



Danish Art & Design

The Golden Age to the present; cities, coast and countryside

13–21 July 2024 (MK 385)

9 days • £4,190

Lecturer: Shona Kallestrup

Excellent art galleries, many with exciting new buildings in fine settings, showing international as well as Danish art.

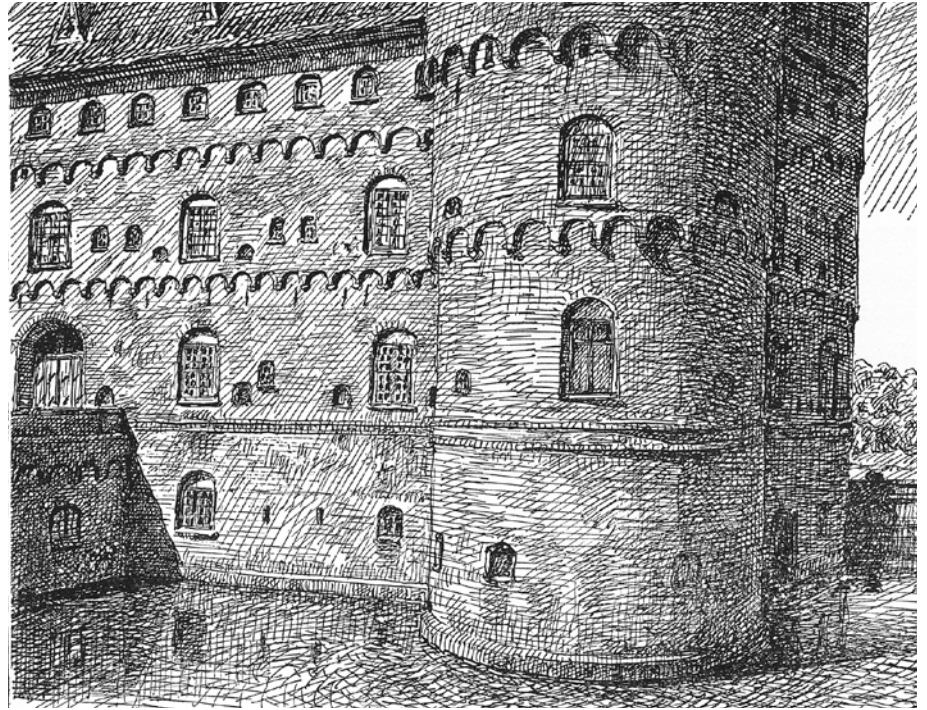
Special focus on art of the Danish Golden Age, as well as later painting of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Historic and modern architecture, city and provinces, town and country.

Memorable museums, superb art of international and Danish provenance, historic architecture and modern design are all features of this tour. While the visual arts are the focus, this is also a chance to appreciate the wider history and culture of Denmark. The tour explores attractive provincial towns as well as the capital, and takes in coast and countryside. A major theme is Danish painting of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Occasional exhibitions grant gallery-goers a glimpse of this phenomenon, but its full glory can be best appreciated in the land of its origin. Low lying but rarely flat, the sensual topography of Denmark was laid down by glaciers at the end of the Ice Age. Now, as when depicted by its greatest native artists, the country is picturesquely clothed with patches of fertile farmland interspersed with hedges and clumps of trees. These are the landscapes that have inspired generations of painters.

Attention is also paid to architecture, too. Whitewashed brick Gothic churches, the flamboyant Renaissance of Christian IV's patronage, the handsome patrician streetscapes of the capital, half-timbered vernacular of town and country all play their part in conveying the picture (not forgetting, of course, the unassuming geometric perfection of Arne Jacobsen and his fellow modernists).

Danish artists found their distinct expression with surprising suddenness during the Napoleonic wars, and the 30 years that followed are regarded as the country's Golden Age of painting. Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg and Christen Købke are but two of many artists who produced perfectly delineated streetscapes, landscapes and scenes of daily life. These works are stylistically distinguished by brilliant naturalism and an inimitable rendering of light – crisp and warm in Greek and Italian views (many artists travelled



Egeskov Castle, illustration by Andreas Friis in 'Danmarks Store Øer', publ. 1935.

south) but pale, pellucid and unmistakably Scandinavian in scenes of their native land.

Towards the turn of the century Symbolism had its proponents but many Danish artists again turned their gaze towards their native land. The painters of Skagen on northernmost Jutland, led by P. S. Krøyer and Michael Ancher, and those of the Funen School, principally Johannes Larsen and Fritz Syberg, celebrated the low-key beauties of Denmark's shores and countryside drenched in ineffable light of the North.

As is to be expected of a prosperous and outward-looking nation, there is much high quality art from the rest of the world to be enjoyed here. Nor is it surprising that in a country which is virtually synonymous with good design, recent museum buildings would merit a pilgrimage even if empty. Several are enhanced by a parkland or seaside setting. Curatorship – hanging and interpretation – is exemplary.

Itinerary

Day 1: Copenhagen. Fly at c. 9.00am from London Gatwick to Copenhagen. After lunch a visit to Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, the magnificent benefaction of a brewer, with

collections of Mediterranean antiquities, particularly Roman portrait sculpture, Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, Golden Age paintings and much else besides. First of three nights in Copenhagen.

Day 2: Copenhagen, Helsingør, Humlebæk. Begin with an introductory walk via the waterfront and through Frederiksstad, passing Amalienborg and the opera house. The Designmuseum Danmark has recently reopened following extensive renovations and has unique displays of decorative arts. In the afternoon drive north along the coast to Helsingør. The maritime museum, dramatically inserted into a historic dry dock overlooking Kronborg (Ingels, 2013), illustrates how the design themes presented at the Designmuseum Danmark still resonate in the contemporary practice of Ingel's studio, BIG. The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art has a permanent collection of international modern art and changing exhibitions in half-buried galleries in parkland beside the sea; a magical combination.

Day 3: Copenhagen. Explore Slotsholmen, the original core of the city: Christiansborg Palace housing the Parliament, the Renaissance stock exchange and the Thorvaldsen Museum

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continued

dedicated to the eponymous Neo-Classical sculptor (1770–1844). After lunch visit Grundtvig's Church (Peter and Kaare Klint 1920–40), one of the finest brick Expressionist edifices of the 20th century. Continue to Carlsberg Byen, marked by the Elephant Gates, an area which is being redeveloped at an incredible rate. Reach the waterfront with the Gefion Fountain, the Little Mermaid and the bastions of the Kastellet.

Day 4: Copenhagen. The morning is spent at the Hirschsprungske Collection, perhaps the finest assembly of 19th-century Danish painting. Statens Museum for Kunst displays an extensive collection of Danish art from the Golden Age to the present day and a fine holding of European Old Masters. After lunch visit Christian IV's Rosenborg Palace, gradually augmented 1605–33, with richly decorated rooms excellently preserved, and the royal treasury. Leave Copenhagen and cross the straits between Zealand and Funen on the 12-mile Storebælt Bridge. First of three nights in Odense.

Day 5: Odense, Kerteminde. A walk around Odense, a delightful town which blends old and new with little cobbled streets, rehabilitated industrial buildings, a riverside park and Gothic cathedral. The Brandts Museum has a comprehensive collection of Danish painting. Visit the Hans Christian Andersen birthplace museum before driving to the fishing village of Kerteminde, which was home to Johannes Larsen (1867–1961), leader of the Funen school. His house, studio and gardens are preserved with a new gallery building (Danish Museum of the Year 2007).

Day 6: Odense, Fåborg. Drive to Faaborg on the south coast to see Carl Petersen's exquisite Faaborg Museum of 1915, the first monument of Nordic Classicism, housing a wealth of paintings by the Funen School. The charming old town centre is well preserved. Egeskov is a 17th-century moated mansion, well furnished, with park and gardens.

Day 7: Mosegård, Århus. Drive in the morning to Mosegård. The state-of-the-art museum (Henning Larsen Architects) opened in 2014. Continue to Århus, Denmark's second city, crossing the bridge to Jutland. Visit the influential university campus, a prime example of Danish Modernism (1930s) and the Old Town Museum, 16th- to 19th-century buildings from all over Denmark reassembled to form an enchanting little town. First of two nights in Århus.

Day 8: Århus. At the heart of the city a traffic-clogged thoroughfare has been replaced by a river, long confined to a culvert, the embankments now burgeoning with café culture. Arne Jacobsen's town hall (1942) is one of Modernism's icons, mathematically precise, perfectly poised, defiantly unmonumental. ARoS Art Museum (2004) is a brick and glass cube with a curvaceous white interior housing historic Danish art, as well as significant pieces of modern art including Olafur Eliasson's roof-top installation '*Your Rainbow Panorama*'. Some free time.

Day 9: Copenhagen-Ishøj. Retrace the route over the Storebælt Strait and traverse Zealand. Above a fine beach south of Copenhagen, Arken Museum of Modern Art is outstanding for its striking architecture (nautical, angular), unexpected location and adventurous exhibitions. Fly from Copenhagen, returning to Heathrow c. 5.30pm (British Airways).

Lecturer

Dr Shona Kallestrup. Lecturer in the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews, she is a specialist in Scandinavian art and design. Trained at the Warburg Institute and St Andrews, she has taught at the Universities of Copenhagen, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. Her publications include the forthcoming edited volume *Nordic Design in Translation: the circulation of objects, ideas and approaches* (2023).

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £4,190 or £3,980 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £4,880 or £4,670 without flights.

Included: air travel (economy class) on scheduled Norwegian Air and British Airways flights (D82902 & BA817); travel by private coach; accommodation as described below; breakfasts, 5 dinners and 2 lunches with wine, water and coffee; all admission charges; all tips for restaurant staff, drivers and guides; all airport and state taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

Accommodation. Phoenix Copenhagen (phoenixcopenhagen.dk): a traditional 4-star hotel close to the Amalienborg Palace.

Comwell H.C. Andersen Hotel, Odense, (comwell.com/): a modern 4-star hotel, a few minutes' walk from the town centre, the best in town. **Hotel Oasia Aarhus** (hoteloasia.dk): a boutique 3-star hotel, a 15 minute walk to the ARoS museum. Hotels in Denmark generally do not have air-conditioning.

How strenuous? There is quite a lot of walking and standing in museums. There are also some long coach journeys; average distance per day: 87 miles.

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.