

# ARNE JACOBSEN'S OWN HOUSE

## GOTFRED RODES VEJ 2



PUBLISHED BY REALEA A/S

## JACOBSEN, ARNE

(1902-1971) Architect and Designer

Arne Jacobsen was born on February 11, 1902 in Copenhagen.

His father, Johan Jacobsen, was a wholesaler.

His mother, Pouline Jacobsen, was specially trained to work in a bank.

1924 - Graduated from the Technical School in Copenhagen.

1924-1927 - Attended the Royal Danish Academy of Art's School of Architecture in Copenhagen.

1927-1929 - Staff employee working at the office of the municipal architect in Copenhagen.

1956-1965 - Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Art in Copenhagen

1930-1971 - From 1930 up until his death in 1971, operated his own drawing office.

## A JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

Arne Jacobsen was an individualist, marching to the rhythm of his own drummer.

Today, his name is known all over the world. In the domain of Danish architecture and design, he distinguished himself in a vivid and personal way for more than half a century through his many different kinds of projects, projects that ranged from constructing buildings to creating furniture and useful objects. His range was a wide one: the spectrum moves from the characteristically functionalist lines in the large buildings to the straightforward simplicity in his celebrated series of knives, forks and spoons. What is characteristic for Jacobsen is that many of his buildings, all the way down to the smallest detail, were supplied and fitted with fixtures and articles of furniture designed by his own hand. Among Jacobsen's paramount works within the realm of architecture, we can mention:

Bellavista in Klampenborg (1933-34),

Bellevue Theatre (1935-36),

Århus Town Hall (in collaboration with Erik Møller) (1939-42),

Søllerød Town Hall ((in collaboration with Flemming Lassen) (1940-42),

Søholm linked house-development in Klampenborg (1950-54),

Rødovre Town Hall (1957),

Glostrup Town Hall (1958),

Munkegård School in Copenhagen (1955-59),

SAS Royal Hotel, Copenhagen (1958-1960),

Tom's Chocolate Factory in Ballerup (1961),

Denmark's National Bank (commenced in 1965),

St. Catherine's College in Oxford (1964-66).

## FOREWORD

In October 2005, the real estate firm Realea A/S purchased architect Arne Jacobsen's own villa on Gotfred Rodes Vej 2 in Charlottenlund, and the company has just completed a thorough restoration of the property.

The house and the garage were designed and erected in 1929 by architect Arne Jacobsen and the layout was expanded two years later, in 1931, with an architectural studio wing and a greenhouse. It was here that Jacobsen lived and worked up until 1951, when he moved to Strandvejen 413, in Klampenborg. Since that time Gotfred Rodes Vej 2 has served only as a residence for succeeding owners.

Set off by its salient architectonic idiom and special character and by virtue of its location on the corner of Gotfred Rodes Vej and Hegelsvej, the property distinguishes itself in a very precise and distinct way, in the midst of a residential neighbourhood characterized by highly eclectic and yet sometimes fashionably sophisticated architecture.

The house, with its garden and its garden wall, were placed on the national preservation list in 1987 and are considered icons for Arne Jacobsen's international period. The house is Arne Jacobsen's first example of a building that takes its inspiration from international functionalism. The property is especially interesting by virtue of the fact that it simultaneously represents two essentially different kinds of building construction within one and the same architectonic style. In 1929, the building regulations from 1889 were still in force and were governing Danish building construction. The law prescribed expressly that domestic architecture in Denmark could only be erected in brickwork. This regulation may be the ostensible reason that the building's first phase was erected as a traditional brick building while the erection of the later extension as a pure ferro-concrete structure was expressly permitted.

With this publication, Realea wishes to present a truly remarkable architectonic and architecture-historical masterpiece, which reflects and simultaneously establishes a frame around one of our time's greatest Danish architects, Arne Jacobsen, and his contributions.

Realea A/S, April 2007.



## FUNKIS WITH MODIFICATIONS

*by Peter Thule Kristensen*

There is an old photograph of Arne Jacobsen's living room in his own functionalist villa on Gotfred Rodes Vej. The photograph offers a surprising effect when weighed against our customary notion of how functionalism's residences were supposed to be furnished. In fact, we are accustomed to regarding functionalism as an aesthetic style, typically characterized by interiors with bare walls and factory-made articles of steel furniture. Judging by the picture, this is not what we see in Arne Jacobsen's own home. The living room is virtually stuffed with objects in the manner one would expect to find in the home of a staid nineteenth century middle class person. Curtains with pelmets, a table and a grand piano with twisted legs, antique chairs, genuine carpets and a great many knick-knacks on almost all of the table surfaces. The only clues that really disclose that we happen to be standing inside a functionalist domicile are the wide panorama window, the absence of stucco profiles between the wall and the ceiling and the exposed cast-iron radiator. Apparently, Arne Jacobsen had an open-minded and undogmatic attitude when it came to furnishing his own functionalist villa.

When we subject the house's architecture to minute inspection, it is analogously possible to discover a number of places where Jacobsen offers surprises and lays down challenges before a narrow and restricted notion of functionalist design. Such challenges are manifest not only in the manner of furnishing and fitting the home but also in a distinctly picturesque form of composition, in the house's traditional plan arrangement, in the use of materials that elicit an ornamental effect and in the sometimes *altmodisch* detailing and building technics.

## FUNCTIONALISM

Functionalism or - as it was known in Scandinavia, *funkis* - are terms that signify a leading current in architecture that sprang forth in the middle of the 1920s and prevailed up until the time the Second World War erupted. Functionalism found its form particularly in a series of impressive building and architecture exhibitions: for example, the epoch-making model city section and residential home exhibition, Weissenhofsiedlung. With the participation of architects like Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, Weissenhofsiedlung was erected outside the city of Stuttgart in 1927. Arne Jacobsen's villa on Gotfred Rodes Vej, which was already finished in 1929, was

*Arne Jacobsen's own furnishings in the living room. Private photograph, made circa 1930.*



accordingly completely up to date with developments that were happening abroad. At the same time, this house was the architect's first attempt with the new style.

What is characteristic of functionalism is an urge to bring forth a contemporary kind of architecture that takes its mark in modern industrial society's technological advances and novel kinds of social structures. The decorative apparatus, which was part and parcel of historic styles, was removed from the houses and replaced with a formal idiom that typically gave rise to associations of factory production or industrial culture's icons like ocean liners and airplanes. The functionalists, moreover, were very interested in one certain new building material, reinforced concrete. With its internal steel armature, the use of reinforced concrete made it possible to bear the load of the building's floor with the help of only a few pillars. On top of all this, functionalism's conspicuous social scruples were derived from industrial culture. This became apparent through very many projects in low-cost and informal residential types made available to the growing working class. Nonetheless, in the beginning, it was a well-educated middle-class that subscribed voluntarily to the ideas propagated by the new architecture.

At the outset, functionalism sought to avoid becoming a genuine style as such and its advocates generally called attention to building types, strategies or implements that were ostensibly not designed on the basis of aesthetic principles but rather on the basis of utility-related, rational or constructive considerations. Nonetheless, functionalism eventually came to be synonymous with a particular aesthetic, characterized especially by asymmetrically composed and clear-cut building bodies with flat roofs and steel windows, like those already in use in industrial buildings. This incited cer-

*On the left: Corner windows of steel, with vertical mullions. Seen here from the eastern facade of the house.*

*On the right: Styled plant growth in the garden. The house's southern facade, with the characteristic large windows and the roof terrace. In the rear, the garden wall, from the point of view of the garden.*



*On the left: The house's western and southern facades, with the steel staircase leading up to the roof terrace. The house does not make its appearance as an isolated object, but rather as a sequence of sections from a larger coherence. What is also especially part and parcel of this whole is the garden, which is intertwined with the house. For example, a lengthy flowerbed adheres to the white garden wall on one side of the house while at other places, the garden's plants climb up its outer walls.*

*On the right: Section of the southern facade, with the roof terrace's steel railings.*



tain otherwise progressive architects like Steen Eiler Rasmussen to criticize the functionalist movement for betraying its own pragmatic point of departure for the sake of an "engineer's romanticism".

Arne Jacobsen was well aware of this pitfall. For him, what functionalism really intended was to extricate itself from stylistic dogmas and take its point of departure instead, for example, in function and construction. In an interview that was published with the title "Nu bør Funkis være et Skældsord" [Now Funkis Ought to Be a Term of Abuse], Jacobsen draws a distinction between genuine functionalism and funkis, as the style widely came to be called among people living in Scandinavia: "Functionalism is the style – or more precisely the exemption from style – that expresses the elements' function in a straightforward and clear way, while funkis plays around and juggles with emptiness and the absence of function ... new houses in Copenhagen are ornamented with broad horizontal ribbons of colour which have nothing to do with the building's original plan and construction."

Whether or not Arne Jacobsen could really stand aloof from purely stylistic or aesthetic considerations in designing his own home is open to question. At any rate, in his choice of architectonic "style" he proceeded in a strikingly open-minded and undogmatic way. For example, while designing and constructing his home on Gotfred Rodes Vej, he was also building other villas designed with yellow brickwork, with pitched roofs and shutters – since the building owner expressly preferred a more pleasant and home-like appearance. In this connection, it is not surprising that Jacobsen, like one of functionalism's founding fathers, Le Corbusier, could hit upon the idea of installing

old furniture in a new villa. "It is especially the French who have understood how to unify Corbusier-architecture with comfort and cosiness", says Jacobsen in an interview and continues, "I feel that old articles of furniture make an impressive appearance, also in new living rooms. But of course, there might be some homes where it will be necessary to throw the worst of the tasselled furniture in the trash."

Jacobsen's own house contains elements that give expression to both the new functionalist currents and reminiscences from a more conventional residential culture – sometimes with romantic origins.

## ARRIVAL

Already from afar, one can see that the house on the corner of Hegelsvej and Gotfred Rodes Vej represents the new era's architecture. A white-painted concrete wall, which encircles the triangular parcel of land on all three sides, is a typical feature in functionalism. The wall follows the road's curvature and foreshadows the emergence of the gliding movement-form that characterizes one of the industrial culture's icons: the automobile. The day's fascination with speed and being "streamlined" can accordingly be read in a garden wall situated in a residential neighbourhood in the Ordrup Krat section of Charlottenlund. Furthermore, the wall plays in ensemble with the house's white-painted facades and as a result, the boundaries between house and garden area become more open than in traditional villa layouts. This is also the manifestation of the expression for a new era.

When you step through the driveway's white-painted lattice gate, the wall and a flagstone pavement almost imperceptibly lead the visitor toward the house, which is situated at the very back of the ground. The house is disposed as an L-shaped building in two stories, with a one-story wing crowned by a roof terrace that protrudes out from the angle. As seen from the driveway, the house is, then, asymmetrical with a tower-like projection that flanks the axis of arrival. Many of functionalism's salient characteristics are present: flat roof, asymmetric facades, clear-cut and white-painted building bodies, steel-framed windows - including corner windows - and, of course, a white-painted steel stairway that connects the roof terrace with the garden. The stairway has the same wire netting as we see on the lattice gate and it calls to mind a stairway we might have seen at a factory or on one of the ocean liners that the functionalists admired as being the epitome for the reigning zeitgeist. However, in somewhat less accord with the new spirit of the times, there are a cornice running immediately beneath the edge of the flat roof and a black-tarred plinth.





*As seen from the driveway, the house is positioned slightly diagonally on the grounds. The entrance door is concealed by a tower-like projection.*

As a direct consequence of the triangular plot, the house is placed diagonally with respect to the driveway. This turn elicits an effect that one does not arrive at the house frontally but rather by moving along its corner. With the obliqueness, there is a kind of funnel that crops up between the garden and the house, which spurs the visitor to keep moving right on through at this very spot. You get the urge to see what it is that might be hiding behind the house's corner and your curiosity propels you to continue exploring. Meanwhile, while you are on your way down along the driveway, the steel stairway leading up to the roof terrace also offers you an alternate route. Similarly, the low terrace wing juts forth and blocks the view of yet another terrace on the ground level: a visual effect that is shored up by a tree standing at the corner. Consequently, you might be motivated to deviate from the main path and climb up onto the terrace or to continue around the corner into the garden.



*On the left: The house's western facade, with the steel stairway leading up to the roof terrace.*



*On the right: The roof terrace, as seen looking toward the east, with a view of the bedroom.*

What we have here are picturesque effects that are known especially from the romantic era's ornamental horticulture, where serpentine pathways and asymmetrically placed tree groups impede the view of other sceneries situated in back of these elements and consequently instigate the visitor to continue wandering – generally with the prospect of more and more potential spatial sequences. Despite the fact that people looked askance at any hint of the picturesque during functionalism, many of its pioneers, such as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, were working in a similar way with picturesque sequences of movement in their houses. Asymmetry and blocking the field of sight have been popular artistic devices in modern architecture's attempts to break away from the Renaissance's central perspective, where architecture was disposed in relation to one definite vanishing point.

Although, in its cubic geometry, the house on Gotfred Rodes Vej is relatively simple, what it is that comes forth as a result is a building with many projections and angles. This kind of multi-faceted compositeness points back in the direction of one of the past's trend-setting movements in the realm of visual art: cubism, which aspires to deconstruct the classical perspective by depicting the motive from several angles at one and the same time.

## FRONT YARD

Should you choose to continue moving along the length of the driveway, you will wind up standing in a small triangular-shaped front courtyard. The garden wall

*On the left: The small triangular front courtyard, with the drawing office wing at the left of the picture.*

*On the right: The porch roof over the front door is perforated with round holes covered by built-in glass, thus serving to draw light down in front of the main entrance to the home.*



runs along one side of this space, which is bounded on its second side by a garage and a low drawing office wing while on the third side, the house's central body rises in its full height. This facade contains very few windows, while on the other hand, it takes on a sculptural character by virtue of a tall chimney – running the full height of the house and then some - and a porch roof placed above the front door. The porch roof is perforated with round holes that are filled with built-in panes of glass, thus drawing light down before the front entrance to the house; the porch roof has been constructed in ferro-concrete, which facilitates the rendering of thin constructions with expansive span. In much the same mode as the flat roof, the thin porch roof was also one of functionalism's distinctive hallmarks. In connection with the wing containing the architectural office, which was built in 1931, the porch roof was extended in its length and brought to an elegant finish with a – now shortened – curve. With this touch, the roof also provides shelter for the entrance to the office, which is hidden discreetly away in a niche. At first, one might expect as a matter of course that the house itself would also have been constructed in the functionalists' building material of choice, ferro-concrete. However, at the time the house was built, the municipal authorities had the option of prohibiting the use of reinforced concrete pursuant to the Housing Code of 1889. For this very reason, Jacobsen had to be content with having his home erected in bricks, upon which he immediately applied a thin layer of plastering, where the brickwork could still be adumbrated. After the erection of the office wing, which was built with walls in concrete, as a matter of fact, the whole conglomerate was coated with a thick layer of plaster and painted white once again, so as to make the complex appear continuous and coherent.

## VESTIBULE

The house's front already attunes the visitor's expectations about the world that is waiting there inside. The door has been constructed of oak wood and is fitted with a circular window, which jibes well with the rest of the home's ship metaphors. The diagonally mounted strip-planking with the exposed screws gives the door the character of an industrial building which, interestingly enough, stands in striking contrast to the presence of fine carpentry craftsmanship, as manifest with the brass hinges with ball bearings and a keyhole that almost coquettishly interrupts the doorframe. In this way, Jacobsen's detailing is not allowed to become all too elegant. It remains in that interesting zone between refined craftsmanship and a less costly industrial form of production. Immediately behind the door, there is a slender porch; with its low height, it plays a part in making the proximate stairway seem extra lofty and lightweight.

The space around the stairway – or the vestibule – is, in a rather traditional way – the house's central circulation zone. It is this space that provides access, on the ground floor, to a small guest bathroom, to a dining room that, together with the adjacent living room, is oriented toward the garden in the south and finally, to a study in the opposite corner - situated in the west section of the plan. The staircase itself has also been elaborated in a traditional way. Although it has conspicuously been exempted from any urge toward ornamentation, the staircase's sidepiece and banister end with a gracefully executed swing, which is also familiar to us from classicism's stairways. However, this whole stairway region is at the same time more spatially differentiated than anything we might meet in conventional classicist architecture. In the entrance area, the various areas in front of each of the surrounding doorways have been elaborated in different ways, all according to the special significance of the particular room that happens to be lying on the other side of the door: a step leads up to the guest toilet and thus indicates that this room is secondary with respect to the dining room, which is situated at the far end of the central axis issuing from the front door. The door leading into the study, on the other hand, is placed so that it is perpendicular to this axis and it has its own little niche. In this way, Jacobsen harmonizes his design to differing situations. This can also be read in the detailing, as when a shelf under the wardrobe mirror is pared so that a pipe can move on through or as when the small guest bathroom is fitted with a circular window and a niche with an arch over the washbasin. It is these kinds of deviations that pose a challenge to any customary notion about functionalist design. What they also demonstrate, when all is said and done, is a great deal of solicitude about functions as commonplace as washing one's hands.

*Facing page:  
The stairway area is the house's central circulation zone. From here, access is gained to two of the larger rooms on the ground floor, a small guest toilet and up to the home's first floor.*





*On the left: The study room, with fireplace.*

*On the right: Dining room, with sliding doors opening out to the living room.*

## GROUND FLOOR ROOMS AND THE KITCHEN

With their functional determination and their grouping around the central stairway area, the three main rooms on the ground floor – the dining room, the living room and the study – do not essentially differentiate themselves from villa construction that was typical for the time around 1900. In his plan arrangement, the villa further calls to mind one of Jacobsen's pre-functionalists projects: Wandel's house from 1927, where three rooms and a kitchen are placed in almost the same fashion around a staircase. In comparison, the Bauhaus-inspired architect Edvard Heiberg's own villa, dating from 1924, is a far more radical example. Here a high and multi-functional family room offers access to smaller rooms on three of its sides.

Nonetheless, Jacobsen's rooms contain a number of features that certainly reflect a more modern notion of architecture: the windows are factory-made standard steel-framed windows which were also known in industrial buildings; the cast-iron radiators are exposed and not hidden behind radiator casings, as would typically be done in villa construction at that time; in the dining room, a corner window serves to clarify that we are standing inside a funkis house; and the elegant sliding doors between the different rooms are not placed in the rooms' central axis but rather asymmetrically at the sides. In relation to this asymmetry, the study room's fireplace makes a strangely conventional appearance in its placement at the centre of the end wall.

Another feature that is typical of the times is the living room's expansive panorama window, which is fitted with a wide windowsill for flowerpots. Through the course of his whole life, Jacobsen was very interested in botany and the organic element plays

*Facing page: From the living room. Original copper potted-plant trays moulded right into the windowsill.*



a central role in many of his projects. This interest is reflected especially clearly in his garden layouts, in his very conscious use of indoor plants, in his articles of furniture with their sometimes sweeping and florid lines and in his wallpaper with botanical motives, which have an almost ornamental character.

The ornament was otherwise taboo under functionalism, which went to great lengths to see the beauty in objects that had found their form on the basis of constructive or use-related principles. Nonetheless, a latent form of ornamentalism can be found in the work of many of the day's modern architects. This propensity typically emerges in the form of natural materials like plants, different kinds of wood with characteristic graining or in the form of natural stones, where the marbling patterns can also elicit a decorative effect. Inside the house on Gotfred Rodes Vej, such a form of nature-created ornamentation can be found in, for example, the study room's fireplace, where a facing of Greenlandic marble delineates an expressive pattern. With their warm glow and their varnished surfaces, the room's parquet flooring and oak-veneered sliding doors also infuse the spaces with a decorative effect. On the other hand, any classical profiling in the form of stucco profiles adjacent to the ceilings or any profiled doorframes or windowsills or panels is missing. The sole reminiscence of profiling is a rather striking bead running along the doorframe's panels.

In one corner of the dining room, there is access to a pantry. From there, further access is gained to a relatively modest-sized kitchen, which no longer contains the original equipment. The kitchen was originally equipped in a relatively simple way, with a pantry closet in the corner and a number of simple pedestals, which were covered by a steel plate containing a standard sink.

As compared with many of our present day life-style kitchens, Jacobsen's detailing certainly cannot be said to be overdone. Nor does Jacobsen shrink from making use of the day's standard products in the rest of the house, whether we are speaking about steel-frame windows, cast-iron radiators, electric sockets or door handles with shafts of galatit, one of the period's new synthetic materials.

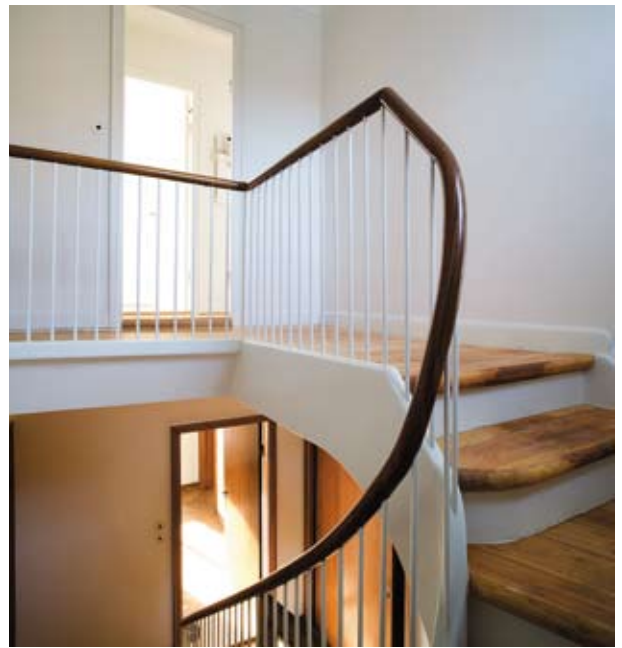
## FIRST FLOOR

The staircase leads up to the residential functions on the first floor, which originally numbered only a maid's room, a bathroom with a separately enclosed toilet cabin and two bedrooms, each one having access to a roof terrace positioned on top of the





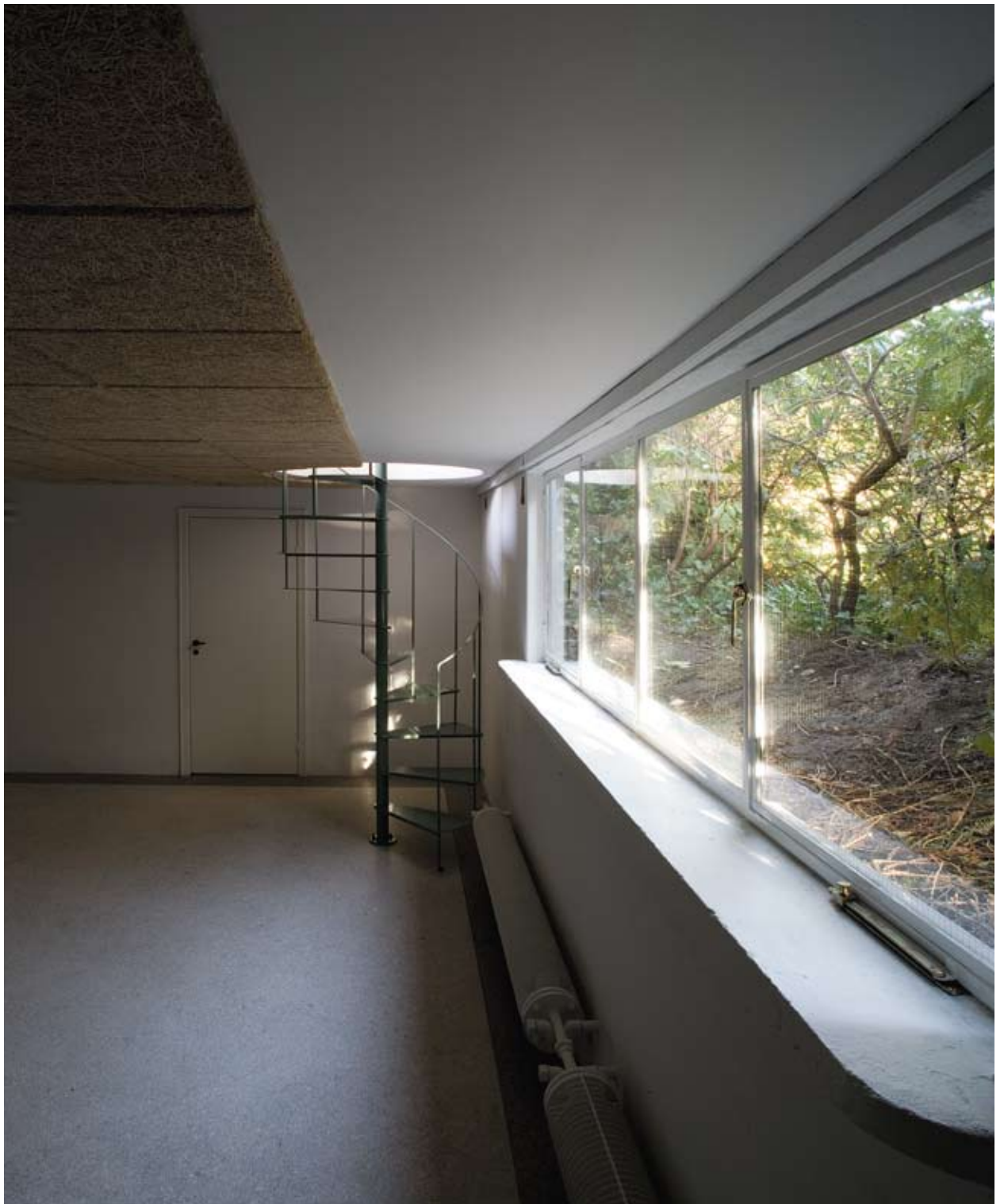
*On the left: From the children's room on the first floor, with a view out to the larger bedroom and the roof terrace.*



*On the right: From the stairway. At the bottom of the picture, the ingress to the dining room can be glimpsed; at the top, what can be seen is an exquisite influx of sunlight from the terrace on the first story.*

living room. Shortly before the divorce from his first wife and the ensuing change in his domestic situation, Jacobsen chose to split one of the bedrooms into two separate rooms. The result of this is that today there are a few extra steps that lead directly from the stairway's half-landing into one of the existing bedrooms. A partition wall that once separated this room's wide window into two sections was subsequently removed. These kinds of solutions are unorthodox, but they also provide excellent demonstrations of a patently open-minded and undogmatic aspect in Jacobsen's work. The ceiling over the stairway is, moreover, the only ceiling in the house that is fitted with a stucco moulding, which conceals a number of cables and wires. Once again, we can see here that Jacobsen's villa does not fit neatly into the picture of functionalism with "pure" lines.

The large roof terrace, the ground plan of which corresponds precisely to that of the living room on the ground floor, is the residential quarter's main attraction. Along with flat roofs, the roof terrace was one of functionalism's hallmarks. As a matter of fact, in a manifesto penned by Le Corbusier, prominence was expressly given to the roof terrace as being one of five points listed as being salient characteristics of the new time's architecture. For both Le Corbusier and Jacobsen, the roof terrace had to do with bringing about a high degree of interchange between building and surrounding environment, i.e. between architecture and nature.





*On the left: The drawing studio. Through the closet doors at the back of the picture there is access to yet another stairway leading down to the drawing studio's cellar section.*

*On the right: Jacobsen's own office, with a view of the drawing studio and the small greenhouse.*

*Facing page: The drawing studio in the basement. The spiral staircase connects the two levels of the drawing studio.*

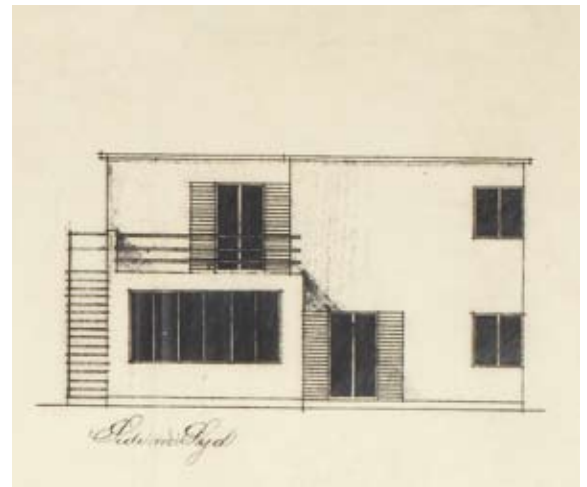
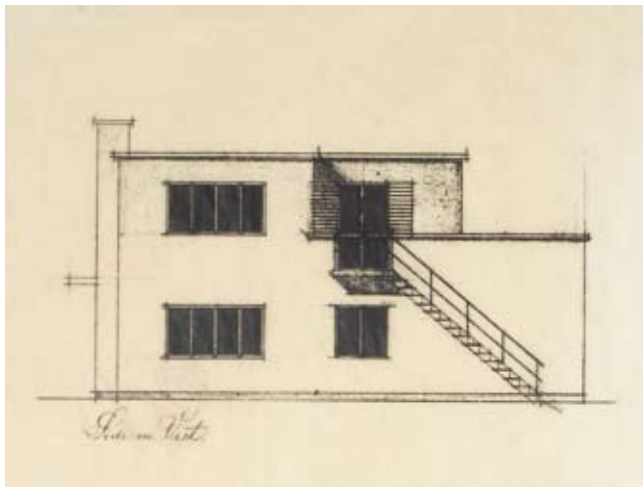


## **BASEMENT AND ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE**

The basement, which occupies the same floor area as the ground floor, does not contain anything unusual with respect to conventional villa construction of the day. Its fittings are very practical and down-to-earth – with, for example, traditional batten doors, which were especially familiar when designing maid's rooms fifty years earlier. Jacobsen had no compunctions about taking hold of standard solutions sanctioned by usage.

From the basement, it is possible to ascend to the architectural office via a round newel staircase of steel, which is a contemporary reconstruction of the original stairway. In one end of the drafting room, Arne Jacobsen's personal office was situated. It contains both a window looking into the rest of the drafting room and another larger window looking out to a small greenhouse that Jacobsen had built between the kitchen and the ground floor section of the drawing studio. In this way, the botanically interested boss was able to keep his eye trained on what his employees were doing and also to gather inspiration in the greenhouse's abundance of growing plants.

In contrast to the circumstances prevailing when he constructed the house's living space, Jacobsen was able to obtain permission to use one of functionalism's favourite materials, reinforced concrete, when constructing his office and the adjoining garage. Because the casting was not executed in a particularly precise way, however, Jacobsen was compelled to roughcast in plaster over the drawing office's facade oriented toward the garden and on the office's inside walls, the thin strawboard insulation has also been covered with plaster. This new building technique obviously did not articulate any significant break from the past's roughcast "facade architecture". On the other hand, the office's mottled magnesite floor, which looks something like terrazzo, does articulate an urge to work with the materials' textuality.



## IMPURE FUNCTIONALISM ?

If we assess Jacobsen's villa on the basis of a narrow-minded functionalist criterion, the house is – in many ways – "impure" in style: the rooms' placement on the lower floor and their manner of being grouped around a central stairwell is conventional; the brick facades simulate an architecture in reinforced concrete; the interior contains curious details, like an arched niche or a winding stairway's course.

According to the renowned Jacobsen-specialist, Kjeld Vindum, a "technical and regionally conditioned inertia" characterizes the house. Moreover, Vindum considers the house on Gotfred Rodes Vej to be Jacobsen's first modern house, albeit without the same lightweight modernity that can be seen in the later major works, Bellavista and Bellevue, both dating from the beginning of the 1930s. Moreover, the modern attributes like corner windows, roof terrace and ship's stairway strike Vindum as being expressions of a somewhat superficial interpretation of an international modernism that had not yet been incorporated fully into the architect's repertoire. Another Jacobsen-expert, Félix Solaguren-Beascoa, correspondingly finds that the house reflects a conflict between two incompatible kinds of logic.

In any event, the house takes on an inviting character – and maybe because of its somewhat "impure" expression. The house's lopsided placement with respect to the axis of arrival does not lie entirely in accordance with the house's orthogonal and cubic geometry, but even so, this tension stimulates the sense of curiosity with a sequence of picturesque tableaux. Jacobsen's fascination with botany can also be spotted in extension of a picturesque aesthetics, which actually gathers its inspiration from nature's form universe. In this way, the planting layout plays a prominent role in

*Original facade sketches, made by Arne Jacobsen in 1929.*

*On the left: West facade.*

*On the right: South facade.*

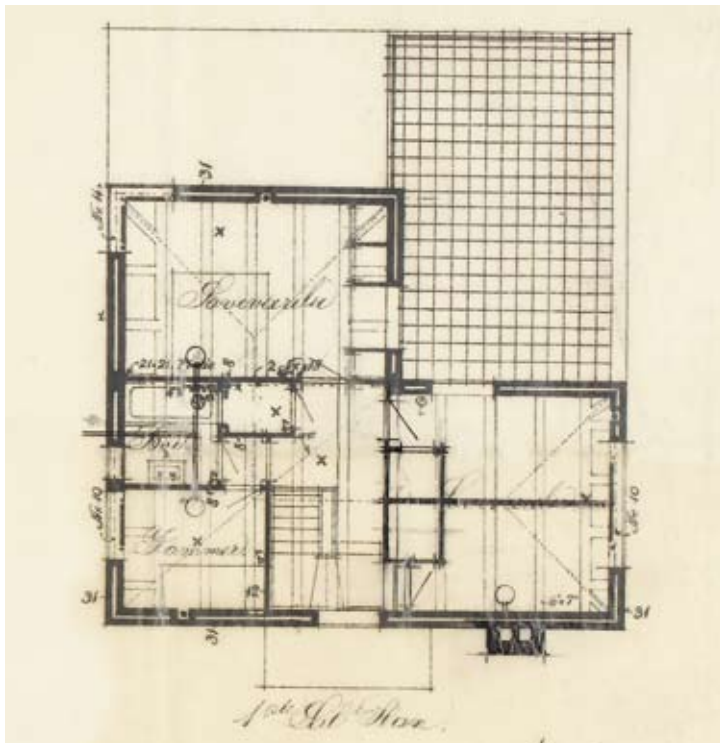


*South gable, as seen  
from the garden.*

photographs of the house; in this context, the house almost seems to make its appearance as a lightweight orangery building or a condensation of the garden's architecture. With this, the house reflects one of the less sober-minded aspects of the functionalist project: a romantic aspiration toward living in covenant with nature. Furthermore, Jacobsen's open-minded and undogmatic approach to alterations suggests that, to a certain extent, he apprehended his own house as a project that stood open to change.

Many of these endeavours were also matters of concern for post-war architects. Since the 1960s, functionalism has consequently been under fire for lacking the capacity to encompass the complexity and the internal contradictions that often serve to render a pre-modern architectural work interesting. In addition, functionalism's requirement about being able to offer a universal solution-model has been contested. A number of architects have been inspired instead by, for example, regional building traditions or by a culture of everyday life that is not necessarily an expression of patently modern tastes.

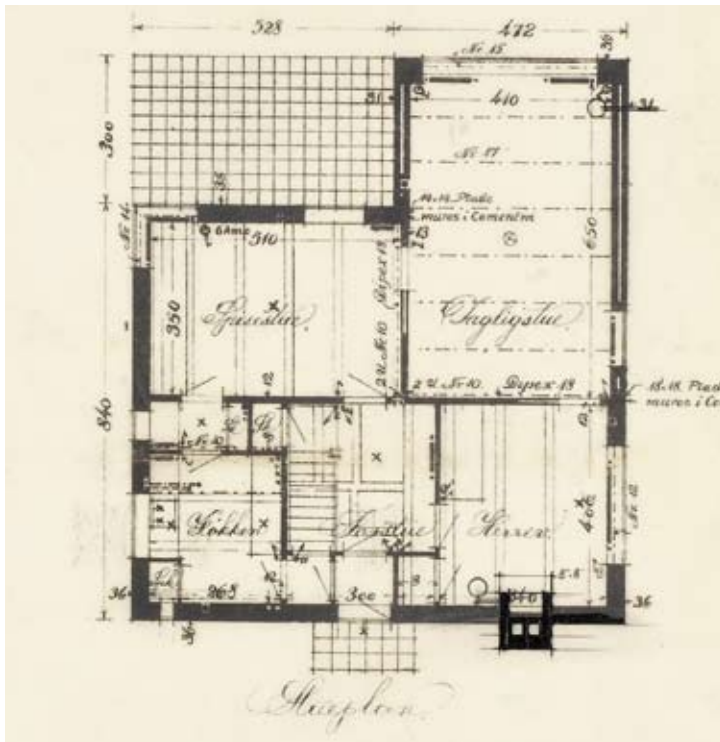
Of course, Jacobsen could not have been conscious about these lines of development when he built his home. Nonetheless, what this course of development entails is that today we can contemplate the villa with other spectacles than that of Jacobsen's day. When viewed in this optics, the "impure" features are not merely manifestations of helpless functionalism: they are also valid in our own day. On the other hand, it can also be ascertained that functionalism wasn't ever really as narrow and stringent as we are accustomed to believing it was. Above and beyond its fascination with industrial culture, functionalism's program also included a romantic aspect, an aspect where architecture is perceived in the form of fragments of a larger scheme, where nature eats its way into the building body and where chairs with twisted legs remind us of a past.



Original floor plan drawings by Arne Jacobsen, made in 1929.

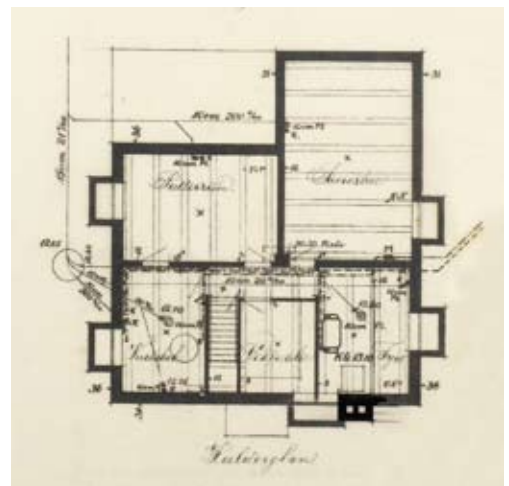
Note: In these drawings, the compass's north point is at the bottom of the page.

Top: First floor; the hatched area is the roof terrace.



Below, on the left: Plan of the ground floor; the hatched area is a contiguous terrace of firm terrain facing the south.

On the right: Basement.



## LITERATURE

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Cover photo: The south gable, as seen from the garden

Photo on the back of the booklet: Corner windows of steel, with vertical mullions





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