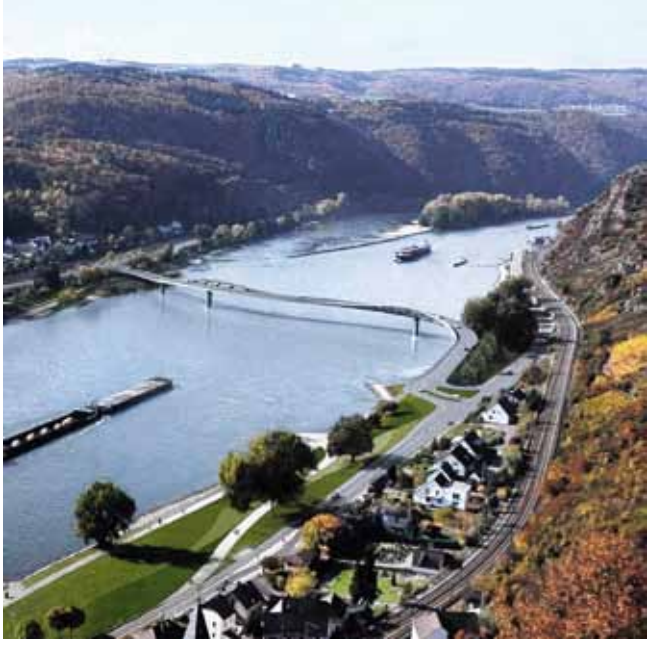
GERMANY

Project for a Bridge in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley

Even before the Upper Middle Rhine Valley was inscribed on the World Heritage List (2002) there had been plans to connect the federal highways B 9 and B 42 on both sides of the river by means of a bridge. This was also intended to connect the valley and the neighbouring districts with motorways A 3 and A 61 as well as with Hahn Airport. As the valley was already troubled enough by the north-south car and railway traffic and out of consideration for the visual integrity of this quite unique cultural landscape, the project was postponed for the time being. In the following years, in spite of ICOMOS Germany's concerns (see the comprehensive statement of 26 November 2007 in *Heritage at Risk 2006/07*, pp. 67–69) and the negative statement of an ICOMOS/UNESCO mission of February 2008, new suggestions and expert reports on various potential sites for a bridge were presented. Now, the government of Rhineland-Palatinate is trying everything possible to go ahead with the construction of a bridge between Fellen and Wellmich on the basis of the winning design of an architectural competition that was presented in Berlin on 13 May 2009. Allegedly, this is an elegant S-shaped construction, "harmoniously blending into the river landscape". Although the position has been moved downstream and no longer directly affects the famous Loreley rock, the bridge will nonetheless threaten just as much as the former projects the visual integrity of the World Heritage, which is of particularly high quality on the right side of the Rhine. The town of Wellmich, for instance, is characterised by a well preserved historic structure and accentuated by the medieval church and its imposing steeple. Steep precipices and the castle "Maus" tower above the town. All in all, Wellmich is a fine example of the qualities that define the World Heritage "Upper Middle Rhine Valley". Any bridge in front of this silhouette would damage and devalue the World Heritage. Particularly critical are the out-of-scale measurements of this bridge construction, which will span the entire river and have a considerable height. What's more, the bridge would be very close to the Ehrental nature reserve.

Upper Middle Rhine Valley, winning design for a bridge, computer simulation, 2009 (photo: Badische Zeitung)



At any rate, the project would severely harm this river landscape characterised by the special geographical situation and by the fact that for centuries no bridge has been necessary. The project would also ruin the traditional Rhine ferries that ought to be seen as a crucial component of the World Heritage site. For centuries, these ferries – in the same way as the other ships – have been part of the Rhine and thus witnesses to the cultural and traffic history of the World Heritage site. Surely, the construction of the bridge between Fellen and Wellmich would render four ferries (Boppard, St. Goarshausen / St. Goar, Kaub, and Lorch) obsolete. Creating just one crossing of the river by means of a bridge will mean that many people in the region will have to travel further and that outside-traffic participants (schoolchildren, cyclists and pedestrians) will have difficulties in getting from one side to the other. Additional bus transfers will be necessary. The federal state government has pointed out that the limited ferry service in the evening and at night is a great disadvantage compared with a bridge crossing. Although this may be right, the situation could be improved by integrating the ferries into the local public transport network – and paying compensation to the ferry operators for providing service outside peak hours. Sadly, according to the ferry operators the government has not taken up contact with them and has not made any attempt of a reconciliation of interests.

The three ferries in Boppard, St. Goarshausen / St. Goar and Kaub together transport 1 100 vehicles across the river per day. As they don't work at all to full capacity the ferry services could be intensified relatively easily, if there was enough demand. It remains unclear why the federal state government is predicting that approximately 7 000 vehicles will use the bridge every day. This leads to the assumption that the bridge is preferred by the government to help businesses, especially in the Rhein-Lahn district on the right side of the river, reach the A 61 faster, and not so much to improve the situation for the people living in the Middle Rhine Valley and for visitors to the World Heritage site. In fact, the ferries are not the main problem for businesses in the region. Instead, it is the inadequately developed roads leading from the Rhine Valley (Fellen) to the A 61 through narrow towns and with railway underpasses that are too low. So far, the government has avoided any discussion about the necessary development of roads in connection with the bridge project. Independently of the threat to the visual integrity of the World Heritage there are many aspects that speak for the retention and further development of a decentralised ferry service instead of a permanent bridge.

Several times, ICOMOS Germany commented negatively on the expertises by the RWTH Aachen University (commissioned by the Rhineland Palatinate Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture): *Evaluation of the Integrity of the World Heritage Property 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley* and *Traffic Study to Evaluate Bridge, Tunnel and Ferry Connection Options for the Middle Rhine Valley at St. Goar* (dated 8 January 2010). In this context, ICOMOS also criticised that the evaluation contradicts earlier environmental compatibility assessments and softens the problems down. In an extensive traffic analysis of 1 June 2010 the Verkehrsclub Deutschland explained much more clearly than the expertise by the Chair and Institute for Urban and Transport Planning (ISB) / RWTH Aachen the negative impact of the planned bridge on the environment, climate and life in the Middle Rhine Valley. In fact, the *Traffic Study* by ISB that culminates in the ab-

surd statement that "psychological, cultural and historic reasons argue against a ferry" can easily be disproved. This is shown by the following statement, written by the Vice President of Europa Nostra:

Comments on the traffic study of the ISB/RWTH Aachen (January 2010) concerning the planned Rhine crossing in the World Heritage zone Upper Middle Rhine Valley

1. Background and remit
In the introduction to the study of the ISB of January 2010 there is no reference to tourism at the Upper Middle Rhine being the main employer and potentially the most important source of income. Instead, the aim of this study is a general improvement of the structural situation, i. e. independently of the consequences for tourism. Therefore, the specific consequences of the alternative crossings on tourism and the hotel and gastronomy sectors are hardly or not at all considered.

2. Efficiency and inclusion of a ferry connection in the urban planning development
For a new bridge near Wellmich 7000 vehicles per day are forecasted. In order to cope with that traffic volume three ferry docks with a total of four ferries would be necessary. These ferry capacities are the basis for the subsequent comparative calculation. In this context, no mention is made of the fact that nowadays at the four existing ferry docks only a total of 1100 vehicles are transported per day, i.e. that the actual demand for east-west crossings is in fact only 15% of what has been calculated. The demand forecast in the study is therefore totally exaggerated. This can only be explained by expecting considerably expanded east-west traffic, for which roads would have to be either built or widened. Incidentally, the consequences on the outstanding universal value of this World Heritage site have not been explicitly assessed.

3. Economic framework
For bridge and tunnel the annuity method is applied, while the ferry calculation is based on full costing.

This calculation is incorrect as far as the ferries are concerned. These ferries are privately owned; therefore the individual operator carries the receipts and expenditures. Consequently, the taxpayers do not have to pay for the ferries. As a benchmark for the bridge and tunnel costs only a public grant could be used, which would enable the ferry owners to transport the vehicles around the clock and more frequently. However, these costs that ought to have been assessed for comparison were not defined in the traffic study on the grounds that one cannot subsidise one ferry without harming the other operators. Nevertheless, it would have been correct and important to assess the subsidisation of all ferry operators.
Based on the rough estimate that each ferry receives subsidies of 100,000 euros, this alternative would be much less of a burden for the taxpayers than a firm crossing (see below).

Since the basic approach to define the ferry costs was incorrect from the start (and thus also the result), it is almost irrelevant to point out a second major mistake in the study: The study is based on the assumption that all four ferries will be new acquisitions and that, as the basis of the annuity calculation, they will last 25 years on average. In reality, however, these ferries are in operation much longer. The ferries presently in operation on the Upper Middle Rhine are between 28 and 100 years old. The annuities (which the taxpayers would not have to pay) are calculated much too high in the study.

The opposite is done when it comes to the costs for the bridge. In this case 40 million euros are mentioned. The widening of existing roads and new road construction to cope with additional traffic along the Rhine and – very important – in the east-west direction through the narrow side valleys have not been calculated. Adding these inevitable extra costs of a double-digit million figure would show that the bridge or tunnel alternative is even more uneconomical.

4. Operational restrictions of the ferry connections
According to the speaker of the Deutscher Fährverband the five lost operation days mentioned in the study have been calculated much too high. In reality, the days the ferries on the Middle Rhine cannot operate amount to one per year. In addition, failures to operate because of floods are immediately connected to flooded roads along the river and therefore also affect the bridge alternative. Moreover, the study has shown that in the past 10 years climate change has not led to higher, but in fact to considerably lower water levels – contrary to what is said at another point of the study.

5. Differences of acceptance between firm crossings and ferries
Here the incomprehensible statement can be found that "psychological cultural-historical reasons argue against ferries". The fact is, however, that for centuries the ferries have been an integral part of life along the Middle Rhine and of the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage site.

6. Changes of accessibility
For this purpose, the journey times from different places on the left and right banks of the Rhine, including far-away places like Nastätten and Emmelshausen, are compared on the basis of a firm crossing and the existing ferries. In this context, the bridge connection was incorrectly positioned between St Goar and St Goarshausen and not between Wellmich and Fellen. Only this incorrect position of the ferry has resulted in a marginal advantage for the bridge alternative.

Conclusion: In practically all analysed fields the study comes to false results. A profound analysis and objective evaluation would instead clearly confirm the advantages of preserving and even expanding the ferry connections.

The inadequate presentation in Brasilia is a serious matter, because the study from the world-renowned RWTH Aachen was presented to UNESCO by high-ranking representatives of the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate and served as a basis of decision-making. Only because of this study a master plan for the bridge alternative was commissioned.

This unfortunate situation that seriously threatens the World Heritage can only be remedied if a comprehensive revision of the study on the basis of a considerably altered remit is carried out. The result of such a revision should be made available to UNESCO by 1 February 2011 together with the requested report on the development of a master plan.

Sayn, 5 October 2010

Alexander Fürst zu Sayn-Wittgenstein
Vice President of Europa Nostra, The Hague
Chairman of Europa Nostra Germany, Bonn
President of the Deutsche Burgenvereinigung, Braubach/Rhein

At an upcoming press conference the Action Alliance Upper Middle Rhine Valley will be presenting a study on "Das Fährwesen und seine Perspektive im UNESCO-Welterbe Oberes Mittelrheintal" ("The ferries and their future in the UNESCO World Heritage Upper Middle Rhine Valley"), commissioned by the Rheinischer Verein für Denkmalpflege und Landschaftsschutz. In future, the Action Alliance initiated by the Rheinischer Verein, which ICOMOS Germany has joined together with Europa Nostra, the environmental organisation BUND, the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz, the Deutsche Burgenvereinigung, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, the Rheinkolleg, and CIVILSCAPE, will be coordinating the protests against the disfigurement of the Upper Middle Rhine by the bridge project.

ICOMOS Germany

Final Attempt to Save the Rheinfelden Power Station

The power station at Rheinfelden, built in 1898, dates back to the pioneer era of electricity generation. It is situated on the Rhine, linking the German and Swiss towns of the same name of Rheinfelden. According to the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH), this power station, which is on the monument list of the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, is an outstanding example of industrial history:

From the point of view of TICCIH there is no doubt that the Rheinfelden Powerstation is one of the most important monuments of the world's hydropower heritage. Together with the Adams Powerhouse at the Niagara Falls in the United States, built nearly at the same time as Rheinfelden, it is worldwide one of the last examples of the early days of this kind of innovative hydropower production at the end of the 19th century. The Rheinfelden Powerstation with its 50 Hz-technology not only set the standard for international development within the field of the production and transportation of electricity over far distances but also became a pioneer in the field of the use of renewable energy. Moreover, with its partly preserved and still functional original equipment it is a technological monument of great historical value which might become a World Heritage site in the future.

(Patrick Martin, President of TICCIH, in a letter of 21 April 2010 to ICOMOS Germany)

As the approval of the plans for the new construction of a power station in combination with ecological compensatory measures requires the demolition of the old power station situated 800 m downstream, the demolition of this historic industrial monument has been planned for years. Nevertheless, ICOMOS Germany, ICOMOS Switzerland and TICCIH have repeatedly spoken up for the conservation of this building, most recently in a letter of 26 April 2010 by Michael Petzet to the Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg, Stefan Mappus. During the meeting of the Advisory

Rheinfelden Power Station
(photos: K. Beretta, November 2010)

Committee of ICOMOS in Dublin the two national committees and the International Scientific Committee for 20th Century Heritage (ISC 20C) made a final – sadly unsuccessful – attempt with a request for a moratorium:

On the occasion of the Advisory and Executive Committee Meetings of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), held in Dublin from October 27th to 29th 2010, the European National Committees came together for a Europe Group Meeting, which served to assess special problems. The delegates discussed with deep concern the developments of the Rheinfelden power station and, due to the following reasons, decided to request the Swiss government, the government of Baden-Württemberg and the Energiedienst AG to accept a moratorium of two years. This appeal is also supported by TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage) and the ISC20C (International Scientific Committee for 20th Century Heritage).

This request is based on considerations of the above-mentioned persons and institutions

- *assessing the outstanding value of the Rheinfelden power station on an international level,*
- *taking notice of the newly built facility and the plans to demolish the historical power station in order to create better natural conditions for the river and its banks,*
- *being aware that a balance between the public interest of maintaining the important historic remains and the public interest of assuring an intact natural environment has not yet been found,*
- *bearing in mind the high potential of historic industrial constructions for the public awareness and the representation of an enterprise,*
- *considering that there is no comprehensible urgency to demolish the historical constructions.*

During the two year period of the moratorium, a study should be undertaken with the goal of finding harmony between the cultural and the natural heritage. Many projects in Switzerland and Germany have proved that sustainable solutions linking built and natural environment are feasible, and – for both concerns – fruitful on the long term.

2 November 2010
Wilfried Lipp
Vice-President for Europe
ICOMOS International

Unfortunately, this attempt to save the historic Rheinfelden power station was also rejected in a letter by the Energiedienst AG of 24 November 2010.

Protests against “Stuttgart 21”

As part of the project “Stuttgart 21”, which has been in the making since the 1990s, the Deutsche Bahn AG (German Railways) has been planning an underground through station. Moving the tracks underground and building a new city quarter on the land behind the station will mean a huge change to the historic urban landscape. Of the central station, a listed monument, only the middle section with its landmark tower will remain as an entrance building, while the side wings will be demolished. Stuttgart Central Station, Built between 1911 and 1929 according to designs by Paul Bonatz

Stuttgart Central Station by night

Stuttgart Central Station, demolition of the north wing (photo: R. Vogler)

Stuttgart Central Station, demolition of the north wing (photo: V. Eidloth)

(1877–1956) and Friedrich Eugen Scholer is a masterpiece of early Modernism. Not only Docomomo and ICOMOS have protested on a national and international level against the defacement of one of the most important buildings by Paul Bonatz. In 2010, the inhabitants of Stuttgart demonstrated and marched against these plans nearly every week. The protests escalated, when on 25 August 2010 the demolition works at the north wing started and several old trees in the Schlossgarten were cut down.

Masters' Houses in Dessau: Controversial Completion

The ensemble of the Masters' Houses in Dessau, an area in Ebertallee with the twin houses Klee/Kandinsky, Schlemmer/Muche, Feininger/Moholy-Nagy, and Walter Gropius' house (Direktionsgebäude) as front building is a world-famous icon of the Modern Movement. In spite of the destruction of the Moholy-Nagy and Gropius Houses in the Second World War the Bauhaus was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996. Before the inscription, the Masters' Houses had been restored back to their original state on the basis of documents and detailed cross-section analyses in the interiors. After the Bauhaus had been closed in 1932 the buildings had been severely altered in accordance with the Nazi ideology, especially on the outside. While the plot of the war-damaged Moholy-Nagy House remained empty, on top of the completely preserved basement of the Gropius House the so-called Haus Emmer was built in 1956, a simple saddle-roofed house reflecting in a certain way the handling of the – not very popular – Bauhaus heritage in the GDR at that time. After perfect restoration of the Masters' Houses in the 1990s, ideas came up to fill the war-related gaps in the eastern part of the ensemble and to reconstruct the surrounding wall as well as Mies van der Rohe's "Trinkhalle", a small building torn down in 1970.

Our report in *Heritage at Risk 2006/07* described the state of 2007 and named three different possibilities (compare *Heritage at Risk 2006/07*, p. 69):

- *The reconstruction of the state at the time of the Bauhaus respecting the conditions of the Operational Guidelines: "Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture".*
- *The erection of buildings which are recognisably from today and which should not interfere with the visual integrity of the ensemble.*
- *Maintaining the present state.*

"Maintaining the present state" would have been no problem since "Haus Emmer", regarded as an authentic testimony to the architecture of the 1950s in the GDR, could have been preserved. However, apart from the understandable wish to reconstruct the ensemble's visual integrity there was the urgent request to create various facilities for visitors (rooms for events and exhibitions, a café, etc) – also to relieve the restored Masters' Houses from unnecessary usage. As far as the construction of new buildings for new usages was concerned, the usual contrast buildings could be expected from an architectural competition. In the case of the obvious solution "reconstruction of the state at the time of the Bauhaus", one had to reckon with hysterical animosities in Germany against any kind of reconstruction, a widespread attitude at that time not just among architects but also among conservationists (compare *Denkmalpflege statt Attrappenkult / Gegen die Rekonstruktion von Baudenkmälern*, Bauwelt Fundamente, vol. 146, Berlin 2010). Under these circumstances, ICOMOS Germany warned against the results to be expected (see H@R 2006/07, p. 70). The winner of the first competition, a Swiss architect's office, failed to meet the difficult requirements of the task. The architects had started with the fancy idea of choosing black for the new buildings in order to distinguish them from the old buildings. Recently, a new competition for the "urban repair of the Masters' Houses ensemble" was won by the architect's office Bruno Fioretti Marquez Architekten from Berlin. In some respect, this design is an improvement of the previous winning design. Nevertheless, ICOMOS Germany regards this as a case of Reactive Monitoring (cf. Introduction, p. 13) and for the following reasons urgently advises to present the plans to the World Herit-

Dessau, the preserved basement of Walter Gropius' house (Direktionsgebäude) and above Haus Emmer (to be demolished) (photo: M. Pz., 2008)

Garage at Walter Gropius' house (photo: M. Pz., 2008)

age Centre of UNESCO in Paris (see art. 172 of the Operational Guidelines).

According to the new project, the ensemble will be amended by completing the twin house Feininger/Moholy-Nagy and by erecting a new Gropius House at the site of Haus Emmer (to be demolished) above the preserved basement; furthermore, by reconstructing the surrounding wall, including the Trinkhalle. On the outside, the measurements and cubic volumes of the ensemble's components will therefore be preserved. The solution found for the basement of the director's building is to be welcomed: the bearing capacity of the basement can be strengthened sufficiently for the new building without an extra concrete ceiling that would change the proportions. Consequently, the original condition of the rooms in the basement, including Gropius' wine cellar can be preserved. However, the plan to install toilets in the garage, preserved in its original condition, must be rejected.

The ruthless handling of the quite remarkable garage is a matter of mandatory usage that already affected the winning project of the first competition. In the meantime, this mandatory usage no longer applies, as the City of Dessau has found another perfectly suitable and centrally located plot, near the Seven Columns and the Masters' Houses, for the requested exhibition and visitors' centre of the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation. This centre is an urgently needed facility for visitors to the Bauhaus and the chances that it will be implemented soon are good. Under these circumstances, it seems the ensemble of the Masters' Houses and its integrity and authenticity will be compromised if the plans for these additional buildings continue to focus on their use as a visitors' centre. The duplex-half Moholy-Nagy, which is practically identical with the duplex-halves Muche and Kandinsky reconstructed in their original form in the 1990s (the only difference being that the Moholy-Nagy dining room has two windows, while the others have one), could serve to commemorate this important artist in the sense of the authentic spirit. This also applies to the Gropius House, where some of the original interiors are documented by historic photos. According to the new project, the idea is to preserve the historic room layout only in some fragments ("Restskulpturen"), while creating a gutted space where "reversible" wooden constructions are installed. Incidentally, the discussions on the critical matter of reversibility of two years ago, with contributions from ICOMOS Germany and our colleague Christiane Schmückle-Mollard as advisor for UNESCO, seem to have been entirely forgotten. This applies in particular to the absolutely necessary demand: "All constructional and technical possibilities for a later reconstruction (windows, doors, staircases) must be created" (provision of the advisory board of 11 November 2008). It is also to be expected that the concept for the exterior of the new buildings will be found incompatible with the authentic design of the ensemble of the Masters' Houses, because according to the rather nebulous architectural concept of "Unschärfe" (blur or state of being out of focus) the exterior is to be inspired by the blurred character of old photos (suggestion of windows as translucent openings, etc), while doing without all architectural details typical of the Bauhaus era (handrails, window frames, roofs, etc).

Before facts will be created in Dessau with this 3.1 million euro project that due to the frequently changing ideas of usage will most likely soon be outdated again, ICOMOS wishes to refer to the authentic values defined in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, also valid for partial or total reconstructions. We hope the matter of "blur" that seems hardly compatible with the authentic spirit of the Bauhaus will soon vanish into thin air. The famous ensemble of the Masters' Houses should be preserved for future generations "in the full richness of its authenticity".

Michael Petzet

Junkers Ensemble in Dessau under Serious Threat

In a letter of 22 March 2010 to Klemens Koschig, the mayor of Dessau, ICOMOS Germany protested against the city's plan to tear down two buildings of the Junkers factory that are part of the Junkalor grounds. These are the only remaining buildings of

The Hugo Junkers-Kaloriferwerk, on the left the administrative building (photo: Verein Industriekultur Hugo Junkers)

Modular steel member system hall at the Hugo Junkers-Kaloriferwerk (photo: Verein Industriekultur Hugo Junkers)

the production site erected by the aviation pioneer Hugo Junkers (1859–1935). ICOMOS Germany thus joins DOCOMOMO Germany in its appeal to save these industrial buildings:

DOCOMOMO Germany has observed the recent events concerning the listed Junkers ensemble on the ground of the former Hugo Junkers-Kaloriferwerke in Dessau with alarming concern. Although these are monuments of modern architecture whose significance extends far beyond the city of Dessau, we are facing the fact that firms have already been contracted to carry out not only the demolition of the surrounding production halls, but also the demolition of both monuments. (…) Hugo Junkers is famous as a pioneer of the aircraft construction and as an innovative entrepreneur. The two listed buildings of the Junkers factories are important milestones, both in the history of Dessau and the industrial history of Germany. The modular steel member system hall, developed and built here in 1927 and the modern administrative building from 1934–36 are unique documents for the operations of Hugo Junkers and also for an important part of the industrial history, here to be seen in their original, authentic location.

Both buildings are examples of a locally anchored, but in the case of the modular steel member system hall also internationally emitting modernism. Although they always stood in the shadow of nearby Bauhaus and the Meisterhäuser in Dessau, they need to be seen in this context. They are striking examples of the architectural and industrial history of modernism. In addition, they are essential in generating identity for the city of Dessau. The modular steel member system hall was developed and built at the Hugo Junkers-Kaloriferwerk and exported worldwide from here, for example to Sao Paulo to build a railway station, to Los Angeles to build a Coca-Cola factory, to London to build a hangar, to New York to build parking lots. The administrative building has a steel skeleton with hung up floors in the American fashion, with brick cladding on the facade. (…)
(see also http://www.docomomo.de/attachments/120__Support_needed_JUNKERS_Dessau.pdf)

Especially in Dessau, where one should be aware of the close relation between these outstanding examples of industrial heritage and the ideas of the Bauhaus, such a demolition would be incomprehensible. For the time being, the city has deferred the demolition, because it hopes for investors and for a concept developed by the "Industriekultur Hugo Junkers" association (see *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* of 9 June 2010).

M. Pz.

Hanover, old plenary hall building designed by Dieter Oesterlen, 1962 (photo: Hannoversche Zeitung)

Hanover, Protests against Conversion of the Parliament Building

The question how to deal with the architecture built after the Second World War is a current topic that was also discussed at the workshop of ICOMOS Germany and ICOMOS Poland in cooperation with DOCOMOMO during the *denkmal 2010* conservation fair in Leipzig ("Architecture of the Second Half of the 20th Century / Studies and Protection", Leipzig, 18 November 2010). Not only in Germany there are conflicts concerning buildings from the 1950s and 1960s that are already on the monument lists. A current example is the opposition in Hanover against the demolition of the old

Hanover, model of planned new plenary hall building

plenary hall, decided in March 2010 by the parliament of Lower Saxony, and the action "to preserve this building highly relevant for the history of democracy in Lower Saxony". This building and its plenary hall, both designed by Dieter Oesterlen and erected at the site of a destroyed wing of the former Leine Castle (opened on 11 September 1962), is actually a protected monument. In connection with a moratorium for the planned new building (result of a competition) there is now hope that Oesterlen's building can be saved by means of a referendum.

Lutheran Community Centre in Leverkusen-Opladen Threatened

Leverkusen-Opladen, Lutheran community centre (photo: C. Machat)

Similar to so many church buildings especially of the post-war period that have been abandoned due to financial constraints of the church administrations, the Lutheran community centre in Leverkusen-Opladen had never been listed and evaluated by the conservation department. Only after the centre was closed down in June 2009, the municipal monument administration suggested a site visit, in the course of which the monument quality of the design and the authentic state of the building from 1954–55 were identified. Particularly interesting is the way the architect Georg Schollmayer solved the difficulty of having to accommodate the various functions of a community centre on such a small plot of land. The bell tower between kindergarten and new buildings is the connecting and also dominating element of the overall concept. In front of the church hall, positioned in the north, the young people's hall and the curved, semi-circular connecting room to the kindergarten lead to the main entrance. All construction details, such as the flat roofs, the rectangular windows and the curved canopy above the main entrance are characteristic features of the 1950s. These characteristics can also be found inside, on the doors, windows with etched glass, the floor coverings, and in the design of the staircase, etc.

For almost two years, the suggestion of the conservation department to list this building and consequently look for a new use was not implemented, because the Lutheran community was more interested in selling the real estate, including the demolition of the buildings. However, in November 2010 the community centre was finally added to the monument list, a decision against which the Lutheran community has filed a lawsuit. Therefore, the future of this building complex remains uncertain.

Christoph Machat

Bonn, Beethovenhalle, aerial view

The Beethovenhalle in Bonn Saved from Demolition

The Beethovenhalle in Bonn is one of the most important buildings in the architectural history of the 1950s in Germany and an authentic testimony to the time when Bonn was the capital of the Federal Republic. Built between 1956 and 1959 according to designs by the then 29-year-old winner of an architectural competition, Siegfried Wolske (Hamburg), who was also a student of Hans Scharoun, the Beethovenhalle is an outstanding example of "organic architecture". The Liederhalle in Stuttgart or Scharoun's Philharmonie in Berlin may be seen as architectural parallels. With its prominent silhouette the Beethovenhalle gives distinction to the northern part of the city. When it was built, it was understood as an urbanistic counterpart of the major government building in the southern part of the city, the Plenarsaal of the German Bundestag (demolished in 1987).

Since its opening the Beethovenhalle has been an indispensable venue for the cultural and social life in Bonn; it is the main venue for the international Beethovenfest, for concerts, trade fairs, congresses and exhibitions. As the number of events continuously grew, Wolske was asked in 1988 to make preliminary designs "for an adaptation to modern congress requirements", which included plans for a new hall. In 1989 the conservation department of the Rhineland became aware of these plans and demanded that the Beethovenhalle be put on the monument list immediately. With the help of a detailed report by the conservation department the building was finally listed on 26 January 1990. On the basis of new plans by Siegfried Wolske from 1996–97 three seminar rooms were added and the hall itself was modernised.

When at the beginning of the millennium further expensive fire protection and other maintenance measures became necessary, the city of Bonn probably considered it a "godsend" that three major companies, the Deutsche Post AG, the Deutsche Telekom AG and the Deutsche Postbank, offered to sponsor the construction of a new Beethoven festival hall at the site of the existing Beethovenhalle. All designs handed in for the subsequent architectural competition intended to demolish Wolske's building. Due to fierce opposition from many institutions and citizens, among them the citizens' initiative "ProBeethovenhalle", the mayor of Bonn and the three companies declared on 21 April 2010 they would no longer pursue the plan for a new festival hall – at least for the time being.

Christoph Machat

The Ulm School of Design

View of the building, c. 1960 (photo: HfG-Archiv Ulm)

Copper edging to the roof and highly reflective blue windows on the façades 2011 (photo: Monika Maus)

Gatekeeper's house with copper edging to the roof and highly reflective blue windows on the façades 2010 (photo: Monika Maus)

Left: highly reflective blue windows on the façades.
Right: transparent and white glass 2011 (photo: Monika Maus)

With their foundation in 1953 of the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm (the Ulm School of Design) Otl Aicher, Inge Scholl-Aicher, and Max Bill initiated one of the most important educational establishments in Germany for product and environmental design. The school tied in with ideas developed by the Bauhaus, and in the fifteen years of its existence it gained international recognition and was regarded as a symbol of Germany's emergence into democracy.

The complex was built on a slope above the city according to plans drawn up by Max Bill. Bill had studied at the Bauhaus Dessau from 1927 to 1928, and his buildings in Ulm continued the concept of combining life, learning, and workmanship. The spaces are located in cubical structures of various designs that are closely related to one another through the arrangement of the site, the extensive glass surfaces, and the organisation of the exterior space. The use of a minimum of different materials corresponds with the simple and clear architecture and is characterised both inside and outside by the exposed concrete of the walls, the nearly natural state of the wood used for the windows, and the large, clear panes of glass. The historical importance and exceptional architectural quality of the School of Design's buildings make them an outstanding demonstration of post-war German modernity.

Extensive restoration work has been performed since 1987, when the university, which had been using the building complex since the closure of the Hochschule für Gestaltung, vacated the premises. However, the restoration work does not do justice to the quality of the architecture. In addition to the sum of smaller and insensitive interventions, the design of the grounds, the application of copper edging to the roof, as well as the exchange of the window panes is problematic. Thus, the material chosen for the edging of the roof creates a completely different emphasis than the original light gray, unobtrusive sheet metal. Particularly unfitting are the highly reflective blue windows on the façades, which severely interfere with the character of the building complex. With its extensive glass surfaces and simple materiality, the architecture used to appear natural and light, transparent and open. The tinted and reflected window panes cause the simplicity and transparency to be lost, and the building now seems heavy and inhospitable. Although the structures have landmark status, the character of the architecture is critically affected. It is therefore necessary to halt the exchange of the window panes, to replace the blue panes that have already been installed with white, less reflective glass, and for a panel of experts to accompany the further restoration process.

Monika Markgraf
Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau

Monika Maus
club off-ulm

Two Protected Monuments Threatened by Decay

All 16 German federal states have their own monument conservation laws and monument lists registering the protected monuments, ensembles and archaeological sites. However, it is not always possible to force owners who are letting their monuments fall into disrepair to at least undertake the necessary maintenance. Here are two sad examples from Bavaria so far unsolved, although the Bavarian monument conservation law includes a "compensation fund", paying compensation to owners who due to their financial situation cannot be expected to pay the necessary repair works of their monument themselves.

In the case of the villa by Lake Starnberg (Ammerland, Südliche Seestrasse 31), erected in 1871 and enlarged and furnished around 1900 by the architect Emanuel von Seidl for the famous painter Gabriel von Max (1840–1915), the severely decayed balconies are a clear sign that the owner is only interested in demolishing the villa, in spite of existing restoration concepts.

The condition of the Schönborn estate in Öttershausen (Kitzingen district), including a residential unit and outbuildings, is also disastrous. The group of buildings was erected around 1743 by the Würzburg court mason Johann Fischbacher, apparently under the direction of the famous architect Balthasar Neumann, but there are also parts dating back to the 16th century (entrance to the cellar dated 1585). The Öttershausen estate is still owned by the Counts of Schönborn, with whom no agreement has been reached so far on how to save these monuments.

Michael Petzet

The Gabriel von Max Villa in Ammerland (photo: H. Pöstges)

The Öttershausen estate (photos: A. Wiesneth)