

SVERRE FEHN: EL LUGAR COMO SOPORTE SVERRE FEHN: THE PLACE AS A SUPPORT

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p.17 Norway has housed ancestral contrasts, after centuries of multisensory relationships amidst farmers, sailors and fishermen that valued the tactile, the dynamism of the routes and the empathy for a warm and intimate atmosphere. Its architects were involved in reinterpreting modernity, giving it subtlety and generating energy even still. Sverre Fehn studied these essences thoroughly, treating places and the landscape with respect. The nuances of his work appear in notes and sketches, available in digital format in the Nasjonalmuseet of Oslo, from his initial impressions of a trip to southern Morocco (the longest and most complete of his writings)¹, encouraged by Jorn Utzon and other friends, published in *Byggekunst* and recently re-issued.

He would return in 1987 with a group of professors and students, an experience described in a conference at the Oslo School of Architecture, with architectural precision and his inexhaustible imagination extended by space and time. He was not the only traveller: Aldo van Eyck travelled between 1947 and 1953 to those lands; his group of friends visited Europe by bicycle, and Jorn Utzon and Arne Korsmo went to the United States and Central America, which left an impression on his works and modern architecture². Through a grant to stay in the studio of Jean Prouvé in Paris, he visited the studio of Le Corbusier, forged impressions of the CIAM and friendships among members of Team 10. His colleagues and disciples in AHO (School of Architecture of Oslo), which Fehn led between 1971 and 1991, are aware of it and his legacy is alive³.

In the journal *Byggekunst*, Fehn referred to how his discovery served a versatile and essential architecture, given that, in his experience of the perceived organisms, "the primitive seems as clear and logical in its structure as nature itself. It is, fortunately, free from all speculation (...). You suddenly feel that the purpose of the walls is not only to support a roof or 'build' a house, but at one time they had been built to create shade, the next to be rest for your back, in autumn they are the shelf for dry dates, in spring the surface on which children draw. All parts of a house are objects of use"⁴.

p.18 Unlike the houses near the desert, endless walls (figure 1a), the mountain houses (figure 1b), placed on a rocky support, with a different system and materials, due to the existing conditions ("adapted for necessity") that explain other actions: "The mountain city is built following the same regional principles of the desert communities. But here, the 'Natural space' is different, and the terrain is rock and stone. This changes its character completely (...). Architecture works towards 'perfection', because it operates in a timeless space. Its signature is 'anonymous', because it is nature itself"⁵.

Ever-present are the exchanges between modern architecture and the Norwegian construction tradition (*byggeskikk*). The structure expresses the potential of the main materials and the places, through a vernacular combination of *stave* and *log* construction: that which is light, transparent and resistant, this, which is massive and closed. Its basic characters are mutually explained by being combined in a dynamic totality. The well know phrase by Fehn to explain his intervention in the Hamar Museum ("one can only dialogue with the past by building in the present"), became synonymous with "what is truly present lies in a new interpretation of the timeless"⁶. In such a reinterpretation, the influence of Arne Korsmo and Knut Knutsen is significant when dealing with what is called "Norwegian consensus", polarised and with inclusion of influences, especially from post-modernism⁷.

Korsmo considered architecture as a personal matter, with a unique character, where he contrasted the nature of objects produced by man. Their relationships, trips, friendships and influence are well documented and give an idea of their size. Knut Knutsen, closer to Arts and Crafts and national romanticism, part of his own vision of nature or vernacular architecture. Both focal points were significant.

Fehn sought universals and in his architecture, he distances himself from anecdotal inclinations. Both from the Norwegian *construction tradition* and like the referred architects, immediate masters, can merge different elements in their *joint vision of the design*. Norberg-Schulz applies distinctions between world, nature, landscape and place, developed when interpreting Louis I. Kahn. The Norwegian critic aims to outline "an architectural language in terms of existential structures and how to understand the process of meeting that makes a building a work of architecture"⁸. There are discrepancies regarding the phenomenological nature of Fehn's practice, as well as evidence regarding the co-existence of rhetorical and graphic methods in his work, which go beyond this study.

p.19 In the plan, there are three phases. First: in to 50s and 60s orthogonal organisations and orthodox modernity (always placing importance on the place: one only has to look at the site plans). Secondly, until the end of 1970, it recuperates structural qualities in its formal definition, culminating in its masterpiece, the Hamar Museum. Third: in the 80's and 90's, in which an important review of Norwegian architecture was carried out, Fehn designed a synthesis with a powerful figurative identity and a precise articulation in the details: (*Villa Busk* in Bamble, in 1990; the *Glaciers Museum* in Faejerland, in 1991) until his last works. Between 1973 and 1992, the reflection forced the giving a coherent method to his work, coinciding with its dissemination on behalf of P. O. Fjeld, C. Norberg-Schulz and his loyal Team 10, confirming his technical and ethic principles from his retirement in AHO to his death (1994-2009).

The residential research into the free floor plan; inseparable form the construction idea, like that of the *Palladian* house in Norrköping (1962), demonstrate ethical discipline and relativity in dealing with the core of the services,

coexisting with the system of objects⁹. In previous projects, like the Johnsrud house in Rikkin, Børum (1970), he inverts the services, placing them near the façade, benefiting the interior space, showing subtle nuances in the measurements, difficult to see in a global vision. These experiences soon lead towards a public dimension¹⁰.

One idea of the assumed activities and character for a given site can be seen in the progression that follows:

The Schreiner House (1963), homage to Japanese architecture, combines gestures of exclusion or introversion (especially in the north façade, of access), achieving a good depth in relation to the living-dining area facing the garden; even the walls – sliding doors – reveal this oriental knowledge appreciated by Korsmo, Kahn and Utzon. His process is similar to what he would carry out in this last one (with a construction system marked from the beginning), except for the qualification processes, that highlight three stages; selection of materials, and procedures to follow; construction system and the finishes, anticipating the use; and reassessment through the movement, preparing the adaptation and the required expression. ("The implication takes concession and resistance, and permeability and exclusion")¹¹. Fehn offers total opacity as the first public image of this house and allows seeing that he can operate in different keys.

This is clearly seen in the houses for the Bødtkers, above all in the series for C. S. Bødtker in Holmenkollen, 1966-1985 (Figure 2). The place is dealt with as *is*; without slope gradients with a horizontal upper wing (garage, entrance, kitchen, bathroom and cellar), a lower and vertical attached block: below are bedrooms; above, the living space; dominated by a revolving nucleus and overhead lighting that do not forget the circulating spaces¹², making the potential of structure and materials and the interior-exterior continuity compatible. When it was extended in 1995, the planning grid turned 45°, moving from interior and exterior in order to achieve an organic set¹³. The critique was inconsistent: K. Frampton appreciated an apparent hesitation, correcting his tone later: "The transforming floor —of the Schreiner and Norrköping houses— are not only coincidentally linked to the contingent situation - a type of super functionalism-. It deals more with the intention to create a flexible space, that continuously changes with respect to the members of the family depending on how each one goes through their life cycle"¹⁴. Norberg-Schulz cites Fehn ("the previously inherent freedom of the great place should be recreated in the interior and exterior") and deems that "it shows the exceptional capability of the author to combine requirements and sensibility"¹⁵, even transcending the modern tradition in a creative way.

In fact, a careful reading of the Palladian houses and the Schreiner, fundamentally the section, shows their relationship. The C.S. Bødtker house also shows the ability to set up in place with minimal intervention through the use of *shelves* and *plateaus* that came from his admiration for the introduction of man in the landscape: climbing the steep slopes, making his way through the thicket to reach a rock and allowing one to admire the landscape and the distant horizon is a very Norwegian feeling. "In smaller projects this platform can be the basis of the entire building. In larger and more complex buildings, Fehn also explores the possibility of placing significant parts of the program under the *platform*"¹⁶. This combination allows dealing with the roof as an expressive factor and light sensor and to direct it according to the importance of the accesses, to make it the essential integrating element in the museums of the 1990s. If we consider the covering system in the pavilions of Brussels and Venice (1962) -especially the timelessness of the latter- can be seen to order a heterogeneity of buildings, leaving the Giardini trees among the thin rafters. This ability to structure the disparity is evident in the projects of the 70s, both in conceptual amplitude and in a poetic reflection¹⁷, with a certain lack of understanding revised today. The competition Project (acquired) for the National Gallery of Tullinløkka in Oslo (1972) is highlighted; an ambitious planning of a good part of the central sector of Oslo, where it confirmed the great heritage buildings and energized the interstitial spaces by means of a clear constructive system where the cross ramps allowed diagonal transits.

MISUNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNITION

Two controversial cases slowed down his trajectory: the incomplete community center of Bøler -difficult to achieve a public character with only one building of the three designed- and the school of Skådalen for deaf children, 1969-1975 (figure 3) -constructed in a natural forest on the outskirts of Oslo-, today a teacher training center. The staggered sequence of buildings housed a relatively complex program: six bedrooms, kitchen-dining room, administration, workshop, observation space and new gymnasium with swimming pool in a restored building. His respectful reference to interventions such as the open-air school of Suresnes (Baudoin & Lods, 1935) or the orphanage in Amsterdam by Van Eyck, from 1960, indicates his harmony with similar international experiences.

In Skådalen there is an exchange between the program and the scale reduction of the buildings, cramming them in with a shoehorn between the trunks of the existing pines and the rocky hills of the place. This approach also makes the project vulnerable: it makes it easy in the future to alter the nuances to place more cars or more garbage containers; that is, respect for the landscape depends on the size and composition of the buildings, as Ola Bettum¹⁸ points out. The plot allowed accommodating and increasing tactile qualities, adjusting to the activities and size of

p.22 the users (low sills, direct views, bright spaces), using materials whose surfaces - brick, concrete and wood - could be associated by their texture to the shapes of each space. Special furniture was designed to prevent static rooms and to be able to move it. The exterior and interior routes facilitated accesses: close to the buildings, with controlled arrivals from public transport, homemade ski slopes and safe areas to promote games between the trees. The whole approach involved new relationships and pedagogical methods for the teachers, so that the architecture was ahead of the conditions of the program.

Fehn explained how he reached the forms, by means of tasks, the density and the relationships with the environment and users: *"The signs of movement on the ground are like architecture that must be preserved. For this reason, the whole complex - the school for deaf children - has been divided into small units, so the details of the vegetation can tell true stories. (...) When people sit and listen to a narrator, the situation creates the semicircle. Of the old man who tells stories under the shade of a tree in the Greek theatre, the freedom of grouping has created the curved wall. (...) Due to their deafness, we should not lose the security of orientation. A glazed atrium was therefore designed, cutting off the meeting space. Architecture honours sign language"*¹⁹.

A devastating headline ("hell of concrete") conditioned his future. Both works were better understood in the international arena, he had to focus on competitions and his work at the Oslo School, intensifying his works with more vigorous figurative qualities and greater organic synthesis.

The Episcopal Museum in Domkirkeodden, Hamar (1967-74 and 1996-2005) deserves a separate chapter. Its implementation (figure 4a) already exhibits the dichotomy between the *structuralist* intervention by Lund & Slaato to cover the remains of the Hamar cathedral with a three-dimensional glazed grid and the *different repetition* of Fehn, a modern museum on layers: medieval remains, walls of the episcopal residence, turned into an agricultural building. *"I perceived, by working on this project, that only through the manifestation of the present could you make the past speak. If you run after it, you will never catch it"*²⁰.

p.23 The routes (walkways and ramps on pillars respectful with the archaeological remains) unify accesses and qualify the different wings, with special clarity on the third floor (figure 4b): north wing for an ethnographic museum; west wing (intermediate), for the Middle Ages; and south wing, auditorium, temporary exhibitions and administration²¹. The tectonics of each wing reveals its secular use, dignifying the museum by means of a laminated wood structure that transfers loads through a dialogue with the reinforced concrete platforms, floor structure, stairs and ramps. The intermediate wing, air-untight, houses the walkway, and there are clear (Paul Nelson and Amancio Williams)²² references. The exhibition arrangement in Carlo Scarpa style, albeit with unprejudiced subtlety, alters the narrative: *"In order for objects to find this space, the architect must reside in objects, like words reside in the soul of the actor"*²³. Their location resurrects them from the museum night not as relics, but as part of the history to which they belong, some closed in small glass boxes; the dialogue with the ruins, inside and outside the building, is even more eloquent. Initiated the process, the successive findings lead to specific interventions (figure 4c): the courtyard dominated by the unifying ramp of the exhibition takes on the character of a cloister, leaving the remains in the land to highlight the notion of time and marked growth.

The echo of this, his masterpiece, influenced Nordic architecture, in different stages, by spatializing time from stable vernacular types, revising the perspective visual space and the resulting rupture between subject and object, even overcoming the split between thought and feeling, a principle of Arne Korsmo. In these stages, the founding principles of modernity were respected, through the open plan and the open form, and new design options were also opened. Fehn's operating way had been to formulate a unitary, a preliminary vision that fused qualities of the place and the program, from which the project²⁴ evolved. It is not surprising that he mixes different elements following the Norwegian constructive tradition and the contingency of the medium. Uncovering the possibility, a mixture of time and body empathy (hapticity) it would be extended. The debate on the place would take on a different aspect: taken for granted in the consideration of *genius loci*, according to Norberg-Schulz (1979), or restated by accepting the relevance of context as a response to what was considered a fragile architecture - by Ignasi de Solà-Morales in 2003 and by Pallasmaa in 2000²⁵-, channelling the reconsideration of pre-existences, to which the architecture has to respond, rather than with a blind acceptance, with the observation of roots, guidelines and constancy that must be reinterpreted, subtly or pondering the limits of their disagreement.

p.24 THE CONFRONTATION WITH THE PLACE
Fehn can be understood from the details from those closest to him: *"Fehn himself defines the correspondence between his buildings and its placement in nature as a confrontation: that should not be understood as violence or denial, but as a significant opposition in which construction and nature unite dialectically in a totality that is something more than the sum of its parts"*²⁶.

Ola Bettum is direct when explaining the Norwegian singularity when faced with landscape: the hard fight against the environment and the rocks, together with spectacular views, makes it easy to squander the nearby qualities of the small scale. This relationship between landscape and construction is born out of an ambiguity between *resistance and mutual play*. Both the large scale and the concrete site put up a resistance to cultivation and construction. *The split vision*, a concept developed by Aasmund Olavsson Vinje and Ivar Aasen, and an essential component of Norwegian authenticity, has implications for architecture: *"Doubt and ambiguity easily lead to confusion and inconsistency. The encounter between landscape and building is optimal when the resistance of the place has become inspiration, so that*

*the place and the program act together, producing unexpected qualities"*²⁷. Fehn's proverbial ability to come up with ideas and size his buildings in the harsh and tangled Norwegian landscape, both in the basic idea and in the details, developed meanings when such a "split vision" found resistance from the place to the building program. For Fehn, the program should not exceed the natural provisions of the site and both the topography and the position of the trees mattered.

This meeting sets guidelines in the creative process. Technology challenges the slow, analogical process of developing a project from a program, landscape and place. In a digital world, the craftsmanship of architecture and construction are under pressure in a reality where the ambiguities of Vinje and Aasen struggle to make room. The process began as a benign reaction in the Otterlo Congress, in 1959, where the "structuralists" were interested in the repetition of standardized units. Although the issue was to order chaos in a changing world, terms such as "structure" and "identity" and other additions ("pattern", "system") were considered part of the same lexicon²⁸. Here they define attitudes of reaffirmation or distancing of the modern project, revealing in the eighties and nineties a series of flaws in the architecture of the Norwegian consensus, sensibly pointed out in 1986 by K. O. Ellefsen²⁹, who distinguishes six trends in which the position and project operations of Fehn remain in context:

(a) *An official expression* where postmodern methods are filtered in a pragmatic architecture; (b) *High-tech architecture*, which applies resources of glass architecture and its aesthetics; (c) *Poetic modernism*, which delves into the content and simplifies effects through modern aesthetics: developed by Sverre Fehn, including the work of Arne Korsmo and his desire to *"unite the logical and the poetic in architecture"*; (d) *Regional and organic architecture* linked to the Knutsen tradition, with renewed interest, incorporating vague working methods, as an alternative to worldly and commercial architecture, and deep studies of the local community towards free, sculptural forms, with simple technology; (e) *A conscious inclusive rupture* of the postmodern as architectural style representing a desire to bridge the gap between elitist architecture and general taste (Jan Digerud and Jon Lundberg pioneered an aesthetic postmodernism in Scandinavia with some small but exquisite works by the end of the seventies, also the intricate constructivism of Bla Strek in Tromsø, inspired by the daily conditions of the polar community of which they are a part, and since 1986 other emerging studies, inspired by a lyrical deconstructivism, such as Snøhetta); and (f) *A trend called architecture and day-to-day ideals*, whose projects consider nature and landscape, also what has already been built, as a quiet rational architecture "that should always be there", essential to form the city that should not have the character of particular collective symbols. Years later, this last category seemed both a desired Ellefsen recommendation and a distinctive trend, fused with the first category.

Professor Tostrup reuses the strategies³⁰ in another context and in three large groups: *novelty, identity and integrity*. This plurality represented a growing continuity of the modern consensus and corresponded to a heterogeneous society with another emphasis on the figurative aspect of architecture. Only part of this plurality is reflected in architecture, as is also the case with the previous "consensus architecture".

AN EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY

The operations of Sverre Fehn can be followed through some works:

I. *Similar appearance, content transmutation: Elverum and Copenhagen*

If we observe the project of the Forest Museum in Elverum, 1965-66 (figure 5a), next to the longest watercourse in the country, we appreciate a sequence of pillars (reminiscent of the trees that were once dragged downstream to Oslo). The museum design recalls this ancestral activity by means of two platforms on both sides of the sequence of columns on which two semi-vaults would rest to collect rainwater, waters collected in a channel that ran through the entire museum until reaching the river³¹.

This configuration of an intermediate element, unifying the proposed image, reappears in the competition for the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen in 1996, where the intermediate street of several existing buildings is transformed into a lobby with great transparency (figure 5b). Dissimilar contexts and times: a rural area, another urban; the intermediate element, a mere ornament in the Forest Museum, is readapted and transmuted into the proposal for the Royal Theatre in a unifying lobby of all the fabric, transforming the immediate buildings, their character, even the global image of such an important area for Copenhagen like Kongens Nytorv. Studying Fehn today implies dealing with his global evolution, since the spark in active disciples is greater than suspected.

II. *Polluted bubble and overcoming the orthogonal: Ode to Osaka*

Some works were ahead of their time. Dismissed at the time, they ended up being built recently, as it happened with the one designed for the Nordic Pavilion of the Osaka Fair of 1970. The continent (without content?), designed by the Danish architect Bent Severin, with a restaurant and exhibition space, under the slogan "Protection of the environment in an industrialized society", should be complemented by the exhibition itself. Fehn wanted to provide a protected atmosphere, without pollution, clean, through an inflatable installation by impulsion (figures 6a and 6b). It was not until 2015 that a replica was built at the Oslo Museum of Architecture, when the Manthey Kula studio (figure 6c) carried out this work to scale³². Perceived *in situ*, the installation offered a set of transparencies, lights and shadows, changing with the day and points of view, and a direct relationship with the visitor. Its movement resembled that of a lung. According to the authors, it was necessary to cut out several pieces and adjust them, which makes us think of the master when comparing how a sail is made, whose cut pieces at the end could cover a cathedral. Numerous investigations are open to the future from seemingly hasty sketches.

III. *Synthetic ambiguity: split vision or fusion of elements? A museum in Røros*

In the Mining Museum in Røros (1979-80), the allusion of Norberg-Schulz to Heidegger³³, applicable to projects of the eighties and earlier, becomes literal: a complete, precise, concise work. With themes of his entire career, such as the journey, the rigging, the vessel and the bridge (figure 7), lead to a synthesis from which he can take up his ideas again with renewed vigour, as if advancing his projects of the nineties. "As a structure the bridge allows an understanding of the totality: it indicates where and how the objects will be placed (on the diagonal), the dividing wall also guides the intensity of the light, by mixing the one that enters the roof with the one reflected from the lateral eaves"³⁴.

This museum is a song to overcoming obstacles: the insecurity of a void becomes a sensor of light from the eaves of the roof. The split vision shows itself with subtlety: what looks like a threshold is the end of a journey, what seems as destiny is a viewpoint, what seems to divide, actually gathers.

IV. *Architecture at the scale of natural phenomena: Verdens Ende and Fjaerland*

Near his house of Hvasser he proposed a gallery and viewpoint design in a place called Verdens Ende -the End of the World- (1988) that advances, on a small scale, the power of the place where he would build the *Glaciers Museum* in Fjaerland. The space of a crevice between crags, open in glacial erosion, is occupied with gestures of megalithic construction; the hidden slit obstructs and lets the light pass, proposes to pierce the rock under the road occasionally and to build bridges in the upper level joining both sides of the eroded rock. As in the previous case, archetypes and polarities coexist (cavern / horizon, earth / sky and its correlated light / shadow). Once the place has been selected, it aspires to be set aside metaphorically and let "the construction be done by itself"³⁵, even hiding the construction under the rock.

It advocates immediately praised and published works: the *Villa Busk* at Bamble (1990) and the *Glaciers Museum* in Fjaerland (1991), where he applies the dynamic juxtaposition already mentioned. The first joins simple forms and elements (corridor, veranda, porch, walkway, deck and tower), in a privileged location as a dream promised to the owner's daughter and with an evident empathy between clients and architect. Already in the experimental house Eternit (1964) Fehn already exposed with multiple sections the relation with the immediate surroundings, next to the topographic depth shown from the House C. S. Bødtker in different floors, and that still manifests shortly after in the project of the *Waterways Museum at Suldal* (1993).

The modesty of the *Glaciers Museum* in Fjaerland (1989-91) silences a warning: "Our future depends on the conditions of our obsolescent sky. The atmosphere that we have breathed over the centuries hides its data under the icy masses of glaciers"³⁶. The scale can be read in two ways: from the fjord and the banks facing the mountains (Supphellebreen, Bøyabreen and the channel between them), or interpreting that course from the upper plateaus (Flatbreen). It changes the perception of the museum, which is perceived as a fragment of ice or rock that would have been dragged from the glacier, or as an observation terrace that would help make the invisible visible, by allowing us to pass through the fog and focus on the graphic memory its external form and the memory of the heat of its interior when moving away (Figure 8a).

In the first case, when we look at the mountains, the starting point is the museum; in the second, if we observe the fjord from the plateau, the starting point will be the mountain range and its glaciers. Located in front of the Jostedalbreen, the most extensive glacier in continental Europe, which has rubbed the rocky base for millennia to form the same fjord, we feel fragility and danger. That riverbank with densified wooden houses next to the Sogne Fjord was ice at one time. In the floor plan (Figure 8b), a simple elongated rectangle, highlight three sectors: observation stairs, panoramic auditorium and oblique glass enclosure of the cafeteria, and the clear and transparent interior covered with wood. A small scientific center explains the principles of formation of glaciers and their beauty. Perhaps, the real museum is on the outside, "a room within the room, and -a space within the space-" Fehn tells us in his sketch (Figure 8c).

V. *The thickness of the boundary: from Larvik to Alvdal*

One of the subjects to which K. Frampton refers to when studying Fehn / Fjeld (The thought of construction) is the consideration of the horizon, of the limits (*that begin where they become present*). Comparing here the project for the Larvik cemetery with the model for the Kjell Aukrust center in Alvdal (1993-96), one feels that the boundary line between interior and exterior, between this side of the plantation area and the inhospitable north, has become more rugged. In the models we see something that reminds us of the Nordic Pavilion in Venice: a reflective depth that will not go beyond the wall. In Alvdal the perspectives have multiplied - as can be seen in the orientations of the south façade (Figure 9a) - and it already has the same character as the cultural museums projected in the nineties.

The Kjell Aukrust center of Alvdal was solved when recognizing the presence of a plateau and setting several pillars sheathed in wood in a line in the landscape - to differentiate volume and mass - with respect to the distant valley. The building separates the new and old Alvdal: the center houses the drawings of an artist in his community of origin, who has to choose between local agriculture and small industry to the north and the traffic towards it. The cornfields contrast like an ocean against the elevated base of stone, necessary against possible flooding of the Glemma River, and mark the seasonal cycle between spring planting and the harvest in autumn. With the simplicity of a plank resting on a wall, Fehn solves the building (Figure 9b): two elongated spaces, on both sides of a structural and service wall that differentiates both sectors (exhibition and exterior views, with irregular closing, and spaces for

temporary exhibitions), leaving an auditorium at one end. The North-South opposition has its equivalent in the different cover treatment.

VI. *Natural absolutes, intangible architectures*

Two cultural projects, the Cultural Center and the Bronze Age Engravings, in Borge (Figure 10a), plus the Information Center of the Borre National Park (Figures 10b and 10c), both from 1993, show the change of direction in his final works. The buildings are now an extension of the landscape and they are expected to be almost unnoticeable. In Borge, the memory of John Hejduk's ideas about the mask can be seen in the sections, the surface of the land becomes covered with a public image, leaving a protected space, whose image is intimate - homage to the mountain - with "pillars" in V form for a double function -expositive niches and directionality of views-. In Borre, the Viking burial mounds, inspiring of several Nordic architects, subtly indicate guidelines and project orientation for the constructions, furrows through which the light filters to illuminate the underground long ramps. A great elegance, leaving a background in the memory that tells of a long journey.

VII. *The depth of the hillside: Inscrutable is life...*

The Ivan Aasen Tunet/ Centre (1996-2000) on the hill above Hovdebygda, in Ørsta, was the last project in which Fehn "would personally extend the limits of his creative capacity to develop a building from start to finish"³⁷. It recalls the configurator of the *ny norsk grammar* (New Norwegian). A farm road near the museum/ center; wavy, to look for the minimum slope, producing in turn a dramatic perspective. The ancestral paths incite a view to the valley, through a wide-open horizontal strip in the mountain (figure 11a), to accommodate the program and give a base to several articulated volumes with variable section (figure 11b). That centre encourages discovery: Aasen's possessions and library in boxes stacked in pyramid shape, ritual, contrasting with the audience and questions open to the visitor - why the information panel is seen only at the entrance, why a desk appears vertically in a room, why there are some cat paw-prints on the lower floor; even the initial sketches, a quick note representing the pages of a book, whose echoes are in the final section. The building is flooded with light in every corner and the singularity of its forms reaffirms a process of identity with the place.

Aasen and Fehn shared the idea of reaching all Norwegian people. The outdoor theatre, on the steep slope, combines diversity and play, with organized or spontaneous meetings, such as those of the seasonal mushroom pickers, a contrast with the old red houses covered in peat, in a narrative relationship with nature and the past, the present and the future.

When Sverre Fehn passed away, his actuality was discussed in a hurried dialogue: "*Something that is easily forgotten because of its obviousness is the tremendous impact he had on the way we look at the landscape, and on our understanding of nature*"³⁸. The sequence of design paradigms that have targeted those closest to him is, in our experience, a freer way to interpret the notebooks that Sverre Fehn always left open. Today the National Tourist Routes welcome the *know-how* of renowned and emergent architects: a museum about the co-existence of architecture and landscape.

In conclusion, Fehn discovers that solving multiple problems can be done in place if judiciously observed. An important lesson lies in the encounter of difficulties (sky, earth, light, sounds, views and vegetation), which require time for their consideration or exclusion. Therefore, we must shift the focus towards a creative exchange where architecture reconsiders spaces and times, allowing it to assume the resistances of place and landscape.

The almost immediate recognition of the work of Sverre Fehn did not come with commissions that would have channelled his talent towards even more transcendental works. He matured his design strategies through a demanding introspection, merging into hybrid proposals the structures of vernacular architecture -*stave* and *log* construction - and a respect for the procedures of modern architecture. His resources are based on the subtle use of architectural elements, operations derived from natural experiences (such as construction on shelf and plateau, very much appreciated when recognizing it in the possibilities of the Norwegian landscape), a rethinking of the functions of time in spatial interventions (unforgettable in Domkirkodden, Hamar) and the continued analysis and with integrity deal with conflicting situations.

Works like Fehn's keep the debate about the place open. With time, the distance between the origin of his works -the situation offered by the landscape and the places- and his final destination -structures whose program respects the environment- was shortened: Fehn seemed to transform nature into naturalness. His buildings, located as intermediary entities between the earth and the sky - full of fog -, always strive towards light. Overcoming the concern for the horizon, the game of the scales seems to interchange: the absolute forces of nature appear transformed into a stone next to the fjord, the row of trees becomes transparent, turned into the backbone of culture, the continuous roofs topping matt-buildings are arranged to climb and respect the mountain. An ancestral past became actuality through a deep respect for what was witnessed. ■

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3. NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian; POSTIGLIONE, Gennaro. *Sverre Fehn. Opera Completa*. Milán: Electa, 1997. NORRI, Marja-Ritta; KÄRKKÄINEN, Maija, eds. *Sverre Fehn. The poetry of the straight line*. Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1992, pp. 45-51.
4. "I find, and I am in what I find. (...) And suddenly a new world existed (...) how "inside" and "outside" were composed, how the "natural space" was the main theme in the design of houses and urban communities". FEHN, Sverre. *Marokansk Primitiv Arkitektur* (Moroccan Primitive Architecture). Facsimile of *Byggekunst*, 1952, n.º 5. In: Ingerid Helsing ALMAAS, ed. *Sverre Fehn. Projects and reflections*. Oslo: Arkitektur N. *The Norwegian Review of Architecture*, n.º 7, 2009, pp. 48-55.
5. Ídem.
6. NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian. Une vision poétique. En: *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. París, junio 1993, n.º 273.
7. TOSTRUP, E. *Architecture and Rhetoric. Text and Design in Architectural Competitions*. Londres: Papadakis, 1999.
8. NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian; DIGERUD, J. G., collaborator. *Louis I. Kahn, idea e imagen*. Madrid: Xarait editions, 1981. ISBN: 8485434145, pp.19-23. Norberg-Schulz resorts to Heidegger to first define what inhabited space is: "The building (settlement) becomes one thing when it reunites the world". And then clarify the differences between nature, landscape and place. In his own words: "An inhabited landscape obviously comprises both natural entities and entities that are the work of man. For this to be clearly seen, the term, inhabited landscape can be replaced by the word place, with more generic meaning, while landscape will be used to indicate the natural aspects of a place." Both in the study of the work of Louis I. Kahn and in *Genius loci*, his approach is phenomenological. P. O. Fjeld, in a published conversation (in MCQUILLAN, Thomas, After Fehn, A + U, 2009, p.86), clarifies that Fehn's approach was never phenomenological.
9. LIE, Tanja. The Word Thief. Per Olaf Fjeld on the words of Sverre Fehn. En I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, nota 4, pp. 64-67. Dice P. O. Fjeld: "Architecture is not only related with human being but also to space; it also deals with the object. This is very clear in his exhibition projects, in how he cares for the objects and he assigns spaces, like the Hedmark museum. But the object is very much present in his semi-detached houses. The best example is Norrköping house where there is a direct and mutual game between the daily objects and the surrounding spaces. The inhabitants and the objects. The table is there, the bed and the chair. They have thier place".
10. FJELD, Per Olaf. *Sverre Fehn. The thought of construction*. Nueva York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1983, pp. 24, 26. Fehn wanted to express in words the dilemma of a lost innocence: expresar en palabras el dilema de una inocencia perdida: "... the house had a function, a meaning. The exterior space and the space of the house were part of the same dialogue. The house belonged to the land. Its location was the result of a constructive thought. This thought was part of nature. (...) When culture developed, man separated from nature (...). The house was separated from earthly activities and as a result his restlessness of man, made the house dependent on the geography. The house became a foreign element since it did not have any practical finality. Its life was no longer linked to survival and support of the collective (...). Nature was reduced to visual beauty".
11. BYGGEKUNST, 1964, n.º 8. LEATHERBARROW, David. A detail of the World. En: I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, notes 4, pp. 32-35.
12. NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian. *Modern Norwegian Architecture*. Oslo: Norwegian University Press, Gjøvik 1986, pp. 117-119. ISBN 8200076962.
13. FEHN, Sverre. Villa Carl Sejersted Bødtker I y II. In: *Byggekunst*, 1986, n.º 4-5, pp. 246-256.
14. FRAMPTON, Kenneth. Il pensiero costruttivo. In: C. NORBERG-SCHULZ; G. POSTIGLIONE, op. cit. supra, notes 3, p. 254.
15. NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian. *Modern Norwegian Architecture*. Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1986, p. 117. ISBN 8200076962.
16. BETTUM, Ola. Resistance and interplay. The landscape dimension in the architecture of Sverre Fehn. In: I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, note 4, pp. 88-89.
17. ELLEFSEN, Karl Otto. Una corrente di modernismo poetico. In C. NORBERG-SCHULZ; G. POSTIGLIONE, op. cit. supra, notes 3, p. 260. Ellefsen singles out the work of Fehn for his ability to lose himself in the project and give it intellectual substance, in the idea of Arne Korsmo, logical and poetic unity. See further on for his analysis of Norwegian architectural trends in the 80s and 90s, which hold significance today.
18. BETTUM, Ola. Resistance and interplay. The landscape dimension in the architecture of Sverre Fehn. En: I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, nota 4, pp. 88-89.
19. FEHN, Sverre. La scuola del silenzio. Skådalen school of the deaf. In: P. O. FJELD, op. cit. supra, notes 1, p. 148 [re-produces the text initially published by Fehn in *Spazio è Società*, n.º 13, March 1981, pp. 4-15].
20. FEHN, Sverre. "Todo hombre es un arquitecto". Acceptance speech for Pritzker awards ceremony 1997. In: I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, notes 4, pp. 56-57.
21. NORRI, Marja-Ritta; KÄRKKÄINEN, Maija, eds., op. cit. supra, notes 3, pp. 16-21. LÓPEZ DE LA CRUZ, Juan José. Tiempo y Construcción. La intervención de Sverre Fehn en la granja de Hamar. In: *En Blanco. Revista de arquitectura*. Valencia, April 2016, n.º 20, pp. 42-49. ISSN 1888-5616. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4995/eb.2016.5254>.
22. FRAMPTON, K. Il pensiero costruttivo. En: C. NORBERG-SCHULZ; G. POSTIGLIONE, op. cit. supra, notes 3, p. 255. TÁRRAGO-MINGO, Jorge. La Maison Suspendue (1935-1979). En: *Proyecto, progreso, arquitectura*. Prácticas domésticas contemporáneas. Sevilla: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, mayo 2017, n.º 16. ISSN 2171-6897. ISSN-e 2173-1616. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12785/ppa2017.i16.03>. MORENO MORENO, María Pura; SANZ ALARCÓN, Juan Pedro. Sinergias entre pintura y arquitectura en el aprendizaje de Paul Nelson: "Maison suspendue". En: *EGA. Expresión Gráfica Arquitectónica*. Valencia: Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, octubre 2015, n.º 26, pp. 170-179. ISSN 2254-6103. DOI: [10.4995/ega.2015.4050](http://dx.doi.org/10.4995/ega.2015.4050).
23. FEHN, Sverre. Fragments of a museum and two exhibitions. En: *Byggekunst*, 1982, n.º 4.
24. GRÖNVOLD, Ulf. Le linee di Sverre Fehn ("Linjer hos Fehn"). En: C. NORBERG-SCHULZ; G. POSTIGLIONE, op. cit. supra, nota 3, pp. 258-260. [Re-produces what was published in *Byggekunst*, 1984, n.º 1]
25. De SOLÁ-MORALES, Ignasi. *Diferencias: topografía de la arquitectura contemporánea*. Barcelona: Ed. Gustavo Gili, 2003; NORBERG-SCHULZ, Christian. *Genius Loci. Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. Nueva York: Rizzoli, 1979. ISBN 9780847802876; PALLASMAA, Juhani. Hapticity and time. Notes on fragile architecture. En: Juhani PALLASMAA; ed. a cargo de Peter MACKEITH. *Encounters: Architectural Essays*. Helsinki: Rakennustieto Publishing, volumen I, pp. 320-333.
26. NORBERG-SCHULZ, C., op. cit. supra, nota 6, p. 44. Clarifies in a conversation with Almaas, differentiating of refining or harmony "clearly due to the buildings (...) originally given by the climate, light, fog, rain. See ALMAAS, Ingerid Helsing: *Norway. A guide to recent Modern Architecture*. London: Batsford, 2002. ISBN 0713487828.
27. BETTUM, Ola. Resistance and interplay. The landscape dimension in the architecture of Sverre Fehn. En: I. H. ALMAAS, ed., op. cit. supra, nota 4, p. 88.
28. TOSTRUP, E., op. cit. supra, notes 7, pp. 83-85. LUND, Nils-Ole. *Nordic Architecture*. Aarhus: Arkitektens Forlag, 2008, pp. 36-49. ISBN 8774072587.
29. ELLEFSEN, Karl Otto. Tendenser i norsk arkitektur 1986: sprekker i den norske enigheten. En: *Byggekunst*, 1986, 68, n.º 7.
30. TOSTRUP, E., op. cit. supra, notes 7, pp. 78-82. The experience of the author in ILA&UD, directed by G. De Carlo, was developed in teams that included colleagues from Oslo School of Architecture, belonging to groups (c), (d) and (e), according to the aforementioned classification cited by Ellefsen: Fjeld, Jan Digerud and E. Dahle. Despite the nuances, it cannot be confirmed that the essence of the modern was ever lost.
31. FEHN, Sverre. Norsk skogbruksmuseum. En: *Byggekunst*, 1984, n.º 1, pp. 26-27.
32. *Ode to Osaka* informed in various formats. The most exhaustive at <http://www.mantheykula.no/>
33. HEIDEGGER, Martin. *Construir, habitar, pensar*. Translation by Eustaquio Barjau. Barcelona: Ediciones del Serbal editions 1994.
34. FJELD, P. O., op. cit. supra, note 1, p. 131.
35. *Byggekunst*, 1992, n.º 2, pp. 100-103.
36. NORRI, Marja-Riitta. Registro helado. Museo de los Glaciares, Fjaerland. En: *Arquitectura Viva*, September-October 1993, n.º 32, pp. 14-21. ISSN 0214-1256.

37. FJELD, P. O. op. cit. supra, notes 1, p. 260: "Fehn seemed to expand in all his old spatial images while at the same time rejecting them. Each element of his authorship is here, remixing or leaving them in provocative combinations. Each section of the building has an individual identity: its formal expression has never been so active. The museum transmits a personal vocabulary created for this place and a language of design taken from early sources of inspiration".

38. MCQUILLAN, Thomas. After Fehn. En: A+U, 2009, n.º 469, p. 86. Dialogue established with Carl-Viggo Holmebakk, Knut Hjeltnes and Per Olaf Fjeld. The answers included are from Hjeltnes that made a comment on the economic term (as administration of the home) and ecological resonance, and from Per Olaf Fjeld clarifying that Fehn did not indulge on phenomenology.