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Translation and Summary of *Arkkitehti* Magazine Issue

Arkkitehti, or *Finnish Architectural Review*, published by the Finnish Association of Architects, is one of the oldest architectural publications still operating today that aims to engage Finnish readers through discussing the work of Finnish architects and global architects and the latest news of the architecture world.¹ The main contents of its fifth issue, published in 1986 and edited by Hannu Hellman and Anne Jarvinen, predominantly focus on Leisure Architecture and Frank O. Gehry.

The issue starts with a few advertisements that reflect and promote the modern Finnish culture in 1986 by introducing the newest architectural products that would “modernize” the workplace and improve the environment's quality and productivity. Advertisements include *Nokia Cable*, which administered data and electricity through the office and improved work efficiency, and new lighting products for improved workplace comfort. One of the most intriguing advertisements was the introduction of *Origo* furniture that promoted modern seats for the “dynamic modern man” and “fast-paced modern woman” to emphasize the growing workplace modernism. Some advertisements also promote architectural products that can aid architectural projects, for example, *Nokia's Aluminum* implemented in swimming pools' facades and skylights. The magazine also promoted products that offered new modern functions to an old Art Nouveau elevator while preserving its architectural style.

¹ “About,” Ark.fi, accessed May 24, 2020, <https://www.ark.fi/en/about/>.

The issue continues to briefly explore different art and architectural ideas and topics, such as the role of Finnish women in art and architecture and their contribution to Finland. It also discusses Josef Alber's colour pedagogy and his famous Homage painting series, Reyner Banham's Industrial buildings during modernism using reinforced concrete, post-modern Italian architecture and baroque architecture in Rome, Kenneth Frampton's critical rationalism, and the role of photography in architecture during modernism. Furthermore, it explains Finland's construction and costs in its capital city, where architects debated ways to provide good quality and affordable apartments, and the problems of construction and design in Helsinki.

Finally, it attempts to educate the readers on using recycled materials by featuring an interview with Frank O. Gehry, who connects art and architecture while considering cheap materials in his work. It clarifies how Gehry's playful use of iron as a collage and sculpture in his own house led international architectural journals to write about him and his work. He introduces solutions to housing problems using cheap and recycled materials such as cardboard, metal, and plywood. Moreover, his interest in Surrealism enabled him to view materials as an expressive tool that integrates art and architecture.

The issue then reviews seven architectural projects located in Finland by Finnish architects that focus on the relationship between architecture and leisure and aim to promote physical and psychological effects through their designs:

1. The "Arctic Circle Cottage" was designed by the ARRAK group in 1965 and is in Rovaniemi Rural District. This leisure development includes the expansion of the cottage with an open gallery, shop, workshop, and modernized foyer. It also has a heating plant, an observation tower, and a production building. The buildings in this

- area were constructed with prefabricated wooden units due to the limited construction time. The U.S. former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who was involved with UNICEF and aided the city of Rovaniemi, visited the development, which helped regenerate tourism and further development following its destruction during the First World War.² ARRAK also participated in the Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition.
2. Bitumi Manner designed “Nikkila Youth Centre” in Sipoo in 1984. Its structure comprises block walls, rounded wooden columns, sawn timber as a facade, and a painted sheet metal roof. Currently, there is no further information about Bitumi Manner nowadays.
 3. “Ararat Holiday Cabin of the Resettlement Union” in Juva is one of the most intriguing projects in the magazine. It was founded in the 1940s and named after the resettlement and farm economy union to protect war veterans who settled down and became farmers. Designed by George Grotenfelt, it aimed to integrate childhood memories and the old architecture of the countryside by following organic and traditional Finnish architecture. The complex design includes a cabin, yard, outbuilding, sauna, and porch. Volunteers built the complex to maintain and suit the natural surrounding rather than fall as a consumer building. The architect himself has quite a reputation for using wood and timber and organizing Wood Architecture

² Jessica Wood, “How Rovaniemi Became the Official Town of Santa Claus,” *Culture Trip*, last modified May 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/finland/articles/how-rovaniemi-became-the-official-town-of-santa-claus/>.

courses at Helsinki University as a professor.³ He expressed his views about construction and materials, discussing the advantages of wood as a stable material in an article on *ResearchGate* by R. Marttila in 2001. Additionally, Grotenfelt was featured in a few books and articles. Such books include “The Vernacular as a Source of inspiration in Finnish Architecture” by Aino Niskanen and “A Critical History of Contemporary Architecture: 1960-2010 about Finland: Architecture and Cultural Identity” edited by Dr. Elie G Haddad and David Rifkind and published in 2014. Grotenfelt also wrote his “From Wood to Architecture” and was one of the authors of “An Architectural Present – 7 Approaches.”

4. The “Hollola Swimming Hall” in Hollola, designed by Pekka Helin, Tuomo Siitonen, and Petri Eerikainen, combines the swimming pool area and youth facilities. The architects used light and soft forms to emphasize the idea of a public bath that promoted physical and mental relaxation and added square and lightweight lanterns to provide natural light for the swimming pool area with a row of clerestory windows. Meanwhile, the youth facilities’ interior is made of natural wood panels. This project was discussed in “Architecture in Context: Helin Workshop” by Peter Davey, published in Switzerland in 2010. Today, Pekka Helin continues to be active and excels in his field. His *Helin & Co. Architects* firm is now considered “one of the leading architectural offices in Northern Europe and recognized for its sustainable

³ “Strong Roots, A Sturdy Trunk and Verdant Crown: Wooden Architecture’s Annual Rings at the Museum of Finnish Architecture,” *ARCHINFO*, last modified October 2014, <http://archinfo.fi/en/2014/10/strong-roots-a-sturdy-trunk-and-verdant-crown-wooden-architectures-annual-rings-at-the-museum-of-finnish-architecture/>.

architecture.”⁴ They were featured in “Architects for the New Millennium” in 2000 in Austria. Their website mentions that they won 40 first prizes in architectural competitions in Finland and abroad in Poland, Sweden, and Norway.⁵ They also designed a Finnish Pavilion for World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, China, the Finnish Embassy in Tokyo, and Nokia Headquarters in Espoo. They won first-prize competitions for Pan-Gyo housing in Seoul and the Teenage Activity centre in China.⁶ Currently, *Helin & Co. Architects* is designing a wooden Metsa pavilion for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.⁷

5. The “Kontio puisto Sports Hall” was designed by Kirimo Mikkola & Co. in 1981 in Pieksamaki to offer resources for teaching sports and arranging festivals. The building's structure and ground used reinforced concrete with glue-laminated wood for the building's roof slabs. The building includes a bomb shelter for ballet practice and a tower with HVAC rooms. The architect published works such as “Architecture in Finland in the 20th Century” in 1981 and “Finnish Vision: Modern Art, Architecture and Design” in 1983, and was mentioned in Malcolm Quantrill's “Finnish Architecture and the Modernist Tradition” in 1995.

⁴ “Helin & Co Architects,” *World-Architects*, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://www.scandinavian-architects.com/en/helin-and-co-architects-helsinki>.

⁵ “About Us,” *Helin & Co. Architects*, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://www.helinco.fi/en#about-us>.

⁶ “About Us,” *Helin & Co. Architects*.

⁷ “Helin & Co Designs Metsa Pavilion for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo,” *Helin & Co. Architects*, last modified February 27, 2019, <https://www.helinco.fi/en/news/helin-and-co-designs-metsa-pavilion-for-the-2020-olympic-games-in-tokyo>.

6. Pekka Salminen's "Hakkari Sports Hall" in Lempaala combines school, sports, and leisure centres. The sports hall was implemented in 1985 and is considered the largest public facility in Lempaala. Salminen is now the President and the founder of *PES-Architects* and has a firm in both Helsinki and Shanghai, previously in Germany and Croatia.⁸ He designed Helsinki Airport and was involved in international projects in Russia, Iraq, Yemen, Europe, and China.⁹ He is most successful internationally in China for his Fuzhou Wuxi Grand Theatre and Strait Culture and Art Centre.¹⁰ Chinese Architect Fang Hai who had lived in Helsinki for 16 years, had written more than 20 books on Finnish architecture and supported Finnish architects in China, acted as a consultant for Salminen and helped him gain recognition in China.¹¹
7. The "Leppavaara Sports Field Stands and Maintenance Building," designed by Pekka Kolari in Espoo, consists of an open-air swimming pool and indoor skating rink. The building is made of concrete with steel roofs and sheet-like concrete pillars. Unfortunately, little information is found about Kolari online.

Lastly, the "Nikkila Youth Center," "Kontioapuisto Sports Hall," and "Hakkari Sports Hall" aim for the same goal: to provide a large hall that can serve multiple purposes, such as a

⁸ "Interview with Pekka Salminen," interview by *EARS*, accessed May 23, 2020, <http://ears.asia/past/interview-with-pekka-salminen/index.html>.

⁹ "Pekka Salminen's PES-Architects Victorious in China," *ARCHINFO*, last modified February 2014, <http://archinfo.fi/en/2014/02/pekka-salminens-pes-architects-victorious-in-china/>.

¹⁰ "Interview with Pekka Salminen."

¹¹ "Architecture Ties Together China and Finland," *JingDaily*, last modified September 1, 2011, <https://jingdaily.com/architecture-ties-together-china-and-finland/>.

forum for large gatherings, school children activities and even different sports courts. These projects include a club, gym, changing rooms, cafeteria, and meeting rooms.

The magazine then offers short summaries or reviews of books for leisure reading, such as the works of Frank O. Gehry, Construction, European Architecture, Hassan Fathy's Rural Architecture, and Reima Pietila. Pietila was the only summary that offered a translated section in English. Upon research, he was one of the most well-known Finnish Architects and was considered an avant-garde architect who was ahead of everyone's time with an interest in the relationship of forms.¹² However, unfortunately, he was not included in the 20th-century modern architecture history books because of the difficulties in understanding his ideas.¹³

Interestingly, this issue includes Hassan Fathy, the only Egyptian architect with whom the issue discusses his life and works. During modernism, he focused on rural, lower-class areas and described his use of local materials. He was inspired by the poor conditions in the countryside to find building methods that were traditional and suitable for rural conditions and improve the lives of poor people in the countryside. He began using clay bricks in construction due to materials shortage caused by the First World War.

Furthermore, the magazine's fifth issue also offers an updated history overview of Frank Lloyd Wright and Herbert F. Johnson's encounter that led to the design and construction of two

¹² "Reima Pietila "Aware of Everything Present and Everything Taking Place" - Interview with Kaisa Broner," interview by Anni Vartola, *Bookm-ark.fi*, November 10, 2019, <https://www.bookm-ark.fi/2019/11/reima-pietila-aware-of-everything-present-interview-with-kaisa-broner/>.

¹³ Vartola, interview.

buildings for the Johnson company, whose designs were unique at the time. Enlightened by Johnson's social ambitions, Lloyd designed a horizontal office building with a glass tube focused on natural lighting, which helped improve labour productivity.

Overall, this magazine issue provides extensive and diverse ideas from the United States, different parts of Europe, and Egypt that combine architecture and leisure and emphasize the relationship between Art and Architecture. There is also an emphasis on materials used in construction and architecture throughout the magazine. For example, it includes Frank Gehry's recycled materials, Helsinki's attempt to provide quality materials at low cost, Hassan Fathy's local and traditional construction technique, and the advertisements mentioned earlier. The issue provides different viewpoints on modernism and offers articles encouraging us to investigate local and non-modern ideas and pay attention to the materials used. It was intriguing to see how the 1980s were booming with new ideas and ambitions through the magazine. At the same time, although some projects have value, they may be considered outdated and utterly different from what their architects are doing now. It is fascinating to see the progression of architecture and how far architects such as George Grotenfelt, Pekka Helin, and Pekka Salminen have come today.

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