

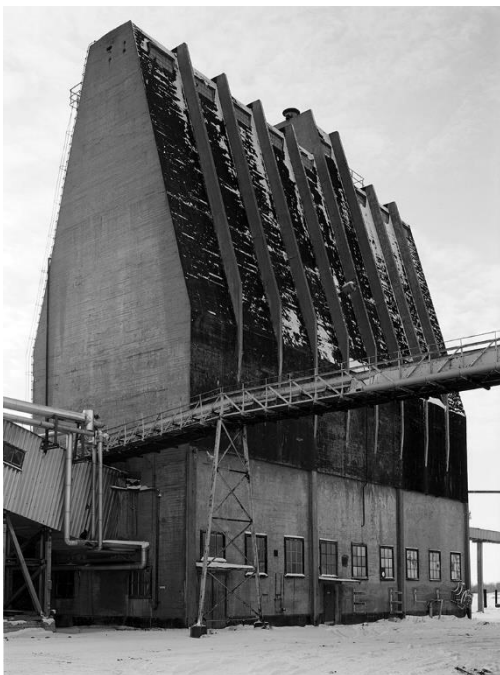
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 17/12/2020

Factum Foundation and the Oulu University of Applied Sciences to partner up on the AALTOSILO for Digital Preservation

In August 2020, Factum Foundation and award-winning Skene Catling de la Peña architects purchased Alvar Aalto's iconic wood chip Silo in Oulu, Finland. The aim is to turn the cathedral-like concrete structure into a new research centre, the AALTOSILO for Digital Preservation, focused on Industrial Heritage and its environmental impact.

The AALTOSILO is to be a research and training centre that promotes the use of 3D-technologies in the preservation of cultural and environmental heritage, where the hardware and software needed for this purpose will be developed. The goal is to establish a Nordic network of collaborators across Finland, Sweden and Norway, including those with many years of experience documenting industrial and environmental heritage in the north and the arctic circle.

Following recent conversations, Factum Foundation and the Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Oamk) are delighted to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding which establishes the terms of a collaboration between both institutions. The project will offer an innovative research and training program that responds to theoretical, practical and ethical imperatives surrounding the use of new and emerging digital technologies for the conservation and rehabilitation of the built heritage in the Nordic countries. Graduate students, PhD candidates, and post-doctoral fellows will have the opportunity to collaborate on interdisciplinary research and training with some of the world's leading academics and professionals working with the application of digital technologies for architectural heritage.



The creation of a centre of technology applied to preservation in Oulu is a thoughtful and provocative call to action. Aalto's Silo, a space once for storing wood chips, will become a store for knowledge – a place focused on sharing human skills, transferring technology and gathering diverse types of information for condition monitoring and to assist in-depth study.

The fundraising is ongoing to support the restoration of this great building, empower the local community and open up the AALTOSILO to an international audience dedicated to recording and revealing industrial architecture and the changing environment of the region. The renovation work is scheduled to start in Spring 2021.

The Alvar Aalto Silo in Oulu, Finland © Raimo Ahonen

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Notes to editors

Factum Foundation was established in 2009 to demonstrate the importance of documenting, monitoring, studying, re-creating and disseminating the world’s cultural heritage through the rigorous development of high-resolution recording and re-materialisation techniques. Factum Foundation has a proven track record in the recording of heritage – both cultural and climate related – and in the preservation of architectural masterpieces through putting them to new uses (such as Factum’s ARCHiVe project – the Analysis and Recording of Cultural Heritage in Venice, the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative in the Valley of the Kings in Luxor and The Resurrection of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry). A core team has now been assembled to progress the project which includes fund-raisers, architects, engineers and conservation specialists.

Skene Catling de la Peña take a unique approach that they call ‘Geoarchaeology’, where they excavate meaning from context as a means of developing architecture. This involves transforming observations about the composition of the earth, historical artefacts and the cultural landscapes of their commissions. They are experienced in the design and integration of contemporary projects into Grade I and II listed buildings, and in creating interventions within sensitive historic contexts. Recent work includes the Flint House for Jacob Rothschild, which was ‘extruded’ from the Buckinghamshire landscape of the Grade I listed Waddesdon Manor estate, Buckinghamshire. This building won the RIBA ‘House of the Year’ for 2015. Skene Catling de la Peña has won many awards and has been extensively published internationally.

Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Oamk) is one of the largest universities of applied sciences in Finland with over 9000 students and 550 members of staff. Its region of operation, the Oulu Region, has been one of the country’s five growth-centres for more than three decades, especially within the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry. Oulu is currently the fast-growing region in Finland and Oamk has had a strong industrial and business focus contributing to the success of the whole of Northern Finland.

Communication and press

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