

# sleeper

HOTEL DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT & ARCHITECTURE

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CROSBY STREET / THE YAS HOTEL / SWEDISH STYLE



**CROSBY STREET**  
 FIRMDALE BRING  
 LONDON STYLE TO NYC

**THE YAS HOTEL**  
 ASYMPOTOTE'S ABU  
 DHABI LANDMARK

**SWEDISH STYLE**  
 THE STOCKHOLM  
 MARKET ON THE RISE

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## Guestbook



© Peter Lavery

### 030

#### TIM & KIT KEMP

Well known for their London hotels, Firmdale have opened their first property on the other side of the pond, with the launch of the Crosby Street Hotel in New York. Our contributor Juliet Kinsman, Editor-in-Chief of Mr & Mrs Smith, met Kit Kemp for a pre-opening tour.



### 058

#### HANI RASHID

Rashid founded Asymptote Architecture with co-founder Lise Anne Couture in 1989. Their innovative digital approach to design was glimpsed by millions of people worldwide as The Yas Hotel provided the backdrop to the inaugural Abu Dhabi Grand Prix last year.



© Eik Hoffmann

### 046

#### PER LYDMAR

The Stockholm hotelier has relocated his eponymous hotel to a new location in the Swedish capital. The original Lydmar Hotel became famous for its thriving lobby scene, whereas his new offering is a far more homely affair, with original artworks throughout.



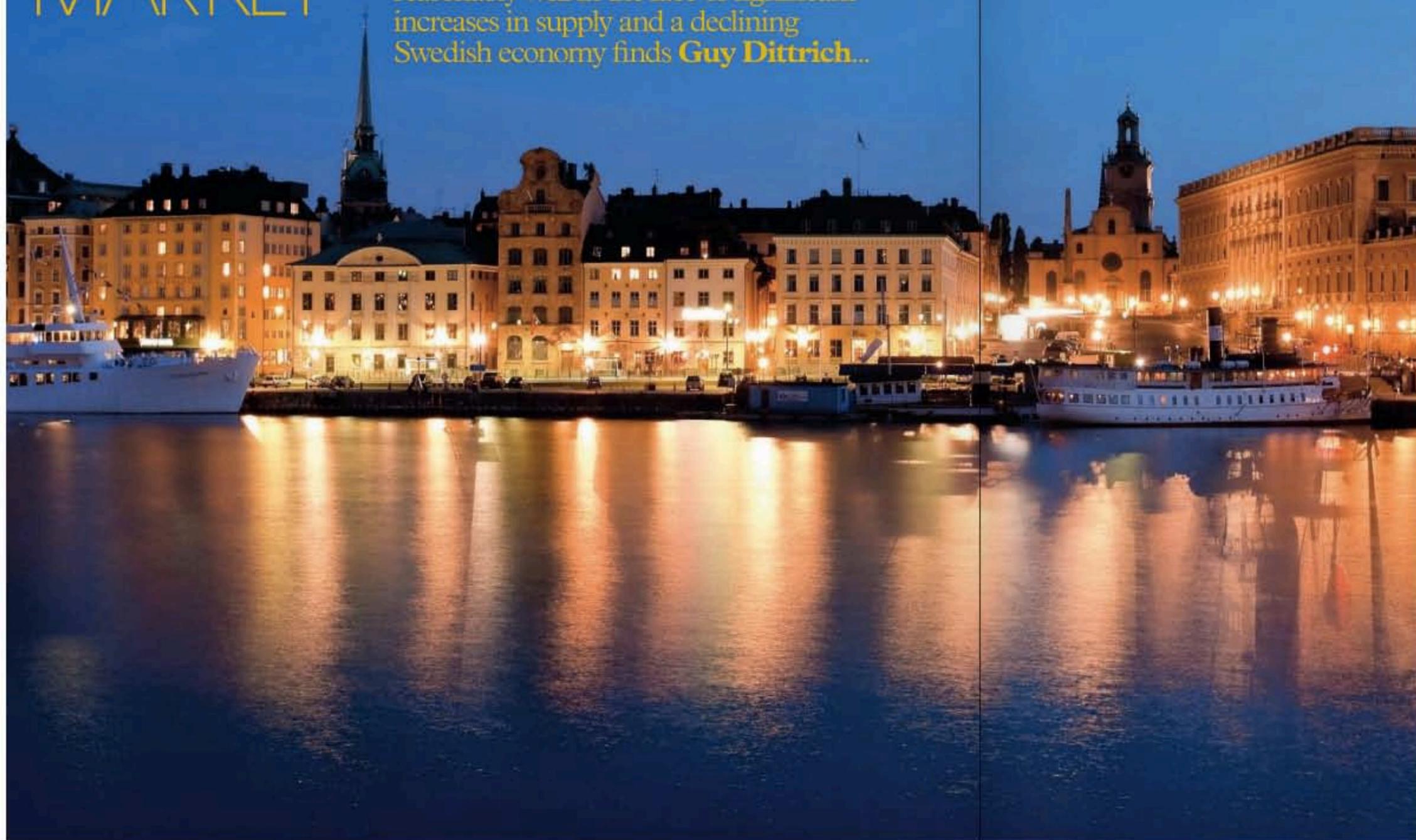
### 082

#### ERIK NISSEN JOHANSEN

Nissen Johansen (LEFT) of Styllt Trampoli chose Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky's 'Crime & Punishment' to influence the design of the Reval Hotel Sonya in St Petersburg. He is pictured here with Dostoevsky's grandson Dmitri (RIGHT) at the launch of the hotel.

# THE STOCKHOLM MARKET

Stockholm's hotel market is performing reasonably well in the face of significant increases in supply and a declining Swedish economy finds **Guy Dittrich...**



## LOCATION REPORT

**S**tockholm is a beautiful city, all grand buildings and waterways. It is also home to the Swedish stock exchange and many multinationals. With a service-based economy, the Swedish capital has been less affected by the current economic downturn than more industrial centres such as Gothenburg where Volvo and Ericsson are big employers. "Over the last years demand was increasing by some 5-6% per annum driven mainly by business travel with leisure demand largely unchanged," explains Björn Arnek of Sveriges Hotell & Restaurang företagare, the Swedish Hotel & Restaurant Association. However the Swedish economy was already in decline prior to the collapse of the banking system in September 2008 and the 4-5% contraction in GDP is having a knock-on effect in the hotel market.

This has not been helped by significant increases in supply. Christie & Co report openings totaling 448 guestrooms in 2007 followed by over 700 guestrooms in 2008. Some 558 of these rooms came with the strikingly angular Clarion Hotel Sign, beside the railway tracks of the Arlanda Express to the airport, making it the largest hotel in town. Also opened in 2008 was the Lydmar Hotel, with 46 spacious rooms. This is just along from the Grand Hotel, itself fresh from a recent extension and renovation that included the addition of the Mathias Dahlgren restaurant designed by Studioilse of Ilse Crawford, and a Raison d'Etre spa. Meanwhile Axios Hospitality Real Estate recently brought in interior designers, Champalimaud, to upgrade the 465 room Sheraton Stockholm across from the City Hall. Newer still are the 82-room Story Hotel and the Hotel Skeppsholmen, with just over 80-rooms apiece and both reviewed.

With the Comprehensive Hotel Pipeline Report of STR Global, providers of hotel performance data, showing a further 1,364 guestrooms under construction, in final planning or in planning stages the expansion looks set to continue albeit at a slower rate. A "definite" amongst these is the 278-room Courtyard by Marriott Stockholm opening in February 2010.

Given the oversupply situation and general climate of economic gloom, results for the city are not all that bad. According to STR Global the year-on-year occupancy for the year to 31 October 2009 saw an overall decline of only 4.5%. Arnek explains that this is because of effects of the weakening Swedish Kronera. "This has led to an increase in leisure demand compensating for the reduction in corporate business," he states, "The twin effect of the depreciation of the Swedish Kroner has been to attract foreign tourists and also persuade Swedes to holiday at home thereby following a general recessionary trend for 'stay-cations'." Furthermore the holding of the rotating Presidency of the EU Council for the second half of 2009 undoubtedly saw Stockholm take a good portion of the 50 to 80,000 extra room nights the country as a whole could expect. This will have served to mitigate the loss of demand elsewhere. Arnek summarises, "The increase in supply and reduction in demand has put pressure on rates and we are going to have some tough years ahead." If there is to be any light at the end of the tunnel it will be for sectors less well represented in the city. These include limited service hotels, aparthotels, hotels near conference centres and more budget accommodation to encourage leisure trade. ■



## The Lydmar *Stockholm*

Words: Guy Dittrich Photography: Courtesy of The Lydmar

Swedish hotelier Per Lydmar has relocated his eponymous hotel, changing it in the process from a Nineties 'design hotel' to something far more homely, yet equally stylish, with designs by Stylt Trampoli.

**P**er 'Pelle' Lydmar is back. And he's grown up. Sort of. After the success of the bar-lobby combo idea that brought fame to the original Lydmar Hotel, and was exported to the Trafalgar Hilton in London, comes the new Lydmar. Expect again a hugely personable and enjoyable hospitality experience but gone is the issue of deciding whether you were ordering a drink at reception or trying to check-in with the bar staff.

The Lydmar Hotel, across a small sound in the Stockholm archipelago from the Royal Palace, sits within a historic, listed building located between the Grand Hotel and further along, the museum island of Skeppsholmen



and its eponymous new hotel. The building has seen service over the centuries as merchant housing, embassies and consulates.

Service is something Lydmar understands well and the helpful staff couldn't be more obliging; the waiter taking a seat at the table to explain the menu and take orders. Personality is another Lydmar attribute not in short supply and plenty of it has been expressed in the interiors with photography, artwork and an amazing array of natural science, archaeological and contemporary cultural artefacts from Lydmar's own collection. A previous career as a photojournalist sees an underwater camera on a lounge shelf alongside art, travel and design books galore. The lobby stairwell doubles as a real art gallery that is curated by Thomas Nordanstad; the launch exhibition of James Nachtway's work had the Swedish national papers

swooning. "Guests are not guests of the hotel but of my home," Lydmar explains of a hotel where every guestroom really is a different experience in supremely comfortable style.

Owners Nordström, a family real estate owner, appointed Lydmar as the independent operator to run the hotel and local structural engineers FFNS to deal with planning and architectural issues. The hotel runs alongside a former canal, which meant significant structural work was necessary. The entrance was moved from the side street to the front and part of the first floor interior removed to facilitate the lobby / gallery entrance with its sweeping staircase and leather-wrapped banister. Corridors were moved as they were "stealing" windows.

Lydmar in turn appointed Gothenburg-based Stylt Trampoli to deal with the interior design concept. The designers' involvement ▶



► from the very beginning of the project was instrumental in the success of their scheme, according to principal Erik Nissen Johansen. Stylt Trampoli have delivered a beautifully finished hotel where quality in terms of the mix of materials, workmanship and space utilisation is the consistent thread. The result is a series of guestrooms different in conception but linked by design, decorated uniquely but each equally liveable.

“A skill of interior design is being able to predict what will work,” explains Nissen Johansen, “and this was particularly challenging at the Lydmar Hotel with so many different suppliers.” Over three hundred for a 46 room hotel. Nissen Johansen and Lydmar spent days moving furniture from room to room to get the look right. “I think we were about 85% right the first time around,” concludes Nissen Johansen.

The range of furniture is vast. From lobby armchairs made of welded car-bodies by Le Car Crash and ottomans from used car tyres, to Chesterfield sofas in lived-in leather, beige felt or burnished gold velvet. Lighting, beds (four-poster to sleigh to metal-framed), side tables and desks – almost everything is different which gives the hotel Lydmar’s sought-after feeling of home.

It is easier to describe the parts of the hotel that are common. Bathrooms are fitted in dark slate with brassware a mix of Dornbracht and more traditional designs from local brand, Mora. Sanitaryware is by Porcelanosa of Spain and Ifo who, like the Byredo toiletries, are Swedish. Beds are covered by a variety of velvet or woven leather throws usually backed with what appears to be a staid 18th Century-type print, but in fact depicts a number of cheeky sexual scenes. Light switches are ►

Rooms are individually furnished with a mixture of artefacts belonging to hotelier Per Lydmar, and homely, but high quality furnishings



The lobby entrance doubles as an art gallery but, unlike the original Lydmar hotel, the bar and restaurant are separate

► traditional black Bakelite. Guestroom flooring is either smoked-oak or original light-oak parquet. Wallpaper, by Maya Romanoff, is limited to only six types, often textured and “Samsonite-proof” according to Nissen Johansen.

Being a listed building, original coving is seen throughout the property, the majority of the furniture is freestanding. Likewise much of the heating pipework is exposed. However the worn stone treads of the internal spiral staircase were re-levelled and new non-slip grooves added. These stairs lead to the roof terrace that tops a new addition, semi-enclosed by the “arc” of the two sides of the original building. This new insertion houses the ground-floor kitchen with windows, insisted upon by the local Catering Union, which overlook a small lawn. Above is the

hotel restaurant and then the roof terrace. This addition was only allowed after long negotiation, because it did not alter the sight lines from the Royal Palace. For a similar reason no new storeys were added to the building. In any case, the foundations could not take the additional weight. Even the air-conditioning units are in the basement to avoid changing the roof profile. Entering The Lydmar, the stairs point you clearly towards the low reception desk. Through two openings the restaurant / lounge is enticingly in view. Low seating for diners nearer the entrance is deliberate, reducing the “barrier to entry”. On busy nights things do spill out into the reception area, which could cause confusion, but given that the current audience grew up with the original Lydmar they certainly seem to be getting the reincarnation. ■

#### EXPRESS CHECKOUT

**LYDMAR HOTEL**  
Södra Blasieholmshamnen 2,  
SE 103 24 Stockholm, Sweden  
Tel: +46 8 22 31 60  
www.lydmar.com

↳ 46 guestrooms  
■ Lydmar restaurant

Developer / Owner: Nordström  
Operator: Per Lydmar  
Architect / Structural Engineer: FFNS  
Designers: Styllt Trampoli

# The Lydmar - Stockholm

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SE 103 24 Stockholm, Sweden

Tel: +46 8 22 31 60

[www.lydmar.com](http://www.lydmar.com)

**Rooms** 46 guestrooms

**Dining** Lydmar restaurant