

reviews bogomtaler recensjoner

Halina Dunin-Woyseth
& Jan Michl (eds.):

**Towards a Disciplinary Identity of the *Making Professions: The Oslo Millennium Reader*.
Research Magazine 4**

Oslo School of Architecture 2001

Jan Capjon & Sture Kvarv (eds.):

Route Mapping: On Relevant Methods, One's Own choice and Application. Research Magazine 5

Oslo School of Architecture and Design 2002

Halina Dunin-Woyseth
& Liv Merete Nielsen (eds.):

Discussing Transdisciplinarity: *Making Professions and the New Mode of Knowledge Production: The Nordic Reader 2004*. Research Magazine 6.

Oslo School of Architecture and Design 2004

Review by Rolf Johansson

This review discusses the three latest issues of *Research Magazine*: 4:2001, 5:2002, and 6:2004. I first want to sketch out the context in which they have been developed: the context of previous issues, and the editors' research environment.

Research Magazine

Research Magazine is an academic journal published by the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO). The first issue appeared in 1991 since when six issues have been published. *Research Magazine* is dedicated to the research education and its premises, and documents the development of the Doctoral Programme at AHO in relation to the school's knowledge stance. The AHO was given the right to confer doctoral degrees in 1981, but research had only been conducted at the school to a small extent when the Doctoral Programme was launched in the academic year of 1991/92. At that time Professor Halina Dunin-Woyseth, Director of Research, was put in charge of the teaching of research methodology. She founded *Research Magazine* and has contributed articles to the six issues published to date, as editor, co-editor, and author.

The first issue of *Research Magazine*, 1:1991, summarizes the process of preparation when introducing the Doctoral Programme at the AHO. This issue has as its topic architectural research as an emerging professional concern. It presents the work of researchers and research students at the

school, mapping out its scholarly competence at the time. It is this competence, which constitutes the basis for developing AHO's teaching in the field of research.

The second issue, 2:1995, focuses on the theoretical understanding of architecture. It documents the conceptual framework underlying the teaching of research methodology at AHO between 1992 and 1995. At this time, the teaching of architectural research methodology was arranged around three steps, and the articles in this issue are organized according to these. The first step consisted of a general introduction to basic methodological problems in research and specific problems related to architectural research. The second step contained an introduction to architectural theories. The part dedicated to this step is the most voluminous in the issue. Halina Dunin-Woyseth introduces it by identifying four "schools" within the landscape of architectural theories, following the phenomenological, the semiotic, the rational, and the humanistic traditions. These "schools" are discussed in one article each. The third step in the teaching of research methodology takes as its starting point the individual PhD candidates and their research questions. The part of the issue devoted to this step focuses strongly on the theory of landscape, which was the theme for a series of seminars for PhD candidates at the AHO.

Up until 1995 the Doctoral Programme at AHO targeted architects, but since then the AHO has admitted professionals from the entire field of practical-aesthetic work. In admitting a range of professionals to its Doctoral Programme, the AHO raises issues concerning the breath of the design discipline and challenges its disciplinary identity. It thus develops a design discipline of its own, at the same time responding to the demands of transdisciplinarity, a dilemma that provides the themes for the following four issues of *Research Magazine*.

The third issue, 3:1998, was published jointly by the AHO, the EAAE Workshop Proceedings, and the Architecture & Behaviour Series. Its theme is epistemology and architecture. This issue contains contributions by internationally acknowledged researchers, discussing topics such as how knowledge is and can be acquired in architecture; lateral thinking; integration of users; and teaching challenges. Unfortunately, this issue has long been sold out.

The three latest issues of *Research Magazine* continue to focus on knowledge and scientific criteria within a *making*

discipline, and the constraints and possibilities of transdisciplinarity.

The *making* professions

Issue 4:2001 has the sub-heading *Towards a Disciplinary Identity of the Making Professions: The Oslo Millennium Reader*, and its articles deal with the issue of knowledge in the *making* professions. The term "making professions" is a Scandinavian coinage and refers to the fields of art production, object design, architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and spatial planning, thus covering a "spoon-to-city" spectrum. The editors for this issue, Halina Dunin-Woyseth and Jan Michl, argue that "there is a case for sustaining and maintaining the field of ... *making knowledge* through a discipline of its own, a *making discipline*". The *making knowledge* has to be relevant to the practice of professionals, as well as fulfilling a number of scientific criteria. This design knowledge appears to be rooted in the triadic concept of design history, design criticism or critical analysis, and design theory. The editors conclude:

We believe that by developing the disciplinary kind of *making* knowledge, accessible to other disciplines with their inherent tradition of organised scepticism, and of ongoing criticism within an inter-subjective discourse, the disciplinarily constructed *making* knowledge would provide for a more informed and knowledgeable practice which is in great demand in a time of change such as ours. Further we believe that a fully developed *making discipline* could be of crucial importance to design education.

A *making discipline* could also create an academic identity and foster research on both disciplinary and transdisciplinary issues.

The six articles making up *Research Magazine* 4:2001 are intended to shed some light on the subject of an emerging *making discipline*. Most of the contributions are based on a lecture series within the Doctoral Programme at AHO. In addition to these articles, the issue includes the summaries of three doctoral theses completed at the school, representing, in the words of the editors, *a making discipline in the making*. They do indeed represent *a making discipline* since they are concerned with the three pillars of such a discipline: History (Elisabeth Tostrup), Criticism (Bjørn Normann Sandaker), and Theory (Thorleif Skjønsberg).

The scientific criteria

How can we comply with the scientific criteria underlying a developing *making* discipline? This is the issue at stake in *Research Magazine* 5:2002: *Route Mapping: On Relevant Methods, One's Own Choice and Application*. This issue marks the tenth anniversary of the Doctoral Programme and is the result of a group assignment by a number of PhD candidates at AHO.

The Doctoral Programme appears to have provided a common ground for the PhD candidates with respect to research methodology: the two cornerstones are qualitative research methods and case study methodology. The editors for this issue, Jan Capjon and Sture Kvarv, ask:

is there a research landscape appropriate for assessing complexity, and flexible enough to fathom scholarly *and* artistic reasoning, rationality *and* intuition, objectivity *and* subjectivity?

Their answer is that “such a landscape exists, and it is called *qualitative research*.” They find qualitative research methods relevant in a *making* discipline in which aesthetic and scholarly practices meet. I fully agree.

References to case study methodology are present in almost all reflections on methodology in the articles. I do not find this surprising. Case study methodology is cut out for being a methodological cornerstone in a *making* discipline for several reasons: the study of specific, complex phenomena in their context match well with design practice; case study methodology and design have in common a holistic, synthesizing, approach; and case studies have the potential to enrich the repertoire a practitioner needs to be able to act. They differ, however, with respect to their time perspectives: a case study is conducted *after* the fact in the “real” world has been observed, but design elaborates what may be—a future case in a model world.

Transdisciplinarity

After having discussed the development of a *making discipline* (RM 4), and the scientific requirements on knowledge production in such a discipline (RM 5), the next issue of *Research Magazine*, 6:2004, addresses the question of transdisciplinarity. Its heading is *Discussing Transdisciplinarity: Making Professions and the New Mode of Knowledge Production*. It is divided into two parts: the first part introduces

what is known as *Mode-2 of Knowledge Production*, and the second part discusses this mode of knowledge production from the perspective of the *making* professions.

One of the contributors to the first part of the issue is Professor Helga Nowotny. She holds a Chair in Social Studies of Science at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, and was part of the group of researchers that coined the concept of *Mode-2 knowledge production* (Gibbons et al. 1994, Nowotny et al. 2001). Nowotny characterizes this new mode—mode-2—of knowledge production by three attributes: it is carried out in the context of application; multiple actors bring different skills and expertise to the problem solving process; and it is transdisciplinary. The potential of transdisciplinarity, Nowotny argues, is to bridge the gap between science and society. It is a form of learning as well as a form of problem solving, in which society and academia address real life problems together.

The workings of this new mode of knowledge production in the field of technology and architecture is discussed in articles by Hans Siggard Jensen, Professor at the Copenhagen Business School, and Fredrik Nilsson, architect and PhD. In their article, Anders Rydberg, former police inspector, and Björn Klarquist, architect and Professor Emeritus, address the problem of a transdisciplinary way of working and give an example of how to bridge the gap between science and society in practice. The issue at stake is safety with respect to housing.



The publication of *Research Magazine* is an impressive undertaking by the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. The journal documents the premises for, and the development of, the teaching of research methodology at AHO over the last fifteen years. By doing so, the journal fosters the development of research skills. *Research Magazine* also documents a number of doctoral courses in the Nordic countries, behind many of which the academic staff at AHO have been a driving force. “The Millennium Programme” is an example of this. It consists of courses given to doctoral students in 2000–2001, and is a collaboration between ten academic institutions within the *making* professions in four of the Nordic countries. More than 50 PhD students participated in the courses.

Whereas the first two issues of *Research Magazine* map out the knowledge stance of the AHO in the early stages of

its Doctoral Programme, the four latest issues answer the urgent need for a discourse on the development of a *making* discipline *and* on the demand on academia to approach real life problems.

I do look forward to reading *Research Magazine* 7.

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Modtagne bøger

Gitte Marling (ed.):

Bangkok Songlines. Spaces, Territories, Mobility

Department of Architecture & Design
Aalborg University, Denmark
ISSN: 1603-6204

The book focuses on mobility, territories and public domains. Through the narratives of fifteen inhabitants of Bangkok, their songlines and territories are traced over the vast urban landscape of metropolitan Bangkok.

The book provides an insight into the everyday life of Bangkokians, their usage of the urban structure and a diversity of transport systems. It describes various perceptions of architecture, landscape and space in urban areas, uncovering cultural and economic diversity. Based on each narrative and the territory it produces, a concept for a new public domain or publicly accessible urban space is presented.

Lena Villner & Abdellah Abarkan (ed.):

The Four Faces of Architecture – On the Dynamics of Architectural Knowledge

ISBN 91-7178-149-8

Publisher: School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
Language: English

The Four Faces of Architecture was the metaphor chosen for the twentieth annual symposium of the European Association for Architectural Education (EAAE), held in Stockholm and Helsinki in May 2003. This anthology presents developed and updated versions of the keynote lectures and a selection of essays that explores four architectural faces – education, practice, theory and research. A comprehensive introduction provides a frame of reference for the texts.

Poul Bæk Pedersen:
Arkitektur og plan i den danske velfærdsby
1950 – 1990. Container og urbant raster.

Arkitektskolens Forlag. Århus 2005
ISBN 87-90979-18-4

I bogen genskrives den danske arkitektur- og planhistorie fra 1950–1990 ud fra et sammenhængende arkitektur- og byperspektiv. Afsættet er en typologisk forståelse af den danske by, der rummer både den historiske by og de nyere bydele.

Med fokuseringen på det formmæssige, på det to-dimensionelle grundmønster, som forfatteren kalder det urbane raster, og på de tredimensionelle arkitektoniske former, der kaldes byens containere, vises det, hvordan de typologiske valg har bestemt byens rum og kvaliteterne heri.

Ulla Egebjerg og Peter Simonsen (red.):
Byen vejen og landskabet
– Motorveje til fremtiden

Aalborg Universitet, KVL – Center for Skov,
Landskab og Planlægning, Vejdirektoratet 2005
ISBN: 87-7923-815-7

Bogen præsenterer resultaterne af et tværinstitutionelt forskningsprojekt hvis mål har været dels at analysere og perspektivere den by- og landskabsudvikling, der er opstået i forbindelse med milliardinvesteringer i motorvejsbyggeri i Danmark siden 1960'erne; dels at formulere visioner for fremtidige rumlige forløb langs motorvejene.

Bogen er delt i tre dele: Del 1 – Effekter af motorveje – dokumenterer udviklingen i brugen af motorvejen og dens nærarealer. Del 2 – Landskabskunst og hverdagslandskaber – fokuserer på de landskabsarkitektoniske intentioner, der lå til grund for udformning af de danske motorveje og på den faktiske udformning af 3 strækninger. Del 3 – Motorveje til fremtiden – der er udarbejdet i samarbejde med 2 unge arkitektfirmaer, beskæftiger sig med visioner for hvordan byområder omkring motorveje kan udvikles med arkitektonisk kvalitet.

Kristian Larsen (red.):
Arkitektur, Krop og Læring.

Hans Reitzels Forlag. København 2005.
ISBN 87-412-0230-9

I bogen præsenterer en række danske, norske og svenske forskere deres teoretiske og empiriske analyser af samspillet mellem mennesker, omgivelserne og vores bevidste og ubevidste læreprocesser.

Bogens kapitler beskriver ud fra aktuelle og historiske eksempler, hvordan læring, krop og arkitektur spiller sammen i fx børnehaver og skole, i hospitals- og behandlingsmiljøer, i familie- og boligsammenhænge samt i idræts- og fritidslivet. Analyserne er skrevet med inspiration fra bl.a. Pierre Bourdieu og Michel Foucault, samt metoder som oplevelsesanalyse og Space Syntax.