SCHOOLCAMPUS
HAUPTBAHNHOF VIENNA

PPAG architects ztgmbh
Preamble
The Viennese school campus model consists of kindergarten, school and spares time facilities at one location. The cross-linking of the education buildings fosters holistic and continuous pedagogical synergies. The cooperation aims for maximum use of all spatial resources which are available to everyone allowing learning from each other. Through the multipurpose school campus project at Hauptbahnhof for the first time a secondary school with 16 classrooms is provided next to a primary school with 17 classrooms, a kindergarten with 11 groups and a sports hall.

(excerpt from the competition brief – spatial pedagogical requirements)

Client: City of Vienna represented by MA19 and MA34
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Once upon a time, learning and doing stood in direct connection. However, the educational system separated the theoretical and abstract aspects of knowledge and somehow, this divide became accepted practice. Today, a large portion of students do not enjoy school because they sense a distance between what they learn and the reality surrounding them. In comparative education studies (PISA), Austria came in last. Schools need to turn back into spaces promoting life-experience instead of institutions encouraging conformity and preparation. Our SchoolCampus Hauptbahnhof project translates the current position in the learning-debate (articulated in a government proposal-plan) into architecture. Today’s curriculum promotes the differences in all children; the right of the individual to develop as they need. This curriculum needs the appropriate surroundings. Architecture can soak in the internal differences of a society, translate them, and express them in a specific space where these differences are accepted and even encouraged. No one form can be recognized as the best and prescribed to all; rather each form must be tailored using different spacial relations for different situations. It is time to accept the pluralism, the variety, and the many parallel circumstances and with that possibly forever say goodbye to the conventional conception of Modernism.

Anna Popelka
SCHOOL CAMPUS

Kindergarten:
11 groups

Elementary School:
17 classrooms

Secondary School:
16 classrooms

Start of Construction:
06.2012

Completion:
06.2014

Start of School:
09.2014
At home it was always, „Liese, leave that alone, it’s too dangerous,” and, „don’t touch that, it’ll break.” I think my parents were relieved when they enrolled me in the new school campus Hauptbahnhof. From the start, Kindergarten was great. We always did what we wanted and nothing bad ever happened. My favorite part was painting and drawing. That’s why I got to be in the „studio group.“ Inside and out there are boards and walls you can draw on. No matter what the weather was like Erika let us play in the garden. She always said how happy she was that there were sun-shades outside to
protect our delicate skin. Even when it rained, we sometimes stayed outside and listened to the raindrops fall on the awnings. Everyone had an outside cubby... That's where I kept the old apples for the hedgehog that lived in the raspberry patch in our garden. From there you can see right into the gym. At our school you can actually do whatever you want anywhere. We always set up camp in a different spot and met up with students
Finally it’s warm enough that we can have class outside again!

Every group paints a picture together.

Whoever needs some quiet to read can sit in the reading corner.

did someone feed the hedgehog today?

Finally it's warm enough that we can have class outside again!
from other groups it the common area marketplace. You can sit on the floor wherever you like and even build a pillow castle. But because of all of these activities we need a lot of different things. To keep it from getting chaotic, a lot of the walls are actually cupboards. That way, no matter what the situation, you can stay organized and clean up quickly. But the coolest room was the mediacenter because, even though it's in the middle of the cluster, it's always bright, even when you close the blinds.
Starting with our own learningroom I slowly began to explore the rest of the school: first, the nearest cluster, then the second story of the kindergarten, and then the library where you can meet all the bigger kids. They're really cool and can sometimes explain things better than the teacher. Later in the first year I discovered that there are amazing common rooms in the middle of the campus and a huge auditorium! When we had our school-ball, there were so many neat things to do from top to bottom! We turned the stairs in the common room into a movie theatre and
watched Fantastic Mr. Fox (my favorite movie, about the clever fox). They changed the gym into a dancehall and the auditorium into a ballroom- but that's mostly where the grownups were. There are a lot of places here where you can watch from and in the courtyards you could still hear the music because we have loudspeakers and outlets and things for that. The music club did an experiment with their teacher, who is actually a professional musician and plays in a famous ensemble, where every
our physics teacher explained that all this was only possible because of the sophisticated fire-safety plan at our school. A school-ball like ours would be unthinkable at my friend Klara’s school. They even had to move a sofa they set up in the hallway. Nothing like that happens at our school. My favorite sport is gymnastics (probably because while I ate raspberries, I used to watch the older kids practice). My passion for sports developed in elementary school. At our school there is gym equipment outside and for me there was nothing better than practicing outside in the summertime! Up
Today you can feed our cow.

Did you see the map for our geography project group?

Everyone please sit down; the play is about to begin!

In a few minutes we have history with the other class.

Did you put your ball in your outside or inside cubby?

Every group paints a picture together.

bisschen Ruhe

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there not many people can see you (which isn't exactly a bad thing if you're still trying to learn the moves). The teachers also have their own break room where they keep all sorts of math and physics equipment some of which they just used for a physics project where they built a battery for the lights in the dining hall. On the teachers patio, the teachers can relax and have a break from us. They are with us in the team-rooms, located in the middle of the clusters, all day. I really appreciate it but
I understand that it can be strenuous. I only have good memories from **elementary school** too. I can't explain every year here, but I remember all of them fondly. The second year room, for example, overlooked the large neighborhood park. There are other classrooms which face the **campus courtyards** but all the classrooms have **great lighting and views** outside from multiple walls. When my grandmother
picked me up from school, she used to waved to me through those windows. When class ran a bit late she would take a walk all the way around campus (which was also our jogging route), and then excitedly tell me about all of the interesting projects and activities she saw. She loved birds and found it wonderful that lots of different types built nests in the tile facade, which purposely had lots of holes and slits in it to allow birds to fly in and out. Because of this, the

campus is also a home for animals. The homerooms in the elementary school and secondary school were pretty similarly designed. The main room had additional smaller rooms attached, like a backpack with external compartments: some rooms for reading and resting and others for more active learning and playing. I can still remember all of my different classrooms because their designs were all different. The nests, as we call them, are really comfy. In the winter time, it’s great to lay down on a soft mattress and
read or watch what is going on outside. When I was in elementary school, there was a girl in a wheelchair in our class. Helping her over the small thresholds wasn't a problem at all and even strengthened our friendship. But everyone is different. For example: I like to be by myself sometimes but Murat enjoys being louder. These differences are only natural. When he gets too loud the teacher sends him
outside to go climb and let out some energy. You can actually climb the walls of the school, and a lot of different types of plants enjoy climbing them too! We learn a lot outside of school too, like reading animal tracks. I can always tell rabbit tracks because so many live by the school. Every learning room also has an outdoor room attached. The outdoor rooms on the second floor are designed like terraces and even have their own staircases connecting them to the garden. Sun shades cover them to protect from sun and rain. It's only when you're outside so much that you realize how important
Whoever needs some quiet to read can sit in the reading corner.

Let's go back into the group room and then during break you can come back here, to the common area, and play!

Who wants to help me write the formula on the board?

What lovely pictures you're painting today!
The outdoor rooms on the ground floor have lighted ceilings. Last November we were able to stay outside late into the afternoon because of the lights. Students here are constantly arguing about whether the first or ground floor is better. I always liked the more hidden rooms on the second floor. The teachers hold classes outside as often as possible, which is fun because something unexpected always happens. One time a cat jumped on Murat’s notebook during class and everybody laughed. But that was already in...
We grew carrots. Our teacher found an old variety that tasted really sweet, but maybe that's just because everything you grow yourself tastes better. At the very least we all have more respect for our food now that we know how much work it is to grow things. Our last teacher even believed that each class should raise a goat. He believes that every child should know about all the different things you can do with milk. They still have to make the decision but maybe they'll raise one once I'm finished with school. For our meals we do everything together from
preparation, to eating, to clean-up. The kitchen also has outside access which is great because we can eat outside as often as we like. The common rooms always have entrances to both the school courtyards and to the outside. We can decide where to sit depending on the time of year and how we feel. The marketplaces are as different as the classrooms. There are brighter and darker areas even when you turn on all the lights. There are also
skylights that allow natural light from above. I noticed that we gravitate towards the darker cooler areas when it’s hot, and the brighter areas when it’s cold. The projectareas can also be used differently. You can set up displays or show student works. In the spring the projectareas are used as a greenhouse for our seedlings. In third grade we had an exchange class from Bosnia and turned the project area into a larger guest-classroom. You get the feeling that the school is endless: that inside is actually outside and outside inside. In the summer all of the doors are open so you move freely throughout the campus. One year, the interdisciplinary school theme was „From Microcosms to Macrocosms,“ in other words, from really small to really big. Through a microscope, we looked at amazing life-forms in a drop of water from a wetland and, on the day before the school trip, we got to go onto the roof and look through our telescope. Not only did we have great views of Vienna, but you could see to Bratislava! One of our teachers is
a bee-keeper and started a hive on the roof. Since secondary school we always go to the dining hall to grab our food and then look for a nice spot to sit: inside or outside depending on the weather. Everyone says I know a lot more than other kids my age. I have a good feeling about my life and can always think of ways to help myself. I think this has a lot to do with the type of school I attend. People obviously have different opinions about our campus.
Some believe that we are too spoiled. They might think that because we are always outside where they can observe us and see what a good time we are having. Almost all the parents are positive about the school and talk about the learning-friendly atmosphere. Aside from the tower, the design of the school looks like a village. Some people even call it the „Broccoli-school.” When I discovered our school on Google Earth I realized where the nickname came from. Oh yeah, by the last PISA test our school earned an ‘excellent.’ Now
teachers come from everywhere to discover our 'secret.' There have been lots of presentations and seminars in our multi-purpose auditorium about it too. We think the secret is that we just like going to school and sometimes don't even want to leave. I think that's also true for the teachers. My parents say that the school also attracts talented teachers. If I had my way I would live on the campus! Now that's an idea... Oh yeah, I want to go to college too and maybe even become a teacher: maybe a teacher at the school campus Hauptbahnhof!

Liese L. 4b