

Tale til brug for fernisering af udstilling
"Contemporary Danish Architecture"

Speech by Ambassador Arnold de Fine Skibsteds,
Permanent Representation of Denmark
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First, I would like to thank École Nationale Supérieure d'architecture de Strasbourg for hosting the exhibition "Contemporary Danish Architecture".

I would also like to extend a special thanks to Frédérique Jeanroy and director Jean-François Briand for a constructive cooperation in organising this event.

Denmark is - as many of you may know - a small country, but with a great architectural heritage.

Throughout the 20th century, well-known architects such as Jørn Utzon, Arne Jacobsen and Johan von Spreckelsen have put Denmark on the architectural world map.

The well-known Danish architectural schemes are, however, evolving and today's contemporary Danish architecture is growing on the old virtues of last century's minimalist and functional architecture.

The exhibition before us - "*Danish Contemporary Architecture*" - will take you through some of the newest trends in Danish architecture.

You will find primary examples of some of the most outstanding architectural innovations in contemporary Danish architecture.

The various examples of contemporary Danish architecture clearly demonstrate that the work of Danish architects has a worldwide span. From Henning Larsens concert and conference hall in Reykjavik to the innovative urban planning of Jan Gehl in New York.

Thus, contemporary Danish architecture is always rooted in an idea of simplicity and functionalism that creates the characteristic Danish atmosphere.

It is with pleasure that we now have the opportunity to present that for you here in Strasbourg on the occasion of Denmark's chairmanship of the Council of Europe.

The main theme of the exhibition is how a new features such as sustainability has gained a footing in contemporary Danish architecture.

The aim of the exhibition is to show how the idea of sustainability is incorporated in many different types of architectural designs.

Therefore, the exhibition has a wide span and presents a varied selection of commercial, industrial and cultural buildings, learning facilities, regular housing

and examples of urban planning. All which has a sustainable feature, be it socially, economically or environmentally.

In the corporate field you will see that the architecture among other things is focusing on designing buildings that comply with the corporate social responsibility (CSR) profiles of respective companies.

The social dimensions of sustainability can for instance be seen in the work of the world-renowned company BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group) on the public space "Superkilen" – a unique urban square with a focus on the public's use of community space.

The idea of "Superkilen" was to include different everyday objects from more than 60 different cultures - reflecting the different inhabitants of the surrounding multicultural neighbourhood.

Furthermore, you will encounter distinctive housing projects in shapes of numbers and icebergs. These recognisable projects are redefining conventional apartment complexes and create new platforms for social interaction.

Concerning environmental sustainability, I would once more draw your attention to the work of Jan Gehl on Times Square in New York. By introducing bike lanes and pedestrian streets, he converted congested roads into 45.000 m² of public space. The ambition was – among other things - to reduce the CO₂ emission by 30 % through urban planning.

I hope the exhibition of the diverse contemporary Danish architecture will act as an inspiration and as an enriching experience for you and other visitors – and that Danish architecture can help promote a sustainable way of thinking and living.

Now the only thing left for me is to declare the exhibition open.

Let's *hygge*!