

# Studio/ Louise Campbell

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**Danish Ministry of Culture**  
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Date: 14/02/2007  
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**Product name:**  
Danish Ministry of Culture

**Design:**  
Louise Campbell and Marianne Britt Jørgensen

**Year:**  
Opened January first 2005

**Client:**  
Danish Ministry of Culture  
Nybrogade 2  
DK - 1203 Copenhagen K  
www.kum.dk

**Sub-contractors / suppliers:**  
Sorø møbelfabrik, Kvadrat, Ege Tæpper, Tom Dixon, Paustian

**Interior:**  
Frames, furniture and lighting above frames is all taylor-made for the office

**Measurements:**  
Room measures 102 square metres

**Product category:**  
Environments

**Product status:**  
in use

**Short Texts:**  
Design of interior space of the Danish Minister of Cultures front office. Occupied by seven of his closest staff.

**Long Texts:**  
Danish Ministry of Culture

Nybrogade 2. DK - 1203 Copenhagen K. Denmark  
Client: Danish Ministry of Culture  
Space: The Ministers front office  
Area: 102 m<sup>2</sup>  
Workstations: 7 + machine room  
Budget: Dkr. 500.000 all inclusive  
Timeframe: 2½ months from brief to completion  
Completed: January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005

Originator: Louise Campbell and Marianne Britt Jørgensen, assisted by Torben Bay.

**Concise brief:**  
To focus on achieving a clear distinction between the room's two functions:  
A) Official passageway to the Ministers office  
B) Intense workplace for seven of his closest employees  
To ensure that the path to the Ministers office is clear and obvious  
Otherwise utterly free hands

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Gothersgade 54, baghuset 2.sal  
DK-1123 Copenhagen K  
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T +45 3311 8006  
studio@louiseccampbell.com  
louiseccampbell.com  
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## Challenge:

To design a space, that lives up to the following criteria:

- A conversion of what was previously four offices and a long corridor into one open plan workspace, yet maintaining the original functions
  - An office that reflect the values of the Danish Ministry of Culture today
  - An open-minded, modern office with a pleasant, comfortable and cosy environment
  - Effective workspace, yet welcoming for visitors
  - A sense of spaciousness, in spite of the actual limited space
  - Easy communication between all seven employees and the Minister
  - An atmosphere of delicate contrasts for visitors: To feel welcome, yet slightly tense. To not disturb the employees, yet achieve an understanding of what is going on in the office
  - To respect that the building is listed, and therefore not in any way make changes to the architecture of the room
  - To create high quality at low cost. The space has been financed by grants
- The delight is in the details.

- Frames, tables and storage units are all tailor-designed and comply with the odd angle of 80/100 degrees found in the room itself.  
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- Tables are each 3 metres long, and can be automatically raised and lowered to desired position.  
Storage space is discreetly positioned in the tables. Only one shelving unit is visible, housed in the space of the boss, who stores reference books for free access by all staff.

- The small IN / OUT boxes are of utmost importance. The main function of the office is to act as a filter between the outside world and the minister. All information that is allowed to pass, goes via these boxes.

- Hand-dyed curtains serve two functions:  
To screen from the sun on one side, and to allow for privacy from visitors on the other side if needed. It is not possible to screen off between each zone, as clear view and free communication across the room at all times is essential.

By mounting curtains in the frames and not in the windows, an important effect is achieved: The many colours of the room are gently reflected onto the white walls, meaning that bypassers, during hours of darkness, are given a view of a line of very colourful windows.

- At the end of the room, mounted on the wall to the ministers office, is an ON AIR lamp, which lights up when the minister is occupied on the telephone. By the red zone are three odd machines: one lights up when it is time for the minister to vote, another transmits live from government, the third rings in the event of an emergency such as war.

## - Feature:

The 'Calender Girls' have an extra feature: A punching ball, for free use by all. The girls themselves, the minister, his driver, his visitors, are all free to take a good punch. A special request from the inhabitants, which relieves some of the enormous amounts of tension, that also finds its way to this office. The Minister always greets his guests in the front office. Right next to the punching ball.

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**Note:**

In respect of the grandeur of the room itself, all fittings and functions have been built into the five steel frames. In theory, the room could be emptied, leaving very little trace of what was, within hours. Just as a minister can suddenly be replaced.

**Colours:**

The colour scheme is rigid. All inventory is colour coded. From the frames to the picture hooks.

From a visitors perspective, the colours are very intense. From each workspace, the view is very different. The white walls and the light from the windows dominate. The colours simply mark the five territories

**Lighting:**

— Is held to a minimum.

During daytime, the room is flooded with sunlight from the sixteen windows. During darkness, the lighting is focused on the zones, rather than creating general light. Intimacy has been the code word.

**Passage to the Minister:**

Mirror Ball Lamps by Tom Dixon, that each reflect the entire room  
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**Workstations:**

Original table lamps (as are used in the rest of the ministry) and tailor-made pendants, each containing a lit-up space for private items. Only viewable by the inhabitants.

**Categories:**

The design strives to mark a clear definition of the very different functions that take place within the office, divided into the following unofficial categories: - Passage to the Minister: Continues the specially fabricated blue colour which is found in the rest of the building.

**- Grey zone:**

For the unavoidable machines, that belong in all busy offices.

**- Pink zone:**

For the 'calender girls'. These jobs are always held by young women, who assist the Minister with all tasks, often of a very nurturing nature.

**- Red zone:**

Most intense zone. For the ministers private secretary and the administrations secretary. They are always on call, and often on the move with very short or no warning.

**- Beige zone:**

The office boss. His desk faces the passage, as he insists on illustrating the open mindedness of the ministry himself. This zone has more special features than the others, and only houses the one person. It is the calm and smoothness of the boss.

**- Ice blue zone:**

For the secretaries to the department heads. This zone reflects clear-headedness, concentration and cool.

**Communication:**

Along the left wall, adjacent to the long passageway, are seven frames for mounting posters, invitations, and other printed matters relevant to the Ministry of Culture. All Danes involved in cultural activities are free to make use of this wall.

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To bring attention to the frames, they are backed by a vibrant neon-yellow.

The 'information-wall' serves dual purposes:

- It illustrates that this ministry and its Minister is well informed about the ongoings on the cultural scene nationwide.

- It occupies visitors, pulling their attention away from the busy staff, reducing the risk of unwanted interruptions.

Suppliers:

Several sub-contractors and suppliers have been involved in the making of this office:

Sorø have supplied frames, desks, boxes and storage units.

Ege Tæpper have supplied and fitted carpeting.

Kvadrat have supplied textiles.

Anne Fabricius Møller and Marianne Britt Jørgensen have dyed all textiles.

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Paustian have supplied Eames Aluminium office chairs, and organised special fitting of dyed textile.

Tom Dixon has supplied Mirror Ball lamps.

E-Types have designed the text on the In / Out boxes.

Pilkington Glass have cut and perforated the glass for the information wall.

All artwork is selected by the staff at the Danish State Museum of Arts - to whose archives the Ministry has free access and loan of works.  
Louise Campbell\_