

# Funkkis Mökkis: Paper Huts at the 1932 Enso-Gutzeit Competition in Finland

## Funkkis mökkis: Cabañas de papel en el concurso Enso-Gutzeit de 1932 en Finlandia

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### Abstract

Finland lived, in the 1920s and 1930s, through an ephemeral time of peace and enthusiastic ideas in which it began to forge itself as a modern nation. Its borders still unstable, the country used its landscape as a social unifier and an element of national identity. Finland's incipient welfare state, institutionalised holidays and the democratised consumer goods encouraged a new leisure lifestyle in natural settings. This article studies the recreational housing programme that responded to that demand. The new typology, later called mökki in Finland, was developed during the rise of Nordic functionalism (funkkis in Finnish) – the revision of the romantic villa and the traditional rural housing model, together with the emergence of prefabrication techniques. Among the architectural competitions and drawing albums published on the subject, this article studies the competition run by the Enso-Gutzeit paper company in 1932. Other studies have analysed this competition from constructive, stylistic or historical perspectives. This paper provides a different view by explaining that the competition was a testing ground where one of modern Finnish architecture's distinctive features was forged: tuning into a constructed idea of nature. This fact is revealed through a graphical analysis of the competition's proposals, as well as through the incipient personal traits in the work of the promising, young Finnish architects who participated in the competition.

### Keywords

OSummer huts, mökkis, Enso-Gutzeit competition, domesticity and nature, Finnish functionalism, funkkis.

### Resumen

Finlandia vivió en los años 1920 y 1930 un tiempo efímero de paz y efervescencia de ideas en los que comenzó a forjarse como nación moderna. Con sus fronteras aún inestables, el país utilizó su paisaje como aglutinador social y elemento de identidad nacional. El incipiente estado del bienestar, la institucionalización de las vacaciones y la democratización de los bienes de consumo, alentó una nueva forma de vida y ocio en entornos naturales. Este artículo estudia el programa de vivienda recreativa que dio respuesta a esa demanda. La nueva tipología, posteriormente llamada mökki en Finlandia, se desarrolló durante el auge del funcionalismo Nórdico (funkkis en finés), la revisión de la villa romántica y del modelo de vivienda rural tradicional, junto con la aparición de técnicas de prefabricación. De entre los concursos de arquitectura y álbumes de dibujos que se publicaron sobre el tema, este artículo estudia el convocado por la empresa papelera Enso-Gutzeit en 1932. Otros estudios han analizado este concurso desde lo constructivo, lo estilístico o lo histórico. Este artículo proporciona una visión diferente al afirmar que fue un campo de pruebas en el que se forjó uno de los rasgos distintivos de la arquitectura finlandesa moderna: el de su sintonía con una idea construida de naturaleza, que se desvela, en el análisis gráfico de las propuestas, a través de los incipientes rasgos personales del trabajo de las jóvenes promesas de la arquitectura finlandesa que participaron en el concurso.

### Palabras Clave

Cabañas de verano, mökkis, concurso Enso-Gutzeit, domesticidad y naturaleza, funcionalismo finlandés, funkkis.

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## Introduction

Today, the Nordic countries have over one and a half million summer huts. About fifty per cent of all Northern households have access to a holiday home, with an average of sixteen persons per second home,<sup>1</sup> and the corresponding rate for Finland alone is even higher.<sup>2</sup> *Stuga*, *somerhus*, *hytte* and *mökki* are the contemporary names for second residencies in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, respectively, and they represent links to the countryside and nature, holidays, summer and family history while featuring substantially in national folklore. These terms' cultural meaning, so clearly conveyed today, underwent a long process of refinement starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> The architectural typologies with which they are associated have also evolved.

Beginning with the 19<sup>th</sup> century summer villas of the upper class, during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, speculation began about the possibility of this privilege becoming a democratised luxury across the Nordic countries, including Finland. In the 1920s and 1930s, the idea of domesticity in natural enclaves started to crystalise, while the country was recovering from a civil war, and it adopted the *American way of life* as a moral fuel for its recovery. However, this period did not last long enough for the new nature-focused lifestyle to spread massively, which did not occur until after World War II (WWII).

This article focuses on the architectural proposals envisioned for summer huts in Finland during the competition organised by the Enso-Gutzeit (today Stora Enso) paper company in 1932, which aimed to promote the company's standard products among architects and clients: the wood fibreboard Ensonit and the cellulose wallpaper Ensotapetti.<sup>4</sup> This competition is a telling study case that shows, on the one hand, the beginning of construction materials' standardisation, prefabrication and associated marketing campaigns in Finland and, on the other, the features that characterised the functionalist trend – so-called *funkkis* in Finland – in domestic programmes during the Finnish interwar period. Regarding the epoch's technological challenges, the competition brief and responding entries addressed the possibilities of transferring the Fordist and Taylorist standardisation and prefabrication methods to the construction industry<sup>5</sup> – in this case, the wood derivatives industry. The competition and the selected entries reflected functionalist precepts since the participants were well acquainted with the international works and manifestoes, which had entered the Nordic scene by that time. The influence of functionalism was reflected in Finland at the Turku Fair (1929) – closely related to the Stockholm Exhibition (1930) and its subsequent outcome, the *Acceptera* manifesto (1931) – and, of course, in the *funkkis* architectural landmarks built during the period.

The projects studied in this paper are also relevant, given that they were a training ground for young professionals and a medium through which to broadcast their architectural approach to this topic; these professionals all were emergent figures at the time, and some later became prominent architects. The most interesting projects put into play fresh ideas about minimal, affordable and light-construction housing vis-à-vis functionalism's ideals and range of means, together with their varied envisioning of the interplay with the natural environment. Modern Nordic architecture is acknowledged for its ability to articulate its surrounding environment; therefore, this chapter of Finnish architectural history eloquently shows how this trait began to emerge through the architects of this generation, precisely driven by the programme's requirements. The nature hut was no longer perceived as a refuge for protection against the inclemency of Nordic nature but, rather, as a place that *domesticates* and *commoditises* nature, providing an adequate built environment to enjoy nature like any other consumer good. This

1 Dieter K. Müller, "Second Homes in the Nordic Countries-Between Common Heritage and Exclusive Commodity", *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 7, no 3 (2007): 195.

2 In 2019, Finland had 511,900 free-time residences, when its population stood at 5,518 million; thus, the country had about one second home per eleven Finns. "Buildings and Free-Time Residences", Statistics Finland, [https://www.stat.fi/til/rakke/index\\_en.html](https://www.stat.fi/til/rakke/index_en.html) (accessed May 2, 2021).

3 "In today's Finnish the word *mökki* is a positive expression, probably because it commonly refers to a leisure apartment and leisure is valued. Still in the 1950s, *mökkis* were described as buildings that are decayed or hiding in the shadows of the woods". Kirsti Aapala and Klaas Ruppel, 'Lomalle!', Kielikello, <https://www.kielikello.fi/-/lomalle-> (accessed: May 2, 2021). Translation by the authors.

4 Enso-Gutzeit Oy, *20 Lauantaimajaa* (Viipuri (Finland): Enso-Gutzeit Oy, 1932), 46–48.

5 With the United States having recognised Finland's independence from Russia in 1918, the support of the North American country was political and economic, and its influence was not only cultural but also technological.

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vision of the relationship between the built and natural environments was, though, not a happy occurrence among a group of talented architecture graduates but, rather, a reflection of the *zeitgeist*.

## Domestic Finnish natures

The seemingly ancestral Northern *living in nature* lifestyle, including Finns', is actually a modern feeling, a way of thinking and living that resulted from an intricate collective cultural construct.<sup>6</sup> It started when the old agricultural era was on its way out, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A process of industrialisation was about to start, and the natural landscape became means to go *outside* everyday life. Landscapes were transformed while international borders remained unstable in Finland. Then, a certain image of nature was created that helped unite people. Nature and the countryside became important to the Finnish identity and as a symbolic bridge between classes; in nature, everyone was equal.<sup>7</sup> This period of the National Romantics coincided with the 'early period of the villa culture'.<sup>8</sup> It was characterised by upper-class *summer fun* and lavish hunting lodges, as well as artists' colonies, which flourished during this period. Likewise, the activities of tourists' associations – established in Finland in 1887 – were instrumental in this process of reconceptualising natural values. At the turn of the century, conservation movements and legislation to protect certain areas from industrialisation, together with the establishment of a network of natural parks, also drove the novel concept of nature.<sup>9</sup>

Together with the natural sciences, natural tourism movements and nature's depictions in literature and the visual arts, modern notions of outdoor life's positive health impact also assigned new qualities to the idea of modern Finnish nature. During the 1930s, the institutionalisation of welfare shortened working hours, and statutory holidays increased leaves, leading to interest from various organisations and the government in active leisure and so-called social nature protection. Going out into the natural world in one's free time was not just an individual matter; it was also seen as a concern for the whole of society and for the promotion of public health.<sup>10</sup> An early *green wave* at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, shaped by different movements – such as *garden towns*, *allotment gardens*, *sports cabins* and *weekend and summer cottages* – became popular among the growing middle class. Notably, images of *domesticated nature* were broadcast via gardening manuals. Finnish garden designer Elisabeth Koch wrote the first guide for domestic gardens in 1919,<sup>11</sup> which was especially significant for the trend's Nordic development. Paper media were also instrumental in disseminating a healthy nature-based lifestyle and its corresponding architectural typology: the summer hut.

## Paper huts

In the Nordic countries, houses were commonly marketed through catalogues and leaflets at that time. These assortments of drawings were a commercial variant of the pattern-book collections that served as architectural sourcebooks throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup> Competitions were also held by manufacturing companies that were interested in marketing their novel and accessible construction materials. Journals were involved as well in promoting lifestyles and associated architectures through competitions.<sup>13</sup> Finland followed this trend. Among the journals broadcasting such lifestyles, those that featured what can be considered *funkkis mökkis* included the *Aitta* journal, which organised a 1928 competition for *cheap summer houses*, publishing a correspondent catalogue. The Insulite and Enso-Gutzeit companies organised competitions for *villas* and *Saturday houses*, respectively, in 1932,

6 Erlend Mårald and Christer Nordlund, "Natur och miljö i nordisk kultur Några idéhistoriska nedslag", *RIG: Kulturhistorisk tidskrift*, 99, n° 1 (2016): 1.

7 Mårald and Nordlund, "Natur och miljö i nordisk kultur", 6.

8 Jari and Sirkkaliisa Jestonen, *Finnish Summer Houses* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), 10.

9 Mårald and Nordlund, "Natur och miljö i nordisk kultur", 5.

10 *Ibidem*, 4.

11 For more information about Elisabeth Koch (1891–1982) see: Maria Karisto, Tania Koivunen and Antti Karisto, *Kysykää Essiltä! Elisabeth Kochin puutarhat* (Porvoo: Maahenki Oy, 2015).

12 Rasmus Wærn, "Scandinavia: Prefabrication as Model of Society", in *Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling*, ed. Ron Broadhurst (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 27.

13 For a further explanation of this topic, see Ann Katrin and Phil Armer, *Livet som leves där måste smaka vildmark. Sportstugor och friluftsliv 1900–1945* (Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag, 1998), 267–324.





Figure 1. Front pages of catalogues of commercialised summer huts and competitions for architectural ideas.

publishing separate catalogues showing the awarded buildings. Kator Oy, a heating equipment manufacturer, published its own for *Ulkoilumajoja* (outdoor huts). In 1935, the department store Stockmann published *Viikonloppumajat* (weekend houses), while WSOY edited a collection of drawings for *Weekend Cottages* by Elias Paalanen and Ferdinand Salokangas in 1934. Also, Ab Byggindustri published the series of housing drawing collections *EUREKA* starting in 1937, compiling both *funkkis* and *tradis* (traditional) commercial models. Finnish publications acted as the *paper media* of that time and supposed the proliferation of a specific architectural typology of the summer hut inserted into nature.<sup>14</sup> Through architecture, this typology was supposed to approximate a lifestyle connected with the natural environment. Yet these architectures, according to the leaflets' different titles, still lacked a unifying name (figure 1). It will be some time before the term *mökki* was adopted.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Finnish architects and building contractors were well acquainted with American house factories and working methods,<sup>15</sup> which were starting to permeate the Nordic countries' building industries and material companies' manufacturing. Standardised and prefabricated light wood fibreboard products were amongst the cutting-edge technologies trying to find their way into the market by competing with traditional heavy-log construction. They were manufactured in Finland by the Finnish branch of the American Insulite Company under the brand name *Insulite* and by Enso-Gutzeit Oy under the brand name *Ensonit* (figure 2), both promoters of 1932 architectural competitions.

These collections of drawings were broadly sold and distributed, thus contributing to the dissemination of an invented lifestyle related to an intricate, constructed idea of nature and with diverse drivers, including the liberal politics leading Finland during the 1920s and '30s.<sup>16</sup> The construction and wood industries made an early attempt

14 The article "FUNKKISAIKA. Viikonloppumajoja ja loistohuviloita - tyyppipiirustusten ja eräiden esimerkkien valossa" ("Funktis Time. Weekend Houses and Great Villas - in Light of Type Drawings and Some Examples"), by Jarmo Saari, digs deeper into all these publications that featured what can be considered *funkkis mökkis*. Saari analyses the functionalist stylistic features of the depicted models and refers to their construction and materials, which also involved state-of-the-art techniques for new materials, prefabrication and standardisation.

15 Elina Standertskjöld. *The Dream of the New World: American Influence on Finnish Architecture from the Turn of the 20th Century to the Second World War* (Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 2010), 17.

16 After the Civil War, Finland became a capitalist democracy with a parliament controlled during the 1920s and '30s by the so-called White civil guards, who fought during the 1918 Civil War for the anti-socialists.

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**ENSON**  
eristysaineet  
käytäntöön  
Suomessakin

90 prosenttia **Ensonitin** ja **Enso-pahvin** tuotannosta ostetaan ulkomaille — tullit ja rahdit hinnanlisänsä! Sellaisina rakennus- ja eristysaineina näitä suomalaisia tuotteita pidetään ulkomailta.

Ne on valmistettu vesilasilla yhteen liitettyinä kerroksista. Täten ne eroavat oleellisesti kaikista muista vastaavista tuotteista. **Ensonit**-seinä tähtää kerroksillaan äänen kuluihin 11 kertaa. Vesilasi vastustaa myös kosteutta, suojaa seinää nakertajilta, lisää paloturvallisuutta j. n. e.

**Ensonit** eristää lämpöä yhtä tehokkaasti kuin 3 kertaa niin paksu puuseinä. Sitkeydellään ja vankkuudellaan se lujittaa seinää ja monissa rakenteissa korvaa kantavuudellaan kalliit rakennusaineet. — **Enso-pahvi**, jo monia vuosia kansainvälisesti kuuluisa monipuolisesta käytöstään, on kevyin ja huokein kaikista rakennusaineista.

Pyytää seuraavaan rakennus- tai uusintatyöhön tarjous **Ensonitista** ja **Enso-pahvista**. Tulette näkemään, että Enson tuotteet (joihin kuuluu myös erikoisluja, maalattava Enso-pahvi) täyttävät tehtäväänsä **taloudellisemmin** kuin mikään muut kaupassa olevat aineet.

**ENSO-GUTZEIT OSAKEYHTIÖ, Enson tehtaät — Enso**



*Kesähuuila*

**ENSONITISTA!**

Se on

- keuhkoille viileä, keuhkoille lämmin
- keuhkoille viileä, keuhkoille lämmin
- keuhkoille viileä, keuhkoille lämmin
- keuhkoille viileä, keuhkoille lämmin

Senä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

Mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

Mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

**Talo on vapaa ilman  
ENSONITIA ja ENSO-PAHVIA**

Enso-Gutzeit Osaakeyhtiö

**ENSO-GUTZEIT OSAKEYHTIÖ**  
ENSON TEHTAAT, ENSO

**UUDENAIKAINEN  
MALLIRAKENNUS**  
pystytetään  
huokealla

**ENSONITISTA**

Mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

Mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

Mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
ei se rakennettu **Ensonitista**,  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole  
mikä on se, mikä, kukaan ei ole

**ENSO-GUTZEIT OSAKEYHTIÖ**  
ENSON TEHTAAT, ENSO

Figure 2. Advertisements of Ensonit and Enso-pahvi panels for summer huts by the Enso-Gutzeit company, in several issues of the *Arkkitehti* journal in 1932.

to displace traditional building techniques, based on handcrafted heavy-wood solutions, using the capitalist system of production, based on the massive industrial manufacturing and distribution of affordable, light, standardised and prefabricated building products. Significantly, to some extent, these early models might be said to have been paper projects but also actual *paper* houses. Ephemeral episode this early moment of the *funkkis mökkis* as ephemeral are the few fibreboard huts that were built. Nevertheless, the desire for a prefab summer hut germinated in a country of carpenters via this early development, and the *mökkis fever*, as the Finns call it, has prevailed ever since.

### Domestic natures at the Enso-Gutzeit competition

In the early 1930s, the Enso-Gutzeit company organised a so-called *drawing competition* for the construction of summer huts in Finland, together with the Finnish Association of Architects (SAFA). The competition's main objectives were to study the possibilities and promote the use of the Ensonit panels commercialised by the company. The competition brief did not specify a site for the proposals, which were divided into two groups according to two different sizes: Group A for huts of 25–35 m<sup>2</sup> and Group B for huts of 50–60 m<sup>2</sup> for longer stays.



Figure 3. Built proposal by architects Aarne Hytönen and Risto Veikko Luukkonen at the Nordic Construction Days in Helsinki (1932).

The competition results were decided in April 1932 and published that same year in a catalogue called *20 lauantai-majaa*, since twenty entries had received some recognition. In the same year, SAFA's professional journal, *Arkkitehti*, published the competition results in its sixth issue.<sup>17</sup> Among the 197 competition entries, the twenty that won awards aligned with *funkkis*, the functionalist style already embedded in the Finnish architectural culture at that time. A version of the first prize winner was constructed by architects Hytönen and Luukkonen in the context of the Nordic Construction Days held in Helsinki in 1932 (figure 3). The other proposals remained only paper projects in the competition catalogue (figures 4 and 5).

The catalogue's introduction, written by the Finnish architect Hilding Ekelund, declares the intentions behind the main aspects and advantages of the Saturday houses promoted in the competition. On the one hand, an emerging lifestyle of increased leisure time in connection to nature was supported by the economic virtue of small-sized huts over established villas. The houses' close interconnection with the natural landscape was stressed as a consequence of this lifestyle.<sup>18</sup>

The proposals' main common feature was their capacity to connect architecture with the natural environment without a particular context in the form of a specific site. The design strategies introduced by the architects in their proposals intertwined with a suggested, fictitious natural environment whilst maintaining the principles of functionalist style. They contained different design strategies to achieve this bond with the natural environment, which was embedded in the different drawings submitted to the competition.

Those strategies related to three different approaches to the relation between architecture and its surrounding landscape. The first approach was centripetal – from the outside towards the inside – achieved by framing the landscape through openings in envelopes (windows, doors and inter-column spaces) and vegetation features (with different types and layouts) to introduce nature in the interior space. The second approach was centrifugal – from the inside towards the outside – through views captured by the architectural elements, which situate the scale of architecture in relation to the scale of the immediate natural environment. Finally, the third approach was static – pointing out in both directions – comprising an expansion of the limits between the inside and the outside by creating outdoor rooms as transitional spaces between the indoors and the outdoors. The multiple limits of these outdoor rooms

17 The twenty awarded entries – excepting the entry by interior designer Eevert Toivonen – were published in the *Arkkitehti* journal.

18 Ekelund referred to the summer huts in such terms as “an opportunity for swimming, sailing, fishing, hunting and skiing in a beautiful setting”, “more in line with the economic potential of modern man” and “as neutral backgrounds for pro-life people”; he also said, “they cannot control its surroundings, but it must, on the contrary, closely relate its place to the background and blend into it”. Enso-Gutzeit Oy, *20 Lauantaimajaa*, 1. Translation by the authors.



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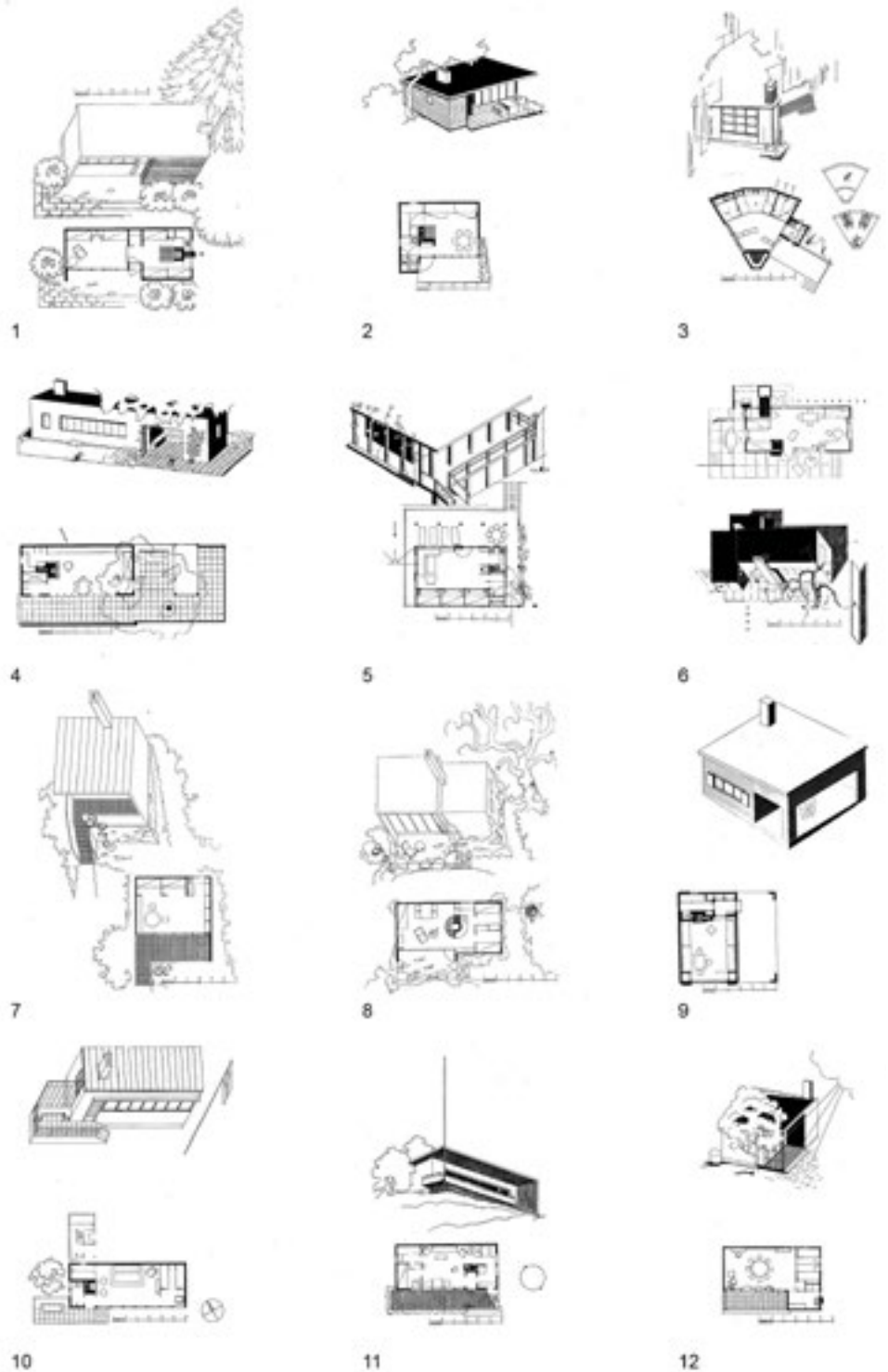


Figure 4. Group A's awarded entries in the Enso-Gutzeit competition (the authors are architects if not otherwise stated): (1, 7 and 8) Hytönen and Luukkonen; (2) architectural student Hugo Harmia; (3) Alvar Aalto; (4), Pauli. E. and Märta Blomstedt; (5) Elsi Borg; (6) Erik Bryggman; (9) Veikko Leistén; (10) Arvo Muroma; (11) Antero Pernaja; (12) interior designer Eevert Toivonen.

configured a sequence of spaces in transition and in degrees of exteriorisation: bounded or semi-bounded outdoor uncovered spaces, outdoor covered spaces, indoor spaces opened visually and physically to the natural environment and landscape, and totally enclosed spaces (shown in figure 6 by a gradient of green hatches).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> In this sense, The Enso-Gutzeit competition entries are instances of what Berta Bardí Milà considers, when analysing Arne Jacobsen's houses, the modern synthesis of the opposed spatial typologies of the *patio* (centripetal) and the *pavilion* (centrifugal). Berta Bardí Milà, "La casa de Arne Jacobsen: el patio y el pabellón" (doctoral dissertation, Departament de Projectes Arquitectònics, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, 2013), 17.

Most of the proposals created a totally imaginary context, as if their authors had very clearly envisioned a specific place that enabled their projects to be site-specific (figures 4 and 5). The drawings suggest the rugged and slanted topographies typical of Finnish terrains close to lakes (proposals 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12); closeness to a dense forest or set of tree masses (1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 16 and 20), a site dominated by a wild, ancient tree (2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 19) or a hut placed in connection to the

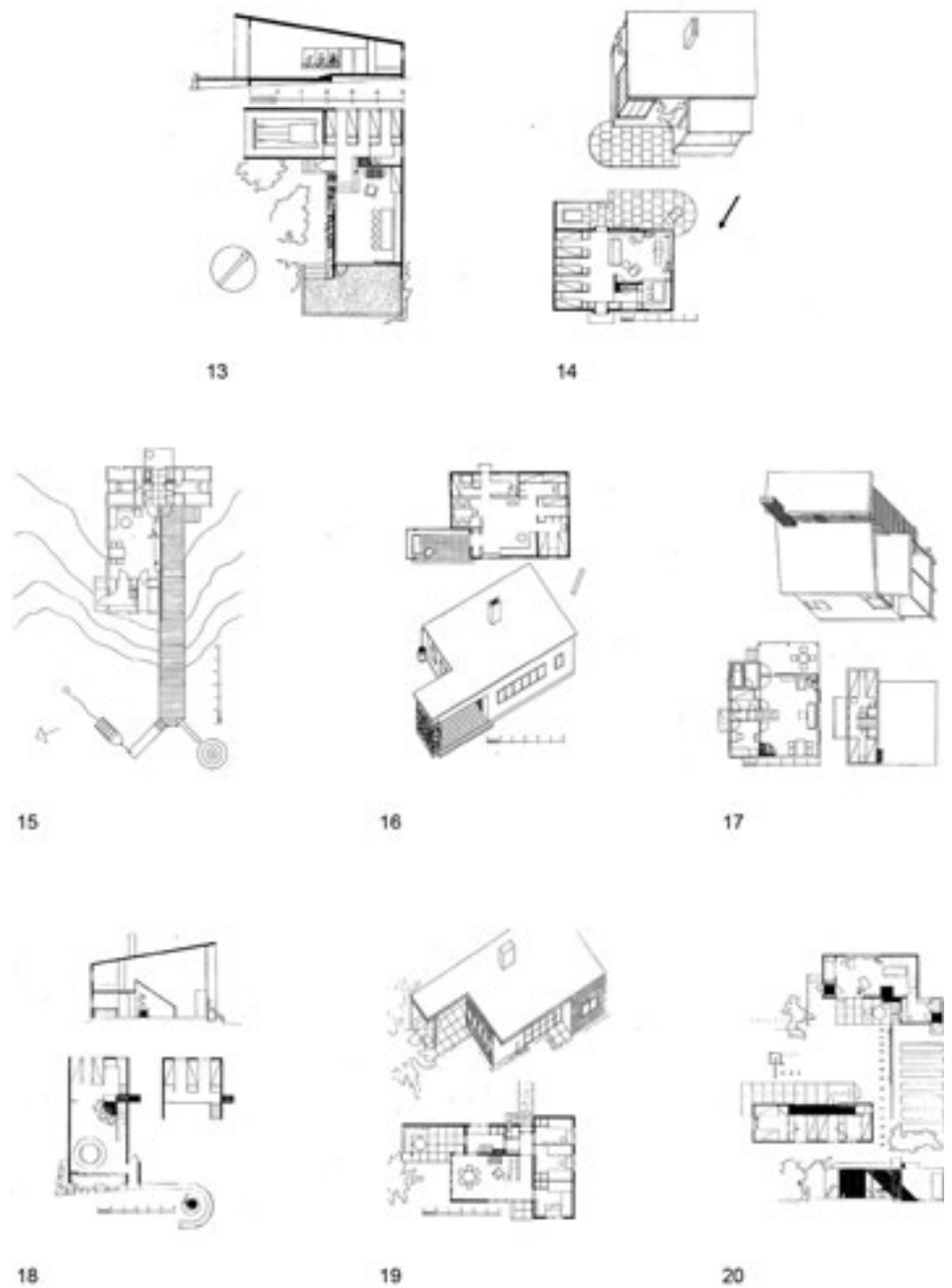


Figure 5. Group B's awarded entries in the Enso-Gutzeit competition (the authors are architects if not otherwise stated): (13 and 18) Hytönen and Luukkonen; (14) E. I. Sutinen; (15 and 17) Kaj Englund and architectural student Dag Englund; (16) Ilmari Ahonen; (19) architectural student Jorma Järvi; (20) Erik Bryggman.

water, whether visually (4) or in a direct physical relation (5 and 15) in assemblages reminiscent of the small constructions on water which are so characteristic of the Nordic countries.

The design strategies through which the architects connected their proposals to the natural environment varied (figures 6 and 7). Most proposals used a terrace to act as a space between nature and the human-made environment. They were usually outdoor rooms, delimited differently in order to create various degrees of domesticity in their configuration. Whilst the hut itself was often one of the limits to these outdoor rooms, cantilevered roofs (1, 8, 13 and 19), porches (2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16 and 19), canopies (6, 14, 17 and 20), long, terrain-like steps (1), wild tree or trees that seemed newly planted (6, 10, 18 and 20), low vegetation in parterres and wall tops or small bushes (1, 2, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 18), parapets and handrails (5, 7 and 10), trellises and porous screens with climbing plants (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16, 17 and 20) and built-in outdoor benches (4, 10, 16, 18 and 19) were also used. All of these elements determined limits that, very often, had to be completed by inhabitants' imagination when formed simply by outbound platforms (1, 2, 8, 12,



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13, 16 and 17) or pavement (6, 4, 14, 19 and 20) attached to or emerging from the huts' defined limits. In the most intricate proposal (20), patio-like outdoor spaces surrounded by pavilions, which combine centripetal and centrifugal configurations, implied a more sophisticated version of these outdoor rooms. Vegetation was used as a nature-framing element through trees that served as the background for huts in most proposals' elevation drawings, and as plants that marked specific limits (11, 13 and 16) or just prevented the approach to a specific façade (18).

We can read, in the entries, the potential influence of Koch's gardening manuals. The projects seem to maintain as much as possible the natural conditions of the imagined site, and they use these conditions as a starting point for their garden design. The entries appear to consider the trees and bushes that are already at the invented site. The small gardens create spaces between the hut and its surrounding nature, in harmony with the natural environment, as well as colourful and comfortable scenes. Their structure seems natural while driven by function and purpose. Also, as Koch suggested, the grass seemed to have been planted close

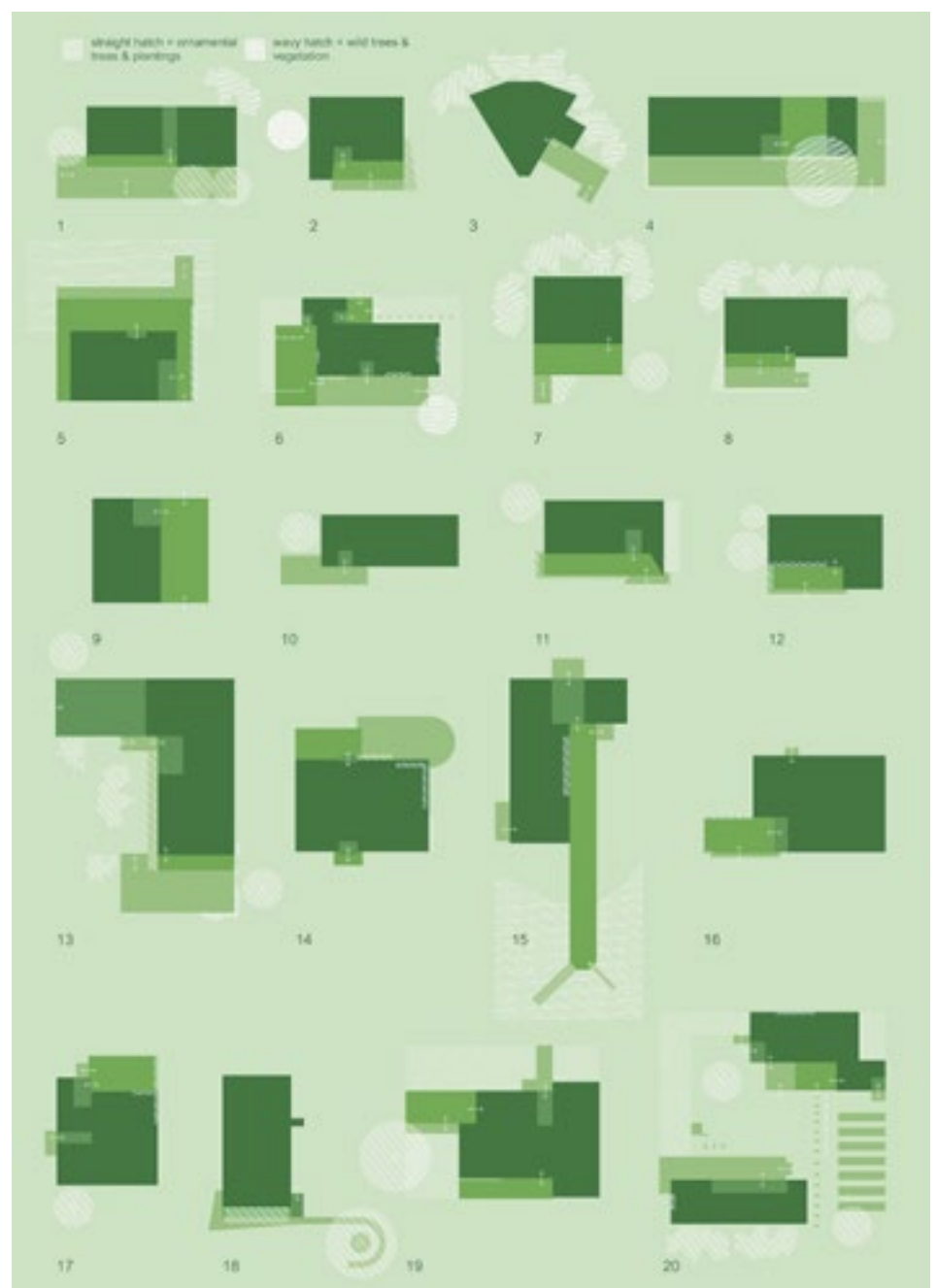


Figure 6. Different type of spaces according to their degrees of exteriorisation. From the lightest to the darkest green: the background as *undomesticated nature*, outdoor uncovered spaces, outdoor covered spaces, and finally indoor spaces (the highest degree of *domestication*). The arrows mark physical connections between the spaces.



Figure 7. Views from the interior spaces framed by the huts' main openings. The black arrows point towards the south, as indicated in the original drawings. Hearths are represented through black hatches and the letter "K" means 'kitchen'. Interior partitions are also represented, and the different line weights imply the different degrees of disengagement of the spaces in relation to the main space.

to the buildings as a muted background for the layout of planted bushes, flowers, edible plants and vegetables. Natural stones or rugged-surface stone slabs were used as surface materials for sitting areas in some of the proposals, as Koch's manuals prescribed.<sup>20</sup>

The architectural elements that played key roles in the design included chimneys or hearths to *domesticate* the indoor ambience through fire. Like tree trunks, in most of the proposals they organised only one interior, acting as a hinge and dividing the space into different ambiances (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 19), or organising the main space around them (2, 3, 8, 17, 18 and 20).

The proposals elaborated on the traditional Finnish *tupa*,<sup>21</sup> the spacious room in a traditional Finnish farmhouse to which, in the most primitive cases, all domestic functions were allocated. The different areas were defined by the location of the hearth, the furniture and light-dividing elements. The proposals reinterpreted this model in multiple ways, from maintaining the spirit of the *tupa* (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 18) to the most functionalistic approaches that proposed a more compartmentalised spatial arrangement (1, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20). All of the entries considered the outdoor space as a consubstantial part of the indoor space, their major addition to the traditional model.

20 Karisto; Koivunen and Karisto. *Elisabeth Kochin puutarhat*. 103–114.

21 For more information about the history of the Finnish peasant living room, see: Sirkka-Liisa Ranta and Juhani Seppovaara, *Tupa* (Helsinki: Rakennusalan kustantajat, 2000).

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The establishment of limits through architecture (walls) and outdoor elements (borders of terraces, pavements, canopies, parterres, parapets and handrails) was a constant across the proposals, setting a hierarchy in degrees of privacy from the interior to the exterior – from an alcove space (enclosed with curtains or partitions) to the fireplace associated with the main space, an entrance hall, to an outside doorstep connected to a partially covered terrace, to finally reach a pavement or uncovered terrace that directly connected with the outside, untouched natural setting. This hierarchy was shown in the treatment of the sections, which connected panoramic views of the landscape from a relaxed position inside (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11). These panoramic views were regularly oriented towards the south.

### Emergent masters in the small scale

Ekelund's concluding sentence in the catalogue praised architects' role in designing for the specificities of the programme and the site. He said, "these types are certainly not suitable for any circumstances: ... in each case, many factors affect the design of a Saturday house. That's why the best expert architect decides the matter".<sup>22</sup> This message has a twofold meaning: firstly, it conveys that the drawings presented in the book have an archetypal character thoroughly considered by each architect, and secondly, that these archetypes should be adapted to specific circumstances by hiring an architect. The selected entries' unique and personal approaches to the brief were precisely what differentiated the *20 lauantai-majaa* catalogue from its contemporaries, which were more commercially oriented.

Among the competition entries, the four submitted by the architects Erik Bryggman, Pauli E. and Märta Blomstedt, Alvar Aalto and Elsi Borg are especially interesting due to their interpretations of the starting conditions and, specifically, their vision of the new lifestyle, architectural typology and its solution to the encounter between architecture and the natural environment.

Erik Bryggman's<sup>23</sup> two entries, named *Dorothy Perkins* (6) and *Solarium* (20), represent the paradigm of the *funkkis mökkis*. They are also the most intricate proposals of the selection in terms of their articulation of the indoor and outdoor spaces, together with a strong proposition for the garden's design and programming.<sup>24</sup> Bryggman used white abstract prisms of different sizes and proportions (containing the indoor spaces) that interplay or intersect with each other. He also used horizontal (pavements and canopies) and vertical planes (walls and fences), as well as points and lines (chimneys, trees, fountains, pavement paths and planting beds) that helped to define implied spaces, altogether generating three-dimensional arrangements that aligned well with De Stijl's compositions. The relationship established by all these elements generated an expansive space, sophisticated gradients and thresholds that suggested a multiplicity of alternative programmes and paths despite the houses' minimal surfaces. With *just the just*, Bryggman's projects enable a family lifestyle in which degrees of intimacy and community, as well as the simultaneous occurrence of active daily routines and leisure time, were well balanced.

Pauli E. and Märta Blomstedt's<sup>25</sup> project (4) was comparable with Bryggman's projects in terms of its functionalist language: its white, boxy look and dominant landscape windows. The projects are also comparable according to their equivalent importance assigned to the outdoors and indoor spaces, and the planting elements' key positioning in the garden. However, if Bryggman's project dynamically appropriated the space with a scattered programme, the Blomstedts' proposal was more self-contained and centripetal. It conveyed a contemplative lifestyle of the modern inhabitant as a passive viewer when enclosed in the frame

22 Enso-Gutzeit Oy, *20 Lauantaimajaa*, 5.  
Translation by the authors.

23 At that time, Erik Bryggman (1891–1955) was building his well-known *funkkis* public buildings and light wooden buildings using Ensonit. These works include the 1932 Insulite competition entry, for which received the fourth prize. After the Enso-Gutzeit and the Insulite competitions, Bryggman's functionalist production continued until he designed the Resurrection Chapel (Turku, 1938–1941), considered an inflection point in his career.

24 These characteristics can be traced back to at least the 1928 *Aitta* competition, to which Bryggman submitted four entries, including the one called *Göpa* (figure 8). Although the *Aitta* projects were designed according to the characteristics of Nordic classicism, the floor plan, gardening elements and use of the landscape window, distinctive of Bryggman's *funkkis* projects, were already present. The Enso-Gutzeit projects were variations on his consistent and enduring *funkkis* series on domestic natures.

25 Märta Blomstedt (1899–1982) built together with Matti Lampén the *funkkis* hotels Pohjanhovi (Rovaniemi, 1936) and Aulanko (Hämeenlinna, 1938), examples of modernist programmes of leisure in natural environments and early touristification. To the best of our knowledge, she did not participate in any of the other summer hut competitions of the time.

of the bound outdoor area and the semi-interior and interior spaces, which were dominated by views enjoyed from built-in benches. The furniture design and arrangement in the hut reflected a sense of continuous togetherness amongst the family, which also distinguished this project from Bryggman's.

Alvar Aalto's<sup>26</sup> entry (3) was probably the most idiosyncratic in many ways, including its formal aspects – not as determinately *funkkis* as the previous examples (figure 8). The project was also unique in its interpretation of the lifestyle stated in the brief and its depiction of the natural and built environments' relationship. The hut has a fan-like shape, which will later become one of the most distinctive formal features in Aalto's work, with the central point of the arch being a brick hearth. The key position of this robust element in the layout recalled fire's symbolic meaning in relation to the theories of the *primitive hut* and the origins of architecture, based on the anthropological relationship between the natural environment and humankind. Aalto's hut, depicted in the border of a dense forest which partially blurs the construction in the perspectival drawing, evokes this foundational myth. However, Aalto *modernised* the story by privileging the inhabitant's sense of vision and hedonistic contemplation of fire. The inhabitant is depicted lying on the bed. From that position, the viewer can also contemplate the *hut's* outdoor space and the landscape through two glass openings: a floor-to-ceiling entrance door and a big window. The hearth's position between these two openings makes it stand out even more, physically and conceptually, given that glass's transparency reads as a void. Thus, the chimney seems to stand alone, recalling Vitruvius motto about *comoditas* being procured by fire alone with no need for mediating construction.<sup>27</sup> The hut's other materials – glass and fiberboard – are ephemeral and transient. This kind of operation, which implies a dialogue between the physical and organoleptic qualities of contrasting materials, is a feature that also became a constant in Aalto's work from the 1930s onwards.<sup>28</sup> Other modernist features of Aalto's proposal in relation to the hearth included its complete functional disengagement from the kitchen. This functional element, together with the elevated outdoor platform, read as plugged-in elements that were not integral to the hut's main core. Aalto also introduced functionalist solutions for spatial flexibility (retractable beds in a perimeter wall-like wardrobe and operable curtains to separate the day and night zones). In this sense, he portrayed the solution's versatility by drawing possible actions that could take place. His depiction of the hut as a ballroom smartly conveyed its spaciousness, eloquently showing Aalto's glamorous and pleasure-seeking conceptualisation of modern domesticity in contact with nature.

Elsi Borg's proposal *The Swimmer* (5) also presented a thorough and very personal approach to the topic – which, like Aalto's entry, distanced itself from the most canonical *funkkis* entries and related (unlike Aalto's relation to an ancient model) to traditional Finnish constructions. Borg's delicate and sensitive articulation of indoor and outdoor spaces revealed the architect's background; garden design was especially close to Borg's heart.<sup>29</sup> Borg had also participated in the *Aitta* competition (figure 8), and *The Swimmer* presents a very different approach to that entry as a much more porous solution with a free and easy relationship with the surrounding environment. The interior space was bounded by a covered veranda overhanging the lake; thus, the exterior space visually extended towards the horizon while physically bound, having just a door connection with the terrain and a stair to the water. The way in which Borg drew the envelope – with the doors' arches showing their alignment with the façade when open – showed her intention of weaving the exterior and interior spaces together. With this interweaving, she generated a dynamic and fluent circulation that implied an active life for a family of six. Borg's furniture layout suggested many possible simultaneous situations for the family members during the long Nordic summer days (fishing, swimming, cooking,

26 Although the entry for the competition was signed just by Alvar Aalto (1898–1976), he partnered with Aino Aalto (1894–1949). By 1932, the couple had already designed their world-famous *funkkis* landmarks. The studio also participated in the *Aitta* competition with three entries, including *Kumeli* (figure 8), and in the Insulite competition, with one entry. All of their proposals were very different from one another. If Bryggman had demonstrated a consistent approach to the summer hut topic, the Aaltos' production was prolific in diverse ideas.

27 Later, in 1941, Aalto, in his well-known conference: "The Reconstruction of Europe is the Key Problem for the Architecture of Our Time", explicitly reveals his identification of the house's hearth with the "heart" of inhabiting. Göran Schildt, *Alvar Aalto. The mature years* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 45–47.

28 Rosana Rubio Hernández, Fernando Nieto Fernández and Carmen Toribio Marín, "Et in Arcadia Ego. The Ruin Metaphor in Aalto's Work as a Driver for Cultural Sustainability", in *Ever(green) Alvar Aalto - 4th Alvar Aalto Researchers' Network Seminar 6.-7.5.2021: Seminar Proceedings* (Pori, Finland: Alvar Aalto Foundation, 2021), 89–94.

29 In 1930, Elsi Borg (1893–1958) had received a travel grant to study garden plans in central and southern Europe. Her travels in Estonia, France, Spain and Morocco promoted her special ability to organise spaces with planting and produce interactions between buildings and nature, creating pleasant environments. Maarit Henttonen, *Elsi Borg 1893–1958 Arkkitehti* (Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1995), 18, 22.



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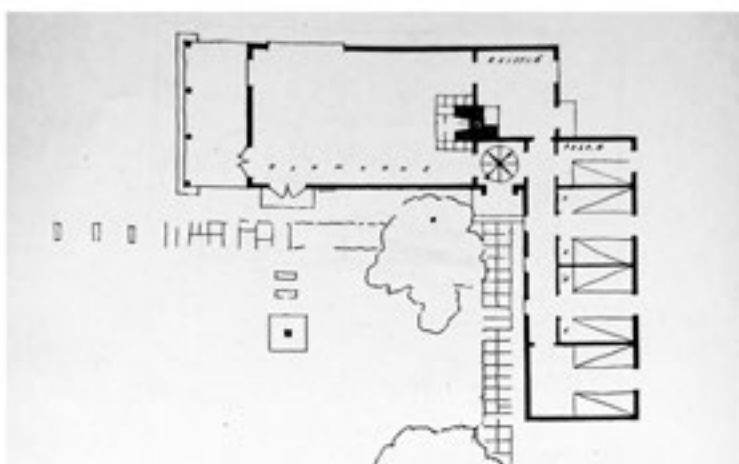
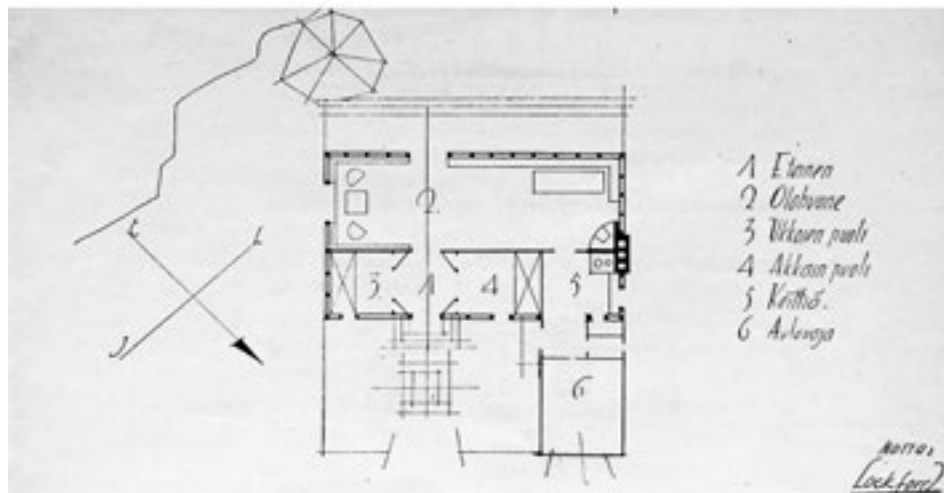
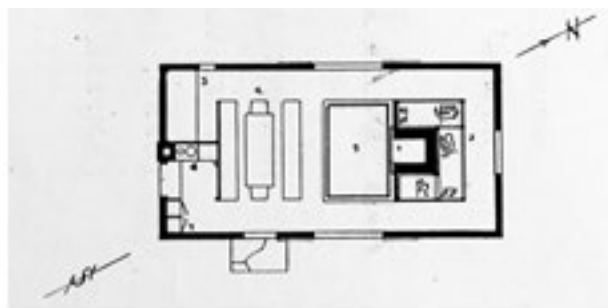


Figure 8. Floor plans of summer hut proposals for the *Aitta* competition in 1928 by Alvar Aalto (upper), Elsi Borg (centre) and Erik Bryggman (lower).

lying down and dining) while the open-plan layout allowed the family to be together all the time. In this sense, Borg's placement of the kitchen is notable; the household was also present in the cooking scene, another feature that differentiated this proposal from Borg's *Aitta* design and from most of the other Enso-Gutzeit entries. The sun path's consideration in Borg's design is also worth highlighting, as well as her use of planting as a climate control device. The north arrow was intentionally shown in the floor plan, as well as an icon depicting the sunrise. The veranda was oriented towards the south, and a trellis with a climbing plant was placed on the western side, offering protection during long summer dusks.

Besides solving the common problem posed by the competition brief, each of these four proposals by promising figures of Finnish architecture revealed their particular conceptions of nature-based lifestyles, which were visible in the sections and floor plans submitted for the competition (figures 9 and 10). Knowing today these figures' later accomplishments, we clearly see that in these first trials, many of the features that would become characteristic of their later work had started to emerge. The Enso-Gutzeit competition was a melting pot of the architectural

Figure 9. Sections of summer hut proposals by Erik Bryggman (upper left), Pauli E. and Märta Blomstedt (bottom left), Alvar Aalto (upper right) and Elsi Borg (bottom right) for the Enso-Gutzeit competition in 1932.

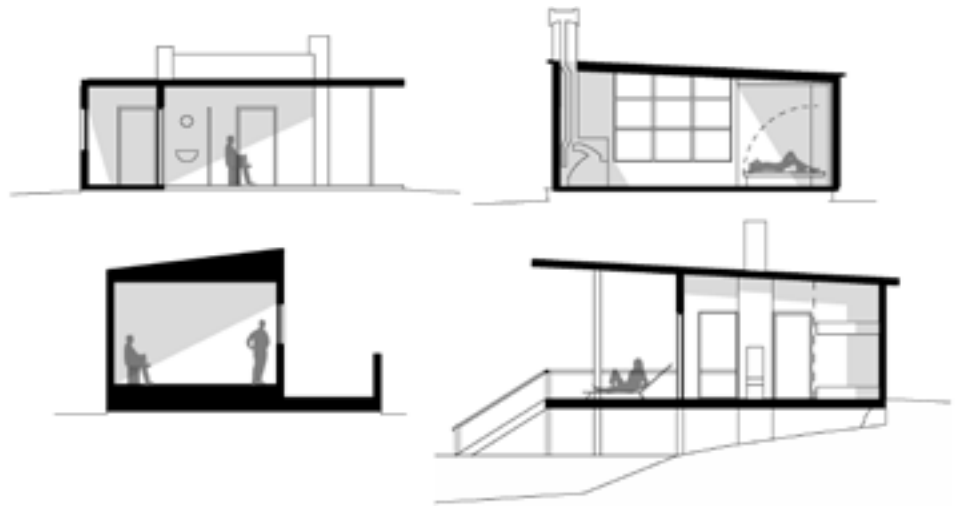
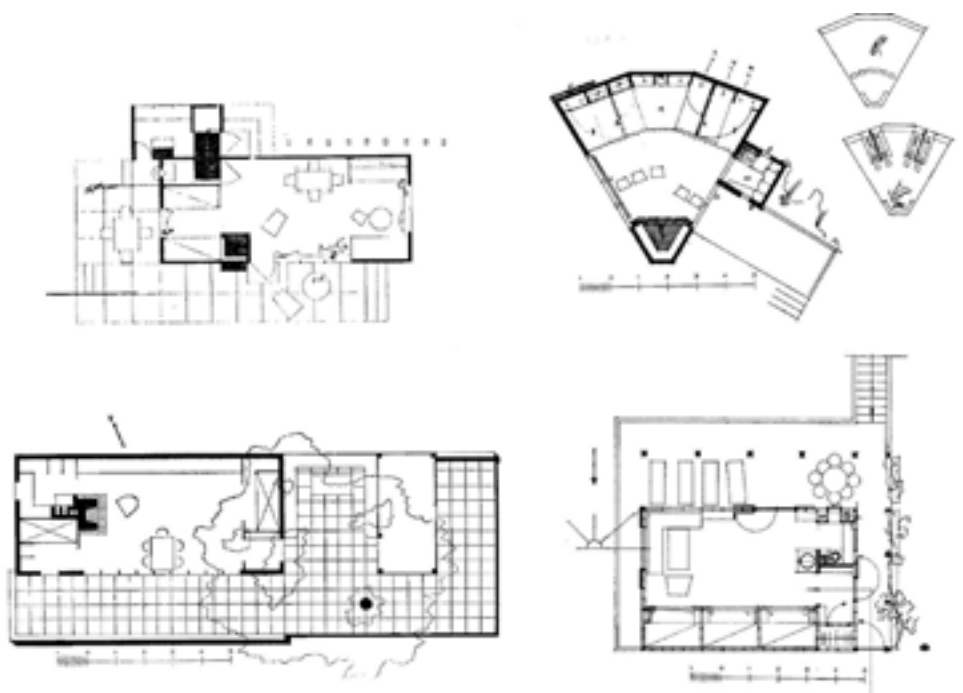


Figure 10. Floor plans of summer hut proposals by Erik Bryggman (upper left), Pauli E. and Märta Blomstedt (bottom left), Alvar Aalto (upper right) and Elsi Borg (bottom right) for the Enso-Gutzeit competition in 1932.



ideas converging at that very moment in Finland, including the overlap between peaking and fading architectural styles, the recovery of traditional models and the incorporation of new building and design techniques in modular approaches. However, both Ekelund's final remarks and each participating architects' personal approaches seemed to question the potential danger that such a radical adoption of modularisation in architecture could entail.

## Conclusions

The enthusiasm of the *funkkis mökkis* was an ephemeral episode which mostly yielded projects that remained on paper only, given Finland's economic and political instability and the unfortunate advent of the Winter War in 1939. Nevertheless, the ideas developed in these early models paved the way for the phenomenon of popular summer huts, which took off once and for all after WWII,<sup>30</sup> supporting the historical interest in *funkkis mökkis* as a historical episode.

The studied paper huts of the Enzo-Gutzeit competition offered architectural solutions in which inhabitants' relationship with the natural environment was sometimes physical and active—and always visual and contemplative. They reworked the 19<sup>th</sup> Century summer villas and the traditional rural housing model, attending (to varying extents) to functionalist ideas of compartmentalisation of uses and, above

30 Although the interest in summer huts experienced a decline in the Nordic countries during the 1980's, due to international charter tourism, since the 1990's it has been recovered. Since then, this domestic model poses novel challenges to many contemporary research fields, including architectural design. Among these new questions are the reformulation of the house program, since they have become more permanent residences and the implications of this domestic model in environmental conservation, which is a novel concern related to the contemporary understanding of the idea of nature.

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all, incorporating the exterior space through garden elements and compositional strategies. All of these operations make the competition entries telling instances of what Carlos Martí Arís refers to as the “new *episteme* proper of the modern world (in the Foucauldian sense of the term)” applied to a design process: enabling the “analytical and abstract” reinterpretation of existing architectural typologies,<sup>31</sup> to comply with a novel idea of inhabiting a natural enclave.

The published competition entries employed the *funkkis* language to varying degrees, using asymmetrical compositions, open floor plans, basic geometric shapes, flat or slightly slanted roofs, and landscape or corner windows, as well as plastered wood exteriors. However, beyond their architectural language, the *mökki* phenomenon addressed the deep principles enunciated by *Acceptera*, intending to overcome the dualities that the manifesto’s authors had identified because of modern sociological and technological changes of the time. Two Europes were described in the manifesto – the first urban, industrialised and connected and the second isolated, disorganised and fragmented, composed of rural and agricultural communities. The *mökki* system seemed to have been ideated to balance both systems. The urban environment, in need of green spaces, incorporated rural areas and isolated agricultural communities which, in turn, benefited from the synergies and infrastructures generated by this new lifestyle emanating from cities, overcoming their isolation.

Regarding another duality stated in *Acceptera* and addressed by these competition entries – standardisation and prefabrication versus traditional design and construction methods – the bridging design approach of *open prefabrication* advocated by the Enso-Gutzeit’s brief and entries prevailed in Finland. This step led to prefabrication programmes for single-family homes during the reconstruction programme after WWII, in which some of the architects who had participated in the competition took part. However, without considering the inevitable homogenisation of working with standardised products, such as the board manufactured by Enso-Gutzeit, the twenty catalogued entries have been proven to have shared certain characteristics in their design strategies.

Nevertheless, beyond their construction, the Enso-Gutzeit projects eloquently exhibited and promoted a lifestyle connected to the new idea of domestic nature, a novel relationship between individuals, the built environment and the natural environment. This idea began to be institutionalised and publicised at the beginning of the 1920s, after a lengthy process of cultural evolution, carrying intertwined connotations of national identity, public health associated with outdoor sports and gardening activities, early ecological concerns and commoditisation, as well as touristification, triggered by incipient modern mobility infrastructures, mass production and consumption. This idea also formulated a new leisure of domesticity for all, which was promoted through paper printed media. Thus, this article has revealed that the Enso-Gutzeit competition was a testing ground for the emerging personal traits in the work of the promising, young Finnish architects who participated in the competition, forging a characteristic of modern Finnish architecture: tuning into this very idea of nature.

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Figure 2. (Left) *Arkkitehti* no. 5 (1932); (Center) *Arkkitehti* no. 4 (1932); (Right) *Arkkitehti* no. 9 (1932).

Figure 3. *Arkkitehti* no.7 (1932): 108–109.

Figure 4. Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*. Modified by the authors.

Figure 5. Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*. Modified by the authors.

Figure 6. Drawing by the authors from Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*.

Figure 7. Drawing by the authors from Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*.

Figure 8. Aitta. *Halpoja Kesäasuntoja* (1928), 33, 45, 101. Modified by the authors.

Figure 9. Drawing by the authors from Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*, 17, 13, 11, 15.

Figure 10. Enso-Gutzeit Oy (1932), *20 Lauantaimajaa*, 16, 12, 10, 14. Modified by the authors.