



R E F L E C T I N G
S C A N D I N A V I A N D E S I G N



Hee Sook Lee-Niinioja

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Hee Sook Lee-Niinioja

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To God who endowed the meaning of life,
..... parent who inspired it,
..... family who supported it.

FOREWORD

I have a very special reason for writing this book. First, as a foreign student, I became a pioneer in studying Scandinavian art and design from 1975 in Norway. Second, as a graphic designer, I had a number of opportunities to work at different places in Scandinavia. Third, as an artist, I travelled all around Scandinavia for my exhibitions. Fourth, as a correspondent for the Korean media, I got acquainted with Scandinavia. Fifth I married to a Scandinavian, thus my present home is Scandinavia. Sixth, as a family member of the diplomatic corps, I enhanced knowledge of Scandinavia to promote abroad. Above all these, my crucial motivation for this book was cultural conflicts against Scandinavian mentalities, which reflected in design, particularly. Therefore, this book discusses of Scandinavian design - its origin, definition, function, and approaches. This investigates how Scandinavian design had achieved its 'Golden Age' during 1950s-70s, still admired by the world. Moreover, this book underlines the unity and diversity of five Scandinavian (Nordic) countries through geography, history, and culture, hoping tits contribute to the globe where crashes take place due to race, location, and faith. This is intended for education and research.

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P A R T O N E
S C A N D I N A V I A



SCANDINAVIA is a historical and geographical region centred on the Scandinavian Peninsular in Northern Europe. The term “Scandinavia¹” describes the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, but sometimes it extends to Finland and Iceland.

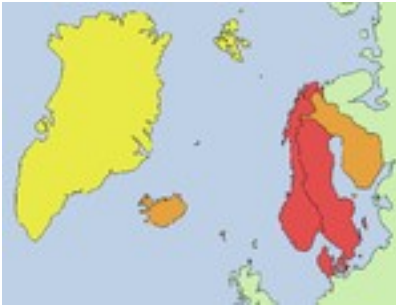
In linguistics, Scandinavia contains the areas where Old Norse was spoken and where the North Germanic language are now dominant. Although Finland is culturally related to the other Scandinavian countries, Finns form a distinct linguistic and ethnic group which speaks a Finno-Ugric language, part of the Indo-European family.

As Germanic root *Skadīn-awjō*, the earliest identified source, for Scandinavia is Pliny the Elder's Natural History (1C AD). During a period of Christianization and state formation (10-13C), three consolidated kingdoms emerged: Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. They were united in the Kalmar Union (1397) by Queen Margrete I of Denmark, but later Sweden left the

¹The term “the Nordic countries” is used unambiguously for Norway, Sweden, Denmark (including the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Finland (including Åland) and Iceland as one collective group.

union under King Gustav Vasa (1523). The Protestant Reformation followed, and a union between Denmark and Norway lasted until 1814.

The name "Scandinavia" was introduced in the 18th century when the ideas of a common heritage developed to literary and linguistic Scandinavism. A unifying concept of this term was established through poems, such as Hans Christian Andersen's "I am a Scandinavian" (1839). Andersen supported early political Scandinavism and wrote after a visit to Sweden: "All at once I understood how related the Swedes, the Danes and the Norwegians are, and with this feeling I wrote the poem immediately after my return: We are one people, we are called Scandinavians!"



Dark: the three kingdoms of the strictest Scandinavia; Middle dark: the possible extended term; Light: the maximal extension of Scandinavia as synonymous to the Nordic countries.

SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

The term “Scandinavian design” denotes a school of thought within the arts and crafts, and their practical application. From its birth around 1920, modern Scandinavian design has been underpinned by Lutheranism, the state religion, which salvation can be gained through honest work. This moral has formed the development of Scandinavian design, and designers have instigated a democratic approach for a social ideal and the quality of life.

As the populations are homogenous in ethnical and religious terms, Scandinavian legal systems come from same origins, dominated by a mutual philosophy. For centuries, the five countries have fostered a regional affiliation based on cooperation as prosperous, modern, and democratic nation, although each has had its own distinctive history, political aspirations and social concerns. The basic characteristic is a pervasive practicality on the development of modern design. The home has been the central forces as a haven from hostile climate and a structure for family. This old culture of self-sufficiency was an economic necessity in rural communities.

Industrialization came late to Scandinavia, letting the handicraft traditions remained. By blending the old craft skills to modern design practice, designers produced high quality objects of “good design” as a sign of improving life. This idea has permeated social cultures such as “Skönhet åt Alla” (Beauty for All) and a catch phrase of the Swedish Society of Craft and Industrial Design, “Vackrare Vardagsvara”² (More Beautiful Everyday Objects). Design is an integral part of daily life, and effects social change. Designers have sought inspiration as much from the delightful nature as from

²The idea enhances life, offers simplicity for comfort, and proves an ethical design approach to the environmental and social challenges of the future.

the cheerful home. Moreover, they created “Brukskunst” (Useful Art³) by combining artistic form and practical function, according to the basic principle of Modernism. In other words, they developed humanizing products that put man first; then machine - functional yet aesthetic products within a humanist interpretation of the formal, technical and aesthetic Modernism.

In fact, the remote location and sparse population of Scandinavia have absorbed foreign influences with evaluation. The lack of the humanism by pure functional Bauhaus was touched by Scandinavian designers who softened forms and natural materials of Modernism. It was a balance of machine and humanism, beautiful form and practical simplicity. The underlying humanism embodies the belief in social democracy, because good design is the birthright of all citizens.

Today's design is meant for every man, for every day. Essentially timeless, it gratifies a multitude of personal tastes. It is totally contemporary, yet complements designs from the past. Because they have great respect for what is beautiful in nature, because they are deeply practical, the Scandinavian people want to surround themselves with objects that make sense to them, are handsome, and which they can afford to own.

Moreover, limited resources have created local origin, and respect for economy has been inherited along with traditional forms. As an artist is also a craftsman, the core of Scandinavian design is the knowledge of how to work in harmony with the material. Scandinavian design has also been driven by the idea of inclusiveness of affordable, practical, beautiful objects for everyone, called “Hygge”, a cosiness and comfort of pleasure, creating a sense of light through the dark winter, such as a sherry in a beautiful glass.

³ It is the thought and product making of objects to a need with an artistic beauty. Brukskunst is a phenomenon and an inspiration for enriching daily life.

It can be said that the high level of Scandinavian design is the result of several factors: (1) versatility and achievement of artists and craftsmen as a whole, (2) cooperation of industry and support of arts, crafts and industrial design societies, (3) public's understanding and appreciation of quality workmanship and sound design form of utilitarian objects, and (4) characteristics of the raw material.

The future of Scandinavian design was expressed from a review of the decorative arts at the "Exposition Universelle" of 1900 in Paris. Scandinavian designs received praise; Gerhard Munthe's textile (Norway), Rörstrand ceramic (Sweden), and the Finnish pavilion by Herman Gesellius, Armas Lingren, and Eliel Saarinen (Finland). The designs embodied a revitalization of the arts as well as the challenge of the coming decades, erecting a radical shift from provincial isolation to self-assertive international setting.

A Norwegian painter, Munthe urged that tradition depends mainly on the developing power of the nation itself, defending the new role of tradition. His philosophy demanded an ethical basis for nationalism and an interaction between the past and present, thus works of art and design would be suffused with the spirit of a people. In addition, the status of crafts was enhanced by a number of societies formed during this century, and craftsmanship has remained an undercurrent of concern within the modern movement.

The underlying features of Scandinavian aesthetics were "good design" as responsibility. Design has an impact on the quality of life, and the arts can be a vehicle for social improvement. The roles of artists, designers, and craftsmen were regarded as one, combining the social mandate and the human aesthetic in the process of design. Many effects of this principle can be traced in the 1920s: Kaare Klint's furniture studies or Alvar Aalto's function and aesthetics in design. However, it was through exhibitions which Scandinavian design was first popularized, such as "Design in Scandinavia" in USA and Canada (1954-7). It was in the Milan Triennale (1951) that the whole Scandinavian countries returned to the mainstream after the war.

Grand Prix was given to Hans Wegner's furniture (Denmark), to Tapio Wirkkala's glass (Finland), to Kay Bojesen's silver (Denmark), and to Dora Jung (Finland) and Julian Sveinsdottir (Iceland) for textiles.

Recognition at the Triennales could generate for exports as well. The products were aesthetical, functional but humanized as both art and craft. The 50s was a start for the Golden Age of Scandinavian design, and continued with the "Finlandia" exhibition in Zurich (1961) and "the Arts of Denmark" in USA (1960-1). However, by the mid-decade, Scandinavian design was dissipating and the international audience was searching for new developments in other creative centres. Facing to the new millennium, a new generation tries to contribute to the modern design in Scandinavia itself and outside.

Scandinavian design has fused the peasant and craft culture of the late 19th century within industrial efficiency and functionalism. DENMARK on the European continent has low-lying, fertile agricultural land for an effective industrial base. Due to its long, open coast toward England, design has the English influence. NORWAY is spilt into small communities along the fjords and in the valleys, emerging varied local traditions and crafts. ICELAND has its isolated position out in the Atlantic, with characteristics in epic poetry and literature than in design. FINLAND's location in a political and cultural cross between East and West resulted in independent design. SWEDEN as the largest in Scandinavia turned to the east (Russia, the Baltic states), and to the south (Germany), being affected to the country itself.

The five countries have not always kept a good relationship, but today's peaceful competition over design was preceded by sharp confrontation. Danish designers established tradition of quality, while Finnish star artists brought trivial objects to the realm of art. Icelandic designers are gaining a status for their cultural contributions, and Norwegians are securing an established position, supported from the state. As a large group, Swedish designers succeeded to satisfy the needs of the society through design.



Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland

CERAMICS

Prior to the 50s, ceramics were simple like porcelain. Now, the handcrafted shapes are popular with coarse grains and colourful glazes, indicating a new awareness of primitive clay handling. Moreover, new clay formulas can offer multiple possibilities for ornamental glazes.

Ceramic production began in 1722 in Denmark when the Delfts Porcelains was making blue-and-white faience after the Dutch style and method. The first true porcelain was after a discovery of local kaolin on Bornholm Island. The Royal Copenhagen Porcelain was established (1775) and won fame for “underlie” decoration.

Consequently ceramic design was no longer borrowed from Germany, and there was a broke at the Royal Copenhagen Factory in the design of “Dancia” dinner service (1789) as a gift to Catherine II of Russia who died before its accomplishment. It was an inspiration of returning to nature after a century’s negligence. “Flora Danica” was a step forward in ceramic design due to its graceful, delicate, and botanically authentic paintings.



Flora Danica dinner set

In Sweden, a porcelain factory was begun at Kungsholmen, Stockholm (1759), but earlier, Rörstrand (1726) was operated by the government funds to manufacture pottery in the Delft manner. A century later, Gustavsberg

ceramic works (1827) was established. Both firms have flourished for excellence. Rörstrand set up Arabia, Finnish subsidiary factory whose ownership passed to Finns later.

The first Norwegian ceramic firm, Herebøe, was begun near Fredrikshald (1758). About 1880s in Porsgrunn, profitable employment was needed due to the low activities of shipyard. As English china clay and coal could be imported, Porsgrund porcelain factory came into being. Norwegians re-interpreted over European influence of Art Nouveau, gaining prizes at the Milan Triennale (1954, 57, 60) by Tias Eckholff's perfect forms, artistic integrity, and simplicity in design for mass production.

ARABIA

As Finland's oldest and largest ceramic manufacture, Arabia was established in Helsinki (1873) as a subsidiary of the Swedish company Rörstrand for the Russian market. Hiring its first in-house designer (1896), Thure Öberg, the factory won a gold medal for the excellent wares at the "Exposition Universelle et International" in Paris (1900). Since then, Arabia started to produce own design for the USA market, such as *Capella* earthenware with printed ornaments of interlocking forms, and *Fennia* ware range (1912). Arabia separated from Rörstrand, undergoing modernization (1916), and Greta-Lisa Jäderholm-Snellman designed a black porcelain covered jar (1930) with an undulating classical form. Her earthenware *Koti* dinner service was hand-painted with floral and countryside scenes, revealing Art Deco. Ekholm's *Model AH* (1935) and *Sinivalko* service (1936) revealed the international functionalism. Under his guidance, Arabia produced designs by Toini Muona, Aune Siimes, Michael Schiikin, Birger Kaipainen, receiving acclaim as well as four awards at the "Exposition des Maitre de l'Art Independent" in Paris (1937). Opening its own museum, Arabia was the leading producer of ceramics in Europe.



Birger Kaipiainen, *Paratiisi* (c1960)

Another figure was Kaj Franck who established the design-planning studio, creating the heat-resistant *Kilta* earthenware (1948). This inexpensive standard range can be purchased separately: multi-functional for tableware and cooking-serving. A similar heatproof range, *Liekki* (Flame 1957) and *Ruska* service were designed by Ulla Procope. Around 1960, Birger Kaipiainen made a landmark tableware design, *Paratiisi* (Paradise) service with its colourful explosion of pansies, blackcurrants, plums, grapes and apples. Alongside mass production, Arabia has created “art ceramics” including Kaipiainen’s bead birds (1960s) and the *Pro Arte* collection (1987s). Recently, utilitarian and art pieces are innovated by Stefan Lindfors and Harri Koskinen.

GLASS & CRYSTALS

Glassmaking, dated back to 500 BC in Persia and Egypt, travelled via Rome and Venice through central Europe. Glass was first made in 1556 when the Småland of south-eastern Sweden where cobalt crystal, the water, and fuel can provide for glass manufacture. Kosta (1742) is the oldest surviving glassworks, and Orrefors (1898), nearby, shares the prestige with Kosta.

Simon Gate, Edvard Hald, and Edvin Ollers began to make true originality, breaking from copying foreign designs since 1917. Sweden became the world's leader through competitions, foresighted management, expert craftsmen, and distinguished artists. Swedish crystal means quality, refinement, and expertise, because the atmosphere in Småland consists of a single country team production, although each firm has a characteristic from the traditional forms to today's modern ones.

Hadeland in Norway has the most exciting cobalt shades of a garnet red and warm brown. Riihimäki in Finland developed exquisite topaz and amethyst shades of nature's colours. Iittala turns out a white glass labelled "opaline", produced by Alvar Aalto and Timo Sarpaneva.

IITTALA

Reflecting the beauty of Finnish nature, Iittala glasses bear traditional craftsmanship, superb design, and high quality. The clear and bright crystal is derived from the purest and finest raw materials. As craftsmanship is inspiration for the designers, Wirkkala ensured that the form and function would be made what he had in mind by learning glass. Although P. M. Abrahamsson founded a glassworks in the village of Iittala, north of Helsinki (1881), the present Iittala dates from the 1930s. Alvar Aalto drew the free lines of a famous vase, marking the start of original Finnish glass design

(1937). The company employed Wirkkala (40s), Timo Sarpaneva (50s), and Valto Kokko (60s) and Jorma Vennola (70ss) to create a classic purity of line.

The Golden Age was during the 50 by Wirkkala, Sarpaneva, and Hongell who swept fame at fairs and exhibitions, particularly the Milan Triennale. The Grand Prix and gold medals given to Wirkkala and Sarpaneva were the international breakthrough of Finnish art glass, changing the traditional concept of household items to practical and imaginative table glass collections. Iittala crystal has not only a high reputation in design and craftsmanship, but also the quality of the materials in manufacturing. During the 60s, the company introduced a new composition for i-glass which remains clear regardless of sunlight and machine washing.

ORREFORS

With a hallmark of purity and artistry, Orrefors began in 1726 with an iron foundry near the Orranäs Lake. When the iron production became less profitable by the end of the 19th century, a glasswork replaced (1898), making bottles, toothpaste jars and plain tableware. On a purchase by Johan Ekman, many talented artists, such as Simon Gate (1916) and Edward Hald (1917), were hired to improve the craftsmanship. Engravers enjoyed a renaissance as “Swedish Grace” reflected the times through classical motifs.

At the “Exposition Universelle et Internationale” in Paris (1925), Orrefors achieved a major breakthrough. Simon Gate’s tall masterpiece of *Paris Goblet* won a Grand Prix, while others had gold medals. In only nine years, the new and creative company acquired a world reputation for Swedish Crystal. Orrefors continued employing talented people. Vicke Lindstrand’s first pieces showed a distinct character whether they were painted or engraved (1928). Nils Landerg, Sven Palmqvist, and Edvin Öhrström were preparing the elite group.



Simon Gate, Thousand Windows bowl (1932)

Eager experimentation and a search for new and better methods of expression resulted in new techniques: Lindstand's exotic thick walled Graal, Öhrström's forceful Ariel, Palmqvist's colourful Ravenna, and Hald's Fish Graal and elegant Cut Graal. Orrefors was present at the New York World Fair (1939), launching the concept of "Swedish Modern". Ingeborg Lundin became the first female designer (1947), giving glass a new, exciting look.

At the Milan Triennales, Landerg's *Tulip Glass*, Lundin's *Apple*, and Palmqvist's centrifuged *Fuga* bowls received critical acclaim as the 50s' graceful and ethereal glass. Orrefors hired gold and silversmith Gunnar Cyrén (1959) whose early pieces reflected the impulses of the 60s in *Pop Glass*. Today Orrefors' long and rich art glass are expanding of the well-known techniques of Graal, Ariel, and Ravenna glass.

JEWELLERY & METALS

Until the previous century, gold and silver have symbolized wealth, honour, and prestige, and gold and silversmiths were in forms and decorations, copied from Germany and other nations. Industrialization late in the 19th century brought on a decline in taste and workmanship in the applied arts. Silver objects were overly decorated, wrongly proportioned, and shabbily machine-pressed.

An independent movement started in the first decade of the 1900s in Scandinavia, underlining new standards of proportion, form, and details. The jeweller's artistic level is progressing due to Georg Jensen, a Danish sculptor, who revitalized the goal toward quality design of the precious metals. In contrast to sparkling gems set in gold, silver, or platinum, the success of Scandinavia jewellery is found in elegantly simple designs, set with crystal, enamel, or semiprecious stones of local origin. Jewellery should not be costly for appreciation or treasure. As the design itself is a work of art, the excellence of modern jewellery should express craftsmanship, taste, and sense of perfect form.



Georg Jensen, Moonlight brooch (c1900)

In the 30s, simplicity was so popular that ornamentation was considered nearly immoral. Functionalism was antagonistic to jewellery. However,

Isolation during the First World War stimulated Jewellers' new impulses. Unadorned metal jewellery came into vogue, and simple stone settings of naked form emphasized movement of the hand. The 50s and early 60s brought a return of fancy in response to the time of gaiety and entertaining. Scandinavian jewellery reflects the currents of various periods, keeping the national characteristic.

TEXTILES

Hand looming, embroidery, and weaving are the common tradition in Scandinavia for pastime during the isolated living of long winter. Colour restraints have been characteristic of Scandinavian textiles, but recently designers felt bored with machine goods. They experimented with simple hand weaving and declined to the natural colours of wool. As a result, sensitivity of Scandinavian colour appeared in textile. Except for the formal dinner sets, white tablecloths became almost extinct; new damask appeared in variations of design and colour.



Marjatta Metsovaara, Niili (c1970)

Another phenomenon was a movement of recruiting a new talent. The gap between the hand loom and industrial production became closer when craftsmen began to work with mills for upholstery fabrics in furniture. Modern textiles reflect a uniqueness of artistic design with handicraft tradition accommodated to mechanical methods. Craftsmen have a tendency to back off from the technical perfection in industrial goods, re-exploring the oldest techniques and adapting them to new interpretations. They react against the multitudinous floral designs of the 40s, the overly geometric patterns of the 50s, and a response to new wall shapes and large window since 60s. Today's textiles underline modified geometrics and abstracts in

restraint of patterning and amplifying colour schemes to admit light and to look exciting. Tryggve Johansson, a Norwegian colour analyst, made a natural, sound colour system for designers and manufacturers.



P A R T T W O
N O R W A Y



THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY (Kongeriket Norge) occupies the western and northern portions of the Scandinavian Peninsula, bordered by Sweden, Finland, and Russia. As a rugged country of mountains, fjords, and glaciers, Norway covers an area of 385,155 km² including the territories Svalbard and Jan Mayen. Temperature is mild in short summer, and is cold in long winter. The country has a population of 4.7 million of which about 80,000 are Sami, an indigenous people in the northern part. Having one of the world's highest per capita incomes from oil, gas, fishery, paper, and shipping, Norwegians enjoy a high standard of living. Between the 8th and 11th century, the Vikings ravaged the coasts of northwest Europe, and Olaf II Haraldsson was the first king of Norway (1015), converting the people to Christianity. Norway was ruled by Denmark (1442-1814) and later Sweden. In 1905, the country gained independence. The country's capital is Oslo.

BACKGROUND

Norway, officially called Kingdom of Norway, occupies the western part of the Scandinavian Peninsula. It is bordered by Sweden, Finland, and Russia, while the United Kingdom and the Faroe Islands lie to its west across the North Sea. The country's extensive coastline, facing the North Atlantic Ocean, is home to its famous fjords. In the 1920s, Norway annexed Jan Mayen and was given the sovereignty over the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard. Since World War II, Norway has experienced rapid economic growth, and is now amongst the wealthiest countries in the world. Norway is the world's third largest oil exporter and the petroleum industry accounts for around a quarter of GDP. Norway has a welfare system and Norwegians enjoy the second highest GDP per-capita (after Luxembourg). Norway was ranked the first in human development (2001-6), and rated the most peaceful country in a 2007 survey by Global Peace Index. It is a founding member of NATO.

Norway's two official names are Kongeriket Norge (bokmål)/Kongeriket Noreg (nynorsk). Although some medieval texts attribute the name to a mythical King Nórr, it is conventionally derived from Old Norse *norðvegr, meaning "the northern route" (the way northwards). Norway was inhabited since early 10th millennium BC, and the populations came from the present-day Germany. In the first centuries AD, Norway consisted of a number of petty kingdoms. Harald Fairhair (Harald Hårfagre) unified them into a kingdom after the Battle of Hafrsfjord in Stavanger (872).

The Viking age (8-11C) was characterized by expansion and emigration. Many Norwegians left for Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and parts of Britain and Ireland. Norse traditions were slowly replaced by Christianity in the 9th and 10th centuries, attributed to the missionary kings Olav Tryggvasson and St. Olav. In 1349, the Black Death killed almost half of the population. Royal politics resulted in unions, bringing the thrones of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden under Queen Margrethe I of Denmark until 1814. After

Denmark–Norway was attacked by Great Britain, it entered into an alliance with Napoleon. On the losing side, Norway was forced to cede to Sweden, but declared independence, electing the Danish crown prince Christian Fredrik as king (May 17, 1814).

This period saw the rise of the Romantic Nationalism of cultural movement, when Norwegians sought to express a distinct national character. The movement covered all branches of culture, including literature such as (Henrik Ibsen), painting (Edvard Munch), music (Edvard Grieg), and two official written forms for Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk). On June 7, 1905, a national referendum preferred a monarchy, and the government offered the throne of Norway to the Danish Prince Carl, named Haakon VII. During both World Wars, Norway claimed neutrality, but was invaded by German forces during World War II. Following the war, the Social Democrats came to power. Norway joined NATO (1949), but two referendums to join the European Union failed (1972, 1994).

Norway comprises the western part of Scandinavia. The rugged coastline, broken by huge fjords and thousands of islands, stretches over 2,500 km. The country is dominated by mountainous or high terrain, with a variety of natural features caused by prehistoric glaciers and varied topography. The noticeable of these are the fjords with the longest Sognefjorden. Due to the Gulf stream, Norway experiences warmer temperatures and precipitation along the coast. The mainland has four distinct seasons, with colder winters and less precipitation. From late May to July, the sun never completely descends beneath the horizon in the Arctic Circle (the Land of the Midnight Sun). Conversely, from late November to January, the sun never rises in the north, and daylight hours are very short. The west coast is one of the most impressive coastlines in the world.



Jotunheimen National Park, containing two of Europe's highest peaks, Borgund stave church.

Norway is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. Since 1991 the king had been Harald V. The king acts as ceremonial head of state and a symbol of national unity. The parliament is the Storting with 169 members elected from the 19 counties for four-year terms. Large reserves of petroleum and natural gas were discovered in the 1960s, which led to a continuing boom in the economy. Norway has obtained one of the highest standards of living in the world. The egalitarian values of the wage difference between the lowest paid worker and the CEO of most companies is much smaller than in comparable western economies. Cost of living is about 25-30% higher than USA and Europe. The increasing oil prices ensure Norway to continue one of the richest countries in the world. The population numbered 4.7 million, and most are ethnic Norwegians, a North Germanic people. The Sami people inhabit central and northern parts, and in recent years, immigration has accounted for more than half of Norway's population growth.

The Norse followed a form of native Germanic paganism known as Norse paganism. When Norway had been Christianized by the end of the 11th century, the indigenous Norse religion and practices were prohibited. However remnants of the native religion and beliefs exist today, such as names, referential names of cities and locations, the days of the week, etc.

Nearly 83% are members of the state church, to which they are registered at birth. Many remain in the church for using services such as baptism, confirmation, marriage and burial, rites which have strong cultural standing, but fewer attend regularly.

Higher education is offered by a range of seven universities, five specialised colleges, 25 university colleges as well as a range of private colleges. Norwegian language has two official written forms, Bokmål and Nynorsk. They have officially equal status, but Bokmål is used by the majority, about 85-90%. Several Finno-Ugric Sami languages are spoken and written in the north. Norwegian is similar to Swedish and Danish, thus the cooperation within the Nordic Council, including Iceland and Finland, has the right to communicate with the Norwegian authorities in their own language.



Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), often considered the "Father of Modern Drama".

Norwegian literature starts with the pagan Edda poems and skaldic verse of the 9th and 10th centuries with poets, Bragi Boddason and Eyvindr Skáldaspillir. The arrival of Christianity around the year 1000 brought Norway into contact with European medieval learning, hagiography and history writing. Little came out of the period of the Dano-Norwegian union (1387-1814) with some notable exceptions such as Petter Dass and Ludvig Holberg. By the late 19th century in the Golden Age of Norwegian literature, the Great Four emerged: Henrik Ibsen, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Alexander

Kielland, and Jonas Lie. Bjørnson's "peasant novels" are typical of the National Romanticism, whereas Kielland's novels and short stories are realistic. Ibsen's fame rests on his pioneering dramas, for example, *A Doll's House*, causing moral uproar because of their candid portrayals of the middle classes. In the 20th century, three novelists were awarded the Nobel Prize in literature: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1903), Knut Hamsun (1920), and Sigrid Undset (1928). The sport activities are very important the same as other neighbours, applying to simple and healthy food.

CONTINUITY FROM PAST AND CHALLENGE TO FUTURE

Natural boundaries forced people to live on their own resources, and during the long winter, time was available for home industry. The Viking folk art perpetuated a respect for craftsmanship with materials from nature which became the key factor in Norwegian design.

On achieving independence in the turn of the 19th century, there arose National Romanticism. The Neo-Viking “Dragon Style” reflected an aspiration to the roots of the country’s identity. Gerhard Munthe’s furniture, Frederik Holm’s silverware, and Henrik Bull’s ceramics stood for political statements and expression of the Pan-Scandinavian decorative revival. After independence, Art Nouveau which was inspired by nature replaced as the first modern international style. Gustav Gaudernack and Thorolf Holmboe exemplified Norwegian Art Nouveau with enamelled objects of stylized yet sensitive representations of flora and fauna. During the pre-war period, the beauty of nature was still influential, while others were seeking for traditional folk weaving, such as Frida Hansen’s woven panels with stylised floral motifs, a combination of heritage and Art Nouveau.

Since the foundation of Norwegian Society of Arts and Crafts and Industrial Design (1918), art and craft had a beneficial relationship. Independent craftsmen from studio and industry designers worked under an organization, because both roles were regarded as the same design process. Their cooperation created better daily objects and improved living situations, because the comprehensive approach to design increased understanding for quality, production, and aesthetics of “Brukskunst (Useful Art)”. Ferdinand Ars states,

Embracing the arts and crafts, applied arts and industrial design; it comprehends the process of social thinking, understanding of consumer needs,

design, and first-class technical and artistic production. Above all it implies the creation, for use, of objects which are technically appropriate and at the same time contain a quality of beauty which renders them easy and enjoyable to live with.

Between the two World Wars, Norwegian designers were influenced by Art Deco and produced simplified forms and decoration, such as Nora Gulbrandsen's ceramics with strong geometric lines. The 30s also witnessed functionalism in tubular metal furniture by Herman Munthe-Kaas' *Folkestolen* (People's Chair 1929). Like other Scandinavian countries during the early 40s, a softened form of Modernism gained ground. Alf Sture's wood and cane chair (1943) reflected as more humanistic approach to design. Its anatomically moulded back section predicted the ergonomic seating of later designers.

After the German occupation of Norway during the Second World War, the country had to regain confidence. In 1945, the periodical *Bonytt* (Interior News) published an article by Håkon Stenstadvold's "Our National Character". Although Norwegian designers should be open to new international design trends, their main goal was to seek and express a cultural distinctiveness through their inward looking approach.

In the 50s Norway achieved more international success by Grete Prytz, Tias Eckhoff, Herman Bongard and Arne Jon Jutrem, awarded Lunning Prizes. Willy Johansson won silver and gold medals for his glassware at the Milan Triennales. Nevertheless, Norwegian design lacked the stylistic consumer products from Denmark, Finland and Sweden. During the Golden Age of Scandinavian design between 50s and early 70s, neighbouring countries succeeded by the distinct design, while Norway continued to grapple with establishing national identity. Present Norwegian craft and design are the aftermath of the 50s and early 60s when Scandinavia achieved a collective international design profile with aesthetic, mildly functional, and balanced between craft and mass production.

The Society arranged a number of exhibitions for everyday goods and art pieces, influencing public interest in design. The reason was that Norwegian design tended to lack a directional focus, and had difficulty to promote its products in competitive marketplaces, having no excellence comparable to the Danish furniture, the Finnish glassmaking, and the Swedish consumer products.

By the late 60s, “Brukskunst” was abandoned when specialization was an issue. The whole Scandinavia focused on the restructuring of the educational system for training craftsmen and designers. Design activity was demarcated into a group of independent specialities with its own profile, standards, and goals, bringing craftsmen closer to the fine arts and away from industry. Instead 50s’ consensus of “Brukskunst”, the new generation believed either in use or in art, no longer in both simultaneously. Industrial designers wanted to work for special needs, public design and environment, stressing methods and ergonomics.

Applied artists promoted pure craftsmanship, rejecting usefulness in mass production, calling themselves “art-craftsmen”. In addition, this division was due to a generational shift. The younger generation did revolution, while the older did not agree with the separation, arguing the idea of “Brukskunst”, since it is important to stand together in interdisciplinary cooperation.

Since the 70s, although the wealth by oil made designers to depart from design in Norway than neighbours, there are a few exceptions, such as Peter Opsvik’s *Balans Variable* sitting tool (1979). His innovative, ergonomic furniture reflected a tendency in Scandinavian design towards socially motivated solutions. As an experiment for the younger generation, it drew attention to solid achievement in Norwegian furniture.

With its long tradition of combining craft sensibilities with social ideals, Norwegian design has been characterized by constructional integrity, functional clarity, user friendliness and the skilled handling of materials. By

reconciling art with technology and by focussing on sustainable solutions, it can create innovative and relevant products for an international appeal with other Scandinavian countries against environmental awareness.

THE GREAT NORWEGIAN DESIGNERS

GERHARD MUNTHE (1849-1929)

FRIDA HANSEN (1855-1931)

GUSTAV GAUDERNACK (1865-1914)

ARNE KORSMO (1900-1968) & GRETE PRYTZ KITTELSEN (1917-)

WILLY JOHANSSON (1921-)

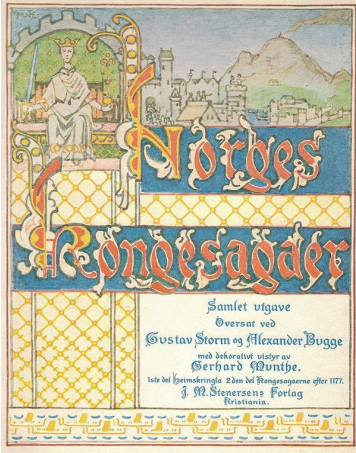
TIAS ECKHOFF (1926-)

PETER OPSVIK (1939-)

GERHARD MUNTHE (1849-1929)

Munthe studied painting in Oslo, and further trained in Düsseldorf, Germany (1874). Establishing a collective with fellow artists at the Fleskum farm, west of Oslo (1886), he pioneered a Neo-Romantic style which reflected Norway's wish to assert its cultural identity. The cultural strength of the artistic community in Denmark encouraged him to revitalize the decorative arts of his country by pioneering a distinct Norwegian aesthetic. He subsequently drew inspiration from Norwegian legends and flora and fauna. His bold Neo-Viking narrative tapestries were exhibited at the "Exposition Universelle et Internationale" in Paris (1900).

The *Studio* magazine (1901) notes: "In these remote countries a powerful art movement is forcing its way into the general art development of Europe." Munthe believed that tradition was a crucial element in the developing power of the nation itself. He attempted to bring out a dynamic synthesis of the past and the present to realize objects that were infused with a vital national spirit. Promoting the Viking Revival, his work was imbued with a symbolism of the country's independence. His decoration of the medieval Håkon Hall in Bergen culminated the National Romanticism.



Norwegian King Saga's title (1914)



Saint Olav, Saga book illustration (1899)

FRIDA HANSEN (1855-1931)

Hansen studied painting and later established an embroidery workshop in Stavanger (1882). Since the 18th century, peasant weavers produced tapestries depicting primitive biblical scenes. These artistic textiles were lacked in technical finesse, but they were national art treasures. Inspired by these, Hansen learned weaving techniques at Kjerstina Hauglum and became the first woman tapestry weaver in Norway (1889). She founded a weaving company, “det Norske Billedvæveri (DNB 1899)” in Oslo (then Christiania).

After a trip to Paris she embraced Art Nouveau, and her style was often adorned with Mackintosh roses, stylized flowers in saturated colours, and bold outlines. She also revived natural dyes and weaving techniques, innovating “transparent weaving” technique which brought her wide acclaim. During the 1890s, Hansen collaborated with Gerhard Munthe, and wrote a book, *Husflid og Kunstindustri I Norge* (1899). She exhibited at the “World’s Columbian Exposition” in Chicago (1893) and the “Exposition Universelle et Internationale” in Paris (1900), winning a gold medal. She became one of the greatest advocates of Art Nouveau in Scandinavia.



Poppy tapestry (c1898)



Milkyway (1898)

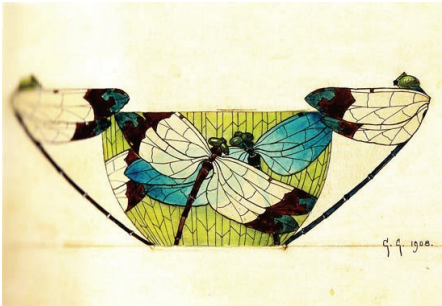
GUSTAV GAUDERNACK (1865-1914)

Gaudernack was born in Bohemia and studied at the School of Arts and Crafts in Vienna (1891). Soon after, he immigrated to Norway, becoming a leading Art Nouveau artist by designing glassware for the Christiania Glasmagasin and enamelling metalware, *Dragonfly* bowl (1908) with flora and fauna. He received acclaim for the skilful execution and imaginative style of a delicate yet sumptuous design which rivalled to Europe. He won a silver medal at the “Exposition Universelle et Internationale” in Paris (1900) and a Grand Prix at “Louisiana Purchase Exposition” in St. Louis (1904).

At his own workshop, he produced silver, filigree and enamel objects, while teaching at the National College of Art and Design in Oslo. His Art Nouveau work had a strong impact on Scandinavian design during the early 20th century, especially in Norway where swirling naturalistic motifs were adopted for furniture and textiles.



Art Nouveau vase (c1900)



Dragonfly (1908)

ARNE KORSMO (1900-1968) & GRETE PRYTZ KITTELSEN (1917-)

Korsmo studied at the National Polytechnic in Trondheim (1929). While working in the goldsmith and jewellery firm Torstrop, he designed the Norwegian pavilion at the “Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne” in Paris (1937). His silver cutlery (1949), distinct for its soft, ergonomically inspired melting forms was awarded a gold medal at the Milan Triennale (1954). Korsmo also designed wooden and tubular metal furniture. During the post-war years, he and his wife, Grete Prytz, were “design couple”, influencing the Norwegian design.

Coming from a goldsmith family, Grete Prytz studied at the National College of Arts and Crafts in Oslo (1941) where her father advocated functionalism in the 20s and 30s. Grete designed jewellery and metalware for her family firm, specializing on enamelling that became a Norwegian speciality through revision of technique for abstract motifs and vibrantly colour. She collaborated with the Central Institute for Industrial Research on enamelling silver. Her *Domino* rings (1952) were shown at the “Norsk emaljekunst i lyset” (Light on the Enamel Art of Norway) in Oslo. She was awarded the Lunning Prize for advanced techniques and free-hand engraving by cutting tool. During the 70s, she designed stainless-steel bowls, revealing her commitment to the design - inexpensive and highly qualified.



Arne Kosmo, the Vase thread (c1950)



Grete Prytz, Catherineholm icebucket (1955)



Arne & Korsmo's Casserole-Steel with black/white enamel and steel handles (c1950)

WILLY JOHANSSON (1921-)

Johansson studied at the National College of Art and Design in Oslo (1942), and designed decorative engraving glassware for Christiania Glasmagasin (1947). As art director, he became responsible for free-blown art and pressed glass production at Hadeland glassworks. Norway's first exhibition at the Milan Triennale (1954) brought him a Diplôme d'Honneur for his glass, sandblasted vases that were blown into wooden moulds.

He also received a gold medal at the Milan Triennale (1957) for clear coloured dishes. The colour of the free-blown designs intensified to their outer edges, contained by Johansson's trademark opaque white rims. Likewise, blue-green vase (1958) and *Medoc* decanter (1961) pursued simple forms and perfect proportions in a quiet monumentality. Although Johansson's clear and smoked glass designs did not possess the expressive spontaneity of Italian glass, they had an underlying integrity which was utterly Scandinavian.



Medoc glassware range (1961)



Atlantic vase (1970)



Free blown vase with colour (1963)

TIAS ECKHOFF (1926-)

Eckhoff apprenticed under Nathalie Krebs at the Saxbo pottery studio in Copenhagen (1948), and studied at the National College of Art and Design in Oslo (1949). He began working for Porsgrun Porselænsfabrik whose factory was modernizing its old product line by reorganization and recruit. One of his first successes was *Der Riffede* (The Fluted One 1952) tableware range - a white porcelain service recalled the soft forms by earlier 30s' design. His aim was "of arriving at a beautiful, simple and functional solution". He also designed fireproof *Glohane* (1955) and *Regent* (1962) tableware ranges.

His talent in artistic and industrial design brought him two prizes for decorative and utility glassware in a competition by Hadeland (1951). He gained reputation for metalware of silver *Cypress* cutlery at the "Inter-Scandinavian Design Competition" by Georg Jensen's 50th anniversary, leading to a Lunning Prize (1953).

Later Eckhoff made highly polished stainless steel cutlery, *Fuga* and *Opus*, *Maya* (1961), *Ulla* (1973), *Tiki* (1974), and *Chaco* ranges (1990). His rational and scientific design was an artistic sensibility. His awards include five gold medals at the Milan Triennale (1954, 57, 60), and three medals from the Norwegian Design Council (1962, 65, 66). As the most prominent Norwegian designer of the modern era, Eckhoff contributed to international attention on the country's design output.



Maya cutlery (1961)



Coffee pot (c1961)



Regent coffee service (1962)

PETER OPSVIK (1939-)

Opsvik studied at the National College of Art and Design in Oslo (1964), and won a scholarship from the Norwegian Credit Bank (1967). As a freelancer, he designed *Mini Max* desk and chair (1970) to meet the needs of adults and children. With an innovative concept of “Generationsstuhl” (a chair that grows with the child), Opsvik designed the best-selling *Tripp Trapp* high-chair (1972). This chair can elevate the child to a normal table height and allow free movement with its foot rest: “to explore the world in comfort and safety”.

His next design was *Model no. 2010* office chair (1974). With Hans Christian Mengshole, he introduced revolutionary *Balans Variable* sitting tool (1979) for better ergonomic seating. Opsvik continued to design a Post-Modern style of *Balans Supporter* (1983) and *Garden Seating Sculpture* (1984). Since the mid-80s, he has produced conventional style and ergonomic seating, such as *Sitti* child’s chair (1993) and *Actulum* rocking chair (1995), as well as more experimental and expressive designs.

Despite Scandinavian concern for social inclusiveness (children’s furniture) and healthful living (ergonomic products), his work is concerned with expressive form, a reflection of the Norwegian liking for oddness in the visual arts.



TrippTrapp adjustable high chair (1972)



Balans Variable sitting tool (1979)



Balans Vital kneeling chair (2003)



P A R T T H R E E
F I N L A N D



THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND (Suomen Tasavalta) is bordered by Sweden to the west, Russia to the east, and Norway to the north. The Åland Islands, off the south-western coast, are autonomy of Finland. The country has a population of over 5 million spread over 338,145 km². Known as a land of forests, myriad lakes and islands, the climate is marked by cold winters and warm summers, despite moderate winter by the Baltic Sea and the Atlantic Gulf stream. In the far north beyond the Arctic Circle, white summer nights and polar winter night take place for a few months. Finnish belongs to the Finno-Ugric linguistic family. The official languages are Finnish and Swedish (6%) as part of Sweden until 1809. Another minority is Lapp. Finland became independent in 1917 from Russian Grand Duchy's autonomy. Forestry, industry, and technology are export commodities. The country's capital is Helsinki.

BACKGROUND

Finland, officially the Republic of Finland (Finnish: Suomi; Swedish: Finland), is situated in the northern Europe, bordering Sweden (west), Russia (east), and Norway (north), while Estonia (south) lies across the Gulf of Finland. Finland is a democratic, parliamentary republic with a central government and 415 local municipalities. Finland was part of Sweden and became autonomy within the Russian Empire. Independence was gained in 1917. Finland joined UN and the EU, and has been ranked the second most stable country in the world, according to social, economic, political, and military indicators. Finland has seen excellent international results in high-technology manufacturing, public education, the rate of gross domestic product growth, and the protection of civil liberties.

The name Suomi (Finland) could be the proto-Baltic word *zeme, meaning “land”. The name was derived from suomaa (fen land) or suoniemi (fen cape). Finland was settled at the latest around 8500 BC during the Stone Age. The earliest people were hunter-gatherers, and even with the introduction of agriculture, hunting and fishing continued. The Bronze Age (1500–500 BC) and Iron Age (500 BC–1200 AD) were characterised by contacts with other cultures in the Fennoscandian and Baltic regions.

The first verifiable written documents appeared in the 12th century. Due to the Swedish rule in the next century, Swedish became the dominant language for nobility, administration, and education, while Finnish was for the peasantry, clergy and local courts. During the Reformation, Finns converted to Lutheranism, and the Royal Academy of Turku was established in 1640. Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire (1809-1917), and the Finnish language gained recognition. A National Romanticism grew, producing a national epic, the Kalevala (1835), and equal status of Finnish and Swedish (1892). On December 6, 1917, Finland declared

its independence, becoming a republic with Kaarlo Juho Ståhlberg as its first president.

During World War II, Finland fought the Soviet Union (1939–40, 1941–4), and ceded most of Finnish Karelian areas. However, trade with the Western Europe helped Finland to transform itself from agriculture to industry, and economic growth was rapid in the post-war era to be one of the most extensive welfare states. In 1981, President Urho Kekkonen's failing health forced him to retire after 25 years' service. A banking crisis, the collapse of a primary trading partner (the Soviet Union), and a global economic downturn caused a deep recession, but since then, Finland has seen steady growing.



Eduskunta, the Parliament of Finland in Helsinki, a lakeside smoke sauna ("savusauna") in Kannonkoski.

Finland has thousands of lakes and islands —187,888 lakes (larger than 500 m²) and 179,584 islands. The landscape is flat with few hills, covered mostly by forests with little arable land. The distance from the Southern point to the northern would take ca. 18.5 hours to drive. The climate in Southern is a temperate climate, and in Northern, particularly in the Lapland, a subarctic climate dominates by cold winters and relatively warm summers. Finland has 5 million populations, focused in biggest cities (Helsinki/Espoo/Vantaa/Tampere/Turku/Oulu). 92% speak Finnish, a Baltic-Finnic subgroup of the Uralic languages. The second language is Swedish (5.5%). In Lapland, there are the 7,000 indigenous Lapp (Sami) people with their own language. Most Finns are Lutherans, but Orthodox church is constitutional. The majority of children are baptized and have confirmation at the age of 15, but few attend the church except Christmas, weddings and funerals. The health care is mainly funded by public and insurances. The life expectancy is 82 years for women and 75 years for men.

Finland is democratic with a semi-presidential parliamentary system. The President is the head of state and responsible for foreign policy in cooperation with the cabinet. Direct vote elects the president for six years' term and maximum two consecutive terms. Finland has successfully fought against the corruption, and Transparency International ranks Finland as one of the least corrupted countries. Finland has a highly industrialized, free-market economy. The largest sector is services, then manufacturing and refining. The industries are electronics, machinery, metal products, forest industry, and chemicals.

The sudden growth of tourism in 2005 can be attributed to the globalisation and modernisation of the country as well as a rise in positive publicity and awareness. There are many attractions for 4 million visitors. The landscape is covered with thick pine forests, rolling hills and complemented with a labyrinth of lakes and inlets. An urbanised region provides cultural events and activities. For example, Olavinlinna in

Savonlinna hosts the annual Savonlinna Opera Festival, while Helsinki is proud of its Grand Duchy era architecture.

Commercial cruises between major coastal and port cities in the Baltic region play a big role. Moreover, Finland is regarded as the home of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus), living in the northern Lapland. Above the Arctic Circle, there is a polar night, a period when the sun does not rise for days or weeks, or even months. In the heart of summer, the sun does not completely set for 73 consecutive days. Outdoor activities are Nordic skiing, fishing, hiking, kayaking. Bird-watching and hunting are also popular.

Formal education starts at the age of 7 of the primary school (6 years) and lower secondary (3 years). Attendance is compulsory between 7 and 16 years. They can enter the workforce directly or apply to trade schools or gymnasiums. There are 20 universities and 30 polytechnics. The World Economic Forum ranks Finland's tertiary education the number 1 in the world. More than 30% are studying in science-related fields.

One of the most traditional cultures is cottage life by a lake, often combined with sauna, swimming and barbequing. Many Finns are emotionally connected to the countryside in nature. Their mentality is characterised by less small talking, more honest, and straight forward in communication. After the Protestant Reformation, Mikael Agricola translated the New Testament into Finnish (16C). In the 19th century, a national romantic movement began, encouraging Elias Lönnrot to collect Finnish and Karelian folk poetry, published as Kalevala, the Finnish national epic. There was also a rise of modern writers, such as Mika Waltari, and Frans Eemil Sillanpää of the Nobel Prize winner in literature (1939). Finns have contributed greatly to handicrafts, design and architecture. Eliel Saarinen and Alvar Aalto were internationally known.



The composer Jean Sibelius (1865–1957).

Much of the music is influenced by traditional Karelian melodies and lyrics, as the purest expression of the Finnish myths and beliefs. During the spread of nationalism, Jean Sibelius composed not only the symphony *Kullervo*, but also *Finlandia* (1899) which helped to gain independence. He remains one of most popular national figures. Today, Finland has a lively classical music composer and conductors. Of media, there are 200 newspapers; 320 popular and 2,100 professional magazines. Finns spend the most time reading newspapers in the world. The National Broadcasting Company YLE has five television and 13 radio channels in two national languages. 79% of the population use Internet, most with a mobile phone.

Traditional cuisine is a combination of European, Fennoscandian and Western Russian elements. The food is simple, fresh and healthy. Fish, meat, berries and ground vegetables are typical ingredients whereas spices are not common due to their historical unavailability. In coastal and lakeside villages, fish was a main cooking, and in the eastern and northern regions, vegetables and reindeer were common. The breakfast is oatmeal or bread. Lunch is usually a full warm meal, served by a canteen at workplaces. The official holidays are Christian (Christmas/Epiphany/Easter/Ascension/Pentecost/All Saints Day) and secular (New Year/1 May/Midsummer/Independence). Christmas is the most extensively celebrated.

Pesäpallo (baseball) is the national sport, but most popular sports in media coverage are Formula One, ice hockey and football. The national ice hockey team is considered one of the best in the world. Finland has been a top country in automobile racing, winning three Formula One World Champions, and produced best rally drivers and ski jumpers. Some outstanding athletes from the past are Hannes Kolehmainen (1890–1966), Paavo Nurmi (1897–1973) and Ville Ritola (1896–1982) who won Olympic medals in the 1910s and 20s. They are the first generation of middle and long-distance runners, called the "Flying Finns".

CONTINUITY FROM PAST AND CHALLENGE TO FUTURE

Finns have developed an extraordinary relationship with nature, called “Soul of the North”, and this has proven in their design approach of material and organic form. They are renowned for stoicism, toughness, tenacity, calmness and an inner resolution, reflected in a notion of “Sisu” whose meaning is “must be done will be done whatever it takes”. Their taciturnity and emotion are offset by design as a means of artistic creativity, derived from the tradition.

When the country became autonomy of Russia (1809), Finns were searching out their roots, and the nationalism appeared in Elias Lönnrot’s epic poem of the *Kalevala* (Land of Heroes 1835). In fact, before the First World War, Finnish design was influenced by European Art Nouveau. Gustaf Sterngell and Aigurd Frosterus began to strip National Romantic architecture and furniture. Sterngell wrote in 1901: “A chair is beautiful when it completely fulfils its function. No decorations are necessary, if it is comfortable to sit in, that is enough... If it is rightly built, then it is beautiful.” As Romanticism was part of Art Nouveau between the late 19th and early 20th, the synthesis of the national and international became a basis of Finnish design.

When Finland won independence (1917), there was a need for public buildings. Functionalism arrived, and its philosophy of utility and simplicity was in harmony with the cultural heritage, giving birth to characteristics of modern Finnish design. Although Finnish industrial art was affected by Modern Movement prevailing in Sweden (1920s), a social reform was begun with an aim of comfortable domesticity. Re-interpreting the puritan Bauhaus, Alvar Aalto incorporated organic forms and natural material to human-oriented designs. He hoped to enhance physical and psychological relations between products and users. His *Savoy* vase (1936) was inspired from the

undulating shape of Finnish lakes. By abstracting essence of nature through humanizing designs, he established one of Scandinavian philosophical design approaches.

Art glass activity was rich in Nuutajärvi, Karhula-Iittala and Riihimäki works in the 30s. Henry Ericsson won the first prize in a competition held by Riihimäki and a Grand Prix at the Barcelona World Exhibition (1929). This activity was continued by Arttu Brummer who laid the foundation for individuality in Finnish design. As editor of the Italian *Domus* magazine, he wrote in 1931 against economic depression,

In our times and especially under the circumstances in which we now live, the artist has become an individual who in a way exists outside society. Nobody really needs him and in vain he raises his voice to demand support and protection from the state.

It was after the Second World War that a demand for beauty was fulfilled and national self-confidence was achieved by design. Designers such as Tapio Wirkkala and Timo Sarpaneva forged a distinct design language to a new aesthetic expression. Finnish design gained international recognition by beautiful organic forms and materials. To Wirkkala's sculptural glassware, awarded at Milan Triennales (1951, 54), a comment was "mixture of primitive daring and incredible elegance". Apart from the pure Bauhaus functionalism, Finnish design projected the spirit of the age as a breakthrough in the 50s.

This was partly due to Finnish industry's using talented artists who knew material and individuality. Already, in the 20s and 30s, glass and ceramic workshops gave artists a free hand. Finnish design has followed the principle of cooperation between craftsmen, designer, and manufacturer to raise a higher quality. Moreover, the well-known designer, Kaj Franck, believed in simplicity and pure line which stood out from other countries: Aalto's plywood chair was made of pale birch of "elsewhere as raw material for

furniture”. In planning, an entity has played an important role, exemplified in Eliel Saarinen design from each product to the smallest detail.

The handling of sensitive material and the promotion of organic forms remained under the Golden Age in the 60s and early 70s. Designers experimented with new techniques and explored bold colours and iconoclastic shapes, seen in Oiva Toikka’s glassware, Vuokko Nurmesniemi’s textiles, and Eero Aarnio’s furniture. During the global oil-crisis, a rational approach was focused on ergonomics, safety and social inclusiveness. Yrjö Kukkapuro’s *Fysio* chair (1978) was one of the first office chairs, based on anthropometric data.

In the following decades, there prevailed Post-Modernism which led a number of radical products such as Stefan Lindfors’ insect-like *Scaragoo* lamp (1987). Since then, Finland has enjoyed a design-driven economic boom as a result of innovative solutions and excellent manufacturing, in contrast to other Scandinavian neighbours. Today, companies, such as Arabia and Iittala, are proud of linking with the great designers of the past, and at the same time associating with the best upcoming designers from Finland and abroad.

It can be said that Finns visualize their deep-rooted connection with nature which supplies their designs with a sublime transcendence over pure function, delighting the hand and the eye. By combining knowledge of craft traditions with empathy for materials and a concern of function, Finnish designers continue to create high profiled products. Finnish design can be identified by simplicity and straightforwardness. Simplicity is the beauty of a form, grasping fine shades of human problems. The long struggle for survival has refused all physical and mental surfaces and economy.

Another characteristic in Finnish design is pure joy in expression. Crafts are restrained but decorated effectively, and design is strictly functional. As tradition is permitted when it meets modern needs, some designers are seeking the roots of Finnish form in heritage with a new light. A feature of the current Finnish design has a comprehensive and well-planned environment,

aesthetically for anyone, extended to specific areas - children's toys, aids for old people and handicap, and the proper working by climate. "Design-intensive" philosophy is based on a high standard of design according to human awareness.

THE GREAT FINNISH DESIGNERS

ALVAR AALTO (1898-1976)

KAJ FRANCK (1911-1989)

TAPIO WIRKKALA (1915-85)

TIMO SARPANEVA (1926-2006)

MAIJA ISOLA (1927-2001)

ANTTI NURMESNIEMI (1927-2003)

VUOKKO ESKOLIN-NURMESNIEMI (1930-)

OIVA TOIKKA (1931-)

EERO AARNIO (1932-)

YRJÖ KUKKAPURO (1933-)

STEFAN LINDFORS (1962-)

HARRY KOSKINEN (1970-)

ALVAR AALTO (1898-1976)

Aalto is Finland's most celebrated architect-designer and one of the pioneers of organic Modernism. He studied at the Institute of Industrial Arts in Helsinki (1921). His architectural work brought him international recognition through the first functional Turun Sanomat Building (1927). In furniture, he experimented with laminated wood, veneer bonding and the limits of moulding plywood, such as *No. 41* and cantilevered *No. 31* chairs (1932). The human-oriented innovative designs signalled plywood as a new material, connecting vertical and horizontal elements, attachable legs under the seat: *L-leg* (1933), *Y-leg* (1947) and *Fan-leg* (1954).

Aalto's *Savoy* glass vase was designed for a competition by Karhula-littala for the Finnish contemporary work at the "Exposition Universelle et International" in Paris (1937). He designed a joyful object with various sizes - the largest standing on the floor; the shallowest for a tray, naming "the Leather Breeches of an Eskimo Woman". A curving, asymmetrical and freely flowing form rebelled against dominant traditional design in symmetry. He let the vases grow as organic shapes, depicting the shorelines of Finnish lakes and the contours of the terrain.

This originality of the vase made Aalto again internationally known as a glass designer. Aalto refused severe geometric forms and man-made materials such as tubular metal, due to their inappropriateness to the human condition. His work was recognized in UK /USA during the 30s-40s as one of organic Modernists. Opposing the extreme Modern Movement which alienates aesthetic and rational design, Aalto claimed, "The best standardization committee in the world is nature herself, but in nature standardization occurs mainly in connection with the smallest possible unit, cells. The result is millions of flexible combinations in which one never encounters the stereotyped." Inspired by the relationship between mankind and nature, his holistic and human design became a key philosophy in Scandinavian design.



Model No. 41 lounge chair with laminated birch (1931~1932)



Stool 60 (1933)



Aalto's sketches for Karhula-Iittala's competition, Savoy vase (1936)

KAJ FRANCK (1911-1989)

Franck studied at the Institute of Industrial Arts in Helsinki (1932), and worked as an illustrator, interior and textile designer. During his military service, he understood under-privileged society. Working for Arabia (1945), he designed everyday modern crockery and kitchenware for multipurpose in geometric. In an article (1949), Franck wrote,

New conditions of life and a new lifestyle have forced us to modernize home fittings. . . You can see hardly any change in everyday porcelain ware. . . There is no need for compromising on the need for appropriate utility items. Durable, solid, water-proof, easy to wash . . . our times will build its design idiom on the conditions of life and forms which belong to us.

Franck realized the ideals in glazed-faience *Kilta* range (1952), not as a traditional dinner set but as individual pieces. He designed limited *Lumipallo* (Snowball) series of pressed glassware (1954), *Kartio* range of jugs and drinking glasses. Frank moved to Nuutajärvi (1950) for better experiments, establishing studio glass. He recruited Italian Murano glassblowers, and some of his designs bore the Venetian influence.

Varied styles of his blown art glass were rustic with bubbles and colour bands. One of the last projects was redesigning *Kilta* range, resulting *Teema* range of 19 pieces in geometric forms (1980). He said that “the only possible way to solve the problems of utility ware was to be radical and social”. His career reflects the unique working practice of Scandinavian designer who design functional goods for mass production along with exclusive limited art pieces.



Kremlin Bells decanter, model no. 1500 (1958)



Kartio glassware range (1958)



Teema range (1980)

TAPIO WIRKKALA (1915-1985)

Wirkkala studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1936), and shared the first prize with Kaj Franck in a glassware competition held by Iittala (1947). His blown-glass *kantarelli* vases, inspired by chanterelle mushroom, captured the fluid organic abstraction to post-war Scandinavian design. Its series established an international reputation. Wirkkala's work evoked a strong sense of national identity through traditional materials, handcraft, and seductive forms found in nature.

As a versatile designer, his output ranged from the everyday objects to art pieces. He took a workman approach to design, “get away from the drawing board, to see just how a product is made and get to know the people who will help make it. . . get a real contact with the joy”. He had empathy for his materials besides his virtuous technique.

All materials have their own unwritten laws. This is forgotten far too often. You should never be violent with the material you're working on, and the designer should aim at being in harmony with his material.

Wirkkala pioneered an expressive language of organic form that was modern but timeless beauty. He won many awards - the Lunning Prize (1951), the Golden Obelisk, Domus Italia (1963), the Prince Eugen Medal (1980). Besides *Ultima Thule* range (1968), he designed jewellery, package of Finlandia vodka bottle, etc. “No one has ever invented new forms. It's only a question of the way in which line and shape are used.” His form-giving skills created objects of extraordinary originality, imbued with intelligence, simplicity, tactility and beauty, underlying humanist ethos.



Kantarelli (1947)



Tapio glassware range (1954)



Ultima Thule glassware range (1968)

TIMO SARPANEVA (1926-2006)

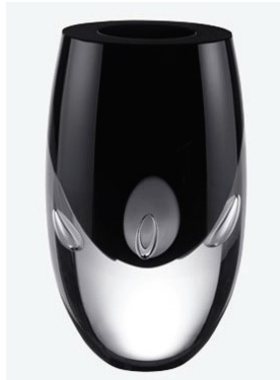
Sarpaneva studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1948). He won second prize in a glass competition held by Riihimäki (1949). Although he received a silver medal at the IX Milan Triennale (1951) for textile, his glassware brought him the greatest acclaim. One of his first technical innovations at Iittala was a steam blowing method, such as the *Kajakki* (1953), *Maailmankaunein* (1954) and *Linnunsilma* (1953) vessels, as well as for colour tinted thin glass plates known as *Aquarelles*. These were sculptural and creative in Finnish design. Moreover, he introduced i-Glass to bridge the gap between art and utility glassware. The industrial line had 17 items, available in several colours to combine. The 50s and 60s saw a dynamic synergy at Iittala with Sarpaneva and Wirkkala. One of Sarpaneva's most influential designs was *Finlandia* series of vases (1964), using slabs moulds, carved in alder wood, charred by the red-hot glass.

In 1992 Leena Kattunen wrote on "Make Glass Not War" at the Finnish Glass Museum: "Sarpaneva has liberated himself from the strict discipline of design and progressed to self-awareness." This technique reappeared in *Festivo* candleholders (1966) with metal moulds. *Finlandia* and *Festivo* heralded the fashion for frosted glass. Sarpaneva applied a unique technique to each range, such as *Archipelago* (1978), *Claritas* (1984), and *Marcel* (1990).

Many of his designs are round-square forms, notably *Claritas*, while *Lasi aika* sculpture was in open and expressive forms. He was made an Honorary Royal Designer for Industry in London (1963), and received a State Award from the Finnish government (1985). Through mastery of materials and artistic sensibility, his work evokes the spiritual essence and a beauty of nature, influencing Finnish glass design.



Finlandia vase series (c1964~1970)



Festivo candlestick(1966), Claritas vase (1984)



Enamelled cast iron casserole with teak handle (1960)

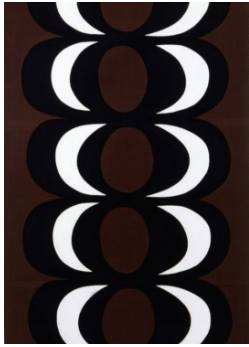
MAIJA ISOLA (1927-2001)

Isola studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1949), and was the principal designer for the Printex textile firm under artistic directorship of Armi Ratia. Isola designed numerous printed textiles for interior. From 1951, she also designed for Marimekko, Printex's sister company, founded at the intention of promoting Printex textiles in fashion and interior design. The inexpensive cotton was transformed by her bold abstract patterns to elegant yet avant-garde textiles. Marimekko dress and furnishing fabrics, as well as Printex textiles were included in the "Design in Scandinavia" that toured USA and Canada (1954-7). Her work was also in the "Forms Scandinavia" in Paris and displayed at the Brussels' World Fair (1958).

Isola's earliest designs were inspired by the African art, executed in bright colour crayons and hand-painted stripes. She was producing floral motif (mid-50s), Slovakian folk art (late 50s), Karelian peasant motifs (late 60s-early 70s). In the mid-60s, she produced the most famous range of large-scale geometric patterns in strong flat colours. The bold designs such as *Kaivo* (1964), *Melooni* (1963), and *Cock and Hen* (1965) reflected contemporary artistic trends, influenced by Colour Field. Her fabrics had a strong graphic quality, epitomizing Marimekko textiles and a new direction in Finnish design. She received ID Prizes (1965, 68).



Unikko (1960), Silkkikuikka 1961)



Kaivo (1964)



Lokki (1961)

ANTTI NURMESNIEMI (1927-2003)

Nurmesniemi studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1950), where social and technical issues were taught. He practised under Viljo Revell and Keijo Petäjä, a new rational architecture firm that reflected the influence of the Modern Movement. Nurmesniemi designed interiors and furniture including his horseshoe-shaped *Sauna* stool for the Palace Hotel (1952). Establishing his own firm (1956), he designed enamelled coffee pot as an icon of Modernism, due to its contemporary industrial aesthetic that predicted the colourful nature of Scandinavian design in 60s. About his *Antti* and *Yleispuhelin* telephones (1984), he claims,

An object should not be designed simply to fulfil a purpose, but for the user. . . . A simply designed object is wrong, if its use is complicated. . . . A designed object does not need to reflect the times. It is much better if it offers a hint of the future.

Nurmesniemi was awarded a Lunning Prize (1959) for refined and distinctive design derived from his systemizing modern European forms with Scandinavian craftsmanship. Like Aalto, he was guided by the concept of shared responsibility in society, and promoted a humanistic approach to Modernism in the practical beauty and utility.



Sauna stool(1951~1952), Antti coffee pot(1957)



Triennale chair (1960) for a gold medal at the 1960 XII Milan Triennale



Model no. 001 chaise lounge for Vuokko (1968)

VUOKKO ESKOLIN-NURMESNIEMI (1930-)

Vuokko studied at the Institute of Industrial Arts in Helsinki (1952), and worked at Marimekko as art director. During the post-war, women's dresses are made of dark and drab coloured textiles for "make do and mend". Marimekko was using printed textiles for clothing, and Vuokko created the first line of youthful and fun garments. Already in the 50s, she was a forerunner of a liberated, simplified and personal style of dress. "I was a child of nature back then, only 21 when I joined Marimekko. My textiles were full of colour: yellows, oranges, pinks . . ."

Her textiles, *Tibet* and *Ram*, were patterned with large geometric motifs, often a third colour as a key feature of Marimekko. Her dress was as radical as well. Targeting universal appeal, she liberated women with loose cloths with zipper, press-button and Velcro tape. She calls herself a designer of everyday wear. "I am a functionalist. A garment must be simple and functional, but never dull."

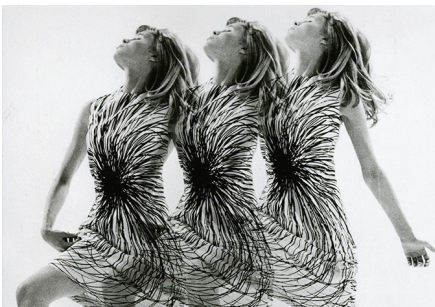
Her breaking designs were acclaimed at the first Marimekko show in Stockholm (1957) and her bright colours were appreciated in USA. *Jokapoika* shirt with small, colourful piccolo stripes is still popular. Her clothes and textiles relied on structural essentialism. Vuokko founded her own company, Vuokko (1964). She received many awards - the Lunning Prize (1964), the Finnish State Design Prize (1969), the Prince Eugene Medal (1986), and the Kaj Franck Prize (1997). She was made an Honorary Royal Designer in London (1988). Vuokko created trends as a characteristic of Finnish design.



Indus fabric (1956)



Jokapoika piccolo shirt (1957)



Pyorre design (1964)

OIVA TOIKKA (1931-)

Toikka studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1956). At Nuutajärvi, he designed a huge free-blown *Kurkkupurkki* (pickle jar) glass - bright colours, bold forms, and abstract pictures from folk art and contemporary design. He produced *Lillipop Isle* glass sculptures (1969) which revealed the joyful, free Pop aesthetic of the time, enhancing the confidence of Finnish glass. Toikka stated,

The 60s was in a way a wonderful time, because one was still carried along by the idea that Finnish was good. It was also a happy time in that people still had faith in glass and design generally. . . it was fun. . . the sky was the limit as far as the appreciation of all the applied arts was concerned.

Toikka also produced industrial goods, such as *Kastehelmi* (Dew drop) glassware (1964) which became one of Nutajärvi's best-selling. Embellished with concentric circles of pearl-like beads, the range included plates, bowls and candlesticks with colours or without. Toikka's *Pioni* (Peony) tableware explored the potential of moulded glass - the smallest size with a budding peony, the middle with an opening flower, and the largest with a blossomed one. Every piece exudes humanity and warmth as a product of the heart.

He produced annually a miniature glass wall of *Vuosikuutiot* (Year Cube 1977). Often disregarding function in favour of fantastic form, Toikka's playful, individualistic and inventive designs owns a poetic quality. He received many awards - the Lunning Prize (1970) and the Prop Finlandia Medal (1980). His famous birds recollect "Nature is an unending source of inspiration for me — and glass, as a natural material, is its best interpreter". He blurred the boundaries of art and design through glassware.



Kastehelmi glassware range (1964)



Ruby(2003), Scarlet Tanager (2004), Red Ibis Bird (2005)



2011 Vuosikuutiot

EERO AARNIO (1932-)

Aarnio studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1957). Following the earlier Finish designers, he designed furniture with natural materials using traditional craft, such as *Jattujakkare* wicker stool (1958). His philosophy was “Design means constant renewal, realignment, growth.” He began experiments with the bold and exciting forms with fibreglass. His best-known series are *Ball or Globe* chair (1962) and rocking *Pastilli* chair (1967) for which he received an America Industrial Designer Award (1968).

Although these iconoclastic seating solutions captured the spirit of the 60s, Aarnio did not embrace the Pop culture. He designed toy-like yet adult-sized *Pony* seat (1973), made of upholstered moulded foam. He believes that, “A chair is a chair, is a chair, is a chair . . . but a seat does not necessarily have to be a chair. It can be anything as long as it is ergonomically correct.” This Pop design could either be sat on sideways or rode to a fantasy limited by one’s own imagination. During the 90s, he produced fibreglass tables, *Copacabana* (1991) and *Screw* (1992).



Globe (1962), Pastilli (1967)



Adelta chair (2002)



Tupla Kupla lamp (2003)

YRJÖ KUKKAPURO (1933-)

Kukkapuro studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1958). He designed chairs with moulded plywood seat and tubular metal frames (1961). “I was already dreaming of making fibreglass chairs, but the dream was little short of utopia in the Finland of those days.” This simple technique, a heated steel form is dipped into powdered plastic to form a layer of melted material. His fibreglass and leather *Karuselli* (Carousel 1965) chair was an innovative single-form seat which embodied Kukkapuro’s belief that “a chair could also be a reflection of the human form as softly shaped as people are. And if at all possible, just as beautiful.” *Karuselli* was featured on the cover of *Domus* magazine (1966), testifying to the importance of design and the influence of Finnish design. His other moulded plastic is *Saturnus* tables (1987).

By the oil crisis of the mid-70s, the plastics era was replaced by ergonomics and ecology, thus Kukkapuro examined different human sizes to generate the anthropometric data for a form-pressed plywood office chair. *Fysio* chair (1978) was the first ergonomic office chair. Of his *Experiment* chairs (1983), he states that “Post-Modernism has once again put us in touch with the vital element that the French call ‘joie de vivre’”. Kukkapuro’s work is Finnish, being distinct by strong graphic outlines, technical innovation, high-quality materials and construction.



Karusell (1964), Saturnus table for Karusell (1965)



Remmi series - lounge chair, a foot stool, coffee table (c1970)

STEFAN LINDFORS (1962-)

Lindfors studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1988). As a student he received a silver medal at the Milan Triennale (1986), and designed insect-like *Scaragoo* halogen table lamp (1988), made of aluminum, steel, plastic and concrete. This lamp activated by touch became one of the best known Post-Modern Scandinavian designs, leading him to be renowned as a protagonist of avant-garde between the late 80s and early 90s. His subversive design blurred the boundary between functional objects and works of art.

He designed the Marimekko shop in Helsinki (1990), receiving the highest Nordic cultural accolade — the Väinö Tanner (Trailblazer) Award (1992). He made sculptural works, such as *Winged Victory* for the Swedish Pavilion at the Atlanta Olympic and *Freedom of Speech* at the Finnish Embassy in Washington (1996). He started *EgO* range of ceramics for Arabia and the first collection of Hackman tools, winning a Design Plus Award (1999) and a Good Design Award (2000). By bringing an artistic sensibility to the design of functional objects, his work is peculiar but distinct Scandinavian in character.



Scaragoo table lamp (1987-8)



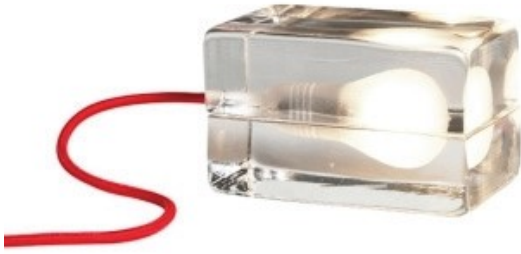
Ego (1998)



HARRY KOSKINEN (1970-)

Koskinen studied at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (1994) where he collaborated with Iittala for a wedding present project. He became fascinated by the process of the molten glass which enabled him a cast glass lamp. His *Block Lamp* was put into production with success, winning a placement at the Nuutajärvi glassworks and later Iittala.

Koskinen has created a number of innovative designs, such as *Atlas* candle holder (1996) which when inverted transforms into a vase, *Klubi* range of drinking glasses (1998) which he puts it “good glass mass”, and *Relations* storm candleholder (1999) as the largest glass made at Iittala. Koskinen also designed simple and functional stainless steel utensils for outdoor cooking (2000), reflecting his childhood in the countryside: “a belief and courage to rely on the fundamental things in life”. His *Air* storage containers (2001) are practical and beautiful. Koskinen’s work embodies the key values in Finnish design of innovation, function, simplicity, and artistry.



Block lamp (1996)



Lantern candleholder (1999), Relations storm candleholder (1999)



Stainless steel pot for home chefs (2002)



P A R T F O U R
S W E D E N



THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN (Konungariket Sverige) is located on the Scandinavian Peninsula in Northern Europe. It has 449,964 km² with a population of 9.17 million. Sweden has lowland areas similar to those in Denmark and Finland, and mountain areas not steep as those in Norway. The agricultural south is flat and hilly, compared to wilder landscape in the north where Lapps are living. Temperature is cool in summers and cold in winters, but the south benefits from milder Gulf stream. In the ninth century, Vikings raided the Europe, and during the 11th and 12th centuries, Sweden became a unified Christian kingdom. In the 16th century, Gustav Vasa fought for an independent Sweden, carrying out the Reformation. Sweden gave Finland to Russia (1809), and French Marshal Bernadotte was elected Crown Prince as Karl Johan. The country was dissolved at Norway's request (1905). Machinery, electricity, aircraft, paper, and home appliances are the main commodities. The country's capital is Stockholm.

BACKGROUND

Sweden, officially called Kingdom of Sweden, is a Nordic country on the Scandinavian Peninsula. It borders with Norway and Finland, and is connected to Denmark by the Oresund Bridge. Sweden is the largest country by area in Northern Europe and fourth in all of Europe. Sweden has a low population density of 20 people per km². Modern Sweden emerged out Kalmar Union (1397) and by the unification of the country by King Gustav Vasa in the 16th century. The country expanded as an empire in the next century, but later, the eastern half of Sweden was lost to Russia (1809). The last lost war was in 1814, and since then, Sweden has been at peace, adopting a non-aligned foreign policy and neutrality.



Gustav II Adolph of Sweden.

The modern name “Sweden” is derived from Old English Sweoðeod, which meant “people of the Swedes”. The Swedish name Sverige literally means “Realm of the Swedes”. Prehistory begins in c. 12,000 BC with Late Palaeolithic reindeer-hunting camps at the edge of the ice. Farming and cattle breeding, monumental burial, polished flint axes and decorated pottery arrived from the Continent in 4,000 BC. The third of southern part was the stock-keeping and agricultural Bronze Age area in 1,700 BC. Caused by a Roman attempt to move forward in the ninth century, a major shift in the

Scandinavian material culture took place, revealing contacts with the Romans. In the second century, the runic script was invented, but the people used Proto-Norse, a language ancestral to Swedish and other North Germanic languages.

The Swedish Viking Age lasted between the eighth and 11th centuries. They travelled east and south, going to Finland, the Baltic countries, Russia, the Mediterranean and further as far as Baghdad. It is not known when and how the kingdom of Sweden was born, but the list of Swedish monarchs is drawn from the first kings who ruled Svealand (Sweden) and Götaland (Gothia) as one with Erik the Victorious. St. Ansgar introduced Christianity around 829, and Sweden is counted as a Christian nation from 1050. The period between 1100 and 1400 was characterized by internal power struggles and competition among the Nordic kingdoms. Swedish kings also began to expand in Finland.

In the 14th century, Sweden was struck by the Black Death (the Plague). However, the cities began to acquire rights, influenced by German merchants of the Hanseatic League. Sweden and Norway were united under King Magnus Eriksson (1319), and Queen Margaret I of Denmark effected the union of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark through the Kalmar Union (1397). On 6 June 1523, Gustav Vasa became the king, leading Sweden to the Protestant Reformation. He is considered to be Sweden's "Father of the Nation".

During the imperial times, Sweden was the most powerful country of northern Europe and the Baltic Sea. By his Protestant leadership in the Thirty Years' War, Gustav II Adolph made Sweden the third biggest nation in Europe after Russia and Poland. Charles XI (1655-97) rebuilt the economy, and his son, Charles XII, was one of the finest arsenals in the world, with a large standing army and a great fleet. Although Sweden could not maintain its territories outside Scandinavia entering the 18th century, Norway was ceded to Sweden after Denmark-Norway's defeat in the Napoleonic Wars (1814-1905).

Mass emigration to America became the only way to prevent famine and rebellion, and Sweden remained still poor. Between 1850 and 1910 more than one million Swedes moved to the United States. In Sweden, many changes were taking place in the agrarian economy due to innovations and the large population growth. Strong grassroots movements sprung up, creating a foundation of democratic principles. The Swedish Social Democratic Party was founded (1889). When the Industrial Revolution progressed, people began moving into cities to work in factories, being involved in socialist unions.

Sweden remained officially neutral during two World Wars, but was under German influence. When Germany started to defeat, Sweden played a role in humanitarian efforts, and many refugees, among them Jews from Nazi-occupied Europe, were saved. Following the war, Sweden expanded its industrial base, social stability and natural resources, and competed with internationally manufacturing sector, such as wood pulp, steel industry, and robotizing mechanical engineering. Sweden joined EU (1995).

Sweden lies west of the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Bothnia, providing a long coastline. At 449,964 km², Sweden is the 55th largest country in the world, the fifth in Europe, and the largest in Northern Europe with a population of 9.2 million people. Sweden has mild temperatures due to the Gulf stream. In southern and central Sweden, summers are pleasantly warm with comfortable cool evenings; while the north experiences cooler temperatures. In the Arctic area, the sun never sets for part of each summer, and in the winter, night is unending.

Sweden is a mixture of constitutional monarchy, in which King Carl XVI Gustaf is head of state, but royal power is limited to official and ceremonial functions. The nation's modern legislative body is the Riksdag (Parliament) with 349 members. Riksdag is responsible for choosing the prime minister, who then appoints the government. The Social Democratic Party has played a leading political role since 1917. The country has a history of strong

political involvement by ordinary people, such as trade unions and the women's movement. Sweden is currently leading the EU in statistics measuring equality in the political and education systems. On healthcare, Sweden ranks in the top five countries with respect to low infant mortality. It ranks high in life expectancy and in safe drinking water.

Sweden is an export-oriented market economy. Timber, hydropower, and iron constitute the natural resource. Engineering sector accounts for 50% of output and exports, and telecommunications, the automotive and pharmaceutical industries are important. Swedes are said to be talented, technical, and tolerant to business. Sweden maintains its own currency, the Swedish Krona (SEK).



The Riksdag building, Stockholm, summer scenery in Jämtland.

Before the 11th century, Swedes adhered to Norse paganism, worshipping Æsir gods, with its centre at the temple in Uppsala. With Christianization, the

laws of the country were changed, forbidding worship of other deities. The 19th century saw the arrival of evangelical free churches and secularism, leading many to distance themselves from church. Today about 75% of Swedes belong to the church of state, but the number is decreasing.

The first literary texts on the Rök rune stone are carved during the Viking Age circa 800. With the conversion to Christianity around 1100, Sweden entered the Middle Ages which monastic writers preferred to use Latin. It was the 16th century which Swedish literature flourished due to language standardization (Swedish Bible in 1541). Sweden has worldwide authors including August Strindberg, Astrid Lindgren, and Nobel Prize winners Selma Lagerlöf and Harry Martinson. In seven Nobel Prizes in literature have been awarded to Swedes. Filmmaker Ingmar Bergman and actors Greta Garbo and Ingrid Bergman became noted. Sweden was seen as an international leader as the “sexual revolution” with gender equality. The number of single people is one of the highest in the world. Sweden has become fairly liberal regarding homosexuality, offering registered partnerships and domestic partnerships for same-sex couples.

Sweden has a rich musical tradition, ranging from medieval folk ballads to hip hop music, including a choral. Instrument is the lur (a sort of trumpet). ABBA was one of the first internationally popular music bands. Apart from Protestant Christian holidays, Sweden celebrates pre-Christian traditions - Midsummer celebrating the summer solstice, Labour Day (1 May), the day of giver-of-light Saint Lucia (13 December), and the National Day (6 June). In August many Swedes have kräftskivor (crayfish dinner parties). Martin Tours Eve is celebrated in Scania in November with Mårten Gås parties, where roast goose and svartsoppa (black soup) are served.

Swedish cuisine was simple. Fish (particularly herring), meat and potatoes played prominent roles. Spices were sparse. Famous dishes include meatballs, served with gravy, boiled potatoes and lingonberry jam; pancakes, lutfisk, and smörgåsbord, or lavish buffet. Akvavit is a popular alcoholic

distilled beverage, and the drinking of snaps is of cultural importance. The traditional flat and dry crisp bread has developed into contemporary variants. Sports are a national movement with half of the population participating. Two main spectator sports are association football and ice hockey. Second to football, horse sports have the highest number of practitioners, mostly women. The Swedish ice hockey team Tre Kronor has won the World Championships, and Olympic gold medals (1994, 2006).

CONTINUITY FROM PAST AND CHALLENGE TO FUTURE

Swedish daily life is guided by liberal attitudes with a strong sense of civic duty. The balance of individual freedom and collective responsibility has ensured a stable and comprehensive society. The humanist ethos of Lutheranism has permeated all aspects, and aesthetic considerations have been tempered by economic and social concerns - simple and modest products of Swedish Modernism. Utilitarian products are for everyday to everyone.

The origins of Swedish design can be traced to the 18th century, when King Gustav III (reigned 1771-92) initiated Neo-Classicism. Underlining lightness, comfort, and simplicity, Gustavian interiors were filled with pastel colour, pale painted pine furniture, and bare wooden floors, offering a gentler interpretation of continental Neo-Classicism. In the 1830s and 40s, Sweden produced sparsely decorated furniture in birch and maple under German Biedemeier. This restrained design reflected not only the lack of importing fine materials, but also the Swedish moral of modesty and simplicity.

Entering the mid-19th century, Neo-Classicism was usurped by Revivalism with heavily ornamented mixture of historical influences from Gothic to Rococo. Moreover, the economic slump forced manufacturers to reevaluate their products. In response to these, the Föreningen Svensk Form (Swedish Society of Craft and Industrial Design 1845) was founded, hoping that Swedish industry maintains through good design and high standards of technical quality: “bring about improvements in handicraft and industry through cooperation with artistic forces, better the household culture, and work to raise the general level of taste.”

At the end of this century, Arts and Crafts movement was nationally distinct. Carl and Karin Larsson furnished their house in a simple peasant culture against industrialization. The Swedish Art Nouveau was prompted to a national aesthetic, exemplified in Gunnar Wennerberg's work of flora and fauna themes. It was Ellen Key who wrote the liberal morals through aesthetics in "Skönhet åt Alla" (Beauty for All 1899). Inspired by Larsson, she urged that design standards could be raised to bring out social reform by refining people's taste and enhancing their appreciation of aesthetic issues: "beautiful home surroundings would be sure to make people happier". However, Art Nouveau was criticized for moral turpitude and lack of social purpose at the Baltic Exhibition in Malmö (1914).

Wilhelm Kåge's *Arbetarservisen* (Workers' Service 1917) displayed the new ethos of ethics-through-aesthetics in design. The printed *Liljebå* (Blue Lily) flint ware alluded to folk art with soft Rococo forms. The simplicity as a symbol for beauty gained ground after the end of the First World War when a world conjured up ideas for a better society. Gregor Paulsson wrote at the "Home Exhibition" in Stockholm (1918) with a key phrase, "Vakrare Vardagsvara" (More Beautiful Everyday Objects). A new and large group were overlooked by industry. Low-wagers need inexpensive, useful yet attractive wares, and factories could benefit by design as a marketing tool. "Good design" is pleasant without wasting natural and human resources.

During the 20s, a combination of avant-garde and industrialization revealed contradiction: national/international, urban/rural, primitive/modern at the "Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes" in Paris (1925). However their commonness was simplicity and elegance. At this time, the Swedish Social Democratic government regarded modern design as a means for social reform, because modernity and technology bridges the gap between capitalism and collectivism. Functionalism (Funkis) projected a sterile institutional aesthetic

that stressed hygiene over homely comfort. Hygiene was the key for a strong nation with good health.

The Stockholm Exhibition (1930) marked a turning point of urban progress over rural traditionalism. Erik Gunnar Asplund was responsible for this. Funkis underlined industrialization as a social and aesthetic ideal, and claimed standardized building and functional furniture. In contrast, the opponents of Funkis argued that social needs could be addressed through the implementation of modern design. To this, a compromise was sought between organic materials and industrial production, initiated by Bruno Mathsson's *Eva* chair (1934) whose seating was made of moulded solid wood and woven hemp webbing, echoing human body. After the Second World War, Modernism became a symbol with "design as life-style". Dogmatic Functionalism was rejected and Modernism of sensual forms, warm earth colours, natural materials, and rationalism was evolved at "H55" in Helsingborg (1955), as a pioneering generation of industrial products.

The late 50s post-war baby boom promoted child-oriented design, while a focus was on ergonomics and safety in the next two decades. Victor Papanek's book, *Design for a Real world* (1970) called for a high level of moral and social responsibility in design profession. The most successful was *Innovator Design* (1969) which Johan Hultdt and Jan Dranger retained their designs anonymously to counter the cult of designer products. Using tubular metal and canvas, they developed colourful, inexpensive yet practical furnishings. It was the democratic roots of Swedish design and signalled a new internationalism within Scandinavian design. Although their designs were the 30s' Functionalism, they are the international High-Tech style.

During the early 80s, Post-Modernism arrived. Jonas Bohlin's *Concrete* chair (1981) was one of the first Scandinavian manifestations, and Mats Theselius' *National Geographic Magazine* bookcase (1990) brought international attention to contemporary Swedish design. However, it was flat-pack furnishing of IKEA that played the greatest role in exporting the

notion of “design as lifestyle”. Today, Swedish design continues the components of durability, economy, honesty, affordability, and functionality by democratic and responsible solutions. Believing that well-designed products can enhance the quality of life, “Vackrare Vardagsvara” will validate to the future design. On the 50th anniversary of IKEA, Papanek noted,

The sustainability of life on this planet can be helped or hindered through the design and use of the objects we make. Ethical design must be environmentally and ecologically earth-friendly. It must be human-scale; it must be humane; it must be embedded in social responsibility.

THE GREAT SWEDISH DESIGNERS

CARL LARSSON (1853-1919) & KARIN LARSSON (1859-1928)

ERIK GUNNAR ASPLUND (1885-1940)

BRUNO MATHSSON (1907-1988)

SIGVARD BERNADOTTE (1907-2002)

GUNNAR CYRÉN (1931-)

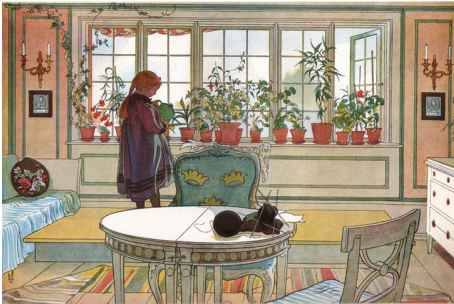
JOHAN HULDT (1942-) & JAN DRANGER (1941-)

BJÖRN DAHLSTRÖM (1957-)

CARL LARSSON (1853-1919) & KARIN LARSSON (1859-1928)

Larssons were pioneers to the notion of design as lifestyle, due to their eclectic style on warm domesticity. During his study at the Academy of Art in Stockholm, Carl did caricatures to the journal *Kasper* and graphics to the newspaper *Ny Illustrated Tidning*. He moved to Paris and Grez, painting a poetic realism and strong narrative quality. He married to Swedish artist, Karin Bergöö (1883). Karin's father gave the family a small house in Sundborn village of Darlarna, the mystic heart of Sweden. Karin decorated it with a simple folk style of white painted and built-in furniture, wooden floors, embroidered textiles, and pots of red geraniums. His idyllic, rural, and free lifestyle was reproduced in an album, *Ett Hem* (Our Home 1899) with a phrase of "reform taste ad family life".

His house was remodelled with a simplicity and warmth to evolve a new concept of Swedish domesticity. Believing art in the home, Larssons embellished every surface of the house by portraits and mottos of "Love Each Other Children, for Love is All". This house was a realization of Arts and Craft for a rural ideal and a manifestation of the Scandinavian notion of "Hygge", a joyful cosiness. The integrated and simple lifestyle formed a background from which modern Swedish design evolved, seen as the spiritual progenitor of the IKEA aesthetic.



Ett hem illustration (1899)

ERIK GUNNAR ASPLUND (1885-1940)

Asplund studied at the Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm (1909). He became editor of the journal *Teknisk Tidskrift Arkitektur*, and received recognition for interior design at the Liljevalchs Art Gallery (1917). He designed a number of Neo-Classical buildings, notably the *Scandia Cinema*, Stockholm (1923), and the *Stockholm City Library* (1928). He also made classical furnishings, such as *Senna* chair (1925). Asplund's work underwent a dramatic transformation when he became chief architect for the Stockholm Exhibition (1930) organized by the Swedish Society of Craft and Design.

Drawing international recognition, his Modernist glass and metal exhibition building introduced Bauhaus to Sweden. By combining Modern functionalism with the grace of Scandinavian Neo-Classicism, Asplund developed a design language that was less severe than that of contemporary German Modernist architects. His achievements included *Skogsykogården*, Stockholm, and an extension to the town Hall in Gothenburg. One of the most prominent advocates of functionalism and Sweden's most important architect, Asplund combined common sense with artistic intuition in his lifetime search for balanced unity and clarity of form.



Stockholm City Library (1928)

BRUNO MATHSSON (1907-1988)

Mathsson trained under his father's firm in Värnamo (1933). During the early 30s Funkis dominated in Sweden, and designers such as Axel Larsson and Sven Markelius produced strong geometric forms of functional furniture. In contrast, Mathsson claimed the necessity of design for the natural sitting, and designed an ergonomic perspective with its contours echoing the human body. Flexibility and comfort were solved by using jute or hemp webbing. His first chair *Arbetsstol* (Working Chair 1936) afforded the sitter greater comfort, explaining a generational shift from geometric Functionalism to organic Modernism, and signaling a new sculptural confidence in product design. His organic *Arbetsstol* and *Pernilla* chaise lounge (1934) with bent laminated wood frames can predate Aalto's *Model no. 43* (1936) and *Model no. 406* (1939).

Although his designs were less utilitarian than Aalto's, they were more ergonomic. He participated in the "Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne" in Paris (1937). *Karin* chair (1968) was a proto-High Tech design with a tubular metal frame, hemp canvas seat, and upholstered cushions. Mathsson was awarded the Gregor Paulsson Trophy (1955) and exhibited at the New York World Fair (1937), "Svenska Fom" in Copenhagen (1946), etc. As a pioneer, Mathsson devoted himself to the continual refinement of ideal types based on structural purity and human-oriented logic.



Pernilla lounge chair (1934), Eva chair (1936), originally as the Arbetsstol - working chair



Jeson chair (1966)

SIGVARD BERNADOTTE (1907-2002)

Bernadotte, the son of King Gustav VI Adolf of Sweden, studied at the Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm and the National School of Applied Arts in Munich (1931), despite his earlier studies on political science. He joined Georg Jensen, becoming the first designer to use geometric forms against the naturalistic Arts and Crafts forms in silversmith. *Bernadotte flatware* (1939) displays a typical angular form. He also designed a volumetric metal and bakelite cocktail shaker.

After his travelling in Europe, Africa and, particularly America, with Acton Björn he founded Merkatil Grafik (1950) whose first success was a compact metal and plastic adding-machine (1952). The practice was expanded to other products, such as melamine *Margrethe* stacking bowl of non-slip rubber bases, pouring spouts and hand-grips, and compact *Privat* typewriter (1960), a cigarette lighter, in-flight tray and cutler for SAS, modular kitchen electric equipment and a plastic picnic set. Bernadotte and Björn were the first Scandinavian design consultant to achieve international recognition. Bernadotte went on to found his own Bernadotte Studio (1964), specializing in heavy industrial design from forklift trucks to outboard motors. He was the first European designer to be elected to the American Designers' Institute.



Bernadotte thermos and cutlery (1939)



Bernadotte & Björn: Margrethe melamine mixing bowl (1950)



Can opener (1966)

GUNNAR CYRÉN (1931-)

Cyrén studied at University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, receiving journeyman certificates (1956) and worked for Orrefors (1959). In contrast to the prevailing Scandinavian taste for rusticity in the early 60s, Cyrén designed glassware that was distinguished by its precise and refined craft skills. This design approach was exemplified by elegant overlaid glass bowl decorate with bear motifs. Cyrén's later iconoclastic *Pop* goblets (1966) with colourfully striped stems and opalescent bowls ere similarly radical, but perfectly encapsulated the joyful and youthful exuberance of the period.

For him, design has always been a private activity and his work often displays “a personal touch”, being at odds with the constrained mass production. Cyrén has concerned of objects that function and personality as well. He was awarded the Lunning Prize (1966) and during the 70s began designing for Dansk International Designs. In the next decade, his glassware kept a characteristic of restraint and elegance in design. He received the Prince Eugen Medal (1988) and contributed glass tableware with many coloured stem (1991) to the commissioned *Nobel* service for the 90th anniversary of the Nobel Foundation. As “the innovative grand old man of glass”, Cyrén continues to design original and beautiful glassware for Orrefors.



Vase (c1960), Pop goblet (1966)



Nobel glassware range (1991) - jug, wine, snap, martini & champagne, liquor, sherry, beer, decanter, candlestick, cutlery to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Nobel Prize

JOHAN HULDT (1942-) & JAN DRANGER (1941-)

During the 60s, a trend of group was an effective means of production caused by the anti-Vietnam war protests and student riots. Four students from the College of Arts, Crafts and Design and Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Johan Huldt, Jan Dranger, Martin Eiserman and Jan Ahlin formed Dux4rya. They were invited to the Dux for functional and affordable furniture experiments for a “do-it-yourself” element. After graduating (1968), Johan Huldt and Jan Dranger founded Innovator Design, and their *Stuns* chair came to international prominence at the Cologne Furniture Fair (1973).

This functional tubular metal chair with a canvas sling and polyurethane upholstered cushions had simplicity towards the High Tech style. This knockdown furniture was sold in unassembled competent form in a cardboard box. Innovator Design furniture would reinterpret 30s’ Swedish Modernism whose materials were steel and glass.

Huldt and Dranger’s designs signalled a new internationalism in Scandinavian design, and were sold anonymously against the cult of designer in the 50s and 60s. Having suffered copyright infringement with *Innovator*, Huldt became a leading campaigner against plagiarism. From the mid- 80s, Dranger has been focusing on sustainable design, collaborating with IKEA. He received an Ecology Design Award (IF Hanover 1999) for inflatable *SoftAir* couch- inexpensive, durable, environmentally sound furniture.



Stuns (1973)



Balluff middle section (1974)



Slim chair (1982)

BJÖRN DAHLSTRÖM (1957-)

Dahlström began his career in the mid-70s, designing graphics and animations for film. He worked for clients which turned his attention to three-dimensional design. *Rocking Rabbit* (1985) and streamlined *Toy-car* (1966) were inspired from his earlier studies of animation and graphic design, distinguished by soft yet elemental forms and straightforward function. In the 90s, Dahlström encompassed a wide range of products including a flashlight and soldering equipment, a pneumatic drill, toys and water-play system, and electric handicap aids, with a belief that “the designer has to be part of the industrial process, taking the role of free-thinking catalyst.”

One of his skills was to transfer “hard” industrial design to look and feel attractive. *Cobra MK1* pneumatic drill set a new aesthetic precedent for such a product and maximized ease of handling by lessening vibrations. Dahlström won many awards - Excellent Swedish Design, and Plus Design. His successful *Tools* cookware range (1998) embodies the high object-integrity, epitomizing one of the best Scandinavian designs since the late 20s.



Rocking rabbit (1985)



Superstructure easy chair (2003), Cobra MK1 (1990)



Tools cookware series (1999)



P A R T F I V E
D E N M A R K



THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK (Kongerike Danmark) is sited at the most southern in Scandinavia with two offshore territories, Faroe Islands (1948) and Greenland (1979) whose self-rule was granted. Denmark herself covers an area of 43,000 km² and has a population of 5.5 million, of whom 1.6 million live in the capital of Copenhagen. 12% of the country is enclosed by forest, while meadow, heath, marshland, bogs, sand hills and lakes of 10%. Due to temperate climate, summer is warm, and winter is not so cold. Towards the end of the 10th century, Denmark was united into a single kingdom and has become independent as the oldest kingdom in Europe. The main commodities are agricultural production, beer, medicines, furniture, shipping, and advanced metal industries.

BACKGROUND

Denmark, officially called Kingdom of Denmark, is the southern of the Nordic countries, bordered by Germany, the Baltic and the North Sea. The country consists of a large peninsula (Jutland) and islands (Zealand/Funen/Vendsyssel-Thy/Lolland/Falster/Bornholm) as well as hundreds of minor archipelago. The Faroe Islands and Greenland are autonomous provinces. With a constitutional monarchy, Denmark has a government and 98 local municipalities. It has been a member of the European Union (1973) and is a founding member of NATO. As a highly free market and capitalist economy, surveys (2006-8) ranked Denmark as "the happiest place in the world," according to standards of health, welfare, and education.

The word "Denmark" centred on the prefix "Dan" whether it means the Dani or a historical person Dan. It could mean "flat woodland". When the Roman Emperor Augustus went a war against Denmark, the country was under the Swedish king Ypper. The Jutes from Denmark asked Dan, the king's son, for help. On victory, they made him king of the united land, naming it Denmark (Dania). The earliest record of the word "Denmark" was found on the two Jelling rune stones. In the Song of Roland (c. 1040-1115), the legendary hero Holger Danske appears as "Holger of Denmark".

People have inhabited Denmark since 12,500 BC and did agriculture from 3,900 BC. The Nordic Bronze Age (1,800–600 BC) was marked by burial mounds, including lurs and the Sun Chariot. During the Pre-Roman Iron Age (500 BC –AD 1), native groups began migrating south. Both Roman and Celtic cultural influence are reflected in the finding of the Gundestrup cauldron. The Danevirke defence structures were built from the third century and the construction efforts in 737 are attributed to the emergence of a Danish king. The new runic alphabet was used, and Ribe, the oldest town, was founded about 700.

During the 8th-11th centuries, the Danes were known as Vikings. They discovered and settled in Iceland (9C), and further in Greenland and Newfoundland. Utilizing their skills in shipbuilding, they conquered parts of the British Isles (Danelaw/Ireland/Normandy) and France, and excelled in trading from Greenland to Constantinople via Russian rivers. The Danes were Christianized by Harald Blåtán (965) who expanded the defensive line of Danevirke to southern Sweden and won Norway.



Øresund Bridge in Denmark-Sweden; Ærøskøbing, a traditional Danish village.

The reign of Canute the Great represented the peak of the Danish Viking age. His empire included Denmark (1018), Norway (1028), England (1035), and held strong influence over the northeast coast of Germany. However, the imposition of the tithe on peasants and nobles to fund monasteries and churches brought his people to rebellion. Canute fled to St Albans Priory and was killed (1086). When Queen Edele came to take his body to Flanders, a

light shone around the church that Canute should remain there. He was canonized for his miracles (1101), and St Canute's Cathedral became one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in the Middle Ages. The death of St Canute marks the end of the great Viking Age. Denmark and England was divided, and ravages were never happened to the rest of Europe. Denmark was Christian.

Following the end of the 11th century, Denmark underwent a transition from weak regional chiefs to a powerful king. The first large churches were built and monastic order appeared. Valdemar II built a "Baltic Sea Empire", controlling from Estonia to Norway (1221). New laws were made, and the famous Code of Jutland (1241) says: "that the king cannot rule without and beyond the law"; "and that all men are equal to the law". However, the kingdom was in decline because of internal strife and the rise of the German Hanseatic League. Margrethe I re-invigorated the kingdom, and Denmark/Norway/Sweden was in the union charter of Kalmar (1237). The Protestant Reformation came to Scandinavia in 1520s. Hans Tausen, a monk in the Order of St John's Hospitalers, proclaimed for Luther's reform in the Catholic Church. Denmark became Lutheran (1536).

King Christian IV attacked Sweden (1611-3), but failed to force Sweden to unite with Denmark. He also planned to claim Sri Lanka as a colony. After the Napoleonic war, the Congress of Vienna demanded the dissolution of the Denmark-Norway (1814), and Norway entered a new union with Sweden until 1905. Denmark became a constitutional monarchy (1848), and ceded Schleswig and Holstein to Prussia, leaving deep marks on the Danish national identity (1864). Since then, Denmark returned to its traditional policy of neutrality.

During Germany's invasion in 1940, Denmark helped Danish Jews, escaping them to Sweden. Iceland became independent. After the war, Denmark was one of the founding members of UN and NATO and joined the European Economic Community (now the European Union) in 1973.

Greenland gained home rule (1979). Danish monarchy is apolitical and refrains from influencing the government. The cabinet, including the Prime Minister make up the government. The ministers are responsible to Folketinget (Parliament) whose members are 175.

Denmark consists of the Jutland peninsular and 443 named islands. Of these, 72 are inhabited with the largest being Zealand and Funen. Many islands are connected by bridges, ferries, and aircraft. Main cities are the capital Copenhagen (on Zealand), Århus, Aalborg and Esbjerg (in Jutland) and Odense (on Funen). Denmark is flat and has a long coastline. It has two eco-regions of mixed forests: the Atlantic and Baltic. The Faroe Islands are covered with grasslands, while Greenland has arctic tundra. The winters are not very cold (0 °C) and the summers are cool with mean temperature (15.7 °C). There is a lot of wind, and an average of 170 rainy days, especially in November. The length of the day varies: short winter (9:30 am-4:30 pm) and long summer days (3:30 am-10 pm). The shortest and longest days of the year have been celebrated. Celebrating the shortest day corresponds roughly with Christmas (jul) Eve. The Norse word “jól” indicates pre-Christian feasts of a season. The longest day celebration is Midsummer Day (sankthansaften: St. John's evening). Christianity continued these.

The economy features free trade and a high living standard. Denmark has a GDP per capita higher than that of most European countries and is one of the most competitive economies in the world. Its flexible labour market is called flexicurity: easy to hire, fire, and find a job. Around 2.9 million residents are in the labour market. Unemployment is very low. Main exports include animal foodstuffs, chemicals, dairy products, electronic equipment, fish, furniture, leather, machinery, meat, oil and gas, and sugar including energy.

The main railway operator is Danish State Railways, and the national airline (together with Norway and Sweden) is Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS). A ferry links are operated in different routs, but private vehicles are

preferred. However, due to the high registration tax (approx. 180%), VAT (25%), and the world's highest income tax rate, new cars are very expensive. Ironically, using old cars fails Denmark's efforts as an environmentally friendly and modern nation. 82% of the population are members of the Lutheran state church. Recognized religious societies and churches in 1682 are the Catholic Church, the Reformed Church, and the Jewish organisation. A 2005 study by Zuckerman shows that Denmark has the third highest proportion of atheists and agnostics in the world, estimated to be between 43% and 80%. The education system provides primary, secondary schools, and higher education. About 99% of students attend compulsory elementary school, 86% at secondary, and 41% pursue further education. All education is free. After Folkeskolen, there are many educational opportunities. The largest and oldest is the University of Copenhagen (founded 1479).



Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875)

Hans Christian Andersen is known beyond Denmark for his fairy tales, such as *The Little Mermaid*. Karen Blixen (pen name: Isak Dinesen), Nobel laureate author Henrik Pontoppidan, Nobel laureate physicist Niels Bohr, and the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard have also made a name for themselves in the world. The capital city of Copenhagen includes the Tivoli gardens, the Amalienborg Palace (home of the monarchy), and *The Little Mermaid* sculpture.

Historically, Denmark has been one of the most socially progressive cultures. It was the first country to legalize pornography (1969), and to enact a registered partnership law, granting same-sex couples (1989). Copenhagen and its outlying islands have a wide range of folk traditions. Carl Nielsen, with his six symphonies, was the first Danish composer to gain international recognition. The most popular sport is football. Sailing and other water sports are popular, as are indoor sports such as badminton, handball and gymnastics. The cuisine consists mainly of meat and fish, because of the country's agriculture and geography. Traditional food is frikadeller (fried meatball/potato/gravy) and karbonader (breaded and fried minced meat). Fish is widely eaten on the west coast of Jutland. Smoked fish dishes (herring/mackerel/eel) are popular. An interest of Danish food is the variety of rye-bread sandwiches for the mid-day meal. Lager beer accompanied by small glasses of snaps or aquavit is the preferred drinks for a day-meal.

CONTINUITY FROM PAST AND CHALLENGE TO FUTURE

Despite its small territory and population, Denmark has twice had a major cultural impact on the world. A thousand year ago the Danish Vikings dominated a large part of Europe through pillaging, trading, and colonizing expeditions. During the mid-20th century Denmark achieved an aesthetic dominance when Danish modern design became an international phenomenon.

According to harsh Nordic conditions, the talent of borrowing functional and aesthetic paradigms from foreign sources and adapting them to something “Danish” with a high craftsmanship was a key factor in the evolution of the Danish design. Danes developed a deep knowledge of local resources. Economic limitations are forced to underline utility and durability over surface embellishment, resulting in simplicity, honesty and respect for function as a characteristic of Danish design.

In Denmark, furniture industry came around the 1920s at the time of fermentation between handicraft and industrialization. The process was slow, gradual, and well-considered as reformism. Moreover, after the First World War, innovative trends manifested themselves in Europe politically, economically and culturally, and a new and better society was needed. However, agriculture and crafts were the main economy, and old craft production was kept longer than elsewhere in Europe. When industries were modernizing after the Second World War, craft tradition and quality workmanship were transferred to industrial products.

In fact, the evolution of design started in the late 18th century when process-making was transferring from an individual to group works. This gave rise to the new profession, and with the foundation of the Royal Copenhagen Porcelain Manufactory (1775), the first Danish designers entered industry. Although the designers promoted the fashionable Rococo

style, Neo-Classicism replaced with simplicity and utility at the beginning of the 19th century. In the 1820s, Gustav Friedrich Hetsch (1788-1864) introduced the Empire style to the Royal Copenhagen, stating:

The object of everything relating to interior design and architecture, large or small, must be that it answers its purpose and meets two main conditions: usability and suitability. . . beauty must always depend on usefulness because without this no satisfaction can be gained for the eye or the spirit.

The approach to functional yet attractive objects for the user first became an important hallmark of Danish design. The masterful handling of materials was inherited to the next generations through family-run workshops or craftsmen guilds. Moreover, the high quality was the result of cooperation between designers and manufacturer. It was the pioneer individuals who set the artistic and ethical standards for the success of modern Danish design.

Although Functionalism was never recognized as a style of furniture in Denmark, it was decisive in response to the growing demands on democracy reflected in function. “Function” was the motto. Each household product should be aesthetically designed, despite its main concern of practicality. Form should match to function. It was Kaare Klint who had a crucial impact on design through his anatomical research during the 1920s and 30s. He established a human-centred design concept which became the philosophical bedrock for Modernism, devising a measure system based on human proportions and applying this data to the furniture design. He also examined historically successful furniture with modern interpretations on them, such as his *Safari* and *Deck* chairs (1933). His systematic method, respect for the tradition, strong ethics influenced the development in furniture.

It can be said that Danish designers remained untouched by the puritan Bauhaus in contrast to the Swedish Modern Movement. Their work reflected the consensus that functionalism had always existed in the Danish design,

and therefore, design should be advanced by evolutionary than revolutionary means. At the end of the 30s, against Bauhaus, upholstered and comfortable chairs were shown at the exhibitions of the Cabinet Makers' Guild in Copenhagen. And the wish for low cost and utilitarian tools permeated the landmark. Finn Juhl underlined individualism and artistic freedom with eloquence, elegance and courage in design, seen in his slender, light, and easy chairs. Besides the exhibitions, designers were able to promote their work through den Permanente, a cooperative association established (1931) by Kay Bojesen.

During the inter-war period, Denmark's long and proud heritage of cabinet-making was put to use with simplified but elegant solid wood furniture. As editor of *Kritisk Revy* (Critical Review), Poul Henningsen demanded for a new industrial objectivity "to promote architecture in accordance with the best of social, economic and technological endeavours in modern culture". The journal criticized the inappropriate aesthetics of Neo-Classicism, and the new Bauhaus which had little to do with ordinary people. Instead, together with Børge Mogensen, he pleaded for simple and friendly design for everyday use. Mogensen designed furniture, combined with different pieces to satisfy the consumer's requirements (1944).

Hans Wegner perpetuated Klint's ideal furniture forms and produced modern vernacular types, *Peacock* and *Chinese* chairs (1947, 43). His unique success in furniture is credited to the blending of craftsmanship and proportion, innovation and working ethics, and simplicity and balance. By studying the essence of successful antecedents and adapting them to a modern idiom, Danish design became a less doctrinal and more accessible form of Modernism. After the post war (50s-60s), soft-edged products of informality and domesticity were preferred for smaller average households. With high-quality machined-aided craftsmanship, "good taste" of Danish modernism signified through exhibitions in USA and UK. "Design from Denmark" became sensational. One reason for this was due to the import of

Philippine teak. The superior hardwood was widely used by designers, such as Finn Juhl, Hans Wegner and Peter Hvidt, called “Teak Style”, or Bojesen’s double salad bowl and servers.

In 1951 Arne Jacobsen introduced the three-legged chair, *Ant*, which was simple, light yet robust suitable to factory canteens. The potential of moulded plywood was also executed in *Model No. 3107* chair (1955) from *Series 7* as the best-selling. As the first modern furniture, *Series 7* and *Ant* termed ‘industrialized’ chair in international setting. He was the first Danish furniture designer in the modern world. In the late 50s, newly synthetic fibreglass was used in his sculptural *Svanen* (Swan) and *Ægget* (Egg) chairs (1957) for the Copenhagen SAS Royal Hotel. A decade later, it was evolved by Verner Panton in *Phantasy Landscapes* of bold forms and brilliant colours.

The global recession of the early 70s coincided with a declining interest in Danish design. Leading firms reaffirmed their commitment to beautiful and highly rational products. The Danish Design Center was founded to enhance Danish design (1977). Niels Jørgen Haugesen designed *X-line* chair in a High Tech style. The following decade, Post-Modernism with a freedom of expression emerged, such as *Bench for Two* (1989) by Nanna Ditzle. Niels Gammelgaard and Alfred Homann developed furniture, lighting and other products aesthetically, functionally, and commercially. However, in Denmark, Post-Modernism never gained a sound foothold.

The tradition of “good design” remains one of Denmark’s greatest assets, caused by the cooperation between designers and industry: simplification of balancing form and function, truth to materials, a deep respect for the task, and facilitating connections between the user, their tools for living, and the environment. Danish design principles reflect a continuous evolution in industry tool. New products share a quality with traditional ones as rational tools for beauty. Today, the industry has worries of natural resources, ecology, technological progress, social alteration, and consumer changes, innovating problem-solutions for simplicity, economy, and technology.

THE GREAT DANISH DESIGNERS

KAY BOJESEN (1886-1958)

KAARE KLINT (1888-1954)

POUL HENNINGSEN (1894-1967)

ARNE JACOBSEN (1902-1971)

FINN JUHL (1913-1989)

HANS WEGNER (1914-2007)

HENNING KOPPEL (1918-1980)

NANNA DITZEL (1923-2005)

VERNER PANTON (1926-1998)

KAY BOJESEN (1886-1958)

Bojesen studied at the Technical School in Schwäbisch-Gmund, Germany (1911), and established his workshop in Copenhagen (1913). His early work reflected the rich decorative influence of the Georg Jensen silversmith, but by 1931 he adopted a modern style of simple forms, undecorated surfaces, and suitability for mass production, such as ceramics for Bing and Grondahl factory. As a leading figure of Scandinavian modernism, he was the driving force behind the opening of “Den Permanente” in Copenhagen, a permanent display for the best contemporary Danish design (1931).

Bojesen designed silver flatware and hollowware pieces, including elegant *Grand Prix* cutlery (1938). Many of silver designs were later transferred to stainless steel for mass production. He had a solo exhibition at the Danish Industry Museum in Copenhagen (1938) and the Milan Triennale (1940). During the next decades, he continued metalware, receiving a Grand Prix at the IX Milan Triennale (1951). He was appointed silversmith to the King of Denmark with international acclaim including a gold medal at the Milan Triennale (1954) for wooden designs of characteristic monkey and puffin toys, and functional yet sculptural teak salad bowls.



Monkey 1951), bear (1952), elephant toy (1953)



Rocking chair (1936)



Teak salad bowl (1949)

KAARE KLINT (1888-1954)

Klint studied at the Polytechnic of Fredericksburg (1903) before apprenticing under his father who underlined studying earlier styles and traditional materials of the 19th historicism with 20th century expressionism. His furniture designs, such as *Deck* chair (1933), were reworking of earlier types from a variety of influences including Scandinavian vernacularism, Shaker design, Regency furniture, and oriental cabinet-making. His designs were remarkable for the quality of wood finishes and proportions.

He established the Furniture Department at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen (1924), and undertook pioneering research into anthropometrics, the systematic collection and correlation of measurements of the human body to improve furniture for users' physical conditions. Klint insisted combining of the attributes related to traditional craftsmanship - attention to detail, in-depth knowledge of materials, and rational design principles.

Like his father, stressing earlier styles' study, he encouraged his students to measure of classic furniture including the English *Windsor* chair to understand the principles of proportion, construction and function. Klint's teaching laid the foundations for the renewal of Danish design after the Second World War, inspiring Hans Wegner and Børge Mogensen for "classic" modern design which were reworking of historical furniture.



Red chair (1927) or Barcelona chair for the 1929 Exposicion Internacional de Barcelona, Mahogany & leather armchair (1930)



Safari chair(1933), Faaborg chair(1914)

POUL HENNINGSEN (1894-1967)

Henningsen studied at the Polytechnic in Copenhagen (1917), and without a final exam, he worked as reviewer for the art journal *Vor Tid*, co-editor of the art periodical *Klingen*, journalist for the newspapers *Politiken* and *Extra Bladet*. He experimented with different materials of copper and glass, and designed a number of light fixtures, such as a chandelier of the Carlsberg brewery (1919). He exhibited a spherical light fitting with reflective planar rings at the “Artists’ Autumn Exhibition” (1922) and devised the Copenhagen’s Slotsholm street light.

As a social reformer, Henningsen wrote in *Politiken*: “The aim is, by working scientifically, to make lighting clearer, more economical, and more beautiful.” He developed a series of multi-shaded table and hanging lights to reduce the glare of the modern electric bulb (1924). His first scientific lamp from *PH* series was awarded a gold medal at the “Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes” in Paris (1925).

He also developed a system of alternately shaped and positioned shades. His logarithmic spiral configuration of the curved *PH* lamps is still popular. Henningsen denounced the artistic pretensions of Scandinavian design, and urged for a utilitarian approach for good design. Unlike Modern Movement designers, he considered traditional forms and materials to be suitable for more democratic products.



PH table lamp (1927), Ph 5 pendel lamp (1958)



PH Koglen lamp (1957), PH Snowball lamp (1983)

ARNE JACOBSEN (1902-1971)

Jacobsen trained at School of Applied Arts in Copenhagen (1924), and the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (1927). The combination of practical and artistic training enabled him to produce functional and aesthetical buildings, interiors, and products. Influenced by Modernists such as Le Corbusier and van der Rohe, he introduced Modernism to Denmark in *House of the Future* project, and *the Rothenborg House* in Ordrup (1930).

Jacobsen and Erik Möller won the design competition (1936) of the Århus Town Hall whose scheme was distinct by soft lines that revealed a humanistic Modernism with organic forms. He designed mass production furniture, such as *Ant* chairs (1952) and *Series 7* chairs (1955). The latter was the most successful seating programme: a standard single-form compound-moulded plywood seat with a wide range of attachment. For the SAS Air Terminal and Royal Hotel in Copenhagen (1960), Jacobsen made every detail from cutlery to furniture. *Egg* and *Swan* chairs (1958) were futuristic and aesthetic.

For him, buildings and products should be proportioned; materials and colours compatible to achieve overall impression. He combined sculptural, organic forms with traditional Scandinavian design attributes of material and structural integrity to produce timeless, elegant, and functional designs. “Pastry usually tastes best when it looks nice. . . there’s nothing I mind if it looks nice.”



Egg chair (1957), Egg table (1952), Table lamp (1957)



Series 7 (1955)



Swan chair (1958), Grand Prix chair (1957)

FINN JUHL (1913-1989)

Juhl was influenced steel and glass building by Swedish Modernism architect, Erick Gunnar Asplund. He studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen (1930), and worked at the Vilhelm Lauritzen's office. His furniture was shown at Cabinet Makers' Guild in Copenhagen (1937). *Pelican* chair (1940) was different from the modern re-workings of traditional furniture promoted by Kaare Klint, and signalled a new and significant direction towards more sculptural and abstract organic forms.

Establishing his own office (1945), Juhl designed solid wood furniture in a seductive form. He was awarded six gold medals at Milan Triennale and fourteen prizes by Cabinet Makers' Guild. *No.45* (1945), *No. 48* (1948), and *Chieftain* (1949) chairs were distinct by superlative craftsmanship and highly expressive, flowing forms. He developed constructional techniques for teak, leading its use to Danish furniture, called "Teak Style". Henri Sten Moller criticized him as "the out-and-out dandy". Juhl put forth great influence on the next generation of Scandinavian designers with his bold sculptural forms and ultra refined detailing.



No. 45 chair (1945), No. 48 chair (1948)



Table lamp (1963), Desk (1948)



Chieftain chair (1949), Sofa (1941)

HANS WEGNER (1914-2007)

Wegner grew up under craftsmanship and materials. He trained at the School of Arts and Crafts (1936), and practised under Möller for the design of Århus Town Hall (1940). For this project, Wegner epitomized design approach, describing his simple chair as “stripping the old chair of their oyster style and letting them appear in their pure construction.” He designed a range of good yet inexpensive furniture for the small post-war apartments. By the 50s, Wegner became a leading designer internationally for balanced, crafted, solid wood furniture. He explained,

as simple and genuine as possible, to show what we could create with our hands, to try to make wood come alive, to give it spirit and vitality, and to get things to be so natural that they could only have been made by us.

Organic designs of *Chinese* (1943), *Peacock* (1947), *Y* (1950), and *Valet* (1953) chairs underlined the importance of the physical, psychological and emotional connections between users and their tools for living. By simplifying and purifying form and construction, Wegner created everlasting beautiful modern workings of traditional furniture with honesty of material. He won many awards including the first Lunning Prize (1951). As a gifted designer and master craftsman, Wegner made Danish design world famous.



Peacock chair (1947)



Chinese chair (1943), Y-chair (1950)



Valet chair (1953)

HENNING KOPPEL (1918-1980)

Koppel studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen (1937), and trained avant-garde at the Academy Ranson in Paris (1939). He associated with George Jensen, and his sculptural silverware attracted the international attention. Inspired by the contemporary sculptures of Arp and Brancusi, Koppel designed biomorphic silver jewellery such as *Model no. 89* bracelet (1946), futuristic and functional as wearable sculpture.

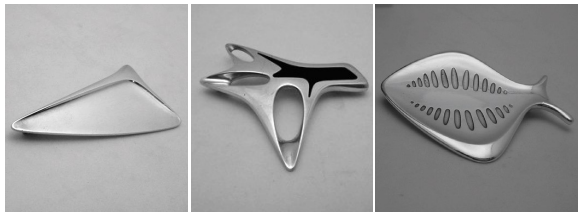
Despite his craft tradition, *No. 978* wine pitcher (1948) and fish dish (1954) revealed modern and universal language of organic form against historicism. Koppel introduced an expressive design to Jensen's flatware collection with *Caravel* cutlery (1957), but during the 70s his work became geometric and less sculptural. He was awarded three gold medals at Milan Triennale (1951, 54, 57), and the Lunning Prize (1953). His masterful understanding of the basic nature of materials enabled him to produce exquisite metalware for sculptural plasticity and sensuous form. His designs epitomized the "New Look" of post-war Scandinavian design with polished reflective surfaces and asymmetrical lines.



Pitcher (1952) became popular under the name “the pregnant duck”.
“Pitcher” in 1965 breathes pure silver pitcher.



Model no. 11 Caravel silver cutlery and flatware (1957)



Sterling Silver brooches (c1945)

NANNA DITZEL (1923-2005)

Ditzel studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, where she met her future husband, Jørgen Ditzel. With him, she exhibited living room furniture at Cabinet Makers' Guild (1944) and their table with a removable tray design received attention. Focusing on small living spaces, Ditzel explored the idea of kitchen units as room dividers, and designed a range of children's plywood furniture (1952). The couple wrote a book, *Danish Chairs* (1954) and were awarded the Lunning Prize (1956). They made a range of wicker furniture, the hanging egg-shaped chair, and solid-wood children's furniture.

Particularly, Ditzel was keen on playground environments and jewellery with semi-precious stones of agates and tourmalines for Georg Jensen. After her husband's death, she founded a workshop in Copenhagen (1986). Driven by natural curiosity and change, Ditzel continued innovative craft-based designs. The Japanese inspired butterfly-like *Bench for Two - No. 2600* (1989) possesses a sense of lightness, texture, motion and beauty.



Egg swing chair (1957), Bench for Two Model no. 2600 and table Model no. 2601 (1989)



Toadstool (1962) today Trip Trap



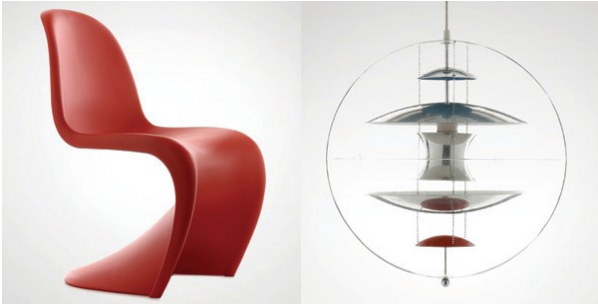
Brooch, Silver cufflinks no.747, Design no 141A (c1960)

VERNER PANTON (1926-1998)

Panton studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen (1951). He was an innovator shown in *Collapsible House* (1955), *Cardboard House* (1957), and *Plastic House* (1960). The 50s was full of imaginative exploration and playful experimentation for him. His first major commission was an inn from Holstenn, where he made an overall red interior including ice cream form of *Cone chair* (1958). This unusual seating made him more international. Panton continued to amaze the public at the Købestaevnet Trade Fair. The world was upside down with carpeted ceiling and inverted furniture, thus everyone can see the person in front of him. He redesigned the Astoria Restaurant in Trondheim (1960) with the unseal form and bright colours.

Panton explored the first-single-form plastic chair, and this revolutionary *Panton chair* was produced from cold-pressed fibreglass reinforced polyester, reputed at the Cologne Furniture Fair (1968). His imagination sustained in psychedelic *Phantasy Landscapes* of sculptural shapes with saturated colours at the “Visiona 0” in Cologne (1968). A comment was: “Every room had its own sounds and odours, so that the sensations from nearly all the human senses added spice to the unique perception of space. . . . You went thought the exhibition and forgot time and place.” He designed the complete 1-2-3 seating system with 20 models of four varied heights for resting-dining-working (1973), and amorphous cut-out shapes of art chair series, made up of 16 plywood single chairs (1981).

Unlike other Danish designers, Panton was revolutionary than evolutionary in design. His innovative, bold designs reflected his optimism in the future. Panton refused the Danish tradition of refining existing furniture and using natural materials. Simultaneously, he held to the Scandinavian belief that design should be first and foremost durable, unified, and integrated.



Panton chair (1960), Globe lamp (1969)



Cone chair (1958), Cone table (1960)



Wire cone K2 chair (1960), Wire chair (1971)



P A R T S I X
I C E L A N D



THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND (Lyðveldið Ísland) is situated on the most northern in Scandinavia, comprising the island of Iceland and its outlying islets. It is the least populous of the Nordic countries and the second smallest with a population of 316,000 and area of 103,000 km². Located on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the country is volcanically and geologically active. The interior has of a plateau by sand fields, mountains and glaciers, while big glacial rivers flow to the sea. Warmed by the Gulf stream, Iceland has a temperate climate. Iceland began in 874 when the Norwegian chieftain Ingólfur Arnarson settled down, and over the next centuries, people of Nordic and Gaelic origin moved here. Until the 20th century, the population relied on fisheries and agriculture, and was part of the Norwegian and later the Denmark (1262-1918). Recently, economy and welfare system developed from fishing to services, finance, and industries. The country's capital is Reykjavík.

BACKGROUND

Iceland, officially the Republic of Iceland, is a country in northern Europe, comprising the island of Iceland and its outlying islets in the North Atlantic Ocean. It is the least populous of the Nordic countries and the second smallest with a population. Located on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, Iceland is volcanically and geologically active. The interior consists of a plateau of sand fields, mountains and glaciers, while many big glacial rivers flow to the sea through the lowlands. Warmed by the Gulf stream, Iceland has a temperate climate and provides a habitable environment and nature. Once being a part of the Norwegian and later the Danish monarchies (1262-1918), Iceland has seen economic reforms, free trade and diversification from fishing to services, finance, and various industries in the 20th century. Icelanders have a rich culture and heritage in cuisine and poetry. The country is a member of the UN, NATO, EFTA, EEA and OECD, but is not of the European Union.

Geographically, Iceland belongs to both Europe and the American Continent. Due to cultural, economic and linguistic similarities, Iceland is included in Scandinavia. The closest lands are Greenland (287 km) and the Faroe Islands (420 km). Iceland is the world's 18th largest island, and Europe's second largest island. 62.7% is wasteland. Many fjords punctuate its coastline where most settlements are situated. The Highlands is a cold and uninhabitable combination of sand and mountains. The major towns are the capital Reykjavik, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Reykjanesbær. The island has volcanoes, notably Hekla. There are many geysers including Great Geysir, which erupts every 5-10 minutes. With the availability of geothermal power and hydroelectricity from waterfall, most residents have hot water and home heat cheaply. The winters are mild and windy; the summers with damp and cool.



Eyjafjallajökull glacier, the Althing in Reykjavik

Few plants and animals have migrated to the island or evolved locally since the last ice age of 10,000 years ago. There are around 1,300 known species of insects. The only native land mammal when humans arrived was the arctic fox walking over the frozen sea. There are no native reptiles or amphibians on the island. Iceland belongs to the ecoregion of forests and tundra. About three-quarters of the island are barren of vegetation; plant life consists mainly of grassland for livestock. The native tree is birch, but deforestation brought it in isolated reserves. The animals are the Icelandic sheep, cattle, chicken, goat and horse. Birds are important as well. Many varieties of fish provide to the country's economy.

The first people thought to have inhabited Iceland were Irish monks or hermits in the eighth century, but left with the arrival of Norsemen ca. 870-930 AD. The first known permanent settler was Ingólfur Arnarson in Reykjavik (874). Ingólfur was followed by other emigrants, largely Norsemen

and their Irish slaves. By 930, most arable land had been claimed, and the Althing, a legislative and judiciary parliament, was founded as the political hub. Christianity was adopted in 1000. The internal struggles and civil strife brought the country under the Norwegian crown, and its possession passed to Denmark-Norway in the late 14th century. Infertile soil, volcanic eruptions, and an unforgiving climate made for harsh life. The Black Death (1402–4, 1494–5) killed each time half the population.



Ingólfur Arnarson in Reykjavík (874), painted by Johan Peter Raadsig

From the middle of the 16th century, King Christian III of Denmark began to impose Lutheranism and trade restrictions on Iceland, while pirates from England and Spain raided its coasts. Again, a smallpox epidemic and the Laki volcano (1783) ensued famine. In 1814, following the Napoleonic Wars, Denmark-Norway was broken up, but Iceland remained a Danish dependency. An independence movement arose under the leadership of Jón Sigurðsson, inspired by the National Romanticism in Europe.

Denmark granted Iceland home rule (1874). The Act of Union recognized Iceland as a sovereign state under the Danish king (1918). During the last quarter of the 19th century, many Icelanders emigrated to North America, largely Canada for better life. After 25 years' union, Iceland became finally independent from Denmark on June 17, 1944, with Sveinn Björnsson as the

first President. The post-war period had economic growth by the fishing industrialisation, Marshall Aid and others.

Iceland is a democratic republic. The modern parliament, called “Alþingi” (English: Althing), was founded as an advisory body to the Danish king (1845). The president is a ceremonial office that serves as a head of state. In 1980, Icelanders elected Vigdís Finnbogadóttir as the world's first directly elected female president. Iceland is proud of hosting the historic 1986 Reagan-Gorbachev summit which brought the end of the Cold War.

Iceland is the fourth most productive country in the world. Except for its abundant hydro-electric, geothermal power, and fishing industry, it lacks natural resources. However, ecotourism, whale-watching, software production, biotechnology and financial services grow actively. The government opposed to EU membership, due to losing control over their fishing resources. Although it was probably the poorest country in the Western Europe until the 20th century, Iceland has been the most developed society in the world, ranked first. Icelanders are the second longest-living nation with a life expectancy of 81.8 years. The social structure is very dependent on the personal car, as one of the highest levels of car ownership per capita, because of travelling by car to work, school, etc.

Official language is Icelandic, a North Germanic descended from Old Norse. English and Danish are widely understood. Compulsory education comprises primary and lower secondary which is mandatory for children from 6 to 16 years. As an egalitarian country, Iceland is liberal in terms of lesbian, gay bisexual and trans-gendered matters. In 2006 by unanimous vote of Parliament, further legislation was passed, granting same-sex couples in adoption, parenting, etc.

The Church of Iceland is the state Lutheran church. However, religious attendance is relatively low, as in the other Nordic countries. A translation of the Bible was published in the 16th century. Icelandic culture has its roots in Norse traditions, and Icelanders place importance on independence and self-

sufficiency. In literature, the best-known classical works are the sagas, epics of blood feud, such as *Njáls saga*. Iceland has produced great writers. Halldór Laxness received the Nobel Prize for literature (1955). Traditional music was strongly religious as a result of Hallgrímur Pétursson's Protestant hymns in the 17th century, but was modernized when Magnús Stephensen brought pipe organs in the 19th century. Other traditions are epic alliterative and rhyming ballads called *rímur*, written by Sigurður Breiðfjörð (1798-1846).

Iceland's largest television station is the state-run *Sjónvarpið*. Radio and the daily newspapers are throughout the country. Icelanders are a technologically advanced nation and a large proportion of them keep a blog. National foods are fish, lamb and dairy products. *Porrmat* is a national food consisting of many dishes, consumed around the month of *Þorri*. Traditional dishes include *skyr*, cured ram scrota, cured shark, singed sheep heads and black pudding.

Sport is an important activity. The main sport is *Glima*, a form of wrestling, originated in medieval times. Popular sports are football, track and field, handball and basketball. Handball is often referred to as a national sport, and the team is one of the top-ranks in the world. Rifle shooting became very common in the 19th century, encouraged by politicians and others pushing for the independence. Now, all types of shooting with small arms are practised in the country.

CONTINUITY FROM PAST AND CHALLENGE TO FUTURE

The environment for survival has played in forming the distinct Icelandic culture. Except few natural resources, Iceland has always relied on foreign goods which impacted on its society. As the political consensus has endorsed democratic conservatism and social inclusiveness, Icelandic designers focused on objects of functionalism.

In fact, the country remained decentralized without large urban settlements, but by the late 19th century, it was transforming itself from self-sufficient farmers to city-dwellers. Nationalistic sentiments began to galvanize the idea of cultural identity through design, while other Scandinavian neighbours were reawakening in heritage.

In 1883 a number of craftsmen joined at an exhibition to encourage aesthetic and functional design. Although National Romanticism inspired them, they did not share the same nostalgia as other Scandinavians, instead emerged from their dark ages. Many challenged to the industrial progress, but the changing social and economic conditions prevented the major influences in design until a later date.

From 1900 to 1930, Icelandic designers, such as Gudjón Samuelsson, employed traditional crafts skills to furniture, made of imported wood. It was an interpretation of Viking arts and crafts, a simple and austere rendition of National Classicism. Iceland was still suffering from stereotyped foreigners who believed that Iceland had a primitive and untouched culture. It was the inter-war years that a true Icelandic identity appeared in design, when the first generation of designer, Jonas Solmundsson returned from his study abroad and introduced Modern Movement. As Modernism coincided with Iceland's final struggle for independence, design became a powerful symbol of nationalism. As an alternative to no available local materials, cement, brick, wood, and corrugated iron were imported from 1900. However,

concrete was treated in an unpainted, cubic and elemental way at the Einar Jonsson Museum (1923). After the First World War, Icelandic crafts and design became notable. Gudmundur Einarsson after his studies in Copenhagen and Munich set up the first ceramic workshop in Iceland (1927).

The School of Applied Art was founded (1939) to improve arts and human environments, as well as the economic depression which prevented Icelanders to study abroad. The school formulated design theory and practice under the leadership of Ludvig Gudmundsson. During the 50s, a new generation studied abroad, especially in Denmark and Sweden where the applied arts were flourishing. Their new influence began in Icelandic furniture design. Sveinn Kjarval followed the Danish design tradition of underlining practical and technical knowledge. His turf farmhouse reflected a mixture of Icelandic architecture tradition with a classic Scandinavian look.

As the country has little money for import, small factories were set up for different types of products in Iceland, producing robust and purposeful simplicity, such as Helgi Hallgrímsson's upholster rocking chair (1968), Gunnar Magnusson's *Apollo* chair (1967), and Einar Þorsteinn Asgeirsson's *Bucky* chair (1980). These reveal the tendency in Icelandic design to take existing forms and adapt them to something new. The wool industry was the most important heritage between the 10th and 13th centuries. However, recent efforts have been directed toward tapestry and textile weaving for the garment industry. Younger designers began to work with printed textiles in limited studio production. Asgerdur Buadóttir acquired reputation at the Nordic Textile Triennale.

Metalwork has an honoured tradition as well. The survival of craft is due to the woman's national costume, decorated with silver and gold filigree ornaments. Metal smiths have transferred from traditional forms and techniques to sculptural or abstract ones. The work of Jens Gudhjonsson reflects the master of materials and technique. Today, Iceland has its first studio glass artist, Sigrun Olóf Einarsdóttir, indicating an important aspect of

craft and design. Young creative designers are using the country's nature and heritage to establish international contacts through cooperation with manufacturers.

After its independence from Denmark (1944), an Icelandic identity became apparent in design, particularly in graphic design. However, famed as a book nation, the quality of words were more counted than the beauty of a primitive typography. In the 90s, graphic designers perpetuated this rough-and-ready approach through simple forms and bold colours. Because of their passion in rudimentary design and the limited materials, designers do not to aspire to the refined products, unlike other Scandinavians. Nevertheless, keeping up a tradition of individualism, Icelandic designers search overseas manufactures receptive to their idiosyncratic product solutions which are original in form, function or material. The charm of Icelandic contemporary design is in contrast by a faith in modern technology, and a primeval association with nature, mirroring the unique geographical contrasts of this small yet dynamic land.

THE GREAT ICELANDIC
DESIGNERS

GUDJÖN SAMUELSSON (1887-1950)

GUNNAR MAGNUSSON (1933-)

GUDJÖN SAMUELSSON (1887-1950)

Samuelsson, the greatest protagonist of Modernism in Iceland, studied at Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen under Martin Nyrop, a leading figure behind the National Romanticism in Denmark. On his return to Iceland, he was appointed the first national architect (1919) and designed a number of important public buildings with a reinforced concrete — an imported material from the 1900s, due to the lack of local one. His buildings were constructed in a modern style, known as *Steinsteypuklasski* (Concrete Classicism). His projects include the Landsbankin (National Bank 1924) and the Lansspítalinn (National Hospital 1930) where he designed site-specific furniture of white painted pine chair (1930). This design epitomized his synthesis of Neo-Classical forms with Modern Movement functionalism.

In the mid-30s, he also designed furniture for the Parliament building, and austere forms of his chairs were enlivened by vernacular detailing of traditional Icelandic woodwork. Rationalism of his designs was treated as a distinctive national interpretation of Modern Movement. Inspired by the functionalist approach to design, Samuelsson pioneered a modern identity for Icelandic design that adopted both national vernacularism and Scandinavian Classicism.



The Halgríms church design in Reykjavík (1937)

GUNNAR MAGNUSSON (1933-)

Magnusson studied at the Reykjavik Polytechnic (1955) and the School of Applied Arts in Copenhagen (1963). He designed furniture for a number of Danish manufactures, such as upholstered pine *Inka* (Inca) chair — a squared form proposed both directness and purposefulness common to Icelandic design. By using geometric shapes, his design predicted the trend towards more rational forms that appeared in Scandinavia during the 70s.

Magnusson received many awards for beds and tables (1962) while he was a student, and won fourth prize in the Daily Mirror's first "International Furniture Design Competition" for geometric forms of bedroom furniture. Magnusson returned to Reykjavik, and designed moulded plywood *Apollo* chair (1967), inspired by the staging sections of NASA's *Saturn V* moon rocket for the Apollo space missions. It was a constructional idea of "a central point and two types of curve".

As the leading Icelandic designer during the 70s, he was commissioned to devise the chess table for the 1974 World Chess Championship Match between Bobby Fisher and Boris Spasski in Reykjavik. His designs reflected the Icelandic penchant for elemental constructions and functional straightness. His works were shown internationally, such as Cabinet Makers' Guild in Copenhagen.



Inka chair (1963)



Apollo chair (1967)



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Dr. Hee Sook Lee-Niinioja, born in South Korea, became the pioneer student in Scandinavia in 1970s. She has educations in journalism (South Korea), art and design (Norway), visual communication (USA) and architecture (UK). As an artist/designer/journalist/Scholar, she has traveled across the globe for her exhibitions "Goethe in Me" as well as presenting/publishing her scholar researches and journalistic activities. She is specialized on 'syncretic architecture between different religions', 'creative but logical thinking', and 'color and emotions', in order to bring our dialogues though the commonness. Moreover, she has volunteered to humanitarian works while teaching at different institutes during her residence abroad as a member of the Finnish diplomatic corps. She received awards and appreciations, including the Civil Merit from the President of South Korea. Residing in Finland, she is engaged with art, writing, research and cultural heritages issues at ICOMOS.

NOVEL & NOBLE

