

RE / DESIGN



The transformation of a landmark • A shopping complex in a superb location • An experiential retail space



NEW AND OLD. DETAILS
AND GRAND LINES.
– DESIGN PLAYS A KEY
ROLE IN SPONDA'S
OPERATIONS

The role of interior design • A modern harbour centre • An energy-efficient production facility

Helsinki
– World Design
Capital 2012



Sponda provides its customers with innovative and tailored business premises solutions. For some the best choice is to build completely new premises, i.e. *design*, while for others it is to renovate the existing premises so that they meet the business requirements, i.e. *redesign*.

The starting point for planning is always the customer's needs, regardless of whether the project is a new building or a renovation. Well-designed business premises support the customer's business operations and improve well-being and efficiency at work. Premises also serve as the company's business card, potentially helping in building the company's reputation.

Customers' spatial needs may change, so Sponda invests in transformability and functionality of the business premises during the entire life cycle of the property. Where new buildings are concerned, attention is paid both to the building itself and to how it fits in with the surrounding urban structure.

This theme supplement highlights a couple of interesting Sponda's *redesign* and *design* projects. *Redesign* projects include Salmisaarentalo, City-Center and Skanno, while the highlighted *Design* projects are Altia, PortGate and Metso.

Sponda is a property investment company specializing in ownership, development, and letting of commercial properties in the largest cities of Finland and Russia. Sponda develops operating environments that promote the business success of its customers.

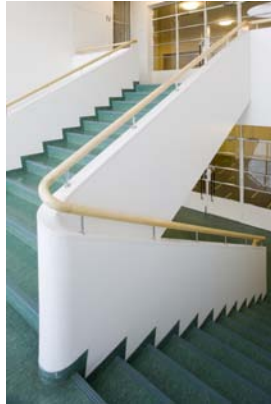
4 Design is communication – Design embodies the corporate brand, says Mikko Kalhama.

5 2012 – the pinnacle for design

Helsinki Design Forum makes the most of the year when Helsinki is the World Design Capital.

6

Creating new and respecting the old in Salmisaarentalo



Sponda carried out a renovation project in which the valuable building was transformed into a modern business premises.



10

City-Center, the pioneer of modern commercial centres in the 1960s, gets a facelift.

City-Center renovated; the protected exterior remains

12

Visiting a store is a unique experience.

Skanno's flagship store is more than just a store.



14

Altia's premises reflect corporate culture

18 – Interior design supports a company's business operations, says Samuli Hintikka.

20 Harbour lights shine bright in Vuosaari

22 Metso's new production facility completed in Vantaa



Mikko Kalhama:
“Design is communication.”

PREMISES FORM A PART OF A COMPANY'S STORY

– **T**o an increasing degree, design is communication. The object of design might not be as important as the manner in which design communicates and the opportunities for dialogue it creates. The beauty of design communication lies in the potential it offers for transforming things into a more understandable form, says *Mikko Kalhama*, Managing Director of Design Forum Finland.

The building and its architecture as well as interior design have a significant influence on the qualities that people connect with a company. In business premises, design is one way to embody the corporate brand.

– If a company has not taken these matters into account, it conveys a weaker message. The significance is subconscious, at the very least.

With design, companies can influence the image their premises give of them.

– Consistency is a crucial factor. For instance, furnishing should not grow organically but rather in a consciously planned way. Carefully considered solutions can enforce the message that a company conveys, improve well-being at work and influence efficiency, says Kalhama.

The location of business premises is significant as well

According to Kalhama, buildings have a soul and a history – and the companies operating in the buildings have a bond with these. Kalhama states that becoming aware of this bond can enforce the identity of both the building and the company operating within it. The location of the building is significant as well.

– The best case is if there are other things around the company that support and enforce a positive corporate image. If the surroundings mostly contain factors that disturb the corporate image, the question is “Why has the company chosen this location?”, comments Kalhama.

According to Kalhama, a good business premises design signifies not only aesthetic and communicative aspects but also functionality. He challenges companies and organisations to take stock on the nature of their operations.

– What in the company's operations enables the birth of something unique? The premises should be organised so that they support positive flow. The premises form a foundation that greatly influences how work is done. /

Helsinki – World Design Capital 2012

DESIGN IS PART OF LIFE

In 2012 Helsinki will have the honour of holding the title of World Design Capital, which is awarded by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid) every two years. The honour is conferred to a city which uses design to bring new vitality to its urban environment. The World Design Capital project focuses attention on the role of design in the planning of urban areas, the local economy and in residents' lives.

In its Design Capital year Helsinki will host a calendar full of design-related events and welcome design professionals and guests from all over the world.

This year's theme is Open Helsinki – Embedding Design in Life, which strives to highlight the role of design in daily life and the urban landscape and to connect citizens' needs to aesthetic and functional values. Design will not be hidden away in boutiques – it is all around us.

Town planning, architecture in the various districts and renovation of properties are all part of modern design. Sponda works towards the creation of a pleasant and attractive urban landscape, for instance, by

renovating landmark properties to suit modern needs – with due attention to historical value. This insert will take a look at the Salmisaari complex renovation completed in 2010 and the conversion of the City-Center complex, created in the 1960s, into a modern business and shopping centre.

Design District bursts with life

The design capital year will also be brought to life in Design District Helsinki, a concentration of creative artists and designers in central Helsinki. The area comprises the heart of design-oriented Helsinki.

Sponda is a supporting member of Design District Helsinki, and has been on its executive committee since its foundation.

The World Design Capital title gives Helsinki and local companies an excellent opportunity to showcase their design know-how and gain international visibility. This unique opportunity must not go to waste!

► Visit the World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 project at www.wdchelsinki2012.fi.

CREATING NEW AND FUNCTIONAL PREMISES WHILE RESPECTING THE OLD

Even an old valuable building can be flexibly modified. Through careful planning and close cooperation between the various parties involved, the old Alko premises in Salmisaarentalo were renovated and modernised for use by the Helsinki Court of Appeal.





Salmisaarentalo, Helsinki

An old industrial property, now housing office and retail premises
 Porkkalankatu 13 / Salmisaarenranta 7
 Year of completion: 1940, years of construction: 1938–40
 Architect: Väinö Vähäkallio
 Floor space: 78,551 sq.m.

In summer 2010, the Helsinki Court of Appeal moved into the Salmisaarentalo building, the former Alko head office and factory in Ruoholahti, Helsinki.

– Salmisaarentalo, currently known as Helsinki Court House, is an excellent example of how a well-designed building stands the test of time. The building contains both simple, flexibly modifiable factory premises and tastefully decorated – and as such timeless premises for social receptions, says Professor **Tuomo Siitonen** who designed the refurbishment of the Salmisaarentalo building, which dates back to 1940.

– It was delightful to see that there were unexpectedly few “unpleasant surprises”, typical of old properties, in the Court of Appeal renovation project. Nevertheless, there are always challenges in renovation: for instance, fitting modern housing technology into the available space requires careful planning, comments **Marko Rinkinen**, Senior Project Manager at Peab, the contractor on the project.

The planning and renovation of the Salmisaarentalo building was facilitated by the systematically designed and rationally dimensioned original frame and the ample floor height that also increases the feeling of spaciousness in the premises.

– Much can be learnt from Salmisaarentalo in the planning of new buildings today, notes Professor Siitonen.



The spaciousness of Salmisaarentalo's corridors and halls originates from the building's history as a factory.



Protected by the National Board of Antiquities

The facades and the most important interior spaces are protected under the city plan.

– A decisive factor in the preservation of protected buildings is finding a suitable user for them. The Court of Appeal could use the protected premises as such, which made them an optimal tenant from the National Board of Antiquities’s point of view as well. Fortunately, the owner, Sponda, was also willing to devote efforts to preserving the old premises, says Professor Siitonen.

– As the contractor, one of our tasks was to safeguard the protected premises during the renovation, continues Mr. Rininen.

In addition to the facade, other protected sections in the Salmisaarentalo building are stairways of the former head office, as well as some of the corridors and the rooms that used to be occupied by Alko’s management. After the renovation, the premises showcase the old 1930s style alongside modern office architecture exemplified in light-filled glass-walled offices. The floor height of the former garage premises could be put to good use in the current courtrooms.

THE MANAGEMENT’S OFFICES PAY TRIBUTE TO THE PAST

The jewel in this protected building’s crown, occupied by the Helsinki Court of Appeal, includes the former premises of Alko’s management and board of directors. These nine offices, now serving as meeting rooms and offices for the senior management of the Court of Appeal, have been preserved in all their 1930s style splendour, including the furniture.

Originally there were six offices for the management, each with furniture and panelling made of different domestic wood species, such as curly birch, elm, curly pine, root of pine and gnarl of goat willow. Unique furniture and lighting fixtures are characteristic of our country and specifically designed for these rooms – genuine unique works of art. In the renovation project, furniture and panelling were restored as well. /





Seamless cooperation

Professor Tuomo Siitonen designed the new premises for the Court of Appeal with **Mikko Lehto**, Project Architect. They were also responsible for designing the new premises for the Helsinki District Court in the same building a couple of years ago.

In addition to architects, the participants in the planning and execution of the renovation project for this old, valuable building included the property's owner Sponda and its user the Helsinki Court of Appeal, the National Board of Antiquities, the contractor Peab, interior decorators and special designers.

– To a large extent, the practical work consists of fine-tuning elements between the contractor and the designer. We ensure that cooperation between all parties runs smoothly and that the architect's plans are implemented, describes Mr. Rinkinen.

According to Rinkinen and Siitonen, cooperation between different parties in the renovation project for the Court of Appeal ran splendidly. The Helsinki Court of Appeal was satisfied with the outcome as well: functional premises tailored precisely to their needs. /



SALMISAARENTALO BECAME THE PRIME CHOICE

Before moving to Ruoholahti, the Helsinki Court of Appeal had been looking for new premises for a long time, but gradually the Salmisaarentalo building became the prime choice. With time, the former premises in the eastern part of Pasila had become inadequate. For instance, the number of oral hearings has increased at a faster pace than anticipated, which led to an increase in the Court of Appeal's need for courtrooms.

After the renovation of the old interior of Salmisaarentalo, the Court of Appeal now has functional premises, tailored to their needs. The personnel used to be spread over five different floors whereas now their offices are on two floors only and different departments are close to each other, which facilitates cooperation. Furthermore, the Helsinki District Court operates in Salmisaarentalo, which creates mutual synergies. Transportation and detention of prisoners as well as document transfer can also be centralised, for instance. /

HISTORIC CITY-CENTER GETS A FACELIFT

Completed in the late 1960s, the City-Center building was one of the pioneers in the development of the modern commercial centre in Helsinki. The building is now being renovated, but its much-debated exterior, complete with the instantly recognisable concrete railing said to resemble a sausage, will remain unchanged for the most part.

A new opening will bring natural light into all floors of the shopping centre.





City-Center

Office and shopping centre
Keskuskatu 6, Kaivokatu 8
Architects: Viljo Rewell and
Heikki Castrén

Year of completion: 1967,
constructed in 1964–67
Renovation to be completed: mainly
at the end of 2012
Floor space: 55,000 sq.m.



The skills of different generations meet in City-Center's design.

— This may be the best-located commercial property in all of Finland, says **Matti Rönkä** of Magnus Malmberg Consulting Engineers Ltd.

He was involved in the construction of the original City-Center, as was **Jussi Jauhiainen**, now with CJN Architects. For both men, City-Center was one of the first projects in a long career.

The gentlemen recall that it was the first time a computer was used for making construction calculations.

— The blueprints, though, were still done by hand, they note.

The design was influenced by the urban American style of the era. The aim was to create something unprecedented and the building certainly accomplished that. Jauhiainen and Rönkä remember not only the initial appeal of the new building, but also the subsequent criticisms of the building's dreary appearance.

City-Center's protected exterior to remain intact

Sponda is now renovating the property completely. The third floor parking lot and basement loading facilities are converted to commercial space, providing an additional 20,000 square metres of floor space. Work began in the spring of 2006 and is set to be completed mainly at the end of 2012.

— The goal is to create new and increasingly appealing commercial space. The City-Center building enjoys Helsinki's largest flows of people each day. We aim to make City-Center a place that people will not only walk through, but also stop in. The building will be pleasant, bright and modern, explains **Olli Rouhiainen** of CJN Architects, who is the Chief Designer for the project.

The interior will be completely renovated while the exterior, protected by Finland's National Board of Antiquities, will remain unchanged for the most part. The only significant change to the exterior is the removal of the car ramps on the Keskuskatu side of the building, as Keskuskatu will be a pedestrian street.

Rönkä and Jauhiainen have been closely involved in the current design work as advisors and "senior partners" as they themselves describe their role with a laugh. They see it as coming full circle in their careers.

— We started with this, and we'll finish with this, Rönkä says with a smile. /

A WORLD OF DESIGN EXPERIENCES

An abundance of light and whiteness greets the visitor in the Skanno flagship store at Mannerheimintie 6 in Helsinki. The store, previously located in the Salmisaari district of Helsinki, was opened in June 2010.

Even before moving to Salmisaari, Skanno had a store in the heart of the city. According to **Joel Roos**, Development Director, the feedback from the customers was crystal-clear: Come back to the centre!

Sponda had two vacant premises in adjacent buildings in a very central location. An original idea was born: let's combine the premises into a single entity.

– We saw the great opportunities offered by the premises, so we decided to accept the challenge, comments Roos.

Skanno carried out a full renovation in these premises owned by Sponda, which included removing a part of the ceiling in the front part of the store to create spaces of varying height. Sponda's part in the renovation consisted, for instance, of tearing down the wall between the properties and providing property information required in this extensive renovation project. The challenging project was carried out in smooth cooperation.

Now the store is divided into three different worlds: first the visitor enters the street level where current design themes are on display, after which the visitor can explore the joyful home accessories department upstairs and enjoy the cosy atmosphere created by soft jazz in the classical department.

The elegant and classical design is broken here and there by the brilliance of soft lights and colourful details. A bookcase full of classics brings added cosiness into the ultra-modern surroundings.

One of the factors showing that Skanno is not a traditional store is that it is very well suited for organising various events. Roos says that in addition to the store's own events, the premises are also leased for different business events, such as product launches and meetings. Larger groups can use the upstairs auditorium, which also serves as a chair exhibition.

– At one party, we turned the sales counter into turntables for the DJ.

– Our aim is to make each visit a unique experience and to ensure that the store conveys our competence and way of thinking, he summarises. /



Joel Roos calls for a larger concentration of design stores in the Swedish theatre neighbourhood – within easy reach of inhabitants and visitors alike.



Skanno Flagship Store

Mannerheimintie 4 and 6, office and retail property

Mannerheimintie 4

Architect: Kurt Simberg

Year of completion: 1965

Floor space: 4,892 sq.m., of which 352 sq.m. in Skanno's use

Mannerheimintie 6

Architect: F.A. Sjöström

Year of completion: 1870

Floor space: 3,855 sq.m., of which 700 sq.m. in Skanno's use

The store premises have been designed by Skanno's interior architect Anna Katriina Tilli.





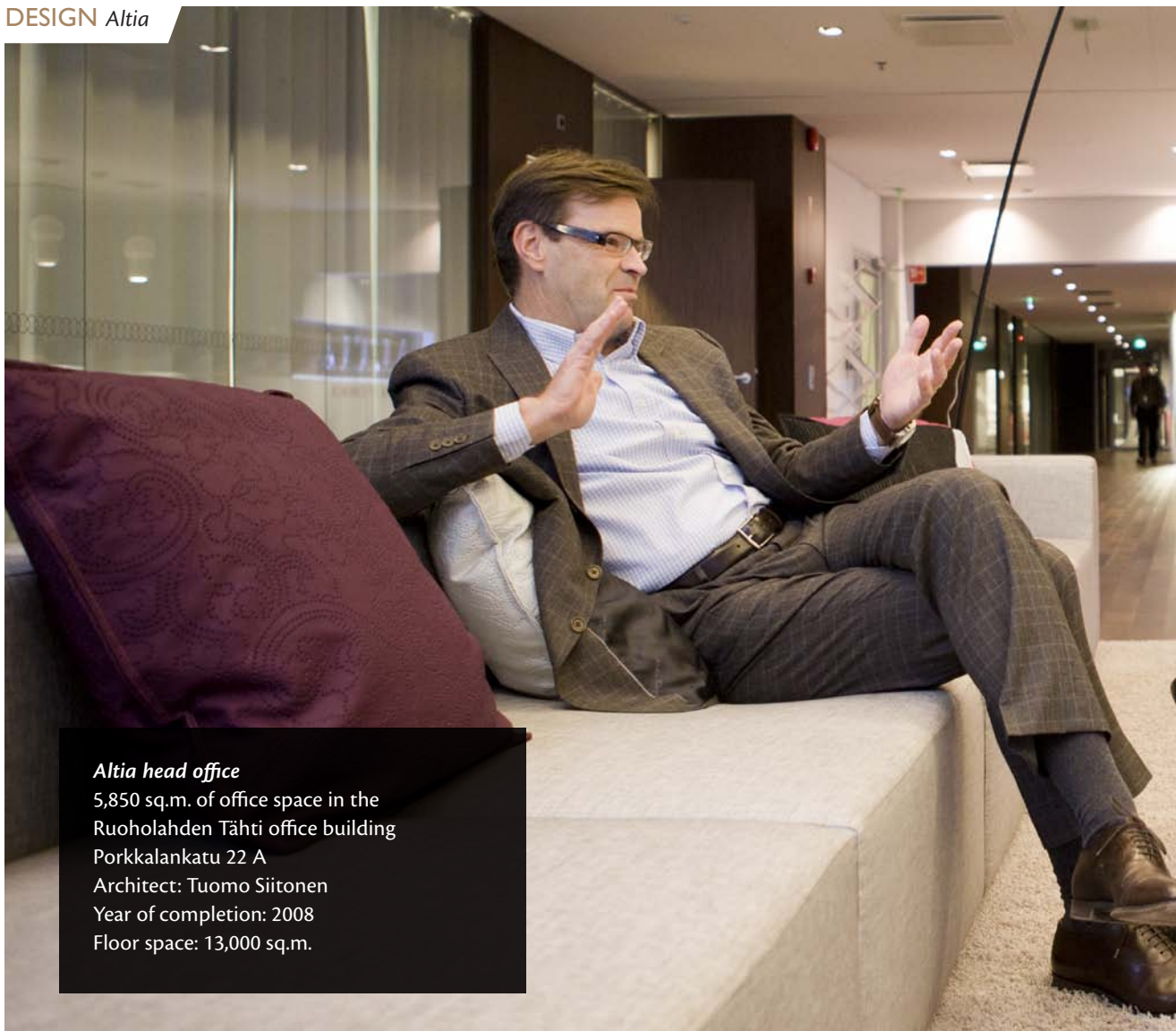
ALTIA'S OFFICE SPACE SUPPORTS CHANGE IN CORPORATE CULTURE

Changes in Altia's operating model and corporate culture were the starting point in designing the company's new head office. The new office facilitates open teamwork and improved communication.

The foyer of the head office could well be the lobby of a modern hotel. With a dark wood floor, a brightly coloured lounge-like seating area and an opening between the floors to let in natural light and increase the sense of space, the foyer has a number of features not commonly seen in Finnish corporate offices.

– There is a fairly clear difference at Altia's head office between the working spaces and the areas regularly visited by clients. The interior design of the foyer and meeting rooms focused on creating an atmospheric experience that strengthens the company's brand. The design of the working spaces for the company's employees, on the other hand, was based first and foremost on creating a disturbance-free work environment and facilitating productivity, explains **Samuli Hintikka** of Interior Architecture Office dSign Vertti Kivi & Co.

– I feel the foyer is an excellent reflection of the line of business we are in. Creating the right atmosphere immediately upon entering the office is very important, says Altia's CEO **Antti Pankakoski**. →



Altia head office

5,850 sq.m. of office space in the Ruoholahden Tähti office building
Porkkalankatu 22 A
Architect: Tuomo Siitonen
Year of completion: 2008
Floor space: 13,000 sq.m.

Altia's needs as the starting point for office design

Before moving into the new office in January 2009, Altia was a tenant in Salmisaarentalo, a Sponda-owned waterfront property protected by the National Board of Antiquities.

– The old office was in a beautiful building that exemplified a particular era, but its long corridors and separate workspaces no longer suited our organisational culture and the needs of a modern and forward-looking corporation. When you move around in this new office space, you constantly see people and feel close to your colleagues.

The move was a long process that started with determining the company's spatial needs.

– Altia began by analysing what its spatial requirements will be in the future and only then proceeded to

look for suitable alternatives. This way, they found an office space that supports their business operations and future prospects, Hintikka says.

They decided the best solution would be the new Ruoholahden Tähti office building, in which Sponda then developed Altia's office according to the company's wishes and needs. Altia was involved in the design process from the beginning, as was the interior design company dSign.

– In addition to needing a space that better facilitates teamwork, we also wanted a single office that has enough capacity for the entire staff. The open foyer serves this purpose very well and provides an ideal setting for various evening events and product launches, Pankakoski explains.

– These needs guided the design process, and since we were involved in the project from the very beginning,



– The interior design of Altia's head office incorporated some fantastic ideas. I think it is one of the finest offices in Finland, says Samuli Hintikka.

we were able to request the architect for an open space that combines two floors. If Altia had simply leased an existing office space, this type of change would have been impossible to implement, Hintikka says.

Working undisturbed in an open-plan office

Altia leased the first two floors of the building along with a meeting room on the top floor. The part of the office that is regularly visited by clients includes the foyer, 18 glass-walled meeting rooms and, naturally for an alcohol company, a bar. The working space is an open-plan office with a slightly elevated central area. This provides natural light for all workstations and spacious views even for those seated in the middle.

– Both management and employees are seated in the open-plan office. This is a key part of increasing teamwork and communication and creating a sense of

community, all of which are important aspects of our strategy, Pankakoski explains.

A move to an open-plan office often causes concern among employees that are used to having their own offices. Prior to the move, Altia's personnel had the opportunity to voice their hopes and fears regarding the new office space and many expressed concern over potential disturbances in working in an open-plan setup.

– We paid particular attention to acoustics in our design work to ensure that everyone can work undisturbed. The acoustics of the ceilings and floors have been designed to minimise noise. For instance, the floor of the working space is covered by a textile carpet that insulates sound, Hintikka says.

In the end, the concerns about noise were quickly proved unfounded. The office has a peaceful atmosphere and everyone can go about their work undisturbed. The people of Altia have embraced the new office space. /

Samuli Hintikka:

CLIENT COMPANY'S FUTURE PROSPECTS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN SPATIAL DESIGN

1 Can interior design support a company's business operations?

Absolutely. The office space is one of the cornerstones of any corporation and a well-designed space makes work efficient and productive. It provides a working environment that is free of disturbances and facilitates teamwork and meetings.

Investments in the working environment result in a greater level of commitment from employees and let them know that the company has their best interests in mind and wants to provide them with the best tools possible. A well-designed office space can also constitute an advantage in recruitment and create a positive corporate image.

2 How does the collaboration between you and your clients usually work?

Unfortunately, in many cases the interior architect is not invited to become involved in the process until after the lease has been signed for a new office space. At that stage, creating the right feeling can be a little difficult.

In the optimal scenario we are involved from the very beginning of the design process, starting with determining the client's spatial needs. As spatial decisions are long-term in nature, we focus particularly on the client's future prospects and expectations. We want to take each client company and create their own story for them rather than copying something that's already been seen or done. I believe that this is also what our clients expect from us.

In the construction phase we ensure that the design created for the client is accurately realised and that there are no changes such as last-minute compromises on materials due to cost reasons.

3 In your opinion, what are the most important current trends in interior design?

There is no single clear trend at present and companies don't have a need to come across as clever or cool, which was the case during the IT boom. These days clients want an office space that reflects their corporate identity. They often want a mix between traditional and modern elements and the interior designer can help them find the right combination.

4 Are ecological choices in construction and interior design commonplace among all of today's companies?

Ecological considerations in interior architecture and property development are here to stay. However, the ecological approach calls for long-term planning and life cycle thinking: the ecological solutions may be more expensive in terms of construction costs, but they can result in substantial savings in as little as ten years.

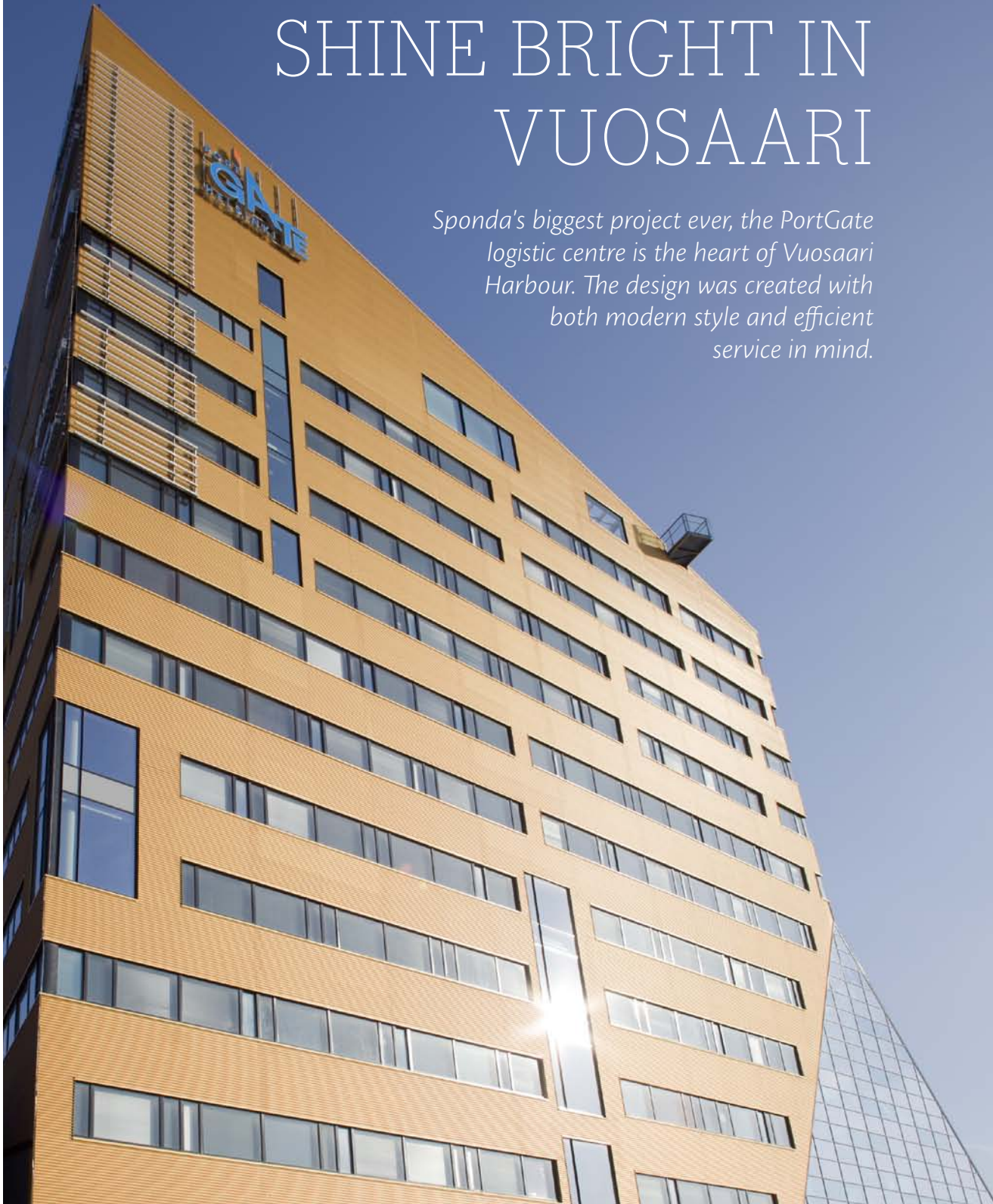
In addition to lighting, flexibility, adaptability, energy efficiency and new materials are emphasised in today's construction projects. /



Designer Samuli Hintikka is a partner and project manager at Interior Architecture Office dSign Vertti Kivi & Co. He has twelve years of experience of interior architecture design.

HARBOUR LIGHTS SHINE BRIGHT IN VUOSAARI

Sponda's biggest project ever, the PortGate logistic centre is the heart of Vuosaari Harbour. The design was created with both modern style and efficient service in mind.





Kari Noroviita and Niko Plith work together to find out how the harbour's functionality could be further enhanced.

The 13-storey office building covered by gold-coloured corrugated sheets gleams in the sunlight and is visible far out to the sea.

The PortGate logistics centre and office building developed by Sponda were completed in late 2008 in time for the launch of Vuosaari Harbour.

– The new properties have functioned well, from property management to various services, says *Kari Noroviita*, Director of Vuosaari Harbour Centre.

Based on effective logistics

SA-TU Logistics, one of the key service providers in the new harbour, was among the first companies to move its terminal, warehouse and head office to Vuosaari. The company produces logistics services to its clients in the harbour, from loading and unloading containers to movement and warehousing.

– We need premises that enable a high degree of logistical efficiency. In practice, this means we need a sufficient number of loading doors and a central location in terms of transport flows in the area, explains *Niko Plith*, the company's Managing Director.

Kari Noroviita mentions that Vuosaari Harbour and SA-TU Logistics have together addressed questions pertaining to the effectiveness of transport arrangements and access control.

– In PortGate, containers and trailers can be delivered directly to the door of the terminal, eliminating one step in the transport process entirely. Railway links, customs and other logistics services in the same area also serve to make operations smooth and efficient.

Plith is pleased to note that the company's operations in the new premises are notably more efficient than at its previous location.

– Our customer base is growing. That says a lot about how our new business premises, designed with our customers' material flows in mind, support our growth objectives now and in the future. /

PortGate logistics centre

Storage, terminal and office spaces in Helsinki's Vuosaari Harbour.

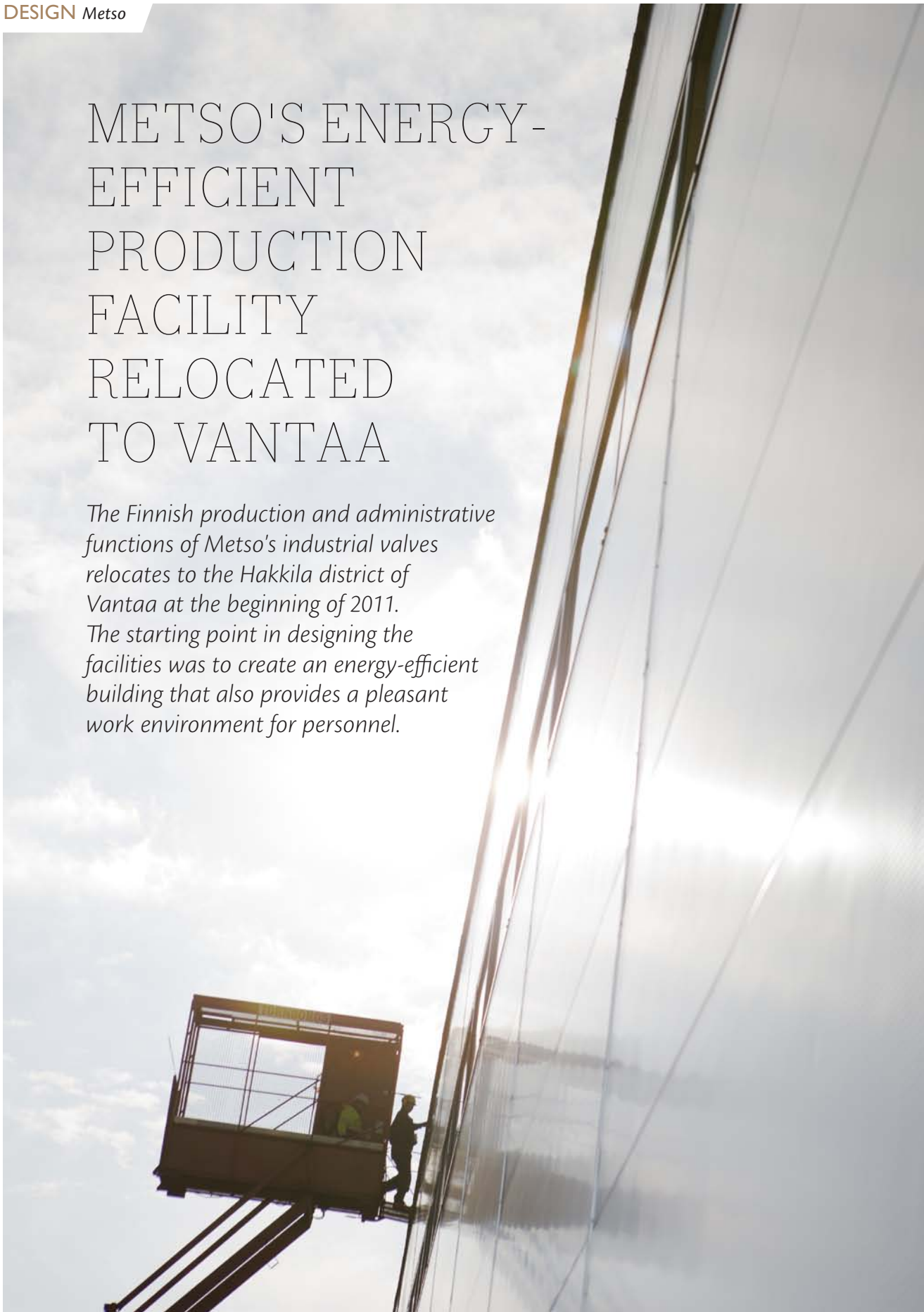
Architects: Kai Wartiainen and Karl Johan Hellman

Year of completion: The PortGate logistics centre and office building were completed in 2008

Floor space: The PortGate logistics centre has a total of approx. 70,000 sq.m. logistics and terminal premises and 13 floors of office and service premises in the Gate Centre.

METSO'S ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTION FACILITY RELOCATED TO VANTAA

The Finnish production and administrative functions of Metso's industrial valves relocates to the Hakkila district of Vantaa at the beginning of 2011. The starting point in designing the facilities was to create an energy-efficient building that also provides a pleasant work environment for personnel.





The unusually extensive production facility project in Finland has run smoothly in seamless cooperation.

— Despite the apparent trend to move production overseas, there still appears to be demand for new production facilities in Finland as well, says Regional Manager **Perttu Hokkanen** of Sponda.

The magnitude of Metso Automation's project in the Hakkila district is significant: Sponda managed the construction of a total of 22,000 square metres of new floor space. In addition, the project entails renovating 12,000 square metres of existing office premises for Metso's administrative functions.

— This is not something that happens every year with logistics properties, Hokkanen says.

Metso will use the new factory to develop and manufacture special purpose industrial valves for clients in the paper and pulp industries and for highly demanding use in the global oil and gas industry.

— Our previous facilities were built in several phases over the last four decades. It was starting to become impractical for modern manufacturing operations, Project Director **Jukka Packalén** from Metso explains.

Metso examined a number of optional premises in the Helsinki region.

— Based on our earlier cooperation with Sponda, we knew they would be an excellent partner for an important project such as this one. It came as no surprise that Sponda was able to offer the most suitable solution for us, Packalén says.

— Metso is an important client and one we have worked with for a long time, Hokkanen states.

— The property was designed from the very beginning with Metso's needs in mind. Various technical so-

lutions such as heat capture, air curtains for doorways and automated lighting and air conditioning technology were employed to improve energy efficiency, Hokkanen explains.

According to Packalén, the aim was to develop a purpose-built and comfortable work environment for 800 Metso employees both on the factory floor and in the administrative offices. All production facilities are located under one roof, which enables the streamlining of manufacturing operations and the elimination of unnecessary movement of goods. /



Metso production facility

Production, office and storage facility

Vanha Porvoontie 229, Vantaa

Architect: Risto-Heikki Laakso

Year of completion: early 2011

Floor space: 22,000 sq.m. (new construction, production facility)

12,000 sq.m. of office and storage space in the adjacent Honkatalo building

SPONDA

Sponda Plc / P.O.BOX 940, FI-00101 Helsinki, Finland / tel. +358 20 43131 / fax +358 20 431 3333 / www.sponda.com