

Project: Württemberg State Library Annex

Team: LRO GmbH & Co. KG Freie Architekten BDA

Size: 20300 m²

Location: STUTTGART, GERMANY



Feature:

Project - The recent expansion of the 1960s Württemberg State Library in Stuttgart by Lederer Ragnarsdóttir Oei Architekten creates a new urban boulevard while seamlessly integrating with the existing Brutalist structure. The 20,300 square-metre annex sensitively continues the raw concrete aesthetic of the original building, with intricate hand-crafted wooden formwork used to cast the new exposed concrete façade. This adds an organic, lively texture, contrasting beautifully with the smooth interior surfaces.

The four-storey volume extends the library's linear form, directly addressing the busy Konrad-Adenauer-Straße to reform a stately urban edge. An atrium visually connects the levels, drawing daylight into the centre. The ground floor also houses a new café, opening the building to the city. The first floor pedestrian bridge forms the main entrance, leading into a bright double-height lobby with information, exhibition space and access control.

The building's zig-zagging white concrete façade, with intermittent copper panels, establishes visual harmony with the older reading room. Inside, amenities like light carpeting and wood cladding bring warmth. Through sensitivity to context, materiality and user experience, the architects have created a functional, inviting next chapter for this important Stuttgart institution.

Design Team - LRO has its roots in the architecture office founded by Arno Lederer in Stuttgart in 1979. He was joined in partnership by Jórunn Ragnarsdóttir in 1985 and Marc Oei in 1992. Over the past four decades, the firm has steadily grown into an award-winning practice of around 50 staff.

Known for creating spaces that engage the human spirit through rich materiality and craft, LRO continues to push creative boundaries. The office prizes both architectural tradition and the questioning of existing contexts to forge new contemporary forms. An intensive, holistic design approach sees small teams nurture projects from competitions through construction.

As founding partners Lederer and Ragnarsdóttir stepped back from management in recent years, leadership transitioned seamlessly. Directors Katja Pütter, Klaus Hildenbrand and Heiko Müller joined Oei at the helm in 2021 when the firm became LRO GmbH & Co. KG Freie Architekten BDA. This new generation stewards LRO's legacy of design excellence, implementing their own vision while remaining true to deeply rooted humanist values that put user experience first.