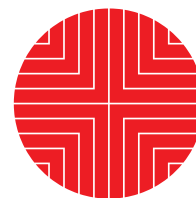


DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION



Copenhagen and Aarhus
6 – 7 June 2017

JAPAN
DENMARK
日本・デンマーク 百五十周年
150 YEARS
2017

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ARCHITECTURE, NATURE AND ART



Preface

This year, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Japan. The Danish Arts Foundation marks this anniversary by highlighting one of the key challenges faced by both Denmark and Japan: the growing differences between cities and rural districts as a result of globalization and urbanization. There is an urgent need for innovation and for pursuing a balanced development, where rural and urban districts contribute with their respective energies and qualities.

Art and architecture can help create new experiences and build networks that strengthen local communities and generate growth outside the big cities. In both Denmark and Japan, many artists and architects work in close concert with individual citizens, associations, companies and municipalities to effect positive change in rural, marginalized areas. That is an effort that the Danish Arts Foundation wants to promote. Therefore, we mark the 150th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Denmark and Japan by initiating a new dialogue between our two countries about how art and architecture can help turn the tide in regions suffering under depopulation and the loss of industry and jobs.

The present report covers two symposiums held, respectively, in Copenhagen and Aarhus on 6 and 7 June 2017 under the heading 'Regional development through architecture, nature and art'. The events featured outstanding Japanese and Danish examples of artists and architects working closely with local actors and generating new dynamics, growth and communities. The specific cases served as a basis for round-table talks and a panel debate on the topic of future priorities and efforts aimed at strengthening regional development in Denmark. With this report, which is published in Danish, English and Japanese editions, we share the many good examples and ideas from the symposiums. We hope that this will inspire new ways of bringing architecture and the arts into play in the effort to promote quality of life, strong communities, growth and development in rural areas. We also hope that the two symposiums have helped lay the foundation for more and broader collaborations involving artists, architects, private citizens, companies, associations and municipalities working together to make a difference.

Our sincere thanks to the Japanese and Danish contributors and to everyone who participated in the two symposiums for investing your time in this crucial social debate.

Kim Herforth Nielsen

Chairman, Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Architecture Grants and Project Funding

Programme

COPENHAGEN

KADK, 6 June 2017

Welcome Address

Lene Dammand Lund, rector of KADK

AARHUS

School of Architecture, 7 June 2017

Welcome Address

Torben Nielsen, rector of Aarhus School of Architecture

Welcome Address, Danish Arts Foundation

Kim Herforth Nielsen, chairman of the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Architecture Grants and Project Funding

Benesse Art Site Naoshima, Regional Revitalization through Contemporary Art

Soichiro Fukutake, president, Benesse Art Site Naoshima

Islands and Works: Thoughts on 25 years of Creating Works on the Islands of the Seto Inland Sea

Shinro Ohtake, artist

The Naoshima Plan

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Architecture and Environment

Kazuyo Sejima, architect and co-founder of SANAA

A Deliberate Strategy? From Arbitrary to Coherent

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Kristine Jensen, Poul Højlund, Søren Taaning, Anne Skovbro. Moderator Kent Martinussen, CEO of the Danish Architecture Centre



Contemporary Art and Regional Revitalization

Experiences from Benesse Art Site Naoshima

Benesse Art Site Naoshima is a unique example of the capacity of art and architecture to drive development in a region located very far away from the growth and dynamics of big cities. For just over 30 years, the Japanese businessman Soichiro Fukutake has invested in promoting growth and development on the small Japanese island of Naoshima and the neighbouring islands of Inujima and Teshima, which have suffered from industrial pollution, abandoned facilities and massive depopulation.

Hiroshi Sambuichi, Kazuyo Sejima and Shinro Ohtake are among the leading architects and artists who have created unique settings for experiencing art in nature, closely interwoven with the local island communities. Although the islands are far away from the major metropolitan areas and growth in Japan, they have become international attractions for art and architecture enthusiasts from all over the world. At the symposiums in Copenhagen and Aarhus, Soichiro Fukutake offered insights into the philosophy behind the work of the past 30 years, while Hiroshi Sambuichi, Kazuyo Sejima and Shinro Ohtake gave an introduction to their works of art and architecture on the islands and their collaboration with the local community.

Soichiro Fukutake

President, Benesse Art Site Naoshima



'In order to be happy, we have to live in a happy society. No society can be happy without smiles. Art can make us smile.'

Soichiro Fukutake presented three guiding principles for the development of Benesse Art Site Naoshima and the overall investment in developing the local communities on the small Japanese islands in the Seto archipelago:

- 'Nature is man's best teacher.'
- 'Use what exists to create what is to be.'
- 'Economy is a servant to culture.'

The overarching idea that Soichiro Fukutake presented at the symposiums is that art and architecture can bridge the gap between cities and rural districts, between past and present and between economy and culture.

Fukutake presented the approach behind the investments in Naoshima as 'Public Interest Capitalism', where, as a business leader, he invests the earnings from his business ventures in initiatives to promote long-term positive development in Japanese society. The economy needs to serve the larger purpose that is culture, argued Fukutake, who explained how the investments in Naoshima began as an effort to counter the negative consequences of urbanization and modernization, which increasingly depletes rural districts of people and dynamics.

By investing in art museums on the islands but also in art projects taking over abandoned buildings in villages, Fukutake aims to create a new platform for dialogue between an ageing local population and younger people from the big cities. Fukutake described how the local population lives with art and presents it to visitors. The locals have become art experts who proudly present something unique. Visitors get both an impression of Japanese and international contemporary art and an understanding of the people and vernacular values that exist in this particular place in the Japanese countryside.

The art and architecture projects on the Japanese islands all address site-specific qualities in the landscapes and local towns, and even a refinery from the derelict copper industry are highlighted and presented in new ways. Art and architecture bridge the gap between history, the present day and the ideas about the future that art can evoke. With his investments in the islands, Fukutake seeks to make all these qualities resources for development, going forward. The overall goal is to create a happy society. As Fukutake put it, 'smiling seniors' are a sure sign of a good and happy society that is shaping its future with respect for the values handed down from the past.

Shinro Ohtake

Artist



'I always find it difficult to make models of my work beforehand. I talk to people, I discover things on-site, people bring me things they would like to have included.'

The Japanese artist Shinro Ohtake presented some of the works of art he has created on the islands over the past 25 years, including his contribution to the Art House Project, where artists are invited to transform empty village houses to permanent works of art. Among other projects, Ohtake created Naoshima Bath "I Love YU", a bath house on Naoshima that is a continuation of the Japanese tradition for local bath houses as well as a total work of art. Like Ohtake's other artworks, the bath house is made largely of materials and objects found

locally: waste or remnants from the industry, culture and architecture of earlier times. Ohtake described how the local population both co-created the works and subsequently embraced them as an expression of their shared history and present. As such, Ohtake's works are living examples of the philosophy of working with site-specific qualities and creating links between unique local features, the local population and visitors from further afield.

Hiroshi Sambuichi

Architect, honorary professor at KADK



'I receive messages that are four-hundred years old and pass them on to future generations.'

Hiroshi Sambuichi presented the Inujima Seirenscho Art Museum, transforming the ruins of an abandoned copper refinery and Naoshima Hall, a multi-purpose hall, where people can get together for anything from badminton to theatre. A common quality in both structures is a careful effort to incorporate what Sambuichi calls 'the moving materials' – wind, sun, water. Sambuichi carefully examines the local weather conditions, geography and climate and how traditional building customs have

produced houses and, indeed, entire towns that are optimized to function in the local climate. These studies and experiences serve as the basis of a modern architecture where cooling, lighting and heating require a minimal use of technology. Sambuichi's architecture demonstrates how it is possible to create a modern sustainable architecture by learning from nature and passing on the experiences that have been incorporated into local architectural traditions.

Kazuyo Sejima

Architect and co-founder of SANAA



'I used to think that straight lines are the norm in a building. Perhaps that is not the case.'

Kazuyo Sejima, partner and co-founder of the architecture firm SANAA together with Ryue Nishizawa, presented the ferry terminal on Naoshima, the Teshima Art Museum and the Inujima "Art House Project". Sejima described how the architecture was developed with an understanding of the landscape and the local community. The main feature of the ferry terminal is an expansive, low roof that shelters the waiting cars without blocking

the view of the landscape behind the terminal. Nishizawa's art museum on Teshima resembles a drop of water nestling in the landscape. In her series of Art House Projects, Sejima demonstrated how she has worked with inspiration from local architecture, using local materials and, increasingly, sought to create new settings for local communities.

Copenhagen

Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
Schools of Architecture, Design and
Conservation (KADK)

6 June 2017



Christen Obel

Chairman of The Obel Family Foundation



'Sizeable grants, such as building projects, require a different degree of involvement, and we almost always engage in a close dialogue while making sure to maintain an arm's length distance.'

Christen Obel presented The Obel Family Foundation and its contributions, which are driven by the vision of 'a qualified, whole-hearted effort for the future'. The foundation mainly supports projects in Northern Jutland and also owns the property company C. W. Obel Ejendomme, whose portfolio includes a number of centrally located properties in the city of Aalborg. Christen Obel's presentation focused on the foundation's shift from

classic philanthropy, that is, providing grants with limited involvement in project development, to a more involved and dialogue-oriented role, especially in connection with larger building projects. The presentation addressed the following projects: Utzon Center, Kunsten, Vestre Fjordpark, Musikkens hus, Spritten, Can Lis and the exchange programme MADE for young architecture and engineering students in Denmark and Australia.

Bjarke Ingels

Architect and founder of BIG, honorary professor at KADK



'Life is always slightly ahead of architecture.'

Bjarke Ingels presented several examples from his own practice, demonstrating how architects can create a sense of identity drawing on existing ways of life and physical environments. For example, the urban space Superkilen in Copenhagen includes urban furnishing such as benches, playgrounds and bus stops from all the nations represented among the local population.

Bjarke Ingels also highlighted the special role of architecture in shaping new aspects of social life that have yet to find a permanent form. Architecture can evoke a sense of identity. The presentation touched on the following projects: Superkilen, the National Gallery of Greenland, La Maison de Fondateurs, Kistefos Museum, Vancouver House and the Maritime Museum of Denmark.

Olafur Eliasson

Artist



'How can we bring our humanist tradition into play?'

Olafur Eliasson spoke of the importance of taking a humanist approach and about the ability of art to engage people, inviting them to become part of a community. In extension of Bjarke Ingels' reflections on design and form, Eliasson addressed the importance of creating spaces where people feel that they are seen and acknowledged, because the designer has understood their needs, even if these needs may not have been verbalized or consciously recognized. Eliasson under-

scored that this humanist insight and approach to architecture and art are important to convey to new generations of students. Olafur Eliasson also addressed the topic of flexible and relational spatial perception, which inspires and is open to multiple interpretations. The presentation touched on the following projects: Beauty (1993), Your rainbow panorama (2006–2011), Map for unthought thoughts (2014), Riverbed (2014) and Self-loop (Inujima, 2016).

Jesper Nygård

CEO, Realdania



'Our work is driven by site-specific qualities and partnerships that strengthen local ownership and capacities.'

Jesper Nygård presented some of the challenges that Denmark and Japan have in common, among them urbanization, which is leading to an ageing population in many areas as the young generation increasingly moves to the cities. Realdania views cities and rural districts as interdependent – not as opposites. Hence, Realdania's

focus is on improving quality of life in the built environment, both in and outside the big cities. The presentation addressed the following projects, which have either received funding from Realdania or where Realdania has also contributed as a change agent: Vendsyssel Teater, Ribe, Camønoen.



Round-table talks

The 13 round-table talks that concluded the Copenhagen event aimed to define the particular potentials of art, architecture and nature to drive regional development in Denmark and debated how to promote a broad involvement of politicians, private citizens, associations, companies and others. Some of the recurring conclusions across the groups were:

1. Enhance site-specific qualities

Art, architecture and nature can enhance the unique qualities of a site while also making room for new communities and a new understanding of local or regional identity. The artist or architect works by facilitating processes together with the local population and by creating solutions anchored in the local environment. Development processes provide opportunities for promoting a local sense of pride.

2. Make room for experiments

Development should be an open-ended process with room for a variety of ways of meeting society's wishes and needs. Individuals with passion and initiative are strong drivers of development and able to think outside the box. We should therefore target grants more directly to support these enthusiasts and experimental initiatives with an interdisciplinary and cross-sectorial make-up that secure broad ownership across organizational boundaries.

3. Focus on multiple perspectives at the same time

Opening development processes up to a wider range of actors generates greater engagement, not only among private citizens but also among competing architects and artists. This achieves a situation where the conversation embraces multiple perspectives and has room

for multiple professional profiles and thus solutions that serve multiple purposes and functions. An open approach also helps make projects meaningful both to locals and outside visitors.

4. Think architect before building, and artist before work of art

Far too many architectural solutions and artistic productions lack distinction, which may be due to a premature determination of the intended outcome of the process. Architects and artists should be invited into the dialogue before the initiators have settled on an idea or a programme. The conversation should take its point of departure in the value of architecture, art or nature to the local community. This will lead to new projects that engage and activate more people.

5. Create meaningful circuits

By connecting multiple elements, we can work together to develop meaningful solutions to complex challenges. Reusing local resources promotes local ownership. The link between city and countryside or between new and old can help lead to sustainable living spaces. If, in addition, we cultivate slow-paced processes and allow things to mature slowly, we can enable new possibilities for the creation of local wonders with a strong narrative.

6. Create suitable settings

Art, architecture and nature can help create settings for meetings between people that spark a collective curiosity and a sense of taking part in meaningful communities. This also creates a suitable setting for a development dialogue about future challenges, including the more difficult ones, which we need to find common solutions to.

7. Rethink planning

Regional development should incorporate a stronger cultural element. Municipalities can and should assume a greater responsibility for this development by including architecture, art and nature in local planning efforts. Going for visionary and truly distinctive projects makes it possible to launch initiatives with an impact that spreads like rings in the water, with a local, national and international reach.

8. Share knowledge and inspiration

Far too much energy is wasted on unproductive competition between neighbouring municipalities or among cities within the same region. Instead, the focus should be on sharing knowledge and on mutual inspiration. The same applies to relations among private citizens, companies and the municipality. Instead of focusing on differences of interest, the focus should be on overlapping interests in order to achieve citizen engagement rather than merely citizen involvement.

9. Communicate when and where development occurs

Change can happen from the top down or from the bottom up. It can come from without or from within. As human beings we always appreciate being close to the developments or decisions that influence our lives. The social media are efficient communication platforms in connection with local developments, because they are close to people and offer a good way of getting the word out when changes occur. The social media are thus appropriate for cultivating close relations and for demonstrating how short the distance can be from words to action, even for someone living in a region where the geographic distances may seem considerable.

Concluding conversation

Danish Minister of Culture, Mette Bock with symposium moderator Kent Martinussen



'We need people who master several languages.'

The minister of culture argued that even if the premises of the Benesse initiative differ from Danish development practices, it offers a rich source of inspiration when it comes to turning former industrial sites into attractive destinations by working with architecture, art and nature.

The minister also emphasized how important it is for architects, artists and scholars to master several 'languages' to be able to grasp everyone's needs and wishes, as a broad conversation promotes the cohesion of Danish society. The ambition, according to the minister, is to improve conditions for more people in Denmark by drawing on existing cultural, social and economic resources – and by having professionals bringing their knowledge and competencies into play.



Aarhus

School of Architecture

7 June 2017



Poul Høilund

Architect and co-founder of NORRØN



'We spend a long time developing an understanding of the landscape, the culture and the stories, and then we develop a poetic narrative that guides the way we develop the site.'

Poul Høilund presented Norrøn's approach to regional development, which is the key focus of this young architecture firm. Høilund explained how Norrøn develops destinations by analysing potentials in landscapes, nature and our cultural heritage and then creating new narratives that bring these potentials into play in new ways. This approach is exemplified by 'De hvide dronninger' (The white queens) by Fakse Ladeplads, which

combines coast protection with the beach environment and new facilities for bathers. The project relates to two local stories. One is the story of how lime was once shipped from the harbour, the other is the story of a local shipyard that built ships named after queens. The two stories come together in the project and acquire a new life in terms of materials and design expression.

Søren Taaning

Artist and chairman of the Danish Arts Foundation's Visual Arts Grant Committee



'How can we transfer the creative energy from the city to the countryside?'

Søren Taaning presented the collaborative art project Skovsnogen, which is a cross between a work of art and a venue for outdoor activities in a wood near Sønder Omme in Jutland. Fusing art with facilities for play, physical activities and nature experiences, Skovsnogen has become a popular site for both art lovers and outdoor activities. The presentation of Skovsnogen led to a general discussion about turning the countryside into a new workspace for artists and a place for experimental collaborations between artists and the local population.

Søren Taaning pointed out that while it is increasingly difficult for artists to find a creative breathing space in the cities, the countryside offers a wide range of options for working in a freer and more experimental manner. Hence, Søren Taaning suggested that a new focus of regional development could be to encourage artists to come to the countryside to live and work, for shorter or longer periods, and that artists similarly should be more aware of the potentials of the countryside as a place to work.

Anne Skovbro

Executive Director, CPO, Realdania



'Site matters. Base your work on the unique potentials!'

Anne Skovbro spoke about Realdania's strategic focus with regard to promoting regional development. Anne Skovbro pointed out that agricultural production has changed and now employs far fewer people than before, which inevitably influences how many people live in the rural districts. In light of this change, Anne Skovbro emphasized the need for a realistic and forward-looking approach aimed at strengthening local qualities and networks and placing quality over quantity. 'Site matters' is the headline for Realdania's philanthropic effort to promote regional development. Among the specific

examples mentioned by Anne Skovbro is an effort to revitalize some of Denmark's old seaside towns. This includes the somewhat run-down seaside town of Marienlyst, where Realdania helped fund a new urban space that improves the quality of the city centre and highlights the town's connection to the sea. The revitalization effort is carried out in close cooperation with local businesses and private citizens, who follow up with improvements to the built environment overall. As such, the project is an example of local engagement and ownership, which Anne Skovbro highlighted as a crucial factor.

Kristine Jensen

Owner, Arkitekt Kristine Jensens tegnestue, honorary professor at KADK



'We have created a place that is not only about history but which the citizens of Jelling can actually identify with.'

Kristine Jensen spoke about the new landscape and land art project around the Jelling Stone, which is one of Denmark's most important cultural heritage monuments. Kristine Jensen shared the considerations behind the distinctive design, which draws out an ancient palisade, a stone ship and a number of Viking-age houses as landscape elements. With a deliberately modern approach featuring light concrete as a key component, the project brings out the different layers of history and gives modern-day visitors an understanding of the scope and beauty of the ancient monument.

Kristine Jensen explained how the project helped alter the local population's experience of living near one of Denmark's most important cultural heritage monuments. Previously, a certain fatigue with the number of tourists was widespread locally, but now, the locals embrace the monument with pride. According to Kristine Jensen, this change has come about because the project not only focused on the historical layers but also enhanced the connections between the monument and the surrounding city, the new design considering the concerns of everyday life in the area.

Panel debate

Anne Skovbro, Søren Taaning, Kristine Jensen, Poul Høilund

The panel debate that rounded off the event addressed some key issues in relation to regional development, going forward. The audience contributed with many questions and comments. Some of the key topics were:

The political debate

We need a broad and well-informed political debate that takes a realistic view of the possibilities of creating balanced development in Denmark and which is not stuck in notions of growth and development shaped by obsolete assumptions.

Urban-rural synergy

We need to stop viewing city and countryside as polar opposites or competitors with regard to development and instead focus on synergies and interplay.

A new urban life in the countryside

We need to utilize the fact that Denmark is a small country, where the geographic distances between city and countryside are short. One way of doing this might be to develop new flexible approaches to life and work, where city life is combined country life.

A realistic approach

We need a realistic approach that acknowledges and addresses the fact that some villages will die out, and some towns will inevitably shrink.

Quality over quantity

We need to focus on quality when developing rural tourism. The focus should not necessarily be on attracting more tourists but on creating better, higher-value tourism.

Broad partnerships

We need to combine local engagement and ownership with outside perspectives and assessments of local potentials.



The symposiums were organized by the Danish Arts Foundation's Committee for Architecture Grants and Project Funding, rep. by Kim Herforth Nielsen, Mette Ramsgaard Thomsen, Signe Kongebro, Søren Leth and Torben Schønherr. In cooperation with the Danish Architecture Centre, rep. by Kent Martinussen. Aarhus School of Architecture, rep. by Mogens Morgen. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, rep. by Arne Høi. Agency for Culture and Palaces, rep. by Bo Kolbye, Lone Ravn, Signe Marie Ebbe Jacobsen, Michael Lauenborg, Francine Andersen and Ida Høybye Davidsen.

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