

**Category:** Wayfinding

**Project:** St. Barbara Cemetery, Linz, Austria

**What was the challenge?**

It's not everyday that we get to work for eternity. The story of this cemetery began in the 13th century. At its current location, the St. Barbara Friedhof in Linz, Austria, covers an area of 12 Hectar (29,6 Acres) with around 20.000 graves. Situated right in the centre of the city, it provides a quiet, leafy, space, and citizens are encouraged to make use of its qualities as a refuge, a place of contemplation. However, cemeteries tend look very similar everywhere, and it is hard to make out and remember landmarks. Visitors to funerals are often not locals, and music, literature, theatre and art exhibitions also bring people to the St. Barbara Friedhof who are unfamiliar with the area. Additionally, the new wayfinding system needed to be more than "just" an aid to wayfinding. It should provide a sense of place and identity without intruding on the experience of being there.

**What was the solution?**

- Guiding considerations were:
- respect the space, remain consistent to existing, familiar information elements.
  - use materials that are present in this context such as brass, copper, stone, or wrought iron.
  - visibility, but taking a back seat.
  - modularity for various types of positions.
  - ergonomic and usable for all.

Starting point was the existing information system. The cemetery is divided into plots,

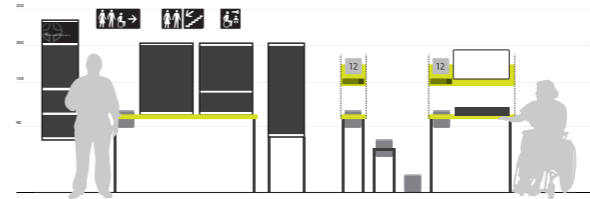
the plots are marked by small sculpted stones with an engraved number. Stones are often hard to see, maybe overgrown or weather-worn. This familiar system was retained and enhanced with new stones physically integrated into the wayshowing elements. They are made up of separate components that cover different levels of functionality depending on how they are assembled:

- Lacquered steel frames and double T-bar legs for various free standing and wall-mounted positions.
- A wide stained-brass "tabletop" slightly tilted towards the reader, mounted at a height accessible for wheelchair users.

It contains the stone with the plot number, a tabletop map or a frame for a standing map. There is also space for tactile

- information and an enamel QR-code.
- An identical small table to hold just the raised stone and tactile information.
- A low frame holding just one raised stone.
- The numbered stone itself also angled forwards and readable from two sides
- The orientation map horizontal with a forward angle or vertical, oriented in viewing direction. Graphic representations of landmarks provide the additional bonus of naming these chapels and monuments which may previously have been anonymous.
- Wall-mounted and free standing panels at entrances and buildings complete the information needs and provide a unified experience.

Water spouts and old stone markers co-exist happily with the new.



**What was the effect?**

The new wayfinding system feels as if it had always been there. It is visible and blends effortlessly into its surroundings. The traditional stone markers were made more noticeable through their modern counterparts which have become touchable, sensory elements. Maps are easy to read and physically accessible for everyone.

Work in progress: the tactile information system combined with QR-code access to location information. This is in the process of being developed in cooperation with representatives of disability organizations. To be completed 2023.

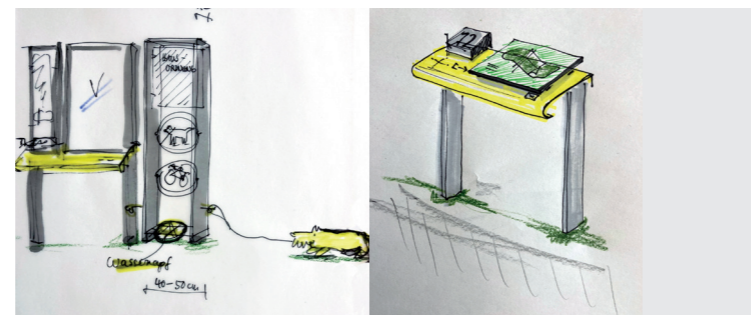
Various elements of the system family.



Space reserved for tactile elements

**Contact:**

name: Christel Schmidt (architect) / Veronika Egger (information designer)  
company/organisation: werkrausch / is-design  
e-mail: cschmidt@werkrausch.at / veronika@egger.pro  
website: werkrausch.at / is-design.at  
client: St. Barbara Gottesackerstiftung, www.barbarafriedhof.at  
images: C. Frauscher, C. Schmidt, V. Egger



First sketches



From full scale cardboard models to prototypes.

