





FINLAND, THE LITTLE BIG COUNTRY OF ARCHITECTURE



Finland has reinvented itself in just one short century. Our national character and Northern heritage have boosted us to the top of all kinds of country rankings from quality of life to innovation. Our architecture is renowned worldwide. Our high standards of education and a long tradition of architecture competitions ensures that professional know-how is passed on to the next generation. Compelling evidence for this can be seen in the current boom in ambitious school, library, church and other public buildings as well as in the success of Finnish architects in international competitions.



WORLD RECOGNITION FOR 1920'S – 1950'S MODERNISM



Good governance and architecture have always gone hand-in-hand in Finland. High-quality public buildings designed by the best architects have underpinned the development of civic society and formed part of Finland's national identity from the 19th century to the present. The Art Nouveau-inspired National Romantic style brought Finnish architecture and design, and Eliel Saarinen's name, to international attention.

However, the country is best known for its 20th century architecture, with a strong modernist tradition spearheaded by Alvar Aalto and his 200 notable works, 50 of which can be found outside Finland. The vernacular tradition, with its simple forms and way of building with wood, has given important impulses to Finnish modernism, and is strongly visible even in today's Finnish architecture. Women have made a strong contribution to the profession's development: in the late 19th century, Finland was the first country where women could study to be architects.



SUOMI
FINLAND

A SYNTHESIS OF ELEGANCE AND PRAGMATISM



Finns have a unique relationship with nature – and practical problem solving lies at the core of our national character. No wonder then that the mainstay of Finnish architecture is closeness to nature paired with a strong tradition of modernism: a simple elegance that combines pragmatism with the highest standards and optimal use of materials.

There is demand for this approach outside Finland too,, as demonstrated by several famous Finnish-designed buildings across the world. In addition to the celebrated Aalto works, early examples include Viljo Revell's Toronto City Hall and Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch in Missouri, for example.



Many of these were based on competition-winning entries. More recent examples are the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw by Lahdelma & Mahlamäki Architects and the Wuxi Grand Theatre in China by PES Architects. Today's Finnish winners are increasingly outward-looking and internationally well-connected, young, emerging offices.

Finland is also internationally known as a pioneer in architectural policy, architectural education for children and conservation of modern architecture.



INTEREST ON A GLOBAL BASIS

Interest in Finnish architecture is widespread: in 2014, the Alvar Aalto Museum and the Museum of Finnish Architecture ran a total of 16 events and exhibitions in 13 countries on five continents, attracting a total of 556,000 visitors. In the same year, 35,400 architecture fans from overseas visited the museums' exhibitions and sites in Finland.



**SUOMI
FINLAND**

A THRIVING INDUSTRY



Around 3,000 people are employed in Finland's architecture sector, with around 500 partners and 1,500 employees working in private companies. In 2013, their total turnover was around EUR 165 million. In addition, each architectural project employs a high number of other professionals in the construction and cultural sectors.

Architecture firms account for around EUR 7.5 million in exports each year. Finland's architectural export projects make a permanent statement in the country concerned, since Finnish buildings are made to last decades.



RECENT SUCCESSES IN ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS ABROAD AND IN FINLAND



Lahdelma & Mahlamäki Architects, Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, Poland (2005/2013)
ALA Architects, Performing Arts Centre Kilden, Kristiansand, Norway (2005/2012),
Helsinki Central Library, Finland (2013-)
JKMM Architects -, Seinäjoki City Library (2008/2012), Finland, Turku Central Library, Finland (1998/2007)
Anttinen Oiva Architects, “Kaisa House”, The University of Helsinki City Campus Main Library ~~Library~~, Finland (2008/2012)
Verstas Architects, Saunalahti School (2007/2012), Otaniemi Campus Buildings, Espoo, Finland, (2013-)
PES Architects, Wuxi Grand Theatre, Wuxi, China (2008/2011), Strait Culture and Art Centre, Fuzhou, China (2014 -)
OOPEAA (~~ex~~), Kuokkala Church, Parish of Jyväskylä, Finland, 2006/2010
Avanto Architects, Chapel of St. Lawrence, 2003/2010
Vapaavuori Architects, Kumu – Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn (1994/2006)
ARK-house Architects, Viikki Comprehensive School, Helsinki, Finland (1999/2003)
Juha Leiviskä, Sandels Cultural Centre, Helsinki, Finland (2002/2007)
Heikkinen - Komonen Architects, Max Planck Institute, Dresden, Germany 1997/2001



SEE ALSO:

Juhani Pallasmaa, theoretician and internationally renowned writer on architecture

Restoration of Viipuri Library, Vyborg, Russia: Tapani Mustonen/Alvar Aalto Academy

Learning and community centres in developing countries: Hollmén Reuter Sandman Architects (Senegal, Tanzania, Egypt), Architects Rudanko +Kankkunen (Cambodia)



LEARN MORE ABOUT FINNISH ARCHITECTURE

Architecture Information Centre Finland, incl. web journals:
www.finnisharchitecture.fi, www.archinfo.fi

Museum of Finnish Architecture: www.mfa.fi.

Alvar Aalto Museum: www.alvaraalto.fi

Finnish Association of Architects (SAFA): www.safa.fi

The Association of Finnish Architects' Offices (ATL):
<http://www.atl.fi/index.php?id=182>