

## Across the border: Vitra and the trinational museum landscape

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The cultural space of Basel extends into its neighbours. In Weil am Rhein, a few minutes from the Swiss border, the furniture company Vitra, whose owners come from a Basel family, commissioned the Vitra Design Museum from Frank Gehry. Opened in 1989, it was Gehry's first building in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Around it the company assembled a campus of buildings by Zaha Hadid, Tadao Ando, Álvaro Siza, SANAA and Herzog & de Meuron, whose VitraHaus and Schaudepot complete the ensemble.<sup>2</sup> For visitors, the campus is part of a cultural visit to Basel, even though it lies in Germany.

On the French side, Saint-Louis hosts an exhibition space for contemporary art in a converted distillery, while Mulhouse offers museums of industry and technology that recall the region's shared industrial history.<sup>3</sup> Part H described the institutions of cross-border cooperation in the Dreiland and Eucor, the European Campus of the universities of the Upper Rhine.<sup>4</sup> Culture is among the fields where such cooperation is easiest, because exhibitions, concerts and joint tickets require no harmonisation of law. The trinational museum landscape therefore gives the region a coherence that its political structures, divided among three states, have struggled to achieve.

### 1 Notes

1. On the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, designed by Frank Gehry and opened in 1989, and the Vitra Campus, see the publications of Vitra. To be verified. ↩
2. On the fire station by Zaha Hadid (1993), the conference pavilion by Tadao Ando (1993), the VitraHaus (2010) and the Schaudepot (2016) by Herzog & de Meuron and other buildings on the Vitra Campus, see the publications of Vitra. Dates to be verified. ↩

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3. On the Fondation Fernet-Branca in Saint-Louis (opened 2004) and the Cité de l'Automobile and Cité du Train in Mulhouse, see the publications of these institutions. To be verified. ↩
4. On the trinational cooperation in the Upper Rhine region and Eucor – The European Campus, see Part H, Chapter II. To be verified. ↩

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