



Top left: Monte Rosa Hut, Zermatt in collaboration with ETH-Studio Monte Rosa
 Opposite, top right: Winery Gantenbein, Fläsch in collaboration with Gramazio & Kohler Architekten, Zürich
 Below: Federal Criminal Court, Bellinzona in collaboration with Durisch + Nollí Architetti, Massagno
 Portrait: Valentin Bearth, Andrea Deplazes, Daniel Ladner

Bearth & Deplazes Architekten 'Amurs' - loving landscapes

Cultural landscapes, materials, natural light and social conditions provide an essential starting point for new design and structures. Together, they make up the context that is so important for architecture. Bearth & Deplazes Architekten draw inspiration from these cultural contexts and their design responses always show the relationship to the cultural origins of place.

TEXT: ELISABETH DOEHNE | PHOTOS: RALPH FEINER, TONATIUH AMBROSETTI

In other words, the Swiss architects closely observe the surroundings in which their buildings will eventually exist. "For us, architecture, whether we're planning or building public, private, small or large projects, always begins with that magical momentum, something that cannot be measured in square meters or money," explains the Swiss architects.

The three partners Valentin Bearth, Andrea Deplazes, and Daniel Ladner head a team of 15 employees. Founded in 1988 and headquartered in Chur and Zurich, the Swiss firm has extensive experience across a broad range of building types and sizes: cultural facilities, government build-

ings, corporate headquarters and private residences.

Cultural landscapes - Amurs

Their recent publication 'Amurs' (the Romansh word for 'loves') includes a selection of 19 structures and projects. The architects personally selected these 'Amurs' and the book shows their subjective viewpoints, preferences and experiences with these buildings. All projects are characterised and inspired by very different contexts, environments and each tell a different story.

In Europe, the New Monte Rosa Hut in Zermatt has become a well-known exam-



ple of a modern, alpine hut. On the outside, it is a contemporary donjon that braves the snow and freezing cold, but inside the wooden casing characterises its cosy and safe environment. A fantastic trail leads alpine hikers to the refuge within three to four hours. The building's terrace is ideal for mountaineers and families wanting to enjoy the warmth of the sun with good food and Valais wine.

The landscape of aspirations

The vineyard of Daniel and Martha Gantenbein is nestled in the vineyards of the famous, yet well-hidden, village of Fläsch on the edge of the Bündner Herrschaft. Wine lovers praise the legendary Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from Gantenbein. The region is a melting pot for German, Valais and Latin cultures and the sight of the Gantenbein estate evokes images of the great pillar stables of the Lombardy.

The seemingly windowless building turns out to be a well-lit hall. The sunlight breaks through the open cracks in the clinker brickwork, creating a shadow play. Lounging on the estate's roof terrace, guests can dine and enjoy the Gantenbein wines while



overlooking the vast vineyards of the Rhine Valley.

The magical landscape

In St. Moritz, nothing is more relaxing than taking a hot bath after an intense day of skiing. The bright, warm pools of the new bath Ovaverva are perfect for taking in the fresh air while watching the twilight fade over the valleys and mountain ranges of the Engadine. The 'temple bath', as it is popularly known, stands majestically at the base of the snowy landscape and overlooks the scenic forests. Inside, the bath resembles a labyrinth that holds many surprises and perks for its guests. The spa helps guests feeling relaxed, cleansed and energised for the next day.

The new Federal Criminal Court, the highest court in Switzerland, offers an impressive addition to the town of Bellinzona, which is known for the historic Castelgrande. On the court's outside, old and new materials blend into a new whole – held together by white marbled concrete – and gracefully reflecting the light. The interior structure mitigates the daylight, like the foliage of a tree, and disperses it throughout the shadowy halls of the court. This design is inspired by Switzerland's history, when courts would take place outside under the town's linden or oak tree.

The Bündner Herrschaft

The new corporate headquarters of the public health insurance ÖKK in Landquart resemble a simple, yet charming Venetian Palazzo in the Bündner Herrschaft. The

structure is divided by arcades and oriented towards the public; through both its aesthetic expression and its integration into public life. The building's front square revives the narrow Bahnhofstrasse, a cafe which invites people to sit and meet and the atrium hosts public events. From this location, visitors enter the famous area of the Bündner Herrschaft.

www.bearth-deplazes.ch

Below: ÖKK-Headquarter, Landquart

Bottom: Pool, Spa & Sports Centre St. Moritz in collaboration with Morger + Dettli Architekten, Basel

