EUROPAN

Europan is a European collaboration in the field of urban planning and architecture which organizes a competition every second year with the goal to implement the winning ideas. Europan has existed since 1988 and consists of up to 20 member countries. Every country has its own secretariat, from which national activities are organized and implemented.

Learn more about Europan and read more about the results of the competition here:
www.dac.dk/da/dac-cities/europan-denmark
www.europan-europe.eu

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NOTES ON THE JURY REPORT

Denmark participated in Europan 12 with entries from two districts in: Aalborg and Copenhagen. When the competition deadline concluded in summer of 2013, EUROPEAN DENMARK received a total of 50 proposals for one of two Danish competition entries. Each proposal was individually assessed and evaluated by an internationally comprised jury. The first jury meeting reduced the entries by about twenty percent for a second round of assessment. The second and final meeting of the jury concluded with a decision on 1st and 2nd places and also the entries worthy of a special mention. In total, 4 publishers are commemorated, with 12,000 Euros awarded to the winning team and 6,000 to the runner up.

This report is the culmination of many hours of intense discussions and commitment by a panel of highly esteemed peers. Considerable recognition was given to each entry in regard to the thousands of hours of work that have comprised the proposals; as such it was a difficult challenge to whittle down the applicants to an eventual winner.

The jury report aims to accurately describe the manner in which the discussions undertaken determined which proposals survived the first round of assessment and the motivations for the selection of the winner, runner up and special mention. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to give individual feedback for the remaining proposals.

This report has been written by the jury members and EUROPEAN DENMARK. The Danish Architects’ Association has acted as consulting advisor for the jury. The two participating municipalities are not represented within the jury itself, but have closely followed the procedure and discussion, contributing whenever required during the selection process.

Europan Denmark
December 2013
During an assessment of a large international architectural competition in Copenhagen, I came across one of the expert judges, the Spanish architect and urban planner Joan Busquets. Busquets was one of the protagonists of Barcelona’s amazing development in the 90s and onwards. Our conversation ended revolving around the fact that the overriding issue for architects, now and in the future, is the question of cities. Not just cities in general, but the explosive growth of the world’s metropolis cities in the coming decades.

The picture is clear for many western countries and European societies. The current tendency lies in the depopulation of peripheral and rural areas as citizens explore the ever-growing cities. Currently tens of thousands of people are moving to metropolitan European cities every month. Busquets described this as the biggest challenge facing architects; forming cities that are comfortable in all respects. Creating humane and sustainable cities that are able to absorb the massive influx of people whilst ensuring resiliency and a continued high quality of living is a huge task.

One of the largest challenges is segregation. The global shift from rural to urban is in itself creating the most general problem of social imbalance – the relation between the rich cities and the still more socioeconomically disadvantaged rural districts are exacerbated. The division of districts and neighbourhoods arising out of changing social and income conditions are also a challenge in the metropolitan cities. To avoid this division of the neighbourhoods many impressive social, architectural, cultural and economic initiatives are being made in the larger cities, like for example Copenhagen.

In spite of these initiatives many former mixed neighbourhoods become fashionable, neat and streamlined, pushing the segregation issues from the center of the city to be solved in the suburbs.

Though this tendency, one should not be prevented from creating mixed neighbourhoods in the city. The neat streamlining is risky, since it is in the differences the social life in the city will evolve, in the friction between the wealthy and the low-income groups; in the space between the safe and the shaky grounds. Through Europan 12, Denmark has received a whole series of architecturally stunning answers to help create future dense, sustainable and socially comfortable cities. Suggestions include adaptable spatial cities with large socially diverse areas accommodating for everyone.

In Vestbyen, Aalborg, the dominant responses build on the existing qualities of the area. Here, original architecture, urban regeneration and transformation is developed and emphasized. In the great diversity of ideas, the projects suggest new forms of an urban space hierarchy. Altogether the projects are an inspiring collection of architectural enrichments. In Vesterbro, Copenhagen, the projects help to generously enrich the dense, slightly decaying urban neighbourhood of the last century. Here the focus is more on the building typology of the housing and the block, but are also concentrated on the transitions and boundaries between the public space, the semi-public, and private.

Both in Vestbyen, Aalborg, and Vesterbro, Copenhagen, there are selected proposals with the classifications of winner, runner up and special mention. All these projects are of high quality, focusing on placing the conscious scale of cities on the architectural agenda. Both towns have obtained what they asked for - and more. Europan has once again shown its merits. Young architects from all over Europe have provided new visions and an inspiring professionalism concerning our cities’ future. It looks promising.

Jan Christiansen
Head of The Jury,
December 2013
COMPETITION ASSIGNMENT
Aalborg Vestby, was first developed during Denmark’s industrialization before further expansion between 1900 and 1950. It is a classic example of a densely built-up city environment that has functioned well for many years, providing good, cheap housing for local industrial workers.

As the original industry has now been relocated or demolished and as new residents have moved in with different needs and demands, the neighbourhood is further motivated by its attractiveness as a residential area. This is a familiar and relevant situation, not just in Aalborg but throughout Denmark and Europe.

One of the key issues of the Aalborg site is how new strategies can be transformed, finding new functions whilst preserving the town quarter. Also asking how the existing structures can contribute to provide solutions to climate challenges, social problems and the creation of new activities in the neighbourhood.

COMMISSION AFTER THE COMPETITION
It is the intention that the competition proposal is used as input to a further process and actualization of the overall vision and strategy for Vestbyen. In addition, there may also be a need to expand upon the competition proposals in regards to specific efforts and defined areas.

GENERAL REMARKS
Most of the 14 entries address the question of climate change and the need for sustainable solutions. Some seek to establish a connection between the different parts of the city whilst some focus on the sole connection between Vestbyen and the waterfront.

SHORTLISTED ENTRIES
GO437 / DAS ANDERE
HC922 / A COLLECTIVE STORYLINE
PJ546 / NEW SYNERGIES
DF092 / WEST SIDE STORIES
DT185 / AALBORG VEST ACTIVATED

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE SHORT LISTED ENTRIES
The five shortlisted entries possess quite different approaches to the strategy of redefining the urban quality of Aalborg and Vestbyen.

The project ‘PJ 546/New Synergies’ use climate adaptability with various green elements as the main strategic tool. Also, ‘DF092’ has a high degree of greening within its project strategy, adding urban gravity as an important secondary aspect. Both entries are assessed as relevant and qualitative inputs. All the selected entries are considered as qualified inputs for the urban development of Aalborg. This means the committee was facing a very interesting discussion on the subject of how a city can start a strategic oriented development leading to implemented change in the direction of the city.
GENERAL DESCRIPTION
In the entry Das Andere, the decision-making required for the development of the Vestbyen area is seen as a process of Negotiation, replacing the tradition of the coherent master plan. The proposal perceives the multiplicity of stakeholders involved in the making of the contemporary city, with their own contrasting, unpredictable interests, as making any uniform top-down action unsustainable. The participation of citizens in decision-making opens the way to a new application of direct democracy, and in this context the project postulates that Vestbyen should, instead of answers, be provided with questions in built form.

In the proposal the district of Vestbyen is read in terms of sameness and diversity. Within the more quotidian urban tissue, certain exceptional fragments are identified. It is stated that Aalborg in the shift from an industrial to a knowledge economy, needs alternative narratives in the search for a new identity, and only Places of Exception can produce these collective memories.

In the first snapshot of 2018, the proposal lays out punctual interventions as Baits, to foster interest around certain spots in the city, acting as incubators to reveal hidden potentials and disclose the widest spectre of possibilities. The four chosen areas of interventions are given individual names and character: “the hospital”, “the viaduct”, “the back court” and “the pier”. At the architectural level, the interventions are overlaid, adding instead of replacing, to preserve at most the built traces of the city that was. The snapshot of 2025 is the result of a dialectic process of negotiation between municipality, stakeholders and citizens based on Negotiated Plans in form of exemplary architectural proposals, starting from the given Baits. They will evolve through adaption to changing needs and influence the physical transformation and identity of the wider area of Vestbyen.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
The jury has chosen this proposal as the winner for its strategic value and thinking. It proposes a discursive process, not based on consensus, but rather on friction and agonistic reasoning through embracing conflict. The project manages to formulate a strategy of asking questions through built form. The proposed tool of architectural Baits is challenging the current expectation of what the future development of the Vestbyen area would be. The jury especially would like to highlight the way the project proposes a very specific strategy of intervention contrary to the competition requirements, “to produce a clear, coherent narrative for the entire strategic area and providing the entire area with a “lift”, but enhancing the diversity of Vestbyen by focusing on very specific parts of the city that makes a real difference. A diversity not based on the idea of variation, but on the idea of exceptions, of real otherness.

Another strength of the project is how architecture is used to create spatial conditions, suggesting and triggering new types of unexpected use. The proposal works less with atmosphere than with clear spatial interventions, always adding and overlaying elements rather than replacing existing ones. The interventions on the architectural level are defined to be simple, straightforward and also open in the sense that they don’t pre-define use.

However, the jury has debated over the quality of the proposal at the architectural level of intervention. The proposed Baits are not yet strong enough to set up a real dialectic process. Their promised otherness or exceptional value seems not yet high enough to start a new economy of desire. The unfinished character and the openness of the tactical interventions have
an advantage though, that they can be further defined and refined through future negotiation with all the local stakeholders. A bait, like the viaduct requires an overinvestment, but has the potential of delivering a critical impact creating a situation of real exception, a situation that does not exist today.

The weakest aspect of the project is the lack of focus upon the light railways opportunities to “kick-start a development for the entire area”. The jury strongly recommends the authors to develop strategies, which take into account the competitions ambitions, which exploit the catalytic potentials for regeneration this massive infrastructural investment enables. The proposal is refreshing perspective of the Vestbyen area, viewed in the context of the challenges of contemporary urban processes and the adaptability of the city.

The jury concludes that the proposal offers a compelling framework of radical questions that in dialogue with the municipality and other stakeholders will be able to inform and improve the further development of the future identity of Vestbyen and points it out as the winner.
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This proposal focuses on a vision of turning Kastetvej into the strong backbone of Vestbyen. With an interest in public spaces as a starting point, the Kastetvej becomes the strongest line of development and central to the new identity of Vestbyen. It is the central collective storyline which other new and existing storylines hinge themselves on in the transformation of the city.

A selection of valuable areas are singled out and connected to and across Kastetvej through different strategies. Existing green spaces are strengthened and new green areas are established in streets and plazas. The proposed light rail line establishes new infrastructural connections along Kastetvej, and also emphasizes that Vestbyen is the point along the proposed line with the closest proximity to Limfjorden. Kastetvej is also made central in the strategy of distributing, developing and displaying the different local identities. The programmatic strategy seeks to activate public spaces by different user groups at different times. Climate is also included in the strategy, with the ambition to turn climate changes issues into an included part of the rhythms and circulations of the city. Ideas for 12 different sub-areas of Vestbyen are collected in a storyboard of identities, and distributed in phases of development over time, according to tentative snapshots of the situation in 2018 and 2025.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT

The project is commended by the jury for its holistic and comprehensive approach to Vestbyen, covering all the competition criteria satisfactorily. There is a measure of care and emphasis on the development of public spaces across all scales of this project that the jury finds interesting. Trying to answer all possible aspects relevant to the development of Vestbyen with equal care, making them equally important in the strategy, is the great strength of the project - but also the potential weakness, risking a lack of hierarchy and clear momentum, making the totality of the strategy a bit predictable.

Nevertheless, the project strategy of storyboarding a catalogue of possible identities for different subareas, whilst remaining within the specific context of each area, and then linking them together at Kastetvej, is a robust way of providing an open toolbox of examples, ideas and possibilities that can inform the further development of Vestbyen and therefore the jury points it out as a runner up.
SPECIAL MENTION
DT185 / AALBORG VEST ACTIVATED

TEAM
ANNA GANCEWSKA (PL), ARCHITECT URBANIST
ANNA ZIOBER (PL), ARCHITECT URBANIST

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
The overall ambition of this project is to develop the potential of the district of Vestbyen as a cohesive organism where many identities and typologies live in symbiosis. By underlining the fact that the potential of the district resides in its diversity, the project tries at the scale of the city to unite Vestbyen as one district. To ensure the equal development of the district, a strategy of three main elements with different timeframes is proposed. Within the district a green network for pedestrian movement between strategic places is developed with a timeframe of more than 10 years. Public activators in the form of large-scale public spaces in locations of future light rail stops along the Kastetvej are implemented during an adaptability period of 5-10 years. Local activators are temporally installed for 3 months at junctions in the green network in the local neighbourhoods. The space consists of a “frame”, a pavilion or square provided by the municipality and rented out for free to different organizations and inhabitants and local stakeholders, enabling them to curate their own “content” for a short period of time.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
The project receives a special mention by the jury for its bottom-up approach to the development of Vestbyen, and how the projects seek to activate the development of the district through small-scale temporary operations. The jury particularly appreciated the role of the local activators in this strategy, as a way of enabling citizen participation and giving the local neighbourhoods of Vestbyen an important role in the development, fusing together economic, environmental and social needs. However, the presented examples and illustrations of architectural consequences of the strategy remain less convincing. The way the strategy of the activators should be physically implemented is unclear and vague. The desired long-term effects of the temporary activators should have been further developed in the project.
ENTRIES: 36
LOCATION: VESTERBRO, KØBENHAVN
STRATEGIC SITE: 8.75 HA
PROJECT SITE: 3.75 HA
OWNER OF SITE: MUNICIPALITY OF KØBENHAVN AND HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

COMPETITION ASSIGNMENT
More people are moving to urban areas, and those who already live there are staying put. Combined with the growing consciousness on climate change issues and the world’s resources there is an increasing demand on new solutions for city environments.

The buildings in the project area represent Copenhagen’s identity and cultural heritage. They have shown their strength and robustness over time, and with good solutions and smart decisions, these old buildings can retain their identity and contribute to the desired future solutions.

Many people want to live in the city, but still wish to enjoy the benefits reaped by living close to nature; the close contact with the changing seasons, constantly shifting sunlight and the opportunity to cultivate flowers and vegetables. One of the key issues is how these opportunities are offered to city dwellers, how buildings are made more adaptable to climate change effects and the growing mountain of people wanting to live in the city.

COMMISSION AFTER THE COMPETITION
The intention is that the City of Copenhagen offers the winner of the competition the chance to act as a consultant in the development of the site as well as possible subprojects in energy renovation and climate adaption in the selected strategic site and focus areas. The municipality does not own the buildings or common courtyards within the site area, but it does own the streets and plazas incorporated within the strategic site and focus area. The project is envisaged to be completed in stages or as shared projects.

GENERAL REMARKS
Most of the 36 entries address the challenge of climate change and the need to deal with the increased amount of storm water incidence in the city.

SHORTLISTED ENTRIES
CE791 / CITIZEN ALPHA
MC095 / PASSAGE OF TIME
JG258 / SOCIAL CORRIDORS
CM482 / SHARE THE STREET – GAIN SPACE
ZI487 / OUR COURTYARD IN THE STREET
UO447 / JEG VIL BO PÅ VESTERBRO!
BT080 / SPROUNTING CITY BLOCKS

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE SHORT LISTED ENTRIES
Both the entry ‘CE791/Citizen Alpha’ and ‘UO447/Jeg vil bo på Vesterbro’ focus on sharing space both in the building block and the courtyard, changing the private and semi-private areas to shared and public spaces.

The entry ‘CM482/Share The Street – Gain Space’ proposes changes to the inside of the building, but most differently through focusing on the street, adding public areas and larger urban spaces in the immediate surroundings of the building.
WINNER
ZI487 / OUR COURTYARD IN THE STREET

TEAM
RUNE JØRGENSEN (DK), ARCHITECT
DITTE MARIE HILDEBRAND FREDERIKSEN (DK), ARCHITECT
LAURA WEDDERKIND BANK (DK), ARCHITECT

COLLABORATORS
MARIA HVIID BENGTSON (DK), GRAPHIC DESIGNER
KARL HENNING TÖRNFELDT (DK), CAND ARCHITECT
MARTIN VRAA NIELSEN (DK), ARCHITECT-ENGINEER

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
This project has a combination of site-specific and concrete solutions with an ability to describe the hidden potential of the existing building stock in a beautiful and simple way, representing an exciting and innovative approach to the transformation of the building stock.

The proposal’s strength is that it is based on the area’s existing potentials and seeks to broaden the scope of everyday life in the familiar Copenhagen endearment. The participants are using the building as a planning tool rather than basing their idea on a comprehensive and more conventional urban planning strategy. The proposal introduces a number of exciting offers on the blocks neglected room - the basement. The project focuses on the relation and transparency between the street and the courtyard and by simple means it introduces a series of recognizable poetic phenomena in the area’s urban space. With this impetus the project illustrates both scalable and realistic solutions, where one can initiate the transformation - wherever and whenever. The proposal presents a series of site-specific analyses of the existing building stock, whereupon the concrete local solutions create the overall urban variation.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
The jury sees the proposal as an open framework and a strategy for further qualification, working in cooperation with the municipality and residents. The method appears convincing, but not all artwork appears thought through. The jury finds this proposal most convincing and best when it is specific, and when the ideas are supported by a bold and pragmatic description in text and diagrams. The treatment of proposed street space is a bit weak and there is also a lack of a more detailed approach to the potentials of the courtyard. However, there is great confidence in the proposed robustness aspect, also because of the weight of dwellings qualities and their relation to the courtyard and streets.

The proposal creates with few means a powerful and dreamy image of inviting spaces. The illustration of the circular lighting in Dybbølsbro could add poetic and identity qualities in everyday life to the area.

The proposal presents many opportunities for varied architectural solutions, based on a series of simple means, creating contemporary and attractive housing and spaces for business and associations. A targeted activation of the rooms at street level, and their potential to contribute to a different social behaviour in the well known. The project takes up a small element, the basement apartment, and shows that it has enormous strategic value. Once rethought, the project performs on the scale of the dwelling, the courtyard and the street. On top of that, through its potential repetition, it could change the quality of residential districts city wide. Therefore the jury points it out as the winner.
RUNNER UP
BT080 / SPROUTING CITY BLOCKS

TEAM
VICTORIA DIEMER (DK), ARCHITECT
HIROSHI KATO (JP), ARCHITECT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
The jury likes this project for its ability to create surprising and elegant solutions, based on the idea of emerging neighbour-hoods. The proposal creates better daylight conditions in the existing block at intersections in the existing stairwells. Towards the street the proposal stands with subtle openings and perforations of the facade, whilst having a more consistent approach to the site of the courtyard. The courtyard is created with a new common room, what you might call a forceful neighbourliness, where high social demands are placed upon residents.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
This proposal demonstrates a good understanding of the identity and capabilities needed to create an inspiring transition between town, city space and the existing building stock. The proposal examines the district’s branched structure reinforcing hidden spatial treasures. The approach shows great local knowledge of the district and a fine empathy for its character. It helps that the proposal appears to be a very personal interpretation of the area’s potential. The proposal is operating with a new kind of communal space for city blocks and its residents, wanting to turn the city block inside out, with the idea of a new emergent form of housing. The idea is that communal spaces should be able to create new kinds of communities and new ways to socialise.

Basically, dwellings are constructed very schematically and the jury are questioning the level of realism of the idea of shared space in the proposal. The jury is sceptical whether there are to many areas cut away in the block and what potentials effects are obtained thereby.

The jury sees the proposal to a lesser extent, missing a greater empathy for the proposed spatial answers to the building blocks challenges, the visual illustrations and the overall approach. The jury has sympathy for the project’s desire to address the well-known block and points it out as a runner up.
SPECIAL MENTION
MC095 / PASSAGE OF TIME

TEAM
MADELEINE SEMBRING (SE), ARCHITECT
BJØRN MOGENSEN (DK), ARCHITECT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
This proposal seeks to strengthen the area through a number of infrastructure initiatives, combined with a clear green and climate-adapted strategy. Interesting attempts to create new forms of spatial formations across the urban grid forms the basis of town planning in the proposal.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
The proposal represents a more classic urban plan big and appears as a realistic proposal, well meaning and pragmatic, the proposal fits in line with many of the City’s existing strategies for transformation. The project advises across many dependent landscapes, however, based on many private initiatives. Proposers suggest placing new community centres at several street courses with the ambition to create new patterns of movement and less traffic. The change of road layouts is a good move, however, the jury finds that the inadequately designed common houses visually closes Dybbølsgade and leaves the proposal as a slightly simplified picture of what a city is.

The jury has a hard time seeing a priority in the draft but considers that the proposal attempts to introduce sympathetic new blue - green solutions and therefore grants the proposal a special mention.

SPECIAL MENTION
JG258 / SOCIAL CORRIDORS

TEAM
IDA LINDBERG (DK), ARCHITECT
ESBEN THORLACIUS (DK), ARCHITECT

COLLABORATORS
MAINE GOODRIDGE (SE), STUDENT IN ARCHITECTURE
LINNEA BERG (SE), STUDENT IN ARCHITECTURE

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
The proposal is a scenic grab on the courtyard radicalized by virtue of semi-public transitions between the yard and the street. The proposal takes drastic steps in its penetration of the building blocks facades. The strength of the approach is in the potential of the new urban space midway between the street’s public and yard’s semi-private room.

JURY’S ASSESSMENT
The jury recognizes the proposal for its clear ideas as well as for its ability to beautifully convey a clear decision on materiality, texture and space.

The radical opening of the courtyard space does not correspond to the safety problems that are the result of the main lever. The proposal could have been stronger by also developing and integrating the principles of building mass, but the jury realises that challenge as being an aesthetic riddle resulting in a denial of concrete answers on the programs other issues.

The jury wishes to highlight and praise the proposal for its sense of materiality and texture and its ability to see a spatial and aesthetic potential of the neglected courtyards meant to be fed an amenity with a very site-specific design and points it out as a special mention.
THE JURY

URBAN / ARCHITECTURAL ORDER

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Civil Engineer and Master of Public Administration,
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STEPHEN WILLACY (DK/UK)
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URBAN / ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

JAN CHRISTIANSEN (DK)
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the state-owned company Freja Ejendomme

OLE SCHRÖDER (DK)
Architect, partner in the architectural firm Tredje Natur
and winner of Europan 11

FREK PERSYN (BE)
Architect, partner in the architectural firm 51N4E

ANDERS MELSOM (NO)
Architect, owner of the architectural firm Melsom Arkitektur

PUBLIC FIGURE

MORTEN STRÆDE (DK)
Danish Sculptor

SUBSTITUTES

KASPER GUIDAGER (DK)
Architect, partner in the architectural firm 3XN and head
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