

Laudation Walter Nägeli for Knapkiewicz & Fickert

The works of Katharina Knapkiewicz and Alexander Fickert are characterised by pleasantly relaxed interaction with the residential construction heritage of modern architecture without any interfering ideologies. It is not neutral living space being offered, but rather a room which would like to arouse the undiscovered residential potentials of its occupants.

The focus is on an idea of an architectural room, in which a balance is sought between the perception of the moving subject and a highly differentiated subtle geometric arrangement in the background, similar to that of an English landscape garden.

It is the spatial diagonal which links the interior subspaces together and with the exterior room in many concepts. This transforms the buildings into oscillating room systems which are nested within each other and convey the closed and open, the small and large, the private and public areas.

Here, designing means the arrangement of transition points in the room texture. The structural detail is important but not essential; the degree of perfection of the joining elements results more from the concrete spatial marking tasks than from the available technological possibilities.

The public appearance of the buildings creates an atmosphere, a pictorial compression of identifiable factors in the specific context. The structures can learn: They speak the language of their environment, while formulating their own new statements. Every building is unique; there is no self-determined architectural canon underlying the designs. Contrasts are not synthesized and eliminated but analysed and made to coexist. The constantly open structural response of Knapkiewicz and Fickert is raised to an art of sensitive intervention.