

Designing Learning Spaces: A Guide to Best Practices

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About Project:

The architecture of educational spaces shapes not just the physical environment, but also the comfort, creativity, and success of students. In search of the most innovative and impactful designs, the EdDesign Mag and EdDesign LLC team explored hundreds of architectural projects from studios around the world.

Our final list features 21 design studios — from iconic, world-renowned names with deep-rooted histories to bold, forward-thinking newcomers reshaping educational landscapes in their own countries. We set out to capture a wide spectrum of creativity, showing how cultural context, national tradition, and visionary innovation come together to redefine the way we design spaces that inspire learning.

About Magazine:

EdDesign Mag is an online platform dedicated to the intersection of school design and education.

We believe that the physical environment plays a critical role in shaping the educational experience. At EdDesign Mag, we explore how architecture and design can serve as powerful tools that support and enrich pedagogical approaches. Through in-depth articles and video content, we showcase exemplary case studies, feature expert interviews, and examine the dynamics of the school construction market and its broader economic context. Platform is founded by EdDesign LLC.



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Primary School Infanteriestrasse / Behnisch Architekten
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EdDesign

United Arab Emirates

#1

Website: eddesignconf.com

EdDesign shapes environments where ideas thrive and learning comes to life. From the first sketch to the final chair, EdDesign manages every step of creating inspiring work and educational settings, having a deep understanding of how architecture influences educational outcomes, crafting spaces that support purpose and ignite potential — all while staying smart on budget and fully aligned with regulatory standards of the particular country.

Related Materials:

[ART and IT: How to Set Up Workshops at School](#)



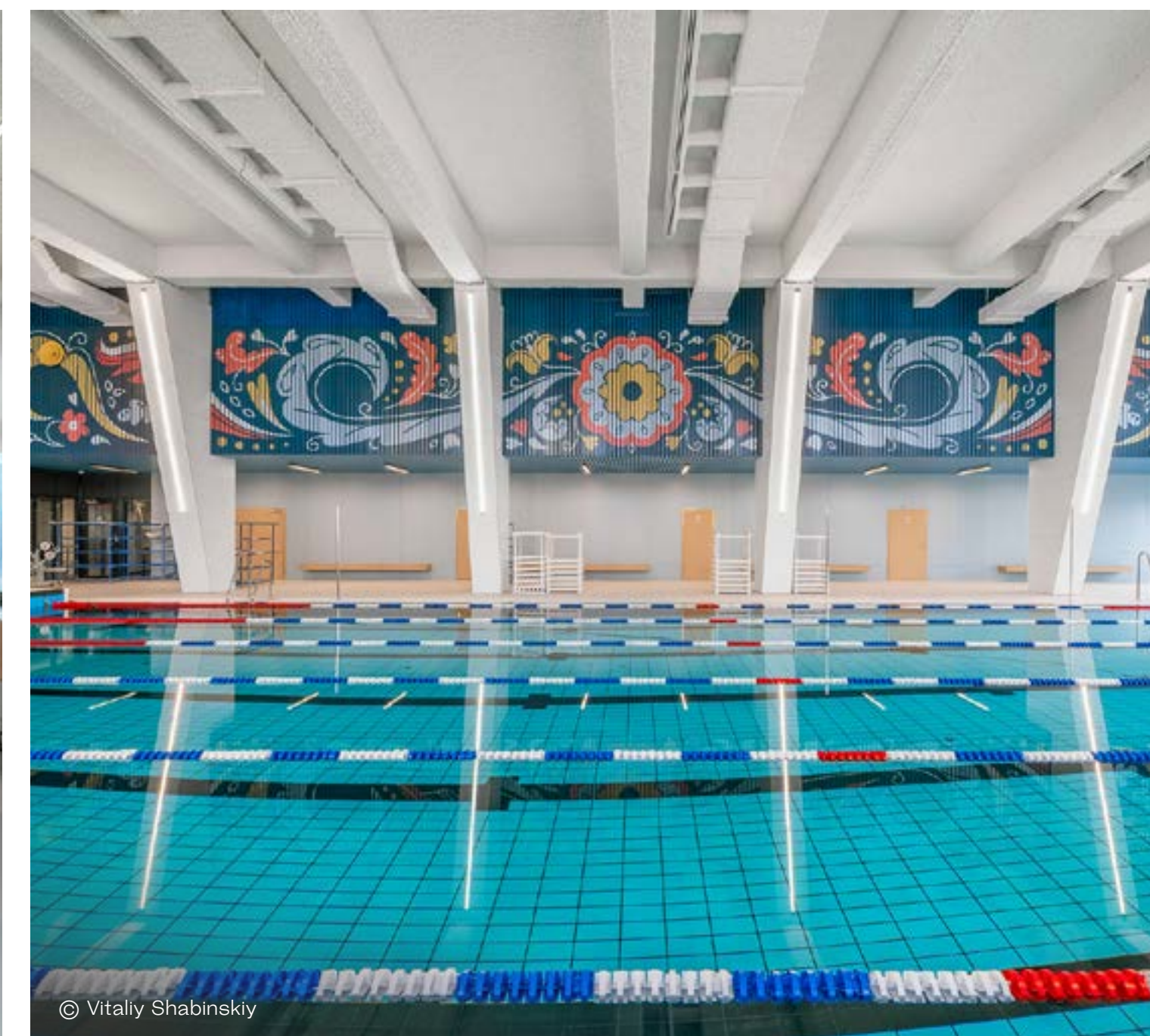
Lyceum №1, Almet'yevsk, Tatarstan, Russia, 2023



① Lyceum No. 1, the oldest school in the city, is nestled among historic buildings and needed to seamlessly blend into its surroundings. The architects opted for a classical style, featuring gable roofs, small windows, and light, airy façades in soft tones that evoke elegance and timelessness.

② An additional school building — the infrastructure block — is set to open for city residents. It includes a music school, carpentry and metalworking workshops, and even a fully equipped auto repair garage complete with an inspection pit. The block features two separate entrances: one from the school grounds and another directly from the street.

③ For the architects, showcasing local culture was essential, which is why they chose to incorporate Tatar national motifs into the school's interior. They collaborated with local designers to create ornaments that were later used in the upholstery of seating throughout the academic blocks, as well as in the decorative finishes of walls and ceilings in the sports complex. Locally made furniture was also actively used, further reinforcing the connection to regional identity.



Lumio Private School, Paphos, Cyprus, 2024

① The Lumio campus spans approximately 6.8 hectares and has undergone significant renovations to create a modern and dynamic learning environment. The architectural design, led by Lazarou & Michael Architects, focuses on blending the school's facilities with the natural landscape, creating tranquil and dynamic exploratory learning zones.

② The school's facilities are designed to be modern, functional, and comfortable, providing an inspiring and supportive setting for both students and staff. EdDesign created functional and modern interior design for the classrooms, as well as designed specialized rooms for music, art, ceramics, and a library.

③ Lumio Private School's commitment to integrating education with thoughtful architectural design reflects its mission to create an environment where students can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.





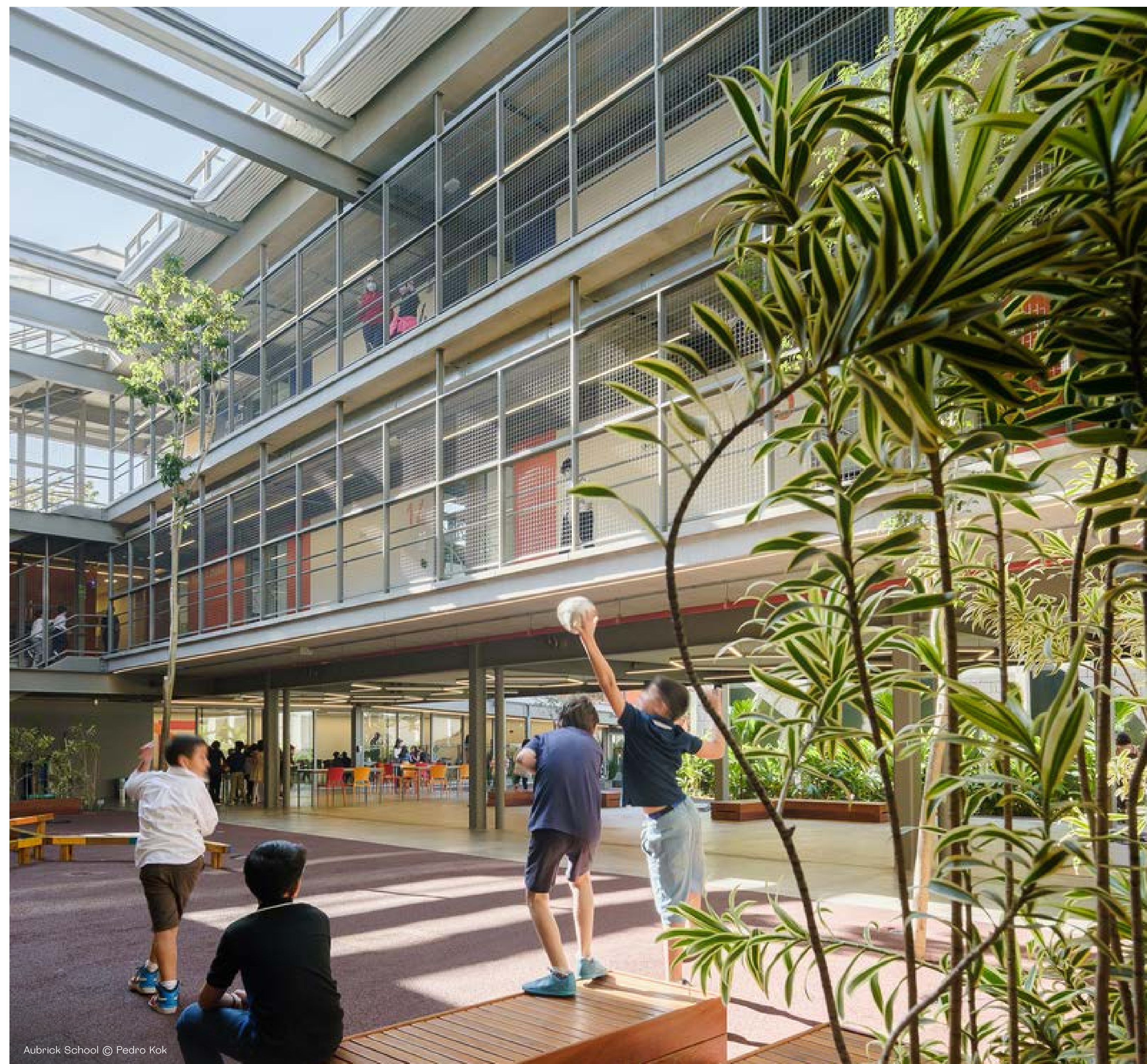
Andrade Morettin Arquitetos

Brazil

Website: andrademorettin.com.br
Year of Foundation: 1997

A Brazilian architectural studio specializing in residential and commercial design, Andrade Morettin Arquitetos Associados also creates cultural and educational spaces that capture the essence of the region. Their projects seamlessly blend a modern approach with a deep respect for local traditions.

#2



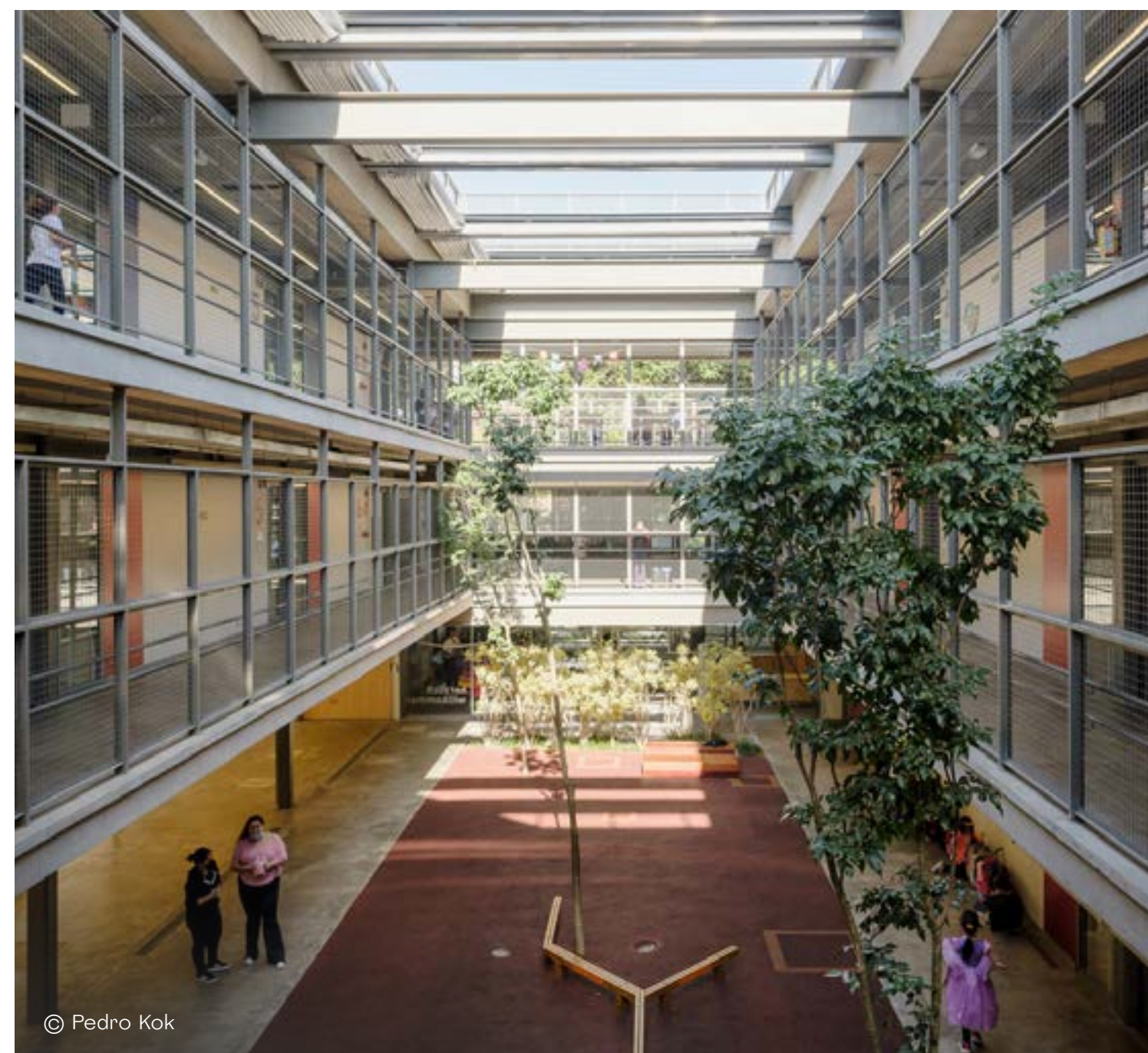
Aubrick School © Pedro Kok

Aubrick School, São Paulo, Brazil, 2021

❶ The new building's primary mission was to bring together the school's structures and breathe new life into the space, aligning it with modern educational principles. The project was developed by the architects in close collaboration with the school administration and teachers.

❷ The central feature of the space is a garden, around which the buildings are arranged in clusters. Biophilic design principles, which integrate natural elements into the architecture of the school, are perfectly suited for Brazil's warm climate. Light construction frames the garden, which can also serve as additional space for classes.

❸ The use of wood, lightweight structures, and vibrant colors creates a warm atmosphere, helping children feel comfortable and secure in the educational environment.





Andrade Morettin
Arquitetos
Brazil

Selected Educational Projects:

- 1 Beacon School, São Paulo, Brazil, 2016
- 2 Santa Cruz Library, São Paulo, Brazil, 2020
- 3 Hei Sei School, São Paulo, Brazil, 2022
- 4 Beacon High School, São Paulo, Brazil, 2023





atelier PRO

The Netherlands

#3

Website: atelierpro.nl
Year of Foundation: 1976

A Dutch architectural studio headquartered in The Hague, Atelier PRO's approach is based on the concept that each building should be harmoniously integrated into its surroundings and interact with them. The company has completed over a thousand projects, ranging from residential complexes to educational institutions.



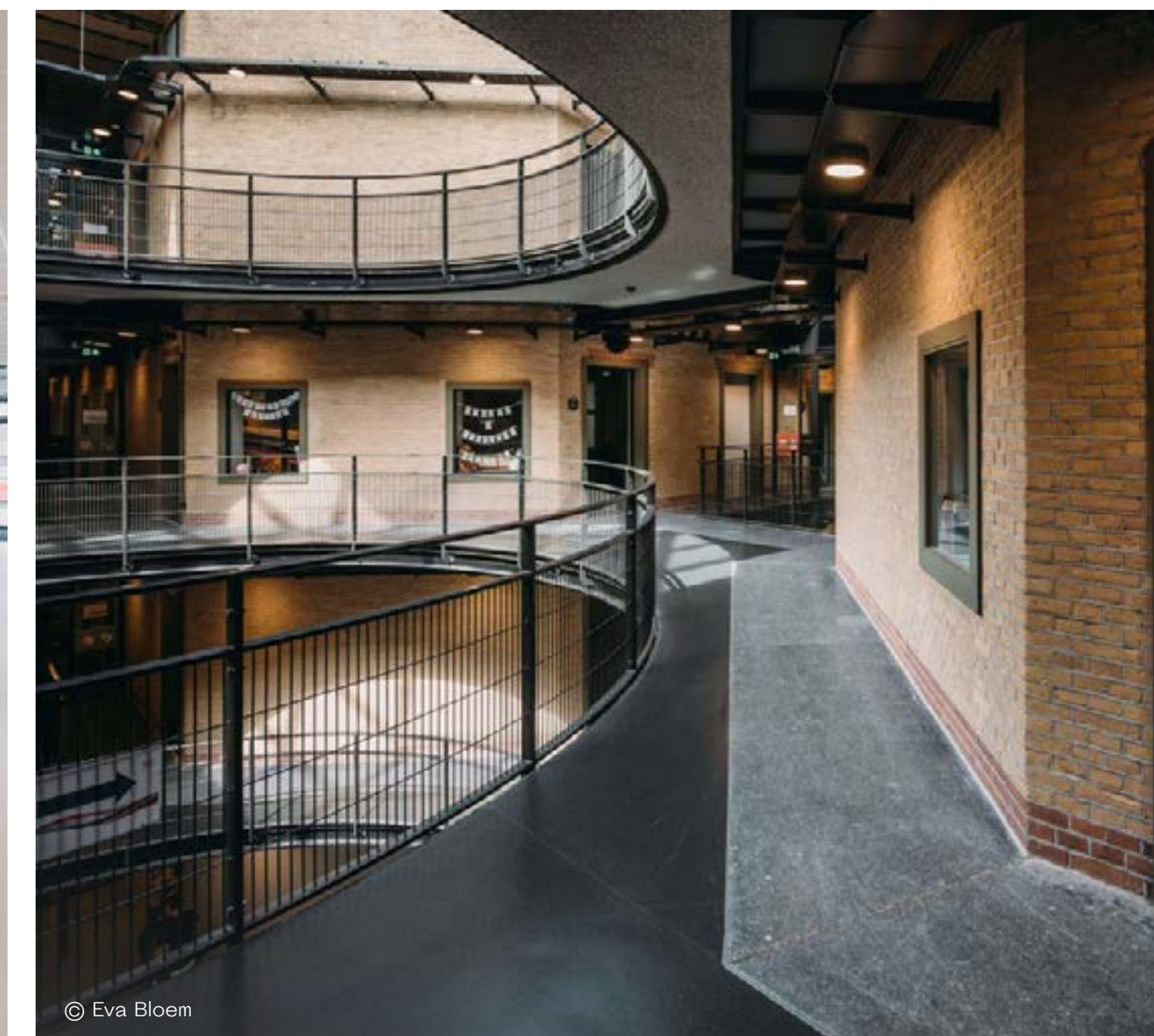
Albert Schweitzer School © Eva Bloem

The British School of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2021

① Perhaps the most unconventional example of redevelopment — a former prison transformed into a school. Originally built in 1891 and designed by Dutch architect W.C. Metzelaar, the building has served various roles over the years: a prison, an artists' residence, and even a shooting location for films and series. Today, it houses a school.

② The design team approached the renovation with great respect for the building's heritage status. The original structure — a panopticon with four wings — was preserved. One wing now serves as the entrance area, while the others have been adapted for primary, middle, and high school students. Former prison cells were converted into spacious classrooms with additional windows, and new floors were added to accommodate more school functions.

③ What was once a closed-off space has now become an integral part of the neighborhood. The former prison wall was replaced by a schoolyard, and later additions to the building were removed to restore its original architecture.





atelier PRO
The Netherlands

Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ The Klinker Cultural Centre, Winschoten, The Netherlands, 2014
- ❷ Metis Montessori Lyceum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2018
- ❸ Lumion Amsterdam School, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2019
- ❹ Albert Schweitzer School, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2022



© Eva Bloem



© Jan Paul Miolet



© Jan Paul Miolet



© Eva Bloem



Behnisch Architekten

Germany

#4

Website: behnisch.com
Year of Foundation: 1989

The studio was founded by Stefan Behnisch, son of renowned modernist architect Günter Behnisch, who designed the Olympic Park in Munich. Behnisch Architekten specializes in the design of public and educational buildings that harmoniously integrate architecture, technology, and nature. Guided by a human-centered philosophy, the studio places user experience at the heart of every design, with each project thoughtfully responding to the unique character of its surroundings.



Lycée Franco-Allemand © David Matthiessen

The New Building of Waldorf School Uhlandshöhe, Stuttgart, Germany, 2023

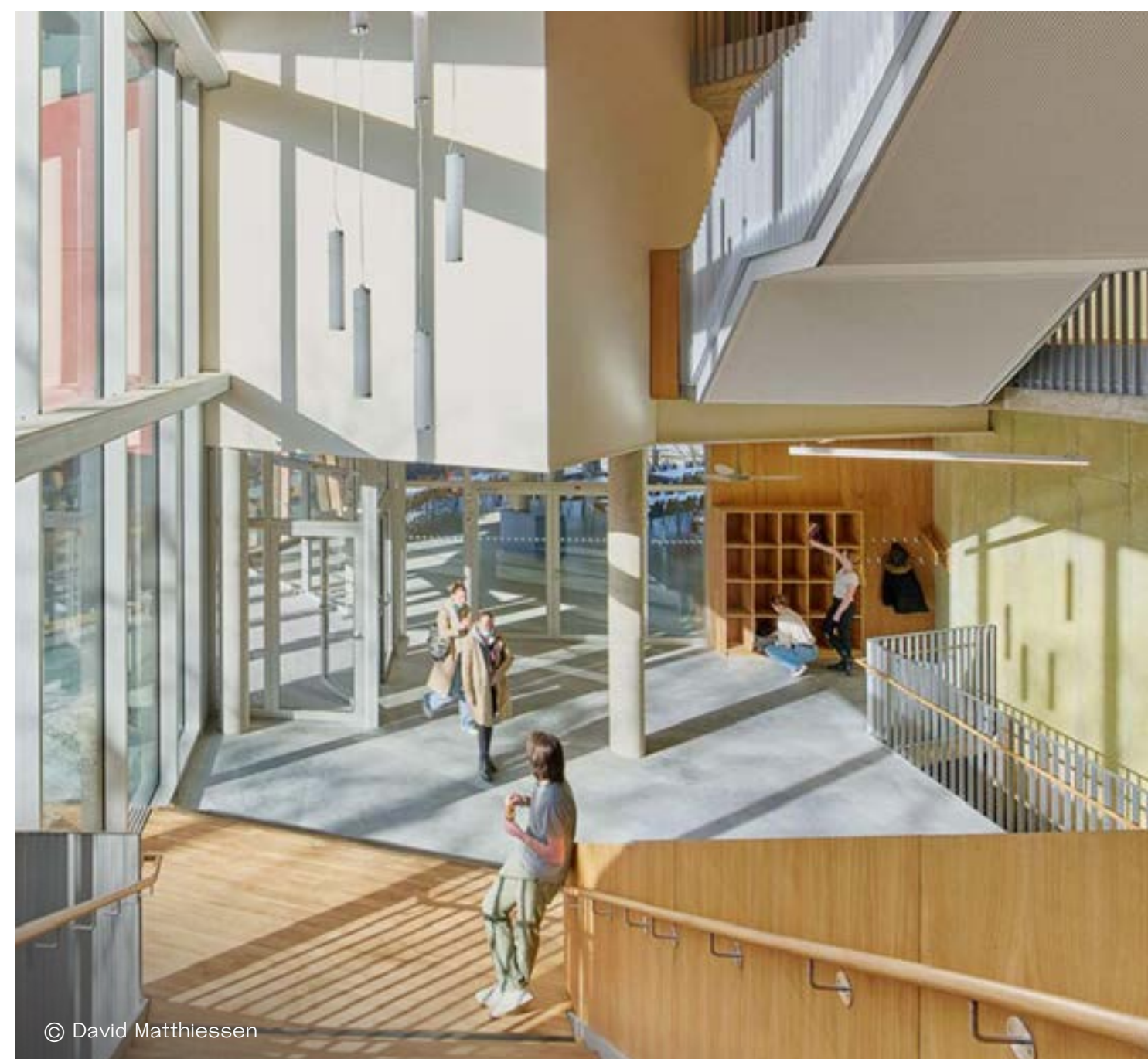
① Founded in 1919 by Emil Molt and Rudolf Steiner, this school was the first educational institution based on the principles of Waldorf education. Most of the existing buildings date back to the post-war period, so the school required a modern extension that would reflect the values of the program.

② The concept of the new building is based on the idea of a “villa with an annex”, which fits harmoniously into the architectural context of the Uhlandshöhe hill area, where small structures are scattered throughout the landscape. The building consists of three volumes, whose boundaries form a central school courtyard. The campus features a fluid layout of levels and classrooms.

③ A key aspect of the project are energy-efficient technologies, including rooftop solar panels, natural ventilation, and the use of geothermal energy, making sustainability a cornerstone of the project.



© David Matthiessen



© David Matthiessen



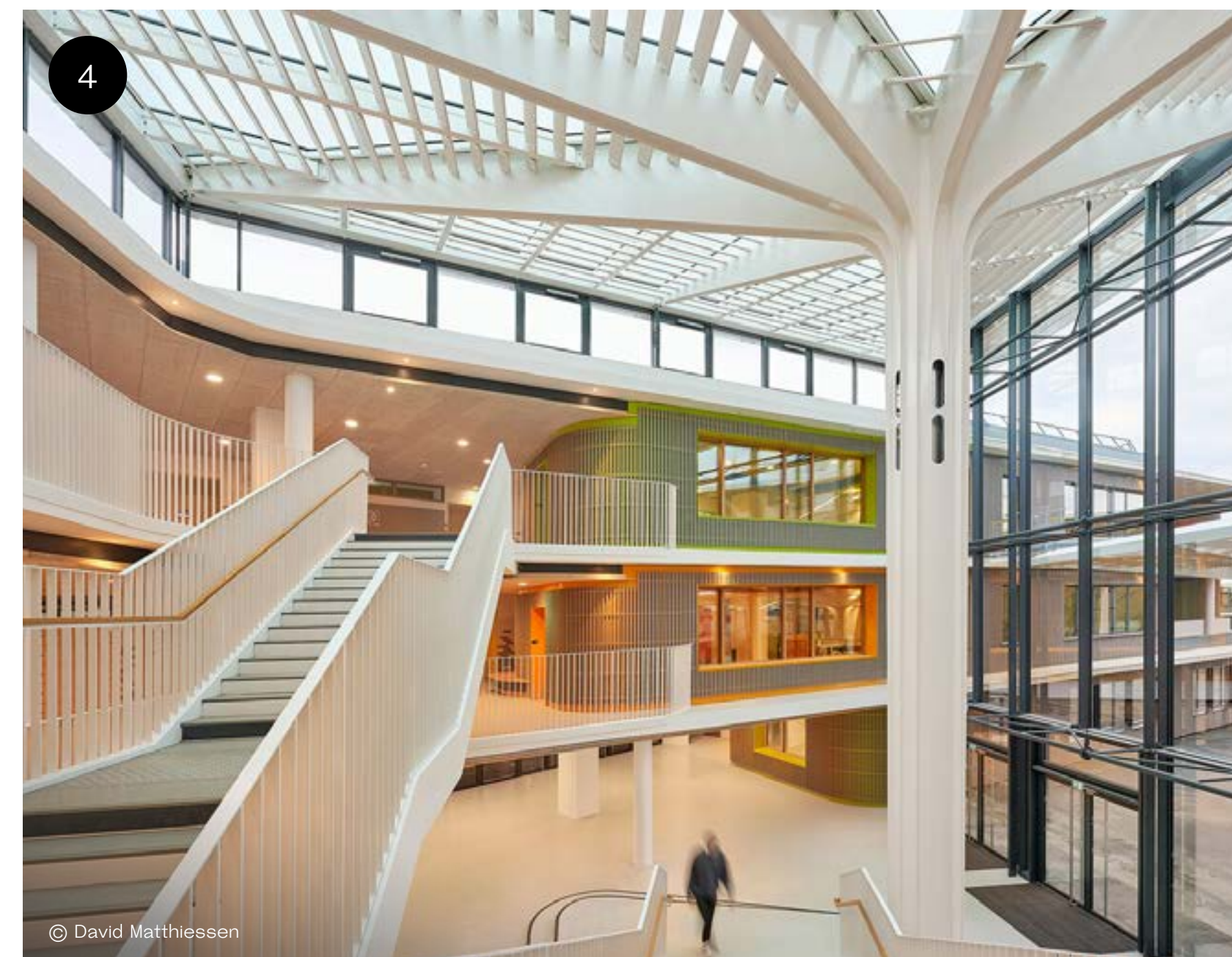
© David Matthiessen



Behnisch Architekten
Germany

Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ Primary School Infanteriestrasse, Munich, Germany, 2021
- ❷ Lurup Neighborhood School, Hamburg, Germany, 2021
- ❸ Harvard University Science and Engineering Complex, Boston, USA, 2021
- ❹ Lycée Franco-Allemand, Buc, France, 2022





C.F. Møller Architects

Denmark

#5

Website: cfmoller.com
Year of Foundation: 1924

One of Scandinavia's leading architectural firms with a history spanning over a century. C.F. Møller Architects has offices in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Berlin. The firm's architectural principles are rooted in core Nordic values — the rational use of resources and a strong sense of social responsibility. In addition to public buildings such as hospitals, the studio also designs a wide range of educational institutions, including universities and schools.





C.F. Møller Architects
Denmark

Details of a Project

The School on Islands Brygge, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2021

❶ The school's concept is rooted in promoting a healthy lifestyle, making food and movement key elements that shaped the architecture of the space.

❷ At the heart of the school is not just an atrium, but a dining hall. Positioned at the core of the building, it connects all areas and functions of the school — including the gymnasium, which is fully visible through the windows.

❸ The school's architecture actively encourages physical movement. In addition to the gym, the rooftop features a running track, a parkour zone, and a court. The roof also links different parts of the building, inviting students to explore alternative routes throughout the school.

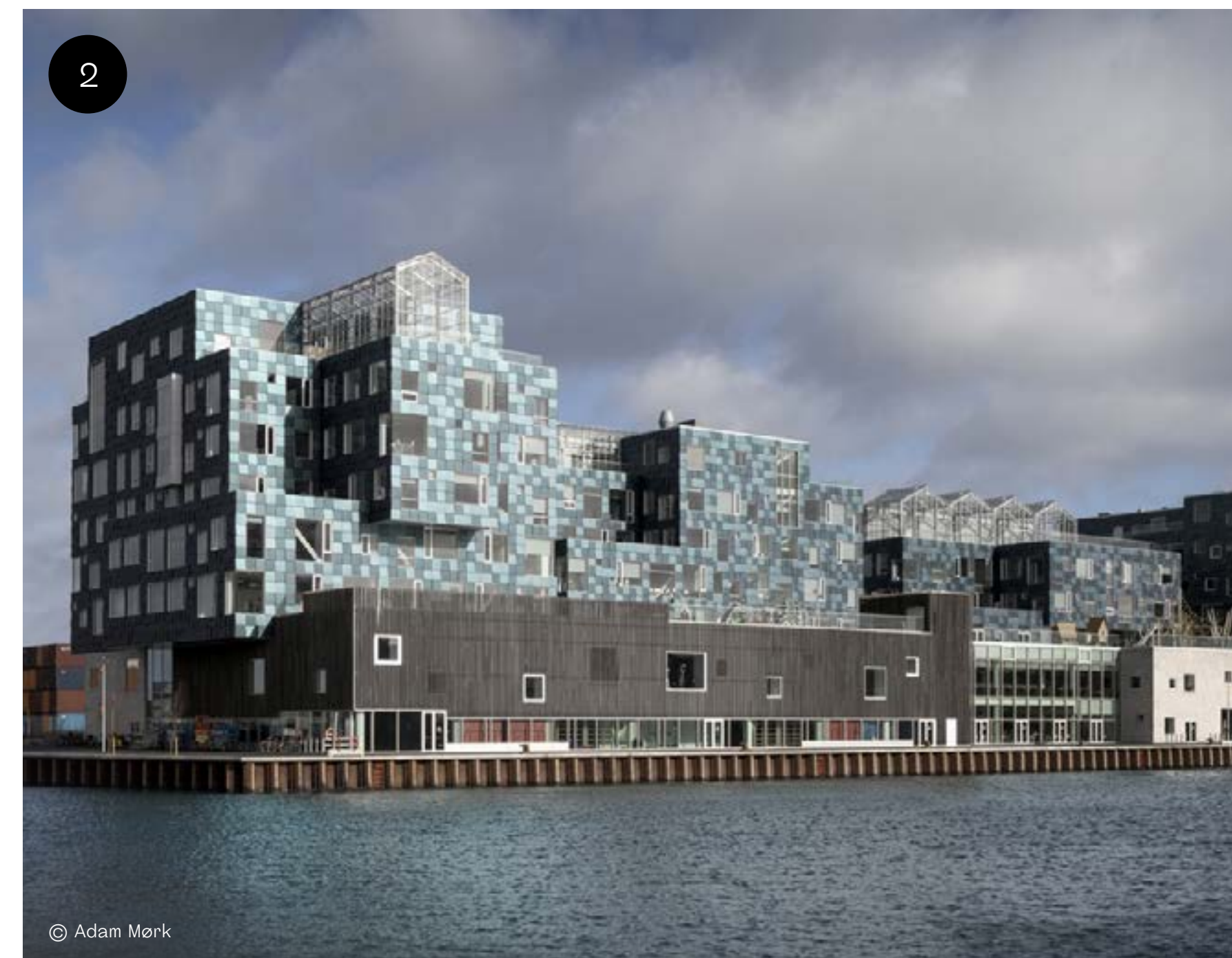




C.F. Møller Architects
Denmark

Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ Herningsholm Vocational School, Herning, Denmark, 2014
- ❷ Copenhagen International School Nordhavn, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2017
- ❸ Biomedicum Laboratory Building, Stockholm, Sweden, 2019
- ❹ LEGO® Campus, Billund, Denmark, 2022





Crossboundaries

China

#6

Website: crossboundaries.com
Year of Foundation: 2005

An international architecture studio known for its distinctly creative approach to designing educational and public spaces, Crossboundaries stands out through experiments with color, form, and concept. The studio actively explores interdisciplinary possibilities, significantly expanding the potential of educational architecture.



Chaoyang Future School © Ziling Wang

Jinlong Prefab School, Shenzhen, China, 2020

① A social project aimed at addressing the shortage of schools in Shenzhen, driven by rapid population growth and an overall lack of public education facilities. Faced with strict budget and time constraints, the school had to be built in just 13 months — far less than the typical 2–3 years. This was made possible through the use of prefabricated concrete and steel components, which made up 75% of the structure and were manufactured locally in Shenzhen.

② Despite relying on modular construction, the architects managed to give the building a unique character by combining different structural systems, varying window sizes, and experimenting with a diverse color palette.

③ On a 16,000 m² site, the architecture studio created a multi-story campus housing 36 classrooms and a dormitory. Unlike traditional school layouts, the Jinlong Prefab School features a running track elevated on a central platform. This smart spatial strategy allows the library, creative zones, sports areas, and multipurpose spaces to be tucked beneath it — making the most of every square meter.

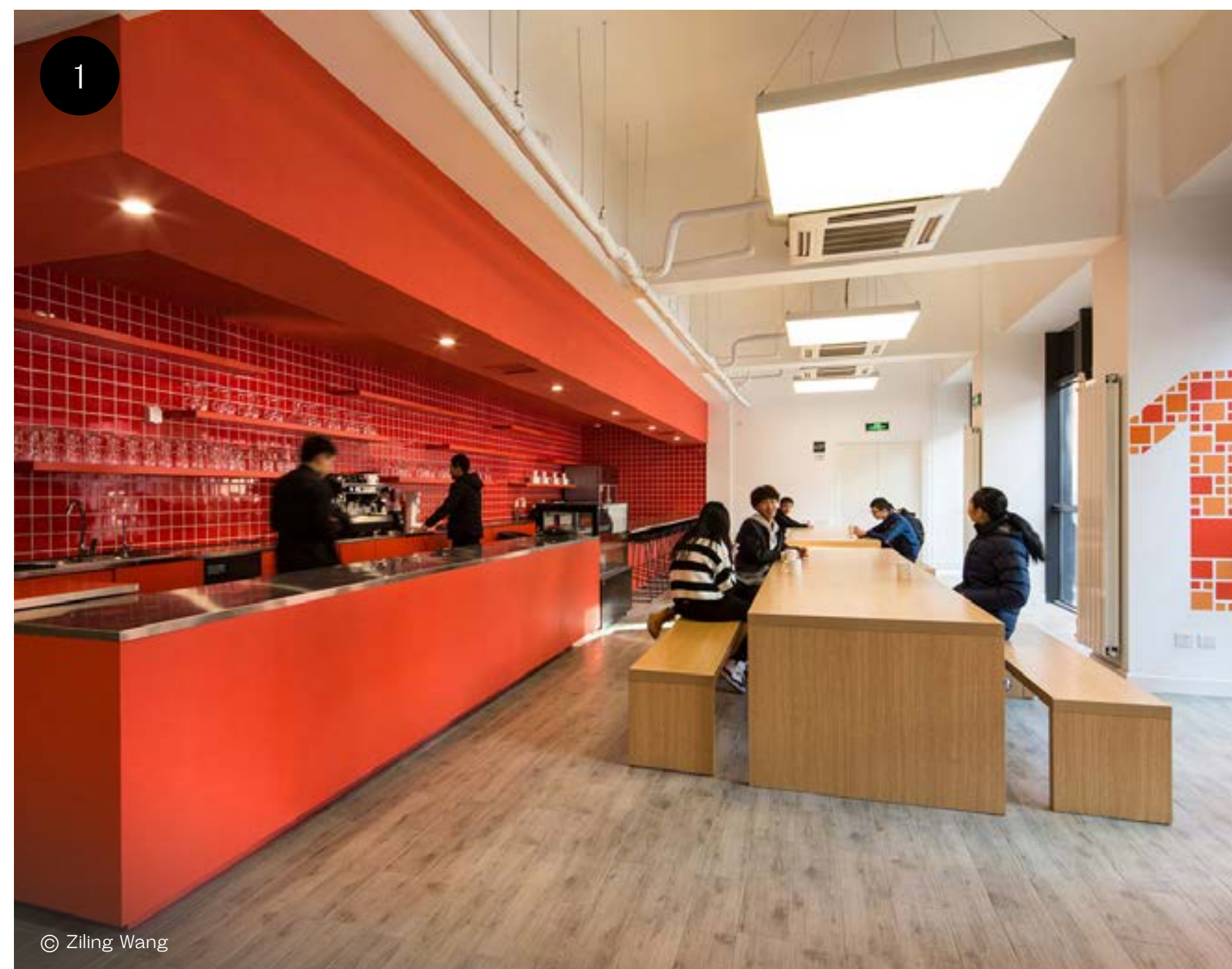




Crossboundaries
China

Selected Educational Projects:

- 1 Chaoyang Future School, Beijing, China, 2017
- 2 Beisha Kindergarten, Jiangsu, China, 2018
- 3 INFINITY 6 POP-UP SCHOOL, Shenzhen, China, 2019
- 4 Songzhuang Micro Community Park, Beijing, China, 2021





Dominique Coulon & Associés

France

#7

Website: coulon-architecte.fr
Year of Foundation: 1989

Dominique Coulon & Associés, an architectural firm, places a strong emphasis on context. However, rather than striving for its projects to blend into the surroundings, it aims for them to stand out. Precise geometry, color, and natural lighting are key characteristics of many of the studio's buildings. Dominique Coulon & Associés specializes in cultural and educational spaces of modest scale, which allows them to integrate their designs effectively into limited plots of land.





Dominique Coulon
& Associés
France

Details of a Project

Moulon School Group, Saclay Plateau, Gif-sur-Yvette, France, 2021



❶ The architects of Dominique Coulon & Associés played on the contrast between the building and its surroundings. The façades feature a pixelated color gradient ranging from black to white, complemented by bold blue and orange accents. Against the neighborhood's muted gray tones, the school looks like a digital splash of color brought to life.

❷ With its crisp lines and colorful blocks, the building looks like it was lifted straight out of Minecraft — a visual reference that's sure to resonate with students and spark their imagination.

❸ The school complex includes facilities for both a kindergarten and a primary school, as well as a recreational area. The architects clearly separate the kindergarten and school spaces. The kindergarten, along with its playground, cafeteria, and gymnasium, is located on the ground floor. The primary school occupies the two upper floors, with its playground situated on the roof.





Dominique Coulon
& Associés
France

Selected Educational Projects:



© Jean-Marie Monthiers



© Eugeni Pons



© Clement Guillaume



© Eugeni Pons

- ❶ Martin Peller Group of Schools, Reims, France, 2005
- ❷ School Group René Beauverie, Vaulx-en-Velin, France, 2020
- ❸ "Olympe de Gouges" School Group, Gidy, France, 2020
- ❹ Youth and Cultural Center and Library, Rennes, France, 2023



Fielding International USA

#8

Website: fieldingintl.com
Year of Foundation: 2003

Fielding International is widely recognized as a global leader in school architecture and educational consulting. In addition to designing learning environments, the firm also develops recommendations for curricula and teaching methodologies. Schools designed by the studio can be found in more than 50 countries around the world.

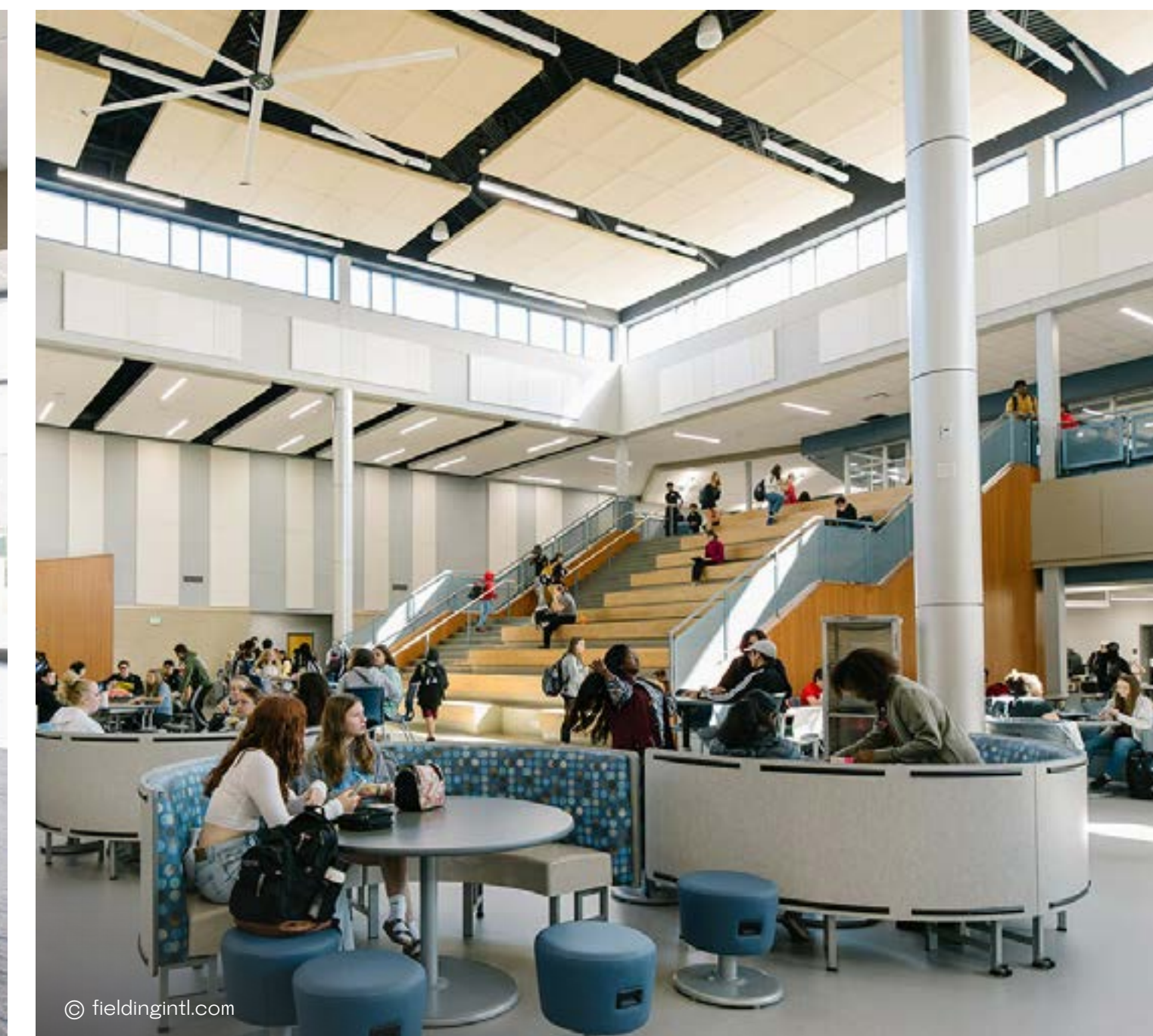


Sun Prairie West High School © fieldingintl.com

Sun Prairie West High School, Sun Prairie, USA, 2022

① The school was created through a participatory design process. To ensure the building truly reflected students' needs, the architects invited them to take part in shaping the very environment where they would learn. The design process also involved district administrators, teachers, and parents.

② The result of the project was a new senior school building that meets the demands of contemporary education. The school provides all the necessary conditions for research, idea exchange, and the development of professional skills. Its flexible spaces can be easily adapted to the needs of students and reconfigured to support evolving teaching methods.





Fielding International
USA

Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ Strathcona Tweedsmuir School, Okotoks, Alberta, Canada, 2018
- ❷ St. Martin de Porres High School, Cleveland, USA, 2018
- ❸ North Tampa Christian Academy, Wesley Chapel, USA, 2018
- ❹ John C. Schiffer Collaborative School, Sheridan, USA, 2022





Hayball

Australia

#9

Website: hayball.com.au
Year of Foundation: 1983

An Australian architectural firm with a focus on culture, community, and education, Hayball's portfolio includes over 50 educational projects across the continent, ranging from early childhood centers to schools at various educational stages. The firm's core social value is well-being, which is fostered through spaces designed in collaboration with clients, partners, and the community.



Braemar College Stage 1, Woodend, Australia, 2018

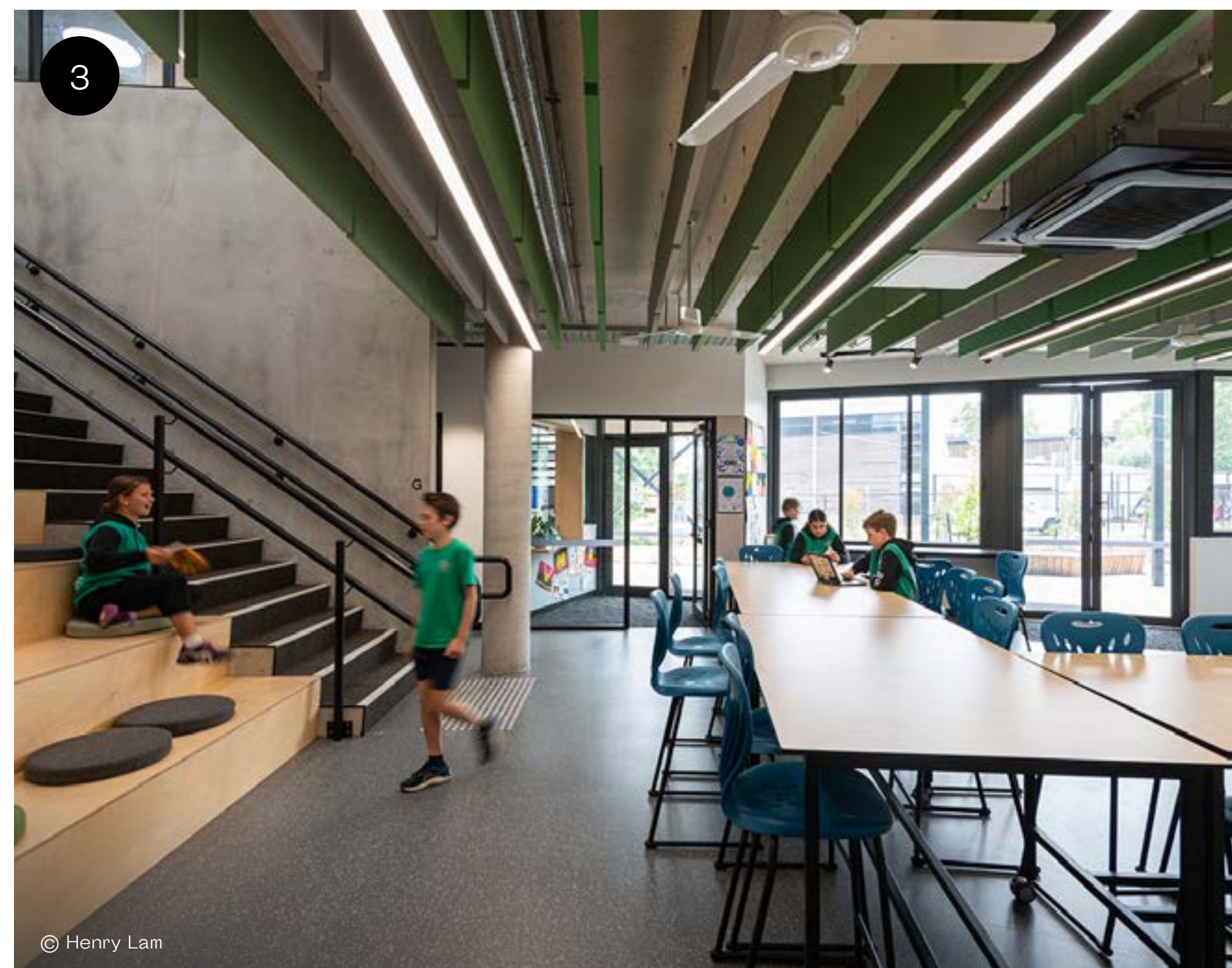
① Nestled in the heart of the countryside, the school blends effortlessly into its natural surroundings. The architects made minimal interventions to the surrounding landscape, showing respect for the natural environment. The design includes outdoor learning zones that create an educational platform for programs focused on agriculture, water conservation, environmental sustainability, and energy.

② The campus is made up of several buildings, each dedicated to a different grade level. Central to the design are communal spaces where students from all ages can come together. These shared areas are thoughtfully placed at the heart of the campus.



Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Caulfield Grammar School, Caulfield, Australia, 2014
- ② Yarra Valley Grammar Fine Arts Building, Ringwood, Australia, 2021
- ③ Fairfield Primary School, Fairfield, Australia, 2021
- ④ Aitken College Cumberland, Greenvale, Australia, 2023





Kéré Architecture

Germany / Burkina Faso

#10

Website: kerearchitecture.com
Year of Foundation: 2005

An architecture studio founded by Francis Kéré, the 2022 Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, whose desire to become an architect was born from a deep commitment to serving his community. His very first project was a school in his hometown of Gando, Burkina Faso. Today, the studio focuses on designing for regions where contemporary architecture is still rare. Its core mission lies in creating social infrastructure — with a strong emphasis on educational spaces.



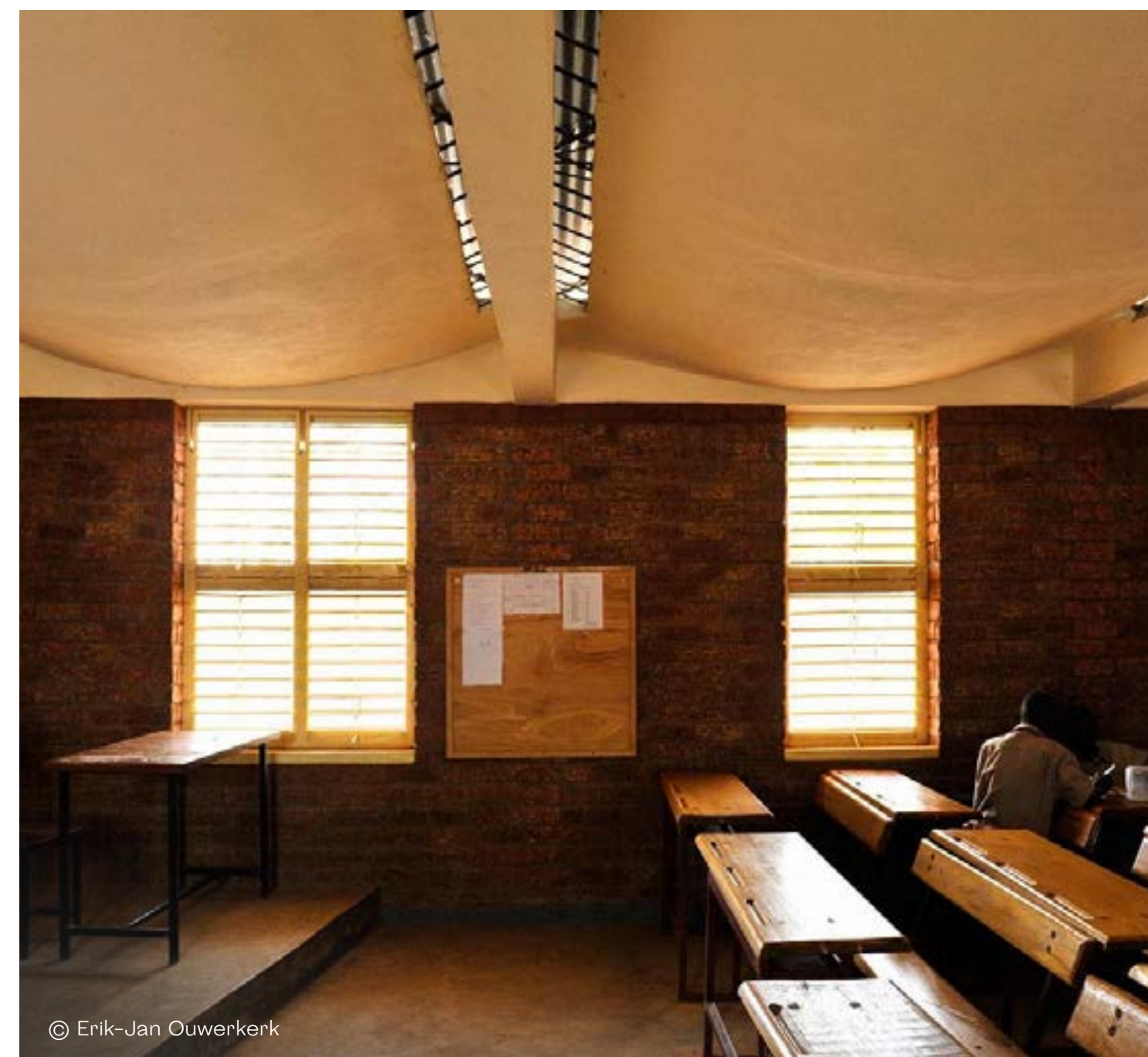
Lycée Schorge Secondary School © Andrea Maretti

Dano Secondary School, Dano, Burkina Faso, 2007

❶ One of Kéré Architecture's social projects, this school was built in close collaboration with the local community, who took an active role in the construction process. The local young people gained not only a deeper appreciation for traditional building materials, but also valuable hands-on experience, training, and education.

❷ The primary construction material was laterite, a locally sourced stone known for its high thermal mass. It absorbs heat from the environment, helping to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature. A metal sheet roof provides protection from direct sunlight.

❸ The school comprises three classrooms, computer room, office space, and a shaded area set below ground level, which serves as a space for informal learning.





Kéré Architecture
Germany / Burkina Faso

Selected Educational Projects:

- 1 Gando Primary School, Gando, Burkina Faso, 2001
- 2 Lycée Schorge Secondary School, Koudougou, Burkina Faso, 2016
- 3 Burkina Institute of Technology (BIT), Koudougou, Burkina Faso, 2020
- 4 SKF-RTL Children Learning Centre, Nyang’oma Kogelo, Kenya, 2020





Kengo Kuma & Associates

Japan

Website: kkaa.co.jp
Year of Foundation: 1990

An international studio founded by architect Kengo Kuma, whose buildings can be found around the world. Many of the studio's Japanese projects are known for reviving traditional architectural techniques and reimagining them in a contemporary context. This approach is also reflected in a number of educational institutions designed by Kengo Kuma.

Related Materials:

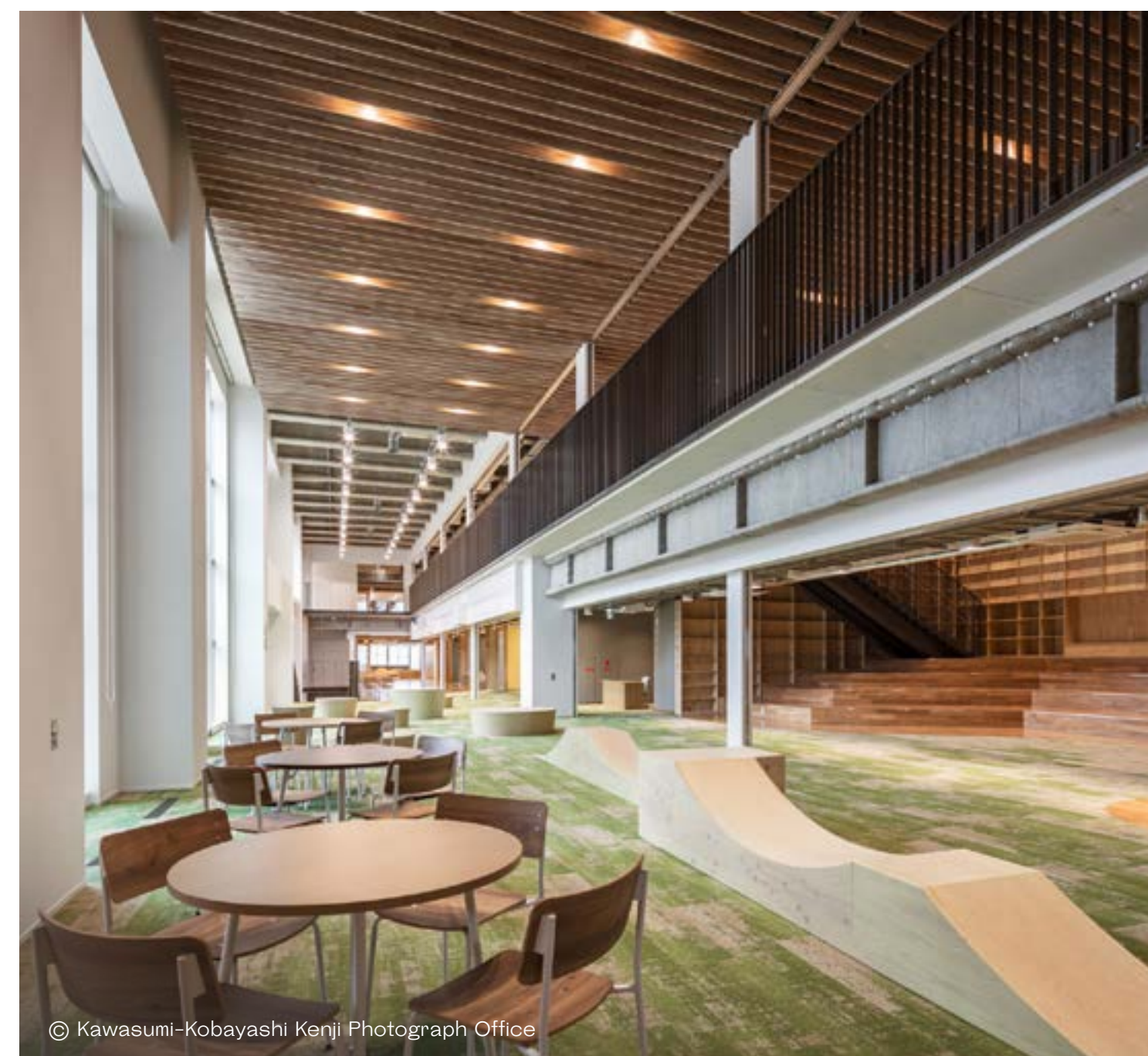
 [Yokohama International School: Japanese Traditions and Architectural Innovations](#)

#11



Nozomigaoka Elementary School and Junior High School, Osaka, Japan, 2025

- ❶ The studio's newest educational project is set to open in Spring 2025. This space is seamlessly integrated into the dense urban fabric of Japan. Although the structure is unified, the campus is visually perceived as a collection of smaller, individual buildings, reminiscent of traditional Japanese architecture.
- ❷ The school building, spanning approximately 20,000 m², is designed to serve two elementary schools and a junior high school. The school's courtyard will be open to the local community.
- ❸ The learning spaces on various floors, overlooking the atrium, are arranged like overlapping platforms, inspired by the surrounding hilly terrain. A unique feature of the interior is the absence of a dedicated library. Instead, bookshelves fill the entire building, with books placed in almost every common area of the school.

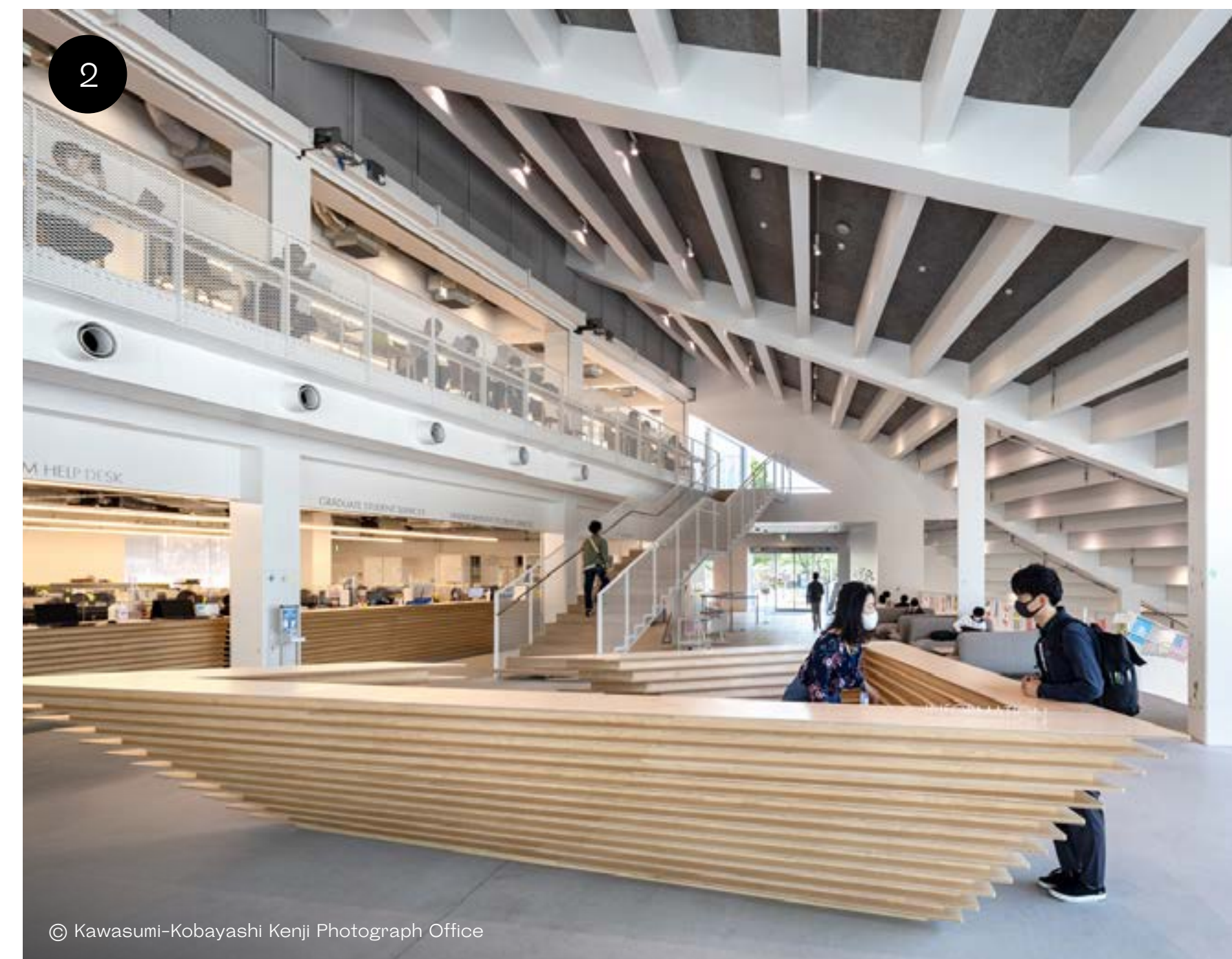




Kengo Kuma
& Associates
Japan

Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Aitoku Kindergarten, Saitama, Japan, 2016
- ② Tokyo Institute of Technology Hisao & Hiroko Taki Plaza, Tokyo, Japan, 2020
- ③ Yokohama International School, Yokohama, Japan, 2021
- ④ Yuwa Junior High School, Wakayama, Japan, 2023



LINK Arkitektur

Norway

#12

Website: linkarkitektur.com
Year of Foundation: 2000

The largest architecture firm in Scandinavia, with offices in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Over the years, the firm has designed around 25 educational facilities — primarily schools. Its core principle is the creation of sustainable, socially responsive architecture. The studio has designed buildings in some of Norway's most scenic locations, where breathtaking views of the natural landscape unfold just outside the windows.



Flakstad School © Hundven-Clements Photography

Svalbard Folk High School, Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway, 2023

- ❶ The world's northernmost folk high school is located in Longyearbyen, Western Svalbard, at the 78th parallel north, near Adventfjord. From the school windows, students are treated to breathtaking views of the fjord, with the chance to spot whales and even the mesmerizing Northern Lights.
- ❷ Located in the permafrost zone, the school is perched on stilts to prevent the ground from thawing. All engineering utilities are placed above the ground, a distinctive feature of most local architecture. The first floor of the building is elevated about 1.5 meters above the ground.
- ❸ The school building consists of several architectural volumes painted in a color scheme typical of the region. The shape, color palette, and building materials — reused planks from the old mines of Svalbard — connect the new structure with the local nature, culture, and history.



Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Vågen High School, Sandnes, Norway, 2005
- ② Horten Upper Secondary School, Horten, Norway, 2019
- ③ Flakstad School, Ramberg, Lofoten, Norway, 2022
- ④ Estrid Ericsons School, Hjo Sweden, 2022





Perkins&Will


USA

#13

Website: perkinswill.com
Year of Foundation: 1935

Perkins&Will is one of the largest architecture firms in the United States, with more than 20 offices around the world. At the core of the studio's philosophy lies a powerful idea: design should serve society — and people should always come first. One of Perkins&Will's key areas of expertise is the design of educational spaces. From libraries and museums to kindergartens and full-scale K-12 campuses, Perkins&Will reimagines learning environments as inspiring, human-centered spaces where knowledge, creativity, and community thrive.

Related Materials:

 [Navigating the Future of Learning: Architectural Perspectives from the USA](#)



School 360, London, United Kingdom, 2021

- 1 This small school in Stratford, East London, stands in stark contrast to the architecture firm's more typical work — large-scale school campuses in the U.S.
- 2 Classrooms come with flexible, movable walls, allowing spaces to adapt as needed — expanding for collaboration or closing off for focus. The school also features a range of specialized learning areas: a Makerspace for creative and artistic activities, Oracy Stairs on every floor for informal group learning, and dedicated spaces for sports and dance. In addition, there is a thoughtfully designed area for students with special educational needs.
- 3 The building was designed with sustainability at its core and has achieved a BREEAM rating of Very Good.





Perkins&Will
USA

Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Katherine Johnson Technology Magnet Academy, DeSoto, USA, 2018
- ② University of Washington Life Sciences Building, Seattle, USA, 2018
- ③ Springfield High School, Springfield, USA, 2020
- ④ Western University, Weldon Library Revitalization, London, Canada, 2022





Rosan Bosch Studio

Denmark

#14

Website: rosanbosch.com
Year of Foundation: 2011

An architecture studio specializing in the creation of educational spaces, founded by Rosan Bosch. She applies an artistic approach to designing schools, crafting environments that stimulate curiosity and creative thinking in students. The studio consciously rejects the traditional classroom model, favoring flexible, dynamic spaces. Its concept revolves around working with archetypes and metaphors inspired by natural imagery.

Related Materials:

[🔗 "We Are Used to Ignoring our Body": Rosan Bosch on Designing a Conscious Learning Environment](#)



Vittra School Telefonplan, Stockholm, Sweden, 2011

❶ The first architectural project by the studio, where the concept of metaphorical, flexible space was developed. The school doesn't have traditional classrooms — instead, it is divided into distinct zones. For instance, «The Cave» is a small space for one or two students to work, «The Campfire» is a group collaboration area, and «The Watering Hole» is a space for informal interactions, offering various learning and play scenarios.

❷ The school's design is vibrant and dynamic — one of the key features of the studio's projects. Design itself becomes a learning tool, inspiring students to explore and create. Rosan Bosch herself compares her work to art installations.

❸ The school became a kind of signature project for Rosan Bosch Studio, reflecting the core ideas of the studio that were later developed and refined in other projects.





Rosan Bosch Studio
Denmark

Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Western Academy of Beijing, Beijing, China, 2019
- ② GO! Campus Zottegem, Zottegem, Belgium, 2021
- ③ Humanitree School Hive and Flight, Mexico City, Mexico, 2023
- ④ Universidad de la Libertad, Mexico City, Mexico, 2023





Salto Architects

Estonia

#15

Website: salto.ee
Year of Foundation: 2004

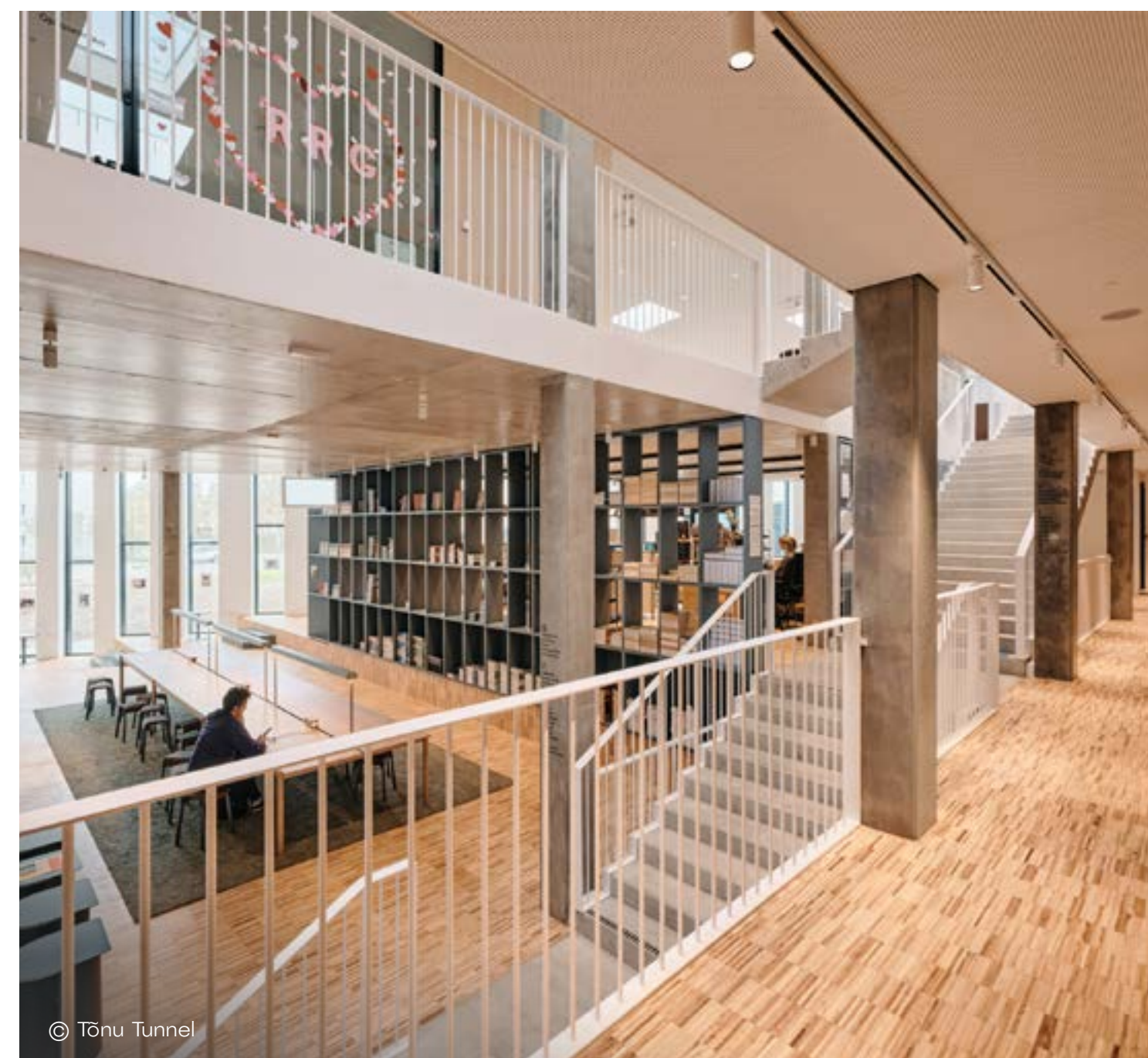
An Estonian architecture studio whose work ranges from installations and temporary structures to large-scale public buildings. Salto Architects places a strong emphasis on the intersection of architecture, landscape design, and art. Many of their projects — including museums and cultural centers — reflect a multidisciplinary approach. School architecture is another important focus of the studio's work.



Tallinn University Creative House © Tõnu Tunnel

Rakvere State High School, Rakvere, Estonia, 2022

- ❶ The school building consists of two triangular volumes. The central section of the building not only connects the campus structures but also visually links the square and park located on either side of the school through its large windows.
- ❷ The architects placed the classrooms in the upper part of the building. The lower section houses the cloakroom, music and IT classrooms, as well as restrooms. The central area serves as a space where students can eat and spend their breaks.
- ❸ The school is situated on hilly terrain, a feature that is also reflected inside — the main atrium features multi-level platforms. Despite the presence of multiple floors in the upper section, the architects worked to create a unified space with an open, panoramic view.

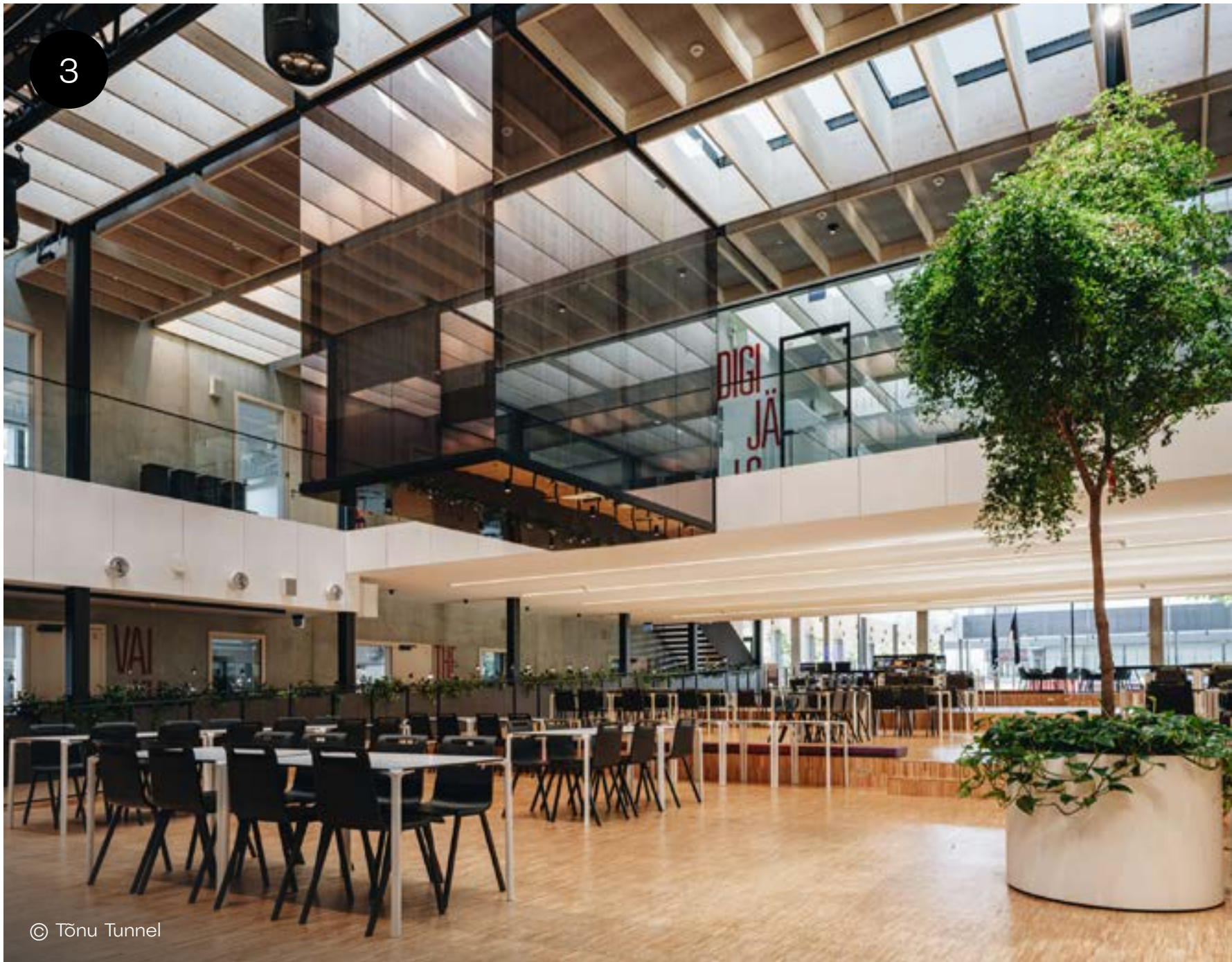
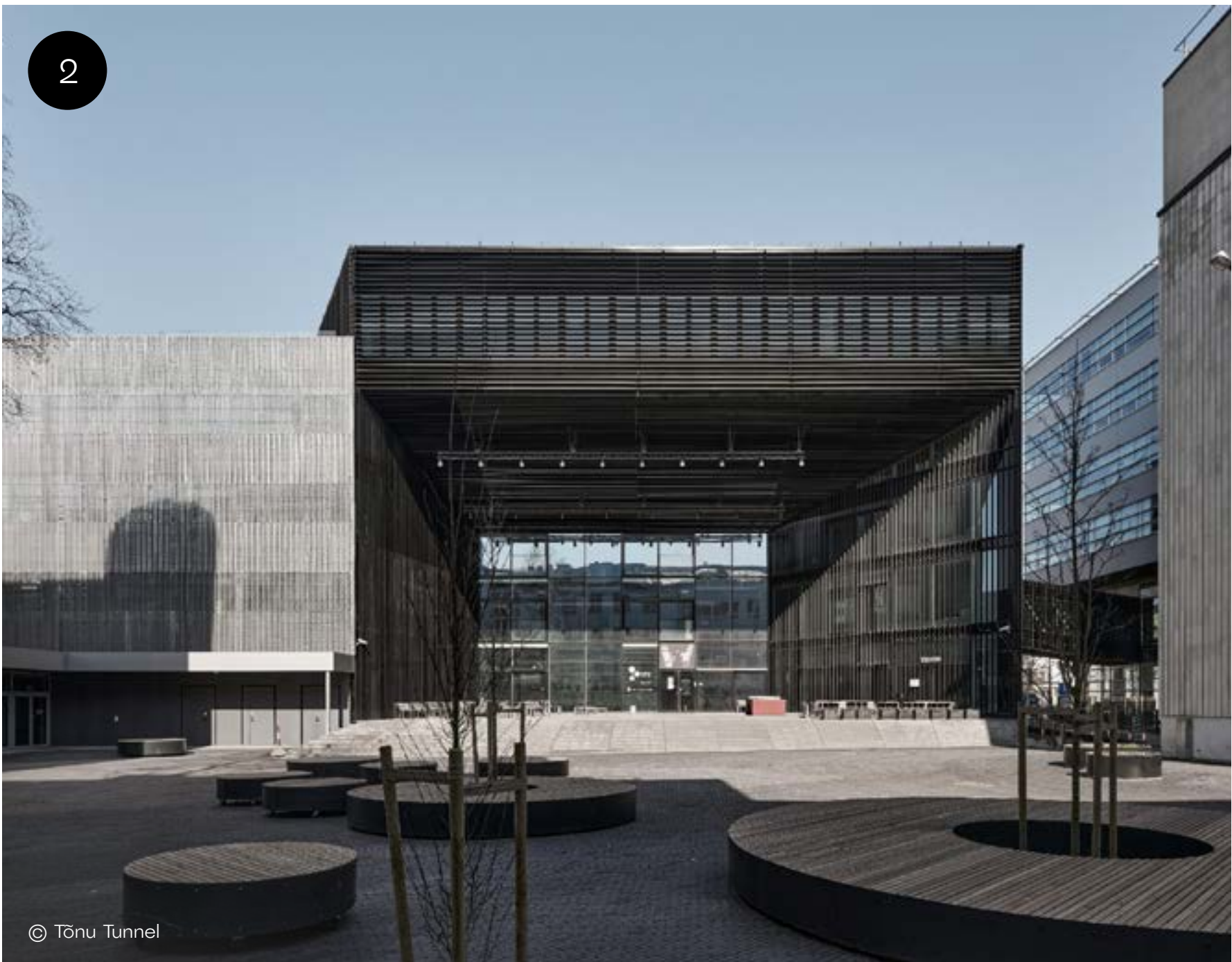




Salto Architects
Estonia

Selected Educational Projects:

- 1 Viljandi State High School, Viljandi, Estonia, 2013
- 2 Tallinn University Creative House, Tallinn, Estonia, 2020
- 3 Narva State High School, Narva, Estonia, 2023
- 4 Paide State High School, Paide, Estonia, 2023





TAO (Trace Architecture Office) China

#16

Website: t-a-o.cn
Year of Foundation: 2009

An architectural firm founded by Hua Li, TAO creates projects that are seamlessly integrated into the context of the place — its culture and nature. Known for its educational and cultural buildings, which have earned recognition for their innovative approach and thoughtful consideration of the environment. Among these projects are examples of school architecture.



Haikou Jiangdong Huandao Experimental School © Hao Chen

Huandao Middle School, Haikou, Hainan, China, 2018

- ❶ The architects of the project aimed to create an environment that sparks creativity and collaboration, breaking away from the traditional focus on exam preparation.
- ❷ Designed to house 24 classrooms and approximately 1200 students, the school's layout is a deliberate invitation to foster communication and idea-sharing. Classrooms are arranged along both sides of the main academic wing, with some standing as distinct volumes, linked by expansive passageways. These spaces do more than just connect levels — they flow into zigzag ramps and staircases, adding rhythm to the facades and framing views of the vibrant playground below.
- ❸ The central courtyard serves as the heart of the school — a space for gatherings and outdoor activities. Wide corridors transform into balconies, which not only facilitate movement between floors but also become natural spaces for social interaction.





TAO
(Trace Architecture Office)
China

Selected Educational Projects:



① Xiaoquan Elementary School, Sichuan, China, 2010

② Rural Library in Chongli, Chongli, China, 2018

③ Haikou Jiangdong Huandao Experimental School, Haikou, Hainan, China, 2022

④ Qingyijiang Road Elementary School, Deyang, China, 2022





Tezuka Architects

Japan

#17

Website: tezuka-arch.com
Year of Foundation: 1994

One of the most significant areas of work for Tezuka Architects is the design of early childhood education spaces. The studio creates environments that support learning and encourage children to interact with their environment. Some of their projects have already become architectural icons — most notably the Fuji Kindergarten in Tokyo. A few times a year, guided tours are held to give visitors the opportunity to experience the space firsthand.

Related Materials:

[Creativity and Freedom: Early Childhood Education in Japan](#)



Yuzunoki Nursery © Kida Katsuhisa / Fototeca

Muku Nursery, Fuji, Japan, 2018

- ❶ The kindergarten complex is made up of a cluster of small, bubble-like circular buildings that appear to be slowly rising into the air.
- ❷ Each space serves a specific function, and many are designed without interior walls or partitions. The architects aimed to create a flexible environment that can adapt to various needs and expand or contract in size as necessary.
- ❸ With transparent or open boundaries, visibility throughout is excellent — an essential quality for early learning spaces. The round structures naturally offer 360-degree views, while the interconnected “bubbles” invite endless possibilities for movement, exploration, and play.





Tezuka Architects
Japan

Selected Educational Projects:

- ① Fuji Kindergarten, Tokyo, Japan, 2007
- ② Children Center of MIRAIZU SORA, Tamba, Japan, 2019
- ③ Seto SOLAN Primary School, Seto, Japan, 2021
- ④ Yuzunoki Nursery, Rittō, Japan, 2022





Verstas Architects



Finland

#18

Website: verstasarkkitehdit.fi
Year of Foundation: 2004

Verstas Architects is among Finland's foremost architectural firms, specializing in the design of educational environments. Their portfolio includes schools, cultural centers, and other public buildings, spanning the country from Helsinki to Rovaniemi. Recently, the firm won a design competition for a new birdwatching tower in Liminka municipality. Committed to inclusive and functional design, Verstas Architects develops solutions that serve not only students and educators but also the broader local community.

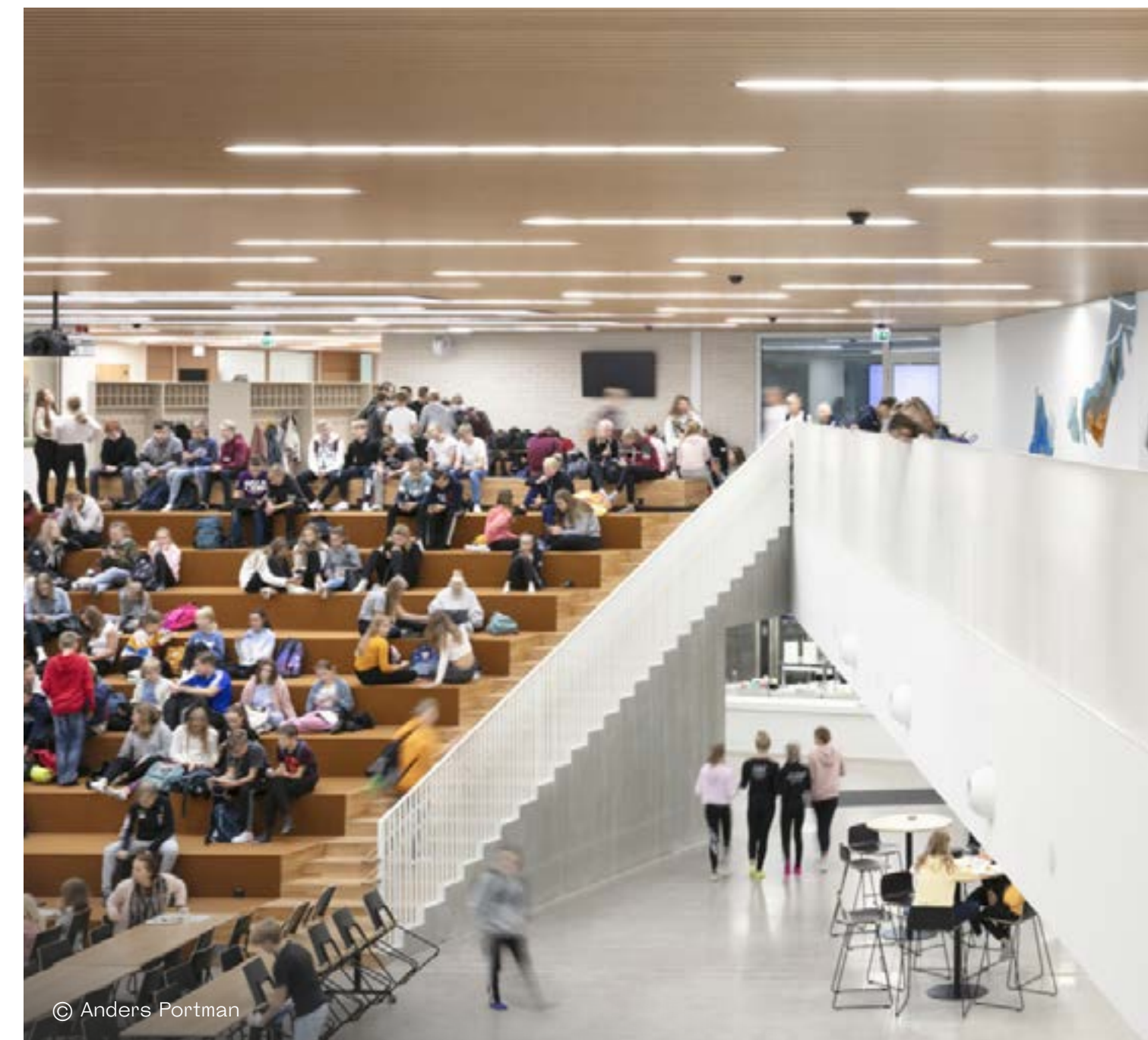
Related Materials:

-  [Stephen Cox: 'In Finland Students Have Both High Reading Proficiency and High Life Satisfaction'](#)
-  [Furniture Is An Important Tool: Going Over Desks in Finnish Schools](#)



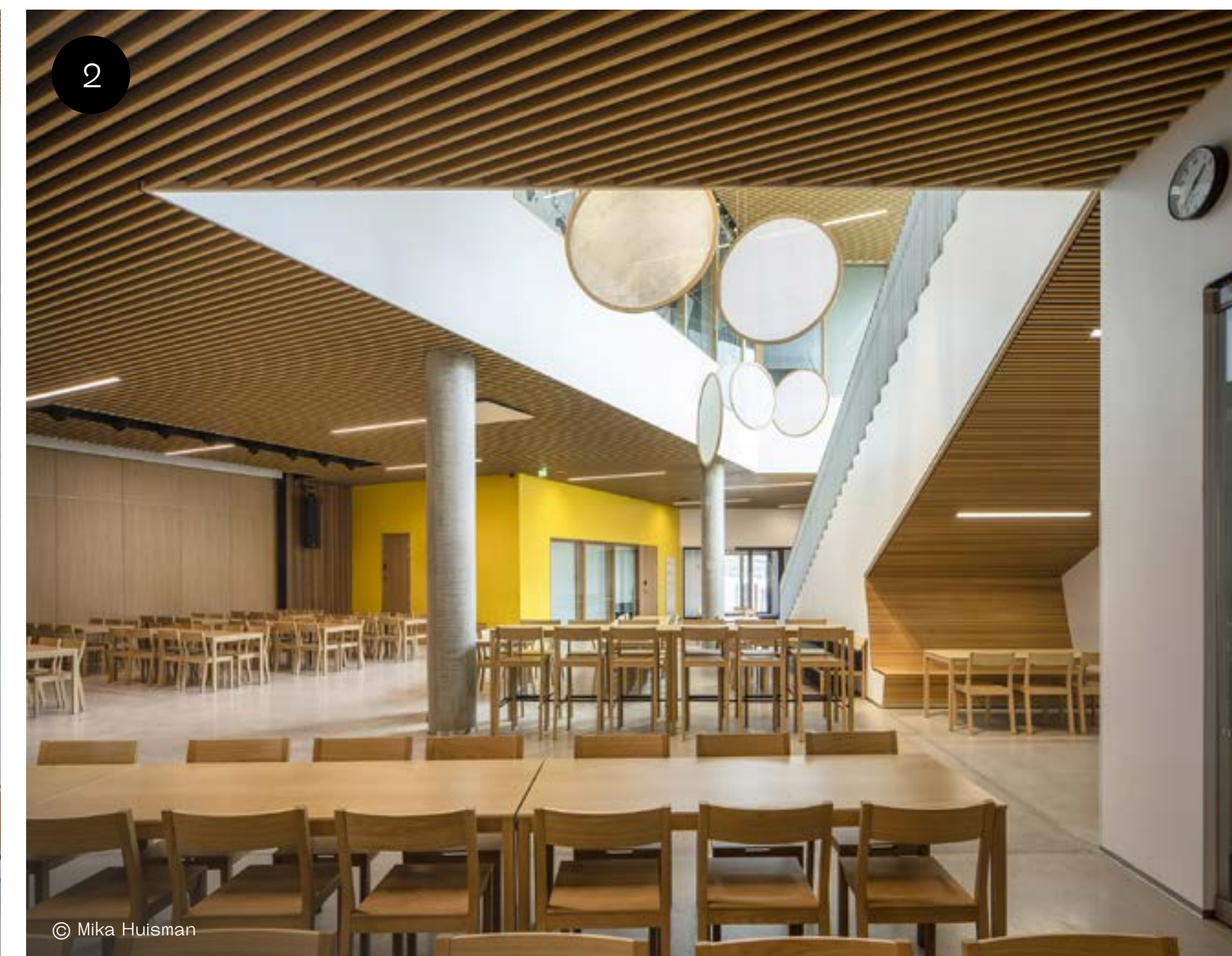
Syvälähti Education Centre, Turku, Finland, 2018

- ❶ A multifunctional building that integrates a school, kindergarten, public library, youth center, and childcare facility. The center serves approximately 1,000 children aged 1 to 16 years.
- ❷ The educational center is located on Hirvensalo Island, near the city of Turku. The building's architecture is seamlessly integrated into the surrounding landscape, which is characteristic of many contemporary public spaces in Northern Europe.
- ❸ Flexible learning spaces have been created with a focus on the Finnish curriculum, which emphasizes interdisciplinary learning. All open areas of the school are used for lessons, including the large atrium with the cafeteria. The division into traditional classrooms is only designated for high school students.



Selected Educational Projects:

- 1 Saunalahti School, Espoo, Finland, 2012
- 2 Vuosaari High School, Helsinki, Finland, 2021
- 3 Lamminrahka Education Centre, Kangasala, Finland, 2023
- 4 Kari Campus Education, Sports and Leisure Centre, Rauma, Finland, 2024





Walters & Cohen Architects

United Kingdom

#19

Website: waltersandcohen.com
Year of Foundation: 1994

A London-based architectural studio, renowned for its work in education and cultural projects. At the heart of the firm's philosophy is the creation of inspiring, functional spaces that foster learning and human interaction. The studio takes special care in respectfully adapting heritage buildings, seamlessly blending history with the needs of the modern world.



Lairdsland Primary School © Dennis Gilbert / VIEW

Reigate Grammar School, Reigate, United Kingdom, 2018

❶ The new building for the library and community center, designed for senior students, complements the historical school complex. Its architecture directly references Victorian-era school buildings. The two-story red brick structure, with a roof framed by massive wooden beams, also evokes the style of church architecture.

❷ This feeling is further enhanced by the unique view from the school windows, which look out over the historic churchyard and its cemetery.

❸ Despite its historical context and details, this is a fully modern space, designed for both individual study and group interaction. The ground floor houses a small cafeteria and office spaces.





Walters
& Cohen Architects
United Kingdom

Selected Educational Projects:

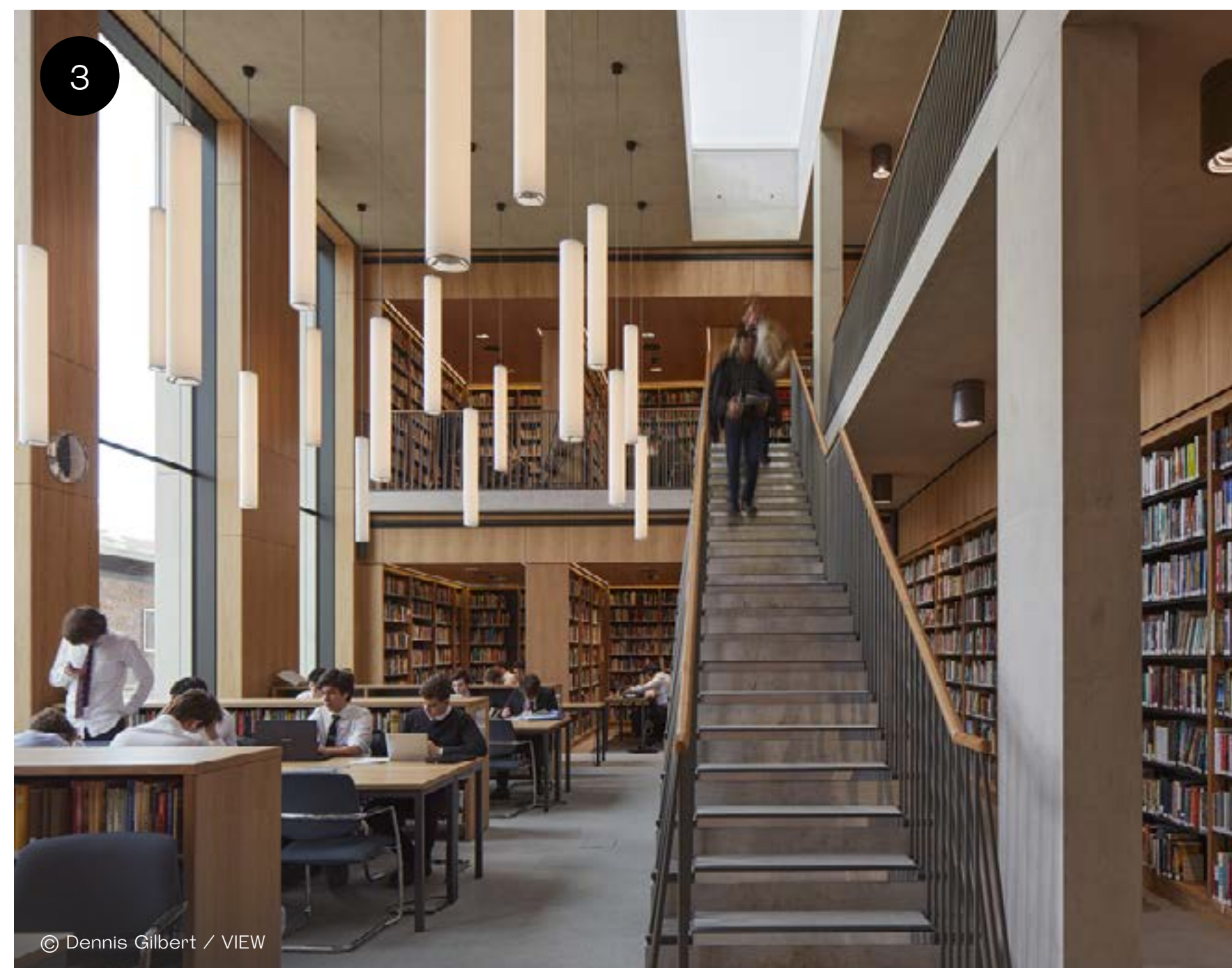
- ① Lairdland Primary School, Kirkintilloch, Scotland, United Kingdom, 2016
- ② Somerset College ESTEAM Centre, Somerset West, South Africa, 2019
- ③ St. Paul's School, London, United Kingdom, 2020
- ④ Godolphin & Latymer Dining, Library and Sixth Form Centre, London, United Kingdom, 2024



© Dennis Gilbert / VIEW



© Dennis Gilbert / VIEW



© Dennis Gilbert / VIEW



© Jim Stephenson



White Arkitekter Sweden

#20

Website: whitearkitekter.com
Year of Foundation: 1951

One of Scandinavia's leading architectural studios, White Arkitekter is driven by the goal of creating sustainable designs that address the social needs of both the present and the future. Their projects are deeply rooted in a harmonious relationship with nature, with an ambitious goal to make all their buildings climate-neutral by 2030. Among their educational projects, the portfolio includes cultural centers and schools.



Preschool at Nobelberget © Anders Robert

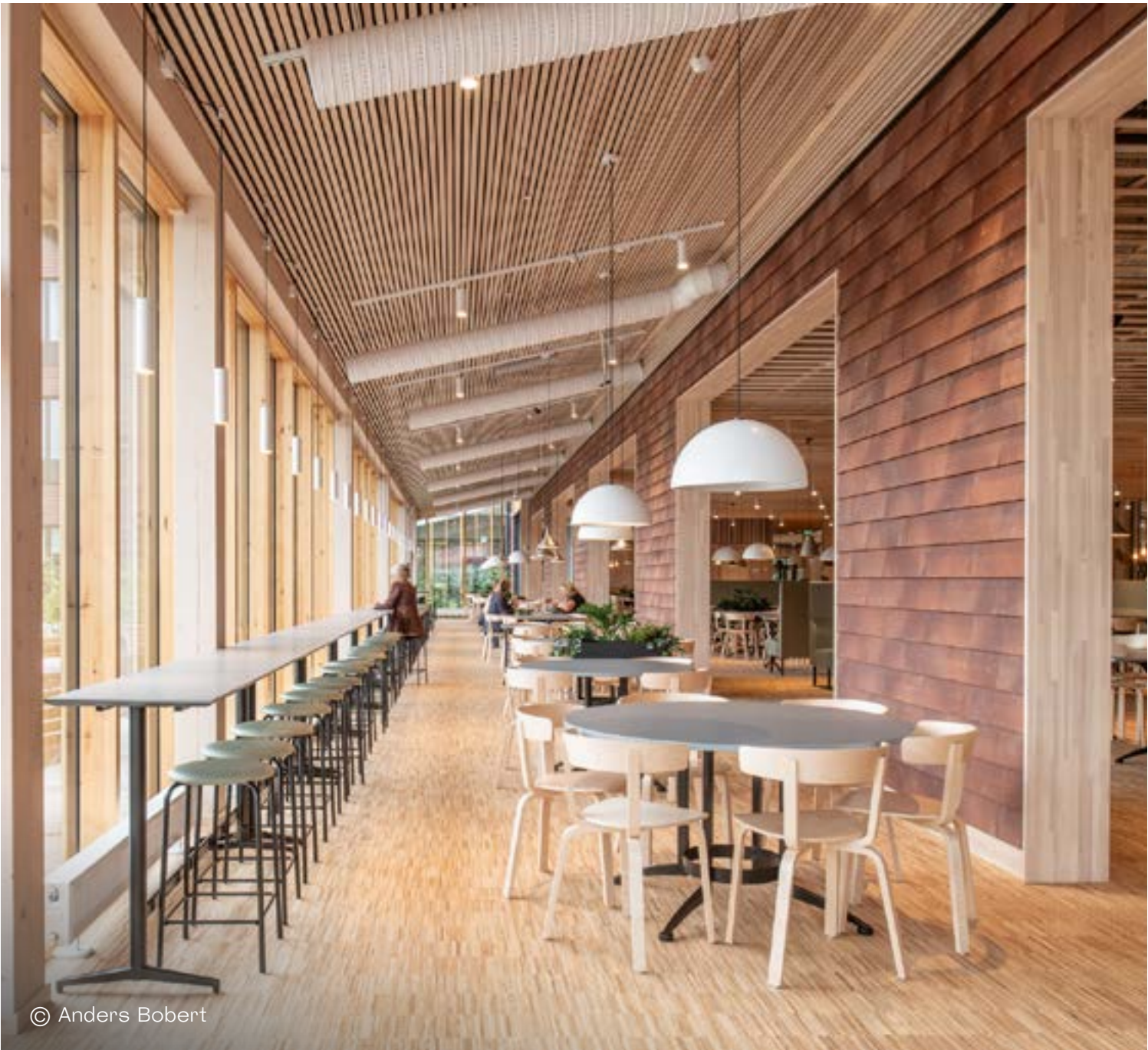


White Arkitekter
Sweden

Details of a Project

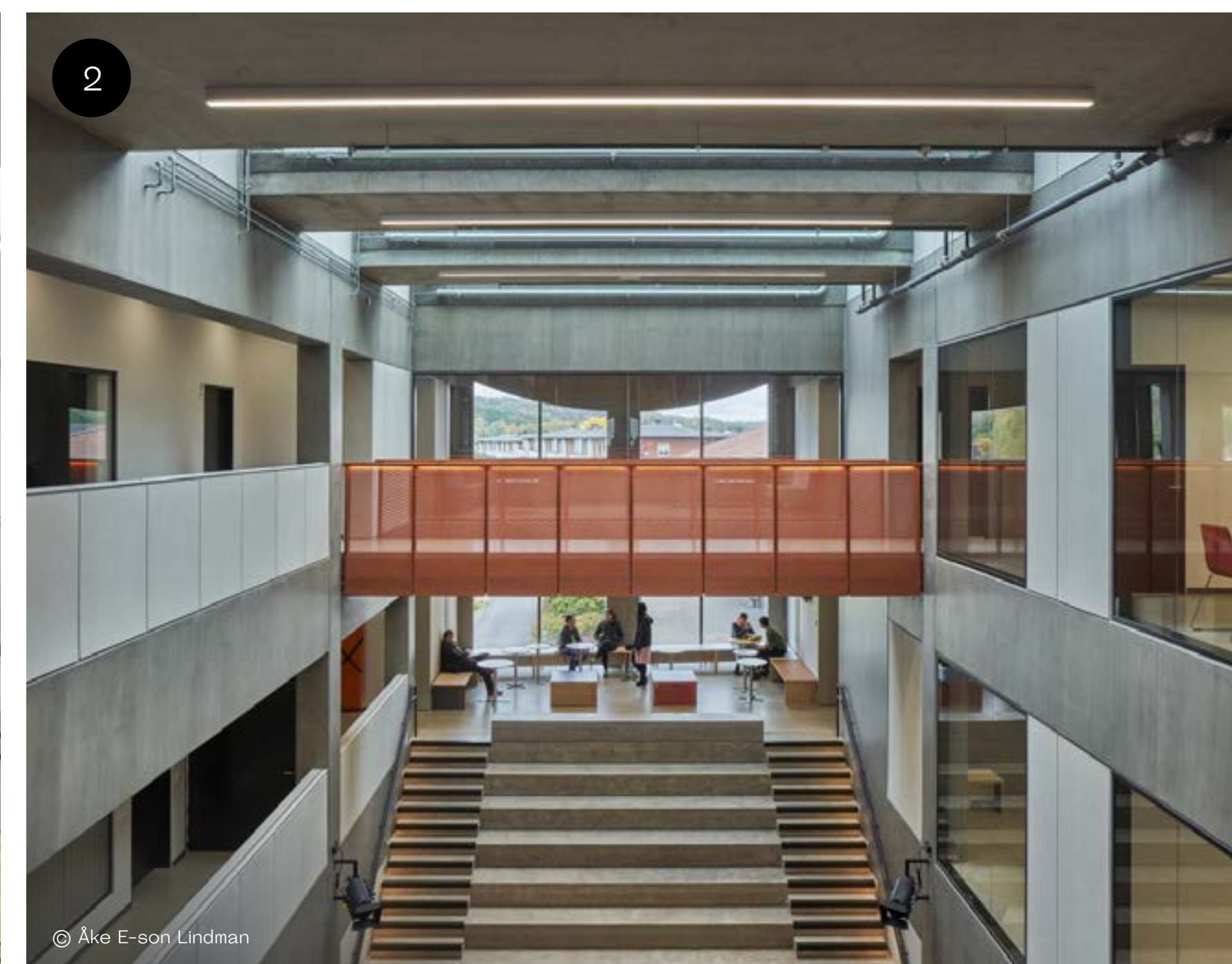
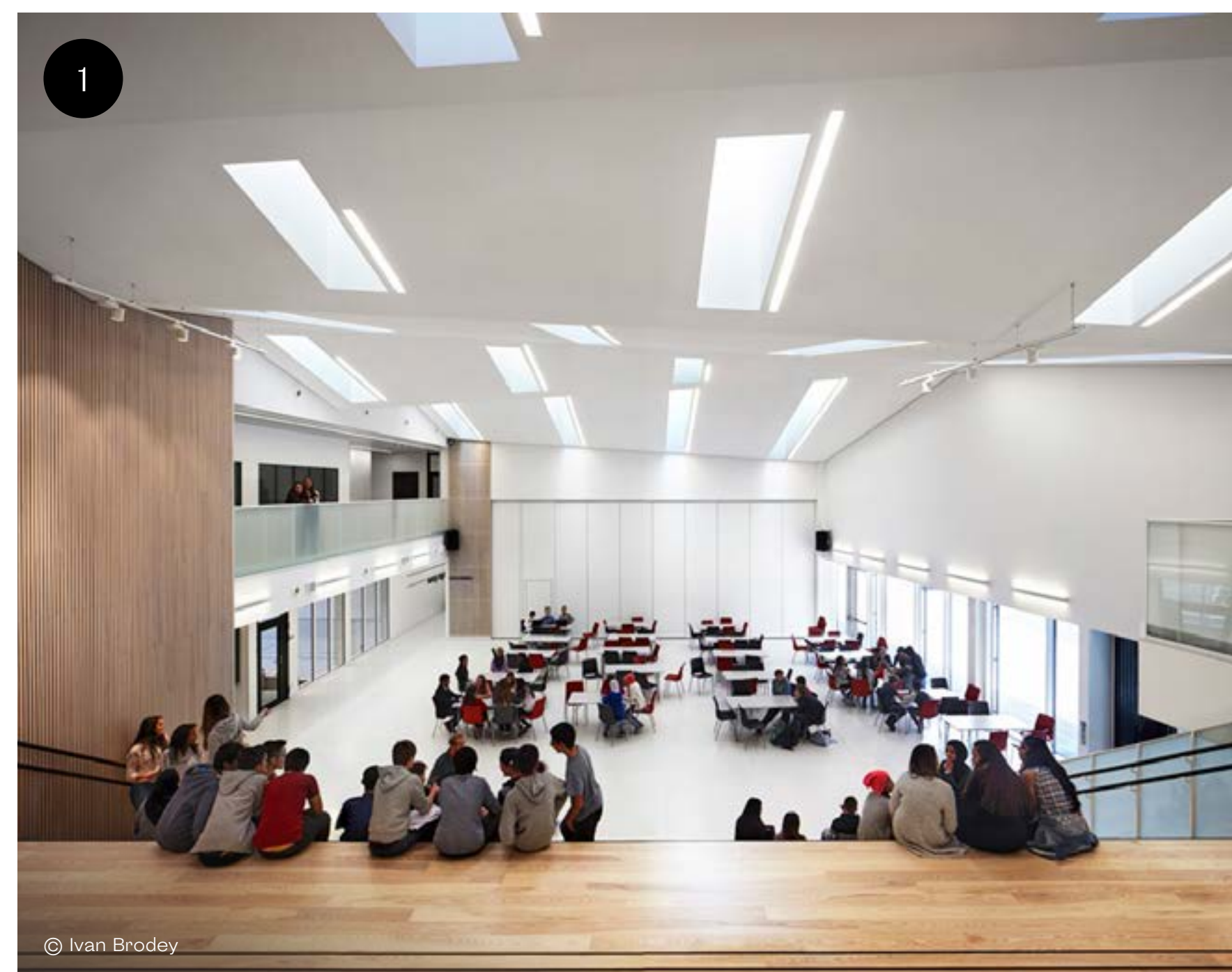
New Westerlundska Gymnasium, Enköping, Sweden, 2024

- 1 Set in the heart of Enköping, the new school campus is more than just an educational facility — it's a spark for neighborhood renewal. Beyond the main building and its adjacent square, the campus includes two courtyard gardens and a park that will become a new green oasis for the neighborhood.
- 2 The soul of the school is its light-filled atrium combined with the dining hall — a vibrant social hub open not only to students and teachers, but also to school visitors. The 500-seat auditorium is designed to host Enköping's municipal council meetings in the future. Both the hall and several classrooms can be rented after hours, making the building a true community asset. The school kitchen serves more than students — it also provides meals for several nearby nursing homes and preschools.
- 3 Sustainability is woven into the project's core. Solar panels spanning over 1,000 square meters are installed on the south and southwest-facing sections of the roof, ensuring energy efficiency is more than just a concept.



Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ Bråtejordet Secondary School, Strømmen, Norway, 2014
- ❷ Selma Lagerlöfs Cultural Center, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2018
- ❸ Preschool at Nobelberget, Sickla, Nacka, Sweden, 2020
- ❹ Indigo in Hovås, Nya Hovås, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2022





wulf architekten

Germany

#21

Website: wulfarchitekten.com
Year of Foundation: 1987

The design philosophy of wulf architekten is grounded in principles such as concept, form, and context. In the studio's work, form is not a starting point but the result of thoughtful exploration. Each building is deeply connected to its surroundings, and projects are approached through a conceptual lens rather than a commercial one. These guiding values are clearly reflected in the studio's approach to designing educational spaces as well.

Related Materials:

 [Vocational Education: Colleges in Germany, Finland, China and Other Countries](#)



Hessenwald School © Brígida González

Protestant Jakobus School, Karlsruhe, Germany, 2019

❶ Construction of the campus began in 2011, resulting in a complex that features balconies running along the entire perimeter. These elements not only enhance the connection between indoor and outdoor spaces but also serve as emergency exits.

❷ The project includes three main buildings — a primary school, a gymnasium, and a secondary school — all arranged around a shared central courtyard, which also serves as the main entry point to each area.

❸ The architectural concept of the school is based on a modular room system. Instead of traditional classrooms, students are grouped by subject and learning style. The school includes dedicated work zones and flexible open areas designed to support a range of educational approaches.



© Brigida González



© Brigida González



© Brigida González

Selected Educational Projects:

- ❶ School Center North, Stuttgart, Germany, 2015
- ❷ Hessenwald School, Weiterstadt, Germany, 2016
- ❸ Four Primary Schools in Modular Design, Munich, Germany, 2017
- ❹ Sports Center for Überlingen School Campus, Überlingen, Germany, 2020

