



Newsletter 2012 No 2

Section on Library Buildings and Equipment



Part of the group of the Section's Midterm meeting at Philologische Bibliothek, Berlin

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Editorial

It is end of July and this years' IFLA conference casts its shadow with various announcement on the program in Helsinki, the very place where we will soon meet. First of all you are invited to our Section's Open Session on August 16th, which will focus on Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) of library buildings. We want to look at tools and techniques for the assessment of a library building after its completion. It will be interesting to explore the questions of how we can determine in an objective way whether a building has indeed met the library's and users' requirements and how effectively it functions for both library users and library staff. Our Standing Committee has selected four papers from the USA, Spain, Germany and Taiwan which we thought will be of interest to you.

There will be another interesting event to attend in Helsinki: on August 13th the Conference Session "Designing the Future Library" will take place. Architects and librarians will try to envision the future library with regard to prominent developments in Finland. Helsinki City Library is currently part of an international architectural competition for the proposed new Central Library. Also, the new Helsinki University Main Library will open in September 2012 and the National Library is renovating its building.

Helsinki is not only host of IFLA's general assembly this year. Moreover, it has been awarded the World Design Capital of the year 2012 by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) . This is a city promotion project that celebrates the accomplishments of cities that have used design as a tool to reinvent themselves and improve social, cultural and economic life. Helsinki's motto is therefore "Embedding design in life". As we know, design ensures desirable solutions for many things including objects, services and brands. Thinking of architecture and in particular library architecture we remember the famous Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto whose buildings and furniture are marked by a distinctive design. Perhaps you will take the time and participate during the Congress in a "Helsinki Design Tour" as it is offered by the organizers.

In this issue of the Newsletter you will also find an article by Inger Edebro-Sikstroem, a member of our Standing Committee. She gives a report of the first mid-year meeting of a working group of the Standing Committee, which took place in Germany in April.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of our Newsletter.

Näkemiin – See you in Helsinki!

Dorothea Sommer

Chair
Library buildings and Equipment Section

IFLA Library Buildings and Equipment Section

Midterm Meeting 14-16 April 2012

By / Inger Edebro Sikström

I am one of 17 members of the International Federation of Library Associations' (IFLA) *Standing Committee on Library Buildings and Equipment*, and I represent Umeå. I wrote about my first meeting in August 2011. This is the second report and it is from a so-called midterm meeting which takes place in Berlin and Halle in Germany. This time we are only a few of us in the group who meet to test and continue working on a model for evaluating library buildings that will be presented at the annual meeting in Helsinki in August of this year.

Those members of the group who were able to participate are Dorothea Sommer (chairwoman) and Olaf Eigenbroth from Germany, Karen Latimer from Great Britain, Jeff Scherer from the USA, Santi Romero from Spain and Stefan Clevström and yours truly from Sweden. It is a fantastic opportunity for me personally to experience and relate to new and acclaimed library buildings. It is also an opportunity to spread knowledge about the *Cultural Weave* and other things that are going on in Umeå. I hope that with this report I can pass on some impressions.

Berlin

It is a special feeling to live in the middle of the area that previously divided the city into East Berlin and West Berlin. Many of the larger cultural institutions can be found here. We walk along *Unter den Linden* and stop at *Bebelplatz*, the former *Opernplatz*, where over 20 000 books, written mainly by Jewish authors, were burned in 1933. So that coming generations will not forget, a large hole has been dug and covered with a protective plate of glass through which you can see empty white bookshelves.

We meet at the restaurant *Ständige Vertretung*, where heads of state and other politicians usually meet for a *Kölsch* (beer in a little glass). The restaurant, which is covered from the floor to the ceiling with photographs of all the prominent people who have visited the restaurant, also seems to be a favourite of the Berliners. It's jam-packed and everybody is in high spirits.

Philological Library at the Free University of Berlin

After the Second World War, Berlin's university ended up in East Berlin and the "free" university was established in West Berlin and became a symbol for democracy and everyone's right to knowledge.

At last I get to see the library that has been designed by the world famous architect Norman Foster. I do not know how many presentations I have seen since it was inaugurated in 2005. This strange "bubble" that looks like a Zeppelin that has just

landed is situated hidden between two other buildings. The building has an organic form that also is repeated in the design of the circulation desks. Armatures, search terminals, wastepaper baskets and much more are specially designed by Foster.



The library, which was planned before the Bologna reform, which is to say has still been planned for individual studies, is a special library for philologies and sharply focuses on giving its visitors the best possible service. The library has opening hours on weekdays from 9.00 - 22.00 and weekends from 10.00 – 20.00. All lighting is indirect. The work rooms are located in a separate building.

The exterior facade is made of recycled aluminium and glass elements and the interior (1.1 meters inside the exterior) is a curved skin made of fibreglass fabric and some kind of transparent material. The photo shows the director Klaus Ulrich Werner exhibiting a picture of how they can use the facade for light installations.

Klaus Ulrich Werner

Klaus also shared his experiences of cooperation with world-renowned architects and about the modifications they have agreed upon. For example, they had installed a revolving door to block the draft and noise from the corridor outside.

Humboldt-University of Berlin and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Centre

The library which was inaugurated in the autumn 2011 is designed by the Swiss architect Max Dudler. It is located directly next to the railway station *Berlin-Friedrichstraße*. The name Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Centre is chosen to acclaim the Grimm brothers' achievements as researchers in the humanities. The library has an area of 22.000 m² and has opening hours weekdays 8.00 to midnight and Saturday and Sunday 10.00 to 18.00.



Regina Pfeifenberger at the automatic return machine

The library's automatic return machine has the same supplier (Lyngsö) as ours – and it serves all seven floors. However, the books are sorted in boxes instead of book trolleys; not an option for us.

A special study room has been created for students with children (I took the opportunity to tell about our plans for “VIP” – Very Important Parents”)

Halle

Halle, or Halle an der Saale as the city is really called, is the largest city in the member state of Saxony-Anhalt and is situated around 30 kilometres from Leipzig. The history of the city goes back to the year 800. Halle already had 100.000 inhabitants by 1890. The composer Handel was born here and among many other interesting attractions you find one of Germany's oldest universities; the Martin-Luther-University of Halle-Wittenberg. Halle is situated not far away from Wittenberg where Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the door of the church in 1517. Not far as well is also Weimar, the European Capital of Culture in 1999.

Bauhaus

Not far from Halle is Dessau where the *Bauhaus movement* moved to in 1925. The *Bauhaus* was founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar in 1919. It is now listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and restoration is financed by EU-funds among others. Werner Möller from the *Bauhaus Foundation* guided us through the *Bauhaus* in Dessau.

Bibliotheken am Dessau



We start by visiting the newly inaugurated *Bibliotheken am Bauhaus Dessau*, which is located next to the Gropius school (see below). The building contains two libraries; a research library of Anhalt University of Applied Sciences and a library that is run by the *Bauhaus Dessau Foundation*.

I believe that they wanted the building to be consistent with Gropius' architecture and at the same time create something new. Think about the same situation with Stockholm's Public Library in the Asplund building and how difficult it must be to build an addition to an architectural icon.

The library organized quite a few programmes that attracted many and gave the library local support in the community.

Even here there is a custom-designed interior that featured among other things cubist formed bookcases in varied heights and propeller-like armatures above the study places.

Walter Gropius Bauhaus school



The building, which was built as a school, is for the most part restored and in part has new functions. During our visit there are creative activities for children in progress. The children eat their lunch in the dining room that you get to by passing through the assembly hall. There is a calculated thought behind this placement which is that meals should be considered as culture. If so, this is in line with our plans for the *Cultural Weave* that includes an innovative workshop that is equipped for cooking.

It is impressive how consistent and well thought-out everything is. The smooth design of the facade, the placement of the supporting columns with their reflection in the sunlight, the strict symmetry softened by asymmetrical alignment... Other examples are the design of the hanging gutters and balcony parapets, armatures, information-bearing lines in the floor. And not to be forgotten - the famous typeface.

The Bauhaus movement took tried-and-tested functions and introduced them in new contexts and venues. Praiseworthy and exciting.

The Dessau Masters' Houses

Not far from the school you find the so called *Masters' Houses* or housing for teachers. Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Vasilij Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, Georg Muche and Lyonel Feiniger lived here.

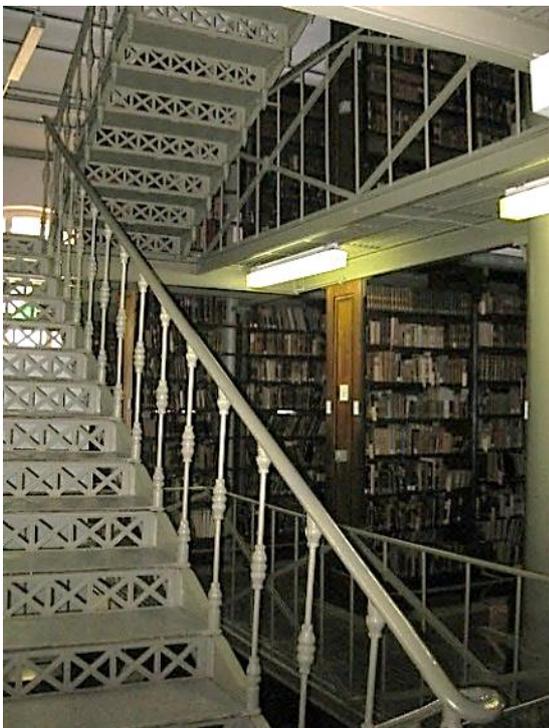
We visit the semidetached house that Vasilij Kandinsky and Paul Klee shared. I am fascinated by how Gropius created variations for the two dwellings by reversing the placement of both studios, as well as by rotating the other parts of the house around an axis. Interesting to see that these radical artists replaced the interior window mouldings of steel with more traditional ones in wood.

Breaking with traditions isn't easy. Werner relates that despite the modern exterior Kandinsky had characteristic Russian bourgeois furniture inside.



Kandinsky's and Klee's semidetached house

Martin-Luther-University of Halle-Wittenberg



You can certainly feel this important moment in history here. The library was founded in 1696 and since the city was not bombed during the Second World War you have a large collection of older literature (perhaps one of Germany's largest).

I'm most fascinated of the historical collection that fills several floors (forgot to count how many) and with the beautiful steel stairway in the centre. The handwritten catalogue (two examples) is equally beautiful, where Marx and Engel's book "Über Kunst und Literatur" is registered with beautiful handwriting as accession number 886.

The beautiful book stacks

Despite my great interest in development and change I think: Don't change anything
– Let everything remain exactly as it is. It is a landmark library indeed.

Die Zweigbibliothek Rechtswissenschaft

Martin-Luther University's law library is located in a new building. The building site was actually too small for the library's requirements. However, the situation was resolved by using extremely high bookshelves. In order to reach the top shelves ladders have to be used. Some of the work rooms are located directly next to the collection.

The differences in levels have been taken into consideration and a beautiful reading room with terraces is the result. The library opens on weekdays until 5 o'clock in the morning and Saturdays/Sundays from 8 to 24 o'clock.



Reading room Die Zweigbibliothek Rechtswissenschaft

Thoughts and ideas that I take home with me

There are plenty of thoughts and ideas that run through my mind. I'll take with me the feeling that we have a good global analysis with us that can be the basis for the development of Umeå's library.

Here below I have tried to gather some of the thoughts and ideas I take home with me. There are things I would like to inspire us, things that confirm that we have already thought about and/or things that we should perhaps check into. These are my personal reflections, but I gladly share them. It would be interesting to get some feedback about them.

Beautiful AND functional

Now I understand even better the importance of what Maria Olsson from White has so often repeated: The Cultural Weave shall “offer general areas for flexible use”. Wish that Norman Foster had had a Maria to listen to when he planned Philologische Bibliothek der Freien Universität in Berlin.



The fixed slats require special window cleaning equipment

In the analysis of the building accommodation needs we wrote in the risk analysis that “good architecture will hold its own ground, but if a library is going to be an architectural monument the chances are that the architecture hinders the operational development”. Unfortunately, this is all too true when older existing library buildings are evaluated. This is also the case with custom-designed interior fittings. The fittings and fixtures in the Cultural Weave should be tested and function well.

Window cleaning and cleaning of the facade should also be considered early in the building process. The annual maintenance can be costly if plans for simple maintenance routines are not implemented.

The impressions from Bauhaus were very seductive. Take for example the importance of using colours to facilitate orientation in the building. So beautiful and so practical.

Another example is how conscious they were about the use of colour and hues. There are many bright colours that nearly remind one of the traditional Sami colours.

Consider the flat roof. The roofing of the Cultural Weave must deal with rain, ice and snow.



Accessibility

It's odd that accessibility has to be so difficult. It's often the little things that make a big difference. For example the designing of lighting with maintenance points that do not cast a shadow on the face. It is important to individuals with hearing disability that they are able to clearly see lips.

It can't be emphasized enough how important sound insulation is, especially in buildings that are made up of basically one room. It's easy to forget how much "small" sounds can be disturbing.



Berlin Hauptbahnhof

Revolving doors are not on my top ten list. At Berlin Hauptbahnhof they have been combined with sliding doors. Is this something for the *Cultural Weave*?

Accessibility and sign systems are challenging. For example, we have to think about how the text appears – or does not appear – for individuals with eyesight impairments, especially the ability to discern certain critical colours (often red and green).

Opening hours are an important factor for accessibility. This is confirmed in the opening hours (8.00 to 22.00) on which we have selected to base the first planning calculation. Perhaps it needs to be changed for weekends, but everything else indicates that we have thought right.

Image making

Should the Cultural Weave have its own typeface, just like the Bauhaus?

When Sune Norgren was commissioned to create the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art (BALTIC) in a converted flour mill in Gateshead, England, he also developed a unique typeface. Profiling has meant a great deal for the *Bauhaus* and BALTIC when both have built up “trademarks” of their respective institutions.



Typeface for the BALTIC is used in many different ways

Ergonomics

A few weeks ago I was with some of the staff and together we checked out a system which was an alternative to compact shelving. It was Katarina Bodén who organized the study visit to the company Ilogistic in Holmsund.

The system is so smart and it is difficult to understand that it isn't used more often by libraries. The University of Missouri in Kansas City has a gigantic device, but it should be interesting for many others. Alternative to compact shelving?



Alternative to compact shelving?

See more photographs and read more

Philologische Bibliothek der Freien Universität Berlin

<http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/philbib/index.html>

<http://www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/0980/default.aspx>.

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm Zentrum

<http://www.grimm-zentrum.hu-berlin.de/>

<http://www.maxdudler.com/43-0-Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum+Berlin.html>

Bibliotheken am Dessau

http://www.reinerbeckerarchitekten.de/html/projekte/bauhaus_bibliothek_dessau_1.html

Walter Gropius Bauhaus school building

<http://www.bauhaus-dessau.de/index.php?The-bauhaus-building-by-walter-gropius>

Die Meisterhäuser Dessau

<http://www.meisterhaeuser.de/en/index.html>

Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

<http://bibliothek.uni-halle.de/?lang=en>

Die Zweigbibliothek Rechtswissenschaft

http://www.german-architects.com/de/projekte/detail_thickbox/22591/plang:de

Conference Session 190

Making the case for change through evaluation: post-occupancy evaluation of library buildings

Library Buildings and Equipment

Congress track 4: Tools and techniques.

16 August 2012 08:30 - 10:30 | Room: Session Room 1 | SI

- **Welcoming, flexible, and state-of-the-art: approaches to continuous facilities improvement**
CHARLES FORREST (Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA) and SHARON BOSTICK (University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, Missouri, USA)
- **When used, library buildings shows up, take profit of it!**
MERCÈ MILLÁN, ESTER OMELLA and ASSUN VILADRICH (Gerència de Serveis de Biblioteques, Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain)
- **Working with focus groups as a Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) to support a relaunch of the library building of the German National Library of Science and Technology/ University Library Hannover (TIB/UB)**
ANETTE FRANZKOWIAK (Technische Informationsbibliothek/ Universitätsbibliothek Hannover, Hannover, Germany)
- **Review of Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) in Libraries in Taiwan from the perspective of the architectural profession**
Translations:[Français]
KOLI CHEN (Tungahi University, Taichung, Taiwan, China)

Conference Session 110 a

Designing the Future Library

13 August 2012 18:00 - 21:00 | Off-site

How do librarians and architects envision the Future Library?

In the near future many library buildings in Helsinki will undergo major changes. Helsinki City Library is currently in the midst of the international architectural competition for the proposed new Central Library. In the academic world, the [new Helsinki University Main Library](#) will open in September 2012. Furthermore, the [National Library](#) is renovating the culturally unique building to meet the user expectations of today.

The keynote speakers are:

- MAIJA BERNDTSON (Helsinki City Library)
- KAISA SINIKARA (Helsinki University Library)
- VESA OIVA (Anttinen Oiva Architects. Architect of the Kaisa House the jury member in the architectural competition of Helsinki Central Library)
- PAUNO NARJUS (LPR Architects, Architect of the National Library renovation)

Hosts: The Helsinki University Library, The National Library and the Helsinki City Library

Location: the new [Helsinki University Main Library](#)

(By invitation only)



THE MAIN LIBRARY IN KAISA HOUSE



Library Buildings and Equipment Section

Standing Committee
Meetings in Helsinki

Saturday 11th of August 2012

Session 43 — SC I

Library Buildings and Equipment

15:15 - 17:45

Room: 101d

Tuesday 14th of August 2012

Session 135 — SC II

Library Buildings and Equipment

13:15 - 14:45

Room: 207



IFLA
2012 Helsinki

Library Buildings and Equipment Section

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