

Past and Future: Nordic Design History Reassessed

Paper abstracts

Theme 1: Material Approaches

Moderator: Dr Leena Svinhufvud

Thursday 26 October 2023, 9:50–12:40

Designing a production

Joachim Allouche

By the 1960s, the Scandinavian glass industry got exposed to foreign competition that employed an increasingly sophisticated production apparatus capable of making machine-made glass. Despite differences in size and age, the Scandinavian glass industry met this challenge with a similar design style, which empathized glass as a manifestation of craft and modern designs while still being affordable due to the industrial character of the production. These designs would sustain the glassworks until the 21st century when the industry got hit by a crisis, which resulted in the foreclosure of glassworks in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

While glass historians have explained the decline of the Scandinavian glass industry as a consequence of dwindling consumption and an uncompetitive industry, no effort has been made to explore the connection between these two factors.

Inspired by Bruno Latour I am applying an ANT-analysis to the Danish glasswork, Holmegaard Glasswork, in order to demonstrate how the two factors can be connected by including a third factor, the designed object.

By focusing on how Holmegaard Glasswork's most well-known tableware designs (the rustic designs) from the period (1960-2008) were produced and marketed, it becomes clear that the rustic designs played an important role in forming the company's production apparatus, and consequently, its ability to adapt to changing customer demands.

The rustic glassware designs, first introduced in 1966, can be characterized by their heavy mass, a fused stem, warm cut edges, and a robust, rounded design that could only be made by hand. They became an instant success, representing over 50% of the glasswork's entire tableware production by 1970. In this way, the rustic glassware gave new life to mouthblown glass, However, as an increasing number of the glasswork's workshops were converted to the production of the designs, the glassworks' production apparatus began to erode. This was due to designs features that cut-out glass-grinders, and stem makers (a task reserved for the most talented glassworkers) from the production. Eventually the erosion meant that the glasswork was less able to change its production to new designs when the rustic glass designs fell out of favor during the nineties.

In addition to connecting consumption and production, the results also indicate that design should not just be seen as a result, but also as a creator of production, thus indicating how a neo-material perspective can add a new dimension to Grace Lees-Maffei's Production-Consumption-Mediation Paradigm.

Short Bio

Joachim Allouche is a Curator at the Museum of Southeast Denmark and PhD-student at the Department of Media, Design, Education, and Cognition at the University of Southern Denmark. His research focuses on the history of the Danish glass design and Industry after 1950

Liquid Forms: Water as a Foundational Element of Design

Malin Graesse & Mads Nygaard Folkmann

Water has a long history for being managed to suit human purposes, such as, gaining access to drinking water through pipes and viaducts, avoiding flooding by being pooled or blocked by dykes, and draining or watering lands to make it apt for agricultural purposes. Even if much design is related to managing, structuring, and containing water and the Modernist movement in design to a high degree had water-related hygiene as a core value, water as a formative element of design has only gained little attention.

Most comprehensively, the design of water is the core theme in a study on the design history of fishways (Graesse 2022). Nevertheless, a systematic approach, directly facing the intricate relationship of design and water, is missing. While “Blue Humanities” (cf., e.g., Mentz 2023) increasingly gains traction within humanities research, focusing mainly on means of representation, water in all its hues is still quite an understudied subject within the field of design. These issues are part of a larger research project termed “Sensing Water”, being developed by the authors.

The proposed paper seeks to explore some of the project’s preliminary research questions through a Nordic lens. The paper will argue that the Nordic countries, while occupying disparate geographical areas with climatic and typological idiosyncrasies, possess compelling connections to water pertinent for design historical research. From providing factories with electric power (e.g., Figgjo Norway) to facilitating global transportation routes, water has been intrinsically linked to the production of design goods. Additionally, water’s symbolic prowess has been instrumental in forming national identities within and beyond the design field (e.g., the three waves of Royal Copenhagen and Finland’s thousand lakes). More recently, the relationship between design and water may be considered one of the strongest markers of current geo-environmental and geo-political concerns, as climate change, according to the UN, primarily is a water crisis (UN-Water, 2022). Finding sound solutions to water issues, then, is fundamentally a design issue.

In this paper we will suggest that the way water has been managed, controlled, and developed through design in the Nordic countries holds important information about historical, present, and future attitudes and ideas about the human relationship with nature. Moreover, we will suggest that water both as material and idea, can contribute substantially to the way Nordic design history develops in the future. By bringing this precious resource to the forefront of design historical research, the paper will argue that water is intricately linked to design, in the past, present, and future.

References

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- Mentz, Steve. 2023. *An Introduction to the Blue Humanities*. London: Routledge.
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Bios

Malin Graesse is a design historian and environmental humanities scholar currently working as a researcher at the University of Stavanger. She holds a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Oslo. Her research focuses on the relationship between design and the environment with an emphasis on water and the more-than-human.

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Mads Nygaard Folkmann is a professor of Design Studies, University of Southern Denmark. Recent book *Design Aesthetics: Theoretical Basics and Studies in Implication* (MIT Press, 2023). Research interests in design aesthetics, cultural studies of design, digital technology and design, and the design of water.

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Diversity in Displays. Ceramics at Nationalmuseum, Sweden's museum of art and design

Helena Kåberg

Most objects can be considered from a wide range of relevant contexts. In exhibitions, however, focus is required. The curatorial and educational team must be selective and refine the content in order to get the intended message across. Nevertheless, when creating the new Nationalmuseum collection presentations – projects that were made possible thanks to the renovation of Nationalmuseum and the Gustavsberg Porcelain Museum – one goal has been to develop a diversity of displays with distinctly different structures and perspectives, which might catch the attention of broader groups of visitors with varying interests and knowledge. The hope is also that interest in one display might increase curiosity and lead to further exploration and the discovery of new contexts, i.e., living up to Nationalmuseum's mandate to preserve cultural heritage and promote art, interest in art and knowledge of art.

At Nationalmuseum, the ceramic displays on offer are especially diverse, and the aim of this presentation is to discuss how this has been achieved and is still developing. The collections comprise paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints from 1500 to 1900 and applied arts, design and portraits from the early Middle Ages up until the present day. Traditionally, the fine and applied art collections were shown separately. In the new *Timeline – from 1500 to today* they are instead shown thematically, side by side. Ceramics are thus displayed in dialogue with art and design in other mediums. To complement this broad historical display, *The Design Depot* is a study collection presenting the history of ceramic art and design. Objects are chronologically displayed here too, but the focus is on materials, technology and the design process. The furnishings in the museum restaurant, designed and produced as part of the *NM&* project, give additional perspectives as they serve as tangible illustrations of material qualities and techniques. For example, an installation of terracotta flowerpots, created by ten ceramicists, showcases various artistic views and methods, and the tableware demonstrates the different functional and tactile properties of glazed and unglazed surfaces. In addition, the Gustavsberg porcelain factory collection, donated to Nationalmuseum in 2000, increases the possibilities even further. The collection spans 170 years of production and comprises drawings, tools, moulds, samples, unique artworks, household goods, sanitary ware, a reference library and a photo archive – a collection that allows Nationalmuseum to visualise and contextualise every aspect of the ceramic industry.

Biography

Helena Kåberg is a design historian, an associate professor of art history, a senior curator and head of the Nationalmuseum collection management unit. During the years 2008–2018, Kåberg was involved in planning and implementing the renovation and remodelling of Nationalmuseum. She was also the project coordinator of the new displays of its collections and the new restaurant interior. Together with Ulrika Schaefer, she has created the new Gustavsberg Porcelain Museum collection display, which opened in 2020.

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Theme 2: 'Early Modern' Perspectives

Moderator: Prof. Anders V. Munch

Thursday 26 October 2023, 14:40–16:30

Textiles and Architecture: Women designers in Kristiania around 1900

Dr. Bente Solbakken

In 1901, the 'Foreningen for anvendt kunst' was established in Kristiania (today's Oslo). At the time it was an association of women designers and architects, and as such an early professional organisation in Norway. The Forening for anvendt kunst maintained its significance until at least 1914. Its original members were graduates of the College of Arts and Craft in Kristiania and had all crossed paths in the Ornament class taught by the principal Hermann Schirmer.

Initially, the association had strong ties to Frida Hansen and Norsk Billedvæveri, where members served as both designers and weavers. While the members primarily worked independently, they also operated together. The association distributed pattern designs through craft shops, with some also included in the pattern library of Husfliden (Folk Art and Craft Association).

Forening for anvendt kunst was important in design- and architectural culture in Kristiania at the time, but when mentioned in scholarly texts it is mostly because of the Arts and Crafts-ideals the association supposedly harboured. The association has been a double victim then, for common biases in design- and architectural history writing. The constant search for proto-modernist tendencies has overlooked the progressive element of allowing women professional companionship.

There may be several reasons for the misrepresentation of Foreningen for anvendt kunst and the work of their members, and admittedly, primary sources are scarce. There is, for example, no archive. Nevertheless, from the few sources available it is possible to puzzle together not a complete picture, but rather an outline – a sort of spectre perhaps.

Bente Aass Solbakken, Senior Curator, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design with a PhD in art history

Swedish Grace – Re-interpreting Modernity in 1920'ies Sweden

PhD Cilla Robach, Stockholm

In much history writings of the early 20th C design, emphasis has been on the development of what we have defined as Modernism. However, in the early 20th C, Modernism, with its focus on rational industrial production and mass consumption, was only one of several possible ways to create a modern society. Another movement wanted to protect traditional craft quality, executed in exclusive and often “exotic” material. In Sweden, this movement has been called Swedish Grace. Their aim was to create modernity *through* tradition.

The design debate between Modernists and Traditionalistst/Swedish Grace Artists in 1920ies was intense. However, since the Modernists “won” with the modernistic breakthrough around the year 1930, they could claim the priority of interpretation as well as arrange the history writing, and the ideas of their opponents, as well as several Swedish Grace designers, were, to a high extent, forgotten.

In this presentation I will discuss the “otherness” of norms and ideals that could have had in impact on modern society, if the Traditionalists had gotten authority. My material is Sweden in the 1920ies, focusing on the ideas, formulated in original texts of the period, as well as the aesthetics, visible in object design and architecture. My research has to some extent been presented in the exhibition *Swedish Grace – Art & Design in the 1920ies Sweden* at Nationalmuseum Stockholm in 2022, curated by me.

Questions I will address at the Nordic Forum for Design History's conference are:

- How did the Swedish Grace designers create modernity *through* tradition, preferably prehistoric antiquity?
- Which properties characterized the Swedish Grace aesthetics and why were they considered modern by their advocates?
- How has the Modernist writing of design history affected our view on the Swedish Grace movement?
- What can we learn to avoid from the 20thC design history writing when we construct design history today?

Bio

PhD Cilla Robach, Head of Collection Unit at Nationalmuseum Stockholm. Her focus is the 20th and 21st C. Her PhD *Formens frigörelse / The liberation of the form* (2010) analyzed the design debate in 1960ies Sweden when borders between art, craft and design were blurred. In 2005 she analyzed contemporary critical design in *Konceptdesign / Conceptual Design* in 2012 she exhibited *Slow Art*, discussing political aspects of time-consuming craft processes.

Examples of objects and architecture of the Swedish Grace period is presented below:



Edward Hald, *The Drapery Bowl*, Orrefors glassworks 1920.



Gunnar Asplund, *Sewing table*, 1920.



Anna Petrus, candle holders, casted pewter, Herman Bergman 1923.



Edgar Böckman, lidded urn, earthenware, Rörstrand 1926.



Sten Branzell, bowl, Kosta Glassworks 1920ies



Uno Åhrén, *Lady's parlour for the Paris Exhibition 1925m Mobilia*, 1924.



Sigurd Lewerentz, *The Resurrection Chapel*, Woodland Cemetery Stockholm 1925.

Daniele Burlando

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*“Standard homes with handsewn tea cozies – Artek model interiors on display
within the modern dwelling debate of 1936 Finland”*

ABSTRACT [400 words]:

This research presents two model interiors exhibited by the Finnish company Artek in late 1936, analyzed as instances of modern identity negotiation through commodities selected to furnish them. They were displayed respectively at the ‘Industrial Arts Exhibition’ in Helsinki, and at the ‘Construction Days’ in the industrial town of Varkaus, as the first Finnish displays of the newly-founded Artek. Previously, Aino Marsio-Aalto’s and Alvar Aalto’s furniture had gained recognition mainly internationally. My problematization places these interiors within the broader negotiation of modernist dwellings and dwellers of mid-1930s Finland.

Through addressing interacting media – exhibitions, press, catalogues, manuals – I highlight multiple agencies debating and selecting appropriate commodities, as well as habits and norms, supporting modern lifestyle. This involves designers and design-focused organizations not only as space producers but also as guideline-makers, critics and journalists as taste and consumption debaters, and dwellers and consumers as challengers and active interior shapers. Focus on these two displays highlights previously-overlooked but crucial early instances of Artek’s authority-building within Finnish modern design culture. Through them, Artek tailored simultaneously urban/middle-class consumers, and rural/working-class ones with a connection to the industry and modernization. The year 1936 is identified as a key moment, because of the advanced modern-housing debate developed throughout the previous years, into which Artek emerged as a radical promoter of modernity.

I refer to scholarship addressing notions of ‘space’, elaborating on Henri Lefebvre’s critique of architectural Modernism’s problematic space production [Ł. Stanek, 2011, *Henri Lefebvre on Space: Architecture, Urban Research and the Production of Theory*, University of Minnesota Press]. I also reflect on Gottfried Semper’s theorization of space as enclosure, with focus on its constitutive materials, whose relevance on Modernism is noted [M. Wigley, 2001, *White Walls*,

Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture, MIT Press]. I see Semper's and Lefebvre's 'space' theorizations, despite chronologically opposite within modern architecture's spatial discussion, as interacting in problematizing the Modernist production of model dwellings and dwellers through selected commodities.

My perspective critiques Modernism as impressing an ontological turn onto society, affecting not only the outlook of dwellings, but the habits and norms of dwellers too. It refers to a scholarship problematizing Modernist interiors in connection to consumerism, also addressing the Nordic countries [H. Mattsson, S.-O. Wallenstein, eds., 2010, *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State*, Black Dog Publishing]. It also contributes to Artek research [N. Stritzler-Levine, ed., 2016, *Artek and the Aaltos: Creating a Modern World*, Bard Graduate Center].

KEYWORDS: Artek – Modernism – Dwellings – Commodities – Space production – Finland

BIOGRAPHY [50 words]:

Daniele Burlando is a doctoral researcher in art history at the University of Helsinki, researching textiles as socio-political tools within interwar-era Modernisms. His publications address Amazigh carpets within Artek [*Journal of Design History*, vol.36, n.1], and Artek's former artistic director: *Ben af Schultén – muotoilija/formgivare* [Parus Verus]. He engages in handweaving.

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Paper abstracts

Theme 3: Design and Mediation Processes

Moderator: Prof. Sara Kristoffersson

Friday 27 October 2023, 10:30–12:20

Prototypes and probes: Towards a history of designing

Maria Göransdotter

What a designer does, for and with whom, and how design is done, has changed over time – and will continue to change also in the future. While history as a discipline inherently has its focus on what has been, the focus of the discipline of design is that of what could become. Although we in recent years have seen examples and proposals of different ways of writing design histories, it is still not easy to find accounts of how different design practices came about.

One difficulty in writing a history of designing, is that there are very few sources that give insights into how design was actually done at different points in time. Structures and time frames of design processes, methods used from concept to final solution, and persons involved in design processes are seldom described as such in any written format by the people actually doing design. In a best case, archives and publications will contain sketches, perhaps prototypes in some cases, and we can often access final results as physical manifestations or images thereof – but only very seldom do we find documentation of the processes and methods beyond the 2- and 3-dimensional material.

In this paper, I will discuss examples of how the introduction of prototypes, and prototyping, as methods for developing design practices aiming to expand understandings of what design could be. Prototypes in design history can tend to be used to discuss or highlight an individual designer's artistic abilities and developments, in terms of formal and material qualities. The prototype is seen as the artistic expression, the hand made original, that antedates the type – the industrially or commercially produced final design. By comparison, prototypes in current user-centered design practices are described to be used with the intention and aim to explore ideas or interactions, test and discuss concepts, in settings where different people – not only an individual designer – make use of the prototype in order to learn new things together, and to work together towards understanding, improving or conceptualizing something.

With a focus on collaborative design processes, that were important for the emergence of Scandinavian user-centered design practices the Nordic countries, I will discuss how design histories that take a starting point in designing could contribute to emerging design practices today. Prototyping in designing was, and still is, used as a way to open up arenas for collaborative learning, aiming to produce possible new designs not only of physical everyday objects, but also of social and societal practices. With these examples of design histories of changing design practices, I will also argue for how design histories such as these could themselves be seen and used as prototypes in contemporary design situations.

Key words: design studies, user-centered design, Scandinavian design, prototyping, transitional design histories

Maria Göransdotter is associate professor in design history and design theory at the Umeå Institute of Design, Umeå University, with a PhD in industrial design and a background in the history of science and ideas. She works in the intersections of design historical and practice-oriented design research, exploring *transitional design histories* as a way of contributing to opening up conceptual spaces for thinking and doing differently in contemporary and emerging design practices. She is part of the research environment Design after Progress: reimagining design histories and futures, and has recently been Senior Visiting Researcher at the Department of Design at the Politecnico di Milano. Between 2008 and 2018 she was part of the leadership group at the Umeå Institute of Design.

The Nokia Design Archive - Exploring the Design of Technological and Digital Realities

Disintegrating plastic mobile phones, once silky but now sticky to the touch; prophetic VHS tapes divining our contemporary symbiosis with the cyberspace; transparencies from the 1990s preaching the gospel of what design does for consumer engagement. These are just some object encounters at Nokia Design Archive, a research project exploring the meaning and methods of design work at the Finnish company, which, at the height of its success, was the largest mobile phone producer in the world.

The starting point for the research project, initiated in September 2021 and funded by the Research Council of Finland, is an archive donated to Aalto University, which consists of thousands of company confidential concepts, process models, prototypes, documents, drawings, and videos. The donation of these materials for research purposes allows an unprecedented entry into design work that created some of the most globally ubiquitous objects in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

This paper explores the possibilities opened by the materials, and what they might tell about the design and creation of some of the technologies and objects that have shaped our lives throughout the past three decades. A central question this paper asks is how, and with what methods, these fragments of design work should be studied to distil something more truthful than a neat narrative of design-driven innovation processes leading to global corporate success.

Furthermore, rather than commenting on any established understanding of the concept of 'Nordic Design', this paper shows one possible way of researching Nordic design history relevant to our current technologized, digitized, and globalized world. Nokia employed hundreds of international designers who designed for a global audience within a global production system. By placing this 'globality' at front and centre of design work, this paper asks what relevance, if any, national borders play not only when designing technological and digital realities but also when researching them.

Kaisu Savola, DA, is a design historian and post-doctoral researcher in the Nokia Design Archive project at Aalto University. Recently, she defended her doctoral thesis about social and political ideologies in Finnish design in the 1960s and 1970s. Her other work includes curating the spring 2022 headline exhibition at the Helsinki Design Museum and the Finnish pavilion at the XXII Triennale di Milano in 2019.

Photographs without chairs: Finnish Design at the Triennale di Milano (1951) revisited

Maija Mäkikalli, University of Turku, maimak@utu.fi

This paper contributes to the reassessment of past Nordic design history in the field of (international) exhibition history. It aligns itself with research focusing on the mediating role of the Triennale di Milano in the 1950s in the production of a rather narrow and stereotyped image of the Scandinavian design among the international design audience (Fallan 2014). This paper takes a closer look at Finland's participation in the legendary 9th Triennale di Milano and has a special focus on furniture and the power of photographs taken at the Finland's section in manipulating the image and thus understanding of the content of the exhibition.

Earlier research has named the first half of the 1950s Finnish international design exhibitions as “the Wirkkala period”, with reference to the exhibition architect Tapio Wirkkala and his focus on artistic and unique character of the exhibits. Art glass, art ceramics and textiles – *konsthantverk* – played the major role whereas artefacts for everyday use were in the margins of, if not completely absent from these exhibitions. In this context, furniture were problematic: even though there were chairs in the Finland's sections at the Triennalis, those were seldom dealt with in the critiques, and especially those were not seen much in the photographs taken from these exhibitions. Thus furniture have also often been excluded from the representations or interpretations (of the events), which most commonly have been circulated and published of these events in the pages of Finnish design history.

This presentation discusses how the image of the Triennale success was constructed and represented in public by and through photographs from the exhibition, and how these images contributed to the downplaying of the success of the Finnish furniture designers. One of the Finnish furniture designers participating the Milan exhibition in 1951 (and 1954 too) was Carl-Johan Boman (1883–1969), designer, the owner and director of furniture manufacturing company Boman Ltd. His chairs were selected to be part of Finnish exhibition (by the jury set in Finland), he paid the expenses, sent his chairs to Milan, even travelled there in person, and was awarded with silver medal. I take this micro-level agency perspective on the event to explore the curious case of chairs in the Finland section at the Triennale di Milano.

Author biography

Dr Maija Mäkikalli has worked in the field of design history since 1997 as a lecturer and researcher at Cultural History, University of Turku; and at the Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland (2005–2020), and she holds the Title of Docent in design history at the University of Turku.

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Theme 4: Fashion Histories

Moderator: Prof. Anders V. Munch

Friday 27 October 2023, 12:20–14:35

Norwegian fashion design history: themes, approaches and possibilities

Trond Klevgaard & Synne Skjulstad

Fashion has long been peripheral to histories of Norwegian design. This can be observed in well-known surveys like Fredrik Wildhagen's *Norge i form* (1988), Ole Rikard Høisæther's *Design på norsk* (2009) as well as in Kjetil Fallan's history of design discourse, *Designing Modern Norway* (2017). Whilst these titles all discuss textile design and weaving, and whilst Wildhagen and Høisæther briefly touch upon clothes designed for specialist use or users, they do not discuss fashion in cultural terms or as an integrated part of the design industry. Fashion's marginal status in such works may, as Tone Rasch has explored (2006), in part be attributed to its uneasy relationship with both applied art and industrial design. It may also have to do with what Patrik Steorn, writing in a Swedish context, has described as fashion literature's 'hybrid nature' (2021). However, none of this means there is an absence of literature on Norwegian fashion. For instance, the museums of decorative art and design in Trondheim and Oslo have over the years issued several exhibition catalogues and other publications on the subject. Notable individual authors include Anne Kjellberg, who for many years served as curator at the Museum of Decorative Art and Design in Oslo. She published on a range of topics, including individual designers like the celebrated Per Spook, the dresses of Queen Maud and a survey of 20th century women's wear titled *Mote: Trender og designere i Oslo 1900–2000* (2000). More recently, Rasch has led efforts to bring knowledge of Norwegian fashion to an international scholarly audience through contributions to volumes like the *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion* (2010), *Fashioned in the North* (2020) and *Nordic Design Cultures in Transformation 1960–1980* (with Trine Brun Petersen, 2022). The proposed paper will look back at these and other publications to outline some of Norwegian fashion design history's main themes and approaches. It will also propose avenues for future research, either by building upon these or by filling gaps identified in the literature. The research undertaken for the paper forms part of a larger, newly started research project entitled *Norwegian Fashion: New Histories*. This project aims to expand Norwegian fashion design history beyond its current boundaries, to connect it to international research perspectives, as well as to map connections between fashion design and other aspects of Norwegian design history.

Author bios

Trond Klevgaard

Trond Klevgaard is a graphic designer and associate professor of design history at Kristiania University College. He holds a PhD from the Royal College of Art and has previously published extensively on the New Typography movement in Scandinavia between the world wars.

Synne Skjulstad

Skjulstad, associate professor, Kristiania, holds a PhD in media/communication studies. Her recent work is concerned with fashion and its mediations. She has published in *Kunst og Kultur*, *Fashion Theory*, and *Int. Journal of Fashion Studies*. She led the project *Norwegian Fashion: Cultural Production and Aesthetic Mediatonal Practices* and edited the resulting book *Fashions*.

The True Stripes of Scandinavian Unisex: retracing similarities and differences of three striped collections by Nørgaard paa Strøget (1967), Marimekko (1968), and Polarn O. Pyret (1975)

Anna Parviainen

At first glance, the unisex collections designed by Danish Nørgaard paa Strøget (*#101*, 1967), Finnish Marimekko (*Tasaraita*, 1968), and Swedish Polarn O. Pyret (P.O.P) (*randig trikå*, 1975) visually resemble each other. This paper explores these three collections as examples of Scandinavian unisex designs by retracing their similarities and differences. The analysis of available archival sources focuses first on design approach and material choices, and second on visuality and representation.

The three collections followed principles of democratic design by offering reduced prices and minimalistic everyday clothes for both adults and children. Analysis of the archival sources reveals that the collections were in part constructed from the same elements: pattern, fabric, and colour combinations. Nevertheless, the three collections had different histories, design approaches, representations, and target groups.

Functionality was an essential factor in the design of all three collections. Although the collections were mainly made of cotton, the use of the material had differences. Whereas *randig trikå* and especially *Tasaraita* were sold in a wide size range, *#101* was manufactured as one size garment with different length variations. The designer of *#101* embraced the material as it enabled a body-hugging fit, but both the designers of *Tasaraita* and *randig trikå* emphasized rather the freedom of movement and comfort. In addition, *Tasaraita* and *randig trikå* collections consisted of similar pieces of clothing and used similar colour combinations as well.

Each of the three collections are renowned national and international items of clothing still in production, but they have different statuses as well as meanings. Today, the companies have updated the collections to reflect these times. In solidarity with Ukraine, *#101* has been sold in the blue and yellow colours of the Ukrainian flag. *Tasaraita* has been decorated with rainbow stripes during Helsinki Pride month. *Randig trikå* has become P.O.P's international uniform for children of all ages.

Biography

Anna Parviainen (MA) is an art historian currently working at the University of Helsinki on her doctoral thesis on Marimekko's unisex imagery of 1956–1979. In her work, she also studies the connection of Marimekko to other Scandinavian unisex designs and critically evaluates the concept of unisex.

Kirsten Toftegaard: Dane Raps 'Dollar' Dress

The 1950-60s were characterized by great changes in the Western world such as the increase in welfare, the youth rebellion (sometimes named the youth revolution) and the breakthrough of pop art and pop culture. In West European fashion it was a time of unrest and upheaval. The fashion ideal was no longer the unique bespoke or tailormade dress for the individual, fashion conscious, elitist woman. Ready-to-wear became an attractive and accessible option for a broader group of female follower of fashion. Previously, the clothing industry had produced stapled goods independent of seasonal changes. Now the industry included seasonal designed collections in the production.

In Denmark a group of well-educated fashion designers developed a collaboration with the ready-to-wear industry. The products turned out to be international competitive both on quality and price, and Danish ready-to-wear fashion was exported to countries in Europe, Japan and especially America. The Scandinavian fashion trend coincided with an American style of casual clothing characterized by freedom of movement. The fashion firm, Dranella, established in 1956 by the couple Søs and Ib Drasbæk - she was the designer, he was the manufacturer - was one of the first in Denmark to develop accessible ready-to-wear fashion design. Among other Danish designers were Margit and Erik Brandt, Sysser Ginsborg, Lars Hillingsø, Mugge Kølpin, Kirsten Teisner, Bent Visti and Lise-Lotte Wiingaard.

The great fashion role models from abroad were British fashion designer Mary Quant and the Finnish textile and fashion firm Marimekko. The British designer Mary Quant (1930-2023) incarnated the miniskirt, which was synonymous with women's liberation and The Swinging Sixties. Although Dranella always followed the broad fashion outline when creating everyday functional clothing design, they often found ways in include traditional recognizable Danish clothing traits when it was a question about design, form and materials, for instance clogs in many colours.

This paper focuses on the years 1960-70s where the emphasis to a much greater extent than seen for the last thirty-fourty years was on the textile in fashionable ready-to-wear. Dranella experimented with a small group of textile-designers and they collaborated with acknowledged textile producers from abroad, for instance the Serbian-Scottish textile designer Bernat Klein (1922-2014), and they made dresses in fabric from the Danish designer Verner Pantón (1926-1998).

Kirsten Toftegaard

Abbreviated biography:

Kirsten Toftegaard is a curator at Designmuseum Danmark and the keeper of the Dress and Textile Collection. From 2005 onwards, Toftegaard has been a member of the Conseil du CIETA (Centre Internationale d'Études des Textiles Anciens), representing Denmark. In 2016, she received a positive evaluation on Ph.D. level from the research committee under the Danish Agency for Culture.

She has arranged several exhibitions at Designmuseum Danmark, selected: in 2014, the permanent exhibition "Fashion & Fabric"; in 2016, "Marie Gudme Leth – Pioneer of Print"; in 2017-2018, "I am Black Velvet – Erik Mortensen Haute Couture"; in 2022, "Powerful Patterns". In 2015, she curated an exhibition on "Modern Danish Tapestry" at the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

Toftegaard has contributed to and co-edited several anthologies. In 2021, she published the monograph "Marie Gudme Leth: en pioner i dansk stoftryk", Strandberg Publishing.

Past and Future: Nordic Design History Reassessed

Paper abstracts

Theme 5: Modernism Inside Out

Moderator: Dr Denise Hagströmer

Friday 27 October 2023, 14:35–16:25

Pragmatism of the Province – A Home Show in the Periphery of Danish Design in 1953

Hans-Christian Jensen

One of the main events in the provincial town of Odense in 1953 was an exhibition of four flats open for the public free of charge that took place in a newly constructed high rise building just made available for tenancy. Subsequently it was estimated that between 20.000 and 30.000 people had visited the home show during the three-week period it ran in early spring. Apart from the modern amenities the reason for the huge attraction was that the flats were fully furnished. It was four members of the local branch of The Danish Arts & Crafts Society who had each installed a flat. This entailed an educational purpose as it is well known that designers and architects exerted a significant effort to inform and educate consumers in questions regarding housing and furnishing in this period with publications, lectures, and exhibitions. These generally sought a high degree of realism in the representation of furnishings appropriate for ordinary housing conditions. In this home shows the realism became almost complete as the representation of 'real' housing conditions did not have to be simulated in drawings or exhibition set-ups but rather belonged to the setting quite factually.

However, the realism also implied a higher degree of pragmatism as it was local retail outlets that provided the exhibits. Moreover, the educational background and profession of the four 'interior designers' diverted from the furniture architects who otherwise dominated this kind of event. The flats thus also appear slightly more diverse than usual.

The home show coincided with the international breakthrough for Danish Design whereby the alleged high culture of modern Danish dwelling was to be spread to the rest of the world the following years. It is thus revealing to look further into the domestic reception of Danish design only 170 kilometres away from its centre in Copenhagen. Of particular interest is that a poll was carried out amongst the visitors which meant that the more conservative of the flats was elected as the most attractive with no less than 90% of the votes.

Hans-Christian Jensen

Associate Professor and Deputy Head of Department at Department of Media, Design, Education, and Cognition, University of Southern Denmark, Kolding.

Teaches Design Studies, Design Culture and Design Management.

Recent publication in English (co-authored with Professor Anders V. Munch): "Selling Time: Multiple Temporalities in the Promotion of Danish Design Classics", *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, 2022. pp. 53-69.

Co-editor of *Design Culture. Objects and Approaches*, Bloomsbury 2019.

Skarphéðinn Jóhannsson (1914-1970): an anthropological architect.

Halldóra Arnardóttir, PhD Art Historian (Iceland)

Skarphéðinn Jóhannsson (1914-1970) is one of the key figures of architects who introduced modernity into Icelandic society through his furniture designs, interiors, writings, and buildings. His work is interwoven with the cultural history of the country, its needs and ambition. Around the Second World War a huge amount of people moved from the countryside to start a new life in Reykjavík. This raised questions on modernity both in terms of production and civil society, a country still based on rural values.

Skarphéðinn studied furniture design at Kunsthändværkskolen from 1935-1938, and architecture at Kunstakademiets Arkitektskole in 1945-1949. Importantly, he worked in Kaare Klint's office during and after his architecture studies, before he went on a one-year study trip to Italy, a *Grand Tour*, in 1951. All these years, his thoughts and travels are well documented through his letters written to family and friends.

When Skarphéðinn returned home, his office (1952 - 1970) worked on hundreds of projects: buildings, furniture, interiors, and curating Expo exhibitions. The country needed new school buildings, factories, offices, scientific laboratories, domestic dwellings. Characteristic prior to drawing, Skarphéðinn carried out an analysis of needs and his clients' vision, often he visited other Nordic countries to learn from others and embraced quality control in all stages of the design.

Skarphéðinn's architecture, simple and honest, expresses social engagement and commitment to people's requirements. At the same time, it encourages a strong relationship with nature, evident in his care for the buildings' surroundings as part of a whole. It can thus be argued that he learnt from anthropology to improve people's quality of life and Iceland's image and self-confidence abroad. He tried to understand people's behaviour, ideas, and their meaning before making a proposal for a project. An attitude based on curiosity and paying attention to his surroundings, both in nature and the city fabric.

Halldóra Arnardóttir has a BA degree in Art History from University of Essex, and a PhD from the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. She has written and lectured extensively on the arts, design and architecture in Iceland and around Europe, USA and Canada. Her writings and books include *Stories of houses* (2001–2008) *Manfreð Vilhjálmsson architect* (2009), *Kristín Guðmundsdóttir interior designer* (2015), *Art and Culture as Therapy, Icelandic Museums and Alzheimer's* (2017), Currently she is preparing a book on Skarphéðinn Jóhannsson architect (2023/24).

E. Johnsen. PAGON's living rooms: Spaces for art, 'enrichment' and silence.

This paper will shed light on how the architects Arne Korsmo, Jørn Utzon, Christian Norberg-Schulz (CNS), Håkon Mjelva and Robert Esdaile's own living rooms (1950–1955) served as curated 'exhibitions' of visual arts, design, and cultural objects. Included in this are also different approaches to the presence of nature.

Experiencing and discussing art and design in a social setting were important parts of the PAGON (Progressive Architects Group Oslo Norway) group's gatherings. These discussions included the art and design in their own homes. The architect's travels and studies abroad, of both contemporary art, design and architecture, as well as vernacular culture, contributed in some cases to their marked distance to what Penny Sparke describes as the contemporary Scandinavian modern interior of the mid-twentieth century: it exuded light and air, and was filled with wooden furniture, objects, and textile products of decorative arts. Arne and Grete Korsmo's apartment at Bygdøy (1950–1951) was more a dark scene, a spatial experiment, and an eclectic global cultural mix.

During his time at Harvard (1952–1953), CNS began his reflections on visual arts related to perceptions and how the interaction with the viewer and the artwork arises, as a social function. « 'Enrichment' can only be achieved by architecture and visual arts coming together on a common environmental idea» CNS wrote in 1957. Several of the architect's interiors appear to be a curated exhibition, – some close to Mies's quiet 'museological vision', – others with the traces of 'lived life'. Both Korsmo and CNS were engaged in creating a '*naturrom*'. Related to this, is also how walls of glass and light reflections could be related to displaying art, as in the collaboration with the artist Gunnar S. Gundersen in Planetveien 12 (1955). Some let their own works of art, have a dominant place. Esdaile's home (1952) showed modernist decoration inspired by Corbusier and Picasso. Mjelva's apartment (1954) was a collage of unfamiliar affordable materials, and a wall decorated by the architect, inspired by his experience of Jackson Pollock's contemporary paintings.

Short cv/ bio:

Espen Johnsen, professor in art history, IFIKK/University of Oslo (phd. in 2002). Research and teaching profile on 20th century Norwegian and Scandinavian architecture. Particularly concerned with modernism, procedural studies, avant-garde and network theories, welfare, and the relationship between architecture and visual arts, and architecture and nature.

Recently books: Espen Johnsen: *Erling Vikjø. Eksperimenter i form og betong* (PAX, 2020), Espen Johnsen: *PAGON: Scandinavian Avant-Garde Architecture 1945–1956* (Bloomsbury, 2023).