

# Buchenwald Memorial

## "Buchenwald. Ostracism and Violence 1937 to 1945"

Memorials are significant places of remembrance. At the same time they are important places of conveying information. The design of the new permanent exhibition in the Buchenwald Memorial deals with the question of how space and form can strengthen and support the contents beyond aesthetics.

The new exhibition "Buchenwald. Ostracism and Violence 1937-1945" is in the former depot building. The design goal of Holzer Kobler Architects was to achieve a change in the perception of the historic building and thus create a physical consciousness that runs parallel to the information conveyed in the exhibition. The intention is that the place Buchwald is made evident in the exhibition and that spatial moments are created in which visitors can become aware of the tragic history of this place. Through the consolidation of large space-forming elements, new rooms are created in the existing space. This creates a "disturbance" within and throughout the entire building.

In the entrance hall, the visitors are confronted with this interference in the form of an inclined angular wall element that cuts into the space from above. This element confronts the rigid, repetitive geometry of the existing building. The form of this new large-scaled element that penetrates through all floors, is based on the existing building itself. Through its dis-location, the new element is set in opposition to the same. Empty spaces are created in-between the existing building and the new element. These spaces are necessary, important and significant as spaces for reflection through which the historical relevance is given contemporary meaning.

The conveyance of information in the exhibition is primarily based on original objects, documents and photographs that are arranged in cluster-like display cases. The form and the position within the space of these "clusters" create new visual alignments and irritate the central perspective of the long drawn-out space. To avoid a possible musealization, the large objects are consciously not displayed in cabinets but placed freely within the space. The prisoner biographies, arranged in light-vertical frames within the space, create the possibility of a contemplative encounter between visitors and the stories of individuals or groups of prisoners.

The stringency of thematically structured exhibition is interrupted by three spatially individual Realienkabinette. In these walk-in auratic spaces a change of perspective takes place: selected themes such as uniforming, malnutrition and self-assertion are explained and intensified through the objects.

With the liberation of the camp a historical and artistic turning point takes place in the exhibition. This is symbolised by the "liberation" wall. The wall is a floor to ceiling display case having only one small and decentralized passage. The room behind the wall is defined by five horizontal elements that change the flow and pace of movement of the visitors. The absence of real objects and the use of medial surfaces conveys the reception of the history of Buchenwald and its meaning for today and the future.

# Facts / Impressum

Place:

Buchenwald Memorial  
99427 Weimar-Buchenwald  
Germany  
[www.buchenwald.de](http://www.buchenwald.de)

Opening: April 17th 2016

Exhibition Area: 2.000 qm

Client: Stiftung Gedenkstaetten Buchenwald und Mittelbau-Dora

Curation: Prof. Dr. Volkhart Knigge, Direktor der Stiftung

Gedenkstaetten Buchenwald

und Mittelbau-Dora

Exhibition Design, Scenography, Medial-/and Light: Holzer Kobler

Architekturen, Zurich/Berlin

Graphic Concept: 2xGoldstein, Rheinstetten

Consulting Exhibition lighting: Lichtvision Design & Engineering

GmbH, Berlin

Display Cases: koerling interiors GmbH & Co. KG, Kassel

Spatial Element: Barth Innenausbau KG, Brixen

Medial: VST GmbH, Saalfeld

Graphic Production, Objekteinrichtung: m.o.l.i.t.o.r. ART IN

MOTION, Berlin

Medial Production: Nils Menrad Film- und Medienproduktion,

Karlsruhe