

*Gisbert Poepler on co-curating the show "Between Time" in a historic Berlin building located at Wallstrasse 85 (through Sept. 22):*

I've been observing this building for about 18 years. It has a long history. I live in the area, and I've always wanted to know: Who owns it? What's going to happen to it? It's very strange because it's in the middle of Berlin, but not many people know of it. Since the wall came down, the building hasn't been restored. Now the owner is about to develop it. Before it changes, I had the idea to do an interior-design showroom in this fantastic space.

The owner gave us the space for six weeks. I showed him the concept, and he said, "Go for it." From there, I went to Milan. There's this company there called Dedar that does fabrics, and they gave us a huge amount of fabric. We made big curtains with them, and the upholstery is mostly from them. I also met the people from the furniture company Azucena.

I told both companies, "It will not be a Dedar showroom. It will not be an Azucena showroom. It will show what you can do with interiors." Interiors are not such a big subject yet in Germany. In New York, it's normal to have interior designers. In France and London, too. But in Germany, it's more like, "Oh, my wife does it." So we're developing what you can do with interiors here. We have the vintage pieces, the Azucena furniture, and antique Chinese Art Deco rugs. It's a whole mixture from different periods. It's not about showing one company; it's more about putting things together into a whole.

The colors we chose for the Azucena sofas correspond with the Dedar fabrics and the space's walls. That's mainly our work. Usually we work in existing spaces; we don't build new spaces. It's this whole "in-between" idea, because the building is in between time. The show's up for only six weeks; you will never see it this way again. The owner is looking for someone to buy it. Ideally, it will be an art collector who has a lot of money to show his art to the public. But perhaps someone else will buy it, and then you won't be able to enter the space.

We also chose pieces by Morten Espersen. His sculptures are a nice contrast to the furniture because they're all about surfaces. He does these fantastic surfaces with textures that very much correspond to the space. He also does these very strict forms, but lately he's done free forms. You can see how he completely changed his process. Up until three or four years ago, it was purer Danish design. Now it's a completely different era in his work. We wanted to show both eras.

I work a lot with colors, so on the one hand, the show seems to be a bit eclectic, but at the same time, what I want to achieve is that as you enter the room you immediately feel comfortable. I want to make people aware of the fact that interior design doesn't have to be minimalist all the time. It doesn't have to be gray and beige, gray and beige. I really want to show what is possible when you combine things. These Chinese Art Deco rugs and '70s furniture are from completely different times—they have completely different languages—but they fit together perfectly. —As told to Spencer Bailey

PHOTOS: INTERIORS, WOLFGANG STAHR. ARTWORK, OLE AKHOI.



Chinese Art Deco rug. Writing table, Gisbert Poepler. Armchair, Vico Magistretti.



"Horror Vacui – Noir désir" (2012), Morten Espersen.



Restored vintage club chair with velvet upholstery from Lelievre and cording by Dedar. Paparazzo lamp, Erik Hofstetter.



"Vacui #1577" (2011), Morten Espersen.



Chinese Art Deco rug. Lido lounge chair, Caccia Dominioni for Azucena. Restored vintage club chairs. Sculpture, Shipper Geissler.



"Horror Vacui #1664 - Disclaimed Reflection" (2013), Morten Espersen.



Chinese Art Deco rug. Diesis chaise lounges, Antonio Citterio for B&B Italia.



"Horror Vacui #1665 - Sedated Hermit" (2013), Morten Espersen.



Restored vintage club chair. Paparazzo lamp, Erik Hofstetter. Luis chair, Caccia Dominioni for Azucena.