



Poul Erik Skriver
Knud Holscher – Architect and Industrial Designer

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Architect and industrial designer Knud Holscher is well known not only in Denmark, but also in the rest of the world. His buildings include Odense University, the additions to the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, the extension of Kastrup Airport and the National Museum in Bahrain. His most famous work in the field of industrial design is the d-line series of door-handles, and the most recent being the Quinta spotlights for the German company ERCO.

Holscher is an outstanding representative of an architectural attitude which was more or less neglected by Deconstructivism and the ruling aestheticism characteristic of the last decades. Thus he still believes that architecture and design are essentially a matter of daily life. His enormous scope ranging from classic tectonic business to the design of everyday things such as lavatories and vacuum jugs indicates his devotion to overall solutions as well as his passionate attention to detail. In this one cannot but recognize the influence of the Danish architect Arne Jacobsen with whom Holscher started his career. For Holscher architecture and design have nothing to do with accidental qualities that vary through time according to aesthetic conventions; rather he conceives it as an intrinsic dimension in our metabolism with the world. For him designing is solving problems. It has to do with our body, with our hands, with our surroundings before it becomes a fancy category of the mind. Good design accumulates all the aspects of a specific use in one form and thereby reduces complexity to such an extent that the form seems almost natural. Only malfunction makes you ask a door-handle why it looks the way it does.

A key word for both the architect and the industrial designer Knud Holscher is technological simplification, but nevertheless by means of technology. There is no romantic nor nostalgic spirit in his works except for the fundamental care that he thinks architecture and industrial design should still be rooted in.

Poul Erik Tøjner is a critic and editor on the weekly newspaper *Weekendavisen* in Copenhagen. He has studied philosophy and literature at the University of Copenhagen and has written a PhD on Søren Kierkegaard. His main interests as a writer are the visual arts, poetry and philosophy. Poul Erik Skriver, qualified as an architect, has been editor of *Arkitekten* and *Arkitektur DK* for many decades. He has written numerous articles in newspapers and periodicals both in Denmark and in other countries and has been a contributor to several anthologies.

Distributors

Brockhaus Commission
Kreidlerstraße 9
D-70806 Kornwestheim
Germany
tel. +49-7154-1327-33
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