

# ASSOCIATION KMD

## Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | The Forestay Museum of Art

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### THE KMD HAS A NEW EXHIBITION BUILDING

Inauguration, May 14, 2016, 6 to 8 pm

Standing on a foundation post that raises this valuable object and its contents safely from the ground and to a comfortable height for viewing, the new building of the KMD – Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | The Forestay Museum of Art, designed by the young Swiss architect Jonathan Banz, is distinguished not least by its shiny copper dome. A thin shell construction of spun copper sheet—the traces of its machining have been left visible—spans a central room like the roof of a church or some other sacred building. Besides a top eyepiece, a panorama window affords the viewer a complete view of the exhibition room and, depending on the viewer's position, lets the surrounding landscape serve as a constantly changing background for the exhibited artworks. Mirror-inverted beneath the main room is another copper hemisphere that encloses a second room, thus focusing the building vertically toward a central axis. A single window in the basement reminds one of the porthole of a submarine through which the visitor can gaze into the arranged interior of the small exhibition room.

The circular floor plan and the large cylindrical window of the exhibition rooms invite both artists and curators to create ever new arrangements with variable partitions and, in so doing, to reflect upon ever new definitions and perceptions of “exterior” and “interior”. To this end, the museum building can be completely dismantled into its component parts. Properly reassembled—by means of a specially developed connecting system of wood, chromium steel and copper—the prefabricated elements form an absolutely watertight enclosure.

With the dazzling reflections on its shiny copper dome, the rather abstract form of the new KMD awakens associations with industrial objects, with, for example, an antique diving helmet or a hurricane lamp that warns ships on Lake Geneva in stormy weather. “Who found it?” the building seems to be asking us. For all these awakened associations, the new KMD is a precisely designed and engineered work that illuminates the relationship between architecture and object.

The definition of an object begins with its sensory or mental perception. Kaolin, feldspar and quartz are fired to make porcelain and, within the milieu and scope of social norms, anatomical studies and industrial mass-production, this material serves to manufacture an object that is clearly perceived as a urinal, and this object in turn, on the decision of a certain Marcel Duchamp, has been declared a work of art. Architecture, at first glance, has nothing to do with this perspective of the object as the genesis of art. And yet architecture itself is composed from a whole diversity of single objects: foundations, walls, windows, roofs and domes that can be clearly recognized and designated. Indeed, a finished building is, in our perception of it, often broken down into its individual



*The new KMD at its location in Cully*

component parts: the facade in front of which we are standing, the room in which we are gathered ...

The new building of the KMD has been so designed that the museum itself is presented as an object, thus blurring the boundaries between exhibition room and sculpture. This robust building has the presence of a cultural institution and as such invites the visitor to take a fresh look at the architected world about him.

Adrian Pöllinger

*Jonathan Banz was born in Lucerne in 1987. From 2007 until 2014 he studied architecture at the EPF in Lausanne and at the ETH in Zürich, where he qualified under Prof. Tom Emerson. Since 2015 he has been a professorial assistant in the Department of Architecture and Art under Karin Sander at the ETH in Zürich and also works as a freelance architect in various consortiums.*

*Responsible for the actual realization of the project were Urs Jordi, Winterthur and the Kunstgiesserei (art casting foundry) in St. Gallen (metal components), the Latreille Foundation in Cully (wooden components), the Poschinger glass manufactory in Frauenau, Germany (glass cylinder) and Yannick Soller in Neuchâtel (electronics).*