

UNESCO WORLD NATURAL HERITAGE WADDEN SEA VISITOR CENTER

CUXHAVEN, GERMANY



Photo: Jan Bitter

CONSTRUCTION UNESCO-WORLD NATURAL HERITAGE WADDEN SEA VISITOR CENTER

The sculpture-like structure of the visitor center is visible from far away and forms a unique orientation point for the visitors of the Wadden Sea. The wooden construction refers to the traditional buildings of the North Sea coast and thus perfectly blends into the stunning landscape. The permanent exhibition offers visitors multifaceted experiences and exciting insights into life in this unique natural setting. Large panoramic windows are directing the visitors' attention to the Wadden Sea and are staging the landscape as the main attraction.

The new, non-profit UNESCO-world natural heritage Wadden Sea Visitor Center is a multifunctional building with a grand foyer, exhibition space, library, seminar rooms and offices. The architectural concept aims to create a simple but at the same time representative building that pays special tribute to its unique setting on the shore of the North Sea. The elevated, compact structure allows for the maximum permeability of the surrounding nature. The building is planned as a wooden construction, the façade is made up of a natural wood cladding. The materials are carefully chosen to emphasize the harmonic link between the construction and the nature surrounding it. The landscape design strictly adheres to the principle that the unique natural setting of the UNESCO world natural heritage remains intact.

On the inside the main staircase connects the entrance hall with the exhibition space on the ground floor and the first floor. Seminar rooms, the library and the laboratory can be found on the top floor; the main administrative office are located on the mezzanine. The generous openings in the façade allow stunning views over the Wadden Sea and the landscape. The new permanent exhibition about the UNESCO world nature heritage Wadden Sea and the fascinating natural setting of the visitor center itself serve as the main attraction. The exhibition builds the contextual bridge between the visitors and the Wadden Sea. Filled with knowledge about the Wadden Sea and the role of the UNESCO world nature heritage sites the visitors will not only enjoy the impressive exhibition, but also their stroll around the spectacular landscape. Experiencing and learning are connected in a simple and compelling way.



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Facts / Impressum

Location:	Cuxhaven, Germany
Opening:	August 2015
Client:	City of Cuxhaven
Gross Floor Area:	1.260 sqm
Main Floor Area	970 qm
Architecture:	Holzer Kobler Architekturen, Zurich/Berlin
Exhibition Design:	Holzer Kobler Architekturen, Zurich/Berlin

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Holzer Kobler Architekturen

Holzer Kobler Architekturen was formed in Zurich in 2004 by Barbara Holzer and Tristan Kobler. The office operates internationally, covering a broad spectrum of activities from urban planning to architecture, from scenography to exhibition curatorship. A multidisciplinary team comprising architects, designers, graphic artists and curators shapes its special approach to projects. Close collaboration with clients in both public and private sectors is integral to their projects, as is a tightly knit network encompassing business, academia, research, arts and culture.

Holzer Kobler Architekturen thrives on its fascination for a wide variety of visual fields, including architecture, exhibitions and design. In fact, architecture itself is not approached as a single entity but as a plurality of architectures opening up and extending the processes of architectural thought, action and research. Among these architectures, from the smallest exhibitions to vast urban planning projects, unifying elements, common ground and synergies are sought.

The visual diversity of the projects the company has worked on stems from its claim to find a solution specific to each task and location that brings together past, present and future and reinterprets the whole. Holzer Kobler Architekturen has never taken an interest in propagating a particular design language as its own trademark style, preferring instead to focus on approaching each design afresh and creating new styles that enrich our society.

WORKS – SELECTION

Architecture / Urban Planning

- 2018 Hospital, **Felix Platter-Spital**, mit wörner traxler richter, Basel, Switzerland
- 2016 Residential buildings, **Haggenstrasse**, St. Gallen, Switzerland
- 2015 Culture and leisure center, **Colorful Zone**, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
- 2015 New university complex with boardinghouse, **Campus Messestrasse**, Vienna, Austria
- 2015 Two residential buildings, **Schönberg Ost**, Bern, Switzerland
- 2014 Student village Plänterwald, **Frankie & Johnny**, Berlin, Germany
- 2014 Three pavillions, **Under One Roof**, with Kengo Kuma and Associates, EPFL – Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2014 Retail and office center, **Inside**, Volketswil, Switzerland
- 2014 Mixed Use Development, **Rex Max**, Thun, Switzerland
- 2013 New research and experience centre, **paläon**, with pbr and topotek 1, Schöningen, Germany
- 2013 Site Development, **Suurstoffi**, Risch Rotkreuz, Switzerland
- 2012 Residential building, **Wasserschloss**, Vogelsang, Switzerland
- 2008 Mixed-use Development, **Cattaneo**, conversion and new buildings, Dietikon, Switzerland
- 2007 Visitor center and observation tower, **Nebra Ark**, Nebra, Germany
- 2006 **Shopping Center Schönbühl**, renovation and redesign, Lucerne, Switzerland
- 2005 Transformation of a commercial building into lofts, **Eichstrasse 25/27**, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2002 Architecture and landscape, **Arteplage Yverdon-les-Bains**, with extasia, Expo.02, Switzerland
- 2002 **Mondial Theatre** and **BarRouge**, Expo.02, Arteplage Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland

Interior

- 2019 Corporate Design, **Humboldtforum**, Berlin Palace, Germany
- 2012 Interior, **Penthouse S17**, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2004 Interior, **BarRouge**, Messeturm Basel, Schweiz

Exhibition Design / Curation

- 2016 **National Buchenwald Memorial**, permanent exhibition, Weimar, Germany
- 2016 **Filtermuseum M+H**, permanent exhibition, Ludwigsburg, Germany
- 2015 **Visitor center Wadden Sea**, permanent exhibition, Cuxhaven, Germany
- 2014 **Grimm World**, permanent exhibition, Kassel, Germany
- 2014 **Constructing Text. Swiss Architecture under Discussion**, Swiss Architecture Museum, Basel, Switzerland

- 2013 **Qin – The Eternal Emperor and his Terracotta Warriors**, History Museum, Bern, Switzerland
- 2013 **Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon**, permanent exhibition, Dresden, Germany
- 2012 **Sasso San Gottardo**, permanent exhibition, Sasso da Pigna, San Gottardo, Switzerland
- 2012 **R.B. Kitaj (1932 – 2007) Obsessions**, Jewish Museum Berlin, Germany
- 2011 **Army Museum of Military History Dresden**, permanent exhibition with hg merz architekten museumsgestalter, Dresden, Germany
- 2011 **Die Bourbaki Armee in der Schweiz**, permanent exhibition, Museum Bourbaki Panorama, Lucerne, Switzerland
- 2011 **First Beijing International Design Triennial – Ren: Good Design, GOOD GUYS**, National Museum, Beijing, China
- 2011 **The Way to Nature – A History of Forest and People**, permanent exhibition, visitor center, Hans Eisenmann-Haus, National park, Bavarian Forest, Neuschönau, Germany
- 2010 **Realstadt. Wishes Knocking on Reality's Doors**, with Heller Enterprises and Angelika Fitz, Kraftwerk Mitte, Berlin, Germany
- 2010 **Time and the Worlds of Messel**, permanent exhibition at the Visit or Center Messel Pit, an Unesco-World-Heritage-Site, Messel, Germany
- 2009 **History of Switzerland and Collections Gallery**, permanent exhibition, Swiss National Museum, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2009 **focusTerra**, permanent exhibition of the Swiss Natural Sciences Collection, Department of Natural Sciences ETH Zurich, Switzerland
- 2007 **All we need**, Lux 07, Culture Capiatl Luxemburg, Esch-Belval, Luxemburg

Awards

- 2015 **Mies van der Rohe Award**, nomination Frankie & Johnny
- 2014 **AIT International Retail & Presentation Award**, paläon
- 2013 **Iconic Awards**, Sasso San Gottardo
- 2011 **Swiss Design Prize**, nomination Realstadt and Building for the 2000-Watt-Society
- 2011 **State Award for Exemplary Architectural Design**, awarded by the State of Hessen, Germany, special recognition for Messel Pit Visitor Center
- 2009 **World Architecture Community Awards**, Nebra Arkr
- 2008 **Grand Prix Design**, awarded by the Swiss Confederation for the complete works
- 2008 **Tourism Award Saxony-Anhalt**, Nebra Ark
- 2007 **European Museum of the Year Award**, Alpinarium Galtür

Publication

- 2010 Holzer Kobler Architekturen, **Spatial Narratives**, monograph, Chinese – English, Architecture & Journalism, Beijing/Shanghai, China
- 2010 **Holzer Kobler Architekturen. Mise en scène**, monograph, Niggli Verlag, Zurich, Switzerland