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NORDIC ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH – EDITORS' NOTES

**CLAUS BECH-DANIELSEN, MADELEINE GRANVIK AND
ANNI VARTOLA**

This is the second volume of *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research* since the journal was re-designed and changed into a web-based journal. The first volume had a special theme, «Architectural Competitions» and it was published in the spring 2012. Thus, this is the first volume having articles presenting research on different topics.

We have awaited the response to the change of the journal's status from a printed publication to a web-based journal with eager. We have been excited about whether it would affect the interest of the journal, and whether we would get the same number of articles for publication as before. It was therefore with great pleasure that we as editors have seen a growing interest, and that the number of submitted articles have increased. Also the interest to publish special theme-volumes has increased. This bodes well for the journal's future.

This volume has a limited extent. This is due to the fact, that the thorough review process, which the journal carries out, takes time. All articles must undergo double-blind review, and in this process some articles are rejected, while others gets more or less extensive comments, that the authors have to relate to subsequently. We have a large number of articles in the pipeline, which are expected to be ready for publication in spring 2013, and we expect that there will be submissions for at least two releases a year in the future. Since we also have several theme-volumes in preparation, we will certainly get started in publishing. On the journal's website www.arkitekturforskning.dk one can get an overview of the theme-volumes to come.

This volume contains four articles, that in various ways dealing with urban and building characteristics. They represent different themes, they includes varying emphasis on theory and empirical, and they are submitted from various Nordic countries. They thus constitute a diverse range of work that characterizes architectural research in the Nordic countries.

The first article, written by Berg et al., focuses on «densification». In recent years density has become a key concept in urban development, and many planners promote increased densification as a response to the growing demand on sustainable development of cities. Also densification is presumed to provide a better basis for municipal services and for social interaction in urban areas. In this article densification are discussed mainly from a theoretical point of view. Various densification strategies and meanings in different townscape areas in Swedish cities are pointed out, and the authors suggest a conceptual framework developed from the main concept «Functional Density».

The second article, written by Inge Mette Kirkeby, is based on a qualitative study, which focused on practicing architects' use of research. The study focus on «young architects», meaning architects who have graduated after 1992. Kirkeby concludes that practicing architects do not draw a sharp line between research and practice in their own architectural work. On the other hand, they only pay little attention to research coming from established research institutes. Thus, in the article Kirkeby problematize the fact, that research and practice are conducted as two separate activities.

In the third article, written by Askild Nilsen and Caroline Hägerhäll, the focus is on outdoor play areas in public kindergartens in Oslo. Results from empirical studies show that the proportion of kindergartens with play area per child under the norm has increased over the time period that was being studied in the project. The authors suggest that specific legal requirements are crucial to secure outdoor play space for children attending kindergarten. In the case of having no legal protection, outdoor play areas may not be given the priority in the general competition for land in urban areas.

The last article, written by Bech-Danielsen, has the focus on physical renewal of Danish social housing estates from 1960–1979. Based on results from a research project the author concludes, that physical renovation of these buildings are based on rather precise surveys of technical and social problems, while architectural and spatial problems are formulated imprecisely with general designations. This makes it difficult to develop a targeted architectural effort. The article points out that physical renovation can lead to significant architectural improvements, but it requires basic analyzes that define architectural and planning objectives. Finally the current intentions to future-proof housing settlements are discussed.

As described, this volume of Nordic Journal of Architectural Research is the second since the transition into a web-based journal – and it is the first volume having articles presenting research on different topics since the new editors was appointed. Now both Denmark, Sweden and Finland

are represented in the editorial work, and since the journal is published by SINTEF Academic Press and a wide range of features and practical work with the setup of the journal and the maintenance of the journal's website are located at SINTEF Building and Infrastructure in Norway, all four Scandinavian countries are represented in the work of publishing *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research*.

We hope that the journal arouse interest internationally, and would like to receive comments from readers as well as users. The journal should be used actively by researchers, and we invite all researchers with relations to Nordic architecture to submit articles. Thus, we hope that we can continue to present Nordic Architectural Research at a high scientific level.

11th December 2012

Claus Bech-Danielsen, Madeleine Granvik and Anni Vartola