



Libraries through the lens

Töölö Library, Helsinki, Finland

DESIGNED by architect Aarne Ervi, a prominent figure in Finnish modernism who worked with Alvar Aalto, the Töölö library was completed in 1970 writes librarian and photographer Thomas Guignard.

The gentle curve of its main facade faces leafy Topelius park in the Taka-Töölö district of Helsinki, a neighbourhood established in the early 20th century at a time of rapid population growth. Like many of his contemporaries, Ervi didn't limit his work to the architecture of the buildings he was tasked with, but also conceived the interior decor and furniture. Aware that the library needed to appeal to all ages, Ervi took care to include playful designs, like a staircase resembling an eye and the

benches in the music room shaped like oversized ears.

The library was nicely renovated recently, in a process that combined a respectful restoration of the original Ervi designs with adapting the premises to current needs. More spaces were opened for public use and equipment was modernised. The music section, which was the first in the country when the library opened, is still popular with patrons today and was further expanded.

Currently, many cities in Europe are covered with a fresh layer of snow. As it likely won't last until readers of *Information Professionals* cast an eye over this page, may the snowy lawn of the Töölö library offer them a reminder of the winter season and with best wishes for 2026.