

Press Release

# Envelopes

addressed by J.MAYER.H

Exhibition in the HDA – Haus der Architektur, Graz

Opening: 12 April, 6.30 p.m.

Exhibition dates: 13 April to 26 June 2022, Tue–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Accompanying event: 12 April, 5 p.m.: Opening talk

Opening with

**Beate Engelhorn**, House of Architecture – HDA, Graz

**Philip Ursprung**, Professor for History of Art and Architecture, ETH Zurich

**Andreas Krištof**, section.a, Curator's Collective, Vienna

**Jürgen Mayer H.**, J.MAYER.H und Partner, Architekten, Berlin



© links: Metropol Parasol, Sevilla, 2011, J. MAYER H. Architects | Foto: Fernando Alda; rechts: Data Collage 24, 2019, Jürgen Mayer H. | Foto: Ludger Paffrath

**J.MAYER.H is one of the few internationally known contemporary studios successfully working in the areas of architecture, art and design. This exhibition searches for the creative power behind the transdisciplinary work. How do art, design, digital space and architecture influence each other? What shapes the expression of the forms in the space? How do processes of form finding emerge in the interplay of two- and three-dimensionality?**

**For the first time, the HDA is showing an overview of current artistic work in the form of Jürgen Mayer H.'s drawings and collages in dialogue with built projects by the office. Detail and construction drawings of the architecture complement the exhibition installation. Like "sample books" of structures and forms they question the boundaries and similarities of the creative disciplines, each of which pursues its own discourse while increasingly speculating on the transdisciplinary potentials.**

When a project starts, art and architecture are both tackling the same question: How is space organized? Initially it does not matter whether the focus is a three-dimensional urban space, a political space, a sculptural space, an installation, an object in a space, a digital space, a filmic space, a danced space, an acoustic space or the imagined space of a two-dimensional image. The interplay of distance and proximity shapes more than just the material space and the surface of an image. The choice of media, materiality, temporality, connotation and texture influence the expression of the evolving designs.

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J.MAYER.H is one of the few internationally known contemporary studios successfully working in the areas of architecture, art and design. A multifaceted oeuvre includes furniture and interior spaces for Vitra and Bisazza, spatial scenarios in cities such as São Paulo, Zurich, New York City, San Francisco and Tel Aviv, and installations at biennials in Venice and Shenzhen. The office has also designed numerous buildings in Belgium, Georgia, Denmark, Germany and the USA. However, it was primarily the project 'Metropol Parasol' in Seville that made the practice well known internationally.

J.MAYER.H realised a mushroom-shaped megastructure made of spruce from Finland in the city's historic centre. With a market hall, archaeology museum, panorama terrace and restaurant it became the city's main public space and a new landmark for Seville. Projects currently under construction include the ZIPPER tower in Dusseldorf, the Universal Music Group headquarters in Berlin, office buildings in Berlin Mitte, an aviation museum with a flight school in Mönchengladbach and the SEEHAUS community in Gaspar/ Brazil.

The variety of different projects and areas of activity share common characteristic of the work's creative process: Organic and complex patterns cover building frameworks and facades, walls and floors. They outline the sculptural volumes for furniture, art objects and large built infrastructures. The vocabulary of form emerges through an intense focus on what are referred to as data protection patterns, incorporated on the inside of envelopes or when communicating PIN numbers to ensure the security of private information, protecting it from prying eyes. Jürgen Mayer H. has been investigating these "promises of structures" for over 25 years, and this shapes the office's underlying approach. They appear in their work at different scales and in different types of construction, are found in analogue patterns, built constructions and art installations as well as in speculative work on the future of mobility and data exchange.

Never before has the relationship between inside and outside been as pertinent as in the past two years. Safety and freedom, private zones and public spaces are continuously renegotiated. And the boundary between the two is elastic. The blurriness of the divide between the protected and the exposed becomes the real focus of discussion. It is these buffer zones that form our actual inhabited living landscape. This is the area for our thinking and concerns where the ambivalence and considerations about innovations in society and design are challenged. The dividing lines between the disciplines and media are thus set aside. Miniatures, collages, objects, spatial installations, interiors, buildings, urban space, infrastructure and digital worlds explore the potential at all scales.

For the first time, the HDA is showing an overview of current artistic work in the form of Jürgen Mayer H.'s drawings and collages in dialogue with built projects by the office J.MAYER.H. Detail and construction drawings of the architecture complement the exhibition installation. Like "sample books" of structures, materials and forms they question the boundaries and similarities of the creative disciplines, each of which pursues its own discourse while increasingly speculating on the transdisciplinary potentials.

## About the office

J. MAYER H. was founded by Jürgen Mayer H. in Berlin in 1996. In January 2014, Andre Santer and Hans Schneider joined as partners. Jürgen Mayer H. studied architecture at the University of Stuttgart, The Cooper Union New York and Princeton University. His work has been awarded numerous international prizes, such as the Mies van der Rohe Emerging Architect Prize in 2003, the Holcim Award Bronze for sustainable architecture in 2005 and the Winner of the Audi Urban Future Award in 2010. In 2020, he was selected as Designer of the Year in the context of the São Paulo design week. The artworks and projects are part of many international collections such as the MoMA NY, SFMOMA, the Vitra Design Museum, the Architecture Museum Munich, Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin and The Art Institute in Chicago as well as in numerous private collections. Since 1996 he has taught at various universities, such as the Berlin University of the Arts, the GSD at Harvard University, the Architectural Association in London, Columbia University in New York and the University of Toronto, Canada.

[www.jmayerh.de](http://www.jmayerh.de)

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## PROGRAM

Opening talk at the HDA  
12 April 2022, 5 p.m.

The opening talk as part of the exhibition "Envelopes" on the interdisciplinary approach of the studio J.MAYER.H tackles the correlation and interplay between arts and architecture.

Even the Roman architect, architectural theorist and engineer Vitruvius (1st century BC) called architecture the "mother of all arts". The Latin word "architectura" stands for "building art" and includes the creation of buildings as well as the design of spaces including their surfaces and furnishings. The term "fine arts" includes sculpture, graphics, painting as well as architecture.

Welcome

**Beate Engelhorn** / Director House of Architecture – HDA, Graz

Introduction and moderation:

**Philip Ursprung**, Professor for History of Art and Architecture, ETH Zurich

About Günther Domenig, architect and artist († 2012), Klagenfurt/Graz:

**Andreas Krištof**, section.a, Curator's Collective, Vienna

Projects and works, studio J.MAYER.H:

**Jürgen Mayer H.**, J.MAYER.H und Partner, Architekten, Berlin

**FREE GUIDED TOURS**

On weekends we offer free guided tours of the ongoing exhibition.

Dates:

Saturday at 3 pm and Sunday at 11 am

Registration is not required.

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**For further information, please visit the HDA website:**

<https://hda-graz.at/programm/envelopes-en>

**Press images are available at the following link:**

<https://hda-graz.at/pressebereich-hda/pressemappe-envelopes>

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