

VELUX®

BERRY COTTAGE

A Weekend House in the Countryside





THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

Martin Kallesø founded his architectural practice, Kallesø Arkitekter, in 2009 and was joined by his wife, Pil Kallesø, in the spring of 2024. Both are alumni of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' School of Architecture. Together, they design and deliver a range of projects, from urban administrative buildings to holiday cottages in spectacular seaside locations. But it is for residential buildings that their hearts beat.

"For us, a home is one of the finest things we, as architects, can design – it is the closest thing, a framework for the life we live."

Martin and Pil Kallesø, Kallesø Arkitekter

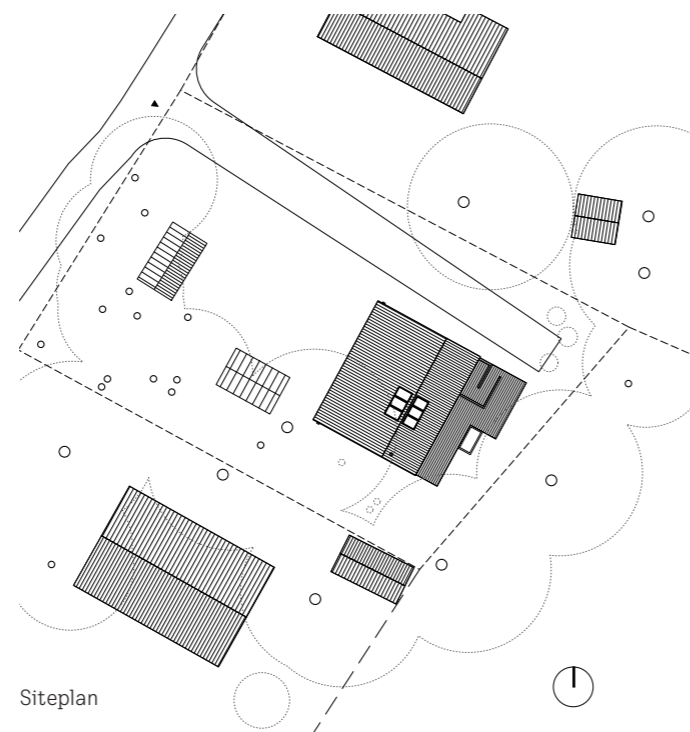
The couple work from home (where they also care for their toddlers) on the landmark Romerhusene housing estate designed in 1961 by Danish architect Jørn Utzon.

At Kallesø Arkitekter, working methods are traditional with a core focus on the aesthetics of buildings. Martin is highly skilled in architectural drawing, something he uses at early design stage to communicate concepts to clients. He and his wife are crafts-based makers who utilise traditional physical model making and create mood boards alongside using digital technologies. They are committed to sustainability, preserving heritage buildings, understanding and using traditional construction methods and to creating beautiful spaces for future generations.

For Martin, context is about more than the neighbourhood around a building site. He likes to quote Portuguese architect and architectural educator Álvaro Siza to emphasise the importance of context, ie climate, socio-economic factors, local vernaculars and building traditions. 'When I work in Holland, I am Dutch,' said Siza. 'When I work in Germany, I am German.'

"Good architecture is sustainable, as no one tears down a great house. We believe in good, contextual architecture made of beautiful, durable materials that age gracefully."

Martin Kallesø, Kallesø Arkitekter



LIVING IN THE FOREST

When Copenhagen residents Majken and Christoffer decided to look for a weekend holiday home, they discovered and fell in love with a plot in Rågeleje, a seaside village north of Helsingør, Denmark. The couple run a company called The Greenery and make wooden greenhouses for private customers - a business born of a passion for DIY, traditional wooden construction and nature.

Their plot was a narrow strip of land that once provided secondary access to a neighbouring farm and was put up for sale independently of the main property. The site served as a tractor driveway, but was also a remnant of an old countryside road, bearing witness to the history of the region. While the driveway was visible, the site itself emerged slowly on approach - a clearing surrounded by imposing trees.

Despite being seasoned DIY-ers with lots of ideas, Majken and Christoffer knew they needed an architect to help design a home that they would be able to build themselves. While researching, they came across Martin's work online and arranged to meet him on-site.

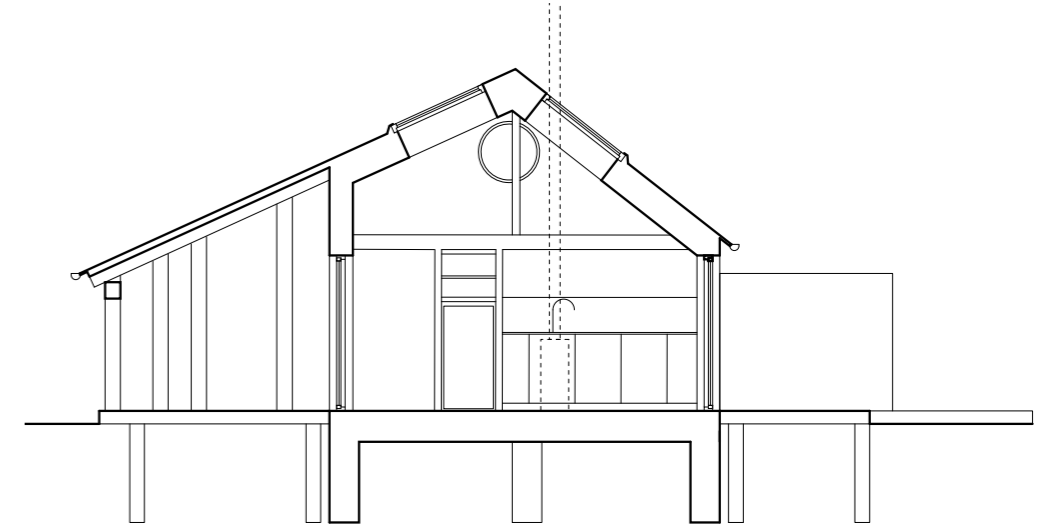
Initially hesitant because of the low budget, Martin warmed to the concept of creating a settlement of buildings within woodland rather than one large imposing house that would dominate the plot. Majken and Christoffer imagined a main house, a guesthouse and a greenhouse in symbiosis with the trees. Martin was captivated by their vision of tiny houses and of a covered porch supported by tree trunks rather than columns.



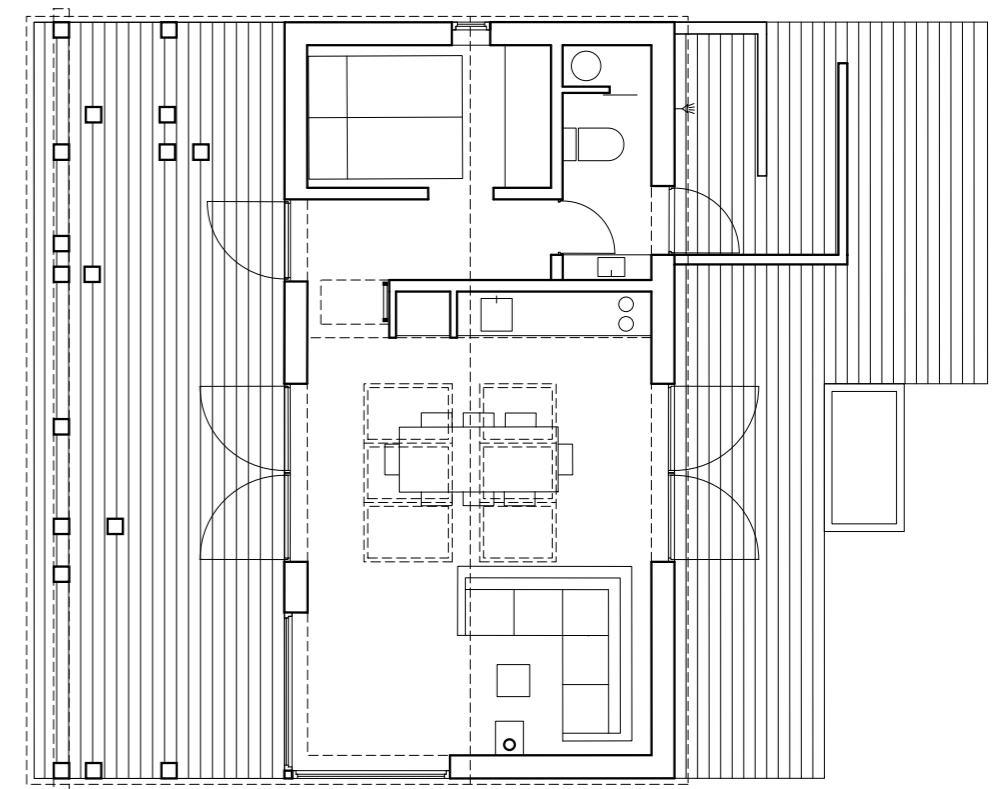
"We don't have a style; our architecture is born out of constraints, demands, budget, site, and the broader context in which we design."

Martin and Pil Kallesø, Kallesø Arkitekter





Cross section through the middle of the main house. The two 3in1 VELUX windows are located close to the ridge, above the dining table. Two French doors connect the front deck to the rear covered porch.



Floorplan. All that's needed for a relaxing stay in a few square metres. The deck and porch are also living spaces - even the shower is outside. Hot water is supplied by a boiler in the bathroom and the house is heated by a wood stove and electric floor heating. Despite its tiny size, the wood stove is very efficient, and Majken and Christoffer open the roof windows to ventilate and cool the room.





"We wanted plenty of daylight in the main house and see the sky and treetops. VELUX roof windows were the obvious choice. I opted for the smaller format of the 3in1 series, with three individual sashes in a single frame. The roof windows are remote controlled, close automatically when it rains and are solar-powered, eliminating the need for wiring."

Christoffer, homeowner

DESIGNING ON SITE

As Martin delved into the typology of the region's traditional villages and began an intense and fruitful dialogue with his clients, the project evolved.

Majken and Christoffer had explored Georgia in the USA before they came back to Copenhagen and set up their business. They fell in love with the American porch typology and were determined to have one of their own.

Their decision to go for three buildings had practical advantages. Majken and Christoffer's children are young adults who value privacy when visiting their parents' countryside property. A separate guesthouse does not need to be heated when not in use and, as a non-permanent construction without plumbing, does not require a building permit. Walking back and forth between the three buildings, showering outside and dining on the porch all contribute to a simple, outdoor lifestyle.

While Martin worked on securing a building permit for the main house, Christoffer constructed the guesthouse following the architectural plans. The greenhouse, a mid-sized option from The Greenery's product range, was erected on the southern edge of the plot. Although the main framework of Kallesø's design remained intact, the clients did make modifications on site during construction. Christoffer realised he wanted a glazed corner opening in the living room, allowing sunlight to be drawn in from the south-west. A small round window high up in the gable lets a sunbeam wander along the walls, marking the passing of hours.

"I like the round windows, because they counterbalance the more rational aspects of the design. They were a challenge for me to install, because I had never worked with round windows before."

Christoffer, homeowner

Last-minute tweaks were also made to the porch. Although a porch had been a pivotal part of the design from the outset, Martin and Christoffer decided on the location of each column late on, positioning them themselves on site. Martin insisted on using whole tree trunks, which Christoffer initially doubted, but later sourced and stored ahead of installation.

"It's not your standard architecture project where everything is precisely designed, planned and executed, but rather a playground to experiment with new ideas"

Christoffer, homeowner



"When we put up the tree trunk columns, the porch transformed from a carport-like structure into something poetic, organic, and beautiful."

Christoffer, homeowner





"The house has traditional, defined openings, with only one glazed corner connecting the interior to the nature outside."

Martin Kallesø, Kallesø Arkitekter



"With its tree columns, the porch transforms a modest house into something remarkable."

Martin Kallesø, Kallesø Arkitekter





THINK PINK

As soon as Majken and Christoffer finalised the greenhouse product they had been prototyping for a year, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Cut off from their usual activities, people turned to gardening, DIY projects and home cooking. Orders for elegant, easy-to-assemble wooden greenhouses surged and, in a very short time, The Greenery grew from a start-up into a stable company. Today, customers can order a DIY kit for self-assembly or opt for a premium service that includes on-site installation.

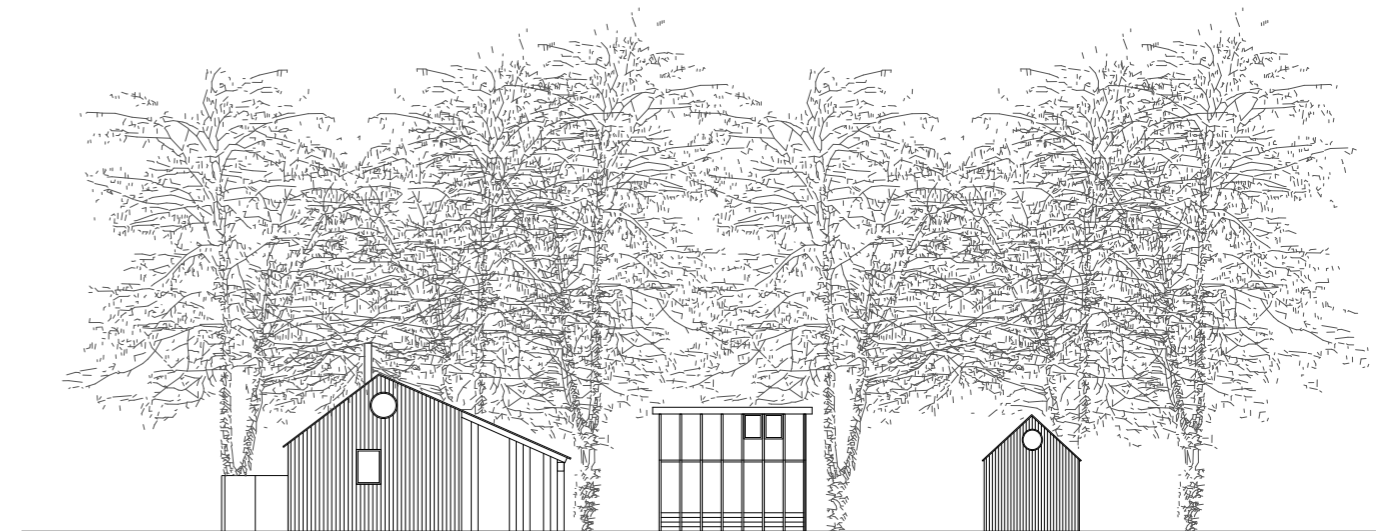
Architect and clients had initially envisioned serene greenish tones for the buildings, but Majken and Christoffer opted unexpectedly for a contrasting pink - not the classic Falu red of the Scandinavian vernacular, but something quite different.

The berry colour is called Yellow & Rose and is one option from a sophisticated colour palette developed for The Greenery with Copenhagen and Aarhus-based surface design specialist File Under Pop. For Majken and Christoffer, the shade 'brings out all the lush greens and everything we can't control!'

Martin, who had never used such a bright colour on his architectural projects, was initially uneasy about the choice. However, once he discovered that the pink hue resembled the colour of pine trees beneath their bark, he had a site-specific context for the specification.

"With his design, Martin Kallesø has captured our family's dream of outdoor living."

Christoffer, homeowner





PROJECT DATA

Client:	Private
Location:	Rågeleje
Architecture:	Kallesø Arkitekter
Year:	2024
Photography:	Mads Frederik Christensen

VELUX Danmark A/S
Breetlevej 18
2970 Hørsholm

Tlf.: 45 16 45 16
salg@velux.dk
www.velux.dk



Transforming Spaces