



## MEDIA INFORMATION

Munich, 5 December 2023

### THE GIFT: STORIES OF GENEROSITY AND VIOLENCE IN ARCHITECTURE

**MEDIA CONFERENCE: 28 FEBRUARY 2024, 11.00 A.M.**

**OPENING: 28 FEBRUARY 2024, 7.00 P.M.**

**EXHIBITION DURATION: 29 FEBRUARY UNTIL 8 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**Exhibition by the Architekturmuseum der TUM in the Pinakothek der Moderne**

**Partner: University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA**

Architectural gifts are everywhere: libraries funded by wealthy philanthropists, shelters donated by humanitarian organizations, farms paid for with development grants, mosques financed by Islamic foundations, and stadiums handed over as part of diplomatic charm offensives. Embedded in religious and imperial traditions of gift-giving, architectural gifts shape the urbanization process across the world. Humanitarian, developmentalist, and diplomatic building-gifts have become ubiquitous in rapidly expanding African, Asian, and South American metropolises and their hinterlands. In North American and European cities, philanthrocapitalists invest in cultural, social, and educational facilities passed down by the dwindling welfare state.

This exhibition features gifted buildings—from spectacular to mundane, from extravagant to genuinely useful—that show how the unequal relationship between the giver and the receiver results in both **generosity and violence** exerted by and through architecture. What are the benefits of an architectural gift and how may it cause harm? We document how the giving and receiving of architecture impacts the **production** of these buildings, including their program, design, and materiality, as well as labor relations on the construction site. We consider the economic gains and political influence of the donors. We explore whether architectural gifts require **reciprocity**, and if so, what constitutes a counter-gift. We wonder if the obligations of the receiver and the giver persist after a building's completion. What is the **afterlife** of a gifted building, and how is it perceived, maintained, and used by local communities?

Working with local researchers and communities, and using storytelling as a method, we present case studies on four continents to explore the generosity and violence of the gift-giving dynamic. These include stories of humanitarian gifts for Skopje, North Macedonia; the gift of land in Kumasi, Ghana; diplomatic gifts for Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; and philanthropic gifts in East Palo Alto, California, USA. At the end of the exhibition, we turn to Germany, showing how philanthropy continues to shape Munich and other German cities today.

In Skopje, Ana Ivanovska Deskova is an architectural historian specializing in modern architecture, curator, and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. In Kumasi, Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh is a curator, critic, and lecturer at the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. In Ulaanbaatar, Uurtsaikh Sangi and Temuulen Enkhbat are



researchers at Ger Hub, a nonprofit social innovation firm addressing the most pressing issues in ger districts, informal urban areas in Mongolian cities. In East Palo Alto, Michael Levin is a documentary filmmaker engaged with the community for over twenty years, and Leigh House is a preservationist and Ph.D. researcher at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA.

Curators:

Dmjan Kokalevski, Dr. sc. ETH, Scientific Associate at the Chair of History of Architecture and Curatorial Practice, Technical University Munich

Łukasz Stanek, Ph.D., Professor of Architecture, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA

Exhibition Design and Research on German Case Studies:

Andjelka Badnjar Gojnić, Ph.D., Scientific Associate at the Chair of History of Architecture and Curatorial Practice, Technical University Munich

Graphic Design: Wiegand von Hartmann (WVH), Munich

**WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR REVIEWS.**

-----

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

##### **ARCHITEKTURMUSEUM DER TUM**

Lisa Luksch | Architekturmuseum der TUM

at the Pinakothek der Moderne

Arcisstraße 21 | 80333 München

T +49 (0)89 289 28342 | F +49 (0)89 289 28333

E-Mail: [luksch@architekturmuseum.de](mailto:luksch@architekturmuseum.de)

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

##### **PRESS DEPARTMENT PINAKOTHEKEN**

Tine Nehler M.A. | Head of Press & Communications

Alte Pinakothek, Neue Pinakothek, Sammlung Schack und Staatsgalerien  
& Pinakothek der Moderne (Kunst | Graphik | Architektur | Design)

NEW ADDRESS

Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen

Richard-Wagner-Straße 1 | 80333 München

T +49 (0)89 23805-253

[presse@pinakothek.de](mailto:presse@pinakothek.de)

[www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de/presse](http://www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de/presse)

Information on data processing can be found at [www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de/en/data-protection/](http://www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de/en/data-protection/)