

# Press release

## Extension of the WHO Headquarters in Geneva



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### Press text short

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The new building enlarges the existing headquarters of the World Health Organization, set in a park complex at the edge of Geneva. In conception and design, it takes Jean Tschumi's masterwork of 1966 as a point of departure. Analogously, the addition is structured as a unifying base and a recessed ground floor above which a larger volume is suspended. Forming the spatial centrepiece is a spacious hall in the connecting structure and an open atrium in the office tower.

472  
characters

79  
words

### Press text long

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In 2014, with altogether 253 firms participating, Berrel Berrel Kräutler prevailed in an open, international competition for the extension of the WHO Headquarters. The new building supplements the existing one, erected by Jean Tschumi in 1966, and set in a spacious park complex at the edge of Geneva. The complex encloses a green space like a set of brackets, while the closed, prestigious facade faces the street. Reflecting Tschumi's design, the extension consists of a connecting base, a recessed ground floor, and a volume which projects beyond it.

2532  
characters

403  
words

The new concrete base – whose large strip windows face the park – interweaves new and old. It forms the new heart of the complex as a whole, a place where staff members can meet at lunchtime or during coffee breaks, can gather for conferences or meetings, or coordinate the 400 operations planned by the WHO annually in various crisis regions worldwide. Recapitulating the arrangement of stories found in Tschumi's building, the interior of the new base structure takes up the logistical and functional interconnections found in the existing building. A wide, interior passage takes the form of a gallery that overlooks the dining hall, while also affording views of the garden behind. Despite its placement in the lower level, it offers direct views onto the landscaped areas from all over. Adjoining the passage are modular conference rooms with landscaped atria. Available in the second basement level, in addition, is a divisible hall designed for gatherings of up to 800 people.

Forming the upper terminus of the base structure is a terrace with roof garden, inviting users to stroll between the ground floors of the two tower blocks. Like Tschumi's predecessor building, the new cubiform office tower projects on all sides beyond the ground floor, forming a protected exterior space. Severe in appearance externally, the nine-story building is open, bright, and flexible within. The office levels are broken up by multistory lounges whose open plans allow them to be variously organized. Open atria on all levels offer viewing axes through the tower as a whole. All staff members share what is essentially a common space, reinforcing a sense of community. The four cores not only provide vertical access, but also form the supporting framework of the reinforced concrete structure. Much emphasis has been devoted to the attractiveness of the staircases, which function as places of encounter. The tower's aluminium facade echoes the faceted appearance of Tschumi's building.

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### Project data

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Completion</b>
Headquarters of the World Health Organisation WHO	2020
<b>Address</b>	<b>Floor area</b>
Avenue Appia 20, 1202 Geneva	38'000 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Competition</b>	<b>Building volume</b>
2015	140'000 m <sup>3</sup>
<b>Start of construction</b>	<b>Number of work places</b>
2017	800

### Project participants

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<b>Client</b>	<b>Building technology</b>
World Health Organisation	Amstein + Walthert AG, Geneva
<b>Architects</b>	<b>Facade planners</b>
Berrel Kräutler Architekten AG, Zurich	Emmer Pfenninger Partner AG, Münchenstein
<b>General contractor</b>	<b>Geoengineering</b>
Implenia AG	Dr. Vollenweider AG, Zurich
<b>Construction engineers</b>	<b>Light design</b>
Dr. Schwartz Consulting AG, Zug	Mettler + Partner AG Consulting, Zurich
Dr. Neven Kostic GmbH, Zurich	
<b>Landscape architect</b>	
ORT AG für Landschaftsarchitektur, Zurich	



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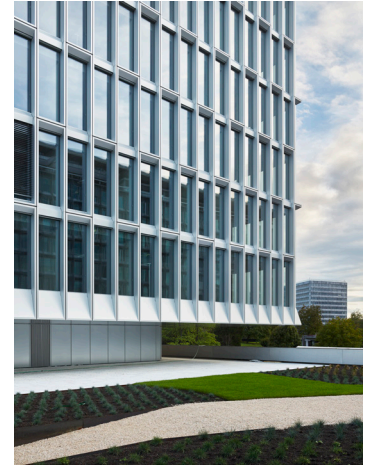
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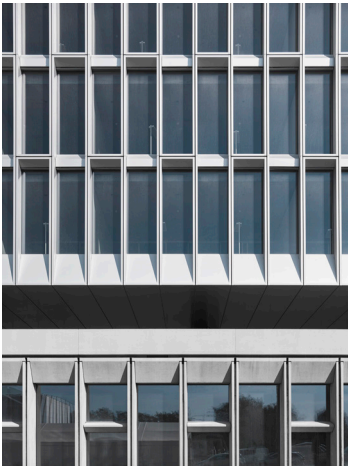
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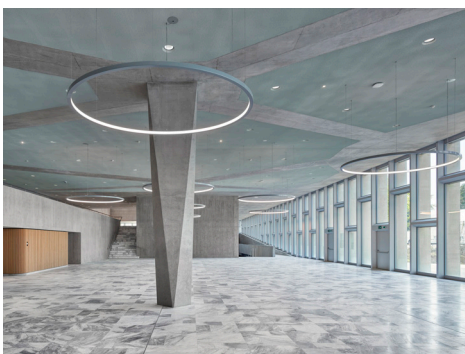
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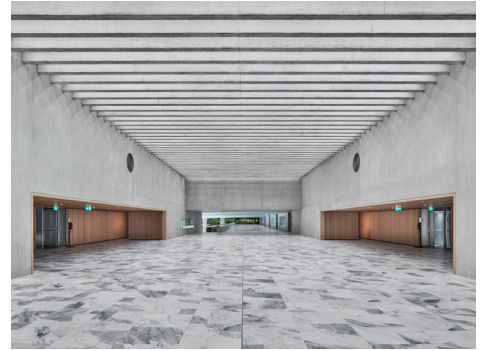
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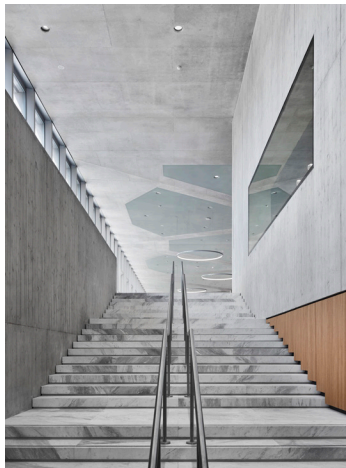
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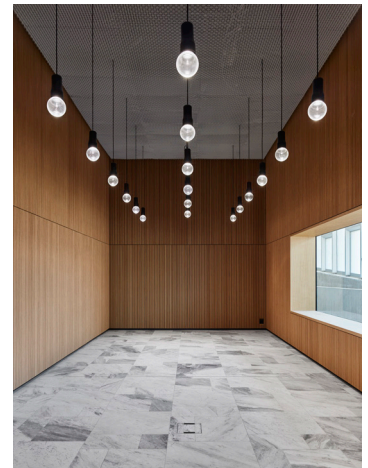
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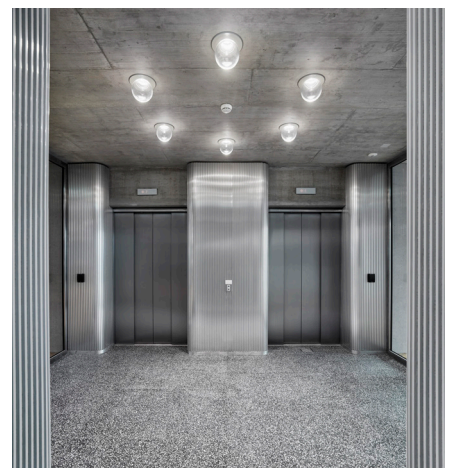
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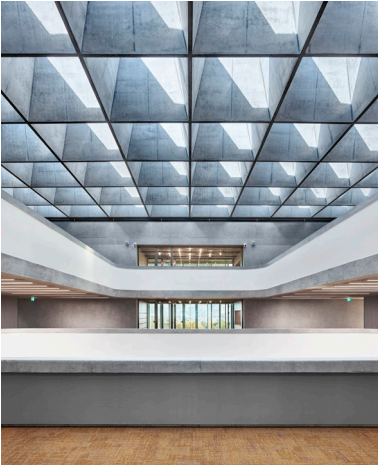
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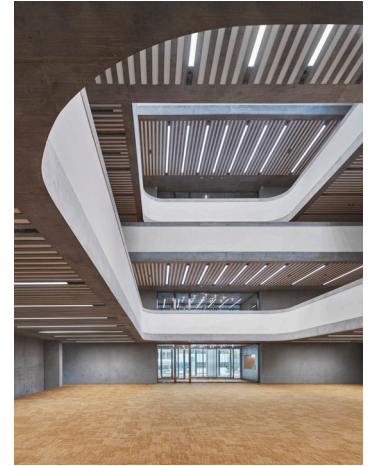
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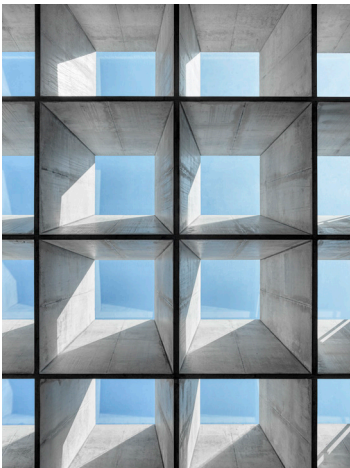
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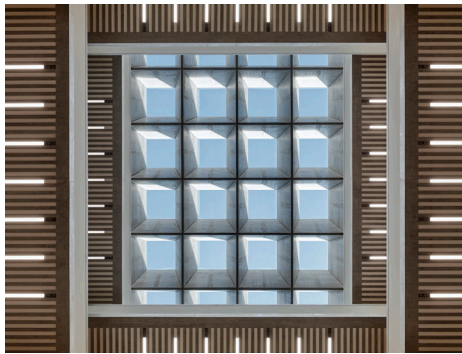
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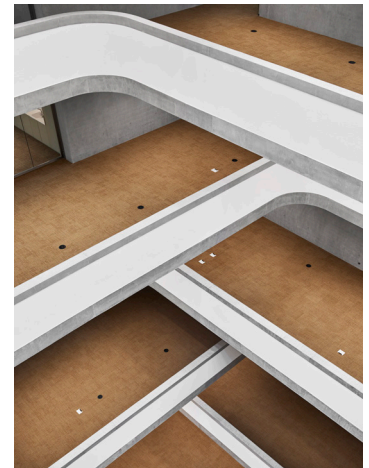
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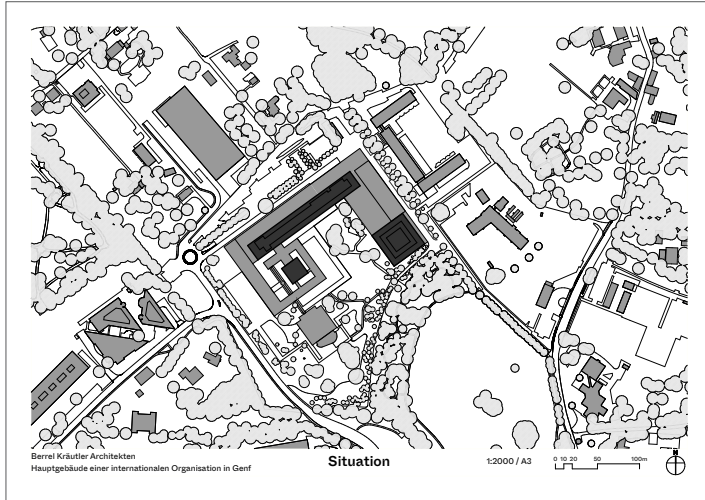
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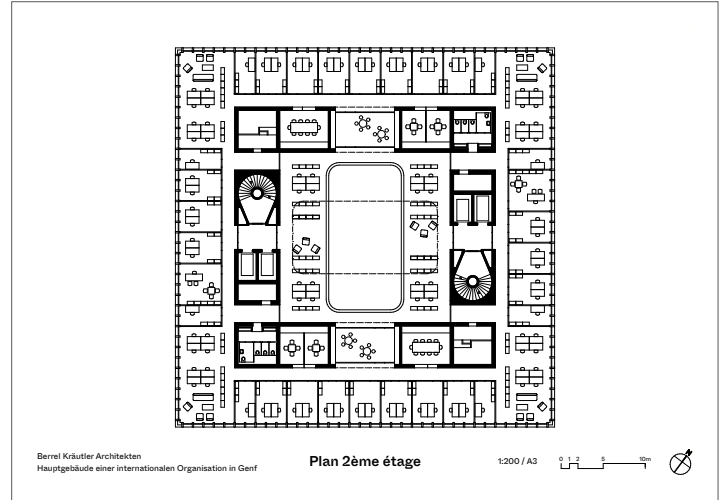
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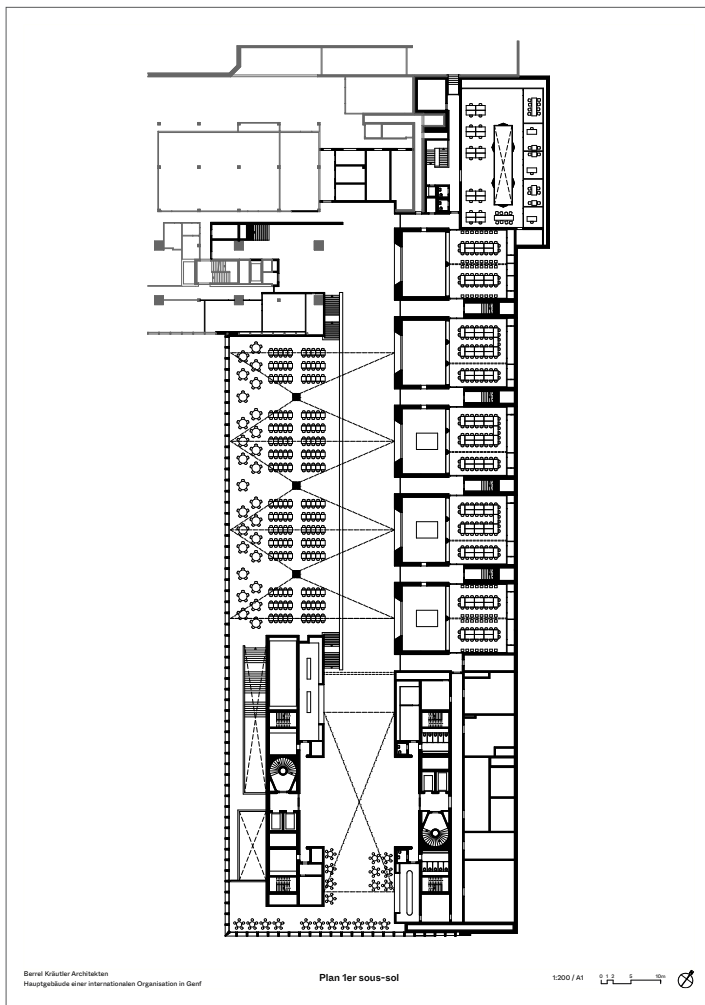
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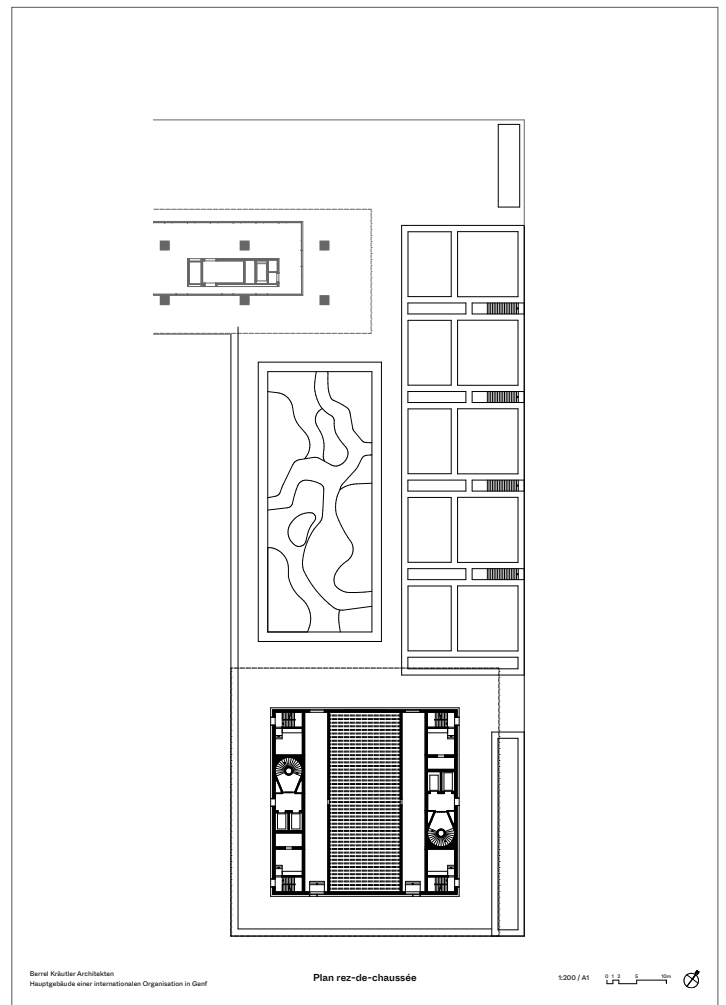
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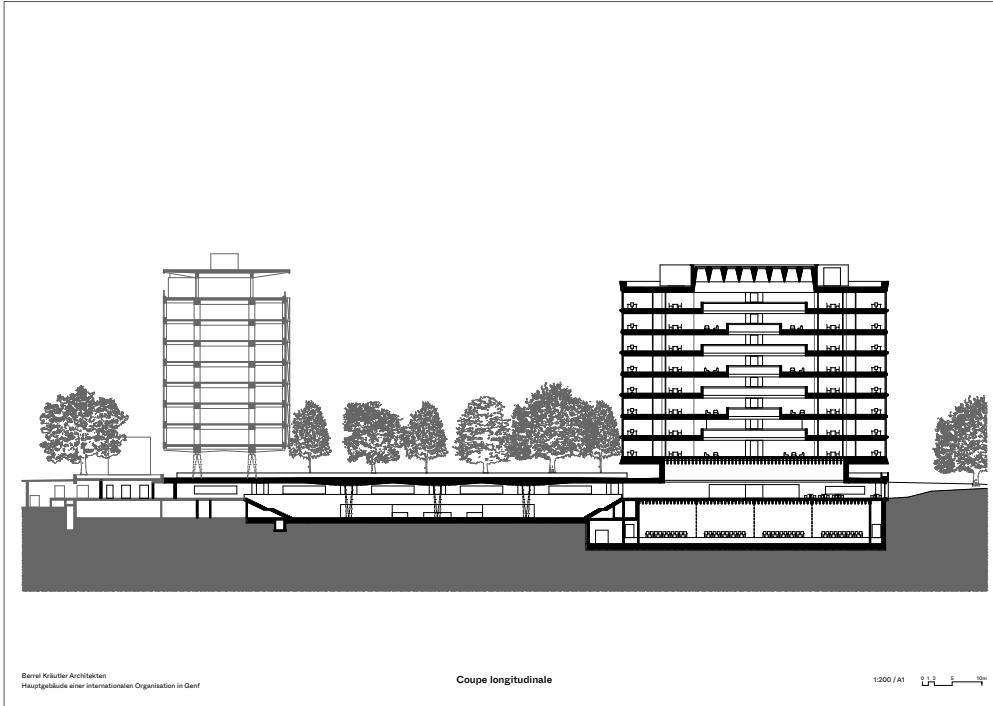
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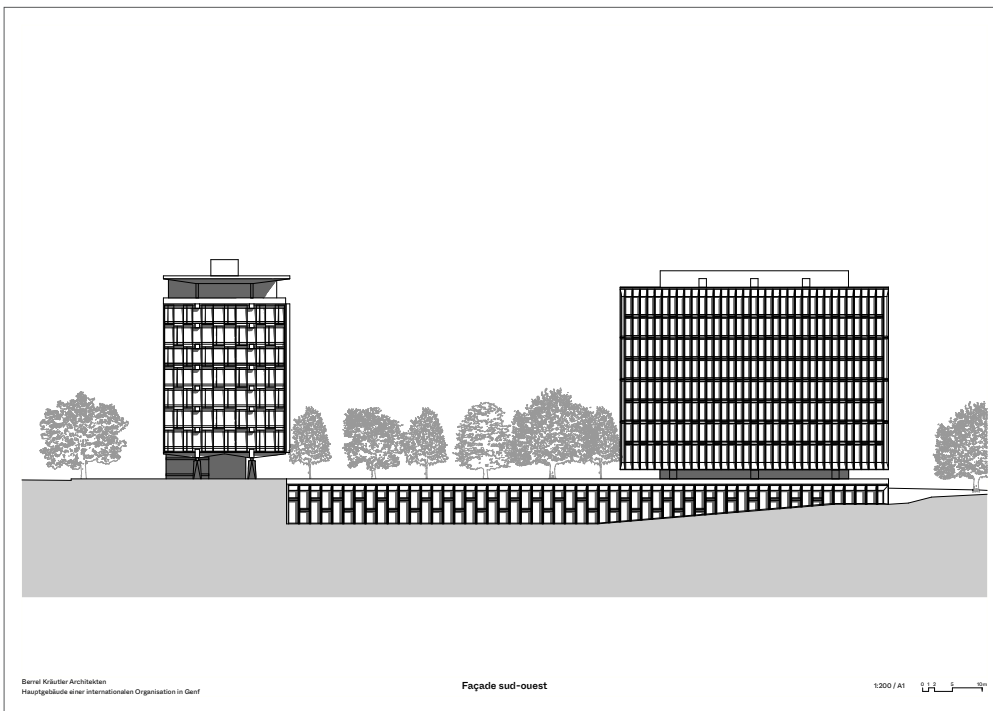


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### Photos

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Photos: Damian Poffet

1. WHO\_2020\_CF109460: The new building with Jean Tschumi's masterpiece in the background
2. WHO\_2020\_CF109444\_b: View of the tower from the roof terrace
3. WHO\_2020\_CF109436: Detail of the new façade
4. WHO\_2020\_CF109695: Details of the tower and the base façades
5. WHO\_2020\_CF109691: Original and new façades
6. WHO\_2020\_CF109019: The restaurant on the basement floor
7. WHO\_2020\_CF109064: The floor-to-ceiling glazing opens the restaurant to the park
8. WHO\_2020\_CF109052: Three pillars carry the wide roof above the base building
  
9. WHO\_2020\_CF109082: View from the gallery into the restaurant
10. WHO\_2020\_CF109108: The new foyer and the passage to the old building
11. WHO\_2020\_CF109168: The foyer with the entrances to the tower
12. WHO\_2020\_CF109584: The passage from the restaurant to the large hall
13. WHO\_2020\_CF109611: The stairs up into the restaurant
14. WHO\_2020\_CF109562: The «Salle cristal», a separate dining room
15. WHO\_2020\_CF109501: The atrium in the emergency centre
16. WHO\_2020\_CF109573: The large conference hall
17. WHO\_2020\_CF109425: Hallway in front of the lifts
  
18. WHO\_2020\_CF109654: The central atrium in the tower
17. WHO\_2020\_CF109277: Alternating cutouts in the ceilings of the office floors
18. WHO\_2020\_CF109251: View from the first floor up into the atrium
21. WHO\_2020\_CF109647: Coffered ceiling over the atrium
22. WHO\_2020\_CF109617: Coffered and ribbed ceilings in the atrium
23. WHO\_2020\_CF109667: Balustrades of the alternating floors
24. WHO\_2020\_CF109212: The break room on the first floor with a view of the atrium
28. WHO\_2020\_CF109334: Hallway between peripheral offices and the building core
25. WHO\_2020\_CF109674: View from a break room into the offices

### Plans

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1. 03.100 Situation plan (with north on top)
2. 01.212 Office floor plan (2nd floor)
3. 01.209 Base floor plan
4. 01.210 Ground floor plan
  
5. 03.100 Longitudinal section
6. 03.400 View from south-west

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Berrel Berrel Kräutler

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Since graduating in 2003, Maurice Berrel and Raphael Kräutler have been running an architectural practice that now employs 30 people. Their projects are mainly organisationally complex, large-scale buildings of urban planning and architectural relevance that emerge from open competitions. Berrel Kräutler Architekten believe in the immediate value of architecture, and they seek to contribute to a first-rate culture of building with meticulously designed projects that do justice to the requirements of the users, as well as to the surrounding environment. They strive to enhance quality of life.

Other realised buildings

Administration building Pulverstrasse for the DETEC in Ittigen, 2020

Administration building, Geneva, Extension, 2018, with Herzog Architekten

St. Jakobshalle Basel, Extension, 2018, with Degelo Architekten

House Berrel, Rodersdorf, 2016

Buchenholz pavillon für die Swissbau, 2016

Office building Kaiserhof Maltes, 2015, with am-architektur

Orientation school Vouvry, 2013

Fire station Pratteln, 2013

School building with gymnasium, Biel-Benken, 2013, with Zwimpfer Partner

Water reservoir Bruderholz, Basel, 2008

Ernst Koller Pavillon, Basel, 2007

Contact data

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