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## Panel show

### Note Design Studio sets the scene for the story of concrete at ArkDes, Stockholm

In the post-war era of urban reconstruction, the concrete panel represented optimism, a utopian symbol of hope for a better world, to be built from the ground up. The image of the panel, suspended from a crane and swinging across the sky above a construction site, became iconic. Today, concrete is more commonly associated with the grey monotony of the neglected cityscape, and the modular building system that once represented near-infinite possibility is often dismissed as ugly and dystopian. What happened?



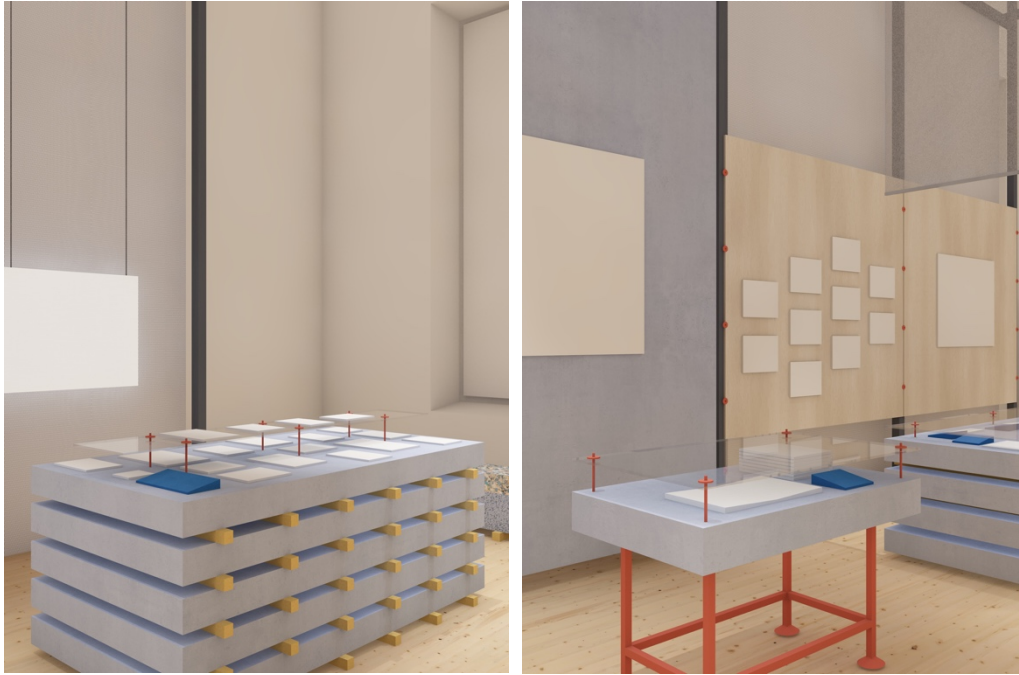
Model of the exhibition, designed by Note Design Studio. All images courtesy of Note Design Studio.

Opening on 18 October at ArkDes, Sweden's national centre for architecture and design, *'Flying Panels - How Concrete Panels Changed the World'* explores the changing fortunes of concrete building systems and celebrates the architectural optimism they once embodied. Researched by Chilean curators Pedro Ignacio Alonso and Hugo Palmarola and in collaboration with Senior Curator at ArkDes,

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Carlos Mínguez Carrasco, the exhibition uses poster art, paintings, films, toys, cartoons and opera sets to examine concrete's tremendous cultural impact across continents and decades, and showcases models of 60 modular building systems from around the world.



Renders of the exhibition design by Note Design Studio. All renders courtesy of Note Design Studio.

Behind the look, feel and physical framework of the exhibition is Note Design Studio, the award-winning multidisciplinary Stockholm studio recently responsible for the public artwork *Waiting Windows* in Nacka, and the installation *Formations* with flooring brand Tarkett – a highlight of Milan Design Week earlier this year.

*“We want to capture that utopian momentum where everything seems possible and the air is filled with excitement and anticipation for the future. For us, that moment in time is represented by the construction site. It’s a place where you look up, change your normal perspective, and let yourself dream for a while.”*

– Daniel Heckscher, Interior Architect and Partner, Note Design Studio

Tasked with giving the exhibition a spatial identity that would appeal to the serious architecture audience while remaining accessible to the concrete-curious public, Note has developed a design concept based on the construction site. Taking

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inspiration from its contrast between organised structure and constant movement – materials piled on the ground and parts swinging in the sky – the studio has sought to translate the positive vision portrayed pop art and propaganda posters featured in the exhibition into its design and layout.

*“Note Design Studio have created an extraordinary exhibition design for Flying Panels that upends the visitor’s expectations of what a show about prefabricated concrete panels should be. To wander in this colourful room is like floating in the sky, with the concrete panels flying around you. ArkDes’ historic exhibition hall is not easy to deal with, and Note’s design encloses the walls in an elegant way, creating a completely fresh impression of the space. Finally, Note put incredible effort into small details that you would normally never find in an exhibition design: beautiful, colourful touches that our audience will deeply appreciate.”*

– Kieran Long, Director of ArkDes



Renders of the exhibition design by Note Design Studio. All renders courtesy of Note Design Studio.

This change in perspective is integral to the experience of *Flying Panels*. By using objects, slabs and panels at different heights on the vertical plane and in different organised patterns, Note divides the exhibition into defined areas, while also obliging visitors to engage with the space at multiple levels. The design

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encompasses the entire exhibition space, defining its territory like the fencing around a building site.

In terms of aesthetics, Note has compensated for the hard, cold and often rough look and texture of concrete, with warm, welcoming colours and a tactile material palette, creating a pleasing contrast between the atmosphere of the exhibition and its subject.

*“Our task has been to find a balance between the context of ArkDes, the weight and importance of the 15 years of research that has been carried out by the Chilean Curators, and the overarching goal of making this an accessible, interesting and experiential exhibition for the public.”*

– Jesper Mellgren, Architect, Note Design Studio

*Flying Panels - How Concrete Panels Changed the World* is showing at ArkDes, Stockholm from 18 October 2019 to 1 March 2020.



Model of the exhibition design, designed by Note Design Studio. All images courtesy of Note Design Studio.

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## Notes to Editors

For more information, about Flying Panels and Note Design Studio, please contact Emma Collins (emma@zetteler.co.uk) or Georgia Maxwell (georgia@zetteler.co.uk) on +44 (0)20 3735 5855.

### About Note Design Studio

Founded in 2008 by Johannes Carlström and Cristiano Pigazzini, Note is a Stockholm-based design studio working across the fields of architecture, interiors, products, graphic design and design strategy. Now comprising a team of 14 designers, Note has grown to become one of the most internationally admired names in Scandinavian design, working with a wide range of international design brands and winning a steady stream of design awards.

**Website** [notedesignstudio.se](http://notedesignstudio.se)

**Instagram** @notedesignstudio

**Twitter** @noteds

**Facebook** /notedesignstudio

### About Note Design Studio

ArkDes is Sweden's national centre for architecture and design. It is a museum, a study centre and an arena for debate and discussion about the future of architecture, design and citizenship.

**Website** [arkdes.se](http://arkdes.se)