

## Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus



### Location

Gustaf Gründgens Platz 1, Düsseldorf, Germany

### Built

Construction period: January 2018 – October 2020  
Public Procurement Procedure 2017  
GFA: 19.000 m<sup>2</sup>  
Programme: Refurbishment

## ingenhoven architects responsible for the refurbishment of this iconic building in Düsseldorf

ingenhoven architects, in close cooperation with the Department for the Protection of Historic Buildings, are responsible for the refurbishment of the Schauspielhaus theater in Düsseldorf. The building, which was constructed between 1965 and 1970 to a design by the architect Bernard Pfau, and the Dreischeibenhaus high-rise building, together constitute one of the most important ensembles of post-war architecture in Germany. It is extraordinarily notable from the point of view of theater history, architecture, and politics.

The Schauspielhaus theater was listed as a historic monument in 1998. Its current condition, however, does not comply with the requirements for a modern theater. In addition, faulty construction details during the building period have led to potentially hazardous damage and faults in the facade and roof. The atmospheric quality of the interior and exterior is in need of an upgrade to modern standards for both visitors and employees of the establishment.

The principle objective of the refurbishment is to re-establish the appearance of the Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus theater, which is listed as a historic monument, in its original 1970

version. Overall, the historic building fabric is to be preserved and upgraded to current technical standards only to the extent possible. The reopening has been scheduled for the middle of 2019.

The design remit includes the refurbishment of the roof and facade and the refurbishment of all areas accessible to the public, including lighting and furnishing. Only the two theater halls are excluded, because the great hall was refurbished by the architect Jörg Friedrich (pfp architects) in 2010/11. The principle of careful refurbishment also applies to the restoration of the partly over-painted or over-formed fair-faced concrete walls.

The repair of the roof, or rather roofs, is one of the essential parts of the work. Thanks to the sculptural shape of the building, there are flat roofs at several levels, as well as a gently sloping tent roof above the fly tower. The technically correct and appropriate new roof structure complies with modern thermal insulation standards whilst preserving the appearance and construction height of the original. Extensive greening of the roofs will be introduced as part of the refurbishment.

In technical terms, the facade of the Schauspielhaus theater presents an enormous challenge. Some of the steel profile panels are up to 16 meters long, are fitted without butt joints, and are attached to the building structure using a specially developed substructure and a special clip produced by Thyssen for this purpose. Owing to these construction details, a refurbishment of the facade is not advisable. Instead, it will be necessary to completely replace the metal facade and substructure, including fixing clips. The visual appearance intended by Bernhard Pfau can be fully replicated using today's technical means of construction and color analysis.

Another notable intervention is the demolition of the subsequently added ticket office and the construction of a new lobby in front of the existing main entrance. The main ticket office will be relocated to the foyer. The other functions of the existing front extension are to be relocated to a new pavilion on the forecourt. The unique and elegant glass/steel construction of the main entrance facade will be retained, although it will be upgraded in terms of technology and paint finish.

The exterior of the immediate surroundings of the Schauspielhaus theater will be redesigned and upgraded by

renewing the delivery zone and the artists' entrance. This involves the construction of a visual screen (in concrete) between the artists' entrance and the delivery/disposal zone. Furthermore, a visual merger with Gustaf-Gründgens-Platz is achieved by introducing a new floor finish to both areas. The idea is to continue the design around the theater up to the Hofgarten public park, and to more strongly integrate this area using planting concepts and lighting installations.

## Building history

The Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus theater was founded in 1904 by Louise Dumont and Gustav Lindemann as a private theater with an associated acting school, and soon became one of the leading theaters of the German Empire and, later, of the Weimar Republic. During the Second World War, the theater building—which had been designed by Bernhard Sehring in 1905—was completely destroyed; in 1951, the theater was re-established in what at the time was called the Operettenhaus (operetta house) as an independent institution of the City of Düsseldorf. Gustaf Gründgens was in charge as general manager; he was one of the best-known students of Dumont and Lindemann before the war. Over many years, the Schauspielhaus theater rose to become one of the most important German-speaking stages in Europe and also retained this position for a long time under Gründgens' successor, Karl-Heinz Stroux. This is evident from the numerous invitations to the annual Berlin theater meeting which, until the fall of the wall in 1990, was always considered to be the most important cultural event in the world of theater in the Federal Republic. Well-known actors and directors who dominated the post-war era were under contract here, including Elisabeth Bergner, Paula Wessely, Maria Wimmer, Ernst Deutsch, Fritz Kortner, and Bernhard Minetti; Wolfgang Langhoff moved from Düsseldorf to Berlin in order to found the Langhoff theater dynasty. The regional, national, and European success of the establishment led, from 1965, to the design of the new building, for which Bernhard Pfau was commissioned after succeeding in several stages of the competition.

## Awards, Nominations

2022

Deutscher Fassadenpreis für Vorgehängte Hinterlüftete Fassaden 2022 - Recognition  
Deutscher Fassadenpreis 2022 - Recognition  
Architizer A+ Award 2022 - Finalist  
International Architecture Awards 2022 - Honorable Mention

2021

DAM-Preis 2022 - Shortlist

## Team

Client – refurbishment roof and facade  
State Capital Düsseldorf

Client – refurbishment public areas  
Neue Schauspiel GmbH

Architect  
ingenhoven architects, Düsseldorf

Team ingenhoven architects  
Christoph Ingenhoven, Oliver Ingenhoven, Max Grams, Peter Jan van Ouwkerk, Veronika Przybyla, Vincent Jeanson, Anette Büsing, Dariusz Szczygielski, Ursula Koeker, Ulrich Hochgürtel

Project management – refurbishment roof and facade  
Hahlhege Gesellschaft für Projektsteuerung & Controlling mbH

Project management – refurbishment public areas  
G + N Consult Baumanagement GmbH

Structural design – refurbishment roof and facade  
Werner Sobek AG

Structural design – refurbishment public areas  
VDS Statik und konstruktiver Ingenieurbau

Facade design – refurbishment roof and facade  
Werner Sobek AG

Technical Building Services  
HTW - Hetzel, Tor-Westen + Partner Ingenieurgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG

Fire protection – refurbishment roof and facade and public areas  
IfBW Ingenieurbüro für Brandschutz Wuppertal GmbH

Lighting design – refurbishment roof and facade and public areas  
Tropp Lighting Design GmbH

Interior design – refurbishment public areas  
**ingenhoven architects, Düsseldorf**

Construction supervision – refurbishment roof and facade and  
public areas  
**ingenhoven architects, Düsseldorf**

Building physics – refurbishment public areas  
**ISRW Dr.-Ing. Klapdor GmbH**

Building physics – refurbishment roof and facade  
**Werner Sobek AG**

Photographer  
**Hans-Georg Esch (HGEsch Photography)**

General planner  
**ingenhoven architects, Düsseldorf**

Colour analysis and consulting  
**Farb-Bau Prof. Friedrich Schmuck**