



KAREN BLIXENS PLADS: MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

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At more than 20,000 m² Karen Blixens Plads is one of the largest public squares in Copenhagen. Situated between the University of Copenhagen and the Danish Royal Library's buildings on the university's South Campus, the open and welcoming urban space is an innovative, spectacular and multi-functional architectural design that accommodates and promotes green transportation, climate change adaptation and biodiversity. The project was supported by a generous donation from the private foundation A.P Møller Fonden.

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Interdisciplinary Collaboration

In collaboration with CN3, COBE and EKV's construction engineers calculated and created 3D projections of the iconic concrete dome constructions. The solution is based on a shell construction as the loadbearing structure. Aesthetically, the design provides a large airy space underneath the domes. However, while a shell construction does not normally have holes in it, these domes have large openings, which presented a significant challenge and required additional statistical analyses.



Green Profile

In a soft transition, Karen Blixens Plads brings together the university's need for urban spaces with the open landscape of the neighboring Amager Fælled (Amager Commons). The north side of the square, where the three main entrances to the university are located, is an open and multipurpose

space. To the south, a hilly undulating meadowland connects the campus with the commons. In addition to bringing nature into the campus, the landscape also contributes to climate change adaptation by adding a capacity to handle stormwater. Delaying rainwater in depressions in the landscape utilizes the recreational values of the water and creates small wet biotopes that support biodiversity, enable rainwater evaporation and supplement the canal in case of extreme precipitation. The design uses simple, sturdy and durable materials, just as lighting and furnishings are kept to a few, simple elements to ensure a sustainable urban space. All the selected elements are low-maintenance and contribute to the square's green profile.

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