

The Porcelain Garden

by: Andrew Cranfield, Director of EBLIDA

photos by: Jakob Boserup

The name "Porcelain Garden", doesn't really sound like a library, but that may well be because it's not a library in the traditional sense. As a user you will not find permanent book or journal collections, as materials that the user needs are delivered from the main collections of the Copenhagen Business School Library (CBS). The user brings his own laptop to the Porcelain Garden and can access the many electronic resources available at the CBS Library, including more than 8,000 e-journals. However in this mini-library, you are not on your own as 4 librarians are on duty to help and give advice. News and current affairs information is downloaded from the net and BBC World and CNN can be viewed on large TV screens - and comfortable chairs are provided!

The design of the library is simple and modern, the cubicle work spaces painted a discreet red with small black desk lamps at each work station. The importance of information competencies for students is underlined by the positioning of teaching facilities in the middle of the library, the glass walls surrounding this room inviting students to learn more about information seeking and retrieval. The librarian's desk is also constructed in such a way to remove the all too typical divide between librarian and user, adopting an inviting and open space for patron enquiries.

The Porcelain Garden is very much a representation of the library as a place to work and study with other people, in an environment which is convenient, flexible and relaxed. By deciding on a fairly neutral design, some might even say impersonal, the CBS has created a fairly successful new library space. It would probably be difficult to class this as a new library concept, but as a remodeling of the classical library reading room it is certainly interesting and as we see more and more materials becoming electronic, not least in the research libraries, it seems likely that we will see more learning spaces such as the Porcelain Garden.

When asked about the students' response to the Porcelain Garden, Library Director Rene Steffensen said, "In general the reactions have been positive. We are in the start up phase and the students have to learn to use us. When we opened the main library in 1999 it took over two years before all the study places were occupied from dawn till dusk and the same thing is going to happen here. Things take time, but today we have one million visitors a year at the main library and most of those come to sit and study. I am in no doubt that our study facilities and central library services are going to be used - and used well. And that is our survival strategy. It is absolutely necessary for us to be visible in the environments where the students and researchers are, as our physical collections - our library book towers - disappear".



From the editor

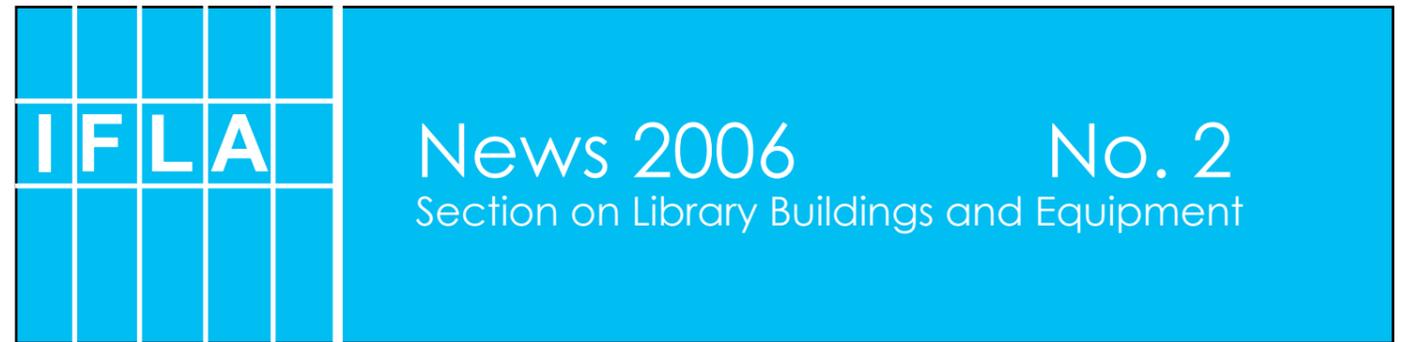
In this issue of our newsletter we bring some examples of newer library buildings from Denmark and Spain and a short report from the section's open session in Seoul in August. Next year in Durban will see the publication of the Section's guidelines for library buildings and we will be using the session in Durban to discuss these and other topics (see <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/calls-build-en.htm>).

The Section is always looking to present new libraries and new innovative solutions in design, so we would urge members of the section to contribute to the newsletter if you feel that a library you know brings something exciting to the world of library buildings.

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Renewal of the Public Library Concept in Kolding, Denmark

by: Hellen Niegaard, Chief consultant, The Danish Library Association

photos by: Hellen Niegaard and Arkitema

In January 2006 Kolding Public Library in Eastern Jutland was inaugurated: a pleasant although rather traditional library seen from the outside but an interior and an organisation based on a new concept.

The large 7,500 m² new main library today services some 63,000 inhabitants and, from January 1st when Denmark's Structural Reform is carried out, this will rise to some 86,000 in combination with two branches and one mobile bus which will make it bigger than a middle sized Danish municipality. The aim is to create a 100% integrated library.

The library is part of a new building block, opposite the Kolding railway and bus station, which comprises flats, offices and a hotel. The new holistic-based concept includes the following solutions amongst others, all reflected in the interior and design of the library.

New organisation: the over all focus is on the patrons and not the collections. From the outset the vision was that the library would be an integrated part of the municipality actively meeting its societal, educational and cultural development and needs.

Public-private partnership (the first in the Danish library sector): Kolding Municipality runs a part of the library service in cooperation with private companies. One of these is the circulation service including the self service loan/return system. Staff from a private company carry out all every day jobs in this area with their own back-office in the library. Another outsourced service, provided by the nearby hotel, is the management of the café facility including provision of daily newspapers. Indeed the library opens directly off the café/hotel area.

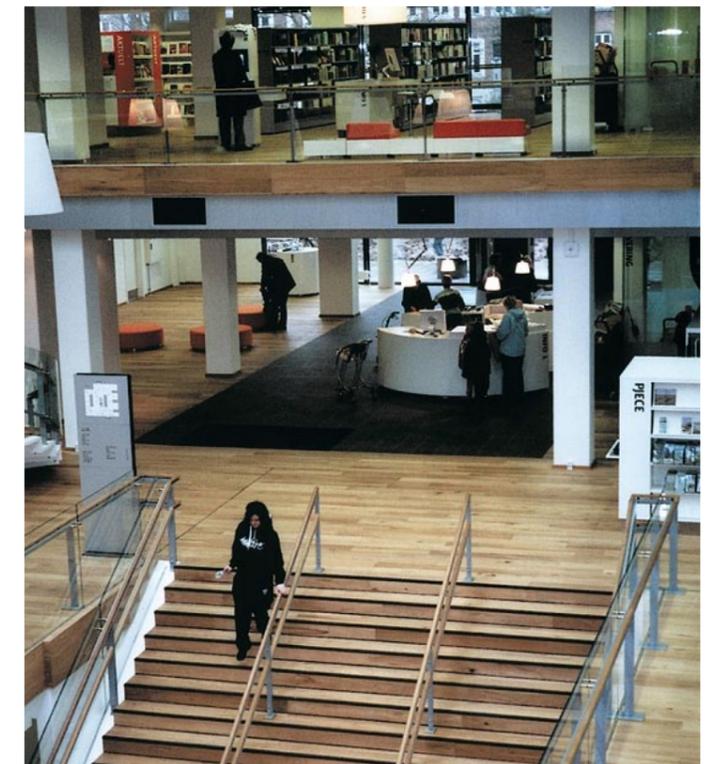


Upgrading professional service: throughout the library at the Info 1-8 new service desks, which resemble small bars, librarians assist patrons face-to-face unless they are out and about in their particular service areas. There are no traditional desks or "seated librarians".

Integration of e-resources and net-services: every service area consists of clusters of shelving, informal seating and work spaces. Each shelving area contains all materials in whatever format and begins with an in-built PC-section offering access to the library catalogue, union catalogue and virtual library e-resources.

Upgrading PC facilities: there are now more than 100 PCs and also wireless access from PC-bars placed in various service areas plus facilities for patrons taking advantage of the information literacy training.

Back room facilities: only two staff members now have their own offices - the director and the union spokesman; everybody else carries out back room work in one of the two big open-plan offices. If privacy and/or silence is needed for special projects or meetings, facilities are available.



Library Buildings and Equipment, Open Session, Seoul 2006

- The design implications of libraries in multi-functional complexes

by: Kjartan Vevle, Biblioteksentralen AL

The open session was held on the 22nd August and was attended by well over 100 delegates. The session was chaired by Andrew Cranfield and papers presented were:

- Opening small public libraries in underused local shopping malls could boost local businesses in Goyang, Korea. YOUNG-SEOK KIM (Myungji University and Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea)
- Libraires: the learning space within. SOHAIR F. WASTAWY (Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, Egypt)
- Multifunctional library design and sustainability: designing multifunctional learning resources centres in Vietnam. MICHAEL ROBINSON (Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, China)
- Introduction to the final draft version of the guidelines for library buildings. HELLEN NIEGAARD (The Danish Library Association)

Harish Chandra was unable to attend and present his paper.

Young-Seok Kim reported that Korea is one of the fastest growing countries in the world. Library services are slowly changing and growing. There are 487 public libraries including 34 branches in Korea as of December 2004. One of the reasons for the slow growth of the Korean public library services relates to size.

It is thought that placing small public libraries in multi-functional complexes may be one of the best solutions to building more public libraries and improving library services in Korea. Opening a small public library in a local shopping mall could also bring new people into the area.

In the last twenty years many satellite cities have been built near Seoul. The capital city of Korea, Goyang, is one of them and it has five public libraries including one branch library for its 880,000 citizens. Each library serves around 176,000 people. The average floor space of the libraries in Goyang is 3,250 sq. metres.

When Goyang city was constructed, one small local shopping mall was opened in every residential block in which there are about 2-3,000 houses. However, after many huge, new shopping malls were established in the city centre, people no longer visited the local shopping malls. As a result hundreds of small shops in local shopping malls were closed.

It is deemed that placing small public libraries in local shopping malls could bring the following advantages to Goyang, Korea:

- To redevelop local shopping malls which are considered dull by bringing new people into this area.
- To build more small public libraries.
- To save budgets for maintaining and operating libraries
- To provide local people with easier access to public libraries.
- To give shopkeepers, who rarely visit libraries, the chance to visit their local public libraries.

Opening small libraries in local shopping malls could boost local businesses and could improve the quantity and quality of library services.

Sohair Wastawy opened her paper by pointing out that, with the accelerated development in information and communication technology, libraries have become more focused on people and learning processes rather than just on printed material.

She gave an overview of the new and diverse elements in library design, and highlighted the role of technology as a catalyst in reinventing the library and restoring its role as an institution of learning, culture and intellectual interaction. She used the new library of Alexandria to demonstrate how this library, with its new and unique building, has successfully created an atmosphere and a set of intellectual resources conducive to learning, research, discussion, and appreciation of knowledge across the various disciplines. With six specialized libraries, three museums, a planetarium, an Exploratorium for children's exhibitions, two permanent exhibitions, six art galleries, a conference centre, and eight research institutes, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina has managed to become an embodiment of a true "learning space". However, the library as a learning space entails designing a multi-functional building which may have some drawbacks.

Michael Robinson referred to the many examples worldwide of the integration, or sharing, of library buildings with other types of facilities and institutions. The integration of cultural and other functions into library spaces can serve a much more fundamental and practical requirement: to promote the long-term sustainability and the development of the library itself.

In these projects, the objective of the integration of other functions into the design of the library has been to develop facilities which either directly or indirectly generate income or support which contribute to the ongoing management and future development of the library services. The funding to maintain and develop library services and buildings is often limited. With this in mind, integration, multi-functionality and flexibility of design have been important considerations since the inception of the Learning Resource Centre projects, and have been incorporated into thinking about the design and layout of the buildings from the earliest stages of each project.

Mr Robinson reviewed the range of cultural, teaching and learning, research and commercial spaces integrated into the Learning Resource Centres in Vietnam, and discussed the design process and outcomes in each case. The Learning Resource Centre at Hue University in central Vietnam has facilities such as a restaurant, gallery and exhibition space, conference and seminar facilities which were designed as part of the building, blending the teaching and learning function with other activities and institutions in this UNESCO World Heritage Centre of Vietnam.

Hellen Niegaard gave an introduction to the draft version of guidelines for library buildings. These guidelines will include essays, checklists, templates, standards and references. The final guidelines will be presented at the Durban conference in 2007.

New Library Buildings

- Jaume Fuster Public Library – Barcelona, Spain

by: Santi ROMERO, Diputació de Barcelona Library Services architect, in collaboration with Carme Galve, Head Librarian at the Jaume Fuster Library.

photos by: Santi Romero

The aim of the project was to combine the Central Urban Public Library and the Gràcia District Municipal Archive in a single building. Gràcia is one of Barcelona's ten districts and it has a population of 115,000 people. The library is one of the 29 that make up the city's library system.

Barcelona City Council announced a competition for the project and this was won by the architect Josep Llinàs. His proposal was based on locating the building on one side of the site with the main facade facing onto an existing square. A canopy with slopes at various angles provides a wide entrance space and softens the view of the building from the square.

Inside, it is the lobby that constitutes the library's nerve centre. In addition to the loan service, which is located here, the lobby provides direct access to the cafeteria, the magazine section, children's area and exhibition hall, all of which are located on the ground floor. A staircase leads to the general area on the first and second floors and also to the conference room in the basement. The second floor also houses the municipal archive, which occupies a space that is differentiated from the general area, and the library and archive administration facilities. The storerooms are located in the basement.

One of the project's strong points is the location of the

cafeteria. When the library is open its proximity to the lobby makes it an ideal meeting place. A movable screen makes it possible for the cafeteria to be used even when the library is closed.

The building's distinctive section, together with the interplay of areas of different internal heights, creates a visual relationship between the various floors, and the roof's sloping planes, in the architect's own words, "provide the cover every library must have as a space which is both individual and social".

The library, opened in November 2005, has a built area covering 5,800 square metres and cost €10 million, a cost that includes the furnishings. It recently received the prestigious 2006 FAD Prize for Architecture, which is awarded annually for the best building to be constructed in the Iberian peninsula (Spain and Portugal).

"The library receives 1,900 visits per day and has become a focal point for the district's cultural life as well as being a place for people to meet and converse", says Carme Galve, the Head Librarian.

