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Volker Fischer and Andrea Gleiniger

**Stefan Wewerka – Architekt, Designer, Objektkünstler /
Architect, Designer, Object Artist**

160 pp. with 220 ill., 242 x 297,5 mm, hard-cover, German/English
ISBN 3-932565-07-X

Euro 68.00 (DM 133,00), sfr 118.00, £ 49.00, US \$ 79.00,
\$A 128.00

The oeuvre of Stefan Wewerka occupies a unique position in post-war art because of the way in which he mixes different genres. Wewerka is an »uomo universale«, an uncomfortable pedagogue, a bringer of enlightenment. In addition to his practical work as an architect – his competition entries have had a lasting effect on architectural discourse – he has alienated architecture photographically or with the aid of traditional artistic techniques, has written books, has painted pictures, has made films and object art.

In the early 50s Wewerka involved himself in earth architecture – early attempts to build with nature and not against it – and this at a time when no one was talking about ecology or even »green« building.

Wewerka became known to a wider public in the 60s by the artistic alienation of chairs and other everyday objects, which he sawed up or distorted in order to undermine familiar images subversively. He also did not leave architectural »high culture« untouched. Triumphant arches like the Arc de Triomphe in Paris or Gothic cathedrals heel over or buckle to form surreal structures and thus make their ideological claims questionable.

In the late 70s Wewerka also started to design furniture which had high utility value despite its free form and which emanate an almost Bauhaus-like dignity. All this furniture, like the *Fan Desk*, the three-legged chair or the *One-Swinger*, and also his *Kitchen Tree* and the programmatic *Cella* furniture system stand like sculptures in the space and always derive a new and surprising variant from subjects and genres that seemed to be closed.

The internationally known architecture and design historian Volker Fischer was Vice Director of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt for over ten years. For some time now he has been building up a new design department in the Museum für Kunsthandwerk in Frankfurt; in addition to his museum work he teaches history of architecture and design at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Offenbach. Like Volker Fischer, architectural historian Andrea Gleiniger worked for many years in the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt; she now teaches at the Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung in Karlsruhe. Her principle working fields are the history of housing estates in the 20th century and the relationship between architecture, art and the new media.

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