

Summary

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des formes différentes surtout pour l'aménagement intérieur: poutres de couleur foncée, lambrissages au plafond clairs en pin naturel, portes coulissantes et revêtements des parois en orégon et parquets en chêne.

Haakon Mjelva

Maison familiale à Reistad près de Drammen

Exécution: 1962

(Pages 117-119)

Située sur une pente sud-ouest cette maison à plan rectangulaire comprend une zone de jour bien distincte de sa zone de nuit ouverte vers la pente. D'ailleurs les deux faces principales de cette maison sont très différentes l'une de l'autre: la face arrière presque pleine en brique avec un toit peu en porte-à-faux s'oppose à la face ensoleillée devant laquelle se trouve un espace couvert à poteaux et sommiers en bois qui supportent un large avant toit, et le balcon. L'assemblage des pièces constructives est souligné d'une manière artisanale: les sommiers très rapprochés reposent sur une panne de double portée et sur le mur fermé dont la fonction porteuse est celle d'une membrane. L'intérieur est conçu de la même manière: les éléments primaires constructifs sont apparents et prennent l'importance d'accents plastiques.

Summary

Kjell Lund and Nils Slaatto

Town Hall, Asker

Project started: 1958

Construction: 1961-63

(Pages 94-99)

Site:

The town hall is situated in a hilly landscape with widely scattered small villages. The building is an unexpected mass in this semi urban countryside and its density can only be explained by the development that this region will undergo shortly. It is to be the centre of urban concentration which is to be of high density. Placed on a hill between the village and the station the town hall will be the focal point of the future city.

Form:

The town hall is made up of three cubes, clearly expressed. The wing of only one level contains the reception rooms in a square plan, the tall block of 7 floors comprises the office space. The administrative rooms open to the public, are grouped round a spacious entry hall, which is expressed volumetrically. The elevations have the horizontal elements emphasized by continuous sills and glazing, not expressed on one plane as in the 20's, but three dimensionally by bringing forward the solid elements which pass in front of the vertical circulation tower also and are only interrupted at the entry and main columns.

Materials:

The principle of trying to arrive at a plastic unity is maintained by the choice of materials, which are composed essentially of plain concrete externally and inside black painted concrete, natural wood ceilings and green painted surfaces. The furniture is made of steel and leather.

Plan:

The plan is well conceived functionally, the entry gives direct access to the three organisational parts and to the vertical circulation, where the services are grouped. All the office space can be subdivided as needed. The cantine is placed on the roof, and the committee rooms on the ground floor are grouped round the large council chamber, which is roof lit.

Astrup and Hellern

Assistants: Knut Astrup, John R. Johnson

Apartmentblock in Hammerfest

Project started: 1959

Construction: 1961-63

(Pages 100-103)

The climatic and regional conditions at Hammerfest have resulted in an

architecture very specially adapted to the long dark winters and the possibility of summer planting for wind protection. The horseshoe plan is open towards the sunny slope, and closed to the prevailing winds. This offers a protected place for the green play area. Three vertical cores distribute to balcony access flats: (60 crossover two floor flats) with 4 room, 2 room and 1 room types.

The basement contains the laundries, ski store, pram store, bicycle park, heating, storage cubicles and services installations. The structure is made up of concrete cross walls between the flats, and concrete floors.

Nils-Ole Lund

Aarne Korsmo and the Norwegian functionalism

(Pages 104-108)

Functionalism was first developed in central Europe, England, Belgium, Austria, and Italy, who took part at the beginning of the movement, but became less interesting as time went on. After the war years one can judge more objectively "Art Nouveau" and the "isms" of the 20's. It is easier to pick out the Utopians of the pioneers who created the basis for a realist architecture using the new materials and the new structures as well as the social changes.

One new only the principal tendencies and their movement, but one has not yet sufficiently analysed the applications in the various parts of Europe. The sources of this information are very few, and usually written in the language of the country concerned. When one considers Scandinavia one notes that one speaks usually of Sweden and Denmark, and very little of Finland (apart from Aalto) and hardly at all of Norway.

But, in the end, it is in Norway that functionalism first found its application in the Nordic countries in the 30's, and this resulted also in some architects of merit. It is only the Neo-classical movement that happened simultaneously in all the Nordic countries. The architects reacted against the introvert architecture of the beginning of the century, and against the great interest in local peculiarities and traditions.

One could believe that such a pointed interest in formal problems could have hindered functionalism in arriving at its applications, but the creation of clean, clear cut elevations as well as the classic idea of geometry allowed the use of the mediterranean style which arrived at the start of functionalism. The great overthrow was not in the formal field but in the social sector.

The same architects who had worked on a classical basis were converted to cubism, the best examples are Asplund and Fisker. Norway did not produce architectural pioneers, nor anyone of European importance. The architects who were revolutionaries were the good interpreters of continental ideas. As from "Art Nouveau" Scandinavia produced some exceptional buildings, where the quality rests above all in the application of the continental ideas, rather than in the spirit of reform.

One tends to date the commencement of modern architecture in Norway from 1930 with the exhibition in Stockholm which was aimed to familiarise the greater public with the new ideas of functionalism. They were creating the "Useful form", and proposing objects of daily use far more adapted to their function. It was also the architecture of the spaces in the exhibition itself that counted as a positive argument in their meeting between varying ideas. It consisted in eliminating the favouritism of the few, at this happens at a social level, in creating good useful objects for everyone.

Despite the sharp discussions, the new trend found a wide field of application. All the same the Norwegian functionalism dates from before this; Aalto had modern projects as early as 1927 (The Viborg library etc.);

To be more exact the significant change came with the publication of the magazine Byggekunst in a completely new format and changes in type face, layout and in the editorial ideas.

In Norway this evolution took place only toward 1930, but already in 1928 the architect Johan Ellefson published

a manifesto with six criteria, based on the works of Le Corbusier and Lars Backers built his "Maison Objective" a restaurant in Oslo. In 1930 functionalism was leaning towards classicism, on the other hand Sweden had accepted the international style from which they took even the formal romantic language.

The Germans and the Dutch were the first sources of information, (Dudok, Oud, Jan Wils) then Le Corbusier with his "Vers une architecture". Even though Oslo had only 350,000 inhabitants at the time, there were a great number of talented architects of which Ove Bang became the key personality after the death of Backer in 1930. The works of Frithjof Reppen, Per Grieg, Thorleif Jensen, Eyvind Poestue, Lind Schistad, Blackstad and Munte Kaas, Knut Knutsen, Einride Slaatto and Aarne Korsmo were praised in a Dutch paper by Schlegel, who admired very much Perret at that time. 30 years later one is able to distinguish the more clearly the exceptional buildings of this period and judge their real value.

Always one of the most important buildings is Backers restaurant of which one has said that it was Showing a bare behind to the Norwegians. The same Ascetic expression is used again the block of flats by Reppen in which the curving volumes form elegant spaces, and in the shopping centre by Per Grieg at Bergen (1937/38) which is similar to that of Dudok, but is free of all heavyness. Then comes the house "Villa Hoffsjef Iø venskioisvei at Oslo (1937)" by Ove Bang, one of the most talented architects of this time, whose death was as serious a blow to Norway as Asplunds was for Sweden; it is one of his most pure works. Constructively it is conceived so as to keep its youthfulness; the main volume are structured at the lower level so as to form a differentiated living room. It expresses a dynamic style whose evolution was interrupted by the war. From that time it is difficult to speak of a Norwegian Architecture: one can only mention some architects whose work has to a lesser or greater extent come under the influence of the European development of modern architecture.

One has first of all Aarne Korsmos, who in his European travels met Mendelsson, Kahn, Lurçat, Le Corbusier and Dudok. In taking these new ideas to Norway he became the catalyst from the moment that he worked with Sverre Aasland, with whom he built a group of small villas which were put together in a new way plastically. Korsmo was never a pure rationalist nor a nude aesthet. He told his clients that he would build them a romantic house and not a Machine for living in. When building housing schemes Korsmo was never a social reformer, his only interests were the human being, and his position as an artist. He battled with society for aesthetic reasons; he thought that the modern society was too materialist, and too exclusively occupied with technical and economical problems. So he was not looking for a new society, but a new human being, who would revolt against his conditions and dependant life.

He expressed this in his exhibitions (Vi Kan). Korsmo was a man who knew how to adapt himself to different circumstances. He did not search for an intellectual analysis, but he tried to find intuitively a universal truth, in rejecting a too scholarly education, he deteriorated into a constructive analysis of a formal discipline.

His architecture tried to express "calm, order, and harmonie". He did not at all neglect detail, as well as the play of light, and of colours. Also in a villa for a collector of Munch, he created a space with a translucent light that was very suited to this painters work.

Molle and Per Cappelan
Trond Eliassen and Birger Lambertz-Nilssen

Institute for social Research, Oslo

Project started: 1957

Construction: 1959-60

(Pages 109-112)

The institute is an independant body supported by the university, in which

the research covers a very large field. For this reason the program was framed in terms of a free organization with cubicles for concentrated work, while demanding communicating spaces for circulation and leisure activities. The plan expresses clearly this idea. The site is situated in the midst of many small villas, so there was some conflict between the building regulations and the program which required a high site ratio, but with several basement levels.

The first stage is developed round an interior court separated from the neighbouring site by a solid wall. The center of the complex is the entrance hall which comprises some exhibition space, and leads to the lecture hall and the individual research rooms. The architectural composition is made up of simple volumes, very cubic in appearance. This simplicity is emphasized by the use of materials: Breeze block for the vertical panels and copper for the sills and the Facia. Also natural wood is used for the suspended ceilings and portland stone for the floors. While the external gives the impression of being closed, the whole complex opens out towards the interior with glazed panels and a series of volumes generously spaced and which include the conference hall, study rooms and the internal court which makes the general architectural impression very pleasant. The value of this small building lies in the plastic result achieved with very limited means.

Kjell Lund, Nils Slaatto

Home in Besserud/Oslo

Project started: 1959-60

Built: 1962

(Pages 113-116)

In the outskirts of Oslo on a southward-sloping site commanding a magnificent view over Oslo Fjord, Slaatto sited a house that is entirely open to the south and closed facing the slope. The plan is subdivided into four zones which are accented by templates visible in the shape of canopy projections.

The entrance is situated on the north side, with access to a transverse corridor, which opens directly into the living room, and, at the other end, into a staircase which leads to a staggered tract comprising a bedroom and a studio. The living room opens immediately into the dining room and the studio of the lady of the house, the latter room being directly connected with three east bedrooms with their corresponding lavatories.

Behind the living room ist the hobby workshop and the kitchen, on the other side, a terrace which is partially shielded from the wind.

A very thick deck gives the house its horizontal accent. The exterior skin, whether of solid masonry or glazed, is disposed freely with more or less obvious canopies resulting from the deck, which is rectangular in plan.

The construction materials employed are brick and wood in different forms, especially for the interior fittings: dark beams, light-coloured natural pine wainscoting on the ceiling, sliding doors, partition cladding of Oregon pine and floors of oak.

Haakon Mjelva

Single family in Reistad near Drammen

Construction: 1962

(Pages 117-119)

Situated on a South-West slope this rectangularly planned house has a day area clearly separated from the night zone which looks onto the slope. The various elevations are very different from each other: the rear elevation in brick is almost solid with a roof slightly cantilevered over and which faces the sunny elevation with a covered area in front with wooden columns and joists supporting the balcony and a large porch. The assembly of the constructional element is realized in a contrived way: the joists placed very close together are resting on a beam with a double span and on the enclosing wall which has the structural nature of a membrane. The interior is followed through in the same manner: the primary structural elements are clearly expressed and take an important plastic role.