

## VIT showroom, Asperhofen

*Querkraft builds a showroom that singles out serious customers.*

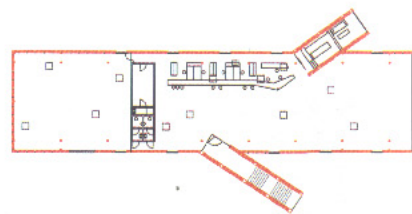
— AUSTRIA — TEXT: OLIVER ELSER, PHOTOGRAPHY: HERTA HURNHAUS

Oswald Vit is what you would call a 'self-made man'. He sells conservatories to people who would never think of going to an architect with their wishes. He wanted a showroom and he owned a site that was much too steep to build on as it was. He hired Querkraft Architects, who were recently shortlisted for the Adidas Brand Center in Herzogenaurach, Germany. In Austria's young and lively architecture scene, their average age of forty makes them almost seniors.

The absurd situation of having to use a slope as a commercial building site would normally create high costs. First, the hill would have to be levelled. At least, so the neighbours thought and put up monstrous retaining walls. Oswald Vit let Querkraft convince him that terracing would not only violate the landscape but also be just as expensive as a tube, perched on numerous little supports, starting at the top of the hill and shooting straight out into space. The tube ends six

metres above ground level with a big window, through which passing drivers can glimpse the conservatories. Through a kind of trunk that extends down from the building, visitors climb a long flight of stairs to reach the showroom. A second trunk reaching upwards houses the office of Oswald Vit. From here he can observe how the cars slow down as they pass by on the motorway.

The businessman has clearly understood that an oversized conservatory would never



have stimulated business but only attracted too many idle viewers. Anyone venturing up the gangway of this building has practically made a purchase already. ←

### VIT WINTERGÄRTEN SHOWROOM, 2002-2004

Architect: Querkraft Architects (Jakob Dunkl, Gerd Erhart, Peter Sapp, Michael Zinner)  
 Client: Oswald Vit  
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