Architecture as a branding device

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In the winter of 2004, Munich's Haus der Kunst staged an exhibition entitled *Das Bild Europas* (The Image of Europe). The subject of the exhibition was none other than a new image, a *rebranding*, for Europe. The European Commission in Brussels assigned the task neither to advertising agencies nor to political scientists, but to Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas. No other architect has explored questions of architectural representation in such depth. Ever since giving up his former profession as a scriptwriter and journalist in the 1970s and turning to architecture, he has been interested in how capitalism and architecture are interrelated. During the recession in New York he experienced how the problems of the economically ruined metropolis were solved neither by architectural design nor urban planning, but by the property operations and financial coups of developers of the likes of Donald Trump. From ever-changing perspectives, his manifesto-like books – *Delirious New York* (1978), *Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large* (1995) and *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping* (2001) – examine the question of how architects are capable of understanding and articulating the brutal forces of capitalism.[1] Anyone wishing to explore the connection between architecture and branding simply cannot ignore Koolhaas.[2]

Twilight of the brands: Seagram and the consequences for architecture

Like other architects, such as Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind and Peter Eisenman, Koolhaas stepped into the limelight with spectacular projects in the 1990s after a phase in which he mainly produced architectural representations and texts. He became known as a result of such projects as the Kunsthal Rotterdam (1992) and Euralille (1994). He is now one of the exclusive band of international star architects who have themselves become brands, trophies with which clients from Barcelona to Beijing are glad to decorate themselves.[3] In the catalogue of his exhibition entitled *Content*, Koolhaas describes the unrealized project for Universal Headquarters in Los Angeles as a decisive moment in the history of his practice. In 1995, Edgar Bronfman Jr. assigned him the task of producing the concept for the headquarters of Universal's film studios and theme park in Los Angeles. Bronfman had merged the Seagram

1 Rem Koolhaas, Universal Headquarters, Los Angeles, project, 1995–9

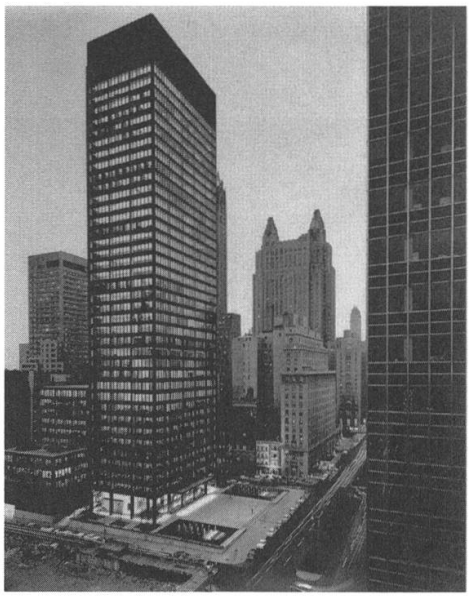
spirits group with the entertainment giant Universal and thus brought about one of those spectacular mergers of corporations that are characteristic of the global economy. In the course of the planning, however, the corporation constantly changed its face. Time and again, the project was postponed. In 2000, the financially ailing Universal was bought by the French consortium Vivendi, which in turn collapsed after a short time. Since then, the probably most ambitious branding project in the history of architecture has been, as Koolhaas succinctly puts it, 'on hold' (fig. 1).

For Koolhaas, Universal was the first sign of a radically new phase in architecture: 'Universal became the first warning of a fundamental change in architecture, a progressive evaporation of a project's feasibility simply because the company was mutating as fast as a virus, at a pace that no architecture could hope to maintain. There was a conflict between the slowness of architecture and the volatility of the market.'[4]

For his part, Koolhaas reacted to this experience of the volatility of the markets by expanding. He established his AMO practice in 1995 – a practice for *non*-built architecture. As he calls it, AMO is a mirror reflection of the office he opened in 1975 together with Elia and Zoe Zenghelis and Madelon Vriesendorp: OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture). According to Koolhaas, the aim of AMO is to develop projects, free of the constraints of realization, for which built architecture is 'too slow'.[5] AMO has become an efficient instrument for research and branding.

But there is another reason why the failed project for Universal is also a milestone in Koolhaas's career. In the world of architecture, the names Seagram and Bronfman have a magical ring to them. They are indissolubly linked to a building that is considered the epitome of corporate architecture and without which the history of architectural branding would be inconceivable: the Seagram Building by Mies van der Rohe in New York (1958). Koolhaas has never made a secret of the fact that he considers Mies as a central reference, claiming to be his architectural heir, as it were. Putting it casually, Mies could be described as a kind of architectural grandfather for Koolhaas. Both are masters of architectural representation in images and words. Both

are Europeans who find their greatest challenges in the United States. And both articulate the power of bureaucracy and capitalism in their projects. It therefore comes as no surprise that Koolhaas compared the assignment from Edgar Bronfman Jr. with the assignment that his grandfather, Samuel Bronfman, had given to Mies forty years earlier.



2 Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Seagram Building, New York, 1954–8

In 1954, on the initiative of his daughter Phyllis Lambert, Bronfman asked Mies van der Rohe to build the headquarters of Joseph E. Seagram & Sons on New York's Park Avenue[6] (fig. 2). Built in collaboration with Philip Johnson, the Seagram Building was van der Rohe's first large-scale office building and one of the most influential projects he ever designed. The free-standing tower, which is set back slightly from the street and thus opens a kind of plaza, has left a deep impression in the city planning of New York, and in corporate architecture. The elegant bronze and glass façade, the interplay of materials and the contrast between the plinth and the lofty tower not only created a 'clearing in the urban jungle',[7] but also influenced the very way in which corporations present themselves. The architectural critic Herbert Muschamp called it the 'most important building of the millennium'.[8]

It can be assumed that Koolhaas saw the Universal Headquarters project as the opportunity to realize 'his' Seagram Building, his own icon of corporate architecture. However, the way a corporation can be presented architecturally changed fundamentally within that forty-year period. The budget that Mies van der Rohe had at his disposal, for example, appears to have been equivalent to five times the sum available to his successor. Koolhaas wonders whether architecture has lost '80% of its (self)-worth'.[9] And while at that time the spirits corporation Seagram was a unit with a comparatively clear identity that did not change during the building process, this was no longer the case in the mid-1990s. This has consequences for architecture. In Koolhaas's words:

'Where in '54 a building could be a "portrait" of a known entity, forty years later it needed to be a *device* that was able to create a degree of wholeness from a permanently changing cluster of ingredients and latencies. A building was no longer an issue of architecture, but of a strategy.'[10]

The corporation that Seagram became during the 1980s and 1990s was like an 'unstable combination of various groups that appear and disappear', as is stated in one of Koolhaas's diagrams, which are reproduced in the catalogue. However, the 'real challenge', according to the text in another diagram, is the question of whether architecture is able to represent the intended merger of a spirits company with a film studio, or of a music corporation with an internet company.[11]

The project for the Universal Headquarters building thus exemplifies the problems architects currently face when hired by global corporations. Of course, like Mies before him, Koolhaas also had to make the maximum profit within the limits of legal regulations. And of course he also had to find solutions for the hierarchies and liturgies of the bureaucracy – from the 'corner offices for 400 vice-presidents' [12] to the lounges, reception rooms and infrastructure. Paradoxically, the client asked that the building appear 'timeless'; and he found many of OMA's proposals too 'contemporary' and believed they were too likely to age quickly.[13] However, Koolhaas was in search of a dynamic form of representation that was open to changes of all kinds, including unforeseen ones. Simply put, he was not in search of a static monument, but of a performative image machine that would produce dynamic events. While Mies had evoked the performative element as an isolated image, as it were, by exhibiting different sculptures for a limited time on the plaza, by placing fountains and by capturing the interplay of light and shade in the panels of glass in the hall, Koolhaas intended to conceive the entire project as a performance.[14]

IKEA *ante portas*: signature architecture under pressure

Koolhaas's projects for Universal have since proven more durable than the corporation itself, which is not the only one to have foundered in the wake of the financial meltdown. The heirs of the Seagram group had to stand by and watch helplessly as the headquarters building was sold together with its exquisite collection of paintings, sculptures and photographs in order to pay some of Vivendi's billion-dollar debts. In the light of such changes – the media referred to the Vivendi Universal disaster as the 'nemesis of an empire' – the question arises as to how architects can represent 'continuity' at all when the ground is likely to be swept away from under their feet. The term 'branding' is entirely appropriate to this issue, for it involuntarily evokes the image of a cowboy catching a bull with a lasso after a daredevil pursuit and burning the owner's 'trademark' into the animal's skin with a glowing branding iron. Furthermore, the gerund 'branding' emphasizes the fact that branding is a performative, unfinished action. Not least, it reminds us that it is a matter of claims of ownership and competition, victory and defeat, winners and losers. In this competitive situation, where is

there room for architects? Are they still necessary? Do they have the strength to keep up? Or must they make do with the role of observers who comment upon and criticize events without being able to influence them?

The company that is probably the most successful at global branding, namely IKEA, proves that global corporations can do without architects. Ironically, of all companies, this Swedish-based corporation, which has developed the world market for furniture and interior decoration since the 1940s, manages without architectural design. It's hard to imagine any buildings more indifferent than IKEA's gigantic blue metal boxes, which are put up on cheap plots on the edges of towns the world over. The brand is shown in huge yellow letters on a blue ground. It is reminiscent of the Swedish national colours and hence vaguely reminds us of the cliché of Scandinavia as a salubrious, nature-loving, family-friendly world. All the items of furniture that can be bought inside the building and assembled at home bear first names that promise individualism and regional identity. In reality, they are produced in countries with low wages and distributed in the IKEA buildings, where warehouse, distribution, display and consumption merge in a single, all-embracing space. The buildings stand like stranded spaceships in the peripheral landscapes. They are hermetically sealed against the outside world. There is no communication between inside and out, no windows, no courtyards. The only thing that distinguishes the entrances to these box-like buildings from the exits is that people leave the latter exhausted and carrying heavy packages, while they enter the former aperture full of expectation.

IKEA can be compared with other global corporations that can do without architecture in the traditional sense of design, such as snack bars, car rental companies, petrol stations, and of course the malls in shopping centres, railway stations and international airports. They all bear extraordinarily strong, well-established brands that do not appear to suffer from being housed in cheap, stereotyped, at times even demonstratively shabby buildings whose only quality lies in the fact that they can be rapidly assembled and dismantled. By analogy with the junk food of the snack bars, Koolhaas likes to describe such rooms as 'junk spaces'. In order to assert themselves in the competition among brands, architects must be familiar with the mechanism of these spaces.

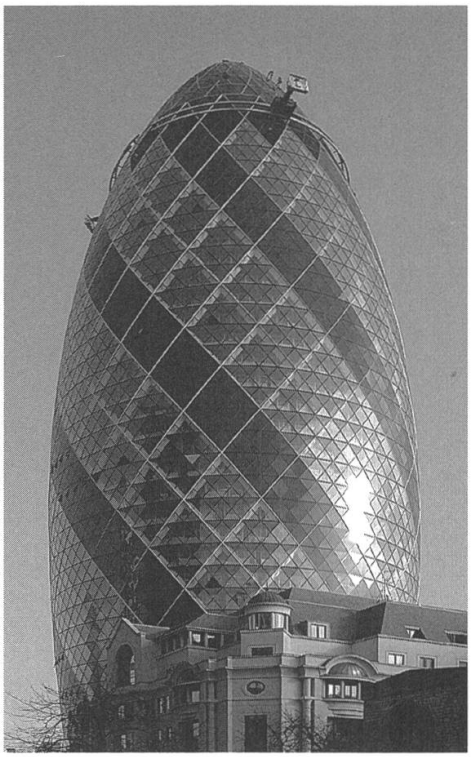
The question of duration is indissolubly linked with the phenomenon of junk space. By its very nature, architecture is a protracted process, because it encompasses factors such as financing, approval by authorities and security, but also the sheer time involved in building. A seven-year period is not unusual for larger-scale building projects, but this is an eternity for global corporations, for which every delay costs money. Shopping malls are constantly under construction, and branding costs have to be re-

deemed much more quickly today than fifty years ago. The images must be instantly recognizable, change rapidly and thus constantly call the brand to mind. Of greater importance than the impression of permanence are the element of surprise, easy reproducibility as an image, and the feature that distinguishes the brand from its competitors. Architecture no longer functions as a static phenomenon that is built for eternity and will continue to stand for following generations, but as an ephemeral event whose lifespan is determined by its physical and symbolic amortization. Especially recently, the exploration of the theme of 'event architecture'[15] has been correspondingly varied. This exploration is concerned with central issues and problems of our societies succinctly described by Guy Debord in his book *The Society of Spectacle* (1967): 'The age of the consumption of images – the medium of all wares – is intrinsically the area in which the instruments of the spectacle are fully effective.'[16]

In view of today's shortage of time, the role that architecture used to play in connection with the representation of companies – in other words until the 1980s – is bathed in golden light, as it were. In those days it was a crucial element in 'the architecture of branding'. Unlike the art collections with which many corporations adorn themselves, a building is aimed at a much broader audience. Unlike an abstract logo, architecture is physically tangible and present in the urban landscape. Unlike advertising, which ages rapidly, it bears more durable and broader connotations. Anyone who works in, visits or sees a building makes it part of his life, his memory and imagination.

The twentieth century gave rise to a plethora of signature buildings, in other words, individual edifices with the purpose of lending a company architectural form.[17] Many of these stand in New York, like actors on the enormous stage of what Rem Koolhaas describes as the 'theatre of progress'.[18] The series begins with the headquarters of J. P. Morgan and Company (1913) by Trowbridge & Livingston; instead of a high-rise edifice covered with ornamentation, the financier John Pierpont Morgan, at that time the richest man in the world, erected an unadorned, four-storey building immediately opposite the New York Stock Exchange. Today we can only speculate whether Morgan wanted to demonstrate that he was not dependent on the earnings that more floors would have generated and wanted to represent their potential value in compressed form, so to speak. But this is the first attempt to represent 'abstraction' architecturally and to find a form for the forces that dominate the world of monopolistic capitalism. In the immediate vicinity stands the neo-Gothic, exuberantly decorated 'cathedral of commerce', the Woolworth Building (1913) designed by Cass Guilbert at the same time, which was to remain the tallest building in the world until the 1930s. The series continues, ranging from William van Alen's

Chrysler Building (1928), whose Art Deco embellishments celebrate the machine aesthetics of the early age of the motor car, to the above-mentioned Seagram Building by Mies van der Rohe, a monument to the repetitive, all-embracing, bureaucratic working procedures of late Modernism. The most striking high-rise buildings constructed after the Seagram Building include Gio Ponti's Pirelli tower block in Milan (1958), Karl Schwanzer's BMW headquarters in Munich (1973), the 'Four-cylinder engine', Skidmore Owens and Merrill's Sears Tower in Chicago (1974), Cesar Pelli's Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur (1998) and Norman Foster's Swiss Re Building in London (2003). The latter is now popularly known as 'the gherkin' (fig. 3).



3 Norman Foster, Swiss Re Building, London, 2004

High-rise buildings remain a privileged type of branding to this day. They function like icons; in other words, as easily recognizable and reproducible symbols whose *raison d'être* is the effect they have on the outside world. They shape the silhouette of the cities and form an indissoluble link between a company's name and the urban landscape in the collective memory. Many still bear the names of companies that are no longer in existence. They stand in the cities as symbols of the volatility of capitalism, of the rise and fall of corporate empires. This applies, for example, to the former AEG turbine hall in Berlin (1909) by Peter Behrens,[19] or to IG Farben's headquarters in Frankfurt by Hans Poelzig, now called the 'Poelzig Building' and part of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, and, lastly, to Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal at John F. Kennedy airport.

However, not only individual signature buildings, but also entire urban districts can serve as branding tools. The office-machine corporation Olivetti, for example, formed a district of the little town of Ivrea north of Turin with consistently excellent buildings from the 1920s onwards. Olivetti further cultivated the image of well-designed office machines in the form of architecturally outstanding office buildings, which it constructed all over the world and which made Olivetti synonymous with contemporary good taste, cosmopolitanism and technical innovation on every level.[20] The gradual demise of the brand in the wake of computerization brought

about the end of this strategy. Today, new, smaller companies have settled into the company's premises, which have become an internationally acclaimed monument to corporate architecture, and are protected as a whole. To a more modest extent, the Vitra furniture factory has pursued a similar strategy since the 1990s. The various buildings at the company's headquarters in Weil am Rhein were built by star architects like Zaha Hadid, Tadao Ando and Frank Gehry. To a certain extent, the global pharmaceuticals company Novartis also follows this example, although the architecture does not function as external branding, but is designed to make the location more attractive to international staff. For example, the corporation refers to its new factory complex with research and administrative buildings currently under construction in Basle with the university brand 'campus', and is having them built by star architects; however, the public is forbidden from entering the premises.

While Olivetti and Vitra aim to impress their clients with spectacular architecture, other corporations, such as the sports goods manufacturer Nike, suggest a sense of togetherness that gives clients the feeling that they are not isolated buyers in shops, but 'citizens' of 'NikeTowns' united by the same interests and the same lifestyle. And at the end of the 1990s, Volkswagen also realized that, particularly at a time when the actual production sites of its cars are scattered all across the globe, the brand must remain emotionally charged and retain a local identity. Today, for approximately the same amount as it would cost to transfer the car from the factory to the dealer, the buyer of a new VW can drive to Wolfsburg, stay there in a luxury hotel and savour every aspect of the VW phenomenon in the 'Autostadt VW' (VW car city). The theme park consists of an exhibition centre to illustrate the history of the brand, as well as a series of pavilions distributed throughout the complex in which the numerous brands that now belong to the company – from Skoda to Bentley and Lamborghini – are presented. The main attraction is two glass towers in which the cars are stored before they go to the customers. Rather than being displayed in showcases, the cars are stacked on top of each other inside the towers, suggesting an inexhaustible abundance and choice of vehicles. In reality, the cars are manufactured to order and stored for as short a period as possible. Yet although only a few of the models are really manufactured in the factory immediately next door and many are delivered by rail from the factories in the Czech Republic or Spain, the clients have the impression that they are collecting their cars at the very moment of their 'birth', as it were.[21]

Not everywhere does branding function by means of architecture. Thus, as I mentioned earlier, a conglomerate like Universal will not necessarily improve its image through architecture – or rather, that image is considered five times less positive than in the 1950s. Nor are the clients of the exclusive wine brand 'Château Pétrus', which

is in demand all over the world, interested in the fact that Herzog & de Meuron built a spectacular vineyard for the brand's owner, Dominus Winery, in Napa Valley (1998).[22] But in most areas, branding is successful. This is also true of the arts. Museums and concert halls in particular have become central elements of 'city marketing' since the 1980s. From the 'museum mile' in Frankfurt am Main to Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and Jean Nouvel's Cultural and Congress Centre in Lucerne: clients and authorities always rely quite explicitly on star architects to upgrade their town or region. This is also an area that is now threatening to become saturated. If every small town possesses a museum of contemporary art designed by Frank Gehry, the effect is bound to wear off. In that sense the 'Schaulager' in Basel (2003) by Herzog & de Meuron is revealing, because it is a case of double branding. On the one hand, the star architects have put an unmistakable stamp on the building. On the other hand, the building's title, namely Schaulager, a 'storage hall for viewing', is written with the sign of 'registered trademark' and thus jealously occupies its territory as an architectural and semantic 'brand'.

Image machines: Prada's strategy

However, architectural branding is most effective in fashion. While the representation of Edgar Bronfman Jr.'s disintegrating corporate empire proved an unsolvable problem for Rem Koolhaas, he had more luck with another project: Miuccia Prada entrusted him with the task of developing a strategy of architectural representation for Prada, the Italian fashion group. Like many companies in the fashion industry, Prada expanded, positively exploded in the late 1990s. The once small, exclusive cult brand was transformed into a global corporation with approximately 200 branches in the wealthy cities of Europe, Asia and the United States. Like comparable luxury labels such as Louis Vuitton, Cartier or Calvin Klein, Prada was also confronted with the problem that, due to duplication, quantitative expansion ultimately involved the loss of exclusivity as well as of the element of surprise and mystery.

In the mid-1990s, Calvin Klein astounded the fashion world with the minimalist interiors of his shops designed by John Pawson. Luxury and exclusivity were not expressed through opulence and material wealth, but to the contrary by an atmosphere of emptiness and purity. The theoretician Charles Jencks ironically dubbed this 'boutique Cistercianism'.[23] And now that every Gap shop looks like an art gallery and even McDonald's branches are designed to imitate the dignified interiors of luxury Japanese restaurants, the aesthetic of emptiness has become less attractive.

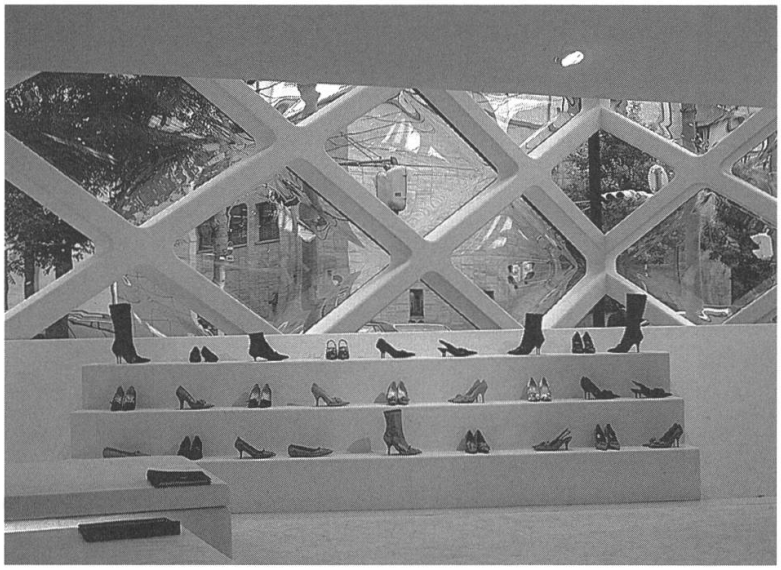
Today, Prada's strategy is not to restrict itself to the products, the label, the lifestyle or the atmosphere that surround the brand, in other words not to concen-

4 Rem Koolhaas, Prada New York, 2001

trate on aesthetic categories. In Koolhaas's view, it is possible to avoid the risk of repetition and to exploit expansion by continuously redefining the brand. In the catalogue of the exhibition with which this strategy was presented in Milan in 2001, Koolhaas summarizes his strategy as follows: 'By introducing two kinds of stores – the typical and the unique – the epicenter store becomes a device that renews the brand by counteracting and destabilizing any received notion of what Prada is, does, or will become. The epicenter store functions as a window: a medium to broadcast future directions that positively charges the larger mass of typical stores.'[24]

On the one hand, Prada thus creates an atmosphere in its shops that is immediately recognizable everywhere. On the other hand, the brand pinpoints the centres of the most important global cities – New York, Tokyo and Los Angeles – by means of specific, architecturally radical epicentre stores. In the case of Prada, Koolhaas is not concerned with what has been described as 'corporate architecture' since the late 1980s. It is thus not a matter of forming an image that is as coherent as possible, a coherent brand architecture. It is more about conceiving architecture as an instrument that produces shock waves like the centre of an earthquake, and destroys any presumed and expected coherence. This is intended to keep the brand in constant movement and to save it from losing its aura.[25]

Prada clients should not only be recognizable to the initiated by the red stripes on the soles of their shoes, and not only be able to immerse themselves in the greenish atmosphere that characterizes Prada's shops all over the world. They should participate in a brand that is moved by natural events and feel they are embarking on an ad-

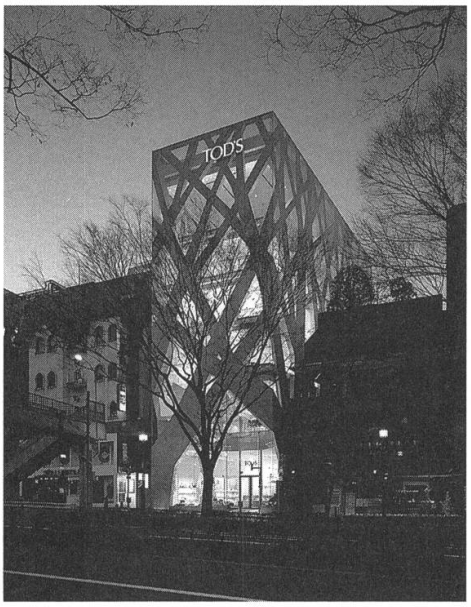


5 Herzog & de Meuron, Prada Tokyo, 2003

venture, even if imaginary, indeed that they are exposed to a 'risk'. Unlike 'type stores', epicentre stores do not duplicate a type or continue a typology. They are unmistakable and unique, or, to put it differently, they embody the myth of the individual that the fashion corporations propagate in a global world. In this respect, they differ from Mies van der Rohe, for whom 'universal character' was central to the longevity of a building.[26]

True to his principles, Koolhaas did not build all the epicentre stores himself. He designed the stores in New York and Los Angeles, while he assigned the task of building Prada Tokyo to Herzog & de Meuron. Indeed, the three epicentre stores built so far are spectacular. Prada New York is dug out of the building that once housed the Guggenheim Soho like a cave (fig. 4). It consists of an undulating ramp, which can be used for performances or fashion shows, and suggests something like a continuation of public space. The shop is like an enormous public stage, while the actual products in the consciously improvised-looking lower floor are displayed in very limited space. On the ground floor, on the other hand, there are practically no clothes to be seen. The brand is so sure of its appeal to clients that it can afford to address a wider audience and to refrain from displaying any products at all. Thus in one episode of *Sex and the City*, produced by private American broadcaster Home Box Office, when the escort of heroine Carry Bradshaw enters Koolhaas's New York Prada store, he says, 'Holy shit! You know, on my planet the clothing stores have clothes.'[27]

Prada Tokyo goes a step further (fig. 5). Herzog & de Meuron used the assignment to intensify their research into the presentation of objects. From the display cabinets



6 Toyo Ito, Tod's, Tokyo, 2004

to the lamps, from the changing rooms to the seating, every single piece in the interior has been reinvented. At the same time, Herzog & de Meuron took up Koolhaas's idea of architecture as a 'device' or an instrument, almost literally. They transformed the epicentre store into a 'viewing machine', an apparatus that functions not only as an icon in the cityscape, that is, not only symbolically, but also continuously produces images itself. The façade consists of a network of lenses that distort the surrounding area and allow the visitors inside the building literally to see the world anew. The intention is to suggest that the brand not only bestows another appearance, but also enables a new way of perceiving the world.

Another brand has already reacted to Prada. In the vicinity of Prada Tokyo, if not directly within eyesight, Tod's has commissioned the architect Toyo Ito with the design of his own shop. Ito picks up where Prada has left off and varies the theme: the building almost imitates the trees lining the street, practically incorporating them into the façade. Here too, just as is the case with the Prada crystal, it is a question of fusing the building with an image – this time of a tree – and of making it unmistakable (fig. 6).

The imitators show that Koolhaas's strategy has stood the test of time. While Japanese fashion *aficionados* could still be seen as recently as the mid-1990s reverently traipsing through the streets of the little Tuscan town of Montevarchi in quest of the mythical roots of the Milanese company, Italian architecture enthusiasts now flock to Tokyo to admire Herzog & de Meuron's epicentre store. The success of the concept is

due not least to the fact that Prada has taken up the theme of speed and uncertainty in the designer and fashion sector, which aims for visual effect. However, it is merely a matter of time before this strategy also reaches its limits. Whether this concept can assert itself against the economic pressure created by brands that do without architecture altogether remains to be seen. The countdown has begun.

1 Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York, A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*, London, 1978 (German ed.: *Delirious New York, Ein retroaktives Manifest für Manhattan*, German translation by Fritz Schneider, Aachen, 1999); Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large*, New York, 1995; *The Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*, ed. Chuihua Judy Chung et al., Cologne, 2001.

2 For the terms 'architectural branding' and 'corporate architecture', see Jons Messedat, *Corporate Architecture. Entwicklung, Konzepte, Strategien*, Stuttgart, 2005.

3 Cynthia Davidson gave a memorable presentation on the recent phenomenon of star architects, using the International Union of Architects' conference held in Barcelona in July 1996 as an example. See Cynthia Davidson, 'Dear Reader', *ANY* 15 ('Memory Inc.'), 1996, p. 5.

4 Rem Koolhaas, 'A Brief History of OMA by Rem Koolhaas', in Rem Koolhaas, *Content*, exh. cat., Berlin and Rotterdam, Cologne, 2004, pp. 44–51, quoted from p. 44.

5 'That insight triggered the birth of AMO – OMA's mirror image – a new organization that proposed, given a situation where built architecture was simply too slow to capture mutating organizations, to explore the possibility of applying architectural thinking in its pure form – liberated from the need for realization.' Rem Koolhaas, 'Goodbye to Hollywood', in Koolhaas 2004 (see note 4), pp. 118–25, quoted from p. 118.

6 See Phyllis Lambert, 'The Seagram Building, New York (1954–58)', in Phyllis Lambert, ed., *Mies in America*, exh. cat., Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, New York, 2001, pp. 391–406.

7 Ibid., p. 406.

8 Herbert Muschamp, 'Opposites Attract', *The New York Times Magazine*, 18.4.1999, p. 92, cited after Lambert 2001 (see note 6), pp. 391–406, quoted from p. 406.

9 Koolhaas 2004 (see note 5), p. 44.

10 Rem Koolhaas, 'Goodbye to Hollywood', in Koolhaas 2004 (see note 5), p. 118.

11 Ibid., p. 121.

12 Dan Wood, 'Almost Famous. The Story of Universal HQ and all that could've been', in Koolhaas 2004 (see note 4), pp. 124–5, quoted from p. 124.

13 Ibid.

14 Jacques Lipchitz and Henry Moore refused to produce sculptures. See Lambert 2001 (see note 6), pp. 397–400.

15 See Philip Ursprung, 'Weisses Rauschen: Elisabeth Diller und Richard Scofidios Blur Building und die räumliche Logik der jüngsten Architektur', *Kritische Berichte, Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften*, 29, no. 3, 2001 *(Event-[Archi]Culture)*, pp. 5–15.

16 Guy Debord, *Die Gesellschaft des Spektakels*, translated from the French by Jean-Jacques Raspaud, Berlin, 1996, paragraph 153, p. 136.

17 See Ilka & Andreas Ruby, Philip Ursprung, *Images. A Picture Book of Architecture*, Munich, 2004.

18 Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York. A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*, new edn, New York, 1994, p. 13.

19 Tilmann Buddensieg, *Industriekultur, Peter Behrens und die AEG 1907–1914*, Berlin, 1979.

20 Sybille Kicherer, *Olivetti. A study of the corporate management of design*, New York, 1990.

21 For the branding and corporate design of Volkswagen, see the doctorate currently being prepared by Claudia Simone Hoff, M.A., Berlin, under the working title 'Corporate Design am

Beispiel Volkswagen' (University of Zurich, Prof. Dr. Stanislaus von Moos).

22 Christian Moueix, in conversation with Philip Ursprung, October 2002.

23 Charles Jencks, 'Open Discussion', *Architectural Design*, 69, 5/6, May–June 1999, pp. 15–17, quoted from p. 15.

24 Rem Koolhaas, 'Introduction', in Rem Koolhaas (OMA/AMO), *Projects for Prada Part 1*, exh. cat., Fondazione Prada, Milano, Milan, 2001, no page.

25 Norbert Daldrop describes architecture as a 'youngster' that has only been named explicitly in connection with corporate identity since the late 1980s. See Norbert Daldrop, *Kompendium Corporate Identity und Corporate Design*, Stuttgart, 1997, p. 58, cited after Messedat 2005 (see note 2), p. 1.

26 'I am, in fact, completely opposed to the idea that a specific building should have an individual character – rather, a universal character which has been determined by the total problem which architecture must strive to solve.' Mies van der Rohe, letter to Cameron Alread et al., 11 May 1960, cited after Lambert 2001 (see note 6), p. 391.

27 Cited after Koolhaas 2004 (see note 4), p. 231.

Summary

The use of architecture to represent corporations is as old as capitalism itself. As New York landmarks, successful examples such as the Woolworth Building, the Chrysler Building and the Seagram Building also remain associated with the companies whose names they bear long after the corporations themselves have disappeared. In the age of globalization, however, one factor has fundamentally changed, namely that of time. Today, corporations can change their faces within a few months, so that architecture, in the words of Rem Koolhaas, has become 'too slow' to react. Many global brands, such as IKEA, can do without architectural design altogether. As Koolhaas emphasizes, architecture can no longer be a portrait of a static corporation, but a means or device with which a brand can constantly be called to mind.

Koolhaas is currently the architect who is exploring this issue in the greatest depth. His strategy for Prada is also an example of efficient and successful architectural branding. His concept of the spectacular epicentre stores serves constantly to redefine the brand and to continue to arouse the curiosity of the clients. Herzog & de Meuron, for example, have not created an effigy of the company with their Prada Tokyo store, but a machine that allows clients and visitors to see the world through new eyes.