



BEAR'S SLEEP IS BEAR'S WORK

For Annukka Pietiä

In memoriam Reima Pietilä 1923-1993

BEAR'S SLEEP IS BEAR'S WORK

Roger Connah © 2025

ISBN: 978-1-987899-18-4

Edited by Gareth Griffiths & Camilla Lumme

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CRITICAL FICTIONS Vertigo Press (Forth Worth) Texas, USA

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BEAR'S SLEEP IS BEAR'S WORK

An anti-mémoire



Reima Pietilä, Fort Worth 1977 © Martin Price

ROGER CONNAH



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BEAR'S SLEEP IS BEAR'S WORK

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Preface

An Anti-Memoir

I had already come across this intense presence that has nothing to do with words – not in military men, or politicians, or artists, but in distinguished men of religion, whose affably commonplace words seem to bear no relation to their inner life. It was this that had reminded me of the mystics when he had spoken of revolution.

André Malraux, *Anti-Memoirs*¹

Why does an *anti-memoir* seem acceptable for such a figure as the Finnish architect Reima Pietilä (1923-1993)? After nearly twenty years of a personal and professional friendship and an intellectual intimacy with Pietilä, how does a person who appeared detached at times, individual and enigmatic, share that journey? What is my or our shared role in this architect's knowledge? As we look back over someone else's life or work through our own, it goes without saying that we have an ethical and intellectual duty to organise our own understanding and sense our own shortcomings as we proceed.

We need to understand and acknowledge the preferences we select to make up what might be a personal and critical history. And what cultural directions taken in our own life do we think help us understand the directions in another's life? If we have shared an intimacy in another's work and knowledge, do we not need to know the intimacy and selected ignorance of our own too? What is this resistance we set up to memory in the present?

Some may argue that Pietilä's architecture - work, writing and exhibitions - is now complete, a closed book. Some will see it critically fixed and narrowed within the concerns and experiments of a national (and) romantically rich period in Modern Finnish architecture; an architecture more generally grounded within a 'rationalism' from the 1950s through to the 1980s.

In *The Sleepwalkers* we are introduced to an entertaining synthesis of mysticism and science as Arthur Koestler explores man's changing visions of the universe. We learn how Johannes Kepler's early version of the cosmic mystery was completely false yet led to the demolition of the antique theories of the universe and the birth of modern cosmology. Kepler, according to Koestler, clearly had an inkling of the paradoxical nature of the blindness of his own insight.

When we embark on any anti-memoir, Kepler's words are worth recalling: "the roads by which men arrive at their insights into celestial matters seem to me almost as worthy of wonder as those matters in themselves."² Many too, including architects, must have sleepwalked through the 20th Century. There is little doubt that *Modern Architecture* was, for much of that century, a multi-layered but also powerful, indivisible complex not entirely unlike a "Pythagorean synthesis of mysticism and science".

A study of man's changing influences, selected ignorance and visions might be fitting to approach Finnish architecture if we return to the last century, from alchemy and mysticism to the many unchallenged claims for a scientific truth. That ideas and our own knowledge take shape in the inter-weaving of the ideas from others could clearly produce new versions of Koestler's *The Sleepwalkers*. Whether Copernicus cheated or merely fudged everything to save the neat antique version of the heavenly motions, Kepler's words alert us to the consequences:

"How human Copernicus himself was in adopting figures which within certain limits accorded with his wishes and served his purpose; this diligent reader of Copernicus may test by himself...He selects observations from Ptolemy, Walter, and others with a view to making his computations easier, and he does not scruple to neglect or to alter occasional hours in observed time and quarter degree of angle."³

Fudging, innovative cheating even lying, altering evidence to fit our critical histories and unbending theories to preserve this or that phenomenon was an internal debate Pietilä carried out with (Finnish) architecture in his own mind. His constant discussions with himself or in dialogue were often infinite, meandering, searching; no destination was implied. Not a particularly talkative man, he would put this into a kind of 'dialogic' play with his own Finnish colleagues. And these colleagues too appeared to choose material and edit preferences to accord with their own wishes for a vibrant, unquestioning, scientifically proven and rational Modern Architecture.

Any student or critic alert today to the contemporary warring of ideologies, clichés and platitudes in architectural circles will recognise similar patterns. Architects can produce a disastrous writing, statements that contain within them a history of critical fudging, often misreading or altering the evidence of last century's architecture to fit their visions in this century. "Were I a writer and dead" Roland Barthes writes, "how I would love it if my life, through the pains of some friendly and detached biographer were to reduce itself to a few details, a few preferences, a few inflections, let us say: to *biographemes*."⁴

When the Finnish architect Reima Pietilä died in 1993 at his 70th birthday party, I was at a loss to say anything about his architecture. I felt it was time to "let the goldfish go", to speak no more. I had spent a period of 20 years moving from an assistant to becoming a friend. I had also written a book of 464 pages in 1989 called *Writing Architecture* that attempted to set out the options for anyone wanting to research and interpret Pietilä's architecture and assess his significance in the 20th century. I had included readings and misreadings. I had included some 'biographemes' in the book. I was not in any hurry to write, make more errors or claim more. For the last thirty years, apart from a few requested short texts, I remained silent.

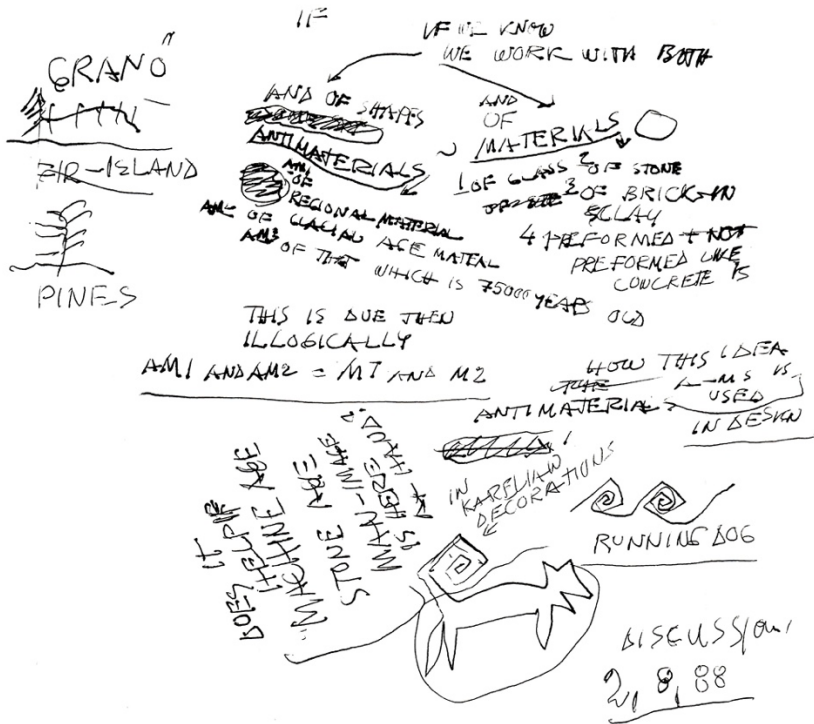
After Reima Pietilä's passing, many colleagues, Finnish architects and commentators would enter what I suspected would be a gradual process to set things straight in Finnish architecture. They would at the same time revise their own histories of Finnish architecture through anecdote and prejudice. My pessimism at the time was only balanced by an accidental and undeveloped interest in Sufism. On Pietilä's death I wondered, seriously, if knowing more about Sufism would help. Or 'pataphysics'? I doubted that.



In a private hospital room in Helsinki in August 1993, when I saw Reima Pietilä for the last time. I imagined his hand doing what it always did. I imagined the hand would lift slowly but deliberately in recognition of those privileged to visit him. Of course, this was impossible. He was already in a coma, had been for hours, probably since he felt woozy as his guests lined the apartment staircase in Helsinki's *Viiskulma*. There, including the President of Finland Mauno Koivisto and his wife, all were waiting to greet him on his 70th birthday. Just before he fell ill, Rabindranath Tagore wrote a remarkable poem called *On My Birthday*. Like Tagore, the architect's exuberant, imaginative creativity went on to the last moment.

I had just returned from India to design the book I had written. Pietilä was always preparing small texts, often giving them to me, on single sheets of paper. These were miniature architectural narratives. They began intently in 1988 with what he called our *Running Dog Discussions*. They would continue up until his death in 1993. He had a very clear system as he worked daily in the last five years of his life. He looked and re-looked at ideas. He altered them and twisted them. The texts delightfully and teasingly always went in and out of language and image. He wrote in space not in lines. Some observers or critics who wanted to undermine the texts would often see these texts as nonsense. It was part of the feeling that he would remain the outlier, the aberrant architect in Finnish architecture.

A month before his death, during the summer, we had spoken of the paradoxes between *architecture* and *mind*. There was a conversation we had before an aeroplane broke the silence and the sky. Now I notice how Tagore puts it similarly: “That words have meaning is just the difficulty. That is why the poet has to turn and twist in metre and verse, so that the meaning may be held somewhat in check, and the feeling allowed a chance to express itself.”⁵ How simple yet relevant to imagine the architect speaking with Tagore: “When next you step on a shadow, look up!”



Reima Pietilä Running Dog Discussions 2.8.1988

“Why?” Tagore would ask Pietilä. “Because there is architecture all its own in the clouds... restless, never forming, moving, glimpsed... more complex, yet simpler than we will ever be.” “Yes”, Tagore would agree and pouring out a nightcap, a single malt, “like the reality that nursery rhymes capture....the stuff of Nature, that harmonious ‘world-song’.” This imaginary conversation could run on and became part of the film for Finnish television I would make in 1994 on Pietilä called *27 Minute Lies*.

Both Finland and a knowing international architectural community mourned the demise of the architect. At the time I wondered whether and how further understanding would emerge amongst all the confusion and untruths. Even if someone put together *The Collected Pietilä Letters*, was it already too difficult to approach an architect who fictionalized his own logic, and reinvented his own work continually? As John Ashbery has put it...

My Collected Letters will I somehow
feel vindicate me but even there the onion skin cannot be split and
I'll go on being a postscript written in invisible ink until some
day several centuries from now when they open a time capsule and
enthusiastic fresh air will rush out to inform
the world and one can rise from one's nap in time for bed.⁶



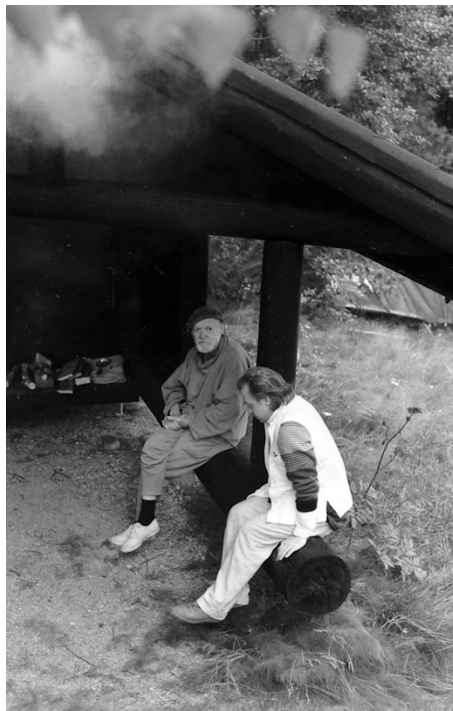
One evening speaking a year or two later with the Finnish writer Tove Jansson, herself a friend to Reima Pietilä for over fifty years,⁷ I mentioned writing something about the architect, something involving memory and intimacy. Ultimately, I wanted to write something that had no further form except perhaps the way intimacy changed over the two score years I had known him. I had kept many journals of our time together.

“The more we know, the less we know, something like that,” I said to Tove, “a kind of anti-memoir.” She smiled. “No forest metaphors about his architecture or culture. Our words going everywhere and nowhere. Something that might emerge, magically, from lost memory only.” She liked this idea and suggested I do it quickly. There was something in her look and smile that said memory would not survive, even a lost memory.

Almost a year after my own father died in 1992, the man with whom I had spent – off and on – some two decades of my life, a man with whom I had travelled, shared hotel rooms, cottage rooms, podiums, lecture halls, cocktail parties, a man almost as close as my own father, a man I knew in the *third person* and in the first person, a man I called the *Bear*, would also die. And, as if to betray the elegant sense of controlled disorder which he carefully applied to his architecture, he was to die somewhat neatly organised on the day-night of his 70th birthday, in August 1993.

It is now three decades since his death, and 100 years since his birth. How much has Pietilä been mentioned, how much the architecture has been discussed is unclear. Is that why it seems so fitting to try and begin to tell anew how this Finnish architect became so known, so legendary, so internationally famous, yet so unknown? ⁸

Prologue
Scarce Friendship



A Pietilä © 1989

The bird doesn't see, the bushes congeal into stalagmites,
the spider doesn't die its web just falls apart,
the morning dew
like fur on its strands in the morning
Skoteinos dances
he thought...

Pentti Saarikoski *The Dark One Dances* (1983).

Bear's Sleep is Bear's Work is a series of three journals kept whilst designing and preparing the publication of *Writing Architecture* which was to appear later in 1989 published by Rakennustieto and MIT Press. The book was written out in long hand in New Delhi and then transcribed on a very early word processor in The Claridges. I had initially travelled to India to install the Pietilä exhibition in Delhi and Ahmedabad in 1986.

Returning to Finland after over 3 years in India, I resumed my contact and friendship with Reima Pietilä. I no longer worked in the office or worked as his amanuensis on lectures, books and correspondence all in English. All that had ceased when I left for India and Pietilä had suffered an illness in 1986. We were simply friends. Though 'simply' is probably the last word one would choose for Pietilä. The translated words of the poet Paavo Haavikko might be more suitable – a *scarce friendship*.

Meetings took place in Helsinki around Viiskulma and also in Tenhola where Raili and Reima Pietilä had a summer cottage. After India, I lived for short periods in the small room on the 7th floor in Laivurinrinne which had been Pietilä's own retreat for many years as he managed an ever-enlarging office in the early 1980s. In Tenhola I stayed in a small room next to the sauna they had designed with benches outside.

This became a regular meeting place for us to talk during that summer. Pietilä had slowly emerged out of his illness and begun to resume activities in the office. But he was never as active as he may have wished, his wife Raili took on more and more of the supervision and completion of Mäntyniemi the project for the official residence of the President of Finland. It was in this environment of Western Finland in Tenhola that I began to imagine him as the *Bear*, careful slow movements, stooping a little, balancing books and paper and bringing me a pot of coffee in the early morning with its dew like fur.

I have in mind a poem by Pentti Saarikoski from his collection *The Dark One's Dances* (Hämärän tanssit, 1983). It seemed apt for the slow, gentle intimacy that this man I called the Bear always invited through language. What he would self-reflexively call "Pietilä's talking machine." He often spoke of himself in the third person. Was he the *Dark One*, was it Skoteinos, Heraclitus, Saarikoski, or all three?

Who translated Saarikoski's original poem and chose instead the word 'obscure', rather the 'dark one'? Another word for darkness, *pimeys* in Finnish, contained all this, it also contained Pietilä. His consistent ambiguity was always useful in creating a new lighter space to exist within. As Pietilä would debate his own difference between Pietilä as the *dark one* or the *obscure*, I would see this *bear* lying on the hammock in Tenhola. Saarikoski's poem provided the obvious title for these journals:

The sun
is new every day
like the spider's web
bear's sleep is bear's work he thought
sleep is the foundation of the universe
he entered a cool grove
where philosophers congregated
imbibing, conversing
Skoteinos dances, the bear sleeps
soon the spider begins to weave again
His theory did not strike the thinkers as interesting⁹



If I could speak to Pietilä today I would ask him to contemplate two words: 'vähäinen' and 'hämärä'. The first word is used by Pentti Saarikoski in the title of his volume of poetry from 1983 called 'Hämärän Tanssit'. This has at least two translations: Anselm Hollo translates this as *The Dark One's Dances*. He echoes Saarikoski's reference to Heraclitus in a poem from 1958. Herbert Lomas however translated the line as *The Obscure Dances*. We can quibble about this endlessly, but I like this difference. In it I see Pietilä's own difficulty and the difficulties he posed to others. In this was the seductive way he could turn ambiguity to his own use. He would argue for the *dark one*, I suspect, and would be sympathetic to Heraclitus. But in thinking about himself, in a more self-reflexive mode - Pietilä in the third person - he would also appreciate being described as the 'obscure one' with all the nuances he could bring to that word.

The second word I would ask him about would be from Paavo Haavikko, from his poem *Synnyinmaa* (1958). It is from a line in Finnish that goes like this: 'vähäinen ystävyys kuluu loppuun, kulta vaihtuu rautaan.' Anselm Hollo translates Haavikko's line as: "scarce friendship becomes exhausted/ gold is exchanged for steel". I think Pietilä would also argue for Haavikko's clean dismantling, his counter-modernism yet he would always be pulled towards Saarikoski's mystic integrity.

I see Pietilä here in both those 'words', and our friendship situated somewhere between Haavikko and Saarikoski. But is *scarce* the appropriate translation for *vähäinen*? My own trusty Finnish-English Dictionary, an intense tome from 1919 compiled by Severi Alanne, offers us the following range of words for *vähäinen*: little, small, diminutive. It could even be trivial, immaterial, even humble.

I would call on the French language perhaps to clarify this. If we speak of 'vähäinen ystävyys' this might resemble a small but not insignificant friendship. Just as the French can use the term *petite amitié* or *petite mort*, the relational depth we achieved emerged out of a small, acute friendship. This is where a small loss of consciousness, even a trance adds up to immeasurable gifts. So yes, it was humble, even a diminutive friendship with the 'Bear'. Perhaps we can agree Hollo gets it just about right – a *scarce friendship*.

In contemplating this scarce friendship with the 'bear', I cannot help recall the friendship between Shams and Rumi as a way to try and explain what the 20 years with Pietilä meant for me, moving from seeing him as an employer, mentor and master to friend. Rumi defines the limits of such a gift; "discipline is needed, required to live inside presence with patience." In friendship Rumi goes on to say "there is a fierce courtesy to be learned, as grapes hurry inwardly towards their own sweetness. They ripen, holding a taste of light. Wait, and trust the waiting."¹⁰ Perhaps I can still say we ripen holding onto this taste of light.

Bear's Sleep is Bear's Work

No matter how deeply I am committed in joy or suffering to someone else, he is not me, and I am not him. However lonely or sad one may be, one can exist alone. **R D Laing**¹¹

His theory did not strike the thinkers as interesting. Saarikoski's line came unexpectedly. I had been in Paris in November and London in December 1985. Unrest and uneventfulness could always be arranged to avoid instability. After some ten years in Finland the anxiety and awkward intimacy of the Baltics had defeated me, the exile was over. I had begun spending more months of the year out of Finland than in. I was to take an exhibition on the architect to India.

Within three days of arriving in Helsinki from London, I was stepping off a DC10 in the Indira Gandhi International Airport. It was January 22nd, 1986. This was the omelette welcome to the Third World. The air was stickier than hell. The face hit the fan of hot air and found nowhere to run. Life in India was going to be fragile, unpredictable, spectacular and risky. Always part of the carnival it would blind me, and it would seduce me. For four years the fictions and myths of India, loss of control, unrest and increased bewilderment in the world would grow. Alertness would remain uppermost, madness within. I had a book to write.

India meant I would see no further use for more books that would pass for reasonable cultural pathology. If one becomes a chimera, what use is it to describe societies that offer nothing but chimera? In India I was obsessed by the coherence of misfortune. I slipped beyond a modern logic into that liminal zone the social anthropologist Edmund Leach speaks about. Life itself threatened to become a rite of passage. Any logic by which symbols connect and cultures communicate was suspended. The logic, if there be any, by which symbols no longer connect would be a fairer definition of what Leach called 'bad fiction'. We may not only be going back and forth in our minds, in our inner speech, we may, if inventive computerized soliloquies take off, have an inner environment equivalent to our inner speech.

Private menus for knowledge already suggested how the new paradigm would make virtual reality out of virtually any fiction. In India, the picture was doubled. In 1989, after almost four years in India and finishing the book *Writing Architecture*, many things collapsed. I ended that Indian sojourn. I felt a little like the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa from *The Book of Disquiet*, "drunk on my mistakes, for a few seconds I had the feeling of being alive."¹² Returning from India to Europe and Finland I thought, in my naivety, that it might be possible to discuss error in architecture as much as sovereignty. Interested to identify those more duped upon than duping, those more confessional than others, 1989 was a special year.

By the end of the 1980s there was a temptation to feel more aware of the wool pulling and hoodwinking that seemed to have been present in the 20th century. I would later be fond of an extract from Georges Bataille that went as follows, “The greatest intellect is basically the most easily duped: to think that one apprehends the truth when one is only evading, vainly, the obvious stupidity of ‘everyone’.”¹³ Was it even possible to research the architectural *confession* in order to tell the hoodwinkers apart from the hoodwinked? Where was the architect in all this?

Whilst travelling back and forth from India in those years our dialogues had resumed; Pietilä had made a relatively good recovery from the illness that had struck him during a visit to Sofia in 1986. He was often in good form but betrayed – at least to me – an increasing fatigue. I was not at all certain this fatigue was due only to the illness. I tried to understand this. Without doubt, constant opposition to his ideas and thinking had been wearying. Might not the contract between architecture and life demonstrate more serious consequences? The small society prevented direct acknowledgment of this opposition, but there was no doubt it took its personal toll.

The humour in the architect remained; he was like the Finnish poet Paavo Haavikko’s Emperor, but he would never see himself so. If anyone ever suggested a metaphor, *the last dinosaur*, the lonely academician, the hunter or the last modern hero, you could be sure he would again instantly attempt to de-stabilise this critique whilst situating himself within it. It was this irrepressible, engaging and self-defeating game with ‘critique’ that Pietilä offered

Pietilä would retain this self-monitoring right up to the very end. Half an hour before he disappeared, before the Finnish President Mauno Koivisto arrived to celebrate his 70th birthday he spoke to me of the same opposition. His fingers were precise as he held a glass. His words were acute, but they had begun to drift off. In 30 minutes after that moment he had finally disappeared.



On one occasion in 1988, when visiting Helsinki from India, we began once more the idea of running conversations. We had planned various conversations, dialogues, books, and pamphlets over the years from the late 1970s onwards. File after file began filling up with texts and sketches. There was never a real direction to these, but they were methodical. Our approach seemed to celebrate the constant diversion, the consistent, playful way our ideas could be hijacked by each other. A particular note was sketched out in green felt tip pen on thin sketch paper, dated 2.8.88, in the bottom right-hand corner, *Running Dog Discussion*. Top left the word *Granö*, a sketch of firs, then below *fir-island, pines*. It was no accident. Pure geography, pure architecture; the structure and theme of all discussions happened to be represented in this intense little departure.¹⁴

This time the discussion was of material and anti-materials. The intention was always to work within both. Materials included: 1. glass, 2. stone, 3. brick/clay, and 4. preformed concrete. The shapes of anti-materials were of a regional material (AM), glacial age material 75 000 years old (AM2). The question, though I remember little of this discussion, was how the idea of *anti-materials* could be used in design. A small note to the side: *does the illogical follow?* Pietilä was still passionately introducing illogicality within the logical expectation and his thinking would then veer off. We got a playful mathematical equation: $AM1 \& AM2 = M1 \& M2$. Written *slantingly* to the left, only accessible if upside down, was the phrase: *does it help, machine age, stone-age, man-made is here (at hand)*. He then proceeded to draw a dog with a simple squared spiral tail. There is an arrow pointing from the words 'Karelian Decorations' to the tail. Did I understand anything about this? I folded up the sketch paper and filed it. I remembered he imagined at school being a mathematician and then a philosopher.



I must have returned to India, for it was only at the beginning of the year 1989 that I noticed our discussions began in more intensity. It was then I began to see him as the 'bear'. The notes kept increasing during the year, hibernating, until they occupied a whole file. On 31.1.1989 we seem to have had an intense discussion. But I have no recollection of it. Was it invented? Was this the third person, projecting a discussion the first person was having with himself? The page is densely compact. A piece of A4 paper has been folded into three vertical sections. This was something he did every so often. I remember the entire copy of *Roots of Modern Architecture* by the Norwegian architectural historian Christian Norberg-Schulz annotated with intense commentaries, all written on strips of paper, all sized 29cm x 7cm and passed to me as if the key to the 'other' reading.¹⁵

When a piece of paper is folded so, it can be used and written on at different points. Looking at this paper there is no way now to determine whether it reads from left to right, or from right to left. It appears to read from strip 3, top to bottom. Yet the ink colour changes, and the green pen has faded or reacted with time. It has now become blue. Starting in the top right corner, we get the repetition of R and S. These signified our two selves, the alleged conversational partners, first person (R) and second person (S).¹⁶ Top left there was a note 'Talking themes of basic meeting for AID.' AID was accompanied by *S/R: An Imaginary Dialogue*.

20-7-88

STONE AGE
LAAVU-HOUSE:
PLAN

ROOF

STONE AGE
LAAVU-HOUSE:
PLAN

SMALL STORES OR

ROCK BACK OR

BURN JOINTS

BURN OR CUT WITH AXES OF STONE

WOOD + STONES + BURN PIT - ISOLATION

WIND PROTECTION, MEASURES, AGAINST COLD GROUND

MATRAMAKI 20-7-88

SINKKILÄ & ANNURKA
CAME YESTERDAY EVENING
WITH NYUNY-FORS
SEVERI IN HELSINKI
THIS WEEK, TODAY WED-
NESDAY OR THURSDAY.

1 TOLD SINKKILÄ OF
ELK-SEMINAR U ELK
PARTICIPATING WITH
THEIR LAIRS

2 BRONZE-AGE GRAVES
ON THE PENINSULA PLACE
OF AESTHETIC, SILENCE
CRITICS OF ARCHITECTURE.
WE DESIGN HERE
EXPERIMENTALLY

3 LAIR ~ FINNISH LEIRI IS
ETHYMOLOGICALLY ARCHEOLOGIC
POINT!

4 LAAVU ~

JURTHA
HOUSE OF
TEXTILES

WALL
HOUSE
OF STONE
"STONE-
HEUDGE"
MONUMENT

MISSING
HISTORY
OF LAAVU HOUSE

5

1800-1900

1989 →

NEW
TRIANGLE
SHAPE

SAW MILL
INDUSTRY DURING
THE FIRST TWO
CENTURIES

6 HOW LAAVU HOUSE
USING SAW MILL PRODUCE
OF 1990 → LOOKS OUT?

- ITS ROOF TYPES? PLANS,
- WALLS, - SECTIONS, ETC!

POINTS 4, 5, 6 SEMINAL IN
THE MATRAMAKI ELK-MIND
DESIGNS SEMINARS
(RAIU HAS MET ELK YESTERDAY)

Reima Pietilä 20.7.88

Pietilä was like a coder, enjoying encrypting his pages and his words with another level. Often, as he progressed with a dialogue, Pietilä knew how to indicate the question that I should ask him to invite the type of answer that he had already written. He would write the questions I was to ask for our interview. This was a game and we both knew it. The first strip down the right side of the paper goes as follows below. My answers were provided; my script was already written. He was R. I was S:

R: sorry, please dig a tunnel under it, and guess, or dance around, as children do!

S: (a drawing of the triangle) poets – scientists – technologists/architects inside a circular spiral with the note: warehouse of information.

R: sketches for AID ideas

S: Are they neoistic?

R: A few

S: Complex ones?

R: And anti-ones for those we call principles!

S: We talk of regionalism/globalism as an interaction complex

R: Not about cities

S: City was a CIAM and UIA idea.

R: All gathering their gathered information. Our options to survive.

S: It is our party partner

R: Our means to dance around or look through!

S: Around this rotten trunk of a tree

R: It is living.

S: or life

R: it is life

S: or architecture

R: no life

S:.....




TALKING OF THE THEMES OF BASIC MEANING FOR I.A.A. S/R - IMAGINARY DIALOGUE.

-S- OF A BASIC? IMPORTANCE

R- WELL, CAN I SHOW IT WITH A SCHEME IMAGE, BY MEANS OF THIS DRAWING!

2000? FUTURE OF THIS DATE? SOON, BUT WHICH DATE? 1986, 1990, 1995, 2000



LE CORBUSIER SAID! YOU WILL CONTINUE THE GROWTH!

S- NOW THERE ARE MANY GROUNTS! C.G. U.I.A. ~ I.A.A.

R- BUT IF I.A.A. HAS ITS BASIC CHART, MANIFESTO IT WILL BECOME TO CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN ARCHITECTURE AS WE WRITE OF THIS TO STOILU?

S- AND DISCUSS OF I.A.A. PRINCIPLES. R- THE MOST APPARENT ONES ONLY! THERE ARE FEW ONES. FOR THE CHART OF SOPHIA S- OF COURSE ONE! THE NEO-REGIONALISM

R- THE CHART OF SOPHIA WOULD AS HEADLINE IT AS REGIONALISM ~ GLOBALISM COMPLEXITY! OR DUALISM!

S- NOT AS OPPOSITION LIKE PALLASMAA THINKS!

R- I DO NOT THINK IN UNQUIET SCHEMES OR COILES, BUT IN NATURE'S RELATIONS, CALLING OF NATURE'S WAY TO THINK.

S- IS THIS EXPRESSED IN YOUR BUILDING SCHEMES? R- FROM DIPOLI TO MANTYMIEMI PROJECTS

S- NOW, PREPARE THIS SOPHIA CHART OF US! (CANNOT THREE-MANAGED?) R- IF PENTH EISTON A PHYSICIAN, YOU A POET AND I AN ARCHITECT, MAKE A COLLISION, OR INTERLUCTUAL BODY, NOT A COMMITTEE.

R- TO SOPHIA OF ISOTRE, IN THE CONVENT!

RULE 1. DON'T LOSE NEW COMMON IDEAS, (IDEAS) FREELY, BE ELECTIVE! CHECK WHAT IS DUE FOR YOUR SUBJECTIVE ~ OWN ORIGINAL CHARACTERISTICS!

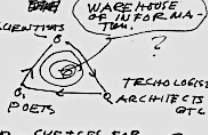
-ABOUT S- LE CORBUSIER'S TREE, MAY BE, A NEW GROWTH OF ITS LIVING ROOTS WOULD BE THE IDEA? - I HOPE SO! IF ARCHITECTS, POETS PHILOSOPHERS, PRODUCE MANIFESTOS IN THE COMING YEARS, IN 1990 ~ 2000, WE SHOULD PUT TOGETHER THEM TO A SYNTHESIS.

S- A JOB OF SOPHIA I.A.A. R- THIS DIAGRAM! IS IT USEFUL? COLLECTING ALL INFORMATION HERE - S- FILED SO THAT IT LIVES?

TUESDAY, 31/1/89

R- SORRY, PLEASE DIG, A TUNNEL UNDER IT AND GUESS, OR DANCE AROUND, AS CHILDREN DO!

S- WAREHOUSE OF INFORMATION?



TECHNOLOGISTS ARCHITECTS, POETS

R- SKETCHES FOR I.A.A. IDEAS? WE PROPOSE? ARE NEOISTIC? FEW ONES? COMPLEX ONES? R- AND ANTI-ONES FOR THOSE WE CALL PRINCIPLES! S- WE TALK REGIONALISM ~ GLOBALISM. AS AN INTERACTION COMPLEX

R- NOT ABOUT CITIES? S- CITY WAS C.I.A.M. AND U.I.A. IDEA! R- ALL THEIR GATHERED INFORMATION I.A.A. OUR OPTIONS TO SURVIVE. S- IT IS OUR PARTY PARTNER. R- OUR MEANS TO DANCE AROUND OR LOOK THROUGH! S- AROUND THIS ROTTEN TRUNK OF A TREE R- IT IS LIVING

Running Dog Discussion Reima Pietilä 31.1.1989

S – my character, my part in this play – was left with a series of dots. I am left with an answer to supply. I am left with my own world. I have no idea what this discussion was about, yet I can recall every moment how it proceeded. I have no idea what ‘neoistic’ means. I had no idea what it meant then. Am I guilty of attempting to pull sense out of what isn’t there, sense where there is no sense? Are these words to stay away from, but which I would write a few weeks later in my own notebook? Is this the mind thinking wild or thought in the wild? Were we merely scratching out a fragment that cannot serve but to confuse? I am still not sure. I had endless conversations with the architect like this and, as he spoke, I had the feeling it was *thinking* that was not only wild but thinking that had gone over to the wild. No less relevant!

Later that year, as if to confirm this play with language, he would draw out and pit his own *Elk Scale* (as he called it) against Le Corbusier’s masculine scale figure. He would draw both in the green pen; one masculine scale, the other an elk scale. Just what did an ‘elk scale’ mean, and should we give more significance to this than we can? Was he inviting us into the labyrinth only to discover, when we got within, this would indeed be labyrinthine? There would be no way out. Or was this nothing like that at all? Inevitably drawn to the poetry of Saarikoski, the dark one not only explains this, but allows it to drift like all words, all theories, all diversions. Yes, bear’s sleep is bear’s work, the foundation of the universe where philosophers imbibe, Skoteinos dances, the bear sleeps. *The spider begins its weave again.*¹⁷



As 1989 progressed, as I was copyediting, amending and designing the book *Writing Architecture* in Helsinki, we met at various times. He would write out more of these imaginary dialogues with or without me and call them *The Elk Sessions*. The childlike mixed with the serious; a hint of tiredness emerged within his chance insight and brilliance. There was only repetition, but it was a repetition with an imaginary narrative: *to save the elk's soul*.

How was I to understand this? Was this really the bear pushing the narrative, or the bear asleep, drifting in between a simple self-didactic poetic murmuring? Were these to become murmurings that could never quite be the poetry, or the philosophy asked from these words? Occasionally a single line, a closed sentence summed it all up for me and I need not go on. I knew then that I needed not to search for further hidden meanings which were or weren't there. It mattered little. What mattered more was the 'soul'; this soul marooned somewhere between life and architecture.

In one of these dialogues, into my mouth the bear puts the following: (S-) "If form can follow function and does it safely as if it runs before its hunting friends, OK. Those Greeks were clever enough to compose enigmas, myths, etc., but save my elk's soul. My mind is leaking already like a clay pot. A pot that shrinks so that it leaks..." I thought I knew what he meant, yet I could not describe it. The architect, like the poet, had entered the realm of a private infinity; from this he would project outwards and inwards. There is nothing complicated about this. He was writing my own words.

Pietilä had, as I felt earlier when arriving in Finland in the early 1970s, begun to climb inside himself. Was this not evidence enough? I could never be sure. But then the excitement of living with, and in, uncertainty had already taken over my own journey. Heraclitus, aka Skoteinos, Saarikoski's 'the obscure' or 'dark one' may dance but the poets knew as well as the architects; the spider doesn't die, its web just falls apart, loses its use until someone else begins the new weave.



It was time to check what sort of parallel worlds we were occupying during that special year. I kept journals during these times. It passed the time too for me. I was involved in discussions with Pietilä that were not strictly spoken discussions at all. I was engaged in an endearing but awkward intimacy, yet I loved the playfulness and unpredictability. Was this something else? Cognitively deluded or dissonant, was this all an invention? Was the architect inhabiting the other sense inside words? Words invented, hired for momentary use and then left to disappear and dissolve like a once-important architecture?

When we are no longer there, is friendship that which now leaves us alone? To whom can these words be given, for whom do we write and how do we hold fast to evidence pleading for an unwanted and excessive clarity? The notes continued, there was nothing for me but to try and understand the bear. 1989: this was the year of all change, living and creating dangerously. If I digressed and helped the bear digress, then I am guilty as charged. I began to date my notes.



26.2.1989. Has his language become full play? It stops and starts, it interrupts itself, it ignores what goes on outside. It crosses, it inter-breeds, it will never remain still. Or silent. There are times, then, when both or all in the family are speaking. Life and architecture continue talking across each other. At cross-purposes?

27.2.1989. His third person continues. "It doesn't matter how I say it, I can always manage with it, even if Le Corbusier said he could see everything of the architecture in the plan. Everyone seems to be worried about plurality today. Too much choice, too much in excess. Finland's fear: organized sex tourism in a United Europe. Really! Even Allah could not understand Pietilä's plan. Even God in heaven, any other God, would struggle to read architecture from Pietilä's plan." No one envies them.

His thinking veers again, bullish and in a gentle combat with himself and his theories. "Khomeini would kill Mies van der Rohe." I don't know where this fragment comes from. Only one thing now: I know that all interpretation has now become internal, closed. He speaks of having problems with plurality and uncertainty. What exactly are these problems to a person who has been speaking about 'pluralism' and 'uncertainty' since the 1950s? Is this the third life or death speaking?

28.2.1989. “The New Delhi Finnish Embassy is a 1950s project. All my ideas came from the 1950s. Pure architecture! I just applied them in the 1960s and 1970s. But what happens to them in the 1980s?” We parted on a joke about ‘futurology’, which serves to keep our conversation going until the next day, but which we both knew the next day will be nothing like this day. As we part, he says, “a small future sleep”. We laugh. Is this the elf or elk speaking, inventing or dreaming? Or the bear? Or all three? I notice this innocence, yet I sense slight guilt. That small-boy look in his eyes as if he wishes to reclaim the mischief of a lost childhood. But this is my invention. “If no one catches us today,” he says, “we should be happy. We got away with it.” I reply. “Until tomorrow then, yes!”

4.3.1989. He’s slower now in the mornings, Bear-like. Rises later. Remember all those years he must have risen at 5 or 6, visited the office, sat at every board, applied a drawing with masking tape, covered the drawings and then moved on. Every desk: 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 of them before breakfast and coffee at 8. He raises his hand when he sees me. The medicine perhaps, that’s what is making him slower.

I ask about the Russian architecture of Kishi. I intend using some pictures in the book. Long ago he had told me how important this part of Russia had been to his own imagination. Those onion-domed wooden churches, a romance that I always resisted; why?

He looks for the book on the bookshelf, but he seems reluctant to follow it up. He seems suspicious. Why do I want it? Always expecting the swerve or misinterpretation, could he still be controlling what might be applied to his work? As if to deflect me, or as if to correct what I might have said, he adds: “but I’ve left that period behind. Cottage-light, cut-glass period. It’s gone now.”

Did he want to deflect or re-write interpretations for the present and not the past? Second nature to him, he has always re-directed the audience. True, I did want to use the picture of the wooden churches with a line from the poet Haavikko; their “beaks reaching into the sky.” I don’t know why, but I thought of him more recently as the Last Byron. Totally inappropriate, but this was the child in him, a constant anxiety over romanticism and anti-romanticism.

5.3.1989. The intolerance of these exceptions. He speaks of the Baron’s House, which he must have drawn in the 1950s, the one out on the archipelago. “We did not use architecture when we designed the Baron’s House.” Pure landscape. Curiously the era does not allow him to be the designer of this house now. “I think this is very much like the work of the younger generation, even like Pallasmaa and those guys.” Always that name, standing in for opposition and distrust. The new phenomenology, the awareness of sense and space, eyes of skin and loss, of locality and material allows him to attempt to re-locate himself again. In the schools of architecture they now study what he suggested should be studied ten, twenty years back. Always establishing difference, he moves off. “No, that was not architecture then, that was just life.”

6.3.1989. The politically engaged fellow travellers from the past turn to become the accepted masters. It is lonely out there. All public coding has reversed itself. He suggests the need for a new descriptive language. Who speaks and to whom? Embarrassed sometimes that he is popular, their works are popular, he denies the 'populist' label and redefines 'Modernism' once more as misguided authenticity. Back to Sigfried Giedion, I don't know! I never knew enough. This is a 'generation dilemma', he says. I sense a retreat.

7.3.1989. There is a desire to hold onto 'Modernism' as a word of semantic import; Finland is a secret society that wishes to tell itself that it got it right. But only for a moment. Yet they are still embarrassingly contemporary and can only make architecture from a continuous set of fragments, a continuing newness that is not newness. I paraphrase. He sketches four Modernisms: *M1 1920s Expressive Modernism: M2 1930-1956 Bauhaus-trimmed Modernism: M3 1956-1990 Diversity and Postmodernism: M4 1990 Carnival Modernism.*

I remember him coming up to me in Sofia in 1987 after I had spoken using Bakhtin about the 'carnival' in architecture. "Carnival Modernism," he said, "that's what we will have in the future. You got it right." And here it was three years later again. He does what he has always done. He will never give this up. He tries to locate all his projects in these divisions. In the middle of doing this he says: "We must return to Kafka. Or Dostoevsky." Perhaps it is courage he means by this. Or resistance. I don't know why Kafka suddenly appeared. Even Dostoevsky! Or is he planning our dialogues as *notes from another underground?*

I think conversation is stable. We think it is stable. Then it is not. He moves all the dates around again. He re-designs the four sub-divisions of 'Modernism' and says: "now Pietilä can fit in all of them." Magic! How many times have I watched him do this over two decades? Always a test of us against them? Is it going to get lighter, or will it become a way of seeking the new influences as fast as influences are created elsewhere? The repetition, the re-working in the culture, appears to have become heavy, even lacking in confidence. And certainly lonely! It's Finland!

8.3.1989. He speaks warmly of the dualism between himself and his wife. He would have joked about that 'terrible duality' if he had read William James. *Talo-Kota* he uses for this distinction. *Talo*, he says, the word for 'house' represents to him an organized culture. To some extent, this is the applied level. Cooked not raw. Harmless, unexciting. Too homely. *Kota*, on the other hand, is prehistoric. "Tenth century and before, primitive and pagan" he says, and it mumbles into another sentence completely. This is a repetition. I do not know what to say. Am I losing interest? Am I to blame? I remained silent. People come in and out. No greeting, the discourse goes on. Nothing explains this. Nothing 'pagan' at least!

9.3.1989. "How to write about a difficult building in a simple way without trivializing it? A camera could do it. In reality, things are not as clear as in photographs. In the Kaleva Church they can make it beautiful. In nature, it is like a beautiful girl. Seeing a girl is all right but being a good cameraman is important to achieve that beauty... complications come with the camera though. People look at Marilyn in films..."

We trail off again. There is no anxiety in this desire to play with the exegesis of just about everything. Architecture as the theory of everything: a diagram of everything? Intensity everywhere! He talks again of the strong shadow of Aalto and how far away it was necessary to remain. He has spoken of this many times, life! It is a serious jousting, momentarily rigorous, momentarily erased. But never actually erased! He re-scripts the explanation for the Hervanta Congregational Centre in Tampere, especially the design of the windows. Never really an over-successful project; too much organized interpretation and application.

He can be right; he can be wrong. The privilege is his own, however; for no one else goes into it in so much detail as to pass beyond reasonable exegesis. What happens then? Silence? Listening to him self-question and re-script some of the obvious in Modern Architecture, he appears to have been 'deconstructing' his own position before the methodology became fashionable via Derrida. By this he created and re-created distance. Alienation, autism?

11.3.1989. He flicks through an old exhibition catalogue. There is no memory to it. It has become a third-person exercise. He considers this not belonging to him but now it belongs to a third or is it a fourth person called Pietilä. Someone he says, he knows well sometimes, and then other times not so well. His language is not precise nor mean to be. There is a method where errors are becoming even more creative. He discovers some extracts in the catalogue and immediately wants to re-translate them. Even the basic accepted terms in architecture, like 'form' and 'space', he considers re-translating and re-locating within the Finnish language. His 'deconstructionist' moment lasts longer than I think, longer than the architects who temporarily used this term in the earlier decade.

He speaks of a cuckoo trick. "I must have an alternative," he says "to drop a principle and take one out; then two, then three". He is no longer singing the song or defeating Joukahainen. That is all over. He picks up a book, speaks about it for some moments, then puts it down. This serves as a bridge for the moment: a cork, bobbing up and down on the water, a fish tickling the bait, never taking the hook! He laughs, yes he still laughs affectionately.

12.3.1989. We discuss Aalto, his variations. "How easy it was for him in Seinäjoki, Wolfsburg, Finlandia, Essen," he says. "Easy?" I ask. "Yes, easy to repeat. Indistinguishable buildings, the Finlandia series," he calls them. We don't pass into this in any further depth, though I would have liked to. It was all about projection. "He was a provincial genius," he says of Aalto. And smiles. No, it is more than a smile.

14.3.1989. He says something about the film "Raiders of the Lost Ark." I have no idea why. "It's like Blomstedt." I think he meant the sleight of the modernist hand that removed the gold with an equal weight of sand. *A Sleight of Modernism!* He is slowing down. He goes out without a word. Comes back with a bottle of beer. He begins to pour it. There is so much chance in our discussions, in the monologues. Sometimes I think I cannot bounce them back anymore. I find myself thinking how much of this outer speech is based on what is not, cannot be, expressed from within.

"Where do we belong," he asks? It is a few seconds before I realize he is not questioning himself existentially, he is talking about Europe. He is worried that less attention will be paid to aesthetics in the Greater Europe. I don't understand this. Perhaps he is thinking of the whole 'ethics' debate. Too much unity and coherence makes for dull futures. I find myself not wanting to accept this aging, seeing the occasional confusion in his mind. I want the livelier third person, or the first person, the one I knew. Or is this an invented person too?

I stared, exhausted at my own writing, my own position. India has intervened. I am a different person. The architect continues. It is impossible to convey this 'sadness'. He continues whilst I am absent, yet present; he has become the *Unnamable* to me. I can't go on. I must go on, I'll go on...and he does like Beckett whether someone listens or not, whether someone interrupts or not, whether he has the chance to speak out loud or not. I feel sad.

I can't put any 'sense' on this intellectual intimacy; on being friends with a man who has continued his own work, his own private route and direction in the face of immense opposition. I expect all this will be denied later. He will never have been sad. He will never be allowed to have been confused. The archive will make sure of that. Heroes are not allowed to be sad, confused or anxious. His interests in indeterminacy, in undecidability, gave him the sovereign air of the controlled one, the master of uncertainty. But now, today, I am not sure. This is dancing of sorts.

The more I watch television with the bear, the more we go in and out of sense, the more I feel relieved of any interest in this country's affairs and problems. Too much revisionism, too much re-writing history and 'starting over'. The world is just too small here, the architecture jealous, the propaganda all an invention. I want out. Presents to Estonian farmers, social welfare, the unfortunate ones and the alcoholics. Any country with a meteorologist like a stuffed bird gets the weather and dullness it deserves. It's all faded. I don't mean it.

More Finnish you'll not find. Detached. What will this carnival culture make of this man's life, his monologues, his anxiety and his creativity when they eventually get round to studying it? The shaman will continue to offer ambiguity to the critic. Will it be too late? Or will it be too early? I am so tired, sometimes not wanting to deal with this culture anymore. It wouldn't matter if it ended tomorrow. The magnum opus is almost finished, the design though will take some months more.

A gift back to the culture? Hardly! It will never be seen like that. Probably a huge intrusion, a menacing insinuation – forgotten as soon as it is weighed on the scales like a newborn baby! All inevitably to become esoteric adding to the mythologies up ahead. I can breathe now though. The book is done. I can look at the sun and not flinch nor want to turn to darkness. Quietly, I feel jubilant. The India within goes nowhere. The amoebic dysentery made sure of that. It's time to withdraw from architecture or life. Or both.

22.3.1989. Leaving for London. I give the bear the Haavikko collection: *Toukokuu, ikuinen*. He speaks of the trap, the necessary opportunism of not giving too much, of not revealing too much, of holding something back and of never being fully exposed. It's good to see him in the office again designing those spaces where space disappears. The Arctic, semi-Arctic idea of a city; we speak of an exhibition. Hallucinatory, he moves off and goes downstairs to the office. He thanks me for the book in his own special way. Just like the half lift of a hand in a greeting or a farewell.

The tenderness lies in its incompleteness, in it not being a full gesture. It is never the full gesture, nothing complete as if that too will need death to answer back. Farewell, you go to London. Welcome, you return. Third person to first, such moments, nothing special until you don't have them, until they are impossible. I veer from lowercase 'bear' to capitalized Bear!

Then even a rapid look in an unimportant journal can assume significance. But for how long? He tells me to give my greetings, but to whom? To the city? Is it London or India he asks about? Has he forgotten where I am going, where I have been living? Have I become someone else to him now; friendship lost with no memory to alter the rules, to return to the past? It doesn't matter if I have misunderstood him for so many years. The awkwardness of this intimacy and the friendship it offered is irreplaceable. I will not have it again in my life. Long may he make out of a building a sense that someone else has not seen, a sense that is both there and not there. Long may this madness be normal. Long may we survive apart, alone and remain gentle. I leave.

7.4.1989. "Guidelines not credos... not the Marxist way... I cannot say what rules are good, what rules are bad... A return to history will save us... I am much more naïve... like a real animal..." Someone asks me what is 'transcendental' in this work? But I am unable to understand it in a proper way. There is often a pause between his sentences, the statements he makes. Breathing pauses, I think. Or re-thinking pauses, a chance to deflect or alter the thought as it emerges from the mind and makes its way out into the public. Strange, but we don't speak of this. I think back to the Dipoli manifesto in the mid 60s: *Literal Morphology*. Was it such a play? Did he know exactly what he was doing? Was he one step ahead of the basin-haircut corduroy Marxists?

That challenge to good taste! Always to challenge good taste until he too will become good taste! Really, Dipoli is the *summa* of all his thinking. This was why I came to this country after all. It is what I have ended up with, and it is what I will take away. Or is this completely skewed: a grand cognitive illusion?

Has all this in Finland become the alibi for my own life, nothing to do with architecture at all? "I am changing my opinion about matters so fast that some of my recent 'letters' are now out of date..." he says, "Ålander used to say that Pietilä has no permanent principles... but I am very consequent... is that how to say it... about changing my mind..." This sums him up. So endearing, so precious. He was entertainingly methodical before others understood the idea. To be serious about how the mind changes, how one changes one's mind... to know at least this. I think of this as his anti-machine. "The Steiner school uses the literal metaphor, the image...Wright uses process and Corb... Corb used both... process and image. It's the word realm I am interested in. Regionalism is too complex for me... local is better. When I mix images, I do it chaotically, not in any ordinary way... I always have done."

Then comes one of his dialogue-stopping lines, his attempt to keep the conversation going suddenly comes to a stop. "K is trapped in such things as 'transcendentalism'. I have no problem with this because elks do not have any transcendental ideas..."

Elks with no transcendental ideas! I laugh. He laughs too. The rules of this unruliness force us into a rather wild laughter. There is a painful reality behind this continuous talk, and I let the laughter subside. At that moment, this incredible friendship is locked forever.

He continues: “certain times of the year, certain aesthetics are not acceptable... a kind of deconstruction... the building is there but it does not exist... existing means that one can compose such and such, whereas the Graeco-Roman idea of existence...” He trails off. The hand seeks something. It begins to draw the word in thin air, shaping it. “What is it then? A landscape? An imaginary formation? I cannot imagine something existing. Using other ways to think destroys K.” (Who is K? The critic? Why did I not ask?)

“I must rely on the non-verbal, things I cannot see or touch, but I am convinced they are there somehow...” he says, “like a hunter always in the present and aware of the present before it becomes visible; that zone between the future and the past which we no longer call the present...” This is the bear’s thinking machine, a strange idea in grammar... the ‘sanamaa’. Or ‘sanamaailma’. I remember this Finnish word, sana = word: maa = land or world ‘maailma’. Variations had come up very often over the years. The word-world – the realm of the word – and the land of words. I remember Anselm Hollo’s translated lines from Paavo Haavikko’s *The Bowmen* from 1955:

We fly
Against the door-jamb
Of the air

The air
Weeps for us

We were the King's bowmen
We are leaves on the trees

The leaves
Touch air

Not heavy
Like the King's treasure

We go
Trees
Into the reddening glow.¹⁸

Good or bad translation, good or bad fiction. I would award the Nobel Prize to Haavikko and I dream of that ceremony and the curmudgeon finally recognized. After this, nothing stops. The architect, this friend and bear continues disrobing, undressing his own words, his own text, his own thinking. The machine is unstoppable. The bear turns to go.

16.4.1989. Each time I meet the bear he appears slower, more and more pre-occupied. But with what? Is it my imagination of a life slowing down, of ideas remaining way back inside the skull now and not coming out onto the surface? He alters continuously. The word 'method' is crossed out. I recall Paul Feyerabend's book *Against Method*.¹⁹ He puts the word 'procedures' in its place. The exhibition and dialogue idea predominates.

He remembers the exhibition I did in Helsinki in 1984: *Seven Famous Raincoats and Moygashel*. No one knew that 'Moygashel' was the cream linen from Ireland used to make those summer jackets. The machine he talks about continually alters definition and interpretations. He does not let this idea go. It pleased him that, in the exhibition, the visitor could write their own reviews. He then moves back to discussing 'Modernism'.

He is making re-definitions as he speaks. It is an awkward, very awkward talent. If I have appreciated this so much, I wonder why others have not. Is it too unstable? Have I deceived myself into thinking all this inner chatter made 'outer' fits with the notion of the unstable, permanently shifting thinker? Here is the childlike innocence of never coming to rest, never sleeping, never laying one's head on the all-important bosom. Is this an innocence I used to have, and still do? Always wanting to move wherever and whenever someone appears to be getting closer.

It is still 1989 and I continue with *Writing Architecture*, the design and checking the text whilst we have these talks. What is this witness to repetition? And how do I trace the difference in all this? Life is not architecture - architecture is not life: then we fall in between as always. Have I imagined all this *against-method* method of the architect? Have I invented it just to suit my own personal strategy of self-cancelling, and imagined this friendship with a genius and master who could never quite be? And why does this country never really take him on, never really attempt to understand this wing of madness? Even on the radio today I hear the word carnivalize (*karnevalisoida*, in Finnish) and the endless problem of measuring the intellectual weight in a country that has little tradition to make up the weight.

According to the radio, to be an intellectual in Finland is to be considered a sideshow, a marginal affair. Apparently so little significance can be given the activity. Was Georg Henrik von Wright about to be forgotten in this active space? It's April. Saarikoski could have written those lines. *The Dark One* dances alone, the trees do not speak to him, the bird does not look at him. The hammock is empty.

The Bear can take these words and make of them his own reverie. And all I can think after this: is he waiting for May and June to go fishing? When I know he doesn't fish at all but will stand on the shore and look out.

17.5.1989. I have been in New York, London and return to Helsinki. He talks of Viipuri Library after it was mentioned that it should receive some support from the Russians and Finns to restore it. The Bear turns it back to himself. He makes a comparison with his Dipoli project, the students' union building achieved so precariously by 1966. Had I written enough about it in *Writing Architecture*? Will it be preserved as it was; the vibrancy of the 1960s? The test of time will not destroy its texture, the building will return. But who will mourn a dreadful makeover, the conference centre it could become? At present, he says, it is a shadow of its former but confused image of student power. Who knows what irony is in its' future?

It reminds me of how he has always worked in dialogue. Whatever the issue, whoever we speak about, the Bear turns it into a measuring rod for his own works, his own thinking machine. Is there a trace of autism about this? Most people, whether they know the Bear or not talk about this inner self-centredness as if they never really speak to him but at him. Charmed they often are but leave in mystery, in ignorance. Occasionally in awe! But there are some who know. They know!

We talk about reviews of the book *Writing Architecture* that has not yet appeared. I plan some in my mind and utter some sentences aloud. I don't remember which. "Usually, it takes many years for a study of this sort to appear. The author has used his experience within yet outside the Finnish culture. There is an unusual intimacy in both architecture and life. Exception, but it transcends the usual book. It is dangerous." We laugh at the word 'dangerous'! He throws his head back and I see his teeth. That's a good sign. Though there have been essays on the Bear and his architecture, I continue playing the reviewer. "The extent of his thinking and relationships between life and architecture has remained vague. With this book, it will remain so." We laugh again.

21.5.1989. A feeling of naivety again. A raw innocence. How to leave parts open for someone else's complexity, or someone else's infancy? I choose ignorance. New brave Arab architecture! He tells a story of Yasser Arafat leaving the room whilst they discuss the new Arab architecture in Kuwait. Did he invent this? They designed the Sief Palace buildings in Kuwait; man and wife team travelling to Kuwait, staying in hotels, typing contracts and notes in the hotel room on a *Lettera 22* typewriter. On the run, was this the architecture and life that makes him laugh now. Taking on the Kuwait Royal Family, drinking tea, sailing the Gulf and buying a Bedouin robe!

24.5.1989. "The Bear's secret, the Pietilä secret," he says surprising me by referring to himself as the Bear. Eyes twinkling, jester ready: "Pietilä's secret was playing Stalinist music as a warning against what one shouldn't do in Finnish architecture in the early 1960s." The Bear? How did he know about the Bear? How did he know I called him the Bear?

“This is the secret of my Russian life,” he says when thinkiing of his Russian visit. His life as a Russian novel? “No one knows we played the Red Army Music whilst we drew Dipoli. It was not a positive example, or sound; it was the background for everything we didn’t want to do with that building. Now you are the only one who knows the secret.” I cannot help smiling. He smiles too. These throwaway lines still come thick and fast. This is the type of line that makes him appear more buffoonish than he is. I am of course not the only one who knows this. This is the jester coming out. Some think this is a person who cannot sustain serious issues. They’d be wrong. But they’d still think that.

25.5.1989. We travelled to Tampere for the opening of the Hervanta Multi-Purpose Centre. I dislike the word multi-purpose. We pass the Living Green Restaurant, all fresh protein and substitute steaks. The Bear notices the newspaper office next door. He talks of this difficulty with Europe as we walk around. Occasionally he goes off to greet people, head down, his hand out but not too quickly. Then off again. Awkwardness is disguised, his slowness goes unnoticed.

He talks all the time in the third person as we walk. *Pietilä by Pietilä* increases. He gnaws on the bone again, just like he did in one of his texts called *An Architect Gnaws on the Fundamental*. Or was it the pariah-dog? “I don’t remember everything I have written” he says, “I am slipping but I am still considered young. How disastrous? What year was that?”

This time he takes the words *de-sign* and *de-construction*. "How to be a subject," he says to me, and is thinking of the book soon to come out. What will he do with it, what will he think of it? "It's easy to sit here," he says as we are taking coffee and his wife was off somewhere fixing things for the ceremony. Am I playing with my words and my worlds? If Modernism is only a trick of language, has it become the prison-house? (Did I give him Fredric Jameson's book, *The Prison House of Language*? I don't remember. I have it. Did he see it?) "I am speaking about architecture here," he says, "but people play with me and speak about architecture as life in another way."

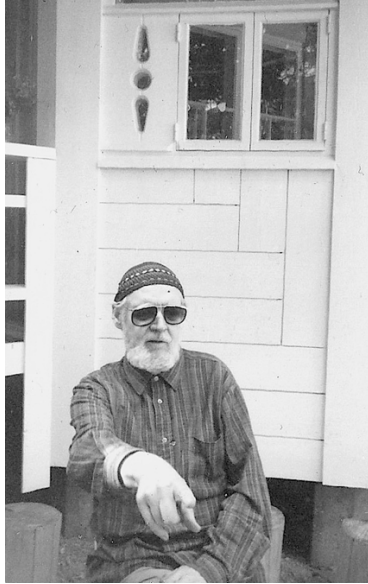
28.5.1989. This is the age of scepticism. We play around with books like forgotten ideas. He searches on this Sunday for his thesis plan. He looks, seeks and then invites misunderstandings. Everything is self-measurement. It is about methodology. It was always about methodology from the 1950s. 'Pure Architecture' like pure geography and landscape with J S Granö echoes! *Pietilä by Pietilä* is almost complete. The book is finished, the design just started.

Autism might be a disorder of childhood development, the inability to form relationship with others, but those affected surely don't have a limited understanding of themselves, just a deeper secret life. It doesn't stop entirely different relations with architecture. We develop coping mechanisms, questions working back on questions. But even to use the term 'autistic' is unwise.

The independent personality in this becomes an inner speech of such intensity that it can never be more than a fragment on the outside. Instead of any other -ism, this is the -ism of the self, the -ism of the greater understanding of that nonchalance and non-method that lies deep within him. I look at him. He seems happy with this, as I am too. Have we become irresponsible toward each other? Are we redundant to each other's life? The Bear turns again. The awkward intimacy of a scarce friendship about to close? Or remain open and infinite, perpetuating more unworthy mythologies?

2

Bear's Sleep is Bear's Work



1.6.1989. The Bratislava film crew arrived on time. How many live interviews was this over the years? Must be into double figures, or even over 20. This time the interview followed mostly the old material and patterns. It is obvious that one has to learn to sum up one's life consistently and coherently if one is going to be understood. This is not, never will be, part of the Bear's approach. Instead, his approach to the media is his approach to the subject. Again, life and architecture blur. There is no separation as the red light comes on and he is supposed to be aware of speaking *for the camera*. The interviewer began waiting for the 'famous' architect's answer in a logical, rational fashion. Instead – as so often – first person gained time for a deflection by writing the question out. He then began sketching the answer at the same time.

This delay irritated the interviewer who expected a more normal answer. Finally, the interviewer understood this was not going to happen and, secretly turning to the cameraman, instructed him to turn off the camera whilst this 'other' activity continued. Most of this *writing out* whilst the architect was sketching the answer was filmable and informative. It was also the way Pietilä's architecture emerges. But the camera is switched off, waiting for the words only. Words that never come, words that never depart so can never arrive.

2.6.1989. This morning the Bear remarks on the 'language' and the book I gave him last night, *Deep Ecology*.²⁰ He points out the paradox, with that glint in his eyes, as if rumbling a detective story. This ecology may not actually ever be deep enough.

Intuitively, he says, we may all be groping towards a deeper ecology, which of course by its very nature ecology has to be 'deep'. He laughs and announces his aversion to tautology, but it is momentary. Much of his speaking plays with tautology and circular reasoning. What does 'tautology mean to a man living out his existence in his own country as a type of exile? No one visits anymore. I remember him telling me similar stories about Alvar Aalto. I am reminded of a book recommended to me by George Steiner in the mid-70s called *Towards Deep Subjectivity*.²¹ I decide to bring it to him so that he can continue his 'tautologies'.

The evening and morning newspaper are occupied by the local international football friendly, *Finland vs The Netherlands*. It was a remarkably tame affair but a necessary event for the face painters, the scarf wavers, and the revellers. There is a nationalist hysteria in this that is not about football or any World Cup. The radio is full of small reports. We didn't do badly. We can be proud. We can hold our head up high... in film, in ice hockey, in football, in architecture? Always this masked apology for the 'almost', for not expecting to do so well and then congratulating oneself for having done so well. I fail to be excited about any of the summer events in Finland. They become mandatory. We are all going to have a good time. We'll do something spontaneous. There's so much primitive head-bashing about all this in Finland. Let's plan for it! After I count to three, I am going to scare you. One, two, three – boo!

3.6.1989. The Bear sits in the small country house re-writing his sketch and mapping of Finnish architecture and architect using a 'metaphorical' iceberg. It was a sketch we used in an exhibition in Aulanko in 1984 and later published (surprisingly in colour) in *Synteesi*, the Finnish journal of aesthetics and semiotics. I had gone to Aulanko to set up the exhibition. The Bear was not with us then. A Frenchman called Antoine, who worked in the office, drove us there in his Citroën. We played *Frankie goes to Hollywood* all the way. *Relax, don't do it!* We smiled and laughed good-naturedly about the world of architecture, about Finland and about two foreigners who didn't expect to be in this country forever.

I didn't imagine anyone really taking the time to understand the architect's diagrams and I have no illusion that anyone will try to understand them later. He is never satisfied with the final version and questions its complexity. "What is its 'real nature'?" he asks, rhetorically. "It is an unnatural phenomenology," he replies to himself. Some lines remain either to be understood or not understood. This was one of them.

There is a space of incomprehensibility about his thought process that has become inseparable from his architectural development. However contradictory, it is this that makes the man. He smiles as I enter. I am certain he has discovered new anomalies and he laughs back without a sound, except that air escaping through the mouth. He pushes his hand back over his head to straighten the 'kalotti' of the day. One of those small skull caps embroidered by his daughter. I cannot help laugh. I think of a medusa.

4.6.1989. It is hard to know whether this attempt to avoid everything but the self, where life and architecture are inseparable, is a sign of the near end, a second or third life or a tranquillity hitherto not known or experienced. Kenosis? Divinity? Sufism? I will never know. The Bear has begun to talk often as if the animals are returning to the forest and the mythology that he is able to contemplate is his only real concern. This is not strange if you know the person. If you don't know, then there are so few ways into this world now. I am often conscious of Heidegger's notion of the half-poetic intellect that re-fashions thinking in a more poetic vein, only to be lost once more. If this is a new approach to 'mythopoesis', then I fear no one will understand it.

More than ever, today it was difficult to make anything but the fragmented sense from his words. But is there, can there, be anything in a fragmented sense? Does it exist? It is not necessary to feel desperate though. The gift of listening to speech as it collides with itself, at a stage before any sense is made, is also a rare gift. The thinking continues. A comet could fall from the sky not a hundred yards away from where we are sitting. There would be a huge flash, a crater a mile deep might be made, and there the Bear would be continuing the thought that began not five minutes ago, not yesterday, not last week, but years ago, even – and this might be the scary part – other lives ago.

Difficult is not difficulty here. Speech is like a flipper game. His words are flipped past you and at times you try to enter as I did most of the time. Many, even those close to him, did not and still do not always have the time and patience for such collisions. They will later, but he won't be here. He knew this.

They will talk of him in his absence. I will be guilty of the same. It becomes hard to see whether this is part of the gradual resignation we make with our own lives and bodies, as the ideas and ambitions give up on themselves, and we are forced to close in to survive and die. The body goes thin. Eating habits are more worrisome, the concern of others so necessary, so blind, so caring, and at times so tyrannical. Everything but speech can be organized all around. Everything but what remains within can slowly drift out of one's control.

The Bear hints at this but only in short, terse words. He fights a tiredness that he shows to so few. I imagine him some 15 years from now, aged 80 or so, like Lear dying finally at his own hand (the hand of architecture of course – not the knife or gun) after not being able to take the decline so gracefully. Finally, where there was never any rage, there is rage. But timid, muffled and as private as he will have to become, as architecture lives itself out.

The imagination is unstoppable. What could this suffering be that collides with ideas and invents new beginnings at such a 'late stage'? Talk of the past, the 1950s and sometimes this decade. It is so brief, unlike previous discussions, as if this too must necessarily be controlled and shaped for the present, for sadness and sorrow.

I feel now invited into my own disappearance. I imagine how I can plan this when the book, the large book, the impossible book, the infinite book, comes out. The decision will go either way. Back to India, or Pakistan, or somewhere else. But I have little doubt. The book will be denounced as nonsense. as some books are by virtue of difficulty. Or obscurity. Only then perhaps will the book be scanned, adopted, revised and partially accepted. I doubt all this. No one approaches difficulty like the Finns without feeling undone. Later, in all this hysteria about architecture and life, the nation will have to contend with yet another ageing academician, about whom they know so little, from whom they have learnt so little.

6.6.1989. *Life and architecture, architecture or life.* Sadness is only being in the half-presence of people, but this is our usual lot. Whole families go through such exile until they reach a turning point. Reappraisal can mean romance or distortion. The images we keep will necessarily remove the difficult times.

No longer present in this summer cottage, I watch the Bear walking around, reading sometimes with book in hand, coming towards me pointing out this line, smiling, laughing as his head rocks back as it did previously. I respond but exile answers differently. I go through the motion of fire burning, coffee making, net throwing and fishing. It matters not whether I catch a fish. I have done it too many times in this country without response, without fire in the belly, in the eyes, without passion.

One more pause in a life that no longer belongs here but knows it cannot quite withdraw yet. It resembles marriage. We know sometimes they are over but imagine the time necessary to plan the demise decently, without destruction. The foreigner changes roles, families, travels, wives or husbands. Although in their eyes, the foreigner becomes helpful, convenient and available, even an understanding friend. The foreigner, we are always a half-person.

I imagine I could have talked more, could have tried to discuss the ideas he had yesterday, even the sadness which he mentions so gently, ever so slightly as if only whispered and then gone. If he has been exiled by his own difficulty, then whose responsibility is it to show this, to demonstrate this? And should we do it for future generations? Why? Or will this too all be forgotten, erased as the lovable, smiling, 'gentle giant' bear of a man who talks about clouds and elks.

Yes, I have heard him called that too: a gentle giant bear of a man. We need exile to cease being where we are not and cease not being. The moment exile becomes manageable, even comfortable, it ceases bringing the creative moments that can alter a life. If but for a minute or so!

7.6.1989. How do others react to this difficulty the Bear presents? Over the years it has moved from confusion to mockery. Impatience is ever-present. Most are like the Bratislavan TV interviewer. They expect the 'normal' within seconds and if that does not arrive, they drift off. Unperturbed, unconcerned with such triviality, the architect continues talking and thinking within himself. Some who perhaps should know better demonstrate irrationality and can be aggressive.

The divided self, locked within this architecture and life, is challenging and often derided. Those who outlive this energy will however remain locked within a lost energy. No one else can do the thinking for them, yet many imagine this necessary. Jealousy rages amongst colleague and close friends. Unspeakable, it manages to do unspeakable things. Astonishingly it can remove years of concern, years of understanding. Frustration turns to violence. Tolerance is more than repressive. It kills.

This morning, as if it can all start again, the Bear re-writes his theory of how Modernism fragmented or shattered into parts from the very beginning. He grapples with a little Heidegger again, a line or two, then talks of the earth and the sky. Then he goes back to drawing something about *Mäntyniemi*, the Finnish president's official residence outside Helsinki. It has become a project that now channels all his thinking: "I am going to draw some fictional sheets," he says. Because he uses the word 'sheets' for pages or papers, I imagine a washing line out in the forest with sheets drying, all with images on them. Like one of those images from a Nyrki Tapiovaara film.

Then there is that increasing nervousness shown towards him. Not knowing what to do with the silence he offers, or the pause in which his thinking moves, there is so often an embarrassment. Too many people with him and amongst him have always filled in the void. The space left between architecture and life becomes intolerable. It needs filling. He senses this. He looks across and the beginning of a smile comes from the lips. The person is out of order in front of us, but we barely notice. His mood appears then timid, as it wraps itself in another silence. The function is clear. Whatever happens will not interfere with these ideas. It is an interregnum. It fills in another life whilst it lives another life completely.

8.6.1989. How is it we tolerate such rejection, such indifference? Rudeness can be unforgivable. The inability to understand someone can turn this frustration into vengeance. A low confidence becomes even lower. It searches for safe points, simple points. The black and white society turns back on itself through this process of vengeance. How much more might the Bear have created under better, smoother circumstances? It is a pointless question really, but it does not prevent its nagging reappearance. As he speaks – I no longer have the tape recorder – he seems more relaxed. But I can no longer decide whether this is repetitive or whether the ideas are forming through a particular form of non-sense.

Certainly, some of the words do not make sense. This has always been the case. But when they are put together with other ideas, with a drawing, with a line here and there, something else takes place. It is too easy to say this is merely nonsense as interviewers or journalists do when unused to such a stream of consciousness. Then, as if to acknowledge this, he will move into a piece of obvious humour and obvious nonsense. The sense of isolation is no longer fragile. The Bear regains control.

He is pleased at visitors, though very few come these days. He does not discriminate nor seems to hold any notion of blame. The man who wrote about him, the one who banalized his work, the one who may have done most harm to his career than any other, receives the smile of a saint.

Is this a contract that we will see played out in the coming years, as the architect will, like those spies from the 1950s, come in from the cold? No one seems prepared to announce the sham of a critic and the idiocy of giving him an award for faking a life.

He continues to write notes, a little larger hand than before, almost like a schoolchild as the words surround a drawing and make new patterns. Are these reminders for him, for others or for me? We have not returned to those fictional sheets or those scratchings.

For months now we have not talked of the conversations we were going to have, those initialled voices (R & S) who would be speakers of an imaginary world of architecture. We had been planning this and making sketches of these conversations for some time now, even whilst I was away in India. We will never complete this dialogue.

17.6.1989. Why do they have to do it? Was it the first time, today, I really noticed his age? Even to imagine him as the Bear might be inappropriate. Is it because I am also following my own father as he reaches 80? His skin drops away slightly around his neck. The nose begins to look slight, emphasizing the hawkish.

When he squints, as he often does in the sun and searching for something, he reminds me of the actors who are chosen to play Fagin. He looks up through the trees at the swan and four little ones flying over. A motorboat passes. The visitor, the critic, the stranger sits and tries to make sense of his speech as he talks of the Pope's visit, the Catholics designing churches and the idea of the earth or the lower part of the building belonging to hell, and the upper part belonging to heaven.

"But I don't believe in this explanation," he says. It is obvious as it has been for years. The sense anyone tries to make is not the sense that already exists in the words. That is a trap into which we can fall if we so wish. When we were in Sofia in 1987, I was asked to speak at the last moment to fill in for a speaker who had not arrived. I spoke about Bakhtin's carnival and 'archobabble'. It was not the Bear's type of seamless thinking-out-loud that was in my mind, it was the babble of the critics and architects who wish to make from this, the movement of accepted ideas, accepted form.

The difficulty is this. Later there is no question Pietilä will be significant for the work he has done, even as he completes what will probably be the last building, the president's residence. But his work, his output, will remain small compared to those architects able to take on more projects, compared to those architects able to trust in others to carry out parts of the work whilst new work is begun elsewhere.

His significance is likely to be embedded in the cultural grappling between language and architecture, between the question of form and the form of a question. This he can transfer from a word or line into a diagram, into another form. To separate life from architecture? Did he ever need to do this?

As an architect ages, what happens? Do we have much knowledge of this? Has not the famous architect, like Wright or Aalto, deflected this into a late style, whereas in fact it is a state of mind? When the edge begins to go, when the edge begins to soften, what happens to the thinking? Can it redouble its effort to remain sharp and focused, or will it become unbounded, infinite?

And are we correct to consider this infinity a lost cause, as we so often do when we see the aged begin to tell the tall stories of another life? Surely this might also be the necessary step to another agreement with the self. In other words, we need a way to step from life as it is to life as it will be.

I imagine myself reaching a stage where I control the cut off, where the decline in the thinking is mine and mine alone. This becomes a death of sorts, which must necessarily pass to that other death. At least this is so for me. As we sit there, as I meditate whilst he speaks, we do not speak of such things at all.

18.6.1989. It is Sunday morning in the West Finnish countryside. The Bear often brings me coffee down in the lakeside sauna and taps on the window to see if I am awake. It is always a gentle tap, it never intrudes. It says: it might just be time to get up and talk architecture all over again today, but it might not, too. Nothing about sleep, the night, the weather, the pleasure of solitude, nor anything of the outside world. He does not discuss these, nor needs to.

He sits and begins to draw immediately, in the gravel outside the sauna, a picture of the Pope's symbol. He uses a stick and suddenly the talk which left off yesterday, late last night, begins as if there were no pause, no separation, no night and no day. Though he looks up occasionally, he needs no response, no prodding. In fact, he needs no interference at all that may alter its course. The speech and thinking are self-altered, like an autistic act, constantly taking shape from the lonelier, inner mind.

Later we will talk more specifically. It almost seems a crime when we begin exchanging ideas. The Finnish condition, he says, lacks serious research. It is static. We do not develop this because we seem to agree on this condition. I speak of moves within a known world, a small, timid exercise like chamber music. We discuss the convenience of *Post Modernism* as a literary method to shake and upset those architects who were so close to an untidy formalism.

Someone wrote about the eclecticism of Gullichsen and we both note it briefly. “Ruusuvuori”, he says was a kind of witty ascetic. He seemed to exist in the comfort of familiarity. Even now the particular names are no longer important. They seem random. In Finnish architecture they are all interchangeable, all seemingly rigid and unbending.

This was the pattern of our conversations. In a way we continue and contest, edging forwards, edging each other sideways. It’s a little game within the critical confusion that Finnish architecture represents. Like fencing. I realize why he wrote those texts in the 1960s and 1970s; texts that were so polemic, so circuitous, so enchanting, texts that allowed the other architects to deflect and sometimes turn mean. But still the mention of names appears so crude, so unappetizing and we change the topic without having to agree on this. *Archobabble*? He invented the word, or did I? I don’t know. Does it matter? I think not.

Always this invention in the middle of something else. I begin from the middle. Was this a line in Haavikko’s poem *The Winter Palace*? Probably not. I decide to check later but I am sure it will be sometime before I do. A phenomenology of Babel, he says, and I both know what he means and don’t know what he means. When a discussion point comes up, I measure it against what I have already written. The book is finished, and it is too late to change anything. I have written what I have written. It’s over!

Writing and *architecture* became inseparable. Have I written anything that might answer this? When I think I have I relax, unnecessary to write on. When I notice I haven't, I imagine re-writing it all, or then just inventing another book called *Reading Architecture*. I doubt if I ever will though. He does something similar when he surveys contemporary work. We consider the *Helsingin Sanomat* newspaper. There was recently something on Ricardo Legorreta. "Legorreta can either do Baragan in Texas successfully or not. He can either do it well or badly," the Bear says. I feel it is all becoming tautological again.

Bewilderment has spread throughout the society this decade. Critical thinking is so thin. He glanced in a recent journal at works by Santiago Calatrava, the Spanish engineer-architect, and the Australian architect Glenn Murcutt. He moves his finger over parts of the image, parts of the building. Like the blind using their fingers to read braille. He seeks some points of similarity in the architecture of his 'competitor', then moves to another part and finds his own difference from them. When the Bear arrives at this difference, there is some contentment, shown ever so lightly on his face, and faintly in his words.

"Assessing a decade where the only constant is change," he reads this from the newspaper. We are nearing the end of the 1980s, this momentous year, a complex and changeable decade in Finnish architecture. "It's not worth making anything new in the country," he says, "because it is too easy to experiment today, too acceptable to diverge." If this is so what options are left?

To remain static, or design projects that will remain unbuilt. In Finland those that have remained unchanged now announce consistency in their own architecture and rail against those others who got caught up in the post-modern carnival. The 'capitalised' Bear is more careful than this. He knows how much influence and impulse came from that period in the 1970s, when suddenly pluralism was spoken about, and buildings could have – after Robert Venturi – both complexity and contradiction. It did not thrill him to be accepted, to find he could be considered both complex and contradictory. He saw this as more misunderstanding and a somewhat clever rejection of his work.

Playful was an insufficient critique: carnival was an unacceptable stage. Architecture has become ludic in the 1980s, and for a serious *homo ludens* this presents a problem of identity and definition. He notices the phrases Frank Gehry is using. "The primitive beginnings of architecture come from zoomorphic yearnings and skeletal images." Is this an indication of the future? They might have been his own words, though if so they would not have been reported in his own country. Why now, why Gehry? he seems to ask me. But it is a question left in silence. Can polar bears really talk?

19.6.1989. I have developed what we might call a passionate indifference. I have seen the nervousness and tension with which others treat him, even those close to him. They act irrationally as if to stop this babble. Some shout when things go wrong. They fly at him.

Some fly at the critics for not getting it right, while he merely continues, silently, re-writing everything they have thought, meaning everything he has thought too. Some don't like putting egg with salmon; it's not Finnish. The image of an order is so strong that it will eventually romanticize this man. There is little consistency in their attacks, and he must feel lonely. He repeats the chaos of uncertainty as if by this repetition he soothingly invites a respite. To play the farmer or the gardener is never his style, and he sits or lounges in the hammock. That's how I like to see him. When he gets up out of the hammock, he holds his hat for fear of it tipping off. The movement is unsteady but paradoxically sure. The key is the slowness.

I am aware of all the pills being taken, of the regime that he must be on, of the necessity of being guided by wife and daughter. I am present, yet not present in this intimacy. Yet it is difficult to deny the years of this awkward, precious and yes scarce intimacy. He sometimes turns to me and indicates that architecture is quite another world than this. One which we have not understood. Then he moves his hand to say: "Look around. All this. Ancient land. People here before us. Elks too!" Oh no, I think, it's the elks again and I await a long theory about Elks and Le Corbusier, but this time it doesn't come. I smile. I sense further chaos and dissolution.

The Bear is a little more uncontrolled, the head just ever so slightly more to one side. The fanaticism and the sleeplessness press in and on. This will all disappear. I didn't know whether they'd be there next week, next month, or the next year. It didn't matter. This was enough. I learnt how to distance myself from the intimacy of someone else's inner speech. Sometimes we join his wife and daughter for coffee at the big house. We walk up the hill slowly. He, pausing to look around: me, kicking a stone or two. A child really: or children both?

This weekend, more than most, I began to sense the beginning of the end. What does this mean? That our thinking cannot go forward? That his work has come to a standstill? That the medicine will make sure of less movement, more slowness, just like my own father? I don't know. Is it my end not his? Then suddenly there are moments of clarity, new thinking, the remains of a day that we will continue tomorrow. The indifference grows more passionate at every step.

22.6.1989. Thinking of the cross in Hervanta, he says: "My thinking changes from the morning. I can no longer return to what I thought yesterday." This is not the first time I have heard this. More instability and increasing uncertainty leading to new 'thinking in the wild'.

A new way to go on, for example, in the Beckettian sense. Problems of verb, predicate and order. What is a better statement under these conditions, under constant change? I had always found the Bear a rather difficult person to be melancholy with. He rarely noticed the lower mood, or the closing of the mind. I am sadder than he thinks. But not anymore! Perhaps that is just as well; I am not sure he would or could do anything with such a mind.

23.6.1989. The Bear is tireless even if tired. Indefatigable is the word that comes to mind. He sees himself as a tireless explorer of the limits of architecture, or should it be the limits of 'Modernism'. His thinking is also clearly bounded. To talk of roots is too coy. Roots suggest a way to emerge into something that is all joined together and coherent. There is nothing like that here, though it is clearly ordered. He is merely exploring the starting points of an architecture that must never reach its destination. At least that's what I glean from this.

The book *Writing Architecture* was to be a detective story, he was the 'subject' or 'object' as he would interject. There is no crime except that of language claiming more for architecture than it possibly can. Hence the book will explode into a series of options. You take your choice. You decide whether your knowledge about this is fluent, truant, infantile or redundant. Then you make your own mind up. With a bit of luck, you will remain in ignorance of the very thing that holds back this architecture.

You will then have the opportunity to meet the origins of ideas that are as yet undiscovered, unexplored even unimagined. Boccioni meets Beckett. Levi-Strauss meets McLuhan. Wittgenstein meets Carpelan. Haavikko meets Ashbery. You enter your own *Winter Palace* with Pietilä and from there onwards it is up to you. You wish not to explain more than necessary but at times fall into that trap and explain much more than necessary. That is the nature of intimacy and the intellect crossing boundaries. This sums up what I feel with the Bear. *Finn-again wake!* That is what I feel as I look now across at his face, the tiredness, across the lake. Then the open joy, the jester architect suddenly comes alive again, bear-dancing.

24.6.1989. I am reading the topical post-modernist work *Sianhoito-opas* [Swine Husbandry Manual] when the Bear comes in.²² No introduction, no pause, right on as if an actor entering a scene: “Von Wright was very much understanding what Wittgenstein was doing. And as I don’t understand what Wittgenstein was doing, then I can only say I don’t understand what Von Wright was doing.” It is an attractive paradox, but I have no time to think it through. “I don’t know what the *logos* is or means. I can mix Babel with Babylon because in a way it’s all the same to me. I have no problem in handling this in a primitive manner...” That’s what architects do!

It is clear he has been thinking of this overnight for there is still no pause, no direct interaction. "I am waiting until someone says something good or bad about the Hervanta, Lieksa, Mäntyniemi project. I then wait and watch to see what happens and how a judgment is made." I have witnessed so many inner moments like this and learnt to let them spin themselves out. Sometimes I would interact, interject or merely concur in some way. This time I am silent, a touch melancholy. But I do not have to wait long. "Many animals cannot understand architecture. Even Pallasmaa with his animal exhibition didn't understand it correctly."²³

I have to laugh. The continual use of animal as metaphor reminds me of the soft toys in the apartment back in the city. Part of the intimacy of family, the Prairie Dog and others in a basket in Helsinki; the human side of longing, of childhood and those stages in life when explanations were not necessary, when grown-ups only wanted the explanations as the little prince remarks in St. Exupéry's book. The animal always stalking their prey, approaching it, gnawing it, and then moving on; like us both in architecture!

How long, I think, do we manage to walk on glass or eggshells before they finally collapse beneath us? No longer holding us up with such flimsy strength. Whole families collapse before us and re-group. We know nothing of the dissolution of souls that are not close to our own. His hand goes for the medicine. I look at his face. I say nothing. Recognition, is this what is required? Or fidelity? But it is too late. It will only come later when the world shifts and spins again and spits this wondrous being out as the last modern Hero or the last 'natural architect'.

25.6.1989. Nothing but a fragmented life now. But then was it not always fragmented? Is this not what he has made his architecture and thinking from? His statements are always disjointed because they remain part of another speech, part of the non-predicate speech.

Continuous energy is not the same as thinking through until the disjointed thought re-combines. The genius of this man, this architect: what is it? An irresponsible thought: that it might all be one supreme, continuous and self-perpetuated hoax. The Bear! One of the best architects and eye-washers this century has known.

If so, then my book will not only participate in that hoax but enlarge it even more. Then, irresponsibly, it too will become the 'hoax'. I will become the 'hoax' responsible for the unspeakable distortion of a life in architecture. No, the architect is far too skilled, far too third-person thinker to be reduced in such a way.

Today I asked him about names, places, and so on. Checking everything that might err in the book. Neither of us pay that much attention to these details preferring, I suppose, someone else to come along and re-invent the biography of this architect, or then re-imagine the places of childhood, school, army and study. Not a lot of energy seems to go into it and I let it drop.

He's not interested in re-tracing with accuracy. The story is better, seductive. Literature or philosophy? Didn't he say he wanted to become a philosopher until his mother 'dreamt' him as an architect? Are we to take this seriously? Why would we need to?

26.6.1989. So sound, so isthmus: the author has done what many do. He has indicated the rule of metaphor up there in the Baltics. He has chosen the idea of a littoral space once more, the high-tide/low-tide area, that place where if you walk into the sea to commit suicide you can still make that decision to go forwards or return to shore. You have that moment of crucial indecision. We all have those moments.

Indecision has become a way of life. So sound, so isthmus the architect removes us and, like an author, erases his subject and puts us into another area, the metaphor of which we must invent for ourselves. Then if we do not answer quick enough, that other metaphor enters the conversation and keeps us going to the ridge.

Architecture has long needed a verbal terrorist, and the Bear is the architect they will say this of in the future: he was the person doing what we are doing now before we were doing what we are doing now. Nice riddle. But too brief, too facile. But nobody knew!

27.6.1989. “We have to reduce everything,” he says, “it is tireless, incomprehensible. It is difficult and lost. It is forgotten. It is untranslatable.” He comes forward toward me just as he stops speaking. He circles around, a little like a dog checking territory. “I need this *ultima thule*, this untranslatability,” he says again, “so that I remain unapproachable.” This is the source of a mysticism and an inaccessibility but not the source of the actual architecture.

There are words he will not say, does not say. Your book, he says, will risk such an approach. There are lines he cannot write. You write about an architect like a pied wagtail bird, a snooper of sorts, a layer of traps for the profession and for the self, a gun-dog sniffer who waits until you are asleep and then announces those lucidities and clarities you all but gave up on. I cannot say when I actually stopped reading, I mean ‘really’ reading!

28.6.1989. He picks up the book I have been reading, *The Swine Husbandry Manual*, but doesn’t open it. “I can’t say where it begins... I must see in the book the same confusion and distance. Reading is something which exposes us.” He puts the book down and assesses it as if the critics would attack it. Then he shifts to his own work and tries to understand again why and how it has been attacked or criticized, or just plainly and wilfully misunderstood. “I am going nowhere,” he says, “I am just circulating...I cannot say but I must say....”

29.6.1989. A gash: approaching something with imprecise knowledge, enthusiasm or ignorance. Applying one's deeper knowledge of one area to another area and coming up with a new blindness, or a new insight? Has this century managed to do a language job on itself? Language constituting being and being constituting language, both cancelling out; this is my disaster not the Bear's. Is the linguistic turn over?

30.6.1989. If you were filming an architect like Aalto, for example and they turned out to be a thief or a criminal, what happens? Do you become a policeman or turn and run the other way and look for the monster in real policeman? This is what we were talking about today. The frauds we play on ourselves, I guess.

2.7.1989. The week has passed. Each morning, I have felt the need to talk to him. Just to indicate that the conversation, however incomplete, goes on. But it gets more insular. Each morning at coffee he picks up something. It might be the German architectural profession's journal or the daily newspaper. An odd item becomes the foreground. The Pope for example. It begins as if it will lead somewhere coherent, somewhat graspable but it becomes something else.

Life spreads into architecture, the poetic ramblings take over and begin inter-lacing. Ramifications pile on if you have kept up with the conversation. If you haven't you may be lucky, or dead.

This is not a question of asking where insight ends, and something else begins. Any arrival is slow, generally put off. Nothing comes in any permanent way. Just how he has thought all his life, at least in the last two decades when I have been close. Sometimes the thought goes too quickly and is actually lost in the stampede and stuttering. If there are others around and they walk past not listening, I always felt I should stay just to balance this rebuttal. He has perfected the monologue which matters not whether anyone listens but a monologue that always swerves and talks at its own pace, under its own conditions. This is triumphant.

Abruptness can appear rude, but he doesn't seem to notice this. He has learnt to use this, to singularize it. He makes the ends meet. It is often an impeccable, even insane, series of reasoning steps making up this flow. Even the hysterical remark does not move him. These are lifelong tactics; life-long, architecture-long!

This morning, he ended up joking about the Scandinavian gallop poll. Where would most people like to live, they were asked, if not in their own country? He noticed no one chose Finland. The Swedes, the Finns, the Danes and the Norwegians. None of them considered living in Finland nor wanted to stay in Finland. The exotic was on holiday. It was a joke on the statistics. He reacted humorously. "More space for us," the Bear said. "More space for this exile," I said back to him.



Two weeks later. Am I now beginning to recognize what I refused to recognize, his illness? He is moving at a much slower pace than he was earlier. He is aware of it and turns it into a joke. At least he did so this weekend. But it is painful to watch and painful to witness, when you want the sharpness to return, when you want the mind to regain its own intimacy.

From being in control, from moving quickly in and out of mind, his whole being begins to suggest a blur. Is there another way of putting it, a way that could allay my sadness? I find none and feel the worse for that. It is difficult to help, to participate in this closing off. He has begun to talk about it, again gently, again understated. It is tempting to begin organizing everything and trying to take over when this happens, but the family, his wife and daughter, have their own way of handling this and must be respected.



I watch the Bear hold to every movement, every harsh word and impatience. He winces. He has become more pessimistic than the last time I was in the country. Or perhaps my stay in India has not witnessed the change. He sits at times now so quiet, so unmoving that I imagine the ghost, that quietness I have seen on the streets in India where any move expends energy that is no longer there. His look becomes a stare, and it goes through now rather than before when it engaged one's eyes. Then almost as long as it takes to move, he shifts.

Like the moment he went to the hammock slung between the two trees and posed for the camera. As I finished the disposable camera, I wonder if he has ever taken a photograph in his life. I wonder, too, when in the country, in Finland, I have merely played with this idea of the country. Has it all been a form of *joke knowledge* to me, the type which V.S. Naipaul speaks about in *The Enigma of Arrival*?²⁴

There is a smell of decay in this autumn. The microwave allows new comforts, whilst the outside grill persuades us to think of rougher, rural times. Is this a primitive hoax? Boats lie on the grass, upturned, tarred, un-floated. No visitors arrive. The Bear lies in the hammock, and I think of the title 'academician'. It is hard not to think of the caricature of this position in the Russian world, in the USSR where glasnost has proceeded, and President Gorbachov is leading the dissolution of the Soviet Empire.

Respected, aging but virtually ignored – was this the fate of those old Academicians just over the wall, behind the curtain, the other side of the Gulf of Finland? Remember Pentti Saarikoski's earlier poem called *Helsinki*; three beards looking over their shoulder.²⁵ Were they not waiting to write the obituaries of their heroes, which merely meant a re-arrangement of the sentences and a newly touched-up photograph? The Bear turns. It is not so easy to turn in a hammock.

Bear's Sleep is Bear's Work



6.10.1989. 1989, what a year! It's the end of cleverness not the end of history. I think of Roland Barthes and an 'acultural yearning'; to exempt oneself from the tyranny of history is also to try and exempt oneself from the pre-scripted, that is, the expected architecture. Is it inevitable to end up with fragmentation? The Bear's interest in dismantling is not a result of new philosophy, Postmodernism, even the flirtation into Deconstruction, it is a result surely of distress. And the laughter at distress!

This parallel life: the Bear no longer operates in the office seamlessly. Something has changed. No longer those rituals, those moments of intense humour. Will anyone ever know the humour of this man? His 60th birthday, 1983: the office had bought him a bicycle and a pair of blue rubber goggles and flippers. Always up for the joke, for the moment that might carnivalize the event and puncture any seriousness, averting embarrassment and shyness, he put on the goggles and sat astride the bicycle. Upstairs on the 7th floor in Laivurinrinne, the laughter was spontaneous. But it also had to be careful and controlled.

He contests and problematizes his own detachment now. But hasn't he always done this? His chatter is relentless, with nothing carnival now to relieve it. How many times have I said this, have I had to repeat it and yet we go nowhere? I hung onto words and then left his words out to dry. Ambiguity was key and a freedom. Nothing could stick! Sufi, pataphysician or shaman!

“I knew more as a first-year student,” the Bear says, “now my colleagues have devastated everything, because they have played with everything.” Coming from a *homo ludens*, this is rich indeed. But an interesting choice of word, ‘devastated’. Is there nothing left within the canon of Finnish architecture for him; is there no dissonance left in the censorship? How can one be obsessed by a notion of national architecture and yet dissent all times?

His recent talk about the confessional and the outcast confuses me. Literally, he is beginning to turn things on their head in his head. I see pain and I wish I didn’t. I wish this life to have been more than architecture, not less than a necessary life. His punning continues and the laughter suddenly re-emerges from a smile. I glimpse the past. As an exception, certainly he has been tolerated. But surely, it’s more than this. He cannot be, as he suggests, outpaced by the century. This cannot be it.

Middy: When is it worth noting down these words or noting his ideas? “I decided in the fifties not to be bound by things like civilisation.” ‘*Sivistys*’ is the word in Finnish for education, civilisation. He speaks often about this. Like a punctuation. There is a question now as to how and why he has become educated. He should be writing poetry or a short story. He begins talking of Saint Peter letting him into Heaven, through the gates.

“Perhaps Saint Peter would refuse me or then he would let me in if I said I wanted to use the WC. For could he be uncivilised, and not let me in?” He laughs again and I cannot resist laughing either. We have done this for years.

The meaning is not in the sentence or the idea, the meaning is in flight, it has taken flight. “The world has gone too fast for me in the last five years” he says. A strange concept, a throw-away line or a revelation: or all three? The Bear speaking to St.Peter!

Evening: back to the old times. A glimpse of the past, an *anti-mémoire* for the future. A freedom, a man without the loneliness he has become. Nobody else is there. He speaks on and on and I think of our history together. Irreplaceable - a gift.

I’m coughing, that little consumptive cough (you should see a doctor sometime). We drink cognac and try and watch a film. Back to Saint Peter. Would he let him into Heaven if he didn’t take care of the elevations of the president’s residence? But he doesn’t wait for any answer. “The city took over that and signed that they accepted the building!”

He is convincing himself of the need to fly, to let go whilst I play Sufi games. But he hints now, more and more oblique, tempting St Peter to lock him up in the ‘prison house of language’.

Laughter, the old self! The familiar divided self? But what was that old self, and when did that laughter mean more than this? He speaks about the post-informational society. All information will become too much. Language is so thoroughly inadequate.

Then he notices the cover of a magazine. This time, it shows the work of the Austrian architects Coop Himmelb(l)au. It might have been any other architect or project of the time. There it is: Heaven, the sky above, the blue sky. And Europe! Anything, that moment and every moment in the day, is filtered through that image, through one project, the final one, the project to end all projects. The project that puts an end to any cleverness!

This for the architect is the terminal project, the one that returns us to first year students, when we have not created anything. A time when innocence is still valid and available! Or even earlier, returning to a boy playing in Western Finland, in Turku, imagining the endless and delightful ambiguity in philosophy.

To be an architect? Why? He speaks of his mother, heaven, the earth and the sky. Like someone returning from a stroke, there is rejuvenation all over the body, in the face, in the shape of the mouth when he can speak, when someone listens... as if, for so long, no one has really listened.

7.10.1989. “Neither heaven nor hell, never wanting to belong. I am always in that space in between. Life and architecture! Architecture or life?” He has been thinking of a high-rise project in Tampere. He links it predictable, yet incongruous: “My brain is too small to think of a 40-storey tower block in Tampere.”

Where and why does this occur? To become a talking machine now, not a thinking machine! A repetition machine – is this a rehearsal to keep away the future? To keep away what? Pain? Death?

What are the words he or I will take to our deaths? How will this friendship end, how will the energy just leak out and others take over? Just to stop talking when it is all turned off.

He has become a Beckett character. Molloy, even! Theories and sentences, the squirm of a language that defies our creations now runs out. Nowhere to move; in the middle of what is marked out he begins to speak of demarcation lines. I think of the English expressions, can't make head nor tail of it, a head on his shoulders, off one's head, to head off, to keep one's head, to bury one's head in the sand. Or the Zen conundrum, *on having no head!*

Headless. I think of boundaries, not this time to other colleagues or architecture, but the boundaries of the self. The pessimism might be my own. He occasionally notices that I am writing as he is speaking. He has done this often and changes his behaviour. He also changes his speech pattern. Suddenly after all this time, the Bear turns and takes on the tone of a lecturer, but for a moment only. “What ideas should we follow now, or next year? What should we know that we don’t know? What can we utter without knowing it with any profundity, any validity?”

Is he de-schooling, unlearning in front of my eyes? No, this is the body slowing down, the mind chattering, facing artistic disappointment; shared only with those who listen. Does the gush, the babble, the monologue avoid any other responsibility, or does it now invite its own redundancy, its own irresponsibility? The architect as an irresponsible self?

He tells a skiing story. So short sighted, he says, he went across the field and was the first to crash. During the war? He laughs. I see the head go back. He hasn’t quite lost his head. Such a moment of joy! He talks of cheating the authorities. His sister Tuulikki did a drawing. He signed it and took it to school. More laughter. Things are coming to a head I can feel it. Metaphorically and literally!

Right at this moment I think of the art of being wrong and the necessity of it. “Why don’t they read more?” he asks. During the day I had left Italo Calvino’s book *Invisible Cities* lying around. I wanted him to dip into it as he usually did. Any page, any line and he would be off, taking it into his head. Instead, he left it there, unopened. This was unusual.

He spoke after a long silence. We’d taken coffee. I think he was speaking about women, but it wasn’t clear. He talked of a non-poetic self, the crudity of ignorance, the innocence of hysteria. Then he slides again.

“Form follows function,” he says, “as wolves follow elks.”²⁶ We have hardly ever talked of women, of wives, of friends, of children, of love, of death, of anything outside architecture. Sentences getting shorter; the Bear running out.

16.10.1989. Today anxiety. It appeared over a Sunday newspaper article about the president’s residence, a building on site and proceeding somewhat erratically. It had been touch and go whether this building would be built. Finally, after some appeals and gentle persuasion, it was going ahead. But does he really still take this type of attack seriously, and personally?

After all the years of opposition and indifference to his work and ideas, has he not learnt to distance himself from the words? Words often unreliable, often exaggerated. Is the memory and fear of misunderstanding so close that the words of a young reporter masking as an anarchist, sniping at the Academician, rattle him? Surely not!

Why should a man who has achieved more than most of his colleagues and critics will ever achieve be so concerned with this type of attack? Is it part of an increasing isolation or the consequence of the essential solitude in a society that has callously differentiated him all the time? He treats it whimsically but - as ever - he reverses it and begins to take it seriously. It bothers him but only as a reminder of what he has always had to face.

“Mirrors of Modernism” was a phrase he used today. “The difficulty of the last 10 years has confused so many.” Now others are as iconoclastic as he has been. Is he losing his ‘difference’ in this Postmodern decade? “What,” he said, opting for the third person “if Pietilä suddenly announced that he was brainwashed by mythology? What if his ideas didn’t suit this architecture at all?”

29.10.1989. “Language,” he said, “is cleverer than man.” Sometimes I pick up these chance lines, slogans and expand them. I try and locate them as if I can see the attraction of the one-line and all it offers to him. It might conform to a picture someone else has of him.²⁷ But it all appears tediously private. And he knows this too.

The aphorism is so lonely without the poetic risk it needs. He talks of Saint Peter yet again. He has done so for some weeks now. Is this important? Am I supposed to link this with his death, his thoughts of death? He has mentioned it. Or can I bypass it by thinking of his wit that mixes with his own neurosis.

“I can’t understand much of architecture today. I’m trying to understand a little, a fraction of it, that’s all...” Illness, restraint, wisdom or good sense? I can no longer choose between any of these. And then he utters a line that tells more: language is cleverer than man.

He mentions the previous Finnish President, Urho Kekkonen. He describes how this infirm being was brought out even though he was ineffective. “What next,” he says, “silence, muteness. Or Paavo Haavikko?” Pity is not an issue here.

Our friendship is questioned and sharpened. It has no one else to call on, no one else can witness this intimacy, so awkward, so rewarding. The pretence of philosophy draws in. There is nothing in everything. He is beginning to question all, and I begin to like this turn. To him, too rational, language is uninteresting unless it upsets all. Unless it can undermine the constraint it sets up!

16.11.1989. He sees a brochure. For a book, for a film, for a building? No, it is the cover of the book *Writing Architecture*. He issues immediate encouragement but it's instinctive, lightly held within a much deeper hold on life and architecture itself. Are these the childish qualities forbidden to adults but beyond the feelings of irresponsibility?

He wants to free himself from being bound by photography and image. The Bear wants to locate himself again and then take flight. Is he embarrassed by an image that he can ultimately not control?

I remember that image of him in a paper hat that he made during a seminar at the University of Oulu. It is an image that carnivalizes all about him, but an image that anyone who knows him will recognise. It was appropriate for the dust jacket. He reads it by his fingers, braille-fashion once more. He traces the image and distances himself at the same time. *The cover of writing architecture!* Is it unreasonable to have chosen such an image?

Juxtaposed with other images, without any further reading, he announces this book to be relevant in a “Post-modern context”. I understand why he does it but think it will not last. Then he begins to stamp his own meaning on the cover. He takes the three words *Fantomas*, *Fragments* and *Fictions* and works them into the third person Pietilä again.

He wants to control the meaning as if it is not allowed to float, as if it is not allowed to have the ambiguity that he so enjoys. As if the very flight necessary to survive has gone. It’s an unnerving moment, again autistic in the way it can cancel out his insight.

Does he dislike the idea of complexity whilst he continually discusses it? Does he need to erase himself from the fixed sentiment of the established Academician of Finnish Architecture? Is he embarrassed at the Academy or is he hiding the attack that will come? How much he appears to fear the critique that relies on so little to display its arrogance! Is he one of Finland’s best architects *in spite of the critique?*

I imagine the Bear worrying about it more now. Is it because I too would worry about this? The openness of his own world turns back on him. Has it gone to his ‘head’? The society makes sure of this and will do so in the future too.

If the book can float and allow different interpretations over the years, over a decade then surely I must be allowed the same luxury, the privilege of error. Has he not done this continuously to ensure he keeps a sovereign hold over his own intentions?

Yet he lets the past float as it closes in. He fears the flight in others whilst our friendship celebrates the flight in himself. He senses the heaviness of the day and then lightens.

He returns from *Mäntyniemi*, the site of the new Finnish President's official residence. I remember his phrase "language is cleverer than man." He begins to play, the activity that pleases him the most. To game with language itself.

"Fantomastic," he says and speaks of the lathe as he watched the workmen on site. In this way he alters the meaning, re-contextualises it. Keeps it his own, keeps it accessible and closed at the same time.

"Fragments," he says, "yes in the rock, the shards of the site... a literal reminder of the Ice Age." I know he hasn't finished. "Fictional, the architectural process is fictional." He is pleased with this little run. "Your titles are good, contemporary," he pauses and looks around, "and acceptable."

It's tempting to think that is the end of our conversation. But of course, it's not! Tomorrow he will re-occupy the words, just as he will re-occupy life and architecture, in a different way. Anxiety may grow, or calmness may intervene.

Have I gone too far? The book on the architect will take years to be understood. Maybe never. Maybe it will be ignored, resisted. Maybe it has to be ignored. Maybe it will be integrated into the forgotten canon of Finnish architecture and its history read, un-read and revised at the same time.

Didley squat as Vonnegut says! It is after all the end of cleverness, too. Every book is a suicide of one's own sense and non-sense. Will he turn on me when he actually begins to read this book, eating my head off? And does he really accept that I cannot show him anything before it is finished. I knew well enough if I did, he would have re-written almost every line, just as he did with another book earlier in the decade.²⁸

He begins to take creative exception to everything written. It's inevitable, part of being the third person in someone else's life. To remain sovereign, yet vulnerable, this hold is necessary to withstand the ignorance others will bring to this intimacy.

“An anti-heroic heroism is what I have attempted,” he says. Does he mean this? The balance is tilting. Is it serious, or has he failed to take on the ethics and aesthetics of ambiguity in a serious way? Has this become so interior?

Like Paul Celan? The architect climbing inside himself forever? Has he ever acknowledged the existentialist background to all his thinking? No real comfort in the reading of Hegel and the perfect imperfection of the system proposed.

Silly idea of mine, this consolation of a life lived between architecture. Instead, De Beauvoir is more apt: “existentialism does not offer... the consolations of an abstract evasion: existentialism proposes no evasion.”

No evasion. If man is free, he is individualistic but not solipsistic. This is not autism, this is the ruse of incompleteness, the necessity of keeping the goal of life and architecture as one which will always recede and never be achieved.

On the contrary, its ethics offers the contemplation of failure: “But this element of failure,” De Beauvoir writes in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, “is a very condition of his life; one can never dream of eliminating it without immediately dreaming of death. This does not mean one should consent to failure, but rather one must consent to struggle against it without respite.”²⁹

"I don't believe in any credo,' he says, "not the credos of some years back. Naturally, I was skilful at applying Corbu's method. Then I woke up. I was no longer a follower. Insight has become too complicated and muddled. It's all anecdotal, impossibly uncritical. I thought I could organise my insights. But I'm tired of Modernism, of its jargon."

A frail ontology, a fragile ontology or an insecure ontology? Without respite! I realise I won't be around for a couple of years. I will disappear. When the book *Writing Architecture* comes out, I have the feeling, the strong possibility, of being 'exactly wrong'! The Bear is silent.

26.11.1989. What makes me think this friendship, this awkward intimacy has to move on? Is it possible for him to maintain it now? Does he need to? He will probably die before his colleagues start revising their own history and significance.

I watch him take the medicine, neatly arranged for him in those plastic containers that contain the pills for the week and the month. Does he remember them? Does he need reminding? Am I ungenerous in thinking friendliness as opposed to friendship can become forced, calculated? Is it then time to leave? A secure friendship must survive this hysteria.

There is a panic around. A panic in this country too. He sits, staring at the irrationalism that he has faced over the years. Reduced to pathos, there are times now when the individual is reduced to service. Impetuous, the tantrums thrown are long gone. I have watched someone else grow up and away just as I am doing the same now.

The country is over for me now. Intellectually, we pass on and the friendship slips into another mode. We deny the closeness of knowledge, the intimacy of error. I monitor his waywardness when in fact it is my own. Leaving, suspicions will grow.

It appears that I have planned this exile and exit all along. I have done things in Finland only to my own advantage. Life was unnecessarily blurred with an impossible architecture. I am to blame. The impossible cleverness, the joke knowledge is all about to end. The book, any book on architecture, is no longer about what it should be.

The subject, the object, the third person; this is a betrayal. But a betrayal of what? Of Pietilä? Of the first person? Of knowledge, interpretations, representations, misunderstandings? The architect no longer needs an audience, the listening ear. He withdraws to preserve intimacy.

But it is me who has used the wandering and erring, the creative cheating to stay in between life and architecture. Not one thing or the other. The *in-between* that no longer listens for too long, the narcissism of one's own calculated existence.

Not systematic means and not being understood. In reality we have both been more systematic than others. I am tempted to think this might bring me later, in some years, to understand the infinite. But that's going too far. Friendship must let go. The Bear will turn one last time.

Estrangement has been the most creative, it is the most lonely! The society has continued its rudeness but senses the silence. It is possible to think about writing without being confused.

The presents are given and taken back. Like a sweater, an automatic gift meaning nothing more than the offer of shelter. The presence of the foreigner will – eventually – be no longer tolerable or tenable.

If the architect remains a strong but minor figure in world architecture, it will not be because of any contribution of mine. And if he becomes a major figure, it will also be nothing to do with his survival of continual negation and criticism.

About all this opposition I have a strange thought. Could the architect have taken out a contract on negation to succeed at the expense of a re-invented self? The words are too difficult now, the ideas unnecessary.

I haven't the heart to mime any more of this. I must let go. His identity will take years now to become tangible and accessible again to the society. Pietilä became a fiction some years ago and no one will quite realise who was responsible for this fiction. Friendship survives. When it leaves, it closes the door and takes the person inside to emerge in other ways. Better be the head of an ass than the tail of a horse!

26.11.1989 It is possible that I have written myself out of and beyond this architect known as Reima Pietilä into a situation that I never imagined. Not only will he ignore the debate he will have to. He will also realise that I have inhabited the invention that has kept us *in-between* each other.

For the last few days, the Bear has constantly been talking about being misunderstood, about incomprehensibility. But I cannot do anything about this incomprehensibility that he momentarily uses to shelter an increasing disenchantment. He notes how many of the new texts on architecture are incomprehensible.

He is right! They are fictions, he says. The fascination for the narrative echoes back to his own: Morphosis, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Libeskind, Eisenman. He was always prepared to dissent with his Modernist colleagues, the young ones, but he never intended to defect. His project was Modernist.

The laughter saved its pretence. He laughed at the impossible seriousness of his colleagues. He wrote in order to dissent. Against the deadly serious, he became to some 'deadly serious'. Saint Pietilä? Little do they know!

10.12.1989. *Writing Architecture* was published yesterday. The publisher takes the Bear a copy. The architect seems to ignore the book. He walks around it like a suspicious package. Like a film director planning his shot sequence, or a detective putting on white gloves and lifting it with the end of a pencil to avoid fingerprints.

It is a strange object, as if he has never seen a book before. "You've written three books," he says. He must delay his encounter with the book. It will be put off for months, years even. Have I planned this? Is this what I had in mind? No one need open the cellophaned book, no one need take it out of its elegantly and neutrally designed grey case.

The end of cleverness means the end of opening the book. This is not the book that adds nothing to the present image of the architecture, to the present image of the architect. This is the impossible book on the architect, the one that could not and should not be written. He prefers to live in the idea of an expected book, or a book-to-come. This is too finite. He prefers the infinite. I have transgressed. The ruse is over. The critique too far.

Nothing to say except, as he lifts the book up with a pencil and sneaks a view under it: "I've never revealed the real construction and structure of the buildings because my enemies would then see them and come to know them." I think he thinks the book had betrayed that silence. He has given too much away, heads I win, tails you lose.



Some years later (2004), 11 years after his death, I am remembering and writing in another journal. "The Bear turned, head down, hands gripping the wine glass. The body was strapped to a machine by then, 1993."

"I worry about not knowing who I am," André Gide wrote. "I don't even know who I want to be; but I do know that I have to make a choice. I feel in me thousands of possibilities but cannot resign myself to want to be just one of them. And it frightens me, every moment, every word I write, to think that this is one more indelible trait of my image which is taking hold."³⁰

I am back in Helsinki, back in that first room that I entered in 1974. The only signs left from 30 years ago are the long red, long black curtains that were used to darken the room for the photographic machine, the machine everyone referred to as *Ihmekone* (Wonder-Machine).

This machine enlarged drawings and sketches to scale and saved much work. In the corner of this room near the door had been the bed that I slept in for the first time after the party on Huvilakatu. I then moved away to a flat in Lapinlahdenkatu, the second of almost 20 addresses I would have in Helsinki over 20 years.

Now the waterbed which used to be in the small cell upstairs, in his hermitage, is here. On the bed, all moves, and all is moved. It is the Beckett bed for me; the lines from *Krapp's Last Tape*, the punt pushed out into the stream and drifting where "she lay stretched out on the floorboards... We drifted in among the flags and stuck. The way they went down, sighing, before the stem... I lay down across her with my face in her breasts and my hand on her. We lay there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side."³¹

I can remember sitting on the side of the waterbed, with the architect, lying back trying to read. He was a little like Krapp stopping the tape-recorder, remembering, talking then and talking now. Always revising what he had said before.

The bed moved as he moved, it was impossible to stay still, impossible not to laugh. Nowhere to sit now amongst the clothes, tools, and dust. The waterbed is where I work with these notes as I look back over the small orange leather notebook begun in 1989 upon my return from India. Above are the wooden shelves, built in 1974 by students in the office. These held the rolls of drawings from previous projects. Now the drawings have long gone upstairs to be archived. Only some stray cardboard rolls lie there now along with his daughter Annukka's Diploma Project from 1995.

I remember the room always being hot because the windows were never opened. Even now in the end of May with rain in the air, the window open, the room is still insufferable. The air is thick with the dust of old completed projects, abandoned projects, unbuilt projects. Ideas, photographs of the difficult years, come back to mind. The floor is painted orange, a tribute probably to the late 1960s, the early 1970s. The floor outside is painted lime green. Modern, immediate, psychedelic colours.

There is something anti-academic in all this, always has been. I recall what Dave Hickey wrote in *Air Guitar*: "So, in general we might say that these anti-academic styles prioritize complexity over simplicity, pattern over form, repetition over composition, feminine over masculine, curvilinear over rectilinear, the fractal, the differential, and the chaotic over the Euclidean order."³² Undoubtedly Pietilä!

I cannot help associate all this even now, with the era of psychedelic art, the orange and lime green, “the horror vacui of psychedelic art” according to Hickey which “deploys itself like an incandescent bridge.” Funny, but the lines fit and I’d do anything to make them less appropriate. The words capture the infinite loss in this friendship that now float back to me whilst lying on this waterbed.

The Prison House of Language by Fredric Jameson was a book on language, linguistics and the Russian Formalists. I can’t remember whether I did actually share this with the Bear and, if so, did he read more than some lines, or a page? As Hickey puts it: “... it is one thing to believe, on theoretical evidence, that we live in the prison-house of language, it is quite another to know it, to actually peek into the slippery emptiness as the Bastille explodes around you. Yet psychedelic art takes this apparent occasion for despair and celebrates our escape from linguistic control by flowing out, filling that rippling void with meaningful light, laughter, and a gorgeous profusion.”

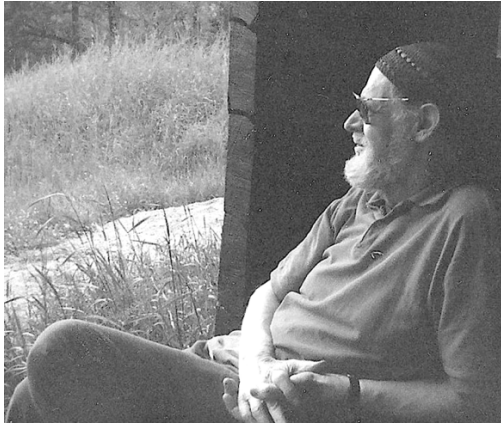
For me, the meaningful laughter will all but be denied as the archive closes in and the scholars search for the seriousness in the theoretical evidence and celebrate linguistic control once more. Had the architect lived on, I imagine him in the position of the composer Einojuhani Rautavaara. In a discount bookshop in the Asematunneli in Helsinki, I find a book on Rautavaara’s life and begin reading it here on the waterbed.

Perhaps the society is lucky though that it doesn't get a version of a life lived in-between family, theory and poetry. Thankfully he will not be put through this invention. It didn't matter then it doesn't matter now. Rautavaara could have been a painter, a writer or a filmmaker. He didn't have to be a musician, he hasn't been a musician, as he himself has said. He wasn't an architect!

There are words in Finnish I think I understand. They are relevant but remain so forlorn, untranslatable. "Loppujen lopuksi Helsingin yliopistosta ja filosofian maisterin tutkinnosta tuli Rautavaaran turvallinen tupakkakauppa, takaportti jos säveltäminen ei onnistuisi." ["In the end, the University of Helsinki and a master's degree in the humanities became Rautavaara's secure tobacconist, a way out if the composing didn't succeed."]³³

For some reason, at 17 years of age, Rautavaara chose music. But he also felt he needed to seek another job, just in case. Noticing the tobacconist in his neighbourhood, sensing a quiet life, he imagined sitting in the back room and composing there when he had no customers. In the summer he imagined sitting in the sun at the front of the shop with his dog and a good book.

I leave Rautavaara for another time. Perhaps someone will write a book about Reima Pietilä's world and call it *The Lost Mathematician*. He wanted to be a philosopher or a mathematician. He wasn't born to be an architect, he said. Once he told me in all seriousness, it might all have been an accident. Then the Bear would smile. We both lived that accident.



postscript

We Let the Goldfish Go

When we let, then we bet

On Lester Piggott when we met

We let the goldfish go.

Van Morrison In the Days Before Rock 'n' Roll³⁴

I was in the grounds of Sabbatsberg Hospital, in *The Garden of Senses* in central Stockholm, 1997, a few years after Pietilä's death. It was when I saw an elderly man sitting in a wheelchair, attended by his wife that I thought again about an anti-memoir. My two-year old daughter was nearby feeding her toy rabbit Pontus. We were both besides the small pool which had been stocked with fish for the benefit, we assumed, of the elderly who used the garden as therapy and as a kind of sanatorium. Through the dark water of the overgrown sides of the small pool it was possible to watch the fish group and re-group. "Look," my daughter said, "they are doing a dance. The fish are dancing."

I smiled and recalled a favourite line from a Van Morrison song (In the Days Before Rock N Roll): "*we let the goldfish go.*" As children we would often go to a funfair. There were stalls, especially one with water and toy ducks moving around. You were given a bamboo pole with a hook affixed to a small fishing line.

We were supposed to try and hook a toy duck as they moved and bobbed around in the choppy water. Successful, you were given a small goldfish in a plastic bag. We usually took them home to a bowl always waiting for such a fish. Van Morrison didn't do that. I didn't do that. Instead, we let the goldfish go. I thought of the architect, Reima Pietilä. I couldn't help feeling the society, the culture, the profession, other architects had let the goldfish go.

The man in the wheelchair, slightly overdressed as the elderly can be for such a summer afternoon, was attempting to lift up his hand as if to greet his wife. Or was it to remove the crumbs from his mouth? He couldn't make it. The hand fell back. "Let's go," my daughter said, "Pontus wants real food."

The hand reminded me of the last time I saw Pietilä do that; the morning of his 70th birthday. He was in Mäntyniemi, the future residence of the Finnish President. It was unfinished and the builders had organised a birthday breakfast. I moved around with my small digital camera and filmed the moment. His hand went up in greeting, in silent acknowledgment.

Pietilä looked up, he was tired but dignified. You could read it on his face. His eyes would search for a restful place amidst all the people. He was behind it all a very shy man. He nodded. I knew we would discuss it all later in the evening. At 7 pm as I filmed in the apartment in Helsinki we spoke very briefly about this. Then he disappeared.

Roger Connah



The author first arrived in Helsinki, Finland in 1974, to study with the Finnish architect Reima Pietilä aboard the SS Baltikka, a Dutch cruiser re-fitted for the Baltikka Russian Shipping Line. Pietilä, at that time, worked with his wife (Raili) and was the ‘enfant terrible’ of Finnish architecture; the architect of works like Kaleva Church, Suvikumpu and the ‘infamous’ Dipoli Students’ Centre which were considered by many Finnish architects way off the scale of any reasonable and rational Finnish architecture! After 15 years of work, labour and writing with the architect, the author wrote *Writing Architecture* (Rakennustieto/MIT Press, 1989). The book was a journey through Raili and Reima Pietila’s architecture, situating them critically in the engaged experiments and communities of Modernism and Postmodernism of the 20th century. The book won the CICA International Critic’s Award for Outstanding Architectural Criticism (1991).

Publications: *What's Wrong with This Picture* (2025) *File under Buddhism and Architecture* (CCMH, Ottawa 2025); *Bear's Sleep is Bear's Work* (2025); *In Which Corner of Café Hawelka Did He Sit?* Gunther Domenig (2024); *Who's Afraid of Fashion - Azzedine Alaïa* (2024); *Timo Penttilä The School of Exile* Datutop, Tampere (2015); *Being: An Architect* (with Ian Ritchie) Royal Academy, London (2014); *The Piglet Years (Datutop 2007) The Rest is Silence: Zahoor ul Akhlaq* (Oxford University Press 2011); *Frank Heron & The Rocket Girls - N Alice Challinor* (Raketa, Stockholm 2009); *Finland: Modern Architectures in History* (Reaktion Press, London 2005); *How Architecture Got its Hump* (MIT 2001); *Zahoor ul Akhlaq* (Laal, Lahore 2000); *Aaltomania* (RK 2000); *Welcome to the Hotel Architecture* (MIT Press 1999); *Sa(l)vaged Modernism* (RT 1999); *Grace and Architecture* (RK 1998); *Centro Dipoli* (Testo & Immagine 1998); *Helsinki* (with Markku Piri RT 1996); *Tango Mäntyniemi* (Edita 1994); *The End of Finnish Architecture* (RK 1994); *K/K A Couples of Finns and Some Donald Ducks* (Edita 1991)

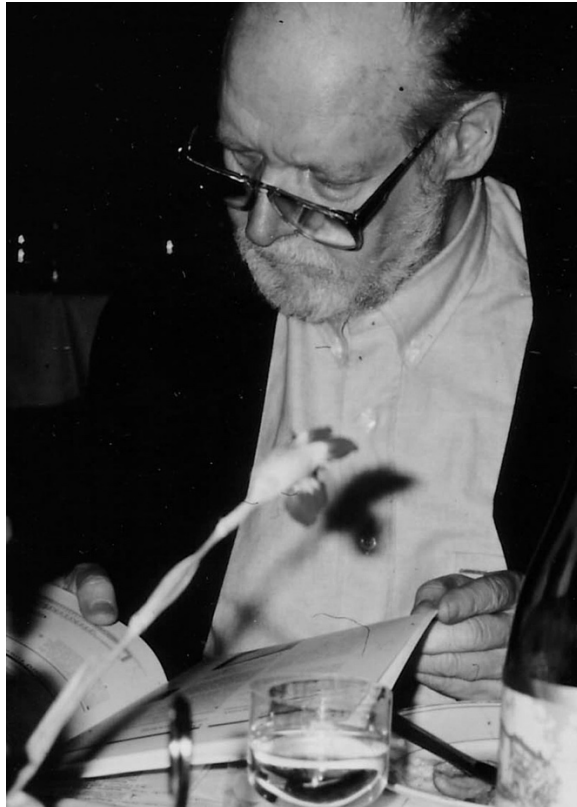
Vertigo Press *The Little White/Black Schoolbook* (2020); *The Anti-Library Pamphlets* vol 1-10 (2008-2015); *The Phoney Island of the Mind - 5 Texts for Nothing* (2015-2020); (Poetry) *A School of Thought* (2020); *The Diaspora of Guinness* (2020); *Follow the Ecstasy* (2022); *Love in the Age of Corona* (2023).

Exhibitions *Seven Famous Raincoats* Paris-Helsinki (1984-5); *Don't Go So Fast You'll Crash into Jacques Derrida* (Helsinki 1985); *Pietilä* (Delhi /Ahmedabad1986); *Kham: Space and the Act of Space* (Delhi 1986); *Zen and the Art of the Fluorescent Tube* (Delhi 1986); *Nexus:* (Ahmedabad, NID 1986); *Shelter* (Delhi 1987); *Satish Gujral Retrospective* (Delhi1988); *Aaltomania* (Helsinki-Amsterdam-Oslo 1997); *Waving not Drowning* (London 1998); *The Digital Garden* (2004), *The Architecture of Everything* (Ottawa 2017); *Paint it Black* (Fort Worth 2018), *Calligraphisms* (Gurgaon 2018)

Films: (H&M) *Sick City* (2019). *Black Walrus* (2009); *Involuntary Architecture* (2005); (Connah) *27 Minute Lies* (YLE, 1994), *Take Five* (YLE, 1993), *Drive* (YLE,1992).

Heron-Mazy Studio (Texas) for Alternative Architecture (Roger Connah & John Maruszczak (2001-25) *The Heron Mazy Compendium* (Vertigo Press 2017)

Pedagogies 2010-2020: www.iswearihavebeeneducated.net;



Reima Pietlä 1923-1993 © Connah

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- ¹ André Malraux, *Anti-Memoir*, New York, 1968 Bantam (1970) p.111.
- ² Arthur Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers*, London (1959), Pelikan (1968). p. 263.
- ³ Ibid. p.259.
- ⁴ Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, California, (1989) p. 9
- ⁵ Rabindranath Tagore, *My Life in Words*. Penguin, London (2019).
- ⁶ John Ashbery, *Flow Chart*. New York, (1991), p.29.
- ⁷ Pietilä's sister Tuulikki Pietilä was Tove Jansson's partner; there were many shared events and evenings.
- ⁸ This is not entirely accurate - there was a large exhibition of Pietilä's work in 2008 "Challenging Modern Architecture" at the Museum of Finnish Architecture. My own series of texts- 'Soothing Memos' were prepared for this occasion but remained unpublished. In 2005 there had been the international conference held appropriately in Dipoli called *Hikes into Pietilä Terrain*. eds. Aino Niskanen, Sirkkaliisa Jetsonen, Tommi Lindh, Taiteentutkija 4, Rakennustaiteen Seura, Taidehistorian seura (Helsinki 2003).
- ⁹ Pentti Saarikoski *Trilogy*, transl. Anselm Hollo: *The Dance Floor on the Mountain* (1977); *Invitation to the Dance* (1980); *The Dark One's Dances* p171 (La Alameda Press, Albuquerque (2003)
- ¹⁰ Coleman Barks, *Rumi - The Big Red Book*, As-Sabur, The Patient, pp252-261.
- ¹¹ R D Laing *The Divided Self Pelican* (1965) p.52
- ¹² "I have this book but couldn't find the quote. That's not to say it is not there, but Google gave no hits either. Though I did find the line: *Drunk on feeling I drift but never stray.*" (Griffiths) This would certainly resonate with Pietilä's disquiet – many times he'd appear drunk on feeling and indeed appear to drift. But of course, he would never 'stray'. From what: a predetermined but unending narrative?
- ¹³ Georges Bataille, *The Impossible*. City Lights, San Francisco (1991).
- ¹⁴ Pietilä was referring to Johannes Gabriel Granö (J S Granö), *Puhdas Maantiede/Pure Geography* (1930); both Reima and Raili Pietilä were interested in this pre-cursor to *Landscape Science*.
- ¹⁵ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Roots of Modern Architecture*. A.D.A. Edita, Tokyo (1988).
- ¹⁶ R & S also signified our two conversational selves: Reima and Severi (the latter was the nickname given me within the Pietilä office.)
- ¹⁷ Pentti Saarikoski *The Dark One Dances, Trilogy*, Alameda Press (2003) p.172
- ¹⁸ Paavo Haavikko, *The Bowmen* (1955), in *Paavo Haavikko and Tomas Tranströmer – Selected Poems*. Translated by Anselm Hollo. Penguin, London (1974), pp.29-30. Hollo later re-translated some of Haavikko's poems including this one but I have chosen to remain with the 1974 version.
- ¹⁹ Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*. Verso, London (1980).
- ²⁰ Probably: Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*. Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City (1985)..
- ²¹ Roger Poole, *Towards Deep Subjectivity* Allen Lane (1972). Steiner had written a favourable review of the book for The Sunday Times.

²² Markku Eskelinen and Jyrki Lehtola, *Jälkisanat: sianhoito-opas*. WSOY, Helsinki (1987). This was a polemical ‘pamphlet’ of course, not an actual guide to swine husbandry. As student/mentee, and later disciple of the well-known younger philosopher Esa Saarinen, the writers ripped into Georg Henrik Von Wright, the Finnish philosopher and friend of Wittgenstein. Mockery of Wittgenstein’s students/disciples in *Wittgenstein’s Poker*. Saying that his texts sound like a 3-year old explaining how to use the toilet to a 2 year old was of course a phrase too far. File under? *Trout Fishing in America* by Richard Brautigan comes to mind.

²³ Juhani Pallasmaa (ed.), *Animal Architecture*. Museum of Finnish Architecture, Helsinki (1995).

²⁴ V.S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival*. Viking Press, London (1987).

²⁵ Pentti Saarikoski, *Helsinki*. Selected poems of Pentti Saarikoski. Translated from the Finnish by Anselm Hollo. Rapp & Carroll, London (1967).

²⁶ This is something one might imagine Wittgenstein saying – the important point here being the ‘meaning as use’ of words. Here ‘follows’ and seemingly has the same meaning in both statements. But actually not. (Griffiths)

²⁷ Again, a sort of Wittgenstein-ism: “The subject does not belong to the world, but it is a limit of the world” AND “It seems to me that in every country, I come across a chapter headed ‘Wisdom’. And then I know exactly what is going to follow: ‘vanity of vanities, all is vanity’.” Perhaps more can be made of how both Pietilä and Wittgenstein both denied and looked towards the possibility of a deeply private language. We might today mention the work of Antonio Damasio and the ‘soul dust’ of Nicholas Humphrey.

²⁸ The notes we wrote together for Malcom Quantrill’s book *Pietilä: Context and Modernism*, Otava, Helsinki (1984) can be found in the Pietilä Archive. They were extensive and Pietilä took creative exception to many lines by the author, Quantrill, to the point of re-inventing and almost derailing the book itself. I wrote the third version of this book and passed it back to the author.

²⁹ De Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, op cit., p.157

³⁰ In searching for the reference, this wording is found in Andy Stafford, *Roland Barthes: Phenomenon and Myth – An Intellectual Biography*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh (1986), p. 193. There is however a rather different translation from the Gide Diaries. “I am anxious to know what I shall be; I don’t even know what I want to be, but I do know that I must choose. I should like to progress on safe and sure roads that lead only to the point where I have decided to go. But I don’t know; I don’t know what I ought to want. I am aware of a thousand possibilities in me, but I cannot resign myself to want to be only one of them. And every moment, at every word I write, at each gesture I make, I am terrified at the thought that this is one more ineradicable feature of my physiognomy becoming fixed...” André Gide, “January 3, 1892”, in *Journals: Volume 1, 1889-1913*. University of Illinois Press, Champaign, Ill. (2000)

³¹ Samuel Beckett, *Krapp’s Last Tape*, Faber, London (1959).

³² Dave Hickey, *Air Guitar: Essays on art and democracy*. Art Issues Press, Los Angeles (1997), pp.94-94.

³³ Pekka Hako, *Unien Lahja: Einojuhani Rautavaaran Maailma*. Ajatus (2000) pp.24 25.

³⁴ in *The Days Before Rock n Roll*, Van Morrison, *Enlightenment* (1990)



978-1-987899-18-4