

# A New Museum

Do we need new museums? Instead of conveying narratives of power and of how things have always been, new museums could be places of exchange, where the old and the new are present and where different voices are invited to contribute to continuing stories about art and society.

The Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv was established in 1906, and the breadth and diversity of its collections reflects something of the anti-authoritarian origins of Swiss society. The country's position at the crossroads of Europe means that 'being Swiss' is always a dynamic and changing condition. Because it engages with every part of Swiss society the archive transcends many of the biases and power structures that lie at the core of more conventional museum collections.

This semester we will design a new kind of museum that brings material from the Sozialarchiv into direct contact with the people of Switzerland. At present, it is possible to visit the archive or access its collections online. We propose that a physical museum would be able to release the archive's content and programmes out into the spaces of the city whose rich stories it tells. The museum could disrupt and rethink the relationship between institutions and their public, bringing ideas of the civic to street level which has been left to retail at



Manor, Bahnhofstrasse, 2010

Theaster Gates, *Black Chapel*, Haus der Kunst, 2019

the service of consumption for too long. A new open architecture could enable the museum to become a portal through which new stories told by the residents of the city can be collected, so that the archive and its public become even more engaged in ongoing cycles of discussion and social production.

Seth Siegelau, Group Material, and Theaster Gates, collectors, curators and artists active from the 1960s to the present, have made collections and exhibitions that challenge content, display, and ideas of audience. Learning from both the intellectual and the spatial structures of their exhibitions – we will design ways to show and interpret specific parts of the Sozialarchiv collections. Attending to the exhibition architecture, the lighting and environmental conditions, the thresholds to the surrounding city, these designs will become the core ideas for new museums on three central sites in Zurich.

Introduction: 20 February 2024, 10:00 am,  
Entrance Landesmuseum, 8001 Zürich  
Construction and writing as integrated disciplines  
are included in this course

FS 2024, ETH Zürich, Studio Caruso  
Emilie Appercé, Lucia Bernini, Tibor Bielicky,  
Adam Caruso, Claudio Schneider