

In Finland Juha Leiviskä is equally clear that light needs to be thought of as a building material. Writing about Männistö church and parish centre in Kuopio he says that 'the most important building material of the church itself is daylight, which affects the space mainly as indirect reflections, which are at their most intense in the late morning, during morning service . . . I have tried especially to ensure that all components of the space, such as different kinds of walls with their works of art, the ceiling, the slanting gallery and the organ belong together and form an entity. The character of the spaces changes continually according to the seasons, the time of day, the sun and the clouds' (Leiviskä, 1999, p.130).

Leiviskä was first impressed by the qualities of reflected light on a visit to Southern Germany as a student. Balthasar Neumann's church at the Benedictine Abbey in Neresheim, started in 1750, continues to be referred to by Leiviskä in his writings to this day. He recorded some of the effects in water-colours during the trip and shows these in his lectures as an early and abiding influence. His teacher called the late Baroque interiors of southern Germany 'instruments for light to play on'. Leiviskä has spent much of his architectural energy creating contemporary equivalents to that Baroque poetry of light.

A comparison between the shafts of hanging textiles and the vertical building planes at Myyrmäki church and parish centre with the interior of Neresheim gives convincing confirmation to Leiviskä's statement that 'one possible model for Myyrmäki may well have been Neresheim, Balthasar Neumann's great abbey church in South Germany' (Leiviskä, 1999, p.74).

How light is reflected and what we read into the qualities of that reflected light affects our perception of the solids, of the black lines we draw; immaterial light changes the materials of building. At Bagsvaerd church, on the northern fringes of Copenhagen, Jørn Utzon, its architect, suspends a wave-like baldechino above the altar. It looks as light as clouds moving

Below
Balthasar Neumann,
Benedictine Abbey,
Neresheim, Germany;
the church was consecrat-
ed in 1792, nearly forty
years after the death of
Neumann

