

*In the beginning was the word. If words and expressions are found, recognition appears, and the image is resurrected in a new form. The choice of the words that delivered new shapes and a new conception of space was already present for the attentive innovators. As young men, Kay Fisker, b. 1893, Aage Rafn, b. 1890, and Ejnar Dyggve, b. 1887, expressed new ideas, when choosing an anonymous Copenhagen citizen's house from the 18<sup>th</sup> century as an object for restoration in 1910.*

*The descriptive text, which accompanied the restoration publication (1914), represents concepts, which were essential to modernism. The young students identify common traits, which create types, "(...) these apartments clearly demonstrate how each element in the living rooms has been placed with an immediate, often almost refined sense of good conditions (...) each room has its own unique quality (...) using displacements and division into squares, all craftsmanship has been done considering each room...a rhythmical feeling (...) Rarely is anything besides the necessary allowed for...each element gets its value from its technical source and by fulfilling its purpose as much as possible."*

*Based on these observations, they were able to broaden their knowledge and in the words of P.V. Jensen-Klint 'fasten a new tradition with the rediscovered common thread'.*

*In M.G. Bindesbøll's Thorvaldsen's Museum and C.F. Hansen's buildings, Carl Petersen, b. 1874, found a classicistic past, which he saw better than any academy professor. Here, he found the simplification tool that he needed. With the exception of the castle church, C.F. Hansen's castle Christiansborg Slot was a burnt down ruin from 1884. Until the wrong decision to replace Hansen's classicism with new baroque was made in 1907, this was a challenge and an inspiration for any up-and-coming architect. And it doesn't stop there. Benevolent Copenhageners also wanted to add a spire to Hansen's dome Frue Kirke, but Carl Petersen and his followers were able to prevent this, though.*

*From 1912-1915 Carl Petersen built*

*Faaborg Museum, and from then on almost all competition projects were designed in a classicistic style. The study of historic styles disappeared, and only classic proportions stayed on the curriculum. Carl Petersen took an interest in the East Asian craftsmanship, technique and material treatment of surfaces. In order to reach the best results, he wanted to collect all the world's finest knowledge. Similar thoughts were expressed in L'histoire de Dannemarc, Copenhagen 1755, which was written on order from the king by Paul Henri Mallet (b. in Geneva 1730): "Si nous voulons sérieusement de nouveaux résultats, faisons des observations nouvelles (...) Il faut étudier les langues, les livres, les hommes de chaque siècle, de chaque pays, puiser dans ses vraies sources la connaissance des nations. Cette étude si belle, si intéressante est remplie de mines aussi abondantes que négligées. Les liens qui unissent les diverses parties de l'Europe se resserrent de jour en jour". (p. 28-29 Avant-Propos). These visions of the Enlightenment, which were also expressed in the first charter of the Academy (which the Danish School of Architecture is part of, ed.), are now used again to express the needs of a new era.*

*Peder Vilhelm Jensen-Klint, b. 1853, was a mathematician and an engineer. In the Gothic style, he found a path to simplification and innovation. It was not a question of imitation, though. To him, nature was the teacher, and mathematics became the tool that revealed nature's principle of growth. This principle was also meant to lead the manmade nature, architecture. Kaare Klint, b. 1888, and Ivar*

*Bentsen, b. 1876, were his students, but his son Kaare also followed Carl Petersen in his work on Faaborg Museum.*

*Even though it was never realized, Jensen-Klint's project from 1907, "En Krystal-knude af Danske Kirketårne, hver med sin Klokke alle sammenstemte" ("Crystals of Danish Church Towers"), showed the way forward. The architectural creation of crystals is also found in Italian and Spanish mountain towns - a vision that continues to be a vital inspiration. In the 1950's, Kay Fisker had his students built a model of the project. In those years, many students went to exactly these mountain towns to survey and study. Striving for absolute shapes, Jensen-Klint wished to build a synthesis of the regional building tradition. As a lecturer Jensen-Klint had great impact. He*

*went nowhere near the Academy of Fine Arts, which he despised, but attracted many of its dissatisfied students.*

*In 1911 he published 10 years of lectures: "Bygmesterskolen" ("The Master Builder School"). Those were the 10 years, when modernism was formulated in music, art and the perception of space. Young people knew Cézanne, Gauguin and Picasso, and Stravinsky and Schönberg. We also have to remember that electricity, the radio, the airplane, photo technique, and movies came into being and brought new opportunities and a need for new technological solutions.*

*"Let us study the object, the surface, and the fabric according to their nature and the demands of the time, never engaging in the writing off of old styles, but practicing our personal style through a thorough education and acquisition of the consistent taste and dignified attitude to style of old times" (1901).*

*"It is about developing fixed norms for ordinary buildings. About creating types of houses in relation to the old house shapes, which can be used without large adjustments by practical master builders, who know the needs of our time and do not strive for any kind of originality, but every kind of solidity. The art of repetition is just as valuable as the art of innovation - it belongs to the craftsman and cannot be carried out satisfactorily by others. Innovation belongs to the artist, and can only be carried out properly by him. Repetition creates the perfection in everyday life, innovation creates perfection over time" (1909). While modernism developed and until his death in 1930, Jensen-Klint worked on designing and building a monument for the Danish philosopher and founder of the Grundtvigian folk high schools, N.F.S. Grundtvig, Grundtvigskirken (The Grundtvig Church) in Copenhagen.*

*In 1901, the citizens of Copenhagen celebrated the opening of their new city hall, built by Martin Nyrop, with a large exhibition of Danish art and architecture. Here, Carl Petersen saw for the first time the drawings of C.F. Hansen and M.G. Bindesbøll (b. 1800) alongside work by contemporary artists, and he realized that they had all worked towards the same goal.*

*But Carl Petersen did not think that the same kind of harmony was present in his time, which he felt was influenced by unrest and tension. The art of the era had to find its own expression. Denmark is not a revolutionary country.*

The absolute monarchy was abolished almost by the king himself in 1849, and 1901's change in political systems was equally peaceful. In all areas there is a belief in evolution. People should accept the new. That was in the spirit of Grundtvig. There was no *tabula rasa* in Danish architecture, but on the contrary a will to innovate, which resembles several European models such as C.F.A. Voysey's speech on styles at "the Design Club" in 1911, Le Corbusier's writings, and the Design-development and social commitment of the Bauhaus School.

Everything was to be digested and in the words of Jensen-Klint: "...since the beauty of all previous times is visible for us today, the architect must acquire it, so that it becomes his property, incorporated in him, and in his education, making him not imitate the old, but resurrect it in giving himself" (1901). In 1915, Kay Fisker and Aage Rafn, who were still students, won the competition for Gudhjembanen (the Gudhjem line) stations in Bornholm. The completed buildings were published in the architecture journal *Architekten* in 1916. There is a significant difference between the project and the final result.

The Art Nouveau lines have disappeared, and the buildings are tighter and simpler. The smallest station, Christianshøj, built in wood and a tarred black, is classicism freed from "style", and the plant's shape is eliminated in favour of a consideration of functions and the surroundings. All blend in naturally with the landscape. One could say that they did not allow for anything unnecessary. Fisker and Rafn do however have Baillie Scott for "Houses and Gardens" and the local building culture of Bornholm to thank for their progress. The stations are without any kind of nostalgic retrospection. When they finally had time to meet up with their friends in Copenhagen again, they were still sitting around happy about an old project with a hideous Doric column. Have we not come further! (letter in Fisker's archives). It turned out to be difficult to abolish the styles; that is to say the superfluous, this unnecessary theatrical costume, which confused pure aesthetics and the functionality.

When Adolf Loos gave his lecture *Ornament und Verbrechen* in Copenhagen in 1916, they might well have thought he was right, but too extreme. There had to be some degree of accentuation after all.

Vilhelm Wanscher was an art historian with ambitions both as an artist and as an architect.

As a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, from 1915 he gave well-attended lectures in the history of art and architecture. Witnesses explain that it provided them with a holistic vision. His book: *The Aesthetic Perception of Art* (1906) was read by everyone. Wanscher especially accentuated Italian baroque, and his influence can be sensed already in Faaborg Museum, but also in Fisker's Hornbækhus (Hornbæk House) 1922, in the inner yards of Politigården (The Police Headquarters) 1924, in relation to which Aage Rafn play a crucial part, and in the ny Scene (new Stage) at The Royal Theatre 1929 by Holger Jacobsen (b.1876), who had also influenced Politigården.

Ivar Bentsen's experiments with rising and falling number series in the Opera and Philharmonic project in 1917-18 was a further development of Jensen-Klint and Kaare's theories. The entire façade could be drawn into a net of squares. There were no marked corners or monumental portals. The only decoration was a baroque banister, which crowned the building parts. This rational kilometre architecture was to fill the entire country, divided by roads and park areas, a democratic architecture, where there was no hierarchy, and personality wasn't expressed in the facades, but something you had yourself. Criticism was deadly: the windows were "the blind eyes of blind men", "the whole regiment stands at attention in the socialist state", was the verdict of Martin Nyrop. Wanscher was disappointed. He missed the invigorating dynamism of the baroque. The project had great impact, however, on all the large yards that were built in the new residential areas outside Copenhagen in the years to follow.

Lisbet Baslev (1928-2002) Swedish writer and historian, was Ass. curator, Thordvaldsens Museum (1964-69). Ass. curator, Architectural Drawings Collection at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Copenhagen (1969-1996)

Few things are so scarce in Architecture as proper acts, coherent with the essence of things. And few as needed as the enthused glance to their authentic contexts, which in Nordic Architecture are dialogues, inseparable from a way of life caring for nature and an elegance based on lightness. In such exchanges one is moved from vernacular traditions to a transposition of classical models, questioned and reinvented over and over again, where care with scale does not neglect the material qualities of daily experience. Sober, varied, heterotopical Architecture, which was a dialogue between authors, as well, opening in such process a frame for collective coexistence and a method to establish the domain of our discipline.

A debate such as this concerning us might have not gone beyond mere *entelechy*, but, once proposals were planned, the ensuing pragmatism went up to its final construction: city planning for welfare society, where a new landscape of Modernity was set up, whilst housing standards were improved. The reflections included in this monograph allow more than one reading, letting us see that Nordic Architectures still maintain their actuality, and go on gaining added layers of meaning. And they suggest some questions: why is it so? Let us sketch some themes.

Firstly, craft and grace: craft which endows works with propriety, in its material value and in the contingency which projects them towards a future. Lisbet Balslev Jörgensen expressed it clearly by quoting Jensen Klint: "Let us study the object, the surface and the fabric according to their nature and the demands of the time, never engaging in the writing off of old styles, but practicing our personal style through a thorough education and acquisition of the consistent taste and dignified attitude to style of old times". Grace that Morton Shand applied in 1930 (Swedish grace) to the Stockholm International Exhibition, but which also concerns the realizations of the previous decade: as premonition in the making from Paris 1925 International Exhibition, understandable today with words written by I. Calvino. "Something