

The cover of the magazine 'Hauser & Wirth Volume 2' features a composite image. On the left, a large, abstract painting is tilted, showing a grid of rectangular blocks in various colors: bright red, black, light green, and a dusty rose. The edges of these blocks are heavily textured with thick, expressive brushstrokes of black and white paint. On the right, a photograph shows the interior of a grand, classical building with a high, vaulted ceiling and ornate architectural details. In the foreground, a complex structure of wooden scaffolding is set up, suggesting an art installation or restoration project. The overall composition is a blend of contemporary art and classical architecture.

HAUSER & WIRTH

VOLUME 2

ARTISTS EXHIBITIONS FEATURES REVIEWS NEWS JUNE - AUGUST 2014

Luis Laplace: A Conversation with Iwan Wirth



Colonnades in the main courtyard at Durslade Farm

Iwan Wirth speaks to architect Luis Laplace, celebrated internationally for his stunning interiors and sensitive architectural developments, about his concept for Durslade Farm.

Iwan Wirth: We've talked a lot about our joint vision for Hauser & Wirth Somerset, but could you summarise your architectural design concept here?

Luis Laplace: The crux of the project lies in the creation of a modernised version of a cloister. The addition of this new space, not square but polygon-shaped, shifts the centre of attention away from the farmyard, which remains agricultural by nature and in scale. The intervention on the farmyard itself was limited; we only added a plinth for large sculptures to be installed in the entrance, in order to establish a hierarchy and to formalise access to the gallery.

The cloister opens onto a contemplative outdoor space. It is a domesticated and sheltered version of nature. In this secluded area, nature and architecture balance themselves out to offer a frame for artworks. The creation of an architectural promenade around the cloister allows visitors to circulate through the old farm spaces and to discover the new epicentre of the site. From one building to the next, the transition remains subtle, which allows for visitors to reach the contemporary exhibition spaces smoothly.

IW: I'm really excited about the way you have integrated the beautiful original architecture of



Left: Ida Applebroog, Jessika, 2007; Wallpaper: Paul McCarthy, Dimensional (blue), 2007; Window: Paul McCarthy, 5 Metal Small Pinnochios, 2002
Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Farmhouse interior

Durslade with the new buildings. What were the biggest challenges you faced in achieving this?

LL: As you remember, at an early stage, we considered the option of conceiving a freestanding building. But combining the new buildings with the existing ones quickly appeared as the best solution from both a typological and a functional point of view. Intervening in the listed agricultural cluster without overtaking or breaking the existing harmony created over the years was one of the challenges of the project.

This challenge was a continuous one. At all phases, we researched materials that related to the existing textures, echoing the simplicity of the original architecture without mimicking it. Concrete offers a perfect illustration of this conundrum; the agricultural concrete that was re-used in the old buildings was revisited for the new galleries. We developed a specific cast concrete for the colonnades.

Another challenge lay in the assimilation of the new buildings. The rotation of the compound responds to the nature of the site – edges of the land vis-à-vis the old buildings. This new angle creates a gentle transition between the buildings and Piet Oudolf's garden. Also as a result of this angle, the cloister

becomes a polygon-shaped space, moving away from a historically traditional manner.

IW: You were given free rein to renovate the interior of the Farmhouse and I am thrilled with the results! I completely trusted you to create something innovative and unique and that's exactly what we've ended up with. How did you approach this project?

LL: My starting point for the Farmhouse came as the result of a playful dialogue between Manuela, you and I, joined later on by Guillermo Kuitca and Pipilotti Rist. I was seduced by the idea of using an artistic language versus an academic one. The result is – as expected – ambiguous, since art, architecture and the history of the house merge. I fully integrated the traces of the premise's history. Keeping the layers of the previous owners' presence was a deliberate choice based on an organic and intuitive approach. The final result challenges the guests who see the unexpected.

IW: This is your first museum project. What did you learn through the process?

LL: I confronted myself with the reality of exhibiting art in a public space versus a private residence. I had to achieve a neutral space and allow for flexibility to

Highlights



Farmhouse at Durslade

offer a frame compatible with various artists and forms of expression. It is all about light and proportions within a space, free from an architectural statement. I really enjoyed the dialogue with the gallery's artists during all the phases of the project. After meeting with Roni Horn in Paris, we agreed to keep the large gallery isolated from the outside, and only to be reminded of the environment in the hinge spaces, via the windows over the garden and cloister.

An early conversation with Björn Roth inspired me. I realised that the restaurant – which is quite a challenging space because of its narrow configuration – needed an approach that was not dogmatic but free and intuitive. Guests will walk through the kitchen!

IW: How has working in rural Somerset been a departure from your previous projects?

LL: I value context more than anything else. I always envision my project through the context first. The English rural landscape and the tradition of the English countryside inspired my project in many ways. For example, the cloister is an architectural element that is present in the area, such as in the Wells Cathedral.

The English weather was also a factor to be considered as guests can still experience the outdoors on a rainy day while travelling through the colonnades.



Gallery Reception, formerly the Cowshed



Above: View from the courtyard of the galleries

Local Opening Event
Sunday 6 July 2014

Education Launch
Phyllida Barlow in
Conversation with Simon
Grant, Editor, Tate Etc
Thursday 10 July 2014

Opens to Public
Tuesday 15 July 2014

Exhibition Opens
Phyllida Barlow. GIG
Tuesday 15 July 2014

Exhibition Opens
Piet Oudolf. Open Field
Tuesday 15 July 2014

Family Saturdays
Saturday 26 July 2014
Saturday 2 August 2014

Victoria Art Gallery
Visit
Wednesday 6 August 2014

Bristol Old Vic Summer
School
11 – 21 August 2014
Public performance on
Thursday 21 August, 6 pm

Garden Museum Patron
Visit
Friday 12 September 2014

Garden Opens
Sunday 14 September 2014

The Art of the Garden
Events Programme
Curated by Caroline
Donald, Gardening Editor
of The Sunday Times
September 2014 – March
2015

Somerset Art Weeks
Director-led Tour
Tuesday 23 September 2014

Prince's Trust Events
Programme
20 – 24 October 2014

Soil Culture Residency
Participation Event
October 2014

Open Lens: Screening
Programme
In collaboration with Bath
Spa University