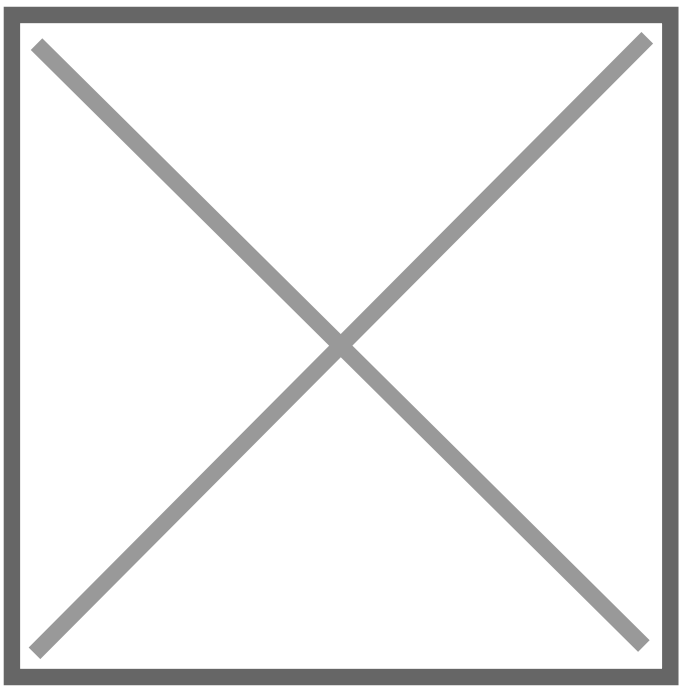
VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE



Karl Hugo Schmölz

About Karl Hugo Schmölz

01.01.2017–

The photographies of Karl Hugo Schmölz belong to the best source material of Cologne's rebuilding. They illustrate the city's history in an detailed way and are also helpful documentations for historians and the protection of historical monuments.

In cooperation with his father and because of an enormous productivity he left a great work, which documents the architectural growing, the planning, the destruction and the rebuilding of Cologne almost complete since the Twenties.

Karl Hugo Schmölz and his father worked for nearly every architect of high standing, the planning department, building contractors and their clients and they documentated not only

Van der Grinten Galerie
Ackerstraße 144
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the building but also the sketches and models

The majority of the postwar-photographies Karl Hugo Schmölz made in the Hahnenstraße and it's surrounding, because there – long time before the currency reform – the rebuilding has begun and he also was good friend with the architect of that street, Wilhelm Riphahn.

Riphahn and the mayor planner of Cologne, Rudolf Schwarz, made the plans for Cologne in that day, sometimes not quick enough or in favour for the architect's plans. So the architects beautified their buildings sometimes with illegal floors or details, which weren't allowed by the city's planning department. Schmölz photographed them, but he also made pictures after the floors and the details have been removed

Some houses with only two floors got enormous advertises or neon signs –a few still exist today– on their tops – to hide the missing of more floors – which were real highlights in the quickly and cheap reconstructed postwar surrounding.

Schmölz' comprehensive photographic work of Cologne show clearly the economic upswing of that time combined with an enthusiam for planning and investations, but also the disagreements between architects and the planning department, which made the reconstruction sometimes slow or stopped it completely.