Kolumba, Museum of the archbishopric Cologne
Between old walls and new architecture

Client
Archbishopric Cologne

Architecture
Peter Zumthor

Construction Period
January to August 2007

Area
320 m²

In the city of the German town of Cologne on the site of the ruined St. Kolumba church, an art museum with courtyard was created by Peter Zumthor's extension to the edge of the architecturally stabilised ruined church. This courtyard is not intended to be an extension of the exhibition area but a space to be used by the visitors to the museum for relaxation and for social events: A quiet courtyard with trees which displays its subtle commune with the architecture in the materialisation of the details. On the two open sides, the museum courtyard is enclosed by a rammed concrete wall. The water-bound cover made of Jurassic limestone mirrors the light-yellow colour of the façade. The gentle site modelling contrasts the clear architectural shapes with more organic stylistic elements and at the same time creates the height required for the planting of the trees. Scattered groups of honey locust trees divide the space into various recreation areas whilst a single sculpture on a stone bench by Hans Josephson provides an overall emphasis.