LIBRARY DESIGN IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY;
PLANNING FOR A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

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The university library is undergoing a dramatic rebirth and reinvention due to:
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TECHNOLOGY
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PEDAGOGY
The university library is undergoing a dramatic rebirth and reinvention due to:

...AND FINANCIAL CONCERNS
The changes are pervasive, but hard to predict:

- What is implemented today may well change tomorrow
- The culture and mission of every institution is unique, there is not a “one size fits all” solution
Where once the library was considered a static and immobile space, it is now a flexible, fluid series of spaces
What defines today’s university library?

- Flexibility
- A relaxed atmosphere—the importance of social spaces for the learning process
- Spaces defined by technology, not technology defined by spaces
- The engagement of the natural world into the library experience
- A student-centric experience
New services and new space types are entering the library:

• Project and media laboratories
• Student services
• Academic support spaces
• Café
• Classrooms
• Maker spaces
The challenges facing university libraries--particularly funding and staffing--are significant, but the opportunities for innovation and transformation are exciting.
John Paul II Library
Maynooth, Ireland
Hunt Library at North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina
How has the thinking about designing libraries changed?
Where once libraries consisted of four distinct space types....
...today’s libraries are an assembly of hybridized spaces and activities centered around the user.
How has this new thinking affected the physical shape of the library?
Comparative matrix

Stockholm Public Library
Gunnar Asplund
14,000 m²
2,100,000 volumes

Biblioteca TEC
14,600 m²
200,000 volumes

TU Delft Library
Mecanoo
15,000 m²
800,000 volumes

University of Aberdeen Library
SHiLA
15,500 m²
250,000 volumes

Cottbus Technical University Library
Herzog & de Meuron
16,145 m²
unknown volumes

Hunt Library
Snøhetta
19,543 m²
2,000,000 volumes

Sendaï Mediatheque
Toyo Ito
21,702 m²
500,000 volumes
From a static experience to a fluid experience
Stockholm Public Library | 1928 | Stockholm | Gunnar Asplund | 14000 m²
Stockholm Public Library  |  1928  |  Stockholm  |  Gunnard Asplund  |  Plan and Section
BMVR | 2010 | Caen | OMA | 12000 m²
Experiencing the library as a journey
Two libraries at the Jussieu Campus | 1992 | Paris | OMA | 25000 m2
The book as ornament
Mushashino Art university Museum & Library | 2010 | Tokio | Sou Fujimoto | 2800 m2
Mushashino Art university Museum & Library | 2010 | Tokio | Sou Fujimoto | 2800 m2
Mushashino Art University Museum & Library | 2010 | Tokyo | Sou Fujimoto | 2800 m2
What’s next?
Bringing the act of making into the library experience.
Monterrey TEC; Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico
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