

Flexibility and Practicality.

The Marburg Building System

SILKE LANGENBERG

Abstract

The Marburg Building System is one of the first of its kind and is probably also the internationally most famous German Building System. It marks the beginning of the doubling of the German University Buildings Stock during the 1960s and 1970s. The aim was to develop a completely open, flexible and also variable building system to fulfil the needs of the first users as well as to provide the opportunity for later changes and refittings. Furthermore it should allow for large extensions, because the belief in continuing growth was still predominant in the 1960s.

The Marburg Building System requires a completely standardised construction. Because of its principle concept, it has to be read as a neutral system, which is independent of its location and use. On the basis of the Marburg Building System it will be investigated, if and how far flexibility and practicality mutually exclude each other; if composition and design of a functional building can follow a purpose which is not clearly defined by its use; how we can deal with the system buildings of the 1960s today and if flexible objects can be preserved, without conflicting with their original concept of changeability.