

European 11, Sweden
Jury Report

The jury was in session the 24 to 25 of October (first session), and the 14 to 15 of November (second session).

The jury decided for the following awards.

MALMÖ

Runner up: GV111 – Greenish Village

Runner up: ID365 – Green Grid

Honourable mention: BA585 – Staging Holma

Honourable mention: ZL433 – Puzzling Holma

NORRKÖPING

Winner: DX123 – Delta X

Runner up: I IC311– Synapcity

Honourable mention: G0646 – Living in the infravillas

NYNÄSHAMN

Winner: UT313 – Skärscape

Runner up: IT111 – To Big Square

SIMRISHAMN

Winner: TU144 – Strädde

Winner: SK010 – Wear Out

MALMÖ

Site and Task

The site is in peripheral Malmö, on a large strip of land between the existing Miljonprojekt housing area of Holma and the busy road of Pildammsvägen. The questions of the brief are manifold, dealing with the desire of the developer to create something with architectural identity that can transform perceptions of Holma, to the need to deal with the difficult legacy of modernist public space. The jury also felt that dealing meaningfully with the road, and perhaps taming it, was vital to the success of the project. Many entries dealt rather conservatively with the task, proposing variations of perimeter blocks with more or less architectural interest. The jury found that no clear winner emerged, and that the urban design skills of many of the entries were disappointingly crude. Noone adequately solved what is a very complex and multifaceted problem. Instead the jury's choices identify projects and young architects with the potential to contribute positively to what will be a long-term project. It seems clear that the vision of a single architect is unlikely to create a decent piece of city in this location.

The site at Holma proved to be a stern challenge to entrants, and noone cracked it. The jury decided to offer second prizes to two projects that suggested some talent in their authors, and ideas that might be developed into strategies for the future of this area.

RUNNER UP

ID365 Green Grid

Karin Kjellson, Malin Dahlhielm, Anna Edblom

Green Grid was chosen for its apparent desire not to distinguish between the existing modernist suburb of Holma, and what might be added to it in the future. The authors had clearly considered Holma as a whole, trying to integrate and solve all the edges of the place, and resisting the creation of new boundaries between old and new. The treatment of the edge of the park was a strong insight, and suggested to the jury that an all-embracing strategic view of Holma would be useful for all stakeholders in this regeneration project.

The jury was less convinced by the rigidity of the proposed block structure, and understood it as a schematic proposal rather than a viable scheme at this stage. But the jury also felt that there was a plausible framework in evidence here that could be worked with.

RUNNER UP

GV111 Greenish Village

Johan Ahlquist, Urban Skogmar, Carlos Martinez

The desire on the part of the developer for some degree of identity to be created through architecture was the aspect of the brief that Greenish Village seemed to answer. Architecturally, the project suggested an intriguing and attractive atmosphere in the green courtyards it proposed, even if the overall plan seemed somewhat monotonous. The jury felt that these grouped towers had the potential to solve the tricky problem of scale on such a site. Whereas many other entries grouped large and small elements in various configurations, this one dealt with various scales of inhabitation in a single architectural expression.

There were fundamental problems with the project at an urban scale, and it was unclear whether it would be desirable to have as much of this housing as proposed. The project also created a vague and unrealistic relationship with Pildammsvägen, and was very schematic at the level of planning the accommodation within the buildings.

The jury felt that there was talent in evidence here, and that architect and client could learn a lot from one another if the project was further developed.

HONOURABLE MENTION

ZL433 Puzzling Holma

John Andersson, Simon Klamborn, Elinor Andersson

This project divided the jury, but won an honourable mention for its consideration of Pildammsvägen, and the benefits that could provide at the scale of the city. The way the project suggests bridging this busy road and trying to create a boulevard-like atmosphere was the most convincing of the projects that attempted this desirable, but tricky, operation.

HONOURABLE MENTION

BA585 Staging Holma

Nadine Aschenbach, Helen Runting, Maja Claesson

It was a surprise to the jury that so few of the entries dealt meaningfully with helping existing residents of Holma participate in its future development. Staging Holma was the project that did this best, and despite an unconvincing masterplan and mediocre presentation, its authors persuaded the jury that they were serious about involving local people in the project. Also, its view on how to add plausible public uses to the place was important. As part of a team, the authors of Staging Holma would add important insight to the redevelopment of this part of Malmö.

NYNÄSHAMN

Site and Task

This site is a piece of leftover land that is threatened with flooding in the future, but at the moment could provide valuable park space for nearby residential neighbourhoods. The brief was open and invited ideas about how this triangular site might be used today, and how a strategy might be created to deal with the 100-year horizon of rising water levels and the consequences for local transport connection and the use of the space itself.

Many entrants chose to heavily programme the area with leisure activity in dedicated 'fields' (from sports to allotments), often embellishing this with monumental proposals for public space infrastructure: footbridges, boardwalks, large-scale man-made lakes. There were few entries that engaged with the task critically, looking at the meaning of such a piece of public realm today. There was also a preponderance of cheerful projects that had little to do with the existing character of the city, or indeed the poetic qualities of Swedish landscape. The winner and runner up, though, represented highly individual voices where real talent was evident. The approaches are very different, but could both offer huge amounts to the discussion about what public parks should be in the future.

WINNER

UT313 Skärscape

Jan Derveaux, Franz Reschke, Rita Leal, Anna Vogels, Frederik Springer

The jury rewarded the restrained and unprogrammed nature of this proposal, beautifully represented in a way that suggested a characterful landscape, but that did not prescribe too much about what might happen there. The result was a proposal that is a stylised meditation on the Swedish landscape, that resists imposing arbitrary, 'friendly' landscape features. It also appears very realisable in terms of scale and form.

The project took seriously the character of what was already there on the site, reinforcing it and slightly sharpening the edges. While the theoretical motivations of the landscape "cuts" were a little obscure, the jury enjoyed how the approach became a design tool that could potentially accommodate the changing needs of the site and brief. There are aspects of the future of this landscape that no project solved, but Skärscape has the most potential to adapt to those requirements.

The jury felt that there was something elegant about the proposal that grows on the observer. This project embraced the emptiness of the landscape, gave it a sense of generosity and created an atmosphere that suggested a calm, recreational mood. It treated the entire landscape as a design project, and used highly architectural means to create this mood. This is a project that dares not to build, if you like: it trusts the power of a confident landscape design.

RUNNER UP

IT111 Too Big Square

Gaëtan Brunet, Antoine Espinasseau, Chloé Valadié

This provocative proposal took a unique approach to this place that seemed to offer valuable insights into the contemporary city. Almost all entries saw this site as some form of park. The Too Big Square redefined it as the location of a huge piazza that operated at the scale of the city region, connecting the scattered parts of the expanded, zoned urban form of Nynäshamn.

This opened up a very big discussion about how cities should programme voids in the suburban fabric, and also how inner city squares might be freed from programme so they can become useful. The jury felt that the Too Big Square showed, provocatively and with humour, how a void can be urban even without the urban context.

While the actual content of the (very large) proposed buildings around the public space was unclear, it was felt that they were not necessarily unrealistic, given the preponderance of large-scale buildings in peripheral city locations. In sum, this is the kind of project that European allows to come to light, and it deserves a broader audience.

NORRKÖPING

Site and task

The site for study is a large, strategic area of southern Norrköping, on the periphery of the city centre. Several identifiable characters bounded the site. The heart of the area is an existing modernist housing area, with a busy and functioning commercial centre, and large slabs of housing arranged in a fan shape at one end of a valley. A large, but not too busy, road bisects the site, and all projects had to deal with how best to ameliorate it. And in the east, next to a large hospital campus, is an area of outstanding natural beauty – a big amenity for the area.

The general standard of proposals was high for this site, with very diverse approaches reflecting the diversity of conditions. It was fascinating to see a generation of young architects dealing critically and constructively with the consequences of modernist planning. The winning projects represent different tendencies within the entries, from orthodox masterplanning, to strategic, politicised thinking. The winner in this category is an outstanding piece of work, asking profound questions that the jury had no immediate answer for, but found very fruitful. The appetite of the municipality for this conversation must be praised, and the jury hopes that this will mean a real follow through with the talented winners of this site.

WINNER
DX123 Delta X
Ebba Hallin, Pelle Backman

This project was probably the most provocative and sophisticated of all the entries to Swedish European this year, raising political, ethical and architectural questions while offering a plausible planning strategy and suggestions of real talent in landscape design.

Delta X resulted in a discussion that the jury felt it learned from – the project rewards close reading. The project questioned the consolidation of large city periphery sites into single ownership, and its critique had real power, suggesting a flexible, even anarchic, method of dividing the area into plots, and encouraging a participatory (as opposed to a consultative) process that felt very much of today.

The project thinks two steps ahead, proposing infrastructural moves (the large, two-tone park and an intricate network of routes), but also a plausible way of putting the system into action. The consequences of such a strategy were explored in the proposal, but not defined.

The representatives of the municipality of Norrköping should be applauded, too, for their interest in a project that might have been dismissed as a utopia. In fact, the jury felt that it would be important to push it towards implementation. Where would the delicate negotiation between control and laissez-faire end up? What would the role of the municipality be in this context? How would the project defend against the bigger powers in the development and construction industries steamrolling this delicately balanced system of land distribution?

The project is a brilliant exposition by architects of real talent: an essay on the identity of peripheral suburban contexts in Sweden and an act of resistance against an atrophied development community stuck in 19th century visions of the city. It is also an important project in the context of European, which has often been an object-oriented competition. It suggests entirely new roles for architects working within a bureaucratic sphere, but creating something of artistry and humanity from an understanding of the development parameters acting on the city.

RUNNER UP

IC311 – Synapcity

Matteo Cesare Parini, Roy Nash, Cesare Ventura, Gilles Berrino, Michele Morrone, Vito Marco Marinaccio, Francesca Mazziotti, Giorgia De Castro, René Diesk, Debora Magri, Paolo Filippo Pelanda, Michal Bernart, Valentina Chiappa Nunez, Marta Parini, Marcello Scaravella, Barbara Valentini, Luca De Stasio

This project had many elements that the jury found intriguing and fruitful to discuss, suggesting new housing typologies that question orthodox development models for suburban contexts, while trying to be in tune with the scale and character of the natural landscape nearby.

While not every jury member was convinced by the biological metaphors at work in the project, most felt that the blob-shaped urban units, with their big-shed housing typologies, provided an interesting alternative to perimeter-block planning strategies, and that the ambiguous, 'stream-like' spaces inbetween the buildings could work well in this location, close to the nature reserve. Some jurors saw it as a contemporary 'Bruksmiljö' – a kind of industrial colony with a campus-like structure. This ambiguity in terms of functionality and public/private space responded well to the brief by creating potentially hybrid building types.

The jury was less convinced about the location of the business node to the north of the site, but some felt that the intuition of making a higher-density district somewhere would provide important hierarchy in the context of the study area.

HONOURABLE MENTION

G0646 – Living in the Infravillas

Carlo Alberto Tagliabue, Nicola Brenna, Marcello Bondavalli, Virginia Ortalli

This project impressed the jury with its desire to try to solve a large-scale problem with a piece of architecture. This single megastructure spanning the road is extreme, and perhaps heroically unrealistic, but the authors had thought carefully about how a building might connect the two sides of the road, and also create an interesting place to live and work in itself. The project does not try to distribute small elements across the site, but brings them together in one gesture, using the agglomeration of functions and accommodation as a means of solving an infrastructural problem. It is unlikely that the road in this case (which is no motorway) requires such a strident solution, but nonetheless the project won admirers in the jury for resisting orthodoxy and following an idea through to its logical conclusion.

SIMRISHAMN

Site and task

This site provided a great counterweight to the more urban/suburban concerns of the other Swedish sites. Simrishamn provided an exciting site adjacent to the picturesque town centre, and called for a housing project that could be seen as an urban extension to the existing. The entrants also had to deal with the adjacency to the waterside, a picturesque aspect in summer, but also a chilly and windy place in winter. What looks like a simple task also had to deal with the existing road network (that accommodates local traffic and the significant summer tourist population), as well as maximising the potential of the waterside, a task that few competitors successfully undertook.

The two winners represent two important scales of this task. The municipality's laudable desire for something innovative in terms of housing is represented by an exciting typological experiment that allows a unique, but believable, water landscape to take shape. The second winner understood the need to continue the character of Simrishamn in a new idiom, and joined this to plausible strategic proposals about how to join the new area to the existing town.

WINNER

SK 010 – Wear Out

Iria De la Pena, Miguel Huelga

This project is the most sophisticated experiment in new housing typologies that we saw in the competition. It is an exciting prototype that, if developed further, could play a role in the strategic future of Simrishamn in terms of living, water management and its image as a town.

The site affords opportunities to work with the sometimes extreme weather conditions and the proximity to the water, and 'Wear Out' does this by making new (but plausible) housing typologies grouped together in such a way that suggests an intimacy of scale appropriate to the historic town. It was (surprisingly) one of very few proposals that proposed inviting water into the town, and in doing so also created spaces that are protected from the worst of the weather in the winter months. Addressing the issue of private, public and semi-public space through water was successful in this project, and genuinely challenging and innovative in a Swedish context. The jury felt that there was a connection between the proposed housing and the intimacy, density and proximity of the historic fishing village of Simrishamn, achieved in a contemporary idiom that does not ape the historic urban pattern.

If the jury had a reservation about the project, it was that the careful judgement exercised in the scale of individual or small groups of dwellings is not so apparent at the urban scale, with the treatment of the harbourside particularly unclear. But the jury felt that the proposed dwellings suggested a townscape that could give Simrishamn a new identity, attracting people to the place while being sympathetic in scale with the historic fabric. The prize is given not for the masterplan, but for a sophisticated speculation on housing types that could provide a new grammar for the development of the town and could even, in the words of one jury member, be a site that in future years is seen as a unique piece of heritage that would attract attention from a broad public.

WINNER

TU144 – Strädde

Anders Eriksson, Egil Blom, Hannes Haak, Daniel Lindberg

This project was founded on a very sensitive analysis of the existing conditions of Simrishamn that displayed an all-too-rare (amongst the majority of entries) sympathy for the site. "Strädde" is a reference to a traditional typology of urban space in fishing village settlements like Simrishamn: small, intimate alleyways between houses that are useful, but sheltered from the worst of the weather. The observations made by the architects were developed into tools that proved effective in creating small scale urban spaces – new versions of the 'Strädde' – while still proposing a plausible neighbourhood of density and variety.

The jury enjoyed how the project began with characterful evocation of place that developed into a movement strategy encouraging porosity towards the waterside. In the proposal, this movement strategy is a means of staging urban encounters, not merely a diagram of movement.

The masterplan also displayed intelligence and insight about the location of potential new public uses, and proposes a new node of public functions at a hinge point between the historic town centre, the marina and the site of the new housing. This will need to be considerably developed, but the scale of the blocks and the way they knit together with the proposed boardwalk and small-scale plaza seemed to the jury to be realistic and well judged.

While the architectural representation of individual buildings didn't get the jury's pulse racing, the strategic thinking and the subtle observations about how to extend a charming but informally developed historic centre, fully merit a first prize.

The jury meetings were attended by the following people.

Jury

- Olle Forsgren, city architect of Umeå, chairman of the jury (full attendance)
- Markus Bader, architect, Raumlabor Berlin (full attendance)
- Celine Condorelli, architect (second jury session)
- Maria Hellström Reimer, artist and professor in design theory at the School of Arts and Communication, Malmö (full attendance)
- Karolina Keyzer, city architect of Stockholm (full attendance)
- Kieran Long, journalist and architectural critic, London (full attendance)
- Dorte Mandrup-Poulsen, architect, Dorte Mandrup Arkitekter (full attendance)
- Ulf Ranhagen, professor at the Royal Institute of Technology, member of the Swedish Delegation of Sustainable Cities and head architect at Sweco (full attendance)
- Bolle Tham, architect, Tham & Videgård arkitekter (full attendance)

Jury reserve

- Annica Carlsson, architect, director at Equator Stockholm, member of the Swedish European committee (first jury session)

Site Malmö

- Anne Rosell, architect and product developer at the public housing company MKB (full attendance)
- Linda Ericsson, project manager at the public housing company MKB (first jury session)
- Marlène Engström, coordinator at the cooperative property company Riksbyggen (full attendance)
- Hannah Bohwalli, project leader at the cooperative property company Riksbyggen (first jury session)
- Mikael Wallberg, project leader at Malmö town planning office (first jury session)
- Charlotta Nilsén, MKB (second jury session)
- Jon Ossler, Riksbyggen (second jury session)

Site Norrköping

- Per Haupt, plan architect (full attendance)
- Josef Erixon, plan architect (full attendance)

Site Nynäshamn

- Ida Olén, municipal architect (full attendance)
- Hanna Hansén, landscape architect (full attendance)
- Anna Ljungdell, chairman of the municipal board (first jury session)
- Daniel Adborn, vice chairman of the municipal board (first jury session)

Site Simrishamn

- Anna Thott, municipal director (full attendance)
- Maria Engberg, plan architect (full attendance)

European Sweden

- Anders Johansson, secretary of the jury (attendance except second day of first jury session)
- Erik Wingquist (full attendance)
- Alpar Asztalos (full attendance)