

The Az W Programme, 2025

How can we build a good future? The focus at the Architekturzentrum Wien for 2025 is on this question. The exhibition 'Abundance, Not Capital. Anupama Kundoo' proposes that we need to unlearn things if we are to reinvent building. And re-education is also called for regarding the most popular form of housing for Austrians, the detached single-family house, as the exhibition 'Suburbia. Living the American Dream' shows.

Who hasn't longed for a big house with a garden and a swimming pool? A quiet and safe place where you can live as a family while still having the city and your workplace within easy reach. The first exhibition of 2025 **Suburbia. Living the American Dream** traces the history of an idealised lifestyle that originated in the USA during the 19th century and was subsequently exported all over the world – leading, among other things, to large shopping malls and empty town centres. Why is the wish for a house of one's own still also so popular in Austria? What alternatives are there? How can the approximately 1.5 million existing single-family houses in the country continue to be used or repurposed effectively?

All over the world the construction industry has become a driver of the climate catastrophe. In many places, labour is being exploited along with natural resources. At the same time, many people can no longer afford their own homes, which have become financial instruments. From autumn 2025, the exhibition **Abundance, Not Capital. Anupama Kundoo** shows a completely different kind of architecture. Projects completed by the Indian-born architect defy the logic of capital and the standardisation of the construction industry, as well as binary standards of beauty which insist that architects are either innovative or traditional, either environmentally aware or generous.

In autumn 2025, a regular feature returns: Every two years, the Az W invites young architects to design an exhibition for the Gallery. **Next Generation – Next Questions** is a stage for the emerging generation and their subjects.

The successful exhibition **Toourism**, which is dedicated to the impact of our dream holidays on the built environment, the social fabric and climate change, continues its tour in 2025 to several new venues in Austria and Italy.

Hot Questions – Cold Storage, exhibits from the permanent collection of 20th and 21st century architecture, will continue to draw the public. In seven chapters and with a wide range of original objects, it develops interconnections between the holdings of the collection and present day social issues as well as those of the future.

The Az W is providing an extensive **programme of events and educational activities** for all age groups in 2025, while also offering tailor-made programmes for school groups. The programme ranges from guided tours of exhibitions to excursions, from discussions and symposia to practical workshops. The **Architektur.Film.Sommer** is once again a firm favourite for the summer of 2025. The Az W film festival has grown into one of the most important summer film festivals in Vienna, attracting large numbers of enthusiastic visitors to the Az W's surprisingly secluded courtyard.

"As a museum with local roots and an international reach, the Az W has achieved a high level of social impact. The large proportion of young people among the visitors is particularly welcome. Our thanks go to the entire team, who apply their range of expertise and their dedication to communicate what architecture can do to a broad audience. We would like to continue to inspire people in the future with our keen analyses and excellent examples," say **Az W President Hannes Swoboda, Az W Director Angelika Fitz and Az W Executive Director Karin Lux.**

Architekturzentrum Wien: The Museum as a Change Maker

The climate crisis, social upheaval and sustainable economic activity: The central challenges for our future are closely tied to the construction industry. Land-saving spatial planning, strengthening town centres, material cycles, the treatment of existing buildings, the right to housing, good design for all — these topics are discussed with a broad audience and specialists alike at the Az W. Good building culture is pivotal to the comprehensive transformation that our society needs.

The New Az W Collection Depot

Linking the past, the present and the future, as is done with the collection at the Az W, is essential for a change in building culture. The energy-efficient refurbishment and extension of the Az W depot in 2024 was a milestone in safeguarding the most important and comprehensive collection anywhere of Austrian architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries. With the help of grants from the City of Vienna and the BMKOES as well as support from private sponsors, the historic brick halls in Möllersdorf have been transformed into a future-proof cultural repository. The implementation of the new Research Center improves accessibility for domestic and international researchers as well as the working conditions for staff.

An Urgent Need for Funding

The Az W is delighted with the continued support from the City of Vienna and BMKOES and, most recently, the joint-financing of the necessary adaptation of the depot in Möllersdorf for the collection. However sufficient funding for work in the future on the programme and the collection, as well as funds for the renovation of the infrastructure and the implementation of barrier free access on site, as well as for the homepage, are still missing. Exorbitant inflation has not spared the Az W in recent years. A substantial increase in public funding is urgently needed to prevent existential cuts to the programme, mediation, security and accessibility of the collection.

By the way, the Az W continues to advocate developing space for an Austrian architecture museum that does justice to the significance of building culture as a topic, and of Austrian architecture.

Exhibitions + Publication 2025

Suburbia. Living the American Dream

06.03.–04.08.2025, Exhibition hall 2

Opening: Wed 05.03.2025, 19:00

Suburbia traces the history of an ideal of life that – starting in the US suburbs – conquered the world and is incessantly reproduced by popular media. At the same time, the exhibition analyzes the contradictions of this model and its social and ecological consequences such as land consumption, soil sealing, and vacancy. The big question is: What happens next?

The American dream can be described with an image that seems to have stood still in time: a large house with a yard, swimming pool, and two cars in the garage. A quiet, safe place for the nuclear family, close to nature and in people-friendly surroundings. Suburbia carries us off into this world of ideas and images that has been hugely promoted by politics, business, and the entertainment industry. The cultural history of the single-family home has its origins in the upscale American residential areas of the early nineteenth century. After the Second World War, the typology was massively developed and rolled out on a broad scale. The exhibition sheds light on the economic, political, and social context of this rapid expansion in the USA and beyond. It becomes clear that the model is based on social, ethnic, and gender-specific segregation and takes up an enormous amount of space.

The exhibition, curated by Philipp Engel for the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB), was adapted for the Az W and expanded to include an Austrian focus. Even in Austria, a large share of the population still wants to realize their own version of this dream on the outskirts of the city. According to a recent study by the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), the proportion of highly sprawling areas in Austria increased fivefold between 1975 and 2020 – particularly due to detached single-family homes, large-scale industrial parks, and shopping centers. As a result, traffic areas are destroying the landscape, the rapidly advancing sealing is threatening biodiversity and food security, town centers are becoming deserted, and in an aging society people are sliding into isolation. The image of half-abandoned, aging houses and residential estates characterizes many parts of the country. Instead of building new ones, the question arises as to how the existing stock of these approximately 1.5 million single-family homes can be made usable for the future. Successful examples of conversions, repurposing, densification, or new forms of living and working are intended to demonstrate the enormous potential and attractive alternatives.

With a wealth of historical material, photographs, films, literature, artistic works, and everyday objects, the exhibition tells the story of the commercial success of single-family home and invites reflection on the future prospects of this form of living.

An exhibition organized by the Architekturzentrum Wien and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona.

Curatorial team: Philipp Engel (CCCB) / Lene Benz, Katharina Ritter, Agnes Wyskitensky (Az W)

Design: Nicole Six & Paul Petritsch

Abundance, Not Capital. Anupama Kundoo

11.09.2025–16.02.2026, Exhibition hall 2

Opening: Wed 10.09.2025, 19:00

Architecture has long been a driving force for innovation and growth and has become the materialization of global capital. Around the world, the construction industry exploits natural resources and labor. At the same time, many people can no longer afford their homes, which become tools of finance and products for investment. How could building become so destructive for humans and nature and what can architects do to counter this? The work of the architect Anupama Kundoo is an example of doing architecture differently. Her work resists the normative standards of industrialized resource regimes and technologies just as much as binary norms of beauty that require architects to be either innovative or traditional, either ecological or industrial.

Anupama Kundoo grew up in Mumbai, where she studied architecture in the mid-1980s. She moved to the experimental town of Auroville in southern India in 1990, where she set up her office, Anupama Kundoo Architects, at the age of twenty-three. She has been teaching at prestigious universities worldwide, has exhibited her work several times at the Venice Biennale of Architecture, and has received numerous awards. She is currently operating offices in Berlin, Germany, Mumbai and Puducherry, India, but the vast majority of her built work can be found in Auroville and Puducherry, India.

In Anupama Kundoo's buildings, wealth does not lie in expensive materials and perfected industrial products, but from the innovative use of materials and techniques that are locally available in abundance. She accomplishes this through the combination of high tech and low tech, the further development of traditional building techniques, inventive lightweight construction, and regional material cycles. Her projects are built knowledge for a new relationship between time, money, and material—both for regions in which there is an urgent need for cost-effective and sustainable construction to ensure basic supplies, and for regions where the focus is on tasks such as conversion and repair. The exhibition enables Kundoo's lively architecture to be experienced sensually and is a call for doing architecture otherwise.

Curators: Angelika Fitz, Elke Krasny

Project coordination: Agnes Wyskitensky

Publication: Abundance, not Capital. The Lively Architecture of Anupama Kundoo, ed. by Angelika Fitz, Elke Krasny, and Architekturzentrum Wien, MIT Press, 2025.

Photographs and texts from the curatorial field research of Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny, together with material from the architect's office, develop a new framework for the analysis of architecture. Essays by international authors address the issues of architecture and capital, CO₂ colonialism, working conditions in the construction industry, modernist utopias in urban planning, as well as architectures of care, and provide insights into Indian architectural discourses.

Europe's Best Buildings. European Union Prize for Contemporary

Architecture. Mies van der Rohe Awards 2024

Until 20.01.2025, Exhibition hall 2

The EUmies Awards Prize, endowed with 90,000 euros in prize money (60,000 Main Award / 30,000 Emerging Architecture Award), is the most important European architecture prize. The accompanying exhibition is a seismograph for architectural developments in Europe and this year focuses on circular construction, existing buildings, and public open spaces.

Every two years, the Europe's Best Buildings exhibition highlights outstanding architectural projects from Europe and has become a veritable crowd puller. The award-winning projects stand for change in the current social, ecological, and economic context and serve as a guide for the development of contemporary architecture. In 2024, the main award will once again go to an educational building: The Study Pavilion on the Technical University of Braunschweig campus by Gustav Düsing and Max Hacke offers a flexible and innovative learning environment that promotes social and professional exchange. The sleek steel-wood hybrid construction is completely demountable. Besides the possibility of densifying the building with additional platforms, it can also be rebuilt in a different form or at a different location. The winner of the "Emerging Architecture 2024" prize is the Gabriel García Márquez Library in Barcelona by SUMA Arquitectura (Elena Orte and Guillermo Sevillano). The sculptural structure enlivens a long-disadvantaged working-class district and at the same time creates an open urban lounge that was immediately accepted by visitors and residents alike.

Among the finalists: the revitalisation of the Saint-François Convent in Corsica by Amelia Tavella Architects; the conversion of a dilapidated slaughterhouse in Ostrava, Czech Republic, into the PLATO City Gallery of Contemporary Art by KWK Promes, in which the contaminated space around the building was also transformed into a biodiverse art park; the new school building for the Colegio Reggio in Madrid by Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation, which resembles an assemblage of diverse climatic zones, ecosystems, and architectural traditions that create a learning environment for collective and self-determined learning; and the Hage public space and garden in Lund, Sweden, which is the first project in a larger new development area and will evolve from an object in the landscape to a void in the urban fabric. The finalist for the Emerging Architecture Prize is the

renovation of the tourism information office and redesign of the surrounding square in Piódão, Portugal, by Branco del Rio.

Out of the 362 nominated projects from 38 countries, a total of 40 projects were selected for the exhibition by the prominent jury chaired by the French architect Frédéric Druot, including two projects from Austria: the Neubaugasse Townhouse in Vienna by PSLA Architekten and IKEA Wien Westbahnhof by querkraft architekten.

An exhibition by the Fundació Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona and the European Union.

Tourism

Exhibition on Tour

The exhibition „Toourism“ tours Austria

The successful exhibition ‘Toourism’, curated by the Architekturzentrum Wien and on show at the Az W from 21 March to 9 September, has been touring Austria since September and will stop off at several locations in 2025.

More and more people are travelling more often, further and for shorter stays. What is the impact of our holidays on the built environment, the social fabric and climate change? And how can we envisage tourism that does not destroy the basis of its own existence? Tourism has created added value, prosperity and cosmopolitanism in even the most remote regions, thus halting out-migration. On the downside are negative effects such as crowds, the impact on the environment, and rising land prices. Tourist hotspots suffer from the onslaught of visitors, while other places are being left behind.

The exhibition sheds light on key aspects of tourism, such as mobility, city tourism, interactions with farming, climate change, the privatisation of natural beauty and the change in accommodation typologies, and explores the question of whether and how the development of tourism is planned. Above all, however, the exhibition looks at the potential for transformation. Local and international examples present pioneering solutions and create an appetite for holidays that are no longer based solely on consumption and the growth paradigm.

Curators: Karoline Mayer & Katharina Ritter, Az W

Exhibition dates:

VHS Kulturgarage, aspern Seestadt, Wien

Opening: 06.02.2025, 18:00

07.02.–02.03.2025

Architektur Haus Kärnten, Klagenfurt

Opening: 03.04.2025

04.04.–23.05.2025

aut. architektur und tirol, Innsbruck
Opening: 26.06.2025
27.06.–25.10.2025

Heimatpflegeverband Bozen
from November 2025

Exhibition book

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive and richly illustrated book „Über Tourismus“ (in German). Edited by: Karoline Mayer, Katharina Ritter, Angelika Fitz and Architekturzentrum Wien

Next Generation – Next Questions

Autumn 2025

What is on the minds of the youngest generation of Austrian architects? Every two years, Az W invites a young architects' collective to curate an exhibition for the gallery. The aim is to make visible the critical examination of the next generation with questions of building culture and its changing occupational profile. What are the tasks? What do the wishes and ideas for future architecture look like?

The press release, as well as high-resolution press photos, are available free of charge for download at www.azw.at/press.

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