

21.05 — 28.07.25

Stefano Graziani



Hermann Czech. Starting from the existent



SCUOLA DI ARCHITETTURA
URBANISTICA INGEGNERIA
DELLE COSTRUZIONI

DIPARTIMENTO
DI ARCHITETTURA
E STUDI URBANI

21.05.25 h.16.30 Lecture by Hermann Czech | Patio
h.18.00 Exhibition Opening | Spazio Mostre

22.05.25 h.16.30 Talks around Czech | Patio

Politecnico di Milano, Via Ampère 2, Milano Spazio Mostre Guido Nardi, Building 11

Under the patronage of



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DELLA PROVINCIA DI MILANO

forum austriaco di cultura^{mil}

Hermann Czech. Starting from the existent

There are few architects whose work is so inextricably linked - and thus extraordinarily understandable - to the city in which they worked. Hermann Czech's built oeuvre, as well as his theoretical work, resonate in complex ways with Viennese urban culture: with the physical city, the Baroque and the modern city, and with the revolutionary ideas of the architects who so distinctively defined its character, such as Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos and Josef Frank. For Czech, there is no architecture without a relationship to real place, to unexpectedly profitable contingencies or inevitably adverse circumstances, to the existing. At the same time, for Czech there is no architecture without the construction of thought, without the production of knowledge that reworks in radically new terms reflections that have already emerged in that place, in a relational and critical conception of continuity of thought and action. For him, building and speculating, just like his illustrious precursors, are faces of the same act of transforming reality, a culturally sustainable transformation. Czech's action is thus aimed at understanding the complexity of the city and its modification within society, at a given moment in history: from here architecture can continuously construct its meaning, its “environmental” quality. The exhibition “Hermann Czech. Starting from the existent” collects projects elaborated throughout his entire career, with the ambition to present to the Italian public a unique professional and intellectual trajectory, with possible assonances with some similar experiences in Milan. In this moment of stagnation, where only aspects related to the easy consumption of an image seem to be relevant, his critical intelligence and his persistent feeling of sympathy for the existent, in radical projects as well as in the smallest transformations, are more revealing than ever.

Born in Vienna in 1936, Hermann Czech studied architecture at the Technische Hochschule and at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna under Ernst A. Plischke. In 1958 and 1959 he attended Konrad Wachsmann’s seminars at the Salzburg Summer Academy. He began working on architectural projects in 1960, from 1963 to 1967 he penned architectural criticism for Die Furche. From the 1970s, projects and realizations at various scales. In 1978, early writings were published under the title Zur Abwechslung (extended new edition 1996); in 2021, Ungefähre Hauptrichtung — Schriften und Gespräche zur Architektur followed (both published by Löcker Verlag). Hermann Czech has served as a visiting professor at national and international universities, including Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, ETH Zurich, TU Wien, and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. He has received awards and distinctions for his architectural work. He participated in the Architecture Biennale in Venice in 1980, 1991, 2000, 2012, and, most recently, in 2023 together with the collective AKT. In 2024, fjk3 — Contemporary Art Space (Vienna) dedicated a major survey exhibition to him. He received the Grand Austrian State Prize 2024 for his life's work. Hermann Czech lives and works in Vienna.

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Introduction

Eve Blau

Harvard Graduate School of Design

h.18.00 Exhibition Opening | Spazio Mostre Guido Nardi

Introduction

Andrea Campioli

Dean of the AUIC School | Politecnico di Milano

Massimo Bricocoli

Director DASTU | Politecnico di Milano

Angelo Lunati

DASTU Politecnico di Milano

22.05.25 h.16.30 Talks around Czech | Patio

Discussants

Michael Bergquist

KTH - Royal Institute of Technology Stockholm

Pierre-Alain Croset

DASTU - Politecnico di Milano

David Kohn

Architectural Association London

Eva Kuss

Coabitare Architektbüro Graz

Wilfried Kuehn

Technische Universität Wien

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