A way of thinking
“The engineer in his own way is an artist too – and not just a dead fish with a slide rule.”

Jørgen Varming
Dating from 1855, the challenge was the sensitive integration of services systems, in old and new building fabric, with seamless continuity.

The Mint was then listed as one of the top 50 groundbreaking buildings in the world by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers.

The Mint
Sydney
The faceted mantle integrates lighting, ventilation and acoustic attenuation into a singular, dramatic, metal surface, grafted onto the existing structure. The air-conditioning and distribution systems support multi-functional modes and a range of occupancy numbers.

The lighting control system can transform the mood according to the event or performance requirements. Parametric modeling underpinned the design process, realised through digital fabrication and CAD/CAM.

Great Hall, University of Technology Sydney

STEENSEN VARMING
"We put a lot of energy into reducing energy."

Ralph Stedman
Aarhus
City Hall

When competing for the contract to design a new city hall for Aarhus in Denmark, Arne Jacobsen didn’t hold back in a call to Jørgen Varming. "There’s an ENGINEER on the jury, and you must GUARANTEE that we get his vote!" Jacobsen said.

Arne Jacobsen was awarded the contract and we provided civil, structural and mechanical building services for the classic functionalist work.
Identification of services is key to the aesthetic of this brutalist landmark and symbolic of their importance. Colour coding highlights the integration offitting and mechanical services, introducing a human and playful contrast to the stark functionality.

The institute houses the Faculty of Health Sciences and Dental School for which we also delivered building services for a later extension.

Panum Institute
University of Copenhagen
Cooling air with water

Sydney Opera House
We established an office in Australia to assist in realising the ambitious Sydney Opera House. It remains an exceptional piece of urban sculpture with groundbreaking mechanical services – still in operation today.
The largest public building constructed in the U.K. during the twentieth century, the British Library took 23 years to complete and houses some 130 million items.

Collaboration was an important design agenda from the start and our engineering services included the world’s first automatic book retrieval system. Along with The Mini, the building was listed as one of the top 30 groundbreaking buildings in the world by the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers.

The British Library
London
In the happy old days now long ago, when time was passing smoothly and slow, we architects had such a happy mind, with no interference of any kind.

Then we could breathe so freely and fair, without this blasted conditioned air, but what we were taught then from our birth is now reduced to nothing of worth.
This 15 floor fit-out encompasses the sundry spaces required for a commercial operation. The challenge, in line with our sustainable ambitions, was to create a low energy lighting solution providing for this diversity, with consistent rendering on the glazed façade externally.

The atrium facilitates the penetration of daylight to all floors. We supplemented this with artificial lighting integrated into the elliptical geometry.
Who spoils the fun of the architect’s task?
Who is the snake in the grass, you may ask?
Who will insist on these plant rooms and gears?
Who – but these confounded engineers.

Kristoffer Nyrop Varming
Architect
1906

Translated by his son Jørgen Varming
Engineer
Described as the finest collection of manuscripts and books by a private collector in the twentieth century, the library's treasure of artistic, religious and secular works date from 2700 BC. The Islamic Collection alone has more than 260 complete and fragmentary Qurans from the late eighth and ninth centuries.

Most exhibits require low conservation levels of lighting while visitors require a stimulating visual environment. A range of lighting types and scene-setting control systems were created for each gallery including an 'out-of-hours' setting to reduce exposure and running costs.

Chester Beatty Library
Dublin

STEENSEN VARMING
Brisbane Supreme Court

The lighting in the Court supports the architectural, and judicial, principles of openness and transparency, and reflects the simplicity and legibility of the design.

Indirect lighting highlights the concrete scotia as a connecting element between each floor, and enhances the appreciation of height and space. Sustainable initiatives, and custom-designed luminaires seamlessly integrate into the architectural concept.
In a relationship with the hospital spanning 15 years, we have undertaken complete services masterplanning, maintenance and major capital projects.

The Biocore, a state-of-the-art isolation laboratory for essential cardiac research, required the design of sealed services and custom-made equipment including pressure gradients to separate sterile from non-sterile areas, and a cyclic lighting system to provide a healthy environment for the animal-holding areas.

---

St Vincent's Hospital
Sydney