

Press Release

Trix + Robert Haussmann
Lehrstücke



From the very outset of their collaboration in 1967, the architect couple Trix and Robert Haussmann subjected the principles of modernist functionalism to a *reductio ad absurdum*. It all started with the Swiss Werkbund's Chair Fun exhibition (also in 1967) of Haussmann objects like their "Anti-Chair": a chair made of fluorescent tubes that would likely collapse if anyone actually tried to sit on it.

This spoof of functionalism eventually led, in 1978, to the first of their so-called "Lehrstücke". They reinterpreted the stylistic devices to be found in Mannerism— the estrangement of materials, spatial illusions, accelerated perspectives, anamorphoses, and literarizing forms—and applied them to a dozen experimental objects, e.g. an imitation column segmented into drawers as a "Disruption of Form through Function". Their "Didactic Pieces" questioned modernism, the reigning paradigm of their own architectural training, and took it to its logical—and absurd— conclusion. Their *Lehrstücke* critically, ironically and playfully subverted the contemporary discourse on architecture and design, which had ossified into a reductionist obsession with "good form".

This book provides the first comprehensive and personal look behind the scenes at their planning, design and working processes. Trix Haussmann herself retraces the genesis and elaboration of their twelve *Lehrstücke* in twelve chapters, accompanied by drawings, sketches and reference images. And in a conversation, art and architecture historians Gabrielle Schaad and Achim Reese place them in their historical and contemporary context.

Edition Patrick Frey

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Design: Teo Schifferli

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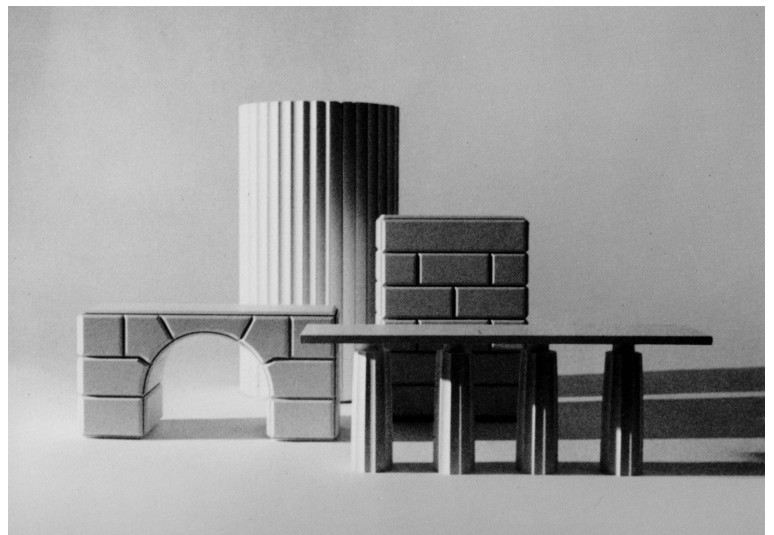
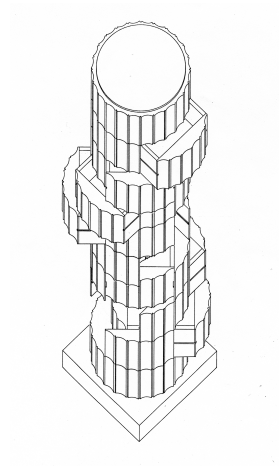
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