

LIGHT HOUSES

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ON THE NORDIC COMMON GROUND
13TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA
NORDIC PAVILION
29 AUGUST – 25 NOVEMBER, 2012

MUSEUM OF FINNISH ARCHITECTURE / MFA.FI



LIGHT HOUSES: ON THE NORDIC COMMON GROUND
Created for the 13th International Architecture Exhibition
la Biennale di Venezia

FIRST PRESENTATION
Nordic Pavilion 29 August – 25 November, 2012

ORGANIZERS
Museum of Finnish Architecture
In collaboration with the Swedish Museum of Architecture and
The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (Norway)

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PROJECT & PRACTICE DESCRIPTIONS
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CONTENTS

LETTER TO THE ARCHITECTS	6
FOREWORD BY JUULIA KAUSTE	7
CURATOR'S STATEMENT BY PETER MACKEITH	9
LIGHT HOUSES/SPECIFICATIONS	13
THAM & VIDEGÅRD ARCHITECTS	15
TYIN TEGNESTUE ARCHITECTS	17
NORDMARK & NORDMARK	19
SANAKSENAHO ARCHITECTS	21
FANTASTIC NORWAY	23
ALA ARCHITECTS	25
KJELLANDER+SJÖBERG ARCHITECTS	27
ATELIER OSLO	29
MARGE ARCHITECTS	31
LUNDÉN ÖSTERLUND WIKAR	33
IN PRAISE OF SHADOWS ARCHITECTURE	35
VERSTAS ARCHITECTS	37
SPACE GROUP	39
JKMM ARCHITECTS	41
MANTHEY KULA	43
JARMUND/VIGSNÆS ARCHITECTS	45
GENERAL ARCHITECTURE	47
REIULF RAMSTAD ARCHITECTS	49
AVANTO ARCHITECTS	51
PETRA GIPP ARKITEKTUR	53
ELDING OSCARSON	55
K2S ARCHITECTS	57
ARKITEKTSTUDIO WIDJEDAL RACKI	59
ANTTINEN OIVA ARCHITECTS	61
BRENDELAND & KRISTOFFERSEN ARCHITECTS	63
HOLLMÉN REUTER SANDMAN ARCHITECTS	65
HAPPYSPACE	67
HAUGEN/ZOHAR ARKITEKTER (HZA)	69
NOW	71
C-O-M-B-I-N-E	73
LASSILA HIRVILAMMI ARCHITECTS	75
RINTALA EGGERTSSON ARCHITECTS	77

Dear Architect,

The Museum of Finnish Architecture is the coordinating institution for The Nordic Pavilion at the 13th Biennale di Venezia in Venice, Italy, for which it has sole curatorial responsibility for the exhibition to be presented in 2012. The Biennale is scheduled to open in late August, 2012 and close in mid-November. This important bi-annual exhibition of contemporary Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian architecture is situated in the Nordic Pavilion designed by Pritzker-Prize winning architect Sverre Fehn.

As Director of the Museum of Finnish Architecture, I am writing to invite you to participate in The Nordic Pavilion exhibition as a representative of Finnish/Swedish/Norwegian architecture. 10–11 architects from each of the three nations will be selected by the curator to participate in the exhibition. As detailed on the accompanying specification sheet, each architect/practice is being invited to contribute a small, site-specific, highly tactile construction, reflective of the architect's own design principles and responsive to the qualities of Sverre Fehn's 1962 Pavilion and the city of Venice. Collectively, these 32 commissioned designs will be presented as an exhibition entitled "LIGHT HOUSES: On the Nordic Common Ground."

This year's architecture Biennale is directed overall by British architect David Chipperfield, with an announced theme of "Common Ground." A short description of these ambitions is attached to this letter. While this theme will be reflected in several group exhibitions at the Biennale selected and curated by Mr. Chipperfield, we feel strong affinities with the stated directions of the larger vision.

The exhibition in the Nordic Pavillion will be curated by Peter MacKeith, Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Architecture at the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis. He is a member of the Finnish Cultural Institute in New York advisory board and is

Adjunct Associate Curator for Architecture and Design at the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum in St. Louis. He has worked in both the United States and Finland and has written and lectured extensively in the United States, Finland, and across the Nordic countries on contemporary Nordic and Finnish architecture. He is currently engaged in a project focused on a comprehensive review and evaluation of Nordic architecture, both contemporary and traditional, entailing a publication as well as a research seminar and an exhibition.

The Nordic Pavilion is a "sacred ground" for Nordic architecture, and the exhibitions placed into it require both strong conceptual ideas and skillful determination of contents and installation. To represent the diversity and vitality of contemporary Nordic architecture, on behalf of three nations, is no small task. The Museum looks forward to working with you in this challenging endeavor and to receiving your acceptance of this invitation. We hope very much you to confirm your willingness to participate no later than May 21. We will inform you about the final selection of the curator by May 30.

Sincerely,



Julia Kauste, Director
Museum of Finnish Architecture

LIGHT HOUSES: ON THE NORDIC COMMON GROUND

The Nordic Pavilion is jointly managed by Finland, Norway and Sweden. Every six years, each of the participating countries, represented by their own architecture museums, is in charge of the organization and curation of the exhibition to be staged in the Pavilion during the Biennale, with the other two institutions as collaborative partners. In 2012, the role of the chief organizer came to Finland and the Museum of Finnish Architecture. We have chosen to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Pavilion – designed by Sverre Fehn and inaugurated in 1962 – by highlighting the work of the younger generations of Nordic architects through a presentation of 32 installations specifically created for the space of the Pavilion by 32 architects.

Each participating architect/practice has been invited to contribute a small, site specific, highly tactile construction, reflective of the architect's own design principles and responsive to the qualities of Sverre Fehn's 1962 Pavilion and the city of Venice. Collectively, these commissioned designs are presented as an exhibition entitled *LIGHT HOUSES: On the Nordic Common Ground*. Through these constructions, the exhibition presents a multi-faceted, diverse "idea" or "identity" of Nordic architecture and culture. The exhibition provides a figurative, collective "common ground" of Nordic architectural and cultural representation. Attuned to contemporary Nordic issues of economic and environmental ethics, this exhibition of "light houses" also presents a contribution to the larger global discussion on architecture and its role in society.

The exhibition process has been a means of developing not only 32 site-specific projects for the Pavilion, but

also of developing "common grounds" of discussion and critique among the participating architects, through a series of workshop meetings held in May and June at the collaborating museum institutions. It has been a great pleasure to see the work and thought process of each of the participating architects come together to form one chorus of diverse voices. Each project remains reflective of Nordic culture and architecture in a highly personal way. Through the exercise of collaboration with our colleagues and partner institutions in Norway and Sweden, this process has provided us an excellent platform for learning about working together and respecting each other for the valuable contribution and insight that each of us has to offer.

I want to express my gratitude to Peter MacKeith, the curator and designer of the exhibition. His unwavering belief in the power of a process of dialogue and collaboration, has made it possible for us to achieve an exhibition bringing together such a large number of Nordic voices. I also want to thank Juhani Pallasmaa for his elegant pedestal design for the installations. I appreciate the hard work and professional attitude of Philip Tidwell and Kristiina Nivari along with the whole MFA team in managing the practical realization of the project. Finally, I wish to acknowledge our supporters who have made all this possible: the Ministry of Education and Culture/Finland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norway, The Nordic Culture Fund and World Design Capital Helsinki 2012.

Julia Kauste, Director/Commissioner
Museum of Finnish Architecture



PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

ELÄMYS

AN OPEN HOUSE, A LIGHT HOUSE

Welcome. Tervetuloa. Välkommen. Benvenuti. The Nordic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale is an open house, both as architecture and as event; in Finnish, we would say *avoimet ovet* (literally “open doors”) and communicate both meanings simultaneously. The Pavilion is also a “light house” of simplicity and luminosity, a structure designed for essential shelter and natural illumination.

The LIGHT HOUSES exhibition draws together in this open room thirty-two invited younger voices in contemporary Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian architecture. Each participant has provided for the installation a specially designed and constructed conceptual “light house,” appropriate in scale, form, and material to the Pavilion’s spatial and atmospheric character, and resonant with the fundamental principles and sensibilities of each contributing architect or practice. These are architects new and established, urban and rural, less-renowned and more highly-publicized. Enter, please, into this active, thoughtful community; enter into these animated conversations; enter into this chorus of Nordic voices in architecture.

Many of these constructions stand elevated on legged steel pedestals, a very few are necessarily bound by their mass closer to the Pavilion’s marble-tiled floor and a select number hover suspended in the limpid Venetian air, at different levels of levitation. Their qualities of “light-ness,” reflective of the Pavilion’s own qualities, may be demonstrated through considerations of materiality, luminosity, density, or fragility, among many possibilities. Their qualities of “house-ness,”

equally redolent of the Pavilion, may be demonstrated through considerations of site, structure, space, or enclosure, among others. To build “lightly,” within a Nordic culture of “noble poverty (to quote Finnish historian Matti Klinge),” is to build within an elected economy of means and with sensitivity to site and culture; to build “lightly” is therefore to build responsibly and ethically.¹ In essence, the LIGHT HOUSES exhibition proposes the means to contemplate these essential concerns and phenomena of architecture, with the open house, the light house, of the Pavilion as both instruction and inspiration.

A NORDIC COMMON GROUND

The Nordic Pavilion, designed and completed by architect Sverre Fehn in 1962, is a distilled, elegant construction of a Nordic “light house” – a design evoking sensations of light, material, structure, space, nature, and atmosphere. The Pavilion presents what might be called a metaphysical house of the North – even a luminous sense of Nordic “home” – one of specific primary architectural images, elements, and details. In these ways, the Nordic Pavilion is the physical and metaphorical “common ground” for Finland, Sweden and Norway.

On the 50th anniversary of this iconic building, the LIGHT HOUSES exhibition is firstly a deserved celebration of the Pavilion’s duration and qualities, and by extension, of Sverre Fehn’s lasting presence in Nordic architectural culture – indeed, in world architecture culture. The Museum of Finnish Architecture in collaboration with The Swedish Museum of Architecture and The National Museum of Art, Architecture and

potency in the translation. The Finnish word connotes an enriched understanding of experience – of a space or place, of a moment in time – one that is not merely enjoyable in a directly physical way, or aesthetic in a cognitive awareness of forms and colors, but occurs to a profound depth of emotional resonance. For an architect, such an experience often compels an immediate desire to know how such a place was constructed, then designed, then conceived; to seek out the means by which such a phenomenon was reified, and perhaps, in time, to be afforded the opportunity to evoke a similar depth of experience in others through their own designed construction. For the architects presented here in the Nordic Pavilion, each of their Light Houses is such a small opportunity, an attempt to manifest phenomena, and a proposal of an enriched experience.

If this is simultaneously a time of constrained or diminishing economic and environmental circumstances, and yet of dynamic, expanding flows of people, products, finances, and information, then the architect's task – their responsibility – becomes both problematic and vital. In an architect's valuation of material, labor and technology, in his or her ability to comprehend and express societal values of education, health, and community, in their ambition to shape our experience of time by ordering procession and activity, the greater qualitative depths of life may still emerge. By creating conditions for the possibility of solitude or participation in community, or by concentrating attention on the intimate human actions of vision and grasp, the architect may still make places of deeper experience, of momentary stasis, of appreciation, affection and dignity. Perhaps this is only a temporary, even romantic, resistance, but the consistent and continuing examples of this quality of experience available in the architecture of the Nordic countries indicates that this remains an active resistance, fueled by an active pursuit of such phenomenal depths, and supported by an engaged society and culture.

The LIGHT HOUSES exhibition is intended as a set of gentle manifestos, of singular moments of intensified experience. The Nordic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale is a privileged place, a sacred ground of sorts, and one from which it is only possible to hope for a greater transmissibility of these small-scaled expressions of architectural ambitions and aspirations. But hope, as Alvar Aalto was fond of saying, “is the patron saint of Architecture,” asserting further that “architecture may not be able to save the world, but perhaps it can set a small example.” The Nordic Pavilion's small examples of phenomenal experience may yet find transference to the larger world outside the Giardino, bringing such sensations of fragility and density, of illumination and inspiration, of contemplation and repose, to the simple moments of everyday experience.

Peter MacKeith, Curator

NOTES

¹Matti Klinge, “The North, Nature and Poverty,” *Let Us Be Finns: Essays on History* (Helsinki, 1990: Otava Publishing Company), pp. 7–20.

²As quoted in: Per Olaf Fjeld, *Sverre Fehn: The Pattern of Thoughts* (New York, 2009: The Monacelli Press), pp. 61–62.

³Thomas Paulsson, *Scandinavian Architecture: Buildings and Society in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, from the Iron Age until Today* (Newton, Massachusetts, 1959: C. T. Bradford and Co); Nils-Ole Lund, *Nordic Architecture* (Copenhagen, 2008: The Danish Architectural Press), Translation James Manley, Editor Marianne Amundsen; Marian C. Donnelly, *Architecture in the Scandinavian Countries* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991: The MIT Press); Henry Plummer, *Nordic Light: Modern Scandinavian Architecture* (London, 2012: Thames & Hudson), Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Nightlands: Nordic Building* (Cambridge, Massachusetts / London, England, 1996: The MIT Press), *New Nordic – Architecture and Identity* (Humblebaek, Denmark, 2012: Louisiana Museum of Art), editors Kjeld Kjeldsen, Jeanne Rank Schelde, Michael Asgaard Andersen, Michael Juul Holm. Published on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name, Louisiana Museum June 29 – October 21, 2012. Portions of this paragraph are drawn from my catalog essay, “The Building Art, the Social Art: Reflections on a Nordic Public Architecture,” pp.134–155.

⁴*Northern Factor: New Generation of the North* (Helsinki, 1997: Museum of Finnish Architecture).

CURATOR

Peter MacKeith is Associate Dean, Associate Professor and Adjunct Associate Curator for Architecture and Design at the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. Since receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to Finland in 1990, he has worked as a liaison between the architectural cultures of the Nordic countries and the United States as a designer, educator, researcher, and author. He serves on the Advisory Board of the Finnish Cultural Institute in New York and is Honorary Consul for Finland in Missouri.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Juulia Kauste, director of the Museum of Finnish Architecture and Commissioner of the 2012 Nordic Pavilion, and to the MFA Board, for this privileged opportunity. The directors and staff of the collaborating institutions – Nina Berre, Eva Madhus, and Jérémie McGowan of the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (Norway), and Lena Rahoult, Malin Zimm and Karin Waern of the Museum of Swedish Architecture, Stockholm, Sweden – have provided support and guidance.

Kristiina Nivari, assistant director of the MFA and Deputy Commissioner of the Nordic Pavilion, and MFA staff members Hannu Hellman, Juho Haavisto, Salla Bedard and Hanna Galtat have been enthusiastic and supportive colleagues throughout the process. Philip Tidwell, assistant curator and designer, has been a dedicated, tireless, and inventive collaborator. Juhani Pallasmaa designed the installation pedestals from his summer retreat; such commitment must be recognized, along with his overall support and counsel. Carmon Colangelo, dean of the Sam Fox School of Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis, and Bruce Lindsey, dean of Architecture at the Sam Fox School, have graciously allowed me a window of time in which to work on this project.

Equal measures of appreciation and admiration are due to the thirty-two architects and practices who accepted the invitation and prepared their installation projects under a tight schedule (on the verge of the Nordic summer holiday), with tight resources; their contributions constitute the exhibition. It has been my good fortune to work with all participants, to know and acknowledge so many as friends, but to recognize them all as professionals of passion and commitment to their art.

LIGHT HOUSES

PURPOSES

I. The Nordic Pavilion, built in 1962, designed by Sverre Fehn, is 50 years old this summer. The Nordic Pavilion represents the “idea” or “identity” of Nordic architecture and culture, in Venice. The Nordic Pavilion provides to Finland, Sweden and Norway our literal “common ground” for the Biennale: a minimal “house” of light, material, structure, and space.

II. The Nordic Pavilion 2012 will mark its 50 years through a gathering of contemporary voices in Nordic architecture, a selective group of approximately 30 architects, born after 1962, the year when the Pavilion was inaugurated. The Nordic Pavilion 2012 will present a multi-faceted, diverse “idea” or “identity” of Nordic architecture and culture, through commissioned, site-specific, small-scale constructions: “light houses.”

The small-scale constructions will be installed throughout the Pavilion to their maximum advantage. Each architect/practice is invited to contribute a small, site-specific, highly tactile construction, reflective of the architect's own design principles and responsive to the qualities of Sverre Fehn's 1962 Pavilion and the city of Venice. Collectively, these commissioned designs will be presented as an exhibition entitled *LIGHT HOUSES: on the Nordic Common Ground*. The Nordic Pavilion 2012 will provide a figurative, collective “common ground” of Nordic architectural and cultural representation, an exhibition of “light houses” attuned to contemporary Nordic issues of economic and environmental ethics.

SPECIFICATIONS

Each participant/practice is asked to design and construct at full-scale (or rather, without scale) a LIGHT HOUSE – a small architectonic “identity-box” – condensing and depicting a distilled perception(s) of the Nordic “common ground” constituted by:

- 1) the architectural character (site, material, tectonics, light) of The Nordic Pavilion;
- 2) the environmental/cultural character of the Nordic region;
- 3) the principles and techniques central to the individual participant/practice

DIMENSIONS

In height, length and width, the “identity-box” is limited to a cubic volume of space, 600 mm x 600 mm x 600 mm. The construction of the exhibition should imply, or be in actual consonance with, the cubic dimensions of the spatial volume. It is not possible to exceed these planar boundaries in the construction. The construction can be designed to be supported from the floor of the Pavilion, in which case there is no weight restriction, or the construction can be designed to be suspended from the beams of the Pavilion, in which case the construction is not to exceed 15 kilograms in weight.

MATERIALS/ATTRIBUTES

There is no material restriction on the materials of the construction itself. However, it needs to be taken into account that the conditions in Venice and in the Nordic Pavilion itself are extremely humid. Artifacts, texts, instruments, etc., are all possible for inclusion. Appeals to all the senses are STRONGLY recommended for tactile employment and apprehension. However, it needs to be born in mind that there will be large numbers of visitors to the Pavilion, so the construction should be designed to withstand the heavy traffic of visitors. If necessary, it is also possible to have the construction protected by a protective cover. The construction is to be approachable and viewable from 5 faces. The exhibition intends to be collectively and individually highly tactile, resonant, and inter-active.

EXHIBITION DESIGN/INSTALLATION

The organizer/curator will be providing standard supports and installations for the constructions, as specified by the participating designs. The standard supports will be designed as background elements for the constructions. The placement and adjacencies of the LIGHT HOUSE constructions will be determined by the organizing institution/curator. Participants can indicate a preference for particular areas or positions in the Pavilion.

ECONOMY/MEANING

Each participant/practice will receive a honorarium of XXX euros as seed financing for the design and construction of the LIGHT HOUSE. Participants are not limited to this economy, but are encouraged to seek a maximum of meaning from an economy of means.



MIKAEL OLSSON

ÅKE ESON LINDMAN

THAM & VIDEGÅRD ARKITEKTER

MIRRORCUBE : A CONTEXTUAL READING

The issue we would like to address, in relation to a possible Nordic architecture, is the relationship between nature and architecture. Beginning with our interest in multiple contexts, this relationship is an investigation we pursue in our practice and in every project. It has resulted in a contextual approach where the analysis of a site and the interpretation of a functional program can lead to an architecture that is mixed, intertwined, and integrated with nature.

As a vehicle to communicate this relationship we have chosen to use our project for a Tree Hotel in Harads. It is a minimal structure that makes it possible to rest in the midst of a deep wild forest in the far north of Sweden. The reduced architecture we proposed, the Mirrorcube, is a very small space that depends entirely on the quality of its surroundings, the light conditions, and the strong material presence of the forest. The tall pines constitute its surroundings and also carry the room itself. Our Light House presented at the Nordic Pavilion is a distilled version of the observations that inspired the Tree Hotel; a simultaneously direct and conceptual relation to nature, the Nordic light, the trees, and the sky.

The built Mirrorcube is a reflective box on a forested hill, close to the Arctic Circle. It is a shelter up in the trees, a lightweight aluminum structure hung around a tree trunk, measuring only 4x4x4 meters and clad in mirrored glass. The exterior reflects the surroundings and the sky, creating a camouflaged refuge. The construction alludes to man's relationship to nature: how we equip ourselves with sophisticated technology to deal with harsh climates, but also have the desire to explore nature at its most wild and fundamental level. The Mirrorcube becomes the physical expression of these ideas, a dream of a secluded hide-out away from civilization.

PRACTICE

Tham & Videgård Arkitekter is a progressive and contemporary practice that focuses on architecture and design – from large scale urban planning to buildings, interiors and objects.

The practice objective is to create distinct and relevant architecture with the starting point resting within the unique context and specific conditions of the individual project. Commissions include public, commercial and private clients, in Sweden and abroad.

Tham & Videgård's approach to architecture is inclusive; with practical, theoretical, social and environmental issues analyzed and integrated within the process. The office combines a search for straight forward solutions with extensive research. The method of work encourages innovative thinking to drive the development of the project, which in turn facilitates its subsequent realization within the logic of efficient contemporary production.

From working with and completing several public-, educational-, exhibition- and commercial buildings, the Tham & Videgård team is experienced in managing projects that comply with the highest international standards regarding climate, security and long term sustainability.

Key projects are the Archipelago House (2004), the Kalmar Museum of Art (2008), the Moderna Museet Malmö (2010), the Tree Hotel (2010), the Tellus Nursery School (2010) and the New School of Architecture in Stockholm (ongoing, –2015).

Tham & Videgård Arkitekter are based in Stockholm, Sweden, and directed by co-founders and chief architects Bolle Tham and Martin Videgård.

www.tvark.se/



PASIAALTO



TYIN TEGNESTUE ARCHITECTS

THE TYIN ARCHITECTS TOOLBOX

The TYIN Architects Toolbox™ contains everything needed to create useful, beautiful, and necessary structures in any circumstance. TYIN Architects Toolbox™ is mobile, sturdy, practical, and simple to use. Bring it along when you are starting a new project and see the value of using these simple methods and tools. Your architecture and everyone involved will benefit from the results when using TYIN Architects Toolbox™.

The tools you find in your TYIN Architects Toolbox™ will help you in implementing your ideas. The hand tools are useful when you need to solve basic issues, such as construction and shaping the chosen materials. Furthermore, the abstract tools available will be crucial when facing the social and mental challenges that lie beneath the surface of the situation. The TYIN Architects Toolbox™ contains practical tips on how to proceed with projects with tight schedules, and limited budgets and resources.

The TYIN Architects Toolbox™ is developed by professionals through practical experience and field-tested under extreme conditions. It is sturdy and can easily be sent by any mode of transport without danger to the contents.

PRACTICE

TYIN tegnestue Architects was established in 2008. The office has completed several projects in poor and underdeveloped areas of Thailand, Burma, Haiti and Uganda. Solutions to real and fundamental challenges call for an architecture where everything serves a purpose – an architecture that follows necessity. By involving local populations actively in both the design and building of their projects, TYIN are able to establish a framework for mutual exchange of knowledge and skills. All materials used in TYIN 's projects are collected close to the sites or purchased from local merchants.

TYIN is currently run by Masters of Architecture Andreas G. Gjertsen and Yashar Hanstad, and has its headquarters in the Norwegian city of Trondheim. TYIN has won several international awards and their projects have been published and exhibited worldwide.

www.tyintegnestue.no/



EUROBILD

NORDMARK & NORDMARK

OCULAROFON

Our approach follows the site-specific approach of Sverre Fehn, in which the visitor, the exhibition objects, and the Nordic Pavilion collectively become the context. As architecture is a place for interaction, so the object intends to strengthen the link between the room and people in the room and to encourage communication.

Light and sound resonant in a shape inspired by Fehn's work, in an abstract form to open and expand thoughts, questions, and interaction. The black matte surface absorbs light and the contrast makes the light of the Pavilion more visible. The object is a view-finder, privileging the visitor's sense of sight; the visions afforded by the multiple and changing views highlight Fehn's approach to the interaction of architecture and nature.

The view-finder also thus visualizes the Pavilion as a symbol of sustainability. The main issue for architects in environmental and economic matters is to make architecture that will remain attractive and useful over time.

At the same time as the shape collects the light of the Pavilion and frames a selected view, it can also amplify the human voice. When used as a megaphone, the sound of a voice occupies the Pavilion. Thus, anyone can communicate their opinion, a necessity in building a democratic and sustainable society.

PRACTICE

Architecture is created through the interactions of people. Similarly, the qualities of any work of architecture emerge through its interaction with people. With a combination of intuition and concrete analysis, the result is at the once poetic, functional and rational. Our goal is to create spaces that affect all of our senses and help us be present. Through visibility and contrast, we develop the identity of each site to enhance one's experience of it. In this pursuit, our roots are ever present. We come from a culture with a distinct character – at once strong but low key, simple but elegant.

www.nordmarknordmark.se/



LAURI MANNERMAA

SANAKSENAHO ARCHITECTS

LIGHTHOUSE

The exhibition object is a miniature model of a lighthouse situated in the archipelago of Finland. The scale of the model is 1:40. It is an abstraction which reflects the architecture of Sanaksenaho Architects' office.

The volume is a simple and sensitive form made of alder wood. The curved forms are familiar in our design expression. Many times the buildings designed by the office hint at boats, ships, and fishes, all dynamic organic forms. The inspiration of Nordic nature, this special kind of northern light and shadow, gives the guiding idea to our buildings.

The wooden volume is pleasant to touch. The object gives a scent of tar. An architecture for many senses, giving people emotional contact to their environment, is the approach of Sanaksenaho Architects design. Material plays an important role in the buildings. The office likes to use natural materials with their pure character, materials which have a long relationship with a human being. For this exhibition object, alder wood is chosen. Alder wood is a traditional material in Finland, beautiful with its reddish tone, and one most beloved by the office. The pedestal plate is made of hot rolled steel with its natural character. The steel is an abstraction of the water above which the lighthouse rises. Water and forms adapted to water also play an important role in Venice.

The lighthouse is a tower. In its proportions and vertical character the lighthouse hints also to the body of a human being; the curves of a leg or a breast are there. The proportions are like a tall man or woman standing in the exhibition hall. In this way architecture can also be human. The tower is in dialogue with the Nordic Pavilion's interior. The vertical object stands as a counterpoint to the horizontal exhibition space. The forms, materials, and atmosphere of the lighthouse become visible in the beautiful natural light of the Pavilion.

PRACTICE

The office was founded in Helsinki in 1991 after the honorary prize in the competition for the Swedish Museum of Modern Art. The partners of the firm are architects Matti Sanaksenaho (b. 1966) and Pirjo Sanaksenaho (b. 1966) who both studied architecture in Helsinki University of Technology and earned their Master's degree in 1993.

Matti Sanaksenaho's previous works include the Finnish Pavilion in Seville World EXPO in 1992 which he designed together with the group Monark. The most important projects of the office are sculptural and simple with pure materials. The other break-through was St Henry's Ecumenical Art Chapel in Turku, which is a copper clad small wooden church shaped like an up-turned boat.

Sanaksenaho Architects has also been involved with a few projects in China. The Villa for CIPEA architecture exhibition area will be finished in 2012 in Nanjing. Another villa for Ordos100-project area in Inner Mongolia is still waiting for realization.

The most recent building by the office is the extension of the Students' Health Care Building in Helsinki which stands as a solid red-brick volume in the old city space beside the older part of the complex from the 1970's.

The meaning of the empty space between and inside the buildings is one of the most important themes which is repeated in the works of Sanaksenaho Architects. The aim is to create timeless architecture that speaks to people on an emotional level.

www.kolumbus.fi/sanaksenaho/



FANTASTIC NORWAY

FANTASTIC NORWAY

SILENT BELL

The piece displayed in Venice is a wooden bell suspended from the Nordic Pavilion structure. The bell itself is a gift from Fantastic Norway to Utøya, the island where 69 people lost their lives on July 22nd 2011.

Fantastic Norway has for the last year been working on the re-establishment of the political camp on the island of Utøya. The project for the new camp has been discussed and designed through a close dialogue with the Labour Youth party, who owns the island. The project can be described as a social village, a closely-knit network of several individual houses and outdoor spaces.

Centrally located in the village, a new belfry defines the main square on the island. The word belfry comes from the Old French *berfrei*, derived from the Germanic *bergan* (to protect) and *frithuz* (peace); that is to say, a belfry was originally a watchtower providing protection against hostile incursions. Having the recent incident on the island in mind, we were instinctively drawn to integrating a belfry with a bell into the design of the island.

The traditional metal bell in the belfry has been replaced with one made of turned wood. This is a reference to the Christian tradition in some countries where, before the Easter celebrations, the steel bells were replaced with wooden, "silent" bells as a mark of respect for, and in memory of, lost ones.

At the end of the Venice Biennale 2012, the wooden bell will be transported to Utøya where it will be placed in the belfry on the new main square.

PRACTICE

Fantastic Norway was founded in 2004. The primary ambition was to create an open, inclusive and socially aware architectural practice and to re-establish the role of the architect as an active participant in and a builder of society.

Fantastic Norway has generated attention and discussion about architecture in Norway by actively using media, mobilization and stunt architecture to create friction and debate. The heart and soul of the practice is a red caravan that functions as a mobile platform for architectural discussions, debates and workshops. Fantastic Norway uses the caravan when they gather ideas, suggestions and local knowledge for the projects they work on and utilize the collected information in the design process. Projects are stitched together by the stories and lives of the people involved.

We believe every town is different; every place is in some way fantastic. Fantastic Norway aims to embrace this fact and through dialogue transform it into architecture.

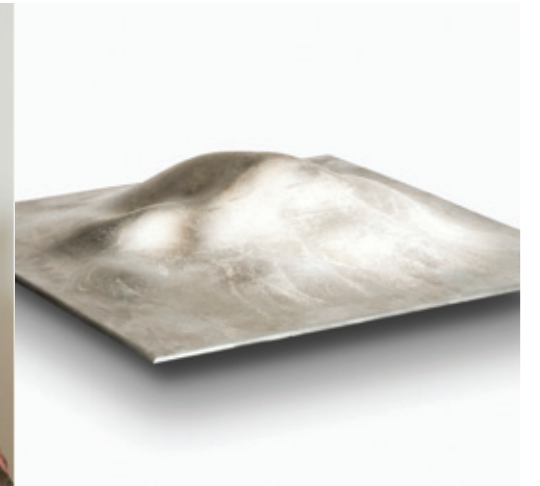
"Building" is not merely a physical notion: Architects can also build identity, pride, cohesion and strategies. We believe that every design process needs to embrace this fact, to truly reveal the potential of the local and for the architect to gain the "silent knowledge": knowledge you cannot read out of maps and statistics; the knowledge only the locals possess.

Fantastic Norway is established as a response to how globalization flattens local diversity and identity. Our device for addressing and solving this challenge is a red caravan.

www.fantasticnorway.no/



ALA ARCHITECTS



ALA ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

In our work, we often first organize the room programme as simplistically as we humanly can, then “overlay” the visual, more intuitive message, generating the architectural scheme. Our entry for the Warsaw Museum of Modern Art consisted of a flat surface, as the surface for direct literal communication and another, almost surreal spatial surface, which works on more intuitive levels. The flat wall acted as “the fourth wall”, a concept of theater articulated by Diderot, acknowledging the presence of an imaginary, transparent “wall” between the audience and events occurring on-stage. This is the surface which everyone accepts as separating reality from fantasy; often the stage opening of a proscenium theatre. In the Warsaw MoMA this surface is the flat wall, separating the works of art from the city. In our design for the Theatre and Concert Hall in Kristiansand, Kilden, it is the undulating oak wall separating the halls from the main foyer and the fjord outside. One must break the fourth wall to access the inside, the content. Form is also used as a sign for content; in Warsaw the form encompasses the room programme as if it was vacuum packaged. In Kristiansand the oak wall describes the rakes of the main auditoriums; presenting the fact the building has several halls.

The form here is a vacuum surface laid onto a man in fetal position. The human body is our common denominator, our common ground.

There is a Finnish phrase describing our Nordic safe haven in contrast to the rest of the world: *Lintukoto*, the bird’s home. *Lintukoto* is a mythical place, a very tight place between the edge of the dome of the sky and earth, where birds migrate to and where a very small people live.

PRACTICE

ALA is a Finnish partnership practicing architecture and urbanism. We challenge ourselves to provide alternatives, develop prototypes and look for innovations. We believe in creating beauty with a design approach which combines the intuitive with the analytic and the practical with the extravagant.

ALA has offices in Helsinki and Kristiansand, with projects ranging from cultural venues to housing areas and underground stations to high-rise developments. The leading partners at ALA are Juho Grönholm, Antti Nousjoki, Janne Teräsvirta and Samuli Woolston.

ALA has recently completed Kilden Performing Arts Center in Kristiansand, a project combining three local cultural institutions: Opera South, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra and Agder Theatre.

Projects currently under construction include the Otaniemi and Keilaniemi metro stations and the Kuopio City Theatre renovation and extension. ALA is currently designing Lappeenranta City Theatre, a theatre placed on top of a shopping center, Cloud City, a bipolar mixed use project in downtown Helsinki and Leijona Tower, expected to become the tallest building in Finland.

ALA won the Finnish State Prize for Architecture in 2012 and the Pietilä Prize for Architecture in 2008. ALA has won 16 prizes in architectural competitions internationally. The partners are active in teaching, writing, lecturing and jurying competitions.

www.ala.fi/



ANNA-LENA AHLSTRÖM

KJELLANDER+SJÖBERG

LIGHT. In northern Europe, daylight is precious. Our starting point was the Scandinavian summer-evening light, which to us represents a special situation, an almost physical space or topography. It is a magical time of day, where events and objects are not as clearly defined in shape and meaning. Objects appear to switch places, colour or character, not unlike Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*...

This specific light, when refracted in the atmosphere, introduces simultaneously the warm reddish-orange spectrum and – as a contrast – the colder bluish light of the sky, caught by greenery, trees, and various shades of the surroundings. These two opposites form a full picture or experience – a perception of reality, at a specific moment.

IN-BETWEEN SPACE. To us, one of the fundamental questions formulated during our working process regards what takes place in between the question of making space and leaving space. What happens? How does one space affect another? Which sequences of serial experiences are developed? What can be achieved with architecture? This leads us to develop intermediate spaces between landscape, city, and architecture.

CONTEXT. We see the Light House as a response to and comment upon Sverre Fehn's Nordic Pavilion, a dialogue in structure and space. Here, there is a focus on daylight and nature; here, for most of the day an even light falls from above, into a continuous free-flowing space punctuated by contrasting tree trunks. Is this structure general – allowing for improvisation and open to use and interpretation – or is it specific?

We see architecture as a means to expand the context. To change or bend the existing plot, add or remove programs, activities, and definitions. In this way, architecture influences and transforms the context and, vice versa, the context shapes the architecture.

PRACTICE

The architecture of Kjellander+Sjöberg exhibits a high degree of naturalness. Of course, architecture is never entirely natural; it is always an exception, and an intensification of the everyday from which it inevitably stands out. Ola Kjellander and Stefan Sjöberg show that it is possible to give shape to this exceptionality in a seemingly casual manner. Their architecture assimilates the everyday without allowing itself to be entirely overwhelmed by it.

They deal with context in the same way – by anchoring a building in the city or the landscape, by finding cues in themes and motifs from the surroundings, by extending a building beyond its external walls. In the work of Kjellander+Sjöberg the context is not an occasion for mimicry but rather for seeking connections with the surroundings and for creating coherence between the building and its site.

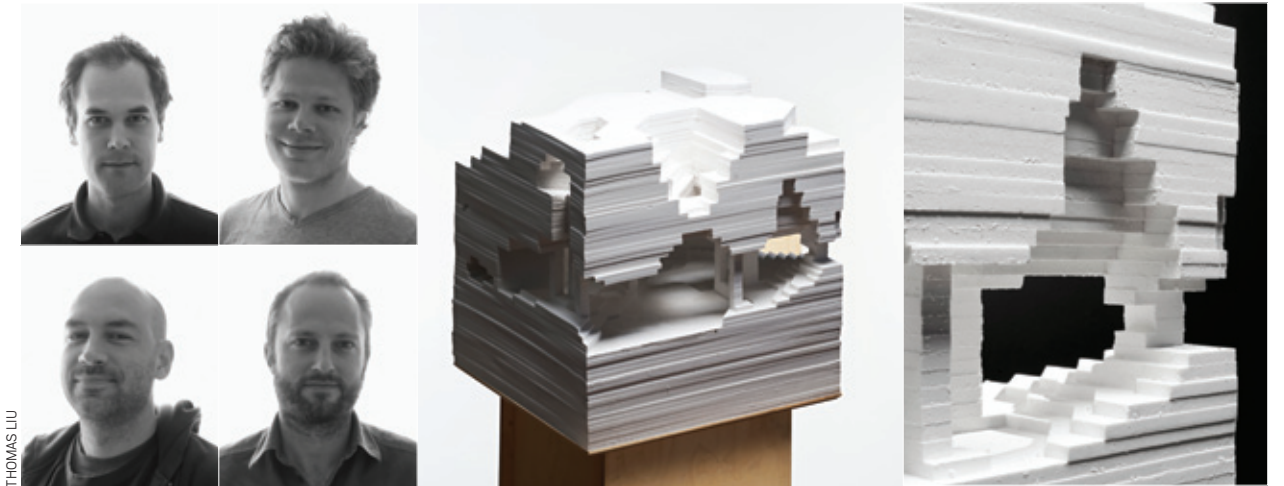
In many of their projects, Kjellander+Sjöberg make a point of allowing for space, for example by leaving spaces open for flexible use. The value lies not in the outward appearance of the architecture, but in what can be achieved with architecture: offering space for everyday life.

They could be described as having a keen eye for any opportunity that arises to improve the built environment and, at the same time, the life that is played out there. As a rule the dwellings are not organized by way of a predetermined division into rooms, but consist of spaces that flow into one another, of a succession of zones that differ in atmosphere and the level of privacy, and join the interior and exterior in an open and natural manner.

Construction, material, detailing and form: In many cases they are ordinary, or at any rate not especially extraordinary. All the same, literally everything, from the drainpipe to the outdoor lighting, is designed with exceptional care. The architecture of Kjellander+Sjöberg is first and foremost architecture for people. www.ksark.se/

Our themes for the Light House exhibition are universal, or if you will, a common ground: LIGHT, IN-BETWEEN SPACE, AND CONTEXT.

In the working process we sought to include the notions central to our practice, regarding connections, interaction and use.



THOMAS LIU

ATELIER OSLO

TRANSCRIBED NATURE

Transcribed Nature is an investigation in the spatial conditions of nature, into nature's relationships and dimensions. Through the process of transcription, the natural forms disappear and a more abstract architectural space occurs.

The ambition of this project is to create an architecture that is not designed *per se*. A natural space is a space that is constructed through a process of time. Our transcribed nature is an attempt to continue this process into the creation of an architectural space.

An actual space in nature was scanned by a 3D laser scanner and then transformed into an accurate 3D model. The specific space was located in a forest outside Oslo along a meandering river. New technology gives us new possibilities and tools to record natural space. An objective analysis of this natural space is now possible in a more 3-dimensional way than before. With a laser scanner the more ephemeral quality of the natural space is given more importance; the leaf of the tree is read as densely as the stone on the forest floor.

Man has developed by dwelling in the complex spatial conditions of nature. The development of a more complex architecture is a search for a space that lies within this history of the human body.

Nature offers a perspective that is in continuous development. Each individual point of view gives a unique reference. This project is an attempt to search for an architecture where the human being feels at rest, a search that is driven by an unconscious longing for a more natural architectural space. Within the reconstructed Nordic light of the Venice Pavilion our space comes to life.

PRACTICE

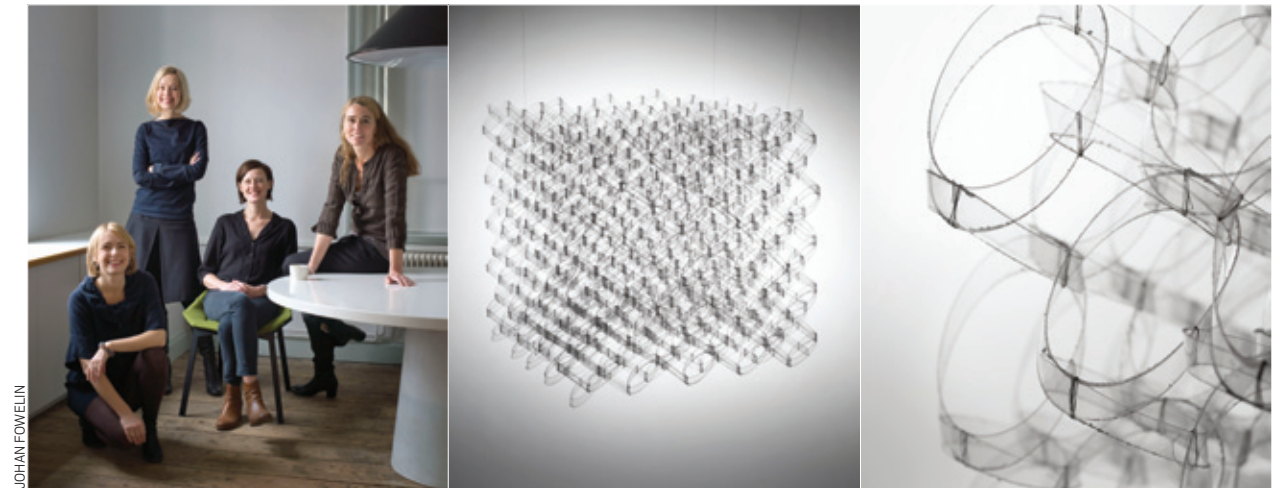
AtelierOslo was established in 2006 by Nils Ole Bae Brandtzaeg (b.1975), Thomas Liu (b.1978), Marius Mowe (b.1973) and Jonas Norsted (b.1973). They have already had success in several architectural competitions, including first prize in the international competition for the new central library of Oslo, in collaboration with Lund Hagem and Agence Ter.

Lantern, the winning project of the competition 'Norwegian Wood Sandnes Amfiscene' together with AWP Paris in 2006, was the founding basis for the studio. The Lantern was nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Award in 2009.

AtelierOslo always attempts to identify the unique key challenges in each task, creating a common ground for the later evaluation of a spectrum of ideas and solutions. The development of each project aims to create high quality architecture in which the basic elements of architecture as construction, light, materiality and space are particularly emphasized and reinterpreted in order to solve current problems.

AtelierOslo's portfolio includes projects ranging from large housing projects to single family houses and small installations.

www.atelieroslo.no/



JOHAN FOWELIN

MARGE ARKITEKTER

PET

The intentions of PET are to evoke the Nordic traditions of craftsmanship as well as to make use of the qualities of day-light flowing through a layered structure. By creating a grid built up by one singular module – a diagonal slice of a PET-bottle – a light-weight and tactile form is constructed. The cube describes mass, although being almost weightless, and diffuses and reflects the light shining through it, but casts no shadows.

For those of us with small hands, the cube creates an endless amount of bracelets through which you could stretch your arms. For other visitors, the vision through the cube will create spectacular views depending on where you stand. The PET-sections are knitted together with silver-thread, addressing traditional Sami metal embroidery, a type of handicraft found in northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

The choice of the PET material was made because of its recyclable character, but also because of it being plastic – a material sometimes used by Sverre Fehn to form structures that would diffuse the light.

PET-bottles could be both washed and reused, but also recycled to PET flakes, a raw material for a range of products in society, one of them being new PET-bottles. PET-bottles are also used for solar water disinfection, as unlike most other transparent materials, the bottle is transparent to UV-light.

Materials are often defined as being of a “low” or “high” value within a certain context. By switching the materials’ usual realm, by adapting or by expanding their field of function, that sense of value could be altered with amazing results. Marge Arkitekter is highly interested in how architectural program and materiality affects us in everyday life, as well as whether a certain shift in form, function, and context can expand the way we experience architecture.

PRACTICE

Marge Arkitekter is acknowledged as one of the leading young Swedish Architectural practices. It was founded in Stockholm 2002 by Pye Aurell Ehrström, Katarina Grundsell, Louise Masrelez and Susanne Ramel. Today the practice employs 11 architects with worldwide experience. The practice produces work on a variety of scales, ranging from initial strategic studies, master planning, housing and commercial developments to interior and product design.

The work of Marge Arkitekter is based on a conceptual design process exploring the use of materials and forms in new and unexpected ways. Their focus is on socially and environmentally sustainable values – creating spaces for people to use and interact in. The practice juxtaposes sustainable technologies with a strong relation to the site. Their clean, sparing approach to space is distinguished by a punctuation of color and an inventive use of materials.

www.marge.se/



LUNDÉN ÖSTERLUND WIKAR

LUNDÉN ÖSTERLUND WIKAR

NILAS – WORK IN PROGRESS

“NILAs” is a sculpture that represents an approach to building systems where skin, structure, and technical appliances are all integrated into one responsive building tissue.

“Nila” is a Finnish word for phloem, the living tissue that carries organic nutrients to all parts of the plant where needed.

The epidermis is a single-layered group of cells that forms a boundary between the plant and the external environment. The epidermis serves several functions; it protects against water loss, regulates gas exchange, secretes metabolic compounds, and (especially in roots) absorbs water and mineral nutrients.

“NILAs” is a crossbreed of these two natural elements. Our simplified model of natural structures combines the cellular structure of phloem tissue and the protective and responsive qualities of epidermis and bark. The object represents an approach to building systems of the future where the border between the built and the natural will no longer exist.

Our vision is that in the future we will be able to build structures where energy, water, waste, and information flow and connect organically inside bio-engineered structures.

Even though the “NILAs” construction represents imitated natural processes, in the end, it is a sculpture made by hand and processed through the lenses of our culture.

For us, the future of architecture lies in rethinking our attitude towards the entire construction process. Instead of working against nature and making buildings out of dead material, we need to begin to understand nature better and to create structures and habitats that thus have a symbiotic and interconnected relationship with nature.

PRACTICE

Lundén Österlund Wikar is a research collaborative focused on exploring the potentials of digital design and fabrication methods based in Helsinki and Tampere, Finland. The collaborative includes Eero Lundén (b. 1982), Toni Österlund (b. 1983) and Markus Wikar (b. 1978)

The collaborative is using computer programming as a means to search for a new kind of architectural expression. Programming has liberated them to experiment and play with complexity and richness of form. Besides developing new ways of better utilizing design, and analyzing and manufacturing software, their work is extending the role of the architect from that of a mere designer to also incorporate tasks from the fields of engineering and manufacturing. Making buildings and developing craftsmanship are in the essence of their design philosophy.

Their past work includes wooden pavilions in Finland: Helsinki (2005), Oulu (2009) and Turku (2011), and in Germany: Hannover (2009). Since 2007 they have been teaching parametric design and scripting in architecture schools in Finland, Estonia and the United States.

Previously, Markus worked as the principal consultant of parametric design for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw by Lahdelma and Mahlamäki Architects. Eero and Toni received the Reima Pietilä Prize for their research work on algorithmic architecture at the University of Oulu in 2012.

Today, besides design work, Toni is conducting his PhD research at the University of Oulu in adaptive urban lighting and algorithm aided design methods. Markus and Eero work as researchers at the Aalto University Department of Civil and Structural Engineering. Their current projects include an experimental pavilion in Shanghai, China and a wooden bridge development project and a wooden manufacturing plant in Eastern Finland. www.nilas.fi/



IN PRAISE OF SHADOWS ARCHITECTURE

ELMA

Elma is cut out of an elm tree that during the past 103 years grew in the Royal National Park in Stockholm. As one of the last standing elm trees in Europe of this age it was infected by Dutch elm disease, and had to be taken down this year.

The wood was worked fresh and brought into this new locality. Now new cracks will emerge in response to the Venetian humidity, and caresses of visitors will varnish Elma's aging surface.

As the Nordic Pavilion once was shaped in relation to the trees on site, Elma is a homage in reverse, drawing its geometry from the Pavilion itself. The wooden piece, no longer growing, is turned horizontally, exposing its wooden heart. By chainsaw and hand tools, Elma was transformed into an architectural piece – "a light house" – that has gained its form from an interpretation of the geometry of Sverre Fehn's Nordic Pavilion.

Sverre Fehn created an architectonic structure to eliminate shadows. Elma confronts the Pavilion with new surfaces, polished and raw, cut in different angles with variations in tactility giving back some shadows and light reflections.

In section the cut angles originate from the height and plan of the beams dimensioned to eliminate direct sunlight and from the angle of the beams that surrounds the biggest tree in the outer corner of the Pavilion. In plan Elma is a projection of the free space in-between the two layers of beams.

In the encounter between our conceptual ideas and the intense qualities of the chosen piece of wood a new reality emerges. Surfaces were polished to expose the material and butterfly joints were inserted to hold it together. Key figures of our thinking are carved into the surface.

SPECIFIC LIGHT AND SHADOWS FOR AN AUTHENTIC PLACE

We work with idea, material and site as ingredients to create personal and site specific architecture. Matter, light and shadows are our tools to create meaningful spaces. In relation to this we explore what contemporary architecture can learn from local traditions and traditional uses of materials. One of our main interests is how the interaction between contemporary architecture, contextual aspects and typological settings can be interpreted into the society of today.

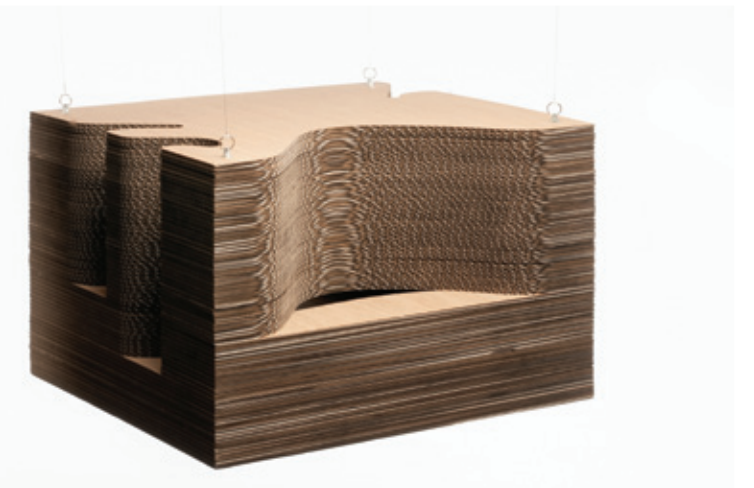
Specific choices of construction and materials are important. The use of wood, concrete, textile, steel and simple standard materials in a intelligent way gives our projects energy, meaning and a life of their own. We are interested in building technology and we see the way in which the building is constructed and structured as an integral part of the expression and experience of our projects.

In our work, the use of physical models is a key tool in exploring our projects and their boundaries. Model building provides us also with a platform for testing new materials and experimenting with new uses of materials. Models made of specific materials and handcrafted by craftsmen in precise ways bring the essential characteristics of a project to our attention. Professional insight as well as the academic experience that we have gained from teaching at Stockholm School of Architecture has guided us in the assignment of making a "light house" for the Nordic Pavilion in Venice.

www.inpraiseofshadows.se/



VERSTAS ARCHITECTS



VERSTAS ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

The Verstas LIGHT HOUSE is a study of the interior of Tikkurila Church in recycled corrugated cardboard.

Corrugated cardboard is a light and ecological material which depicts the warmth of the actual building's brick walls. When laser cut and stacked the cardboard reflects the geometry of the space and the play of light on the masonry. The interior can be viewed from one side of the construction, marking the connection to the Congregation Center in the actual building.

VERSTAS won the competition for the new church for the Tikkurila Lutheran congregation in February 2007. The design work on the building is ongoing.

The new church will be located in-between the old Congregation Center and the City Hall of Vantaa – essentially the only surviving older buildings of the Tikkurila center. Otherwise, most of the neighbourhood is dominated by rather cold 1970s administrative and commercial buildings. In this kind of setting the new church has the potential to be a good counterbalance.

Our design introduces an urban church, which reflects humane values in the ever more commercializing environment. The church is aimed for everyone as an open public space for both composing one's thoughts and gathering together. The new church will become a focal point that illuminates the whole Tikkurila center and will give a unique, recognizable character for the city square.

The sturdy masonry walls express permanence, the necessary luxury that has become ever more rare these days. In the church interior indirect lighting accentuates the curved geometry of the red brick walls. The narrow windows on the sides direct the natural light toward the altar. The altar is lit directly from above. Timelessness and tranquility are the key elements.

PRACTICE

VERSTAS Architects is a Helsinki based architecture practise founded in 2004 by four architects, Vaino Nikkilä, Jussi Palva, Riina Palva and Ilkka Salminen. Verstas offers high quality architectural design and operates on the whole scope of architect's work, from urban design to the finest architectural detail.

The name VERSTAS (Finnish for 'workshop') crystallizes the work practices essential to the office: close, discourse-rich group work generating a tailor-made, unique design result that best serves the customer, the environment and the purpose intended.

VERSTAS aims to improve the built environment. Buildings are always an agglomeration of space, a weave of material and light. We strive to think about entities – not just about the building but how it relates to what's already around. Our goal is to create places and spaces in which people can feel comfortable and thrive. It is essential that the finished structure fits into the surrounding environment in a balanced and harmonious way.

VERSTAS has won several architecture competitions and numerous other prizes and mentions in both national and international competitions. Verstas Architects' main works include two schools in Espoo – Kirkkojärvi and Saunalahti, Tikkurila Church in Vantaa and a block of offices and apartments on Töölönlahti in Helsinki.

www.verstasarkkitehdit.fi/



SPACE GROUP

SPACE GROUP

WISH YOU WERE HERE

SPACE is defined by absence. Absence is defined by the context, which envelops the space. The reciprocal relationship of the two is the beauty of Nordic architecture. Space carries memories encapsulated within its emptiness.

At a certain moment in the landscape, the sky and the mass of the earth approach a similar state, almost imperceptibly. In this state, sky becomes ground, and ground becomes a void to the sky. This flip, these FRINGES, denature the space, for a fraction of time.

A light house establishes a point of orientation, often between two mediums. In *Wish You Were Here*, the two mediums are represented by void and a transparent mass. Each is defined through the refraction of light – the Common Ground.

PRACTICE

Space Group (established in 1999) is an architecture and design office based in Oslo. The office is directed by partners Gro Bonesmo (NO), Adam Kurdahl (DK), and Gary Bates (USA).

A land of protected differences and hyper-similarity, Norway provides the backdrop and need for investigation and innovation.

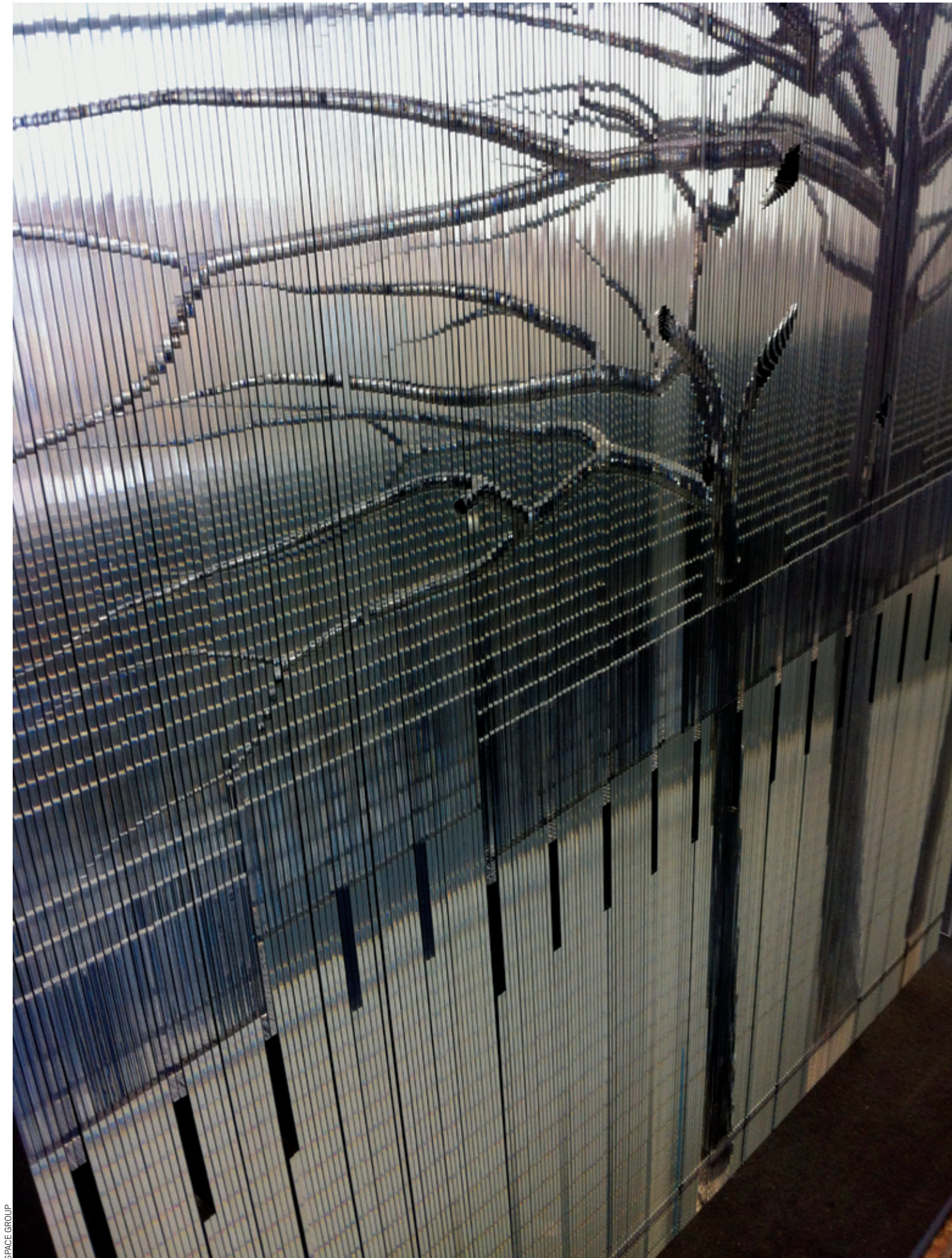
Our work provides SPACE for the staging of uncertainty – CONDITIONS for friction and coincidence – FORMULATIONS on the built environment, through a meshwork of people, materials, information/knowledge, and ideas.

Through design research, we actively engage the performance of architecture, autonomously and in the city – what it does, and where it does it. Politics, economics, aesthetics, and culture form our communication platform.

Space Group is a network-based practice – a diverse international base with a compact core that attacks both small and large projects with similar ambition – strategic and inventive, flexible and specific. The office nurtures intense collaborative processes, guiding clients and teams to find new logics and strategies.

We operate in the business of intelligence – gathering, combining and disseminating intelligence. We buy intelligence, trade it, add value to it, deconstruct it, filter it, transform it, and make it operational through a generative process of design. We are agents of intelligence.

www.spacegrouparchitects.com/



SPACE GROUP



PATRICIA DE GOROSTARZU



JKMM ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

We travelled to the little town of Fiskars to see our friend carpenter Kari Virtanen and to seek a proper log for our project. We found an expressive log of an ash tree that had a rotten core and worked our "Light House" out from this log.

The rotten core was carved out. The natural outer surface of the log was preserved. The drying and cutting of the log was made with patience, to avoid any cracking of the surfaces.

The cuts were made delicately with simple gestures. The cut surfaces were treated differently; the other end of the log has been sawn, the inner space is brushed and the geometrically cut forms have hewn and oiled surfaces.

Our "Light House" is given a position beside the trees in the Nordic Pavilion. The construction strives to express the relationship between nature and the built environment as well as the Nordic Pavilion does. This object is at the same time a universal piece of nature and an unfinished built object. It can be seen as a piece of sculpture or as a miniature dwelling with spatial character.

The Light House emphasizes the process of crafting things. In our works the goal is to bring together human touch and the possibilities that materials and structure possess. Buildings should improve over the years, along with the people that dwell in them.

This object resembles our work.
Architecture has to do with the context.
Architecture has to do with people.
Architecture has to do with making sculptures.
Architecture has to do with craft.

PRACTICE

Asmo Jaaksi, Teemu Kurkela, Samuli Miettinen and Juha Mäki-Jyllilä established JKMM Architects in 1998. They started their studies in the middle of the nineteen eighties. Architects operate actively in various areas and scales of architecture designing buildings, interiors, furniture, urban environments as well as renovations. From the beginning, architectural innovation has been the driving force of their work. Their goal is to make architecture with exceptional architectural and technical quality. In fifteen years the studio has grown and employs at the moment over 30 professionals.

Design approach reflects Scandinavian values and aesthetics. Currently JKMM Architects is designing e.g. the Seinäjoki City Library, Headquarters for Alma Media at Töölönlahti bay area, Paul Stradins University Hospital in Riga and House unit for homeless in Helsinki. JKMM Architects recent works include wooden Church in Viikki, Turku City Library, and Verkatehdas Factory Cultural Center in Hämeenlinna as well as annex buildings for Joensuu University, Finnish Pavillion for the Shanghai EXPO 2010 and Saunalahti house for Children.

JKMM Architects has a long track record in high quality built work and architectural competitions. The partners of the JKMM Architects have won prizes in over 70 architectural competitions, including over 30 First Prizes. The office has received several awards for its work including Finnish State Award for Architecture 2007, Finnish Steel Structure Award 2007, Finnish Glass Structure Award 2007, Finnish Concrete Structure Award 2007, Chicago Athenaeum International Architecture Award 2006 and Pietilä Award 2006 inter alia.
www.jkmm.fi/



MANTHEY KULA

LIGHT HOUSE

Our contribution to the Light Houses exhibition is a spatial installation including sound and seating.

The project has two sources. One is the fictional dialogue between Sverre Fehn and Andrea Palladio written in 1964 and published in Per Olaf Fjeld's book *Sverre Fehn – The Thought of Construction* in 1983. The other is the module of 521 millimeters that Fehn made use of in the design of the Nordic Pavilion.¹

The recorded dialogue evokes the architectonic and poetic realm of Sverre Fehn:

*In this house I met Palladio.
He was tired, but all the same he spoke:
"You have put all the utilities, bath, toilets and kitchen in the center of the house. I made a large room out of it, you know, and the dome with the opening was without glass. When I planned the house it was a challenge toward nature – rain, air, heat and cold could fill the room."
"And the four directions," I replied.
"Oh yes, you know," and he became smaller. "At that time we were about to lose the horizon. You have opened the corners," he stopped a little. "You are on the way towards losing the globe."
"Tell me more," I said.
His voice began to weaken, but he whispered: "All constructed thoughts are related to death." And then he was gone.*

The recording comes from a suspended speaker placed in a tailored holster made of natural wool felt. During transport the piece is contained within a crate of OSB board. After installation the crate becomes seating for the listener. The crate measures 521x521x521 millimeters and is as such designed specifically for the given site in the Pavilion. The material similarity between the crate and the sound piece – the compressed fibers – is of some importance.

¹Fjeld, Per Olaf, *Sverre Fehn – The Thought of Construction*, New York, Rizzoli, 1983: p.9/p.164

PRACTICE

manthey kula of Oslo, Norway, was established in 2004 by architects Beate Hølmebakk (b. 1963) and Per Tamsen (b. 1967). Tamsen graduated from Lund University. Hølmebakk graduated from The Oslo School of Architecture and Design, where she now holds a professorship.

manthey kula works with factual and fictional architecture. Projects span from industrial and utilitarian structures to investigations into specific programmatic fields.

Two of the practice's built projects have been nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Award: the Pålssbu Generator Chamber in 2009 and the Akkarvik Roadside Restroom in 2011.

manthey kula's fictional work has been exhibited worldwide. During the 13th Architecture Biennale in Venice *The 15th Watchtower of Cannareggio – A Tribunal For The Displaced* will be shown at the *Traces of History and Future Steps* exhibition at Palazzo Bembo.

"We embrace the width of architectural competence and practice and recognize that architectural work contains elements of irrationality."

"We make an effort to exploit the potential for architectural expression in all tasks."

"We try to understand what level of precision can be reached in each given task and strive to develop the project accordingly."

"We are inspired by literature. Writing evokes notions of not yet experienced conditions and spaces. The desire to pursue these notions is an important motor in our practice."

www.mantheykula.no/



NILS PETER DALE



JARMUND/VIGSNÆS ARCHITECTS (JVA)

LIGHT HOUSE

Model making is the main tool and method in JVA's architectural production.

The model workshop is the heart of the office, where conceptual models and study models are made on a daily basis. They are not meant to be pretty – they are an instrument to make new and interesting architecture. Dialogues around the making of conceptual models are essential in our process. Physical models give a clear understanding for the spaces created.

Our models are stored on an eye-catching large shelf. From this visible storage we discuss development of new architecture together with ongoing and older projects. The Biennale installation is – like the shelf – an archive of JVA's work. Models of unrealized projects and lost competitions are taken out and placed in a structure. In the Nordic Pavilion they come to life and tell a story about an architectural practice.

The exhibited models represent the variety of JVA's architectural production. They exemplify various relations to architecture in the landscape – from steep hillsides to flat terrain. They exemplify typologies and research for materials, modules, and formal expressions. The models are a contribution to the idea of objects set into a structure at the Nordic Pavilion. Without comparison, the simple structure of the shelf refers to the structure of the Pavilion.

PRACTICE

Jarmund/Vigsnæs AS Arkitekter MNAL was established in 1996 by Einar Jarmund and Håkon Vigsnæs. Alessandra Kosberg became a partner in 2004. The firm is located in Oslo, Norway, and the recent number of employees is 17. The office works in a wide architectural range with commissions mainly in Norway, as well as other European countries.

The majority of the finished works are public buildings and housing projects. JVA is also involved in urban planning and building interiors; aiming to cover all corners of the architectural field. We focus on an independent concept for every single project, avoiding general stylistic approaches. We give priority to early participation in creative programming and an attentive relation towards the surroundings.

The practice focuses on projects with potential for outstanding and meaningful architecture, most often closely related to nature and preferably in strong natural settings with a harsh climate. The practice explores modern possibilities with sensual and tactile means, seeking the appropriate character for the place and purpose. Through clear and understandable strategies we aspire to present solutions that are both self-evident and sensational. Larger projects result most commonly from competition-winning schemes, the smaller ones from the reputation of former clients and structures.

www.jva.no/



GENERAL ARCHITECTURE

DOMINO IN PLAY

Our work for the Biennale is made up of seven aluminium slabs and ninety-six brass rods. The aluminium slabs are stacked and spaced, using the brass rods as pillars, to create a three-dimensional grid-like structure.

The slab/pillar structure, optimised in Le Corbusier's *Maison Domino*, represents an ideal tectonic system. When exposed to lateral forces, stabilising elements such as stairs, walls, and diagonals are necessary to stabilise the structure and to freeze the image of the structural ideal.

Our object puts the *Maison Domino* into play, by focusing on the moment before the stabilising act, before the image is frozen. The imperfections in the structure – the non-rigid joints between pillar and slab – make the object unstable. This condition opens a multitude of unpredictable variations in the spatial configuration. The object thus changes from an ideal Cartesian grid into an open-ended structure, one responsive to the outside influences of visitors and to the Nordic Pavilion itself.

PRACTICE

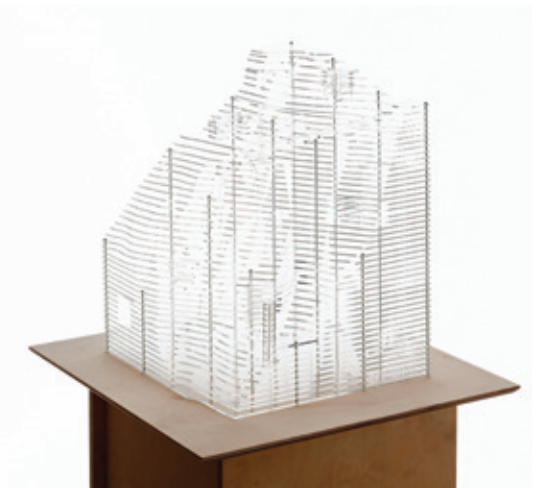
GA stands for a classical approach to architecture. We constantly return to the ever present questions of tectonics, proportion, contextuality and materiality. We aim for project specific detailing and use of materials. In the strive for longevity and patina, not only enduring materials and details but also clear structure and distinct spaces are essential.

In the realm of a project, strict rules are developed, not seldom geometrical ones, for example a three dimensional chain of measurements that becomes a project specific modular system influenced by context, program, building technique and material. The objective of this method is to produce coherent and site specific architecture rather than to reproduce a pre-conceived style.

Our methodology can best be described as an ongoing discussion where ideas and solutions are tested and evaluated continuously, based on technical, economic, social and cultural criteria. We believe that the continuity of such a process, from the initial sketches to the final drawing and the actual construction, is the best guarantee for significant architecture. www.generalarchitecture.se/



ROBERTO DI TRANI



REIULF RAMSTAD ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

Reiulf Ramstad: *In 1962, the same year that I was born in Oslo, Norway, the Nordic Pavilion was designed by Sverre Fehn and built in Venice. In 1991, Fehn exhibited in his own Pavilion and I was with him making the exhibition while I finished my architectural studies at the University of Venice.*

In Fehn's office in Oslo, we had a dialogue on the exhibition project. The entire conversation was very direct: about materials, stories about the construction of the Pavilion's super slim concrete beams, about the trees that were there before the construction, about the room and the space, and about the light. The piece of architecture exhibited was made out of rectangular glass planes in the horizontal position, carried by split steel pipes. The exhibition was in many ways a glance backwards at Fehn's main works.

In 2001, I received the opportunity to return and work in the Nordic Pavilion in Venice. Together with my colleagues I exhibited a piece of work consisting of an imaginary architectural landscape, made out of an elaborate cardboard model. It was an attempt at a glance forward.

Sverre Fehn died in Oslo in 2009 and left a unique architectural heritage.

In 2012, I'm together with my colleagues, back as an exhibitor in the Pavilion. Sverre Fehn's Pavilion in Venice can, if possible, be labelled as the "cathedral of modernism," due to its vibrant and timeless relationship between space and construction, between shadow and light, between the horizontal and the vertical, between the man-made and the natural.

These are all themes that are recurring and filtering through all the work in our studio, and constitute the bedrock of our investigations. The natural and the man-made are not in contrast to each other, but are seen more as continuations, where all ends up in the same character. The cultivated are to be geometric variations in a given topology.

RRA CREATE MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE THAT IS BOTH CHALLENGING AND DEMANDING

Reiulf Ramstad Arkitekter (RRA) was established in 1995 in order to create an architectural practice that would turn conceptual research and the analysis of practical and theoretical issues into driving forces of design. The office has since earned a strong reputation for innovative architecture, displaying a deep understanding of the uniqueness of every site and program and rejecting standardized solutions. RRA has created award-winning designs in all kinds of environments, from urban densities to remote unpopulated areas. Yet, the specific profile of the practice relies on a particular sensitivity to natural landscapes. Time and again RRA have displayed the rare ability to create the kind of unequivocal architecture that comes to be experienced as iconic.

The consistent philosophy is to create contemporary architecture characterized by clarity of thought. Clarity depends on two things: analysis and decisiveness. The first is a matter of method, the second one of mind-set. When a sensitive interpretation of a location yields a set of essential characteristics, this opens up an opportunity for creative decisiveness.

With the uniqueness of every site and context as our point of departure we employ a distinct and limited architectural palette characterized by a strong focus on materials and the sense of a location's individual spatiality. Each project becomes a unique departure when highly individual design emerges from a set of clearly defined and controlled elements.

Examples of project works include: Kindergarten Fagerborg, Oslo, Norway (completed Dec. 2010); Apartment building Korsgata 5, Oslo, Norway (completed April 2010); National Tourist route Trollstigen, Rauma, Norway (completed June 2012) and Knarvik Church (competition winner, under planning – to be completed 2013).

www.reiulfamstadarkitekter.no/



JANI LAUKKANEN

AVANTO ARCHITECTS

WHITE BOX

Our focus is on people and our architecture is more a framework for users than just physical buildings or architectural objects.

There is a plain white 600x600x600mm cube in the Pavilion standing on the standard steel pedestal. The WhiteBox symbolizes the "traditional" Finnish modernist architecture of which we are a part, but which we also find uninspiring.

One side of the WhiteBox is open; when you look inside you find a screen with an integral web camera that connects you with an identical screen inside an identical box in the Helsinki city center. There is a virtual connection between the two boxes so that they are like windows to the other city, the other country. Through this simple device, people from two different locations can communicate with each other and participate in each other's lives. Even though video calls are already common, the WhiteBox situation is very special. Suddenly you are in contact with a random person from different country and background. There is a joy of discovery as you understand the moment.

There are further layers of meanings and hidden connections between the boxes. The WhiteBox in Helsinki is inside the Kamppi shopping center designed by Juhani Pallasmaa – the designer of the pedestal stands in the Biennale exhibition. The Helsinki location in a hectic shopping mall comments upon the Biennale with a warm irony. As the architects' profession is very isolated from the rest of the society (at least in Finland), we wanted to encourage connections between professionals visiting the Biennale and passersby in the mall. The use of such a technical device references the Finnish high technology that our culture is so proud of ... forgetting that after all culture is fundamentally about our lives, our humanity.

PRACTICE

Anu Puustinen and Ville Hara are partners and founders of Avanto Architects Ltd. The name 'Avanto' – a Finnish word literally meaning a hole in the ice for winter swimming – symbolizes the office's design philosophy. The partners enjoy nature and hope to preserve the same opportunity for future generations to do so as well. Avanto Architects strives to create architecture that is sustainable in the widest sense of the term. With works ranging from product design to urban planning, the architects aim to design through an understanding of the users of their projects, in order to create ambiances that evoke an emotional response. More than just physical buildings, they see architecture as a means to improve the quality of life for all who engage in it.

Among their largest realized works is the Chapel of St Lawrence in Vantaa, Finland, completed in 2010. The building serves as a prime example of the partners' manipulation of materials, light, and spatial rhythm. It has been awarded the Copper in European Architecture Award, the 2010 Finnish Concrete Award and the City of Vantaa 2010 Quality Prize. Other noteworthy accolades for the office's work include the Bryggman Prize for young architects and interior designers and two separate nominations for the Mies van der Rohe Prize.

www.avanto.fi/



PETRA GIPP



PETRA GIPP ARKITEKTUR

KNOT

Knot is a work by architect Petra Gipp and composer Kim Hedås.

The work constitutes part of an artistic investigation which intends to explore how the dimensions of architecture/art and music/sound may be widened as more layers are added to the totality. In *Knot*, sound and structure interact to create new sequences which together build a polyphonically shifting play. The architecture is defined through the matter and its relationship to the music, which in turn is reinforced by the space. *Knot* inquires whether these layers can enhance the understanding of an architectural work and a musical work respectively – whether their reciprocity can reinforce each individual piece.

Knot explores the reciprocity between the sound of a double chorus and an architecture arising from the interaction between a part cast in concrete and its double cast in bronze, between the plan and the section which forms its double. As they meet, a knot of void and matter emerges which frames the light from outside and allows it to play its way inwards together with the music.

The collaboration with Kim Hedås started with the work *Refugium/Illusion* at the Kivik Art Centre. The project *Skikt* forms a continuation of this collaboration, an exploratory project in architecture and sound. *Knot* is one constituent of this investigation, as is the project *Part*, presented at The Venice Biennale 2012 at Palazzo Bembo together with works by architects Steven Holl and Arata Isozaki, among others.

PRACTICE

petra gipp arkitektur sets out to create architecture in thoughtful relationship to the needs of an individual client as well as to the specific characteristics of a site. In order to achieve an architectural totality, we find that in depth studies of flows as well as of spatial and structural relationships are essential. In each individual project, everything down to the design of details and the choice of materials relate back to a main concept.

The aspiration of our practice is to make architecture relate to immediate conditions through elemental and distinctly articulated spaces. Without compromising matters of functionality and logistics, the issues relevant to each project are addressed in accordance with the main concept which shapes the expression of materials and defines the scale and proportions of the architecture.

Petra Gipp (b. 1967), founder and principle architect, was trained at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. The work of petra gipp arkitektur has been published in a number of books and magazines, and has been selected for numerous architecture awards. Her work has also been exhibited at the Architecture Museum and Färgfabriken Kunsthall in Stockholm. In 2011, Petra Gipp was awarded the WAN awards 21 to 21, Skåne's Architecture Prize, the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's work grant and the Music Development and Heritage Sweden's project grant. Additionally, she was included in IASPIS, the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Program for contemporary Swedish and international artists. Among her works are Ulriksdal Cemetery, Färgfabriken Kunsthall and *Refugium* at Kivik Art Center, where also David Chipperfield, Antony Gormley and Snøhetta are represented. www.gipparkitektur.se/



ELDING OSCARSON

GIARDINI BIRD HOUSES

Happiness has been transmitted by Sverre Fehn's Nordic Pavilion for fifty years. The Pavilion draws our attention with its thin structure and extreme openness to the Giardini. It is, in fact an outdoor space, where trees grow through openings cut in the transparent roof. The Pavilion's qualities are easy to understand; we imagine a child could enjoy them, as would a bird. On the very inclusive theme of the 13th Architecture Biennale, we would like to send an invitation to the thousands of birds that inhabit the Giardini, a place to which people fly in but birds are permanent.

Creating a slightly disturbing moment among the repetitive beams, the little bird colony highlights the most characteristic building component while providing a lofty vantage point for the birds to enjoy the rigidly laid out exhibition below. If the exhibits were permanent, we would soon know if the generic bird house is favored above the one proportioned according to Fibonacci sequence, or the one that borrows its form from Sverre Fehn's Glacier Museum outhouse above the one that looks just like any Swedish outhouse.

However, like the people, the exhibits will take off when the party is over, returning the Giardini to the birds.

PRACTICE

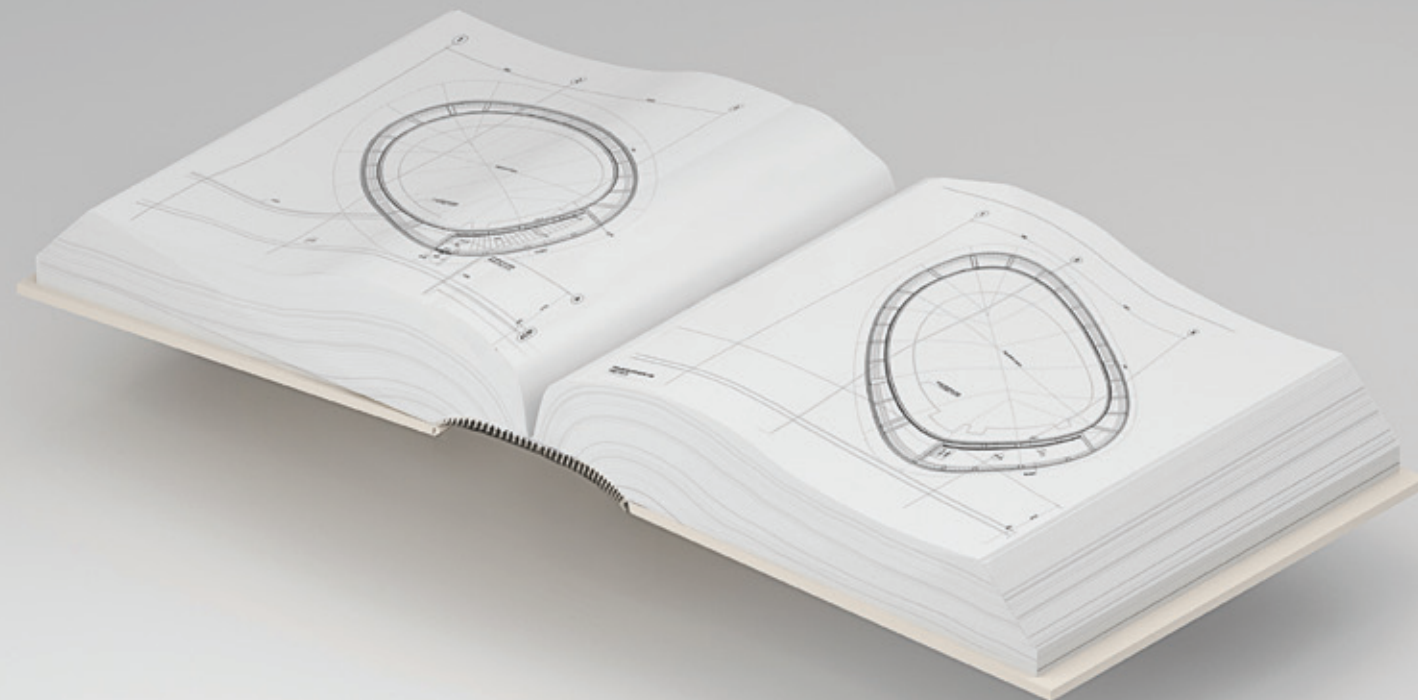
Elding Oscarson is a creative practice founded by Johan Oscarson and Jonas Elding in 2007. It aims to inject happiness into every commission, challenging an eclectic array of architecture and design tasks to probe how their joint effort can contribute to new solutions, ways to live, and spaces to enjoy. The office focuses on the intensification of our perception of site, space, and object. We seek solutions that are surprising and relevant to the particular parameters that makes each project unique.

With the Giardini Bird Houses, Elding Oscarson colonizes the building component most integral to the atmosphere in Sverre Fehn's Nordic Pavilion – the roof structure – highlighting its potency to bring nature inside.

www.eldingoscarson.com/



MARKO HUTTUNEN



K2S ARCHITECTS

WORKING DRAWINGS

Architecture is condensed in working drawings. In these documents, the immense amount of work necessary to design a building coalesces. Architects' working drawings are equivalent to musicians' notations and score sheets. Through these sheets our architecture can be understood. The proportions, materials, dimensions, and details are there. But the most interesting thing about working drawings is that in them the emotional and inexplicable aspects of architecture must take physical form.

This book contains nearly everything we have realized during the last ten years. In a way, it is a kind of diary. The book itself is an object we like. Today almost all our work is digital, and it is good to see things in a true physical form. One of the projects presented here, the Kamppi Chapel, is also exhibited in the Finnish Pavilion.

K2S Architects is in a way an old school architecture office. Our focus is on designing and building real buildings. To us it is important that our architecture is rooted in the site, rooted in both the past and future, and most important rooted in the human soul. Good architecture will always create an emotional impact.

PRACTICE

When talking about architecture, we always talk about roots. The Finnish word for roots is "juuret". For us this word has grown into a new meaning, a sort of secret term that defines good architecture. Roots can exist in almost anything – music, art or people. In the field of architecture we define four different meanings for this term.

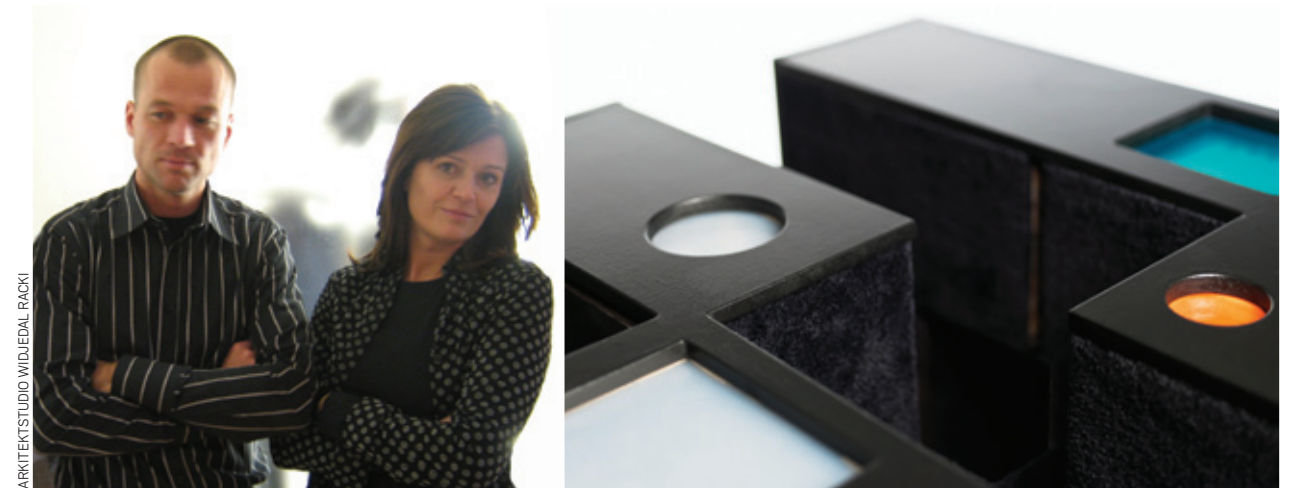
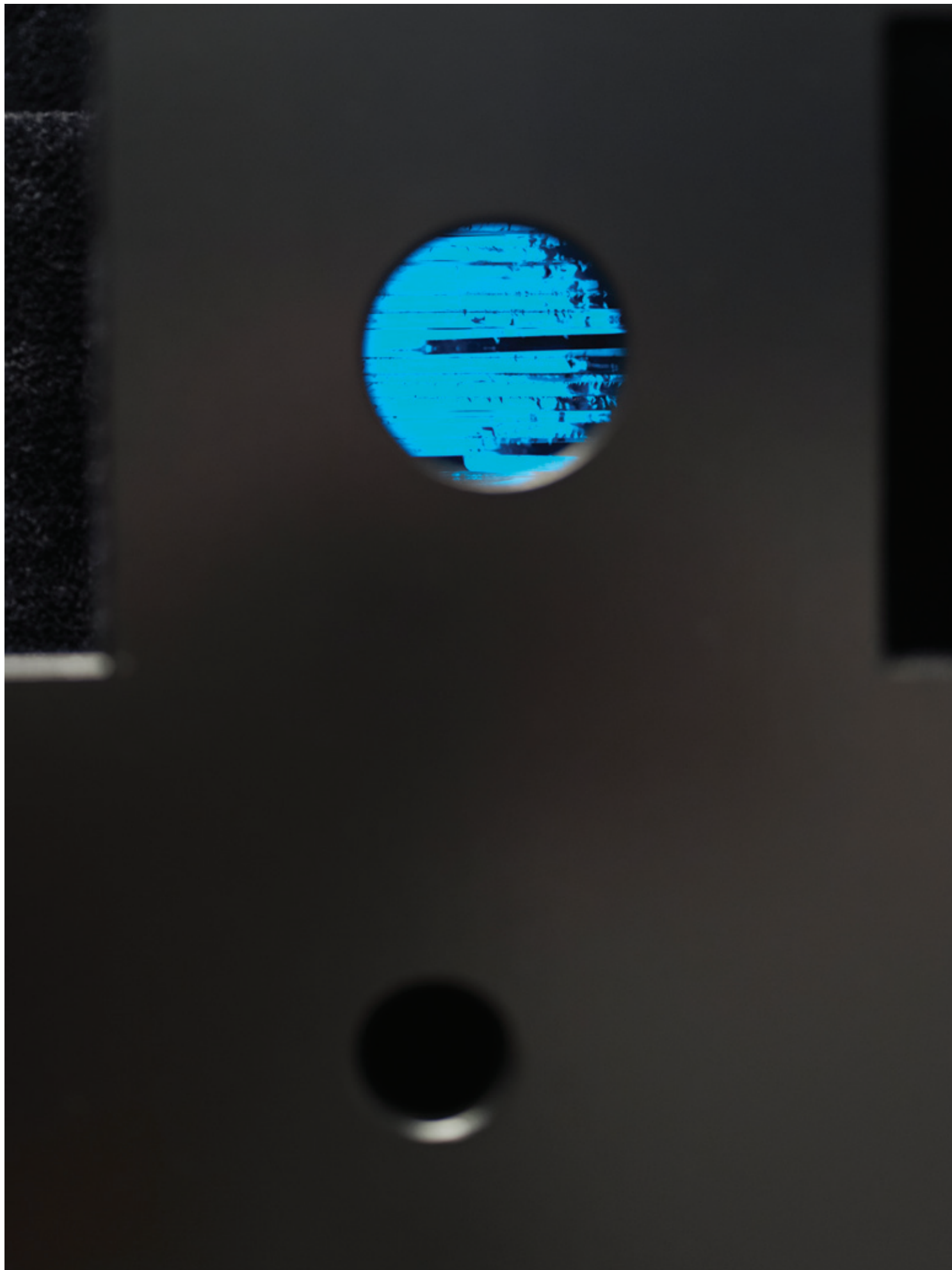
First, and perhaps most important, there should be some quality in the space, materials and structure which touches ones soul. Architecture that moves our hearts has roots.

The second root should grow on the site. Our buildings always relate to their surroundings. They are never alone but a link in a chain between what has been on the site before and what will be there after.

We also like the idea that our architecture has its roots in the Finnish building tradition. The sensitivity to material and light as well as a certain sense of modesty in approach are all qualities that can exist in contemporary architecture, too. This is the third root.

The fourth root reaches into the future. There is always an attempt to create innovation. This can exist in a new way of using materials as well as in a creative combination of form and structure.

Combined these four different roots create a method that we actively apply to our work. It also defines quite well the attitude that we share not only in architecture but in life in general. www.k2s.fi/



ARKITEKTSTUDIO WIDJEDAL RACKI

ARKITEKTSTUDIO WIDJEDAL RACKI

PHENOBOX

Why does a certain architecture deeply engage us while others just pass us by? Wherein is the difference? Through which language does architecture communicate with us? As with good art or music, architecture can sometimes open a direct link to our emotions, a link that is hard to trace, explain, or reference in science. An architect's job is to explore this field.

We often search for our answers in the directness of simple spaces with a strong presence of materials and tactility and close interaction with light. The result often includes sensations felt rather than thought and a conscious focus on mood and atmosphere before form. In this we feel that we share a common bond with much Nordic architecture in both past and present, not least with this Pavilion by Sverre Fehn.

The Phenobox construction is actually a series of boxes joined together to form a unified whole. An anonymous exterior shields a secret inner world waiting to be explored. Inside we have gathered a number of small and simple spaces from our memory and imagination. We hope these spaces will, in a playful way, engage and inspire your thoughts and interest for the spaces that surround us. Much is only hinted at here; much is left for the imagination to complete.

In an increasingly two-dimensional world, we wish to stress that architecture is meant to be experienced with our bodies in the duration of time. But it is equally true that all experiences are but products of our minds ... so welcome!

PRACTICE

Arkitektstudio Widjedal Racki was founded by Håkan Widjedal and Natasha Racki in 2000. Founders and co-workers work together as a creative team expanding and contracting depending on the needs of the projects. By involving different nationalities and experiences, a project always becomes a creative and intense process where clients and external consultants also play an important role.

The work of the office consists to a high degree of private houses. The ambition in each project is always to identify the unique potential in the assignment and make use of it. With careful attention to detail, the projects are executed in close collaboration with the client and the builders. Concept, design and construction are seen as inseparable components coming together to ensure an optimal final outcome.

A theme that seems to reoccur in almost every project the question on how buildings relate to their context in terms of functional-, visual-, and thematic aspects. Often, this results in studies exploring different ways to integrate the building with its surrounding environment.

www.wrark.se/



ANTTINEN OIVA ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

"The act of building can be brutal. When I build on a site in nature that is totally unspoiled, it is a fight, an attack by our own culture. In this confrontation, I strive to make a building that will make people more aware of the beauty of the setting, and when looking at the building, a hope for a new consciousness to see the beauty there as well." Sverre Fehn 1997

Architecture opens up new perspectives into sites and situations. It creates and generates platforms for interactions, by bringing together different forms of lives in their inherent pluralities. It is the elements of everyday life that we shape and which shapes us. It intensifies the experiences we have and makes us aware of the particularities of each time, space and society. In and through architecture we are able to acknowledge the beauty of our surroundings – while at the same time growing the awareness of the inherent limitations of it. The aim of constructing spaces for multiple uses and purposes goes hand in hand with the awareness of the scarcity of natural resources. The integrity of architecture activates the dialogue with it, while its simplicity encourages plurality of views and visions, giving its articulations freedom and breathing space. A building that is able to address and impress in its own unique way paves the way for experiences that are private and public, personal and shared in a collective sense.

PRACTICE

Anttinen Oiva Architects Ltd. is a Helsinki based architecture and urban planning office founded by Selina Anttinen (b.1977) and Vesa Oiva (b.1973). Ongoing projects include town planning, public building and housing projects, mainly in the Helsinki metropolitan area. These projects share the aim to create ambitious, stimulating, versatile and memorable experiences with contemporary architecture.

We always see our work as part of a larger context – a place, a site, a city. It is essential to be embedded; to understand and express the potential of local culture and surroundings, to seek without prejudice new interpretations of it. Each place is unique and contains factors which shape the process and make it unrepeatable. These factors, combined with our own perception of architecture and our reading of contemporary phenomena, define the starting point for our work.

www.aoa.fi/



BRENDELAND & KRISTOFFERSEN ARCHITECTS

BRENDELAND & KRISTOFFERSEN ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

Between 1914 and 1950 the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) lived and worked alone for long periods of his life in a hermetic and primitive cabin in Skjolden, Norway. The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and other texts were written in this cabin. The cabin was removed after he died, and only the foundations are left on the site. The installation presents the idea of his room.

The external appearance of the installation is a solid wooden cube with a keyhole centered on one of its sides. The spectator is invited to put on a set of earphones and peer through the keyhole. The roughly cut exterior, treated with wood smoke, is primeval, abstract, and exotic (as experienced in Venice) and encourages feel, smell, curiosity.

Behind the keyhole is a precise scale model of a room, seemingly carved out of the massive wooden cube. The room is furnished with a simple table and a chair. One of the walls has a large window showing the view from the actual site of Wittgenstein's cabin filmed from a fixed position, with changing skies, light, and moving trees. The room is lit only through this window.

The installation conveys ideas about solitude and exile, and correspondences and differences between center and periphery in Europe. It presents site and history as a starting point for architectural production, as well as ideas about architectural representation and scale. The installation is based on an architectural approach that we have employed in many of our built architectural works, with a sober, calm, and essential organization of interior spaces, spatial proportions, direct relations with the site, and use of basic materials with a strong presence.

PRACTICE

Brendeland & Kristoffersen architects was founded by Olav Kristoffersen and Geir Brendeland in 2002 after winning an open architectural competition for social housing at Svartlamoen in Trondheim. This project is presented in the main exhibition at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2012.

The practice works on different scales from planning to small architectural installations and has a specific interest in typologies, the vernacular, restrained complexity and low tech. The projects are thoroughly local and very direct responses to their contexts, but they transcend the possible parochial nature of this condition through conceptual and constructional rigor. A singular and deliberately unspectacular expression and a reduced palette based on simple and sustainable materials such as wood are extended throughout the buildings. Recent projects include the Svartlamoen Nursery, terraced housing in Svalbard and the Villa Nilsen/Borgen.

Brendeland & Kristoffersen architects has received several major design awards including the shortlist for the Mies van der Rohe Award in 2007 and the Architectural Review Awards for Emerging Architecture in 2005 and 2008. Most of their built works have been published and exhibited extensively in Norway and internationally.

Alongside practice both partners have taught at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and contributed as lecturers and external critics at architecture schools throughout Europe.

www.bkark.no/



OLLUPEKKA ORPO

HOLLMÉN REUTER SANDMAN ARCHITECTS

LIGHT HOUSE

Our Light House is made of rosehip bush roots found on the sandy beach on "Havshäxans udde" in Hanko. Hanko is situated at the southern-most tip of Finland. The place has an important role in our own history; it is a place to find calm and tranquility next to the sea and the horizon.

The roots are marked by weather, sea, and time. We have allowed the roots to form a cubic spatial volume within the given dimensions.

We wanted to use a light, site-specific, natural material that feels relevant to our own lives, reflecting the landscape and atmosphere of the place.

When hovering above the floor of the Nordic Pavilion the shadows cast by the woven form continue the pattern of Sverre Fehn's structure.

PRACTICE

The architects Saija Hollmén, Jenni Reuter and Helena Sandman started their collaboration in 1995 with the Women's Center project in Senegal. Today, their activities span from interiors to urban planning. They work in Finland as well as with several underprivileged communities around the world.

The group believes in innovation by investigation, where the landscape, sensitivity towards materials and site-specific interventions are the means for a new architecture. Their works have been honoured with both national and international awards and have been published and exhibited widely.

Apart from working as visiting critics and lecturers all over the world, the architects also teach at the Aalto University. www.hollmenreutersandman.com/

Nordic Countries/Regions	Area in km ² (coastline in km)	People
Greenland (DK)	2 166086 (39330)	56 615
Sweden	450295 (11500)	9 113257
Sámi (N.S.S.F.R)	388350	80000
Finland	338417 (1250)	5276955
Norway	323802 (24148)	4681134
Iceland	103300 (4970)	307672
Denmark	43561 (7314)	5560620
Åland (SF)	1580	28007
The Faroe Islands (DK)	1396 (1289)	48574

Recent statistics from www.norden.org, www.samer.se



SÖDERMALMS FOTO

HAPPY SPACE

NORA, AN INTERACTIVE STUDY-MODEL

NORA originates from an earlier spatial study for a part of a Sámi Centre in Snåsa, Norway. The spatial study has been transformed into an interactive model for the Nordic Pavilion in Venice.

NORA is inspired by a poem about the North, written by the Finland-Swedish writer Johan Runeberg (1804–1877), and by the Nordic situation today, with 9 more or less independent Nordic regions and cultures. We are fascinated by the fact that the Nordic peoples are so few in proportional relationship to their land areas; the population density is extremely low. The strong shared relationship with nature is perhaps the reason for one of the strongest Nordic common grounds today, the unique Nordic network of social cooperation and interaction, a tight mesh of numerous cross-border ties at all levels of society. The Nordic network of cooperation is internationally recognized for its strong bottom-up organisation, its strong confidence in its constituent peoples, and its unquestioned recognition among the inhabitants of the Nordic region.

*Löfven de falla
Sjöarna frysa.-
Flyttande svanor,
Seglen, o seglen
Sorgsna till södern,
Söken dess nödspis,
Längtande åter,
Plöjen dess sjöar,
Saknande våra!*

*Då skall ett öga
Se er från palmens
Skugga och tala:
"Tynande svanor,
Hvilken förtrollning
Hvilar på norden?
Den, som från södern
Längtar, hans längtan
Söker en himmel."*

PRACTICE

The Studio was founded in 2007, by Markus Aerni (CH) and Boel Hellman (SE). They have an architectural background from Switzerland, Norway, England, Sweden and Germany. They met during several shared years of working in the same office in Berlin. Their studio has created some large poetic installations in public space in the Nordic region. The Covered Sandpit (NO,IS), The Visitor (DK), The Snailstair (DK), the Kiruna Line of Change (SE). The studio office is located in Stockholm South, where they work with three or four architects collaborating with experts specialized on statics and physics.

Each of our projects has a story. One story about how it was created, another story about how it was transformed into a built physical space, and still a third story about the evolution of the space over time as a result of the ways in which people experience it and make use of it. Transformations are interesting and context is always important. The shifts in scale between different kinds of projects help us to see things in new ways. We often work within the Nordic context, dealing with different types of local landscapes (for example the large scale landscape transformation of the Reykjavik Central Park (IS) or our proposal for the Udden Nature-Culture Park in Bohuslän, Sweden). We are also playing with scale as one of the main elements in shaping the Sandudden School-Scape in Sweden. In all of our projects, we work constantly with physical models in order to help us to develop geometric studies of different spatial characteristics and qualities of mental space. The physical layers of material, construction, geometry and light are all important components in our work.

www.happyspace.se/



HAUGEN/ZOHAR ARKITEKTER (HZA)

ADAPTATION

We believe there is a shared Nordic Common Ground, best understood as a fundamental mind-set pertaining to a profound relation to nature and a sincere understanding of our social responsibilities. In architecture, this is conveyed through an approach towards an architecture of essence.

To draw spaces of quality, inhabitable and uninhabitable, is generally speaking our responsibility. For us, architecture is by its nature earthbound, drawn by and for people. In an era of exploding information technology we seek the very primitive relationship between space and body.

Today, people are more connected than ever. Our culture and economy has become global, resulting in changes to people's awareness and way of life, both theoretically and materially. Still, we believe that our social mechanisms are the same as two thousand years ago: we need intimacy, assurance, belonging, friction, identity, and pride. In our opinion, architecture becomes extinct when the architectural act detaches itself from primitive, basic, human needs.

In biological evolution the leading causes of extinction are the destruction of natural habitat, migration of species, and lack of adaptability. Some of these tendencies are traceable in our current professional reality. Architects, who were historically the king's right hand and the undisputed authorities, are now often merely the executors of a plan decided by the institutions holding political authority.

The installation Adaptation addresses a professional crossroads. Our role is constantly evolving. We face continuous erosion of traditional architectural skills; at the same time we are conservative in exploring new fields of strategic expertise. This, together with the effects of a globalized economy, exploding information technology, and cultural confusion demands high levels of adaptability to a rapidly shifting reality.

PRACTICE

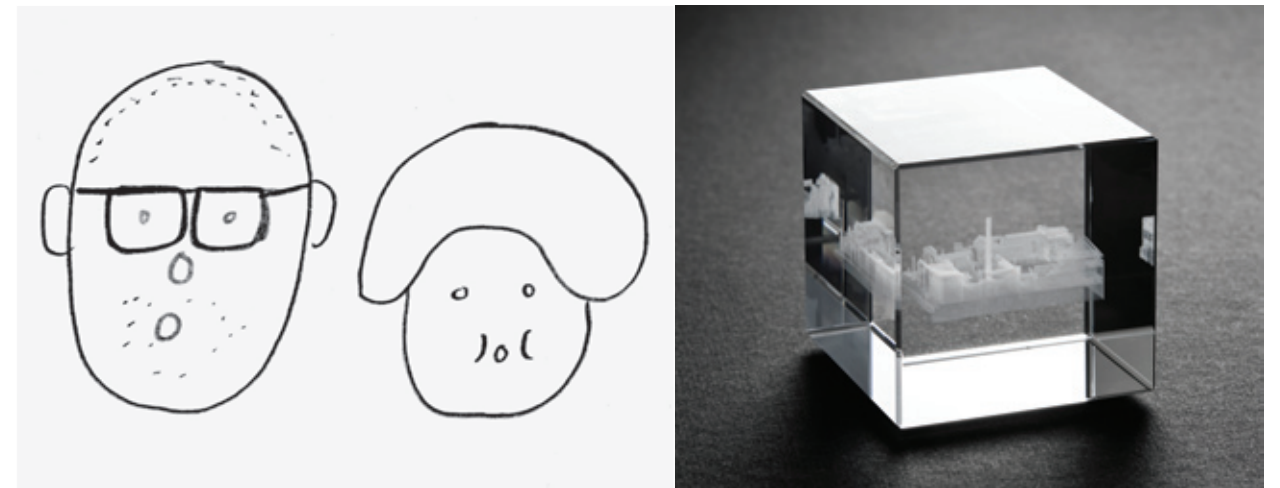
Haugen/Zohar Arkitekter (HZA) is an Oslo based practice established in 2006 by architect and artist Marit Justine Haugen and architect Dan Zohar.

For us, architecture is by nature earthbound, drawn by and for people. In our work we aim to question, expand and redefine relationships between architecture, function and art, by integrating the disciplines of landscape, architecture and sculpture. Concerned with the political, social and environmental urgencies of contemporary society, our work focuses on the translation of such urgencies into spatial and material forms of action. These forms of action have to do with social engagement and participation; they have to do with the environment and expressivity of territories; they have to do with conflicts, needs and visions in our dynamic society.

The practice has received several major design awards including the Architectural Review Award for Emerging Architecture in 2009 and 2011, the Norwegian Center for Design and Architecture prize for young talents in 2007 and is currently nominated for the Iakov Chernikhov International Prize 2012.

HZA teaches both in Norway and abroad.

www.hza.no/



NOW

KULTTUURISAUNA AS A RUIN

Kulttuurisauna is a new public sauna designed and operated by Tuomas Toivonen and Nene Tsuboi. The building will also operate as the office of NOW and will be a venue for cultural exchange and production. Kulttuurisauna is currently under construction and will open in autumn 2012.

The 300 m² building is positioned at the end of the Hakaniemenranta park, in the far corner of an artificial peninsula, overlooking Helsinki's east harbour and historic center. It has two wood-burning saunas, a small cafe, an event space, an office and a pyramid, all gathered around an atrium with direct access to the sea.

The model shows the building in a possible, distant future, as a ruin. The model was made by Ioana Maftei.

PRACTICE

NOW is an architecture and design practice founded by Tuomas Toivonen and Nene Tsuboi. Since 2005, NOW has worked on a wide spectrum of projects reflecting the varied interests and skills of the partners, and the agendas of their clients and collaborators.

Tuomas Toivonen is an architect, writer and musician, living and working in Helsinki. His works include conversations, objects, interiors, buildings, urban plans, enterprises, texts, music, broadcasting, publications and exhibitions. He is interested in people, atmospheric phenomena, analog synthesis, building things and making small contributions to culture and civilisation.

Nene Tsuboi is a designer from Japan, living and working in Helsinki since 1999. Her works include artworks for products and publications, designing graphics and spaces, organising events and exhibitions. Her projects often relate to architecture and urbanism, and the making of more interesting and enjoyable places.

www.nowoffice.org/





ERIC JCS.O



C-O-M-B-I-N-E

CONTEXT BOX

For us, the context of architecture is as important as the possible architectural intervention. We have an interest in the context itself: a complex situation with strong collective implications.

As we see it, that context consists of both the physical landscape and the people that inhabit and consider that landscape. The landscape is the continuous web that surrounds the planet – the physical ground for architectural intervention. The web is in a state of constant change. People's ideas and attitudes are also in constant change, providing an ever-changing flow of ideas created by individuals, by groups, and by society. This is the mental ground for architectural intervention.

The interplay between physical and mental architectural intervention makes the context a dynamic and chaotic phenomenon. We shape the context; the context shapes us. Our daily life is all about how we as individuals relate to the context.

How can we interact with and contribute to the context? How is the potential of the context as a common ground nurtured? How is the interplay between idea and process represented?

In considering our practice, our project, and the context of the Nordic Pavilion, we came to the conclusion that we had to turn the model inside out. The outer appearance of our project is an anonymous box, and the individual is placed in the centre. Four display screens depict four individual streams of information. In combination, the displays create a continuous landscape. As the person in the centre you can rotate between the displays and choose what context to see and comprehend.

We hope that the device can provide an immediate meditation on the nature of the context and the potential to create a common ground.

PRACTICE

C-O-M-B-I-N-E is a collaborative studio. It is an office where all the projects and ideas are created through team work and joint discussions. We at C-O-M-B-I-N-E are interested in how ideas emerge when people come together. Our team is multidisciplinary with training in landscape architecture and design, music as well as architecture. Together we have an interest and an ability to combine and create interfaces between seemingly opposite things.

C-O-M-B-I-N-E's approach is based on the combination and synthesizing of architecture, nature and culture.

The office has three main areas of interest: landscape, urban design, and co-creation processes. In all three the interaction between context and intervention are crucial, in both space and time.

We always work in a non-hierarchical way, mostly in a workshop format and often in close collaboration with the client. We believe in the relevance of an early-stage participatory process in which different actors and the public can engage in creative conversations about the potential development of a site or a project. By bringing together all stakeholders around a common concern and a shared narrative, more viable support and commitment for the future development is created.

C-O-M-B-I-N-E is an employee-owned cooperative. This business structure emphasizes that individuals create ideas within the company in order to simultaneously build its collective value.

www.combine.coop/



LASSILA + HIRVILAMMI ARCHITECTS



LASSILA HIRVILAMMI ARCHITECTS

VENICE LIKE A DREAM

It is all rooted in the place and the materials used. The installation created for the Nordic Pavilion in Venice takes on the appearance of a monolithic wooden object of substantial weight. It hovers above the ground as if it were floating, suspended from the ceiling with the weight distributed among several cables. A visible space of tension emerges between the object and the floor, forming a central element in the experience of the piece.

The material and the way it is handled and treated – from the moment of selection to the final molding into an installation, a house, or a structure – is an essential part of our process of working. With a natural sense of warmth, wood as a material provides an opportunity to challenge the limits of our imagination. In the hands of a skilled craftsman, the material becomes a piece of art and its strongest qualities are worked into a tangible object creating the substance that gives rise to an experience.

Inside the outer surface that forms the external shape of the object, an inner space reveals itself, bathing in light filtered through the ceiling beams of the unique Pavilion designed by Sverre Fehn. As light shines through the inner structure, the wood becomes warm and soft in color. The dark outer shell acts as an antithesis of its surrounding environment, elevating the ethereal expression of the Pavilion.

In its materiality, the installation is real and tangible. It is a strong gesture that operates with contrasts. In a similar way, the city of Venice itself is the result of a determined will to build. Only when reflected on the surface of water – like the buildings in Venice – does the installation acquire its dreamlike existence. It becomes something unattainable, a part of the fantastic Venice of the past that is mirrored in its canals.

PRACTICE

Lassila Hirvilammi Architects works on a great variety of different projects: churches, office buildings, housing, private houses, interior design, renovation projects, and urban planning. Our objective is to create projects in which architecture, material and environment work in harmony to form a functional, technically and ecologically sustainable whole that is of aesthetically high quality and committed to the locality.

It all starts from the material to be used. Our aim is to find the most appropriate methods of design and building techniques for each project. It is about bringing the right people together to contribute each their own valuable input to the entity. We have found it inspiring to work with professionals from different fields in building and construction. For example, we have humbly learned about the secrets of working with wood from the masters of craftsmanship, and we have enjoyed the seamless cooperation with the most skillful of engineers.

Anssi Lassila founded his own practice in 2001. He was joined by Teemu Hirvilammi in 2004 and together they formed Lassila Hirvilammi Architects. The office is based in Seinäjoki (a small town in mid-western Finland well-known for the Cultural Centre designed by Alvar Aalto) and in Helsinki. Lassila Hirvilammi have been rewarded with major awards and nominations, including the Red Dot award in 2011 and a short listing for Mies van der Rohe award in 2005 and in 2011.

The work of Lassila Hirvilammi is about a keen sense of material and a strong respect for craftsmanship, it is about an intensity of sentiment and a commitment to quality.

www.lassilahirvilammi.fi/



RINTALA EGGERTSSON ARCHITECTS

VOID

In Western thinking the notion of void, or emptiness, is usually considered a negative state of affairs – an absence or lack of something. As an existential term emptiness, coupled with our contemporary condition of unforeseen wealth, is associated with the sensation of uneasiness and alienation in the midst of our plenty. This spiritual emptiness may be filled on its surface with activity and entertainment, cultural hipness and formal styles. This obsessive behavior or fear of emptiness, well exploited by commercial interests, is a trap that enforces us to produce, to consume, and to fill the seemingly meaningless gaps, rather than allowing things to evolve in a natural and sustainable way.

Only a deeper mental shock is able to place us again in the real reality where accepting and observing the indifferent emptiness around us is not a problem but rather part of the answer.

Meanwhile, in Eastern philosophies such as Taoism, attaining a state of emptiness is viewed as a state of stillness and placidity which is the 'mirror of the universe' and the 'pure mind'. In the Buddhist mantra, "Form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, form does not differ from emptiness; whatever is form, that is emptiness, whatever is emptiness, that is form, the same is true of feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness."

Thus architecture is not just defined by its physical presence, but also by the condensation of stories of the encounter with the place.

The space is 600 x 600 x 600 millimeters, defined by the floor and two walls of Sverre Fehn's Nordic Pavilion, and the bottom of the podium created especially for this exhibition by professor Juhani Pallasmaa.

The space is empty, devoid of any designed objects, but still full of untold stories.

PRACTICE

Rintala Eggertsson Architects was established in 2007 by the Finnish architect Sami Rintala and the Icelandic architect Dagur Eggertsson. Today the office consists of architects Vibeke Jenssen (associate) and Kaori Watanabe, in addition to Rintala and Eggertsson. The office bases its activities on teaching, furniture design, public art projects, architecture and planning. Important features in Rintala Eggertsson's practice are their hands-on workshops with students and clients, where buildings are designed and constructed in full scale on site.

Occupying the space between architecture and public art, their work has been installed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, the MAXXI Museum in Rome and in the Venice Biennale, and has been published extensively in architecture media around the world, such as A+U, Wallpaper, Architectural Review, Blueprint, Domus and The New York Times. Their work has been described as narrative and conceptual, a layered interpretation of the physical, mental and poetic resources of the site.

They are currently working on projects in Norway, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, Portugal, Canada, India, Chile and China.

www.rintalaeggertsson.com/

