

Walking on Campus

This brochure invites you to familiarize yourself with the buildings, nature and stories in Otaniemi. Where is the most obvious ‘fifth façade’? Which building is located at Otaniemi’s highest elevation?

The campus is continuing to develop: the West Metro section will launch its operations, a new university building will be completed at Aino Square, and residential construction will be increased. Regional planning is directed by sustainable development and the goal is self-sufficiency in energy.



The Otaniemi area is situated in the eastern part of Espoo – practically in the centre of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area these days. The area is recognized as the cradle of modern Finnish technology and industry as well as the main campus of Aalto University.

Before the construction of the campus, Otaniemi was part of the centuries-old Espoo rural landscape. The need for technical laboratories as well as the rise in the numbers of students in higher education required a move of the Helsinki University of Technology away from Hietalahti as well as investment in the construction of a higher education infrastructure. The State purchased Otaniemi Manor for this purpose in 1949.

Architect Alvar Aalto won the area’s design competition along with his spouse, Aino Aalto, who succumbed to a difficult illness over the course of the competi-

tion. The plan was deployed as the basis for the area in 1950. It included not only the State research premises and Helsinki University of Technology but sports facilities and a student village as well. In the same connection, the area received its current nomenclature.

Part of the Teekkari Village and the sports facilities were the first buildings to be completed for the 1952 Olympic Games. After the end of the Games, Otaniemi has frequently functioned as a sports village for European and World Championship events. Of the research institutes, the first to be completed were the Geological Survey of Finland building and the University of Technology’s sawmill, which were needed not only for research in wood technology but as a material supplier for the construction of the area.

Due to a strike, the planning of the Otaniemi area was extended to the end of the

1950s, when the first larger buildings for the Helsinki University of Technology were completed. The first part of the university’s main building was opened for use in 1964, and the inauguration was held in connection with the promotion ceremonies in 1966.

Otaniemi grew into a nucleus for research supporting Finnish industry during the 1970s and 1980s. Approximately 40,000 people currently work in the area. That number is set to grow in the years to come as Aalto University concentrates its operations on Otaniemi. (Panu Nykänen, Ph.D.)

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Maija Holma, Alvar Aalto -museum

1. OTAKAARI 1

The main building of the former Helsinki University of Technology, designed by Alvar Aalto and Elissa Aalto, was completed in 1964. It dominates the central area of the campus from a small hill where the main building of the Otaniemi Manor was located during the 1700s. The roof of the auditorium continues towards the park in the form of an amphitheatre. The red bricks of the campus buildings suggest old Finnish industrial architecture, illustrating the close relationship of the work done within its edifices with industrial activity.



Heikki Juutilainen

2. THE LIBRARY

The library building designed by Alvar Aalto was completed in 1969. It is Finland's oldest and largest library in the technical field. The structure is clearly connected with the former main building next to it with respect to the materials and contours of the façades. The furnishings in the interiors, designed by Aalto and Elin Törnudd, are a fixed part of the whole: a large number of the shelves, tables, counters and lamps are original items. Address: Otaniementie 9



Tarja Trygg

3. SHOPPING CENTRE

At the outset of the 1960s, Alvar Aalto designed a shopping centre and bank building for the centre of Otaniemi. The copper gambrel roof of the long, one-and-a-half storey building culminates in a fifth, clamshell-like façade, which descends in front of the business premises into a curved-edged canopy. In 1987, Aalto's office designed an additional building for the north section of the shopping centre, where Aalto University's student association currently functions. Address: Otakaari 11-15



Martti Kapanen, Alvar Aalto -museum

4. HEATING PLANT

The campus-based heating plant building designed by Alvar Aalto was realized at the outset of the 1960s. The most visible section of the building is the cube-shaped power plant, whose internal engineering is exposed to view from a glass façade. The roof of the structure and its linked projection are made of copper. The laboratories, offices and control centre are situated in the lower rectangular-shaped premises. Address: Otakaari 6



Päivi Kiuru

5. SAW BUILDING

The saw building designed by Alvar Aalto is the oldest building on campus, completed in 1955. For a long time, it was merely a cold shell on top of a sawing line, as the building did not even have insulation. The saw served the Helsinki University of Technology campus during the construction period in the 1950s and 1960s, and was later used to train students from the Department of Forest Products Technology. Currently the Saw Building functions as a venue for various events. Address: Konemiehentie 1



Heikki Havas, Alvar Aalto -museum

6. OTAHALLI

Otahalli Sports Centre, designed by Alvar Aalto, was completed for the 1952 Olympics. The building's larger hall was at one time the country's largest structure of its kind, and the span between its wooden rafters is 45 metres. Otaniemi's sports centre boasts a grassy field, grounds for track and field, a skating area, two street basketball courts, three tennis courts and a jogging track. Address: Luolamiehentie 7



Päivi Kiuru

7. JÄMERÄNTAIVAL 1

This building, completed in 1966, is the only dormitory on campus designed by Alvar Aalto. The four-storey, V-shaped edifice has over 200 rooms, and originally it functioned during the summers as a hotel. The southeast façade on the dormitory's east wing undulates and the layout resembles a fan, which is reminiscent of Aalto's previously designed MIT dormitory in Boston.



Tarja Trygg

8. DIPOLI

The Student Union building designed by Reima and Raili Pietilä was completed in 1966. The materials of the structure, which represent organic architecture, derive from Finnish nature: pine, copper and natural stone. Of the total number of Dipoli's 500 windows, only four are the same as each other. The opening-and-closing Käpy (Cone, 1968), a work of art by Reijo Kerä and Heikki Koivikko, is found in front of the building. Address: Otakaari 24



Päivi Kiuru

9. TEKNOLOGIFÖRENINGEN

The Swedish speakers' sorority house, part of the former Helsinki University of Technology, was designed by Kurt and Thua Moberg and was completed in 1966. The building has no straight corners, and a mythological drinking horn inspired its shape. Club TF – the first disco in the region of Finland's capital – functioned in the premises, and since the 1980s the tradition has been continued by the Täffä AB restaurant. Address: Otakaari 22

10. TEEKKARI VILLAGE

Teekkari Village was planned and designed by Heikki Siren and Matti Melakari. The first stage of the village – nine 'point' houses – was completed for the 1952 Olympics. The construction of these buildings represents the world's largest stunt ever performed by students: engineering students helped on-site to clear and move, in a voluntary work project, a total of 800,000 bricks from the Soviet Embassy, which had been bombed and destroyed during the Continuation War. Address: Jämeräntaival 3, 5, ja 7



Päivi Kiuru

11. SERVIN MÖKKI

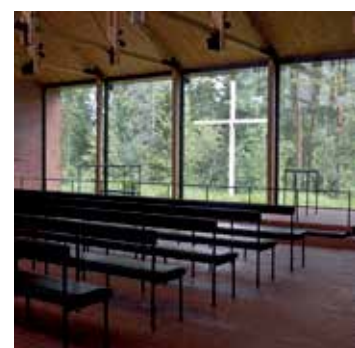
Kaija and Heikki Siren designed this students' restaurant, which was completed in the centre of the Teekkari Village in 1952. Currently in use as a multi-purpose facility, the building's unpretentious milieu is born from its unplanned, sawn-timber board and structures that have been left visible. The original Servin Maijan mökki has evidently been a recreational facility in Helsinki's Alppila district. Address: Jämeräntaival 4



Tarja Trygg

12. OTANIEMI CHAPEL

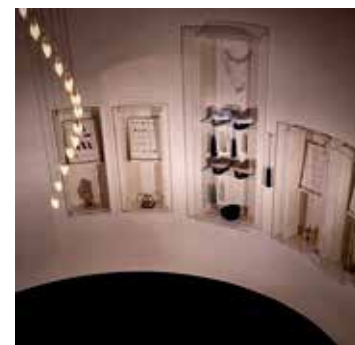
The chapel, designed by Kaija and Heikki Siren, is situated on the highest hill in the Otaniemi campus area. It stands on a plateau on the hilltop, resulting in a splendid series of premises from the front courtyard to the low vestibule and hall seating 140 people, and proceeding from the same via the altar wall to a natural forest area where a cross has been erected directly into the bedrock. Otakappeli Chapel is a globally renowned and awarded architectural site. Address: Jämeräntaival 8



Tarja Trygg

13. POLYTECHNICAL STUDENTS' MUSEUM

The Polytechnical Students' Museum is an absolute jewel of its kind. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), acting under Unesco, this is the only museum owned and maintained by students that concentrates on student culture. It presents aspects of the engineering student experience that are both visible and less known by means of objects and stories. Address: Jämeräntaival 3a, open by appointment: museo@ayy.fi.



Pyry Ekholm

14. VÄRE

Verstas Architects is designing a new building for Aalto University. It will enclose the campus area with a public square forming a heart, together with the former main building and library designed by Alvar Aalto. The edifice, segmented in terms of scale to resemble a village, openly conjoins the operations of the university with their environment – communicating the message of Aalto University's values, ambitions, creativity and sense of community.



Verstas Architects

15. MANOR ESTATES

An impressive utilitarian and decorative garden was built round the ancient Otaniemi manor estates (from the 1700s), with greenhouses and a linden alley (15a) linking the buildings. Another partially preserved linden alley proceeds behind the current library (15b). In addition to the empire-influenced main building (15c) of Hagalund's manor estate, a red-bricked pigsty (15d) has remained, which functions these days as a riding school.



Päivi Kiuru



OTHER BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY ALVAR AALTO IN THE AREA:

- 19. VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, Metallimiehenkuja 2 (VTT Lining Technology Laboratory, 1955/1962)
- 20. Aalto University, Lämpömiehenkuja 3 (VTT Thermal Engineering Laboratory, 1963)
- 21. VTT, Kivimiehentie 4 (VTT Fire Technology Laboratory, 1966/1973)
- 22. Otaniemi Water Tower, 1972. Tekniikantie 6
- 23. VTT, Biologinkuja 5 (VTT Oil and Peat Technology Laboratory, 1960)

- 24. Aalto University, Puumiehenkuja 2 (TKK/VTT Wood Technology Laboratory, 1966)
- 25. Aalto University, Otakaari 8 (Otaniemi Administrative Board Offices and Workshops, 1966)
- 26. Sports field Maintenance Building, 1971. Luolamiehentie 4

16. OTANIEMI URBAN GARDENING

The urban gardening area opened for use in 2013 near Ossinlampi Pond reinforces the sustainable campus and sense of community Aalto University stands for, as its plots can be rented by all the university's students and employees. The rental system is managed by an association established by the university and student union. The project, realized by Sofia Tigerstedt, was launched as a result of the World Design Capital (WDC) competition in 2012.



Päivi Kiuru

17. GARDEN FOR DECAYING WOOD

The 'Garden for Decaying Wood' established close to the seashore in 2014 reinforces the biodiversity on campus. At the same time, it provides a relaxing place to stop for anyone proceeding along the shore route. The garden also offers a location to dispose of dry twigs collected in the care of green areas. The 'Garden for Decaying Wood' is the winning work by Kimmo Heikkinen and Sofia Tigerstedt in student competition.



Päivi Kiuru

18. LAAJALAHTI'S NATURA AREA

This 192-hectare Natura area features some of South Finland's best bird wetlands. In addition to the low and reed-filled gulf, it is bordered by flood forest, grove vegetation and former cultivated fields and shrubbery. Three kilometres of duckboard extend through the area to the Elfvik Nature House. There are two bird-watching towers along the nature trail. Among others, the corncrake, spotted crane and both the common and Arctic tern nest within the area.



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