

These buildings stir emotions

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BEST OF



Some buildings are particularly polarising. For some, they are an eyesore; for others, they are architectural highlights. What do you think?

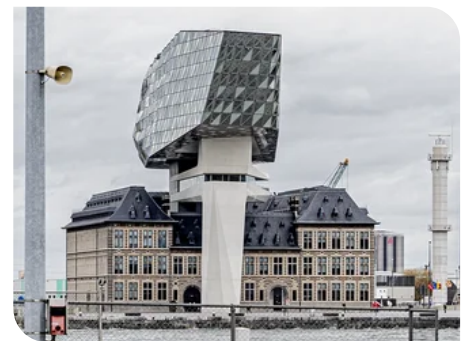
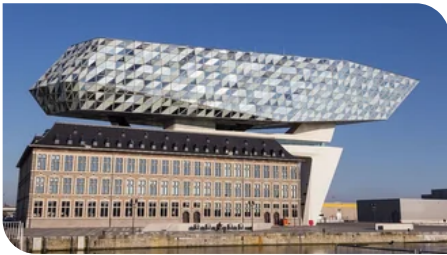
Today a Monument: The Haas House



The Haas House stands in one of Vienna's most prominent locations: directly opposite St. Stephen's Cathedral in the 1st district. After the historic building was destroyed in the Second World War, a simple post-war building was erected in the 1950s – which soon appeared unsuitable for the cityscape. And so, in 1985, **PORR** began construction of the new Haas House, designed by architect Hans Hollein. It was opened in 1990. In the early years, its shape and façade were still the subject of debate.

The new Haas House was probably even more controversial than its predecessor. It seemed too modern, too contrived, too artificial for the historic old town. But now the roof terrace has become a popular hotspot. And the contrast between the historic St. Stephen's Cathedral and the modern Haas House has become a landmark in its own right. Since 2012, it has even been listed as a historic monument – as a rare example of postmodern architecture in Vienna.

A matter of taste: the Antwerp Port Authority



In 2008, Zaha Hadid Architects won the competition to extend an old fire station for the Port of Antwerp. The result is a building that could hardly be more striking. Zaha Hadid and Patrik Schumacher have placed a new building on the roof of the fire station like an alien. There are reasons for this: Firstly, the façade of the historic building had to be completely preserved, the orientation of the building had to remain unchanged and a connection to the surroundings had to be established. In addition, the port authority needed at least twice as much space as the fire station

could provide. The new building with its glass façade meets all these requirements and establishes a connection to its surroundings in two ways: the ship-shaped structure blends into the harbour environment. At the same time, the silhouette of glass glistening in the sunlight is reminiscent of a diamond – a reference to Antwerp's traditional diamond trade. The architects have thus achieved all their goals. As always, the result is a matter of taste.

A much-discussed eye-catcher: the Prague TV tower



The Prague TV tower, with a height of 216 metres, cannot be overlooked. It was opened in 1992 and was deliberately designed to contrast with the historic buildings in Prague's city centre. The modern concrete towers by architect Václav Aulický were not intended to compete with the existing buildings, but to stand on their own. The television tower is open to the public and is a popular destination with its viewing platform

and restaurant. Since 2000, sculptures by Czech sculptor David Černý have adorned the façade. The striking figures, which appear to be climbing the tower, seem bizarre to some, superfluous to others, while others are downright delighted by them. In any case, they make the Prague TV Tower a much-discussed, loved and hated architectural project of modern times.