



Main image: Main station Vienna. Photo: Roman Bönsch

Above: RBS train station Bern: new, subterranean station for Bern Solothurn's local trains. Photos: Theo Hotz Partner / Nightnurse

Passion for intelligent solutions

With a history stretching back almost 70 years, theo hotz partner prides itself on an extensive portfolio of over one hundred building projects and a continuously deepening knowledge base. Its complex construction assignments cover the entire spectrum of architectural services. Through its commitment to quality and creativity, the company has become a renowned partner for clients, building companies and government offices alike.

TEXT: CORNELIA BRELOWSKI

Founded by Theo Hotz in 1949, the firm quickly acquired national and international recognition thanks to a stripped-down, non-nostalgic approach to industrial architecture and the use of the very latest technology, which has netted it multiple awards over the years. Stefan Adler, Peter Berger and Robert Surbeck had been long-standing partners when Theo Hotz handed over the company in 2011, and continue the firm's tradition

of combining the office's creative and technical expertise with an emphasis on close interdisciplinary collaboration with clients, experts and the construction industry. "We have always been driven by the notion of working with others to create solutions of lasting value," explains Peter Berger. The architects uphold this tradition in a modern context. "For us, modern in the sense of 'contemporary' means benchmarking ourselves against

time – proactively addressing issues that are relevant here and now."

Core areas of expertise

The cornerstone of theo hotz partner's success is the extensive know-how and firm commitment of its 40 or so employees. With the majority of commissions still resulting from competitions, the firm's projects span the entire spectrum of architectural challenges. Nevertheless, three core areas of expertise have emerged. In transportation and infrastructure, theo hotz partner is currently working on railway stations in Aarau (central station) and Bern (low-level station to open in 2025), and has recently seen the completion of the impressive Vienna railway station project. Residential and commercial buildings have long featured in the company's portfolio and still remain on the

agenda, with a special focus on sustainability. Its recent SkyKey office building in Zurich is the first Swiss high-rise building to be awarded the LEED platinum certification and also sets new standards for open-space working environments.

The third is a more recent development for the company. While the majority of projects still focus on new construction, transformations of existing buildings have started to assume a more significant role, with an increase in conversions, renovations and densification projects. "We are seeing great potential here. This is more than just technical renovation. Clients now want new, future-oriented

concepts and fresh ways to utilise former commercial buildings," says Berger. One such project is the transformation of 'Schönburg', the former Swiss post office headquarters in Bern. Currently in progress, the project's aim is to reshape and redesign the old structure to create a premium apartment building and hotel.

Architecture for generations

Reluctant to follow trends, theo hotz partner prefers instead to create contemporary architecture with value that will endure for generations to come. This is not just in terms of aesthetics and functionality but also of sustainability, a word often used in today's architectural dis-

course but which for theo hotz partner is often too limited in scope.

As Berger explains, the discussion often centres on technical sustainability, which is essentially about cutting energy costs in order to lower operating costs. But this misses the big picture. What is often neglected is the aspect of social sustainability. In Berger's own words: "Any project planned and built for generations of users should really be operational for that entire time. Economically seen, that makes for the most sustainable solution of them all."

www.theohotz.ch



All three: Main station Vienna. Photos: Roman Bönsch



All three: Sky Key Zurich: Switzerland's first high-rise building that has been awarded the LEED Platinum certification. Photos: Radek Brunecky

