



Above: Haus zu den zwei Raben 1681, restauration.
Right: New central heating plant, Hombrechtikon.



Atmosphere and aura: Roskothen architecture fosters awareness for the ground we stand on

Location, location: Roskothen architects approach unique projects with a refined attitude and respect for the site and task at hand. Be it castle or monastery grounds, guesthouse or living environment, Roskothen give the place to build on a thorough analysis before even thinking about the first draft. The outcome shapes their approach to the project, in close connection to the client's specific vision and ideas.

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With the 'Haus zu den zwei Raben' (meaning 'house of the two ravens'), a historical guesthouse on the unique Swiss island of Ufenau, they have now tackled the task of cautiously restoring and restructuring the building, which dates back to the 17th century.

As Frank Roskothen states: "Every spot or setting has its unique quality and is therefore, in addition to the building task

at hand and the personality of the client, of major importance for the design." The island of Ufenau, set in Lake Zurich, is part of the cultural-historic site of Einsiedeln monastery. The 'Haus zu den zwei Raben' property buildings are listed as a national treasure and part of a protected village-scape.

Roskothen architects have just recently embarked on the challenging task, a

project that Frank Roskothen describes as "groundbreaking". Building on an island, which itself is listed as a place of outstanding beauty and national significance by the federal office of culture, means taking on a huge but welcome responsibility.

The building itself dates from 1681 with a listed annex built in 1939. While the gastronomic purpose will be upheld with a summer restaurant on the ground floor, the upper part of the building will not be touched in its original construction, apart from installing bathrooms. The stabilisation and reconstruction of the building will be carried out in close collaboration with the historic monuments authority. The house of the two ravens is to be reopened in May 2018.

Respect for the place and a mindful architectural approach appeal to a range of clients from dentists to artists, a wide pallet of individuals who often collaborate with the office for several projects. Trust is the key word here and is met with the conscientious planning that Roskothen architects provide, from the first draft all the way to handover day.

Frank Roskothen started his own office in 2002 in Rapperswil after spending several years as a design and competition architect. Since then, staying open to a complex variety of projects has lead him to an equally large range of activity. From designing modern apartment buildings to the restoration of listed properties to creating arts and design projects, a multitude of projects are being realised for both private individuals and the public sector. What combines them is the detailed and task-specific yet innovative attitude.

The architect describes the refined approach in combination with creative curiosity as follows: "Complex preconditions and challenging building tasks stimulate our imagination and drive us to create a valuable addition to our environment."

While functional buildings or a new bungalow with Roskothen will show modern design in the tradition of objectivity, sometimes a clear-cut design has to turn a corner, for example with the spiral staircase for the Villa Martha in Rapperswil. Here, the historic monuments authority set the task to provide outside access to a guest apartment in the upper part of a listed building. A central pillar was out of the question due to accessibility to the parking space and thus the idea for a spiral staircase was born. Due to the respective house wall facing north, the initially envisioned greening was replaced by a truly innovative solution. Cut by laser, the steel banister

now shows a delicate floral pattern, giving it a much lighter appearance with a nod to the historic building design.

From detailed and careful renovation and restructuring to streamlined apartment buildings, from innovative installation to mindful awareness of historical sites; Roskothen architects will always make a point of taking a close look at the task at hand before they begin. As the architect himself sums up: "The outcome of [a location's] analysis leads into respectfully and conscientiously developing a cut-to-measure concept and is translated into a clear, sustainable architecture."

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From left: Castle tower bridge, replacement, Pfäffikon.
New entry building, Groz Beckert AG, Lachen.
Restructuring and extension, sports hall Halden, Rapperswil.
Outside staircase for listed building, Villa Martha, Rapperswil.
Water sports centre for canoeing and rowing, Lido Rapperswil.

