

PLACEMENT.

In an everyday sense ‘placement’ is more or less to do with where you put things, say it in a French accent, though, and it becomes associated with the problems – and pleasures – of seating guests at a table. There is an etiquette involved, alternation of the sexes, partners not together, generational mixing etc., and of course in some formal situations protocol dictates that there is a strict hierarchy. But this is not the interesting problem for the host and hostess. The interesting problem (Machiavellian intentions to one side) is to contrive a *placement* whereby one feels thrown in with interesting strangers and, at the end of a meal, feels that one has made new friends, been entertained or entertaining or maybe learnt some interesting new information.

Where you place things does affect both how they are seen and, in turn, their relationship to their surroundings and then, finally, how the surroundings themselves are seen and understood. Objects interact with each other and with their situation. As an artist I pay close attention to what I make and find it fascinating (rather than frustrating) to see the way things change as you move them around the room and how the room itself changes. It’s more complicated outside but similar considerations apply. In looking at my two proposals for Kunstmuseum Winterthur, it seems that the first, respectful as it was, imposed itself on the building and constrained the museum itself. Given the difficulties of making an attachment to a historical building, the proposal was not developed. In the second proposal the sculpture is autonomous, and articulating the relationship between it and the fostering institution is a question of placement.

Apart from the façade, I had three different possible locations in mind when developing the proposal – the grassed rectangle sheltered by the northwest corner of the old museum building, the asphalt running between the old museum building and

the new extension, and the courtyard-café area. This last, although interesting, is not appropriate for the proposal developed. For the other two situations I have a very strong preference for the asphalt area.

The grass rectangle sheltered in the northeast quadrant is clearly within the confines of the building and a sculpture would have prominent visibility from the roadway and from the pavement. However, the placement clearly suggests a front, facing out, and a back, towards the museum. The location directs, in part, how you look at the work and the potential meanings are constrained by this formality. The area is also somewhat shadowed by the bulk of the original museum building.

The second site is on the asphalt path running between the museum and the extension; it bridges between the original building and the new extension, yet belongs to neither. It's a public but connected place. The location is approachable and does not privilege one or other particular view but allows a multiplicity of viewpoints to unfold. It's in the round. The light is much better and the stainless-steel surfaces will behave differently in changing light conditions: morning, midday, afternoon and evening, sunny or cloudy, rain or shine. To me it has the feel of a placement that is very precise, articulating the location and the commission's relationship to the fostering institution yet informal, open and inviting. The sculpture would be enriched by the location and, in turn, the location would be enlivened by the sculpture.

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