

Press Information

Architecture in Stuttgart

On the trail of Stirling, Ben van Berkel & Co.

Many renowned architects have left their mark in Stuttgart – Leonhardt, Stirling or Yi, to name but a few. Some of their designs were criticized at first, but in the end people loved them. A chronological overview:

Stuttgart State Gallery (1838-1843 and 1984)

Many of Stuttgart's museums are architectural eye-catchers, such as the Old State Gallery, which was commissioned by King Wilhelm I of Württemberg and is one of the oldest museum buildings in Germany. Adjoining it is the world-famous New State Gallery, built in the year 1984 to a design of the Scottish star architect James Stirling. It is regarded as a prime example of Postmodernist architecture.

Stuttgart Market Hall (1911-1914)

The architect Martin Elsaesser (1884-1957) was a man of many talents. He was one of Bonatz's (the architect who designed Stuttgart's main station) assistants at Stuttgart College of Technology and later became one of Southwest Germany's most important church architects and professor for medieval architecture. Stuttgart's Market Hall was built to his design in the style of Art Nouveau. In 1971 it was the subject of heated discussions. Criticised as being "uneconomical", it was to be torn down to make way for a "multifunctional centre". With a majority of just one vote, the town council decided to keep it. Today, Stuttgart's Market Hall is a protected monument and a popular place to shop.

Stuttgart Main Railway Station (1914-1927)

The most important construction of the German architect Paul Bonatz is Stuttgart's Main Railway Station. The historical Bonatz building is at present being thoroughly modernised as part of one of Europe's biggest construction projects, but its exterior will continue to define the cityscape. It is due to reach completion in 2026. The new Bonatz building will contain not only retail stores, but also a hotel and meeting areas.

Weissenhof Estate (1927)

One of the most prominent examples of "Neues Bauen" (New Building) is the Weissenhof Estate, built as an architectural exhibition for the city of Stuttgart and the Deutscher Werkbund (German Work Federation). Under its artistic director Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 17 architects, including Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Hans Scharoun, created a housing programme for modern city

dwellers. However, the Weissenhof Estate – since 17th July 2016 a UNESCO World Heritage Site – was an object of controversy at the time of building. One leading opponent of the New Building style was Paul Bonatz (1877-1956). A representative of the Stuttgart school of architecture, he preferred more classical and conservative designs, with a tendency to monumentalism. To mark the 100th anniversary of the Weissenhof Estate, the Visitor and Information Centre (Besucher- und Informationszentrum, BIZ) is being built as part of IBA'27 as a future reception building and starting point for exploring the estate.

Stuttgart Liederhalle (1954-1956)

Rolf Gutbrod was the architect of the Stuttgart Liederhalle. Regarded as one of Germany's leading cultural buildings from the post-war era, it celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2016. The congress area of the Liederhalle Stuttgart Culture and Congress Centre (Hegel Hall, Schiller Hall and conference rooms) has been extensively renovated and has shone in new splendour since December 2020.

Television Tower (1956)

There was a storm of protest in 1956 when the 217-metre-high Television Tower was seen sticking out above the treetops. Today, however, the "concrete needle" is one of Stuttgart's landmarks and an indispensable feature of the city. The Stuttgart Television Tower was also the first of its kind – worldwide. Originally it was planned to erect a steel lattice mast. Fritz Leonhardt (1909-1999) heard of the plans by chance, proposed building an observation tower with a café instead, and managed to convince the authorities. Leonhardt realised the Television Tower in cooperation with Erwin Heinle and Rolf Gutbrod (1919-1999).

Bosch Areal (2001)

Immediately adjacent to the Stuttgart Liederhalle, the Bosch Areal is a synthesis of past and future urban planning. The original factory building dates from the beginning of the 20th century. Since 2001 the area between its exposed concrete and red brick façade has been spanned by a glass roof consisting of 1,000 individual panes, designed by the Stuttgart engineering firm of Schlaich, Bergemann & Partner.

House of History (2002) and Stuttgart Academy of Music (1996)

The House of History and the Stuttgart Academy of Music are the best-known buildings designed by Wilford Schupp Architekten.

Stuttgart Museum of Art (2005)

The Stuttgart Museum of Art, designed by the Berlin architectural bureau Hascher + Jehle, impresses by virtue of its simple elegance. The architects, both natives of Stuttgart, wanted to create a "calm, elegant building that is clearly anchored in our time." They decided on a free-standing structure in the form of a glass cube, enclosing another cube of stone which contains part of the exhibition rooms.

Mercedes-Benz Museum (2006)

The basic structure of the Mercedes-Benz Museum resembles a trefoil, creating a triangular atrium at its centre around which the exhibition rooms are grouped. The exhibition areas are in the form of a twisted helix, which extends over all the levels. The museum was designed by Ben van Berkel's "UN Studio", one of Europe's most innovative architectural bureaux.

QUANT (2008)

At the foot of the hill known as the Killesberg, the architectural firm of Wilford Schupp Architekten transformed a sterile-looking laboratory block from the 1950s into a residential complex with 23 town flats and named it QUANT (2008), an allusion to Max Planck, the father of quantum physics. The concept aimed to maintain the building's modern form language while reinterpreting its architectural elements. The grounds thematise the city's vineyards, with lawns and angled walls of natural stone. The interior has taken up the pictorial language of the Stuttgart artists Oskar Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister and Adolf Hölzel.

Porsche Museum (2009)

The Porsche Museum appears as a detached and dynamically-shaped monolithic structure which seems to be suspended in the air above ground floor level. It was designed by the Austrian architectural bureau Delugan Meissl Associated Architects. The 5,600-sq.m exhibition area is supported solely by three reinforced concrete cores. Regarded by many experts as unbuildable, the museum could only be realised thanks to the latest bridge- building techniques. 6,000 tonnes of steel were used - enough to build lots of the Porsche cars that the museum has on display.

Z-UP (2009)

The Z-UP is an eye-catcher, its white window frames with rounded corners contrasting starkly with the black background. It was designed by Professor Wolfgang Kergassner. This office and residential block, which is home, among other things, to the Reader's Digest publishing company, owes its name to its position, in two senses of the word: the "Z" stands for the ground plan, which is in the form of a recumbent Z, while the "UP" symbolises its exposed site on the side of the hill, overlooking the city.

Municipal Library (2011)

With its height of 40 metres, the Stadtbibliothek, Stuttgart's public library, towers over Mailänder Platz. To Eun Young Yi, its Korean architect, the monolith, whose façade incorporates countless glass blocks, is a polished jewel. Grey and unpretentious by day, the library cube glows at night in an iridescent blue. From the outside the building seems closed off, but a new world opens up on entering: a 14-metre-high, empty hall, lit only by one overhead window. 100 sq.m of void to offset the everyday hustle and bustle. Yi refers to this archaic, tranquil room as the "Heart". The Municipal Library has become Stuttgart's intellectual and cultural centre, open to people of every nation. This is also symbolised by the inscriptions on the outer walls: the word "Library" in silver letters is in English on the west wall, in German on the north, in Korean on the east and in Arabic on the south.

StadtPalais – Museum for Stuttgart (2018)

The StadtPalais – Museum for Stuttgart opened in 2018 and was designed by the architecture bureau Lederer Ragnarsdóttir Oei. Behind its historical façade, the exhibition rooms are located on the first and second floors. The ground floor serves as Stuttgart's extended living room – in addition to the museum bar there's a lecture room and space for temporary exhibitions.

InfoTurmStuttgart (2020)

In 2020 the InfoTurmStuttgart opened right next to the construction pit of Stuttgart's new main railway station. The interactive exhibition on the major Stuttgart 21 rail project had to move to new premises because construction work was about to commence on its previous location, the historical station tower of the Bonatz building. The striking red exhibition tower is not only an eye-catcher from the outside: inside, visitors can explore the complex project with the help of state-of-the-art technology. It's possible, for example, to take a virtual walk by means of a joystick around the new through station, the new Bonatz building and the surrounding area. The "Rosenstein Quarter" – a new, sustainable and eco-friendly part of the city – is also presented in detail. In addition, free access to the roof terrace allows interested visitors to catch an exclusive glimpse of how building operations are progressing at this futuristic project.

Württemberg State Library (2020)

October 2020 saw the inauguration of the Württemberg State Library's new extension. Designed by the architectural firm of Lederer, Ragnarsdóttir, Oei, the new addition to the original library from the 1960s provides lots more space and functional possibilities, as well as enhancing Stuttgart's 'culture mile'. To underline the coherence between the old and new buildings, the same materials were used for the new extension as for the original library, and more use was made of exposed concrete for both the interior and exterior surfaces.

John Cranko School (2020)

After a construction period of around five years, in 2020 the world-famous John Cranko School moved into its new premises. The design of the Munich architectural bureau Burger Rudacs was largely defined by Stuttgart's unique topography: the terraced structure nestles into the hillside and provides space for a rehearsal stage, several practice halls and other facilities for the young dancers.

Information about the Stuttgart Region at: Stuttgart-Marketing GmbH, Tourist Information "i-Punkt", Königstr. 1a (opposite main railway station), Phone: +49 711-22 28-0, info@stuttgart-tourist.de, www.stuttgart-tourist.com

Hotel rooms: Phone: +49 711-22 28-100, hotels@stuttgart-tourist.de

Sightseeing tours: Phone: +49 711-22 28-123, touren@stuttgart-tourist.de