

## **Giving the harbor back to the people: Faroese customs inspire Henning Larsen's design for new ferry terminal and HQ in Torshavn**

**Henning Larsen has revealed the design for Smyril Line's new headquarters and ferry terminal in Torshavn, the capital of the Faroe Islands. Embracing the picturesque backdrop of lush landscapes and open seas, the building pays homage to traditional Faroese fishing boats and the historic Eastern harbor.**

Smyril Line's new 8000 m<sup>2</sup> headquarters serves three distinct functions - a ferry terminal, office building, and logistics centre. The terminal, poised to become a sought-after tourist destination, features a publicly accessible outdoor ramp area that reconnects Torshavn's residents with the Eastern harbor.

Once the primary gateway connecting the Faroe Islands with the rest of the world, Torshavn's Eastern harbor holds sentimental value for many Faroese people, serving as a departure point for loved ones embarking on new journeys or as a romantic setting for leisurely strolls along the water. In recent years, the harbor was closed to the public due to Schengen port security measures. Now, Henning Larsen's design captures the essence of the nostalgia found in 1950's black and white photographs showing crowds gathering to bid farewell to departing passengers. By separating passengers and freight, the historic promenade is reconnected with the capital.

*"We are honored to unveil the design for Smyril Line's new headquarters and ferry terminal in Torshavn, a project that truly embraces the essence of the Faroe Islands. Through the expert use of materials and careful consideration of the surrounding landscape, our vision captures the essence of the islands, evoking a sense of wonder and connection,"* **said Louis Becker, Global Design Principal, Henning Larsen**

Nestled in a prominent location in central Torshavn, just around the corner from the Faroese parliament building, the building seamlessly blends wood and concrete elements with the surrounding landscape. These design elements pay tribute to Faroese culture and traditions. The wooden structure mirrors the graceful contours of traditional Faroese fishing boats. Crafted with a single axe and tracing their origins back to Viking times, these boats are included in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The base structure of the building reflects the hand-built coastal paths frequently found on smaller Faroese islands, providing easy boat access from the water through the steep cliff faces to small wooden boat buildings.

*"Our design is a testament to the captivating beauty and maritime legacy of the Faroe Islands. The integration of wood, with its elegant lines, draws inspiration from the distinct charm of traditional Faroese boats and the historic Eastern harbor. We are proud to embark on the journey to creating this transformative space that celebrates and reconnects the community with their cherished heritage,"* **said Ósbjörn Jacobsen, Design Director Faroe Islands, Partner, Henning Larsen**

As Smyril Line operates passenger ferries across Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland, the terminal will serve as both a layover and departure point for travellers. The design prioritizes adaptability to the changing seasons and the Nordic climate, ensuring a seamless experience for arriving and departing passengers. A dedicated vehicle drop-off leads directly to the main entrance and encompasses two levels housing a public waiting room, café, registration desk, and International Ship and Port Facility Security area. The upper waiting room grants access to a terrace ramp, where visitors can relax in greenery and impressive views. This space epitomizes the connection between the community and outside visitors, returning public accessibility to the

area. The ramp's verdant landscape features native Faroese vegetation and offers an elevated vantage point of the city.

Situated at the heart of the building, elevated above ground level, the Smyril Line headquarters offers a welcoming environment for over 100 employees. To ensure safety and security, the office area is thoughtfully separated from the terminal. The design of the office space goes beyond functionality, aiming to foster a strong sense of community among employees from diverse backgrounds while prioritizing their well-being. Emphasizing collaboration and interaction, the central common area has been thoughtfully designed as a social hub within the headquarters.

Integrating harmoniously with the surrounding landscape, the office's unique feature is an expansive private internal garden. Also designed by Henning Larsen, the landscape architecture of the multi-level outdoor garden creates a serene and refreshing atmosphere for employees to enjoy, complementing a spacious open-concept canteen, serving as a retreat where employees can rejuvenate amidst nature.

**The detailed design phase is now complete. The contractor will be appointed, following which the construction will begin.**

**For further information contact**

Victoria Wooltorton, Communications Manager, Henning Larsen,  
E: viwo@henninglarsen.com, T: +45 31 14 82 44

**About Smyril Line HQ**

**Project:** Ferry terminal, HQ and logistics centre  
**Location:** Torshavn, Faroe Islands  
**Year:** 2021-2024  
**Size:** 7750m<sup>2</sup>  
**Client:** Smyril Line  
**Architect:** Henning Larsen  
**Renderers:** Visual

**About Henning Larsen**

Henning Larsen is an international studio for architecture, landscape, and urbanism with design hubs in Copenhagen, New York, Singapore, Berlin, and Oslo. At the heart of our design philosophy is the play of light and nature. We bring joy to those who occupy our spaces by shaping the conditions for human interaction. We work at the nexus of creativity and experimentation, always looking to the lasting impact on communities and their environments.

Drawing on a Scandinavian ethos, we develop context-driven, sustainable designs that provide lasting value to users, local communities, and cities. We aim to contribute social spaces that engage people and inspire human interaction. We approach our clients with curiosity and a desire to listen, inspire, collaborate, and innovate.

Our distinctive portfolio has received some of the highest honors in our profession, including the Architecture Laureate of the Premium Imperiale, The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award, and the European Architect of the Year Award, 2019.