

Geminibygningen - UK
DVT/ALA/KH

The Dutch drawing office MVRDV has managed to create a new expression -

- of the old silos without really touching them.

I'm Dorte Mandrup.
I'm an architect and a professor.

I have a practice in Copenhagen.

We're on the south side of the harbour, with medieval Copenhagen over there.

The old commercial harbour here has been changed over the past ten years.

We're right in front of the Gemini residence which was converted -

- by the Dutch drawing office MVRDV after a competition.

Their fine trick was to keep the old silos and use them as access roads -

- and as a construction -

- for the apartments that have been hung on the outside.

Along with this, the city has developed a lot in the past 10 years.

The entire way of thinking urban space -

- and the focus on urban space and architectural quality.

And a lot of foreign architects have been asked to contribute -

- to the development of Copenhagen.

There's Jean Nouvel's new Concert Hall and MVRDV here.

There are various other initiatives -

- such as a grand scheme made by Dutch architects -

- and inspired by Dutch landscape
in the shape of a canal town.

Interestingly enough it comes 400
years after King Christian IV invited -

- Dutch architects to come here
and build Christianshavn -

- which is one of the finest quarters
in Copenhagen ... and a canal town.

Converting old industrial buildings -

- or buildings serving
a different purpose is something -

- that we do quite a lot, apart from
building new houses, of course.

We transformed an old water tower
into a youth residence -

- and an after-school centre.

The old water container is still there,
and it is still a water tower -

- but we've added several other
functions to the existing construction.

Fortunately we, and Europe in general,
have kept in mind -

- that industrial buildings are also
part of our cultural heritage.

It's not just the fine century-old
mansions or citizen's houses -

- that should be preserved, but the
entire cultural heritage is important -

- including
the industrial culture.

Danish practices have always
cooperated with foreigners.

Partly on an exchange basis
to gain inspiration -

- and partly as study tours.