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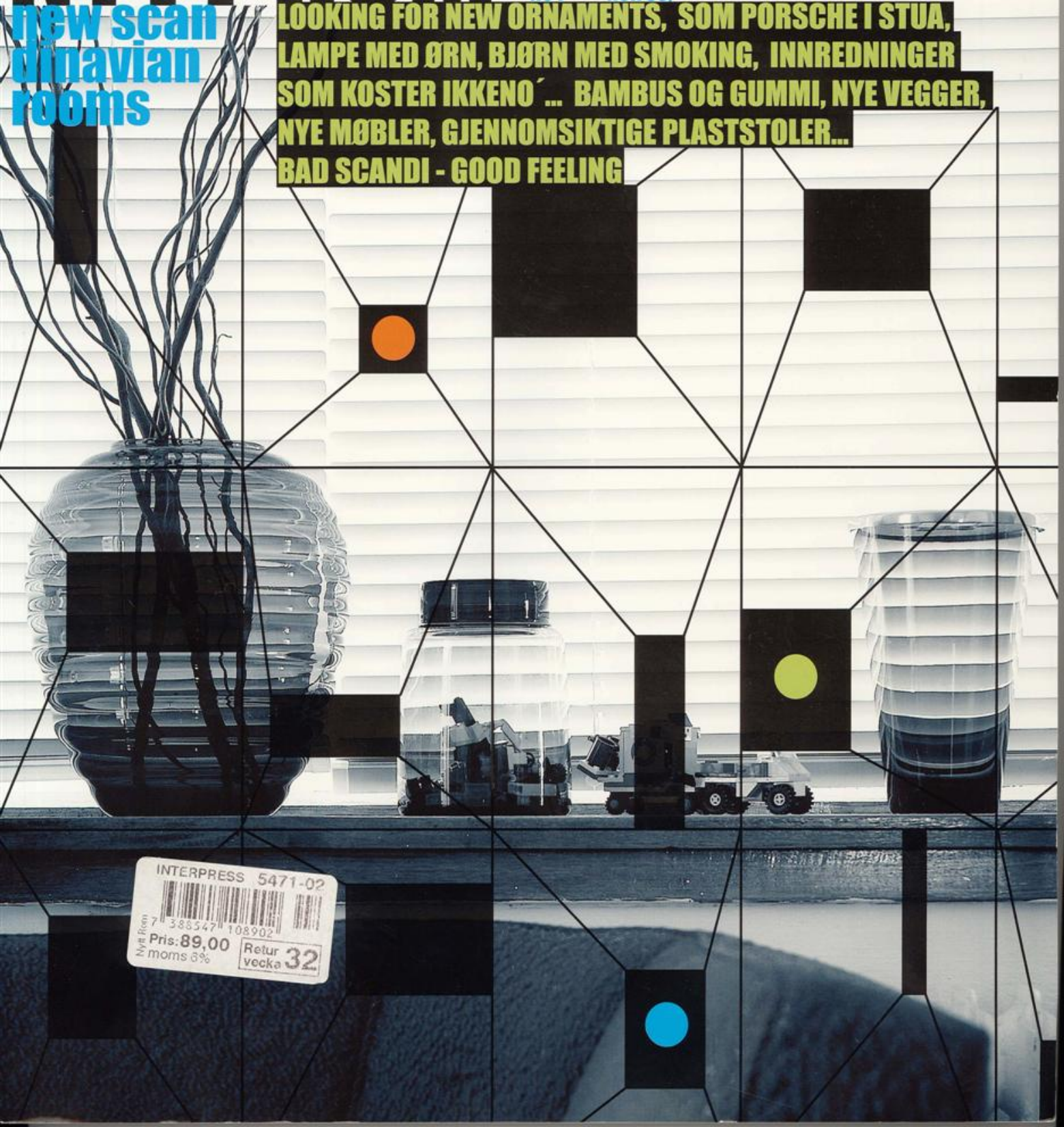

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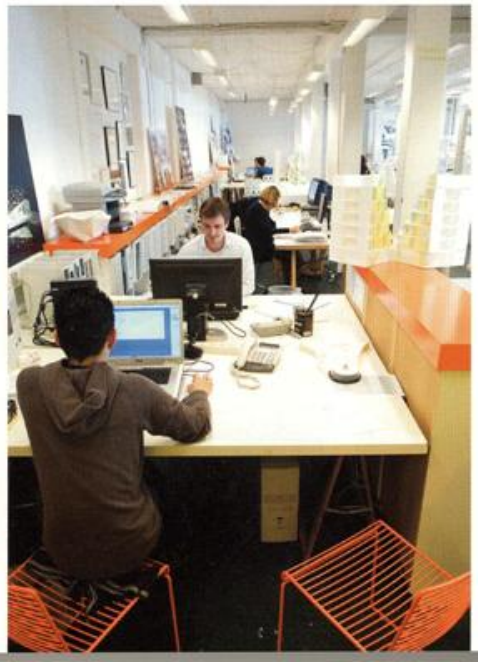
## JDS/JULIEN DE SMEDT ARCHITECTS

Foto: Espen Grønli (fra tegnestuen)

I Vesterbrogade i København, i bakhuset i gården, styrer Julien De Smedt noen titalls unge kreative. Arkitektkontoret disponerer 800 kvadratmeter over tre plan i det gamle teglsteinshuset. Her sitter det designere, illustratører og arkitekter fra 17 land, de fleste ganske unge. Vi blir loset inn mellom modeller og materialprøver til noe som ser ut til å være Juliens kontor bak en gul og transparent plastvegg; en sånn vegg som vanligvis deler soner på et fryselager. Han vil helst posere foran et maleri av en belgisk bekjent, en tidligere tagger og graffitikunstner. JDS Architects er halvparten av det splittede suksesskontoret Plot (med Bjarke Ingels) som blant annet tegnet havnebadet på Islands Brygge, sjøspeiderhuset på Amager Strandvej og den nyoppførte psykiatriske avdelingen i Helsingør. Nå har Julien satt ny kurs med egen stab. Vi er der for å snoke etter ny arkitektur og nye ornamenter. Vi fant nye tanker i alle skalaer; fra de små bollene/fatene de har designet for Muuto til et over tusen meter høyt hus de tegner på i Kina



**About Julien**

Hot for Julien/JDS Arch. right now: We're developing projects that span from interactive media installations relative to the experience and scale of space to the design of a vertical city of 1100 meters of high and over 1,5 million M2.
Important elements in your apartment: The apartment has 3 levels and the stair is filled with art and pictures from friends and family...
Favorite Copenhagen: Rundetaarn,
The best building in the world (all times, all over): Sheats-Goldstein residence, LA by John Lautner.
Which other architects or designers do you find interesting: There's so many... but especially some artists dealing with urban space in different ways: Zeus... Olafur Eliasson.

**About the Studio**

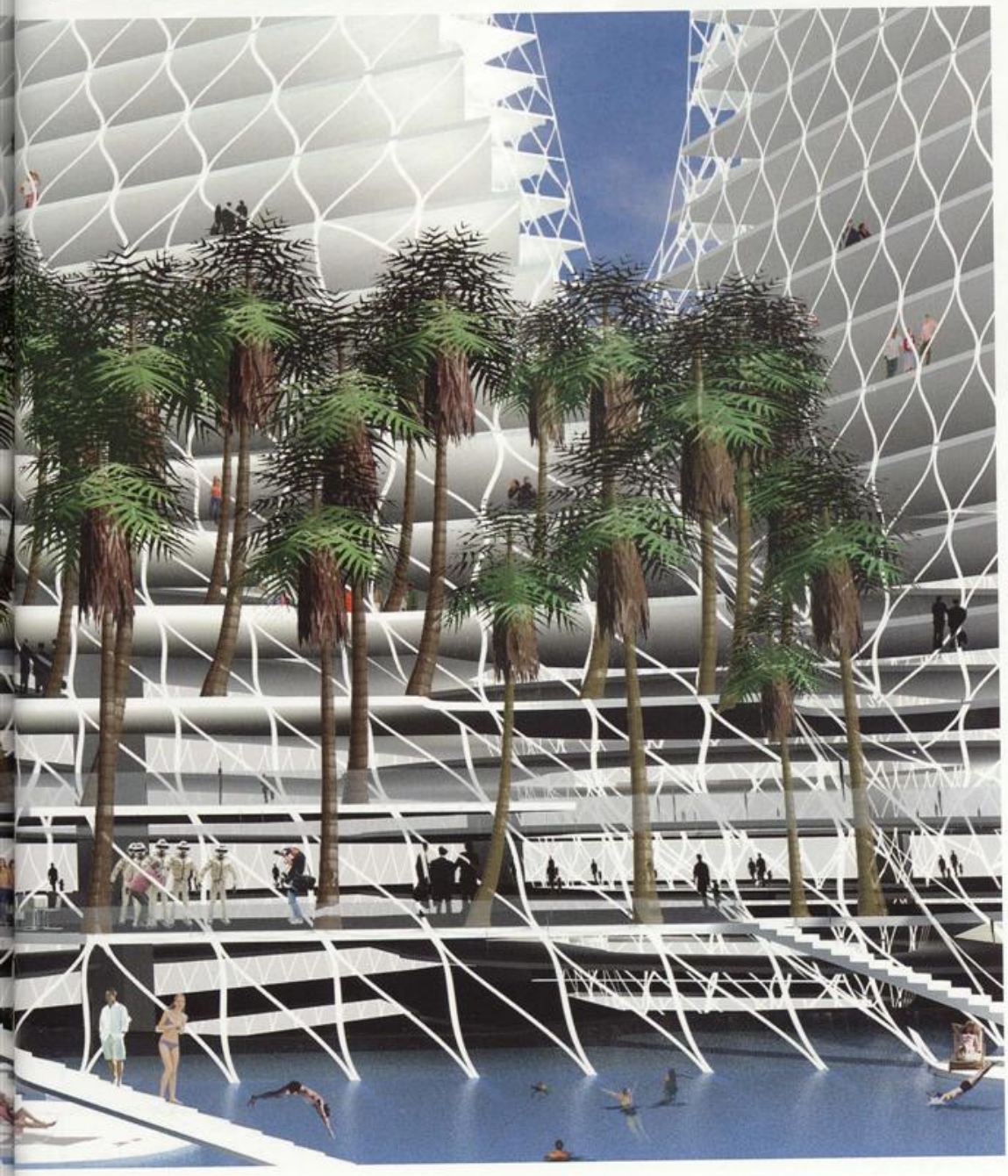
How many, what kind of people, location: We're around 40... our team is VERY colorfull... we have 17 different nationalities. The average age is young... around 30...
What is the Studios pre: Our speciality (and strength) is NOT to be specialised...
The Studios philosophy/politics/main thoughts: Is under construction.

**About architecture**

Which new materials will be important in the following years: Liquid metal... invented in Terminator 2... it can do pretty much everything...
What kind of thoughts/concerns will be important: Environmental issues linked to political action.
What is "the new ornaments": In the proliferation of ornaments that we're currently going through I'd rather pleed for a return to more spartan aesthetics... I think nature patterns and vegetation growing are one way to avoid the issue...
What will a private house look like in 30 years: It will have no foundations and be supported by floaters that will allow it to be amphibian...
... and what´s inside the house: A swiss knife.

**PROJECT: MONDRI AND ELANO HOTEL**
LOCATION: LAS VEGAS, USA
SIZE: 200,000 M2
TYPE: INVITED COMPETITION
STATUS: SETTLED
CLIENT: MORGAN'S HOTEL GROUP
COLLABORATORS: ARUP, HZ, OLAFUR ELIASSON

How do we make a hotel of genuine experiences in Las Vegas, the City of Pastiche? How do we extract the identity of the Mondrian and the Delano Hotels without producing copycat versions? How do we maximize the benefits of a large-scale complex without losing the identity and individual logistics of its parts? How do we address a mass audience while retaining the exclusivity required by a long tradition of groundbreaking hotels? And finally, how do we create the "Small and Intimate" when the program is huge and imposing? We studied the Mondrian and Delano Hotels with the aim to extract core elements of their identities. Rather than falling for their success, we tried to encircle where they could fail in the event of a Las Vegas relocation. What makes these two hotels different and what connects them? We have reproduced the essence of the hotel experience and thereby attempted to introduce a genuine experience of Las Vegas to Las Vegas.



**JDS ARCHITECTS**

**THE BIG STRUGGLE**

Babel, Metropolis, Blade runner, the 5th element...
The future should be vertical.
Bigger, taller... size does matter.
Size is an ongoing architect's wet dream. In an architect's world the term vertical city is cliché. We (architects, film makers, cartoonists, writers...) all once had that phantasm of creating a vertical urbanism.
Rare are the great architects who haven't contributed to this obsession.

Not so long ago we, at JDS Architects, were asked to do a piece of city in Shenzhen, China. Shenzhen is the factory equivalent to Hong Kong. Shenzhen is mainland, historically Chinese, and an urban center with an impressive quantity of production facilities; like in many parts of China, the so-called 'factory of the world'. But for Shenzhen it's about to change: This year it opens a bridge to Hong Kong. This new link will transform the business and therefore living conditions of the region: companies will relocate to the mainland now so easily accessible and erect headquarters on more affordable grounds (current real estate in Hong Kong goes up to 20 times the cost of mainland values). Following these speculations we were asked to design a new urban quarter in Shenzhen.
It had to be 2.5 million square meters.
It had to be 666 meter tall.
And/or 888 meter tall.
Actually, it should really be 1111 meter tall.
And twisted.
Feng Shui, that is.
Those terms and conditions are rather abstract, for western, science infused, architects like we are.
The specificity of those requirements didn't really matter. All they revealed was that it had to be big!

There's a strange way about working on big things for the sake of them being big. It's not the scale in itself that's interesting, rather the possibilities it unleashes. But the scale confuses the stake: Is it about making the biggest building ever or understanding that at such a scale it is no longer about designing a building but really an entire city? We did quite a few wasted attempts until we realized that the task wasn't about fitting the surfaces on the site but rather to achieve a socially and logistically functioning vertical city. From that point on everything became more obvious. At least our mistakes were striking. We had to realize that to make a vertical city is not to make a tower! A city offers a complex set of social and spatial interactions while a tower offers one condition: an elevator to connect a series of repetitive floors. The elevator is the link to everything and therefore your only chance to meet anyone. For that reason we don't live in towers. We just occupy them for as little as we can... then we rush out to wider horizons.

There's a saying that it's not so much the length that matters, rather the width... that works in architecture too: In order to reach those horizons we decided to cover the entire site with our building/city. The impossibility of making a 350 m deep building made us work on excavations that quickly allowed us to realize neighborhoods containing all components that compose a city. We suddenly felt the glimpse of achieving that architect's dream of a three-dimensional city. We came to think that to realize it was the only requirement the project demanded.

From 1986 to 1996 Shenzhen's region mutated from a landscape of mountains and forests into a continuous dense city! Urbanity took over everything. No nature subsisted. It seemed therefore obvious that this vertical adventure will be about re-introducing the most iconic Chinese natural element: the mountain.

The authentic Chinese landscape is one of soft green mountains undulating to the horizon. In Chinese modern times of growth there's neither time nor space to preserve those experiences. But why is it so? Why does urbanity require the erasure of public space and nature? This project is an attempt at reconciling these oppositions... And at embracing diversities and experiences. What made Babel crumble should make this project rise...

Words by Julien De Smedt / www.jdsarchitects.com

**JDS ARCHITECTS**

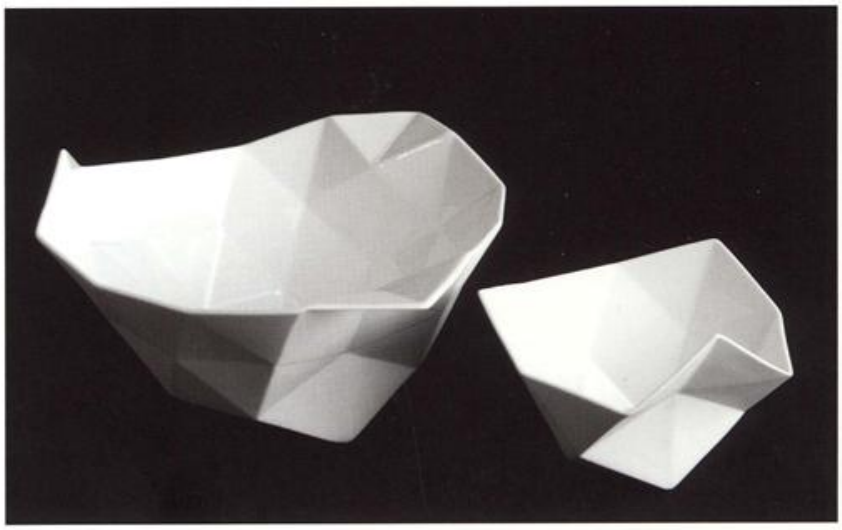
**PROJECT: THE CROWN HOTEL & AQUARIUM**
LOCATION: BRATTØRA, NORWAY
SIZE: 40,000 M2
TYPE: COMPETITION
STATUS: SUBMITTED
CLIENT: REALINVEST AS
COLLABORATORS: BDA, BRANDSBERG-DAHLS ARKITEKTKONTOR AS (STAVANGER)

Trondheim Hotel and Congress center.
How do we create a hotel whose best views are blocked? With The First King Hotel and Congress Center, a project in Trondheim's Brattøra Harbour District, we managed to avoid contextual yokes with the adjacent buildings and planning restrictions, and enjoy both the views to the beautiful Trondheim Fjord as well as take the sunlight and the scenic city. The site has been extruded to fit the programmatic purposes and then lifted at the corners, creating triangular pyramid shapes orienting verdant terraces and hotel views at different directions out to the Fjord and the surrounding city.
The congress center is cut down in the ground in a landscape plane forum with multipurpose and flexible capabilities accommodating large groups and gatherings.
Hovering above, a vibrant indoor/outdoor social space is created at the crux of the connection between private hotel rooms and the public levels of the reception program.
A white band holds everything together, from the peaks to the solid ground, shown as a pierced facetted sharp cut wave surrounding the building. Suspended from the entity across the boardwalk, lies a small aquarium. The aquarium cuts the corner of the harbour pool, drawing a diagonal line from the hotel and congress center to the front pier. The structure is laid as waving pathways, blurring the zone between the pure public space and a visit to the aquarium, making it a natural extension to the existing and future public planning of Brattøra.

## JDS ARCHITECTS

**PROJECT: CRUSHED BOWLS**
LOCATION: WORLD WIDE
SIZE: 0.25L - 2.00L
TYPE: COMMISSION
STATUS: IN PRODUCTION
CLIENT: MUUTO

The Muuto Bowls are composed of equilateral triangles. They are sculpted and derived from its flat geometric shape of a triangle, parallelogram, pentagon and hexagon. With a combination of flexibility, function, and math, a series of vessels are transformed with an organic expression adjusted to comply with the everyday needs of a bowl.



**PROJECT: STOCKHOLM'S GARDEN LIBRARY**
LOCATION: STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
SIZE: 33.000 M2
TYPE: OPEN COMPETITION
STATUS: SETTLED
CLIENT: CITY OF STOCKHOLM

How does one address a site entangled in urbanity, nature while facing a cultural icon? Until now the observatory hill had only one façade towards the city. We suggest turning the library's extension into a garden library, unifying the new facility with the street on one side and the observatory plateau on the other. We do this by pulling the hill towards the street, in the process creating a large sloping roof-façade, accessible via ramps of different grades. These are created through a process of cutting, in turn, providing the whole building with an overview directed to the Asplund Library as well as good interior day lighting conditions. Facing the street, the blanket is pulled up on one corner, creating a very urban, almost high-rise façade with a spectacular entrance that avoids blocking the view of the original Asplund library. The west corner is pushed down towards the street, allowing a plaza between the two library buildings. The façade is dotted and activated with study rooms as interior balconies allowing privacy, but still providing generous space within the open library floors.