

Profile buro Kettinghuls

Open-Minded

We are open-minded, with an eye for the lived environment, for everyday beauty and for slow living. To us, buildings never exist in isolation: we look beyond zoning boundaries and see the built environment, public space, the landscape and society as parts of a whole. This perspective guides our approach to increasingly complex projects, which often encompass economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions.

The Lived Environment

We aim to reveal human perceptions, memories and imagination. Our interest lies in studying how different users behave, perceive and remember their environment. Stories play an important part in the lived environment and in reading a location. As experienced creative and spatial thinkers, we are able to seduce: we translate plans and ideas into imaginative narratives at an early stage. During the design process, we illustrate thoughts expressed by clients and other involved parties. This is our strength: expressing atmospheres in poetic, lyrical or dramatic images and narratives without prior detailing or designing. This facilitates communication among all of the parties involved because together, words and images fully explain jointly decided purposes and visions.

Tabula Scripta

We do not believe in destroying the old to make room for the new: we focus on what is there, its cultural history, its social context and on the qualities of a district or place. Incorporated into a new structure – an urban plan, a building development, a new square – these are made visible again, acquiring new meaning in the minds of their users. Trees, ditches, old walls, existing buildings or urban structures need not disappear under layers of construction sand: they can be integrated into a new system, adding value to the identity and quality of life in a neighbourhood or district. To address issues of identity, degradation and building vacancy, we prioritize reuse over demolition. For us, this is an integral aspect of sustainability and the foundation of all our projects.

Slow Living

Sound, wind, shadow or light largely determine the quality of a space or place. Too often, unfortunately, such factors are ignored in the design of urban spaces and buildings. We advocate a more poetic approach to the built environment and urban life, one that stimulates the senses. We look at the city and the land from the perspective of those who draw on all their senses to perceive and experience the built environment, those who travel about on foot or by bike; active people who move slowly. We do not ignore the 'fast' city, but focus on adopting a different perspective on the built world.

Everyday Beauty

The everyday beauty of a place, area or object creates feelings of satisfaction, pleasure and delight: a full-grown tree providing shade for a bench, a window with a view on the fields or the fresh morning light in a kitchen. Our objective is

always to create everyday beauty. We like to draw attention to universal but forgotten values that are still valid and give them new meaning through the spaces we design. In addition, our projects are specific, because we pay attention to authenticity and local conditions.

Solid

We design buildings that are robust and sturdy, radiate simplicity and are firmly grounded. At the detail level, we pursue refinement that enhances the project's character while respecting the human scale. We take advantage of repetition and alternate this with exceptions that are dynamic and deliberately committed to encounter, sojourn and a sense of home.

Research by Design

In parallel to our work for clients, we work on self-initiated projects. These research by design projects put contemporary issues of the profession on the agenda and offer new insights and pragmatic solutions to spatial, social or economic problems in both high-density urban areas and rural areas. In high-density areas, we seek solutions that will transform the existing built environment into a sustainable and more social one: one that reflects future changes in society. In rural areas, we thereby seek to maximise the interconnectedness of buildings and landscape.

Method

Our focus is not only on the creation of human-centred products and services, but also on a design process that is humane. We draw on our intuitive ability to develop ideas with emotional impact. We base our work on our own observations and personal experiences, changing needs and desires. Our hands-on approach provides an open and refreshing view of the landscape and the built environment, and we see this as a route to new strategies, to a world that is both varied, layered and human.

Collaboration

We believe in cross-disciplinary collaboration, especially during the initial phase of projects when starting points have to be redefined. We like to work in teams involving our clients, group of advisors and people from other fields, including sociologists, financial experts, landscape architects and users (e.g. residents, schoolteachers, farmers). This is important in relation to the current quest for new technologies, new value systems and new models that serve the interests of society.

Tight Budgets

Our designs, based on simplicity and paying attention to distinctive elements, succeed in creating everyday beauty even within tight budgets. Because we are able to give free reign to the experience of others as well as that of ourselves as designers of buildings and cities, we can create plans that take the running costs into consideration at the same time as the spatial plan, the identity of a place and its cultural history. We love simplicity and clear-cut plans.