

A HOUSE ABOVE VIENNA

Azure, August-September 2002



Vienna's a great place but one of the most intriguing views it now offers is not an intended one.

Just in the top of the Austrian Parliament - a big, triumphant, richly decorated neo-classical building - sits a house.

A house, nothing more, grey, with two floors and a sloped roof, absolutely banal. You can find thousands like it in any suburb of the world, but this one is suspended in the air, and in top of the Austrian Legislature from all places.

It looks exactly as Dorothy's house must have looked during the flight to Oz, and it flies with a kind of clumsy sureness more convincing than the elegance of Wright's roofs, or Eiffel's Tower - because it is not *supposed* to fly.

The authoritarian parliament building gets a lot from this cohabitation. It's image is calmed and made more human by the little companion above, while its monumental scale is underlined. The unimpressive, functional house will be totally anonymous in any

other setting. The cohabitation is happy for both, and the huge built mass manages to do something it was certainly not made for - make one smile.

The Österreichsrat, The Austrian Parliament on Vienna's Ringstrasse, was designed by Theophil Hansen and built between 1874-1884. The little structure on top is part of current roof renovation works, built in 2000, is designed by Dipl.-Ing. Herbert BEIER and it is scheduled to stay until 2008.

Photo Irina Suteu.

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