

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

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WALTER PICHLER: PROJECTS* is the first one-man exhibition in the United States of work by the Austrian artist who has been a pervasive influence on much of the architecture and design avant-garde in Austria and Italy. The 70 drawings will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from September 12 through October 28.

Pichler's technique of intricate cross-hatching, carefully composed axonometrics, and melancholy monochromatic washes are "...the intensely ascetic means by which [he] evokes the lonely spaces of an architectural landscape of the mind," says Emilio Ambasz, Curator of Design, who directed and installed the exhibition.

Pichler has undergone a profound transformation since a decade ago, when he presented a series of sarcastic designs for underground megastructures. His interest now centers on the basic elements of architecture. For Pichler, a roof and four posts define a sacred area, "...the primeval house; the place where man's irreducible solitude dwells." Many of his drawings are designs for furnishings for that space, "...sacred artifacts for the performance of daily rituals," according to Mr. Ambasz.

Pichler's largest project to date is the complex he plans to build on ten acres of land at St. Martin, near the Hungarian border. Many drawings for this project are included in the exhibition. Here Pichler has designed an observatory tower for the top of the hill and a concrete silo for the meadow below the house. A wagon will run on tracks from an underground chamber through the open silo to a wooden gallery outside.

"The constructions which he plans constitute, in essence, a citadel of childhood memories," Emilio Ambasz says of Pichler's St. Martin project. "The

*WALTER PICHLER: PROJECTS, published in conjunction with the exhibition, is a 12-page booklet containing an essay by Emilio Ambasz, 11 illustrations of drawings by Pichler, and 7 black-and-white photographs. \$2.50. Available at The Museum of Modern Art.

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wagon is a surrogate for the one his father built and pulled around the town; the aqueducts and cisterns are a remaking of those which brought water to the town where he was born; the building called the Cell is a place to hide, and, as when he was a child, wait to be discovered."

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Additional information available from Michael Boodro, Assistant, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7504; 7501.
