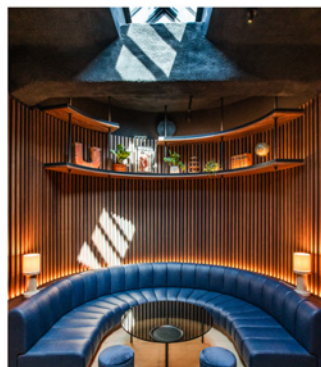


PRESS RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 2023

STUDIO AISSLINGER DESIGNS THE INTERIOR OF THE NEW FOTOGRAFISKA MUSEUM IN THE FORMER TACHELES



Berlin, in September 2023: studio aisslinger has planned the interior design of the new Fotografiska Museum Berlin. The international photography centre will open on 14 September 2023 in the rooms of the former Kunsthaus Tacheles on Oranienburger Straße in the Mitte district. It is the fourth location of the private photo museum after Stockholm, Tallinn and New York. Multiple rooms for exhibitions, events and gastronomy have been created on the 5,500 square metre site, including a restaurant, two bars, a café, a bakery, a shop and a ballroom. Further areas are intended for conferences and co-working.

Fotografiska thus makes use of all the rooms of the Tacheles, from the ground floor to the five upper floors and the roof terrace. studio aisslinger has designed the interior

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as a liaison of old and new, in which new layers have been added to the historical features. Not only the building, which originally opened as a department store in 1909, is listed. The graffiti that was created from 1990 to 2012 during the site's tenure as Kunsthaus Tacheles was likewise not permitted to be damaged.

The interior manages to maintain a balance between the old and the new. Particular care was taken where traces of the past are concerned. The new design does not compete with the patina of the building. However, it does not create a neutral shell, but rather complements the rough and partly wild charm of the building with a mixture of homely comfort and purist elements. Wood and natural stone meet exposed concrete and steel. Decorative fabrics, fluffy velvet and numerous plants add a sensual element.

The new space is meant to be a home to culture, culinary delights and events alike. Unlike classic museums, Fotografiska Berlin stays open until 11 pm. Visitors can therefore combine the exhibition tour with a visit to a restaurant or bar - whether before or after. A bakery, a café and a shop on the ground floor open up the building to the city and create a connection with the neighbourhood. Thanks to the hybrid utilisation concept, the private museum can sustain itself without relying on public funding. This unique location in Berlin, which symbolises the spirit and creative energy of the post-reunification era like no other, is thus being brought to new life.

„We want to look ahead to the future whilst embracing the past. And to do so in a casual way. That is very Berlin“ , says Werner Aisslinger.

CONCEPT & HISTORICAL CONTEXT **THE TRANSFORMATION OF A MONUMENT**

History of the Fotografiska Tacheles building

Shortly before its scheduled demolition in February 1990, the “Tacheles” artists’ initiative occupied the remnants of the building on the corner of Oranienburger Straße and Friedrichstraße. Originally inaugurated in 1909 as the Friedrichstraße Passage, the building was thereby saved from its impending destruction and remains standing to this day. Following partial demolition in the 1980s, the once second-largest shopping arcade in Berlin had devolved into little more than a sad remnant of overly ambitious department store projects from the early 20th century. Approximately fifteen years after its initial grand opening, AEG had repurposed the department stores, which had faced bankruptcy twice in the interim, renaming them as the “House of Technology”. Subsequently, during the National Socialist era, both the German Labour Front and the SS utilised it as one of their headquarters. In the GDR era, the Free German Trade Union Federation eventually took possession of the

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building, which, despite war-related damage, remained in relatively good condition. However, over the ensuing years, it steadily deteriorated. By the late 1960s and mid-1970s, two structural assessments recommended demolition, which ultimately commenced in 1980. Only the occupation of the remaining structure by the artists of the Tacheles group thwarted its scheduled demolition on February 13, 1990. Over time, the group's name, "Tacheles" - originally a music ensemble - became synonymous with the building itself, transforming the former temple of consumerism into a space for open expression, dialogue, and debate.

The phase before Fotografiska

Until 2012, Tacheles was a cultural centre of the post-reunification era. It housed artists' studios, exhibition spaces, an art-house cinema, and two spacious halls for concerts, readings, and theatre performances, rendering it an iconic symbol of 1990s Berlin. Yet, the building's long-term purpose remained uncertain. Since its final sale in 2014, efforts have been underway to breathe new life into the complex, accompanied by the presentation of an appealing long-term utilisation plan. Throughout this process, the existing structure has been preserved. This preservation extends beyond the architectural remnants of the original building and includes the vestiges of modifications made during its various incarnations throughout the 20th century. Notably, many walls and doors bear intricate graffiti, now designated as protected historic artifacts.

The redesign

The task and mission assigned to studio aisslinger was to establish a bridge between the vestiges and echoes of this site's unique history and the burgeoning new era. Instead of pitting the past against the future, both were deemed equally essential in creating the special atmosphere of the new Tacheles. The historical elements were not erased, covered up, eliminated, or assimilated to the point of obscurity. Instead, the goal was to cultivate a fruitful heterogeneity, where the diverse facets of this extraordinary location would offer a meaningful and immersive experience for visitors.

A heterogenous entity

The concept devised by studio aisslinger for the areas and spaces used by Fotografiska essentially envisions a deep connection between the new structures and the existing substance, without attempting to merge the two. Rather, akin to the grafting technique employed in viticulture, the aim is to form a heterogeneous entity, the result of which is the refinement of the whole whilst preserving the distinct identities of the parts.

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A concept of layers

By weaving together different layers that never completely overlap, studio aisslinger creates a space with a unique atmosphere born from the interplay between the old and the new, the existing and the added - creating a convergence of past, present and future. The site's rich historical significance as a listed building forms the foundation in and upon which layers of new material surfaces, iconic furniture and site-specific styling are added, creating a spatial experience across different time periods - as a kind of walk-in collage. The existing is not erased, but enriched and expanded, preserving the different layers of history. In this way, the building's aura is brought back to life and opened up to the present and the future.

Storytelling & Heritage

In recent years, the narrative aspects of objects and spaces have taken on a newfound importance. Today, no object or architectural project can do without its own exciting narrative. Storytelling has the capacity to transform the mere object or space into one imbued with a life story, an authentic and self-aware entity replete with historical allusions and a strong local connection. At Fotografiska Museum, storytelling is an intrinsic part of its heritage, converted into a new urban style through creative design and styling aesthetics.

Life cycles and sustainability

The design philosophy for all rooms adheres to the principle of longevity - Fotografiska does not see itself as a transient phenomenon but as an enduring contributor to the international cultural community. All bespoke furniture and interiors are therefore handcrafted from durable local materials with a pure design language that will remain aesthetically authentic for decades to come.

Experiential architecture

In an era dominated by an increasingly flawless digital world, there is growing nostalgia for genuine haptic and analogue spaces that enable real, social contacts as a counterbalance to the virtual. The quality in design lies above all in merging materials, textures, volumes, arts, artwork and media.

Digitalisation has made online shopping and staying within the confines of our homes all too easy, leading to a disconnection from the real world. Public spaces must undergo change, reinvent themselves as venues that offer unforgettable, immersive experiences for their visitors.

INTERIOR DESIGN

Verōnika Restaurant

In November 2023, the fine-dining restaurant Verōnika will open on the fourth floor of Fotografiska Museum Berlin. The 338-square-metre space can accommodate 158 guests. Solid wood tables are grouped around a large, free-standing bar with semi-circular ends where guests can enjoy an aperitif or digestif, but also dine. The reinforced concrete construction of the former department store is openly visible on the ceilings. At the end of the bar, a walk-in wine chamber draws the eye, framed by tinted glass. Wooden blinds combine cosiness with a touch of film noir aesthetics. In a side room, guests can see into the open kitchen. The final preparation of the plates takes place right before their eyes: a feast for the senses before the food is carried out into the hall.

In the middle of the restaurant, a former corridor has been transformed into a private dining area with direct access to the kitchen. From the rest of the restaurant, this windowless space is shielded from view. An intimate retreat for 14 people seated at a large, centrally placed table, it is surrounded by upholstered chairs, which complement each other to form a wrap-around bench. The walls are covered in graffiti, as are the doors. It is a strong, atmospherically charged space. One of its walls is adorned by the most famous graffiti of the former Tacheles: Angela Merkel sporting a mohawked punk hairdo.

Bar Verōnika

In November 2023, Bar Verōnika will open on the fifth floor. The 193 square metre room holds up to 74 guests. Free-standing armchairs and sofas with low seating heights create a lounge atmosphere. There are also more intimate seating niches with upholstered benches. The furnishings are more relaxed, less formal. Timelessness is an important key to the design concept. This is particularly evident in the materiality. The free-standing, rectangular bar has a dark steel base. It is contrasted by a back wall with fluted wooden panels. The natural grain of the wood is visible in the table tops. Some cover fabrics are plain, others exude tropical flair with plant designs. Velvet curtains provide cosiness and sound insulation in equal measure. Two round seating niches have back walls made of vertical wooden slats. In front of them, shelves bear cascading plants. Skylights allow the sun to shine through. A covered terrace offers another 25 seats, where outdoor sofas and armchairs transfer a homely feeling outdoors.

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Bar Clara

The new pyramid-shaped roof, which rises directly above the two-storey passage to the "Am Tacheles" quarter, catches the eye even from afar. This is where the Bar Clara will open in December 2023, which, together with the surrounding roof terrace, will present a whole new panorama over the rooftops of Berlin Mitte. The interior extends to the outside with floor-to-ceiling sliding doors and windows. In this way, the city skyline is the defining factor. At the same time, the roof pyramid seems to float in the air. Intense blue tones and dark wood showcase the impressions flowing in from the surrounding window ribbon. The cityscape is staged in Cinemascope format.

Ballroom

The former "Golden Hall" is located on the first floor and extends over twice the floor height. In the days of the Tacheles, theatre performances were shown here. Today, a multifunctional ballroom has been created, where concerts, performances, cinema screenings, presentations and other events can take place. A discreet technology infrastructure and air-conditioning have been integrated into the historic structure. studio aisslinger has designed a spacious bar characterised by its understated dark steel materiality. A concert by electroclash musician and performance artist Peaches was held here for the grand opening on 14 September.

CaféBar

On the ground floor, the CaféBar opens onto Oranienburger Straße. Wavy tiles lend the walls a sculptural depth. The ceramic surfaces also accentuate the centrally placed bar counter, which divides the 338 square metre space for 75 guests into individual zones. The rounded design language of the tiles is echoed by the custom-made benches, upholstered in leather and velvet. Framed photographic motifs from the current exhibitions hang from the ceiling. Shelves made of dark wood are placed between the free-standing seating niches, on which table lamps provide a soft light. Velvet curtains contrast with the concrete floor. Shelves of raw steel extend from the floor to the black-painted ceiling, where the girders of the reinforced concrete construction from 1909 can be glimpsed; one of the first in Berlin, foreshadowing the emergence of modernism only a few years later.

Shop

To the right of the entrance is the museum shop decorated with a palette of fine, timeless materials. Armchairs, coffee tables and sofas are strategically placed between the free-standing islands on which books, catalogues and other merchandise are presented. The display pedestals are made of wood; some of the shelves were cast from exposed concrete. Glass-fronted cabinets showcase special products. Plant bowls are integrated into the islands, as are umbrella lamps in a purist design. Decorative carpets add a homely touch. The original tiled floor of the former department store has been preserved and refurbished. In other areas, untreated concrete floors are used. The brickwork has been sandblasted to bring out the beauty of the historic structure. Some of the pillars are covered with the same rounded tiles used for the reception counter and ticket booth as well as in the CaféBar. A free-hanging LED ticker displays information about the exhibitions.

Bakery

The bakery on the ground floor on Oranienburger Straße is designed to encourage and facilitate dialogue with the neighbourhood. It's located in a narrow part of the building on the other side of the passage to the „Am Tacheles“ quarter. Takeaway baked goods are sold here, but there are high stools and counters for eating in as well. The focus here is entirely on breakfast and lunch dishes, which is why the bakery closes at 3 pm, whereas the museum, café, restaurant and bars are open until 11 pm or later.

NOTES TO EDITORS

DATA

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|----------------------------|--|
| Interior design team: | studio aisslinger berlin |
| Size of the building: | 5500 m2 |
| Start of planning process: | 2019 |
| Operator: | Fotografiska Berlin GmbH |
| Investor : | pwr development |
| Address: | Fotografiska Museum Berlin, Oranienburger Straße 54, 10117 Berlin |

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Functions: | |
| Ground floor: | Bakery, CafeBar & Shop & Terrace |
| First floor: | Ballroom & Meeting Spaces |
| Second floor: | Ballroom |
| Third floor: | Exhibition |
| Fourth floor: | Exhibition & Restaurant Verōnika |
| Fifth floor: | Bar Verōnika & Exhibition |
| Sixth floor: | Bar Clara & Rooftop Terrace |

ABOUT WERNER AISSLINGER, DESIGNER

Werner Aisslinger designs for brands such as Vitra, Moroso, Dedon, Cappellini, Hans-Grohe, Kaldewei, Foscarini, Canon, Haier, Nomos and Wästberg. His material-oriented sustainable design objects can be seen in collections such as the MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London or the Vitra Design Collection. His solo exhibitions such as „Home of the Future“ 2013 in Berlin or „House of Wonders“ 2017 in the Neue Sammlung in Munich are a symbiosis of utopia and social criticism with a wink. In addition to product design, his office studio aisslinger in Berlin and Singapore is increasingly active in „spatial design“ and plans coworking spaces such as for Metropolis in San Francisco and Houston, hotels for 25hours and malls for the Central Group in Asia, as well as „experience spaces“ and storytelling concepts such as the current Fotografiska Museum in Berlin

www.aisslinger.de

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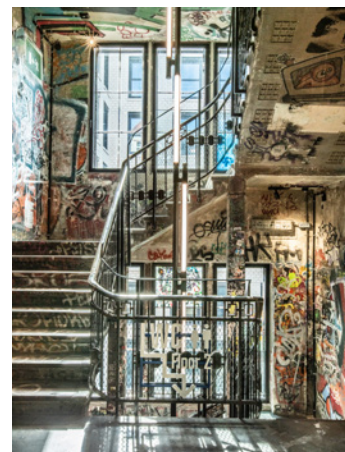
studio aisslinger is a design and interior architecture studio founded in Berlin in 1993, which has also been represented in Singapore since 2008. The design focus is on spatial designs ranging from cabins to new architectural concepts to product concepts, material innovations and culturally oriented visionary design. As a trend-setter in hospitality, retail and new work, studio aisslinger sets the tone with its visions for future work-life-ambiences. The work of studio aisslinger is reflected in a symbiosis of commercial requirements and free creativity in internationally realised and award-winning large-scale projects as well as in design experiments and installations shown in museums and exhibitions. Milestones and high-profile projects during this period include design for Vitra AG Switzerland, Cappellini Spa Italy, Zalando SE Berlin, 25hours-hotel Group, Accor Group France, Nordic Group Sweden, Basecamp Europe, Jägermeister SE, EHPC & SIRCLE Group Amsterdam, Thonet GmbH Germany, Fotografiska International Museums, Central Group Bangkok Thailand, SIGNA Group Germany and Metropolis Investment Group, USA. These and numerous other projects represent a special and far-reaching experience that underpins a very deep understanding of how and why design works.

PRESS CONTACT

For additional information, interview requests or high-resolution images, please contact:

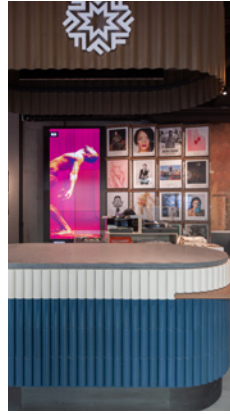
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