

PRESS INFORMATION

20 Years Capital of Culture Graz — 20 Years Kunsthaus Graz — 87 Years Peter Cook

Speculations

Peter Cook, London

Opening with a lecture by Peter Cook: October 22, 2023, 5 pm, HDA, Mariahilferstraße 2, 8020 Graz

Exhibition: October 24, 2023–January 28, 2024, Tue–Sun, 10 am–6 pm

Podium discussion: October 24, 2023, 6 pm, HDA, Mariahilferstraße 2, 8020 Graz



Speculative Landscape © Cook

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Kunsthaus Graz, the Haus der Architektur (HDA) is presenting “Speculations,” an exhibition of drawings and spatial objects by the British architect Peter Cook. His construction of the “friendly alien,” which he realised together with Colin Fournier in 2003, has attracted great attention worldwide, and has developed, as one of Graz’s most significant buildings, to a new architectural landmark of the city. On the opening day of the exhibition, October 22, we are also celebrating Sir Peter Cook’s eighty-seventh birthday.

Cook became known as a co-founder of Archigram in the 1960s. Already at that time, hand-made drawings were the stylistic and expressive means of the neo-futurist group. To this day, he uses colourful, imaginative depictions that show landscapes, cities, and buildings from a wide variety of perspectives. The exhibition shows selected drawings from his new book *Speculations*, published by Circa Verlag.

In his latest works, he expands these two-dimensional “speculations” into installations in which his drawings are enlarged and then fragmented into an assembly where the spectator can walk and immerse into its atmosphere. The experimental character of the exhibition design is tailored to the rooms in the HDA. His visual collages highlight themes important to the architect and reflect many of his architectural ideas. He argues that only through the freedom of imagery can one best examine the future, freeing oneself from practical and conventional constraints to rethink alternative cities and ways of life. Cook’s inspiring depictions give rise to speculations about the future of the city, the region, people, and nature, provoking thought and inviting visitors to embark on a speculative journey into the potentials and possibilities of current and future living spaces.

Under the hashtag **#speculations_hda**, we invite all visitors to share their ideas and wishes for the future of Graz and Styria with us and the public via Instagram.

About Peter Cook

Peter Cook was one of the founders of Archigram (1961–1972) and co-editor and author of the magazine of the same name. Their utopian avant-garde architecture included designs such as the Capsule Home as a mobile unit, and utopian urban designs such as Plug-In City and Walking City. Together with Christine Hawley, Peter Cook planned a residential building for the International Building Exhibition in Berlin. The Kunsthaus Graz, which he designed together with Colin Fournier, opened in 2003.

Having realised several university buildings with his former architectural office CRAB Studio, he became a founding partner of CHAP (Cook Haffner Architecture Platform), which is involved in the development of NEO, the new city in Saudi Arabia as well as library, school, and housing projects in China, Norway, and the Balkans.

Peter Cook was Chair of the Bartlett School of Architecture from 1990 to 2006 and from 1984 to 2002 professor at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main. He has also had teaching positions at MIT in Massachusetts, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, University of California, Harvard University, École Spéciale d'Architecture in Paris, and many others.

OPENING

Opening with a lecture by Peter Cook

October 22, 2023, 5 pm, HDA – House of Architecture, Mariahilferstraße 2, 8020 Graz

With:

Beate Engelhorn Director HDA

Andreja Hribernik Director Kunsthaus

Christine Braunersreuther, City Councillor of Graz, on behalf of **Elke Kahr** Mayor of Graz

Emma Baines Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy in Austria

Sandra Holasek, Spokesperson for Science, Research and Culture, on behalf of **Christopher Drexler** Governor of Styria

ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

PODIUM DISCUSSION “SPECULATIONS” (english language)

October 24, 6 pm, Space 04, Kunsthaus Graz, Lendkai 1, 8020 Graz

Speaking ARTificial—Relations between built and public space

The discussion will speculate on façades, architectural utopias, AI, and the future of communication between people, buildings, and public space.

Discussion with

Peter Cook, Architect/London

Tim & Jan Edler, realities:united, studio for art and architecture/Berlin

Birgit Bachler, Artist and Head of Information Design, FH Joanneum/Graz

Urs Hirschberg, Professor of Architectural Representation and New Media/Graz, Head of the Institute of Architecture and Media, TU Graz

Moderated by

Katrin Bucher Trantow, Chief Curator, Deputy Director Kunsthaus Graz

Beate Engelhorn, Director HDA Graz

An event in the context of the discussion series “SPEKULATIONEN” on the occasion of the anniversary “20 Years 03—The Institutions of the Capital of Culture 2003”.

A cooperative networking project between Murinsel Graz, Helmut List Halle, Haus der Architektur, Kindermuseum FRida & freD, Kunsthaus Graz, and Literaturhaus Graz.

Speculations is designed by Cook Haffner Architecture Platform, a multidisciplinary and experimental architecture office with a focus on culture, the city, and how space functions.

CHAP Design team:

Curatorial and exhibition design: Sir Peter Cook and Cong Ding

Media and VR: Louis Peralta

For further information, please visit the HDA website:

<https://hda-graz.at/programm/ausstellung-speculations-peter-cook-london>

Press images are available at:

<https://hda-graz.at/pressebereich-hda/pressemappe-speculations-peter-cook-london>

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