

HERITAGE MATTERS



Nobuo Sekine, 'Phase of Nothingness' 1970



Access to the Museum in the old white wooden classical villa from 1855. The Museum is named after the Villa built by Alexander Brun who married three times to women named Louise



Not Vital 'House to Watch the Sunset' 2015

Photo credit: Amareswar Galla, International Institute for the Inclusive Museum

THE HIDDEN MUSEUM



Entrance to Pipilotti Rist exhibition 'Open My Glade'



Inward and outward looking gallery designed for Alberto Giacometti's sculptures



Children's Wing and open workshop based on current exhibitions

Museums and art galleries have for long been expressions of wealth, power and hegemonic discourse. They were signifiers of the modern. However, post WW II brought about a transformation in the way museums, especially art museums, were conceptualised. It was often a tension between the imagined national identities and aesthetic deliberations. A disruption ensued. From the Pyramid Hill in Cincinnati to the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem, MoMA in New York to Moderna Museet in Stockholm and the mumok - Museum of Modern Art in Vienna, a range of art and architectural experiments took place. The imposing edifices began to transition from the ego of empires to democratic landscapes embodying the spirit or sense of place. New art museums are born.

An art museum that is an integral part of place making is rare. One evolved 30 kilometres north of Copenhagen. Privately run. State recognised and subsidised. Vision driven. Horizontal. Landscaped into the horizon as if it were. A vision driven dynamic institution. One might ask what generally determines genius loci (the spirit of place). A piece of art, the architecture or a landscape will not create it on its own. Only when unity emerges, when art, building and landscape unite and thus intensify the experience do we get this almost indefinable sensation that - here is something special. Hence, the vision and its realisation of the founder of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Knud W. Jensen. Louisiana constitutes a juxtaposition to the monumental architecture of public national museums such as the Danish National Gallery.

The landscape of the Louisiana is translated into a sculpture garden. It was designed by Jensen to incorporate Brun's fruit orchard. The design incorporated a variety of settings for diverse sculptures and installations. The landscape architect Nørsgaard developed terraces. They embed the presence of the sculptures as immersions in the seamlessly situated spaces. The topography of the landscape transitions from the sprawling lawn in front of the

Villa to the steep cliff overlooking the sea towards the Øresund and across the fjord to Southern Sweden. Nørsgaard's design is without the constraints of an axis or an underlying order. In a cross-cultural engagement, the contrast between the architectural straight lines and organic forms of the landscape enhances the presence of nature. It reflects the Japanese aesthetic highlighting the natural landscape.

Louisiana's architecture constitutes a labyrinth-like construction which makes a circular swerve. The different extensions to the building form a merging sequence which alternately opens and closes. There are changes in height, in the angles of light, and in the acoustics, creating a constant variety of experiences as one moves through the exhibition galleries, the café, the



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(Professor Dr. Amareswar Galla, an Indo Australian, was at a PhD thesis examination this week in The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark)

shop, and the sculpture park. The dynamics of atmosphere is staged, perceived and produced through constant wafts of ingresses and experiences of discrepancies.

Jørgen Bo and Vilhelm Wohlert are the two architects who shaped the Louisiana architecture with respect for the surrounding landscape. Bo made major contributions with his knowledge and skills of architecture and landscape. He was concerned with the trees and how the museum experience inside and outside could become a promenade in the landscape through glass corridors. Wohlert was more interested in construction details and materials. Wohlert's son Claus designed the Louisiana's Children's Wing. It constitutes an organically linked extension to Louisiana's north wing with access to the Lake Garden. Louisiana was a re-

sponse to the needs of the new concept of the museum of modern art. It epitomises art through its changes and continuity of definitions and delineations. It is a landscape museum of abstract, functionalistic, modernist and international-style white cubes. An amalgam of flexible and horizontal architectural elements. It is a montage of labyrinth motif and a circular periphery.

Louisiana has been extended eight times. Since 1958, each extension further wove the surroundings into the topography, conceptually driven and ever evolving. Today Louisiana is classified mainly as a functionalist museum. It is influenced by the Scandinavian mid-20th century architectural tradition. It is characterized by horizontal building structures in tile, wood, and glass, and by its whitewashed brick walls. Nordic functionalism found inspiration from the Californian architects and classical Japanese architecture. Individual experience, ideas and values are articulated moving on to new values from the previous understandings of museum architecture. For Jensen light and movement were essential to develop a dynamic, intelligent and inspirational atmosphere.

As the new capital Amaravati emerges on the banks of the River Krishna, India has an opportunity to create an art museum of its own that reflects the genius loci. The layered historical cultural landscapes and water-scapes evoke a new sense of being, of what it is to be the place of the Andhra people. It could be an intersectionality through contemporary art, of the complexity of the layers of significance of local histories and sensibilities. It could be an architectural innovation drawing on the local building traditions, courtyards and a labyrinth to lose oneself to the future and an understanding of the past and present.

Transparency could be achieved through apertures, multidirectional towards the river and the various directions of the historical cultural landscapes. It could complement the City Museum in the Legislative Assembly tower. It could be the site for the genius of the Andhra people and their aesthetics, both soul searching and globally engaging. Poetics of the place. Void places for culture and creativity. An immersion into the poetry, theatre, visual ecstasy, dance, performance, spirituality, folk ways and all that would engage with posterity to see themselves through the looking glass.

NEXT WEEK Heritage Matters will bring you back to the Southern Hemisphere and the promised 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane

Past Columns of Heritage Matters can be downloaded at: <http://inclusivemuseum.org/heritage-matters/>