



The jury appreciated Alexander Fehre's ability to humanize a large workspace with a clever curved layout.

WORK Large Office of the Year

NEUE ARBEITSWELT 205
BY STUDIO
ALEXANDER FEHRE

SCHWÄBISCH GMÜND – ‘Can’t we fight that?’ pleaded Sevil Peach. ‘Offices are not factories! Are we not trying to break that by bringing in some warmth and humanity to our workspaces?’ ‘That’ in this case was desk density. Owing to today’s start-up-like speeds of growth and troublingly escalating real-estate prices, many companies and designers – including even some of the category’s nominees – are forced to choose desk graveyards as the only way to make every square metre count.

Not Alexander Fehre. Neue Arbeitswelt 205 is an old Bosch AS factory converted into an office space for engineers working with car parts – the AS in the name stands for Automotive Steering. Inspired by the roads on which the products are used, Fehre devised a curved pathway that reduces the density of the workstation clusters with dignity. ‘This is not a desk graveyard ... instead, these are intimate human spaces,’ said Peach as she and her fellow jury members examined the floor plans in awe. ‘It’s a considered, thoughtful project, broken down to a human scale.’

The German architect’s thoughtfulness went beyond the layout. He held several workshops with the engineers to find out which tools they were missing and developed a series of custom-made roving workstations that can be steered open and closed, here and away. ‘These hackable spaces and customized elements ... *that’s* designing with humans in mind,’ added jury member Primo Orpilla, Studio O+A cofounder and principal.

And the cherry on top? Fehre’s proposal is a responsible, sustainable investment for the client. Because of the embedded hackability of spaces and furniture, it ends up being, as Lego workplace design global lead Sudhir Saseedharan noted, ‘future-proofed’. – RM

alexanderfehre.de

PEOPLE’S VOTE
Gusto by Gensler