

DWELLING WOHNEN 2022



PRESS RELEASE

Essen, 08.06.2022

Klaus Benesch: “Architecture and/as Hospitality”

Lecture in the Series „Making a Home: Zur Herstellung von
Häuslichkeit“

21 June 2022, 18:00 (CET), Hybrid Event
Online (Zoom) & Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI),
Gartensaal, Goethestraße 31, 45128 Essen

As both an aesthetic and a fundamentally social space **modern architecture** foregrounds contemporary notions of building, dwelling, and thinking. Its social meaning, as Slavoj Žižek argued, is not merely to provide housing and infrastructure, but to offer stabilizing **counter-spaces** within an ever-changing and increasingly conflicted modern public space. Insofar as it lends material form to the promises but also the challenges of modernity, architecture frequently finds itself at the forefront of cultural and social debates.

In his talk Klaus Benesch discusses the importance of the **built environment as an incubator of social criticism** and, ultimately, notions of a non-capitalist, more ‘hospitable’ world. Among the writers and critics who have turned to architecture to forge alternative concepts of home and society the American transcendentalist **Henry David Thoreau** and the German sociologist **Theodor W. Adorno** are two interesting cases in point. Both have pondered the social consequences of building and dwelling, and both have eventually come to favor a premodern, more humane and hospitable form of design. As Benesch argues Thoreau’s autobiographical blueprint for his unpretentious wooden cabin that withers away and eventually erases the traces of its own making and Adorno’s famous architectural metaphor of an intrinsically alienated modern life (“kein richtiges Leben im falschen”), which he illustrated by way of the corrupted design of a modern American apartment building, attest to the crucial role of building and dwelling properly for both **critical theory** and **modern cultural critique** at large.

PRESS CONTACT

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www.kulturwissenschaften.de

SPEAKER

Klaus Benesch, LMU Munich

MODERATOR

Julika Griem, KWI-Director

COORDINATION

Stefan Höhne, KWI

Sabine Voßkamp, KWI Research Management

PARTICIPATION ON ZOOM

For participation online via ZOOM please register via emily.beyer@kwi-nrw.de until 20 June 2022.

PARTICIPATION ON SITE

PLEASE NOTE: Limited seats are available for in-person participation. This information is subject to change depending on the current pandemic situation. Attendance in presence is only possible after written registration. Likewise, wearing a medical or FFP2 mask is still mandatory upon entry to the building.

REGISTRATION: Please register with Marion Fiekens at marion.fiekens@kwi-nrw.de with the indication of „Participation in Person – 21.06.“ by 17 June 2022.

PLEASE NOTE

The lecture will be recorded on site and probably in zoom. By registering for the lecture, participants consent to the recording and possible publication in KWI's youtube channel.

ORGANISER

Organised by the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI).

We would appreciate the circulation of this press release.

About the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI):

The Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI) Essen, Germany, is an interdisciplinary research centre following the tradition of international Institutes for Advanced Study. In its role as an inter-university institution connecting the Ruhr-University Bochum, the Technological University Dortmund and the University of Duisburg-Essen, the institute works together with researchers and scientists from its neighbouring universities as well as other partners from the federal state NRW and places in- and outside of Germany. Within the Ruhr area, the KWI is a place to share and discuss the questions and results of ambitious research with interested parties from the city and the greater region. Currently, work at the KWI focusses on the following areas: “cultural studies of science and science policy making”, “sociology of literature and culture”, “science communication”, and a “teaching lab”. Projects in the established research field “culture of communication”, as well as individual projects, will be continued. www.kulturwissenschaften.de

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Please note: If you do not wish to receive any further press releases from the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI), please send a short message to presse@kwi-nrw.de. Many thanks.

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