

## English Abstract

*Soldier in Lapland, architect in America. Life of Olav Hammarström*

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This study tells the life story of architect Olav Hammarström (1906–2002). Hammarström was born in Finland and lived in his native country until 1948, when he immigrated to the United States. In Finland, Hammarström's architectural work focused on industrial and residential buildings. A particularly interesting project was the design of an international and modern mining community in Petsamo during 1937–1944. Hammarström's work in the Finnish Lapland was overshadowed by the fact that for the most part of the design and construction period, Finland was at war. Architect Hammarström served in the Winter War and the early stages of the Continuation War. The years in Petsamo were followed by regional planning in Western Finland and construction design for A. Ahlström Ltd.

After moving to the United States, Olav Hammarström disappeared from the Finnish architecture scene. Migration to the new continent signaled a new beginning, and allowed the battle-fatigued architect to pursue the American dream. Hammarström first assisted Alvar Aalto in his design of the Baker House dormitory at MIT, and then moved to working with Eero Saarinen, assisting him in several projects – most famous of which was the General Motors Technical Center. He also served as an architect in the practices of both Kevin Roche and Walter Gropius. In these employments, Hammarström was delivering high-quality, award-winning architecture but was inevitably left in the shadow of his masters and more self-assertive fellow assistants. He also taught a few terms at MIT and Yale. In 1954, Olav Hammarström established his own one-man practice which delivered distinctive churches and dozens of holiday homes – the main achievements of his architectural

career. The most well-known of these are The Chapel of St. James the Fisherman and the Hammarstrom House, both in Wellfleet, Cape Cod.

Through Olav Hammarström's "micro-historical life" I have been able to look at many of the macro-historical structures and events in Finnish and American societies and art worlds, such as: the educational issues within architecture and design, and the breakthrough of Modernism; the modernization of residential architecture in mining communities and in industrialized countryside; the military events in Lapland, and the traumas caused by war; the migrant artists' employment and adjustment to new culture, and the American artists' *soft power* efforts within development cooperation in the Cold War period; the working practices of internationally renowned architects, as well as the "nationality" of the architecture and design in the 1950s and 60s.

This biography of Olav Hammarström also gives a great deal of attention to his spouse, textile artist Marianne Strengell (1909–1998), with whom Hammarström shared a studio and carried out several joint projects. The book also discusses ethical challenges related to biographical writing, including the right to share the story of a stranger, and the reliability of interviews and letters as sources of research.