

Arne Korsmo *Eget hjem*/Own house

Traditional Dwelling Modern Architecture and Private Life

Korsmo's main goal, as architect and professor, was to create a meaningful way of dwelling and this is perhaps expressed most clearly in his own home in Planetveien 12: one of the three houses, designed by Arne Korsmo and Christian Norberg-Schulz between 1952 and 1955 situated on a hill in the north-western outskirts of Oslo.

In 1949, Korsmo and his second wife Grete Prytz went to the USA on an Fulbright scholarship. There they met and established friendships with some of the greatest architects of the time such as Kahn, Mies van der Rohe, Wright, Gropius and the Eames, whose house in Pasadena had a strong influence on the design of his own house in Planetveien 12.

The two architects based their design on a project method developed by Korsmo during the early 50s, called "*Hjemmets mekkano*" (the Meccano house). This was an analytic method which Korsmo defined as a "working method and analysis of man, the home and the house - the aim of which is to give the individual, the family and the environment a chance to free themselves from passivity and become consciously active in dwelling and building."

Korsmo's idea of a "working home" reflected his conception of life. Here dwelling and working were combined in a whole, as an expression of living. In this sense, Planetveien 12 served as a framework for the interaction between the natural surroundings, the family life and activities going on within the house. Therefore, compared to the other two, the house of Grete and Korsmo had an open living room without any column in the centre, and this was due the wish to have a large arena to perform lectures, seminars, but also theatre plays etc.: it was a private *piazza*, an *agorà* for semi-public meetings. While at the upper floor, there was an open air room imagined to be the office during the day and a sleeping area in the night, thanks to the presence of bed-closets furniture.

Korsmo demonstrates, in the built form of his own house structure, his deep linkage with the National building tradition (*Byggeskikk*), his ability to have a performative dialogue with the culture of inhabiting and the challenge to imagine his own house as a foot print of his life and thought.