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THE PRINCE, THE NOBLEMEN AND THE PAINTER: COLLECTIONS OF WORKS OF ART IN COPENHAGEN BETWEEN 1800 AND 1848

The history of collecting in Denmark and Norway in the 19th century is intimately connected with the history of the painters and sculptors active during that period. Right until the early 20th century, copying from works of art formed an essential part of the curriculum of the academies. The art collections in the Danish capital, accessible to the general public, were a major source of inspiration and information about the history of European art in an age where art works could only be studied *in situ*. Whereas paintings showing the students at the Royal Academy copying plaster casts at the Academy are well-known, there are none showing the interiors of the Copenhagen collections of the time before 1848.¹

Unfortunately, at present the literature on the subject is only published in Danish, as are most of the books and articles on the history of Danish art between 1800 and 1848.² The present article will deal with three major collections of the time, each one a representative of a specific form of collecting.³

The national museum of the visual arts in Denmark, today *Statens Museum for Kunst* – at present abbreviated to *SMK* – grew out of the Royal

¹ For the connection between the collections and the artists in the early 19th century see: K. Monrad, R. Linnet & L. Bøgh Rønberg: *I lyset af Holland: mesterværker fra hollandsk og dansk guldalder*, Copenhagen 2001.

² See: J. Svenningsen, *Samlingssteder. Udenlandsk billedkunst i danske samlermiljøer 1690–1840*, Aarhus 2023. Also: J. Svenningsen, “Publicly Accessible Art Collections in Copenhagen during the Napoleonic Era”, *Journal of the History of Collections* 2015, 27(2), pp. 199–210. The Copenhagen collections seen in the context of the development of the Danish and Norwegian visual arts is a subject of Ch. Christensen, *Guldalderens Billedkunst*, Copenhagen 2019. The latest catalogue on Danish art of the period is: *Beyond the Light. Identity and Place in Nineteenth Century Danish Art*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2023.

³ For relevant literature on European collections of the age, see Bibliography.

Kunstkammer. Some of the works belonging to the Danish kings were collected as early as in the 16th century, but the *Museum Regium*, accessible to the public, did not open its doors until around 1650. It took considerable time, though, before the Danish capital was to get a proper museum of fine arts.⁴ Not until 1827, following years of research by Johan Conrad Spengler (1767–1839), who in 1807 had replaced his father Lorenz Spengler as keeper of the Kunstkammer, did the King's collection of works of art open in premises at the newly erected Christiansborg Palace.⁵ Danish artists were only included among the works exhibited at Christiansborg in 1836, while portraits belonging to the King were sent to Frederiksborg Castle and the regalia and items of historical importance were installed at Rosenborg, the summer residence of King Christian IV (1577–1648). Spengler, who was responsible for the catalogue of works of art published in 1827⁶, was himself one of the leading collectors, particularly of master drawings, in Denmark in the first half of the 19th century.

The most important collection formed in the first half of the 19th century in Denmark belonged to Prince Christian Frederik (1786–1848; reigned as King Christian VIII from 1839). Whereas the Moltke Collection focused on the Old Masters, Prince Christian Frederik, like some of his contemporaries such as Prince Ludwig I of Bavaria (1786–1868) and Ferdinand-Philippe, Duke of Orléans (1810–1842) took a lively interest in the works of painters and sculptors of his own day.⁷ Since Munich was an important stop on the road to Italy during the formative years of young Danish painters, the Bavarian King's many commissions from German artists was felt to contrast with poverty at home. On January 5, 1813, Denmark-Norway declared bankruptcy, and for the next 25 years the state of Denmark was indeed not affluent.

⁴ B. Gundestrup, *Det kongelige danske Kunstkammer 1737 – The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1737*, vols. I–II, Copenhagen 1991, has a comprehensive English translation. Ch. Christensen, "Irrecoverable – King Christian IV of Denmark as a collector and patron in terms of peace and war", in: *War and Peace in Europe*, ed. K. Bussmann and H. Schilling, Münster 1998, Essay Volume II, Art and Culture, pp. 191–199. German version: *Unwiederbringlich – König Christian IV. Von Dänemark als Sammler und Mäzen in Friedens- und Kriegszeiten*.

⁵ This second Christiansborg Palace was destroyed in a fire in 1884, the first having burnt down in 1794. The present Christiansborg Palace dates from the early 20th century.

⁶ J.C. Spengler, *Catalog over det kongelige Billedgalerie paa Christiansborg*, Copenhagen 1827.

⁷ See catalogues: *Ludwig I. Eine Darstellung seiner Sammeltätigkeit*, Neue Pinakothek München, 1986 and *Ferdinand-Philippe d'Orléans (1810–1842). Images d'un prince idéal*, Paris 2021.

Before 1827, when The Royal Picture Gallery opened at Christiansborg, the 19th-century public with an interest in the visual arts therefore had to visit the private collections in Copenhagen. Around the middle of the 18th century, several art collections were being established by members of the Danish nobility. Foremost among these collectors were the antiquarians Count Johan Ludvig Holstein (1694–1763), one of the founders of The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and Count Otto Thott (1703–1785). Holstein crammed his country residence Ledreborg, located in a landscape which resonated with echoes of Danish pre-history, full of mainly Dutch paintings. Many of these were sold at various times in later years. Otto Thott filled his *hôtel particulier* in Copenhagen with an even greater number of art works, which were sold after his death. Another part of his collection was still to be found around 1900 at Gavnø, his manor house south of Copenhagen, but only a small number of the art works remain here today after sales at auction and private disposals by the Reedtz-Thott family.

In the first half of the 19th century there were a few noble or bourgeois collectors of both Old Masters and contemporary art, and the public were admitted to some of their houses. The foremost of these, belonging to the Counts of Moltke, was established in the 18th century, when Dutch and Flemish paintings of the previous centuries were most eagerly acquired by the connoisseurs in the Protestant countries of Northern Europe. Often the owners also lent their artworks to the annual exhibition at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, where the visitor might occasionally get a glimpse of paintings owned by foreign collectors. Such was the case when Athanasius Raczyński (1788–1874) from Poznan was the Prussian ambassador to Denmark in the years 1830–1834.⁸

Finally, the artist, Christian Albrecht Jensen (1792–1870) had to rely on his own collection of paintings, drawings and prints as a source of inspiration and reference, as had been the case with the Danish painters of the previous generation such as Nicolai Abildgaard (1743–1809) and Jens Juel (1745–1802). Among the Danish artists, many sculptors and painters acquired antiquities and other works of art during their travels abroad or at auction. The most prominent of these collections belonged to a sculptor who enjoyed European fame in his day, Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844), but The Thorvaldsen Museum was not inaugurated until 1848.⁹ In the present article, the portrait painter Christian Albrecht Jensen will serve as

⁸ Christensen, *Guldalderens Billedverden*, pp. 198–202.

⁹ L. Müller, *Description des Tableaux et Dessins au Musée-Thorvaldsen*, Copenhagen 1849.

an example of a widely travelled artist who copied and collected paintings abroad and at home. He was born in at Bredstedt in Schleswig and died in Copenhagen.

So each of the three collections treated in this paper had a particular emphasis: the Prince took an interest in the Danish and foreign artists at work in former and most recent times, the Moltke Collection consisted mainly of works by Dutch and Flemish painters, having been established by 18th-century connoisseurs, and Christian Albrecht Jensen was attracted to drawings and paintings which he found to be remarkable for their artistic value and their capacity to inspire his own imagination. To various degrees, these private collections could be visited by Danish and foreign art lovers, but none of them have survived until the present day. The only one to have a printed catalogue was the Moltke Collection, which will be dealt with later. Works of art belonging to King Christian VIII and to Christian Albrecht Jensen were dispersed after their deaths by the families of the King and of the painter, and they are known today only from contemporary inventories or auction catalogues. The Moltke Collection was put up for sale at auction in the 20th century.¹⁰ A certain number of the paintings and other works of art once belonging to the Prince, the Counts of Moltke and to Christian Albrecht Jensen can be traced today in museums or private collections, although there are no drawings or paintings showing them *in situ*.

It is often said that the victor defines history. In the world of art, the victors are not the artists but the museum curators, who work in the public collections and who decide which works belonging to their institutions may be seen by the general public. Even in cases where paintings bought by the Prince or the artist Christian Albrecht Jensen eventually entered a museum collection, many of them remain buried in the storerooms. The works of art which Bertel Thorvaldsen brought back from Rome or acquired in Denmark after his return in 1838 would undoubtedly have met with the same fate, had he not donated them to the City of Copenhagen with the intention of having them placed in a separate museum.

Knowledge of the three lost collections is essential to an understanding the history of early-19th-century Danish art, as well as for understanding the collectors, so they should be taken into consideration by all researchers in that field.

¹⁰ See list of Auction Catalogues in Bibliography: Frederik VII, 1864, Countess Daner, 1874, I and II, Caroline Amalie, 1882, Christian Albrecht Jensen, 1871, I and II, and Moltke, 1931.

THE COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS BELONGING TO PRINCE CHRISTIAN FREDERIK

The Prince shall take precedence, his collection being the most numerous – numbering 868 works of art, 719 of Danish origin, even though it was not in general accessible to the public.¹¹ If a visitor to Copenhagen in the year 1829 wanted to know where one could find collections of paintings in the Danish capital, he or she could turn to the “Veiviser” [Guide] for advice. The first three “Collections of Paintings” were the Royal Picture Collection, newly opened at Christiansborg Palace, the Collection of Prince Christian Frederik and the Moltke Collection.

Christian Frederik was born on September 18, 1786, to the Heir Presumptive to the throne, Prince Frederik (1753–1805) and Princess Sophie Frederikke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (1758–1794). As the royal couple had realized that they were unable to have children capable of surviving, the biological father of Christian Frederik and his little sisters and only brother seems to have been *aide-de-camp* Frederik von Blücher. However, *pater est quem nuptiae demonstrant*, and as a collector and art lover Christian Frederik has much in common with Prince Frederik, in particular the fact that they were both Presidents of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. This all-important institution, which until 1944 was the only one of its kind in Denmark, was officially founded in 1754, during the reign of Prince Frederik’s father, King Frederik V.

At the time of Christian Frederik’s birth, the Royal family lived in the baroque palace of Christiansborg and it was here that his collections were housed. They consisted mainly of specimens of a scientific nature, but ancient coins were also included. The Heir Presumptive was an enlightened art lover, who also took an interest in agriculture and science, and the little prince was provided with very good teachers. He was taught to make his own herbariums and he took a special interest in mineralogy, a subject which he in adult years had the opportunity to discuss with leading European specialists. Vulcanology would become a particular interest of Christian Frederik’s and today specimens from his mineralogical collections are to be found in the Geological Museum in Copenhagen. What he had managed to collect while still a boy, however, was lost in the disastrous fire at Christiansborg in 1794,

¹¹ See Manuscripts in Bibliography: MS Christian Frederik 1837–1847: *Fortegnelse over Hans Kongelige Høihed Prinds Christian Frederiks Maleri Samling*. I–II. Royal Library, Copenhagen. Ny kgl. Samling 1811, I–11, fol. Also: D. Helsted, “Christian VIII: An Intelligent Amateur”, *Apollo* 1984, 120(247), pp. 418–425.

which forced his family to move into one of the four *hotels particuliers* on Amalienborg Square.

The architect and designer commissioned to rebuild the interior at the new home of the Heir Presumptive and his children was Nicolai Abildgaard (1743–1809), a neo-classical history painter and a professor at the Royal Academy. He decorated the interiors of the rooms where Christian Frederik lived, and he became his art teacher, presenting the Prince with the same type of drawings from the nude to copy from as those which were in use at the Academy. Today, life-drawings by Abildgaard and his royal pupil are to be found in Her Majesty the Queen's Reference Library.¹²

The most significant event in the life of Prince Christian Frederik was his election as King of Norway on May 17, 1814, when the Norwegians declared themselves independent and voted for their *Eidsvold-Constitution*. But already on October 10, 1814, he was forced to abdicate when Norway entered into a union with Sweden. Christian Frederik, however, managed to outrage his cousin, Denmark's King Frederik VI, to such an extent that for the rest of this ruler's life the Prince was kept away from all important matters of state. As a result, Christian Frederik could dedicate himself to the arts and sciences, which were to occupy a major part of his time until he became King of Denmark in 1839.

Succeeding his father as *praeses*, or president, of the Royal Academy in 1808, Christian Frederik became acquainted with all the students and professors who were trained or worked there in the first half of the 19th century, and he acquired works of art by a great many of them. The Academy held an annual exhibition of their works, and it is often noted in the catalogues that a particular painting or sculpture was in his possession. As King Frederik VI had no particular interest in the visual arts, Christian Frederik had an important say when it came to the purchases for the Royal Picture Collection. Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783–1853), professor at the Academy and the leading portraitist of his age, notes in his diary entry of April 26, 1828, that the Prince and his consort arrived at Charlottenborg, the seat of the Royal Academy, where the annual exhibition was held [therefore often named 'the Charlottenburg Exhibition']. They spent two hours there and notes were made of several paintings for the King to acquire. On

¹² Ch. Christensen, "Reflections. Copy and Paraphrase in the work of Nicolai Abildgaard", in: *Nicolai Abildgaard – Revolution Embodies*, ed. by T. Lederballe, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen 2009, pp. 179–198.

the 8th of May, the King himself visited the show, presumably to evaluate these works.¹³

In the years 1818 to 1822 the Prince and his consort, Caroline Amalie of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1796–1881), travelled widely in Europe, giving him the opportunity to study the major art collections wherever he went in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France and England. He also visited the studios of important painters and sculptors of the epoch. A longer, significant stay was at the *villeggiatura* at the small palace of Quisisana near Naples which belonged to King Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies. He was joined there by the Norwegian-born landscape artist Johan Christian Dahl (1788–1857), a friend of Caspar David Friedrich's, who painted several views of the surroundings, among them depictions of an eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

After the death of King Christian VIII, the 1849 Danish constitution made the Royal Picture Collection state property. No effort, though, was made at the time to include the works of art which had belonged to the late King into the nation's picture gallery, and they were eventually dispersed at three auctions, the first of which was held on October 7, 1864, after the death of his son and successor, King Frederik VII. The apparent lack of interest indicates a change of tastes and a politically based emphasis on the paintings done by artists belonging to the so-called National Liberal party, as well as a bias against the many painters born in Schleswig or Holstein who had formerly studied at the Royal Academy. The remainder of Christian Frederik's collection was sold at auctions, the first held on June 19, 1874, after the death of Louise, Countess Danner, and on August 24, 1882, following the death of the Queen Dowager, Caroline Amalie. Only the Royal Family portraits which had been collected by Christian Frederik were not put up for sale, and today the greater part of them belong to the King's Collection at Rosenborg.¹⁴

That an art collection should be educational was a major concern of Christian Frederik's in his younger years. The Royal Kunstkammer and its successor, the Picture Gallery located at the Neo-Classical Christiansborg, were rich in works by 17th-century Flemish and Dutch painters, but quite insubstantial when it came to works by Italian Renaissance and Baroque masters. It boasted works by Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and also Michelangelo, but today these paintings have been stripped of their illustrious names and been reattributed to other artists. However, the *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, which was once

¹³ V. Villadsen, ed., *C.W. Eckersbergs dagbøger*. Vol. I, Copenhagen 2009: 1810–1837, p. 298 and p. 300.

¹⁴ A series of paintings from the collection of Christian Frederik, bought at auction, is to be found in the Museum of Östergötland at Linköping.

known and revered as a Leonardo and had a major impact on the Danish artists of the 19th century, and is hanging today at the Statens Museum for Kunst as a Bernardino Luini, remains a very beautiful painting.¹⁵

Prince Christian Frederik believed that copies after the Renaissance masters would serve the Danish artists as valuable models, and the young painter Christian Albrecht Jensen was commissioned to copy Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* in Dresden and, later, his *Madonna di Foligno* in the Vatican. At Dresden, Jensen made copies of the *Venus* then given to Tiziano, today known to be mainly a work by Giorgione¹⁶, as well as after the dramatic *Danaë* by Van Dyck, which was destroyed in the Second World War. The *Madonna di San Sisto* and the Dresden *Venus* were both displayed at the Charlottenborg Exhibition in 1819, catalogued as belonging to Prince Christian Frederik. In 1823 Jensen exhibited six copies after Raphael, one after Titian and a "self-portrait by Giorgione" from the Poniatowski Palace in Rome. The copy of the *Madonna della Sedia* from the Palazzo Pitti is listed in 1823 as the property of Christian Frederik, who also had his portrait painted by Jensen on several occasions over the years.¹⁷

Apart from his vivid interest in these copies from Italian and Flemish masters, Christian Frederik was mostly attracted to landscapes when choosing works by contemporary Danish painters for himself. A favorite was Jens Peter Møller (1783–1854), who gained prominence as the artist with the largest number of paintings in the Prince's collection (22 in total.) Christian Frederik took an interest in Møller's career, and he facilitated the artist's studies in Brussels and in Paris as a picture restorer. Even though many of Møller's landscapes were also bought for the Picture Gallery, almost all of them are absent today from the walls of the Statens Museum for Kunst. In his own time, Møller was also favored by Count Adam Wilhelm Moltke (1785–1864), the second most important collector of contemporary Danish art during the first half of the 19th century. The painter was even invited to stay at the count's manor of Bregentved, which boasted a special "Møller Room". His paintings are vivid, colourful and highly finished, and they often depict a particular time of day or a specific season. The Prince and Count Moltke were also patrons of the portrait painter Louis Aumont (1805–1879) during the 1820s, when they helped him to study in Paris (ill. 1). For a time, Aumont worked in the atelier of Antoine-Jean Gros.

¹⁵ Statens Museum for Kunst, Inv. No. KMSSp37.

¹⁶ Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister Inv. No. 185.

¹⁷ On Jensen's copies, most of which remain untraced, see: S. Schultz: *C.A. Jensen: Hans Liv og hans Værker*, vols. I-II, Copenhagen 1932.



1. Louis Aumont, *Portrait of Prince Christian Frederik, later King Christian VIII of Denmark*, The Royal Danish Collection, Rosenborg. From the collection of Prince Christian Frederik (King Christian VIII of Denmark)

At the Christiansborg Palace, which succeeded the first one that had burned down in 1794, the professors at the Academy, Eckersberg, Johann Ludwig Gebhard Lund (1777–1867) and Møller were given major commissions. In 1811 Lund was chosen to paint a portrait of Christian Frederik's son, later to reign ineptly as King Frederik VII. The Prince does not seem to have found the paintings by Eckersberg particularly collectable, but when in later years Eckersberg had come to be seen as outdated by the Danish art lovers, the Prince, realizing that the artist was in dire financial straits, saw to it that works of his were bought for the Picture Gallery. In spite of all, Eckersberg

is represented in Christian Frederik's collection with 14 paintings, though not surpassing Fritz Thomsen (1819–1891), who portrayed King Christian's horses in the years 1844–47. Seventeen of these are today housed in the store-rooms at the Statens Museum for Kunst (Inv. Nos. KMS1039 to 1055).

Among Christian Frederik's favorites were Christian Holm (1804–1846), who specialized in animal paintings, and the aforementioned Johan Christian Clausen Dahl, the Norwegian landscape painter – also a favorite of Thorvaldsen's – and the virtuoso Louis Gurlitt, born at Altona in 1812, then a part of Denmark. Athanasius Raczyński also bought a landscape by Gurlitt during his term as the envoy of Prussia at the Danish court.¹⁸ But the omissions from Prince Christian Frederik's collection are even more telling, as they include most of the painters who have been held in the highest esteem by the art historians over the last 150 years: Christen Købke, Constantin Hansen, Jørgen Roed and Johan Thomas Lundbye.

There are hardly any genre paintings in the collection, and Prince Christian Frederik also did not choose for himself any of the many portraits by the young artists showing themselves or their Academy friends at work in their humble studios. It may be that Christian Frederik's stay in Norway, as well as his interest in geology, disposed him favorably to mountain views, of which one can find quite a lot in the inventories. In 1832 his painting of Gat-Klettur in Iceland by Christian Ezdorf (born in 1801 in the Duchy of Saxe-Meiningen, died in Munich in 1851) was to be seen at Charlottenborg, and as late as 1846 Christian Frederik bought a picture of an eruption of Vesuvius by Hermann Carmiencke (born in Hamburg 1810, died in Brooklyn, U.S.A. in 1867). The largest sums paid for works of art for the collection were obtained by Louis Gurlitt, who in 1844 received 1000 Rix-dollars for a view of the Golf of Salerno and in 1847 was paid the same amount of money for a townscape from Civitella in the Sabine Mountains. One of the few paintings from Christian Frederik's collection which is well known today and on constant display at ARoS (Aarhus Kunstmuseum) is *The Fountain at Constantinople* by Martinus Rørbye (1803–1848), dated 1846, which the artist sold for 800 Rix-dollars (ill. 2). Rørbye was also famous for his paintings from his native Norway, one of which was bought in 1833 by the Prince. In June 1832, he had made a short trip to his home country as the companion of Count Raczyński.

The importance of Christian Frederik as a collector lies in his willingness to support the young artists who studied at the Royal Academy,

¹⁸ M. Łukasiewicz, M. Mencfel, "Patronage, collecting and critique. Athanasius Raczyński's encounter with the artistic circles of Copenhagen", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 2023, 92(1), pp. 18–35.



2. Martinus Rørbye, *The Fountain at Constantinople*, 1846. Aarhus Kunstmuseum. From the collection of Prince Christian Frederik (King Christian VIII of Denmark)

irrespective of their native origin. One may note commissions to Emilius Bærentzen (1799–1838) and to Mathias Heinrich Eddelien (1802–1852), born in Greifswald, who painted in the highly finished way which the Prince appreciated so much. Some of the few genre scenes acquired by the Prince were bought from Edvard Lehmann (1815–1892) but they are distinctive in that they show a fire in central Copenhagen and another scene in a street lit by torches. Georg Emil Libert (1820–1908) sold a view of one of the city's bridges in moonlight as well as a painting of the Frederik church seen in the early morning. At the exhibitions of the Royal Academy in 1843 and 1847, the King acquired two landscapes by Frederik Kraft (1823–1854), which is remarkable for the fact that this young pupil of the Academy was his natural son, born to Sophie Frederikke Tronier.¹⁹

¹⁹ It is believed that Christian Frederik fathered ten natural children. See: H. Dehn-Nielsen: *Christian 8.: Konge af Danmark, Konge af Norge*, Copenhagen 1999, p. 38, quoted in: M.Ch. Hansen, ed., *Emilius Bærentzen – en portrætkunstner i Guldalderens Danmark*. Copenhagen 2014, p. 163.

The promising landscape painter Julie Lütken (1788–1816), who died quite unexpectedly in a road accident in Hamburg, gave Christian Frederik a copy after Jacob Ruisdael and two landscapes. He was sufficiently fond of her memory to acquire two further works by her at the auction after Johan Bülow in 1829 and at the sale in 1837 of the collection belonging to Frederik Conrad Jens Bugge (ca. 1755–1842). In 1843 and 1844, he bought two further landscapes by a female artist, Eleonore Christine Lützow (1817–1890). At Court, special interest was given to female painters, who due to their not being allowed to train at the Royal Academy, mostly specialized in flower paintings, and both the Prince and Caroline Amalie bought paintings from Hanne Hellesen (1804–1844). His collection includes five paintings by her and also includes *nature mortes* by Christine Løvmand (1803–1872), as well as by Johan Laurentz Jensen (1800–1856), best known as “Flower-Jensen”, from 1835 a very conservative professor at the Royal Academy. Christian Frederik saw to it that Jensen should study at Sèvres when he was in Paris between 1822 and 1823, and the almost metallic precision of his flower paintings made them ideal for lighting up the rather dark and austere interiors of his time.

The last of the Danish artists to become a favorite of Christian Frederik’s was marine painter Anton Melbye (1818–1875), who in those early years of a European career was also much appreciated by Bertel Thorvaldsen. One of the latest among the Prince’s acquisitions was a view from Corsica, commissioned from Melbye, who was at that time a resident of Paris. Before Melbye became so highly sought after, Christian Frederik had commissioned seascapes from Friedrich Theodor Kloss (1802–1876), born in Braunschweig, Germany, who was chosen to accompany Christian Frederik’s unruly son, the later King Frederik VIII, on a voyage to the Faroes and Iceland. Kloss had been a friend of Count Raczyński, who had bought his *View of the Port of Copenhagen* in 1831.

The Prince was attracted to views which he considered “finished”, not to the lively sketches favored by the art historians since the 1890s. For instance, he notes in his diary from London that on July 2, 1822 he had paid a visit to the studio of Joseph Mallord William Turner “who imitates Claude and paints seascapes in the style of Coyp [Albert Cuyp, 1620–1691], but who also does not finish his work.” He had levelled the same criticism at the portraits by Sir Thomas Lawrence, which he saw at the exhibition of the Royal Academy on the 18th of May, “which are attractive through the resemblance and expression but also cannot be judged to be finished works ...”. When Lawrence, the President of the Royal Academy, guided the Prince on a second visit to Somerset House around the 1049 exhibits, Christian Frederik warmed to

his works and admired anew George Jones' depiction of the Battle of Waterloo, today in the Royal Collection in London.²⁰

Even though most art critics after 1800 had dismissed the paintings and sculptures of the 18th century as both morally and artistically objectionable, the Prince continued to enjoy the works of artists he had taken a liking to in his youth. Jens Juel had produced several portraits of him as a boy and a young man, and King Christian's interest in the works of Nicolai Abildgaard never waned. At the auction following the death of Johan Bülow (1751–1828), once a prominent courtier, the Prince bought several paintings by Abildgaard. 13 paintings of his are listed in the hand-written catalogue and 11 by Jens Juel.

We have a 'snapshot' of the Prince at the preview at an auction of the estate of Court Surgeon Frederik Christian Winsløw (1752–1811). The archaeologist and fellow collector Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (1788–1865) witnessed the arrival of Christian Frederik in the company of the art historian Niels Heinrich Weinwich (1755–1829) – more of whom later – and a few other courtiers. Thomsen looked on as the Prince pointed to certain pictures with his cane, signaling that those were the ones which were to his taste, then ordering one of the gentlemen to make a note of them in the catalogue, adding one or two crosses according to how important he found them.²¹

Christian Frederik was not wealthy enough to acquire an art collection of European masters from the first half of the 19th century. Moreover, had he had such an opportunity, his acquisitions might have been similar to those of his Royal contemporaries, such as Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orléans, whom the Prince met in Paris in 1822, or Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. In the 19th century, European royalty no longer placed their commissions with the *avantgarde*.

The favorite French painter of the age among Danish art lovers was Horace Vernet, who painted a portrait of Bertel Thorvaldsen and received a commission, never to be executed, from the Danish Art Society.²² Most of the foreign artists exhibited at the Royal Academy as on loan from the Prince were Germans. Among the painters shown at Charlottenborg from his collection were Albrecht Adam (1786–1862), General Carl Wilhelm von Heideck (1788–1861, "*A Street in Athens*"), Johann Christian Klengel (1751–1824), Christian Morgenstern (1805–1867, "*A view of the River Haug in Norway*"), the broth-

²⁰ A. Fabricius, F. Friis and E. Kornerup, eds. *Kong Christian VIII.s Dagbøger og Optegnelser*. II. 1. Halvbind 1815–1821, Copenhagen 1973. [Diaries and Records of King Christian VIII], p. 466 and p. 469.

²¹ The quotation is taken from Svenningsen, *Samlingssteder*, p. 153 and p. 156.

²² Christensen, *Guldalderens Billedverden*.

ers Franz and Johan Riepenhausen (1786–1831 and 1787–1860), by whom the Prince owned two drawings. Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1874) was also represented by two drawings, known like the rest of the above mentioned works only from the catalogues. More than anything else, one would like to know what happened to the two moonlit landscapes by Caspar David Friedrich lent to the Charlottenborg exhibition in 1821 (Cat. No. 53 and Cat. No. 54) and sold at auction in 1864.²³

DANISH NOBLEMEN AS COLLECTORS – COUNTS ADAM GOTTLÖB MOLTKE AND ADAM WILHELM MOLTKE

The most important private collection of old master paintings to have been established in Denmark before 1800 belonged to Count Adam Gottlob Moltke (1710–1792), a major politician and aesthete in Denmark during the reign of King Frederik V, which lasted from 1746 to 1766. Moltke's first advisor when it came to acquiring works of art was the Swedish-born court painter Carl Gustaf Pilo (1711–1793), although he also bought 18 paintings from the German-born court painter Johann Salomon Wahl (born in Chemnitz 1689, died in Copenhagen 1765). Among these was a work by Paulus Potter and a "Rembrandt", now considered to be a work by Karel van Mander III (*Aron as High Priest*, SMK; Inv. No. KMS7985, ill. 3) and a "Lievens", today given to Jan Victors (SMK, Inv. No. KMSSp464), but most of the paintings were bought for Moltke by Gerhard Morell (ca. 1710–1771), a painter turned art dealer. Not only did Morell plan an encyclopedic picture collection of European art to be established by the Danish king, which should include the earliest Italian and Dutch schools, he also found the many Dutch paintings that constituted the Moltke Collection, a major source of information about Old Master pictures for the Danish artists and art lovers outside of the Royal Collection in the 19th century. Through Morell, Count Moltke acquired a series of important works by Hobbema, Ruisdael and Teniers, in accordance with the taste for Dutch paintings, which originated in France in the early 18th century, but later spread to the rest of Europe. Many of the genre scenes and landscapes by the painters of the so-called Golden Age in Denmark were inspired by works of art in the Moltke Collection.

²³ At the auction Frederik VII 1864 they are described as: Cat. No. 430: *Moonlit landscape. Two Fishingboats at the Mooring Post* and Cat. No. 431: *Moonlit landscape. A Wood near a Lake. In the Foreground some Fishing Nets can be seen.*



3. Karel van Mander III, *Aron as High Priest*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (Inv. No. KMS7985). From the Moltke Collection, at one time ascribed to Rembrandt

By the time of Adam Gottlob Moltke's death in 1792, the period when Danish noblemen were the prime collectors of Old Masters was on the decline. Moltke's heirs wanted to dispose of his art works, medals and shells. Eventually, one of Moltke's sons, Joachim Godske Moltke (1746–1818) bought the art collection from the estate in 1794. Niels Henrich Weinwich, a self-taught art historian who gave lectures on the *beaux-arts* in Copenhagen, was appointed curator of the Moltke collection. He wrote the catalogue of this collection, published in 1828, based on a manuscript inventory written by the keeper of the *Kunstammer*, Lorenz Spengler, while not always agreeing with Spengler's attributions.²⁴

²⁴ See Bibliography, Catalogues of Collections: Weinwich 1818.

The Moltke Collection was opened to the general public in 1804, in rooms near the Thott town house in Copenhagen, between noon and 2 p.m. on Wednesdays. As the curator of the collection, Weinwich who became Librarian to the King in 1808, puts an emphasis on its value to society in general. In his dedication to Joachim Godske Moltke, he writes that the Count has now for 14 years "permitted the cultivators of the arts and the art lovers the pleasures thereof. The results have been huge regarding the production of works in this trade, taste has been ennobled, the desire to see them augmented, and the sons of the visual arts have seen ways to make a living in an honorable way, even during the times when the Fatherland suffered under heavy circumstances." The public access to the works of art has "augmented culture and even helped us to acquire esteem both locally and abroad." In fact, a private collection with public access was quite a European novelty: on February 10, 1804, Thomas Hope opened his new galleries, where Bertel Thorvaldsen's statue of *Jason with the Golden Fleece* was to be seen.

Weinwich gave twelve lectures on the Moltke Collection in 1815, and he mentions that Prince Christian Frederik was occasionally to be found among the audience. His catalogue is full of very personal observations, and he does not shrink from comments like the following on Petrus Paulus Rubens: "Not a few are fond of this fresh and decided manner, where the application of the colors do not betray any timidity or hovering, they would like to master the same audacity, and ape his rapid and bold manner, but they must proceed with caution ..." Like most Danish art lovers of his age, Weinwich had not had the opportunity to travel across Europe in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the different "schools" of painting, as they were then known. But he gathered a great deal of information from catalogues and prints, and studied each picture in the collection thoroughly. His interest in the technical conditions of the pictures is remarkable, and his idiosyncrasies amusing.

Concerning the Dutch genre painting *The Homecoming of a Fowling Party* (today at SMK, Inv. No. KMS3886), Weinwich writes that it has been attributed to Frans Hals, but that visitors "who were connoisseurs and had seen other galleries, have always made objections when I have given his name as the master of this picture."²⁵ And he adds, engagingly: "It may have been painted by whomsoever, but it is a capital painting, which never fails to attract the attention of the connoisseurs." Today this "capital" work of art is given to Simon Kick (1603–1652) and despite its qualities, rarely attracts the attention of the art lovers where it presently hangs in the Statens Museum for Kunst

²⁵ Weinwich 1818, p. 45ff. L. Spengler had also doubted the attribution to Hals, but instead considered Hendrick Sorgh as the author.

(Inv. No. KMS3886). It has left its mark on one of the many 19th-century artists who frequented the Moltke Collection, though, and Constantin Hansen probably based his genre painting of a huntsman, showing a bird he has shot to a little girl on the "Frans Hals".²⁶

When Weinwich writes about the most famous painting in the Moltke Collection, Poussin's *The Testament of Eudamidas* (today at SMK, Inv. No. KMS3889), he is not afraid to find faults with the painter: "His colouring, though, must not become an article of faith ... [Poussin] having missed acquiring a practice concerning the chemical substance of the colours, many particulars have been lost, are evaporated, most of them darkened or become swarthy or brushed away by clumsy cleaning and tyrannical treatment ...".

Weinwich supplies information not only on the provenance, different attributions, state of conservation of the work of art and the artistic and the commercial value, but also lists eventual prints after the painting in question. Thus, his is truly a *catalogue raisonné*, and it runs to 152 pages, containing information on 150 works, while omitting others which the author finds distinctly inferior. It can be seen from the auction of the estate of Weinwich that he had brought together quite an extensive reference library of catalogues of the important European art collections, as well as some of the major auctions held during his lifetime. Due to his research Weinwich manages, for instance, to rightly attribute the aforementioned painting of *Aron as High Priest* to Karel van Mander III.²⁷

A new trend in collecting was to appear among the mainly bourgeois connoisseurs in Copenhagen shortly after 1800, who began to make acquisitions of contemporary art works. But the most important member of the Moltke family in the 19th century, Count Adam Wilhelm Moltke (1785–1864), the son of Joachim Godske Moltke, also concentrated his efforts on buying from living Danish artists, most of them members of the Royal Academy. Like Prince Christian Frederik, Adam Wilhelm Moltke was fond of picturesque landscapes and Count Moltke also lent his acquisitions to the exhibitions at

²⁶ Hansen's painting is today at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. When it was exhibited at the Coronation exhibition in 1840, it belonged to the architect Jørgen Hansen Koch (1787–1860), a collector with great taste. It has been suggested that a copy of Simon Kick's painting, located at Helsingborg in Sweden in February 1952 with Mr. Gustav Cimbritz, may have been painted by Christian Albrecht Jensen. Information supplied by SMK regarding Inv. No. KMS3886.

²⁷ L. Spengler already considered the painting not to be by Rembrandt, but attributed it to Govert Flinck.

the Royal Academy. In 1840, the Academy arranged a show of Danish art to celebrate the accession to the throne of the Prince, now King Christian VIII. It was an exhibition of the artists favoured by the new King, and the members of the Academy as well as private collectors brought out 217 works altogether, including paintings by the two 'forerunners', Nicolai Abildgaard and Jens Juel. Count Moltke lent seven pictures to the exhibition, much in the taste of his King: a Norwegian landscape by Johan Christian Dahl, a basket with roses by the much-admired female artist Hanne Hellesen, two Italian landscapes by Just Jerndorff (1806–1847) as well as a landscape in Jutland with a watermill seen "at the setting of the sun" by Kiærshou (1805–1891). Finally, the Count lent "Morning" and "Evening", compositions "in a Southern character" by the ubiquitous Møller. As one can see, both the Count and the King liked a landscape to tell a story.

Whereas parts of the acquisitions made by Adam Wilhelm Moltke still remain *in situ* at the Moltke mansion of Bregentved in southern Sealand, the Moltke Collection of Old Masters unfortunately went up for sale in June 1931. 152 paintings were sold here, and even though some of the better items were bought for the Statens Museum for Kunst, it is a major loss to the Danish cultural heritage that it was not possible to keep the Moltke Collection together.²⁸ Among the notable paintings today at the Statens Museum for Kunst are Peter Paul Rubens' *Portrait of a Dominican Friar*, a gloomy landscape by Meindert Hobbema, and the aforementioned 'capital' painting by Simon Kick.²⁹ In Denmark there has never been a sufficiently strong desire to save the most important privately owned collections for the nation.

²⁸ Among the not previously mentioned pictures at Statens Museum for Kunst from the Moltke Collection may be noted: Meindert Hobbema, KMS3888, Gabriel Metsu, KMS3887, Rubens, KMS3884. Among the pictures which passed to Statens Museum for Kunst in 1931 was also a "Rembrandt" of *An Old Woman*, which had been bought from the collection of the French painter Charles Coypel in 1753, listed by Gerhard Morell as an Aert de Gelder (Inv. No. KMS3885, today catalogued as "Unknown"). Svenningsen, *Samlingssteder*, p. 285 gives a list of the paintings from the Moltke Collection which can be found in public collections today in Europe and in the U.S. Furthermore, The Nivaagaard Collection recently acquired a still life by Pieter Claesz, once in the Moltke Collection.

²⁹ For the Moltke Collection and illustrations of works in private and public collections today, see: Svenningsen, *Samlingssteder*, pp. 72–86. The dismantling of the Moltke collection was followed by the dispersal of the better part of the Thott Collection at Gavnbø – to say nothing of the other 20th-century sales of the Wilhelm Hansen and the Christian Tetz-Lund collections of modern art.

THE ARTIST AS A COLLECTOR – CHRISTIAN ALBRECHT JENSEN³⁰

It is quite common for an artist to become a collector of works of art, guided by his or her particular taste and the pleasure taken in the imagination of a fellow painter or sculptor. In the 17th to the 19th centuries, many artists attached to the European courts were also artistic advisors to their sovereigns, as well as art dealers, who attended auctions to provide them with valuable and historically interesting masterpieces.

Karel van Mander III (born in Delft ca. 1609, died in Copenhagen 1670), court painter to the Kings Christian IV and Frederik III left behind at his death a veritable museum of weapons and artifacts, paintings and specimens of natural history. Karel van Mander's collections were sold at auction on July 15, 1670.³¹ The printed catalogue lists a large number of *naturalia* in what is here termed the *Kunstkammer*, such as flying fish, an East-Indian cow's tail with a silver handle, a stuffed badger and two tails from birds of paradise. Among the paintings (112 in all) portraits, landscapes, still lifes and historical paintings can be found, as well as ethnographical subjects such as "a black man" and a peasant couple from Amager, an island next to Copenhagen, where Dutch farmers had been invited to settle in order to boost the conditions of Danish agriculture.

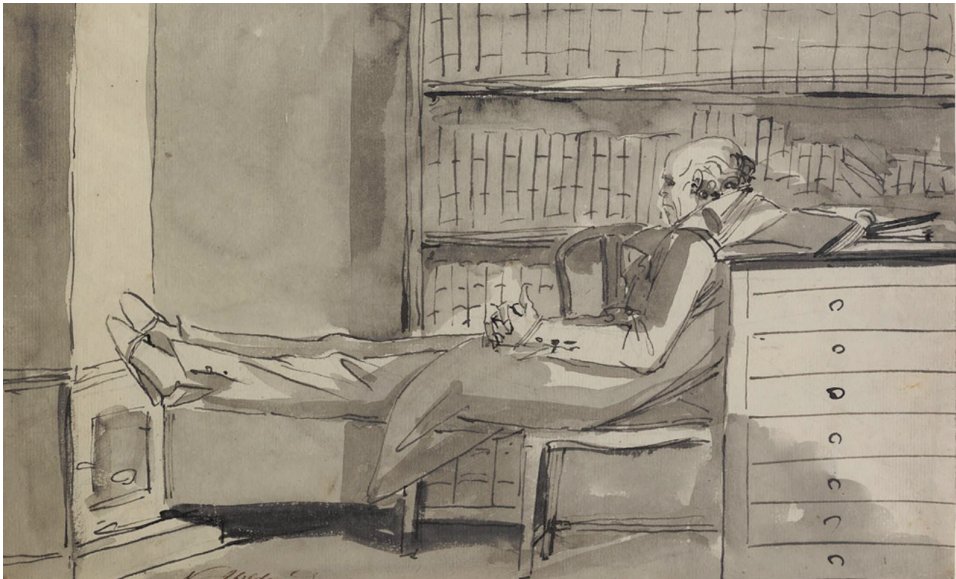
A later court painter, Johann Salomon Wahl, served the Danish kings Frederik IV, Christian VI and Frederik V, and besides painting portraits of members of the Royal families, he was a very active and knowledgeable keeper of the *Kunstkammer*. Together with Gerhard Morell (1710–1771), who was to become his successor as curator of the Royal Collection, Wahl bought a great number of the paintings which form the core of the Statens Museum for Kunst today. The printed catalogue of his estate, which was sold at auction in 1766, runs to 88 pages. The title page gives the specification "A catalogue of several rare paintings, drawings and prints by the best and most famous masters in Europe, as well as pretiosa, artificialia, naturalia, minerals, shells, medals, old coins and books and other items".³² The paintings are listed following a sequence of the rooms in which they were left at Wahl's death and they amount to 362 lots, succeeded by the drawings, which number 260 lots and the 525 lots covering the prints, almost all of the latter comprising several engravings or etchings.

³⁰ Ch. Christensen, "C.A. Jensen", in: *Biographisches Lexicon für Schleswig-Holstein und Lübeck*, Neumünster 1994.

³¹ See Bibliography: Auction Catalogues, Karel van Mander III 1670.

³² See Bibliography: Auction Catalogues, Johann Salomon Wahl 1766.

The first court painters to have been born and raised in Denmark, Royal Academy professors Nicolai Abildgaard and Jens Juel, both collected paintings and drawings.³³ In the 18th century, a special form of entertainment consisted in artists getting together in their studios to study works of art. One interesting example is a drawing by the Swedish sculptor Johan Tobias Sergel (1740–1814), made during a visit in Copenhagen in the 1790s, which shows Abildgaard at home (KKSgb8163, ill. 4). In the background one sees shelves containing a part of the Danish painter's impressive library and he is shown leaning on a convenient piece of furniture, made to contain his collection of drawings and prints. While the art works and library belonging to Jens Juel were sold at auction after his death in 1802, the prints and drawings which Abildgaard had bought in Italy and in Copenhagen, as well as his important library, were acquired for the Royal Academy thanks to the intervention of its president, Prince Christian Frederik. Both Juel and Abildgaard found inspiration in their personal collections, as Danish art historians have been able to establish.³⁴



4. Johan Tobias Sergel, *The Danish Painter Nicolai Abildgaard in his Study*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Department of Prints and Drawings, Copenhagen (Inv. No. KKSgb8163)

³³ The auction catalogue of the estate of Jens Juel is published in Charlotte Christensen: "Jens Juel som Kunstsamler", in: *Hvis engle kunne male ... Jens Juels portrætkunst*, Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg, 1996.

³⁴ C. Fischer and J. Svenningsen, "Nicolai Abildgaards Tegningssamling", *Konsthistorisk tidsskrift* 2014, 83(4), pp. 271–289.

In every collection formed by an artist up to around 1900, the attributions of works to old European masters will be found to be over-optimistic. Many of them include works attributed to Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, to Rubens and Rembrandt, as well as to Dürer and Cranach. When these paintings can no longer be traced, it is not possible to judge how near the target the attribution came, but the artist-connoisseurs may sometimes have acquired real gems in spite of their limited means. Raphael or Rembrandt may not have been the creators of a particular work of art, but the painting or the drawing could be of great artistic merit, nevertheless. An example might be the Danish collection acquired in the first half of the 20th century by the painter and sculptor Jens Ferdinand Willumsen (1863–1958), which can be studied in detail, as it is part of his museum in the city of Frederikssund. Willumsen's own attributions have mostly not stood the test of time. But on the other hand, Willumsen's artistic sensibility was acute enough for him to buy a painting, which was eventually proven to be an early work by El Greco (Willumsens Museum, Inv. No. GS 345).³⁵

As a protégé of Prince Christian Frederik, Jensen made his entry at the exhibitions of the Royal Academy with copies from the Old Masters, part of them catalogued as belonging to his patron. In this way Jensen was able to gain sound knowledge of the painters of the Italian Renaissance, and he thus found the opportunity to travel to the major European museums and spend a considerable amount of time in the picture galleries in Dresden, Florence and the Vatican. As an artist in his own right, Jensen specialized in portrait painting, and Christian Frederik procured for him an appointment as copyist of the portraits of prominent Danes at Frederiksborg Castle. Later he was able to contribute portraits of most eminent Danes among his contemporaries to the Frederiksborg collection, but his success was not to last and his painterly approach, indicative of an admiration for artists like Frans Hals and Velasquez, did not appeal to the arbiter of taste Niels Laurits Høyen (1798–1870). As the leading Danish art critic and art historian, Høyen held important posts at the Royal Academy and the Royal Picture Collection. Høyen did not value the works by Jensen, who is the most enchanting among the Danish portrait painters of his day, at all. He obstructed Jensen to the best of his abilities, and in 1858 no fewer than 15 of the works done for Frederiksborg stood around the painter's studio, uncollected – a dreary, daily reminder of how little Jensen's work was appreciated.

³⁵ Ch. Fischer, *Italian Drawings in the J.F. Willumsen Collection*, vols. I–II, Frederikssund 1984 and 1988.

Even though King Christian VIII continued to make his influence felt as Jensen's patron, the painter met with ridicule in the press and active opposition from Høyen. Finally, he gave up painting altogether, and at the same time, he probably had to begin selling off works from his art collection. Being a widely travelled artist, who had worked in St. Petersburg and London, as well as in Germany and Italy, Jensen had acquired Old Master paintings and drawings abroad, as well as at auctions in Denmark.

We do not have a catalogue of his collection dating from the time when Jensen was still alive. A large part thereof was probably disposed of in England, so it is probably not fair to judge Jensen's worth as a collector just by the paintings listed in the catalogues of the auctions which followed his death. In 1871 his collections were sold over two sessions, and all in all 194 paintings came under the hammer, as well as around 1400 master drawings and 1900 prints.

We can see that the auctioneers were very cautious in their assessment of the collection, since it was emphasized in the catalogues that most artists' names are given according to "inscriptions on the back of the paintings". These indications of authorship may have been Jensen's, but they could also occasionally have been the notations of previous owners. Whoever was responsible, they seem to be rather fanciful: Giorgione, Tiziano, Veronese, Rubens, Rembrandt and Dürer are among the painters on the lists.

A painting in the Nivaagaard Collection, a delicate portrait one of King Christian IV's sons by Jacob van Doordt, has been traced to Jensen's collection by Jesper Svenningsen (ill. 5). On the back of the image of the young boy, three suggestions for an authorship are to be found. Crossed out at the bottom stretcher one reads "Velazquez", on another stretcher is found the inscription "no. 41 v. Dijck" (first written in pencil, later written in black paint), also crossed out and replaced by "Daniel Mytens". But Jensen never arrived at the name Jacob van Doordt.³⁶

A few works of art from Jensen's collection can be traced in museum collections such as those of the Statens Museum for Kunst and the Nationalmuseum in Norway. These include a painting formerly attributed to Rembrandt, *An Ox Standing* (SMK, Inv. No. KMS3220), now reattributed to Rembrandt's School. The most famous of Jensen's paintings was known as being by Anthony van Dyck, a *Study Head of a Young Man Looking Upwards. St. Sebastian*

³⁶ The inscription, most likely to be by Jensen, further reads (in an English translation) – after the name "Daniel Mytens": born in the Hague. He lived in England during [the reigns of] James I and Charles I, he painted as a court painter together with Van Dyck. He painted mainly portraits some of which were so masterly executed that they were taken to be works by Van Dyck himself. I am grateful to Jesper Svenningsen for information on the inscriptions and to chief restorer Jørgen Wadum for sending me the exact wording.



5. Jacob van Doordt, *Portrait of a Son of King Christian IV of Denmark*, Nivaagaard Collection, Nivaa (Inv. No. 0019NMK). From the collection of Christian Albrecht Jensen

(SMK, Inv. No. KMS3222), but it has now also been downgraded to a position as “attributed to” this great painter. A questionable work, which seemingly has not attracted attention in recent years, still figures as by Van Dyck, a *Sketch for the Supper at Emaus*, which was bought by Captain Grünwaldt at the first of the Jensen auctions for the risible sum of 3 Rix-dollars (ill. 6). It is easy to understand the fascination that the vivid and theatrical painting held for Christian Albrecht Jensen with his taste for the eloquent brushstroke. (SMK, Inv. No. KMS3223).

The most interesting painting among the works from Jensen’s collection which are at the Statens Museum for Kunst today is Inv. No. KMS3217 by an unknown artist. It is reckoned to be the copy of a lost original by Giorgione or Tizian, based partly on a quotation from Carlo Ridolfi’s *Le Maraviglie dell’arte*, Venice 1648. The collector Sophus Larpent (1838–1911) bought it from the Jensen children in 1870 for as many as 600 Rix-dollars. It is said to have been acquired in Holstein by Christian Albrecht Jensen in his younger years and to originate from the noble family of Rantzau.

It is unfortunate that it is no longer possible to establish a proper catalogue of the collection of Christian Albrecht Jensen in its entirety, but it is certain



6. Anthony van Dyck, ascribed, *Sketch for the Supper at Emmaus*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (Inv. No. KMS3223). From the collection of Christian Albrecht Jensen

that its dispersal, together with the sales at auction of the art works belonging to Prince Christian Frederik and of the Moltke Collection, constitutes a regrettable loss to Danish cultural heritage. Only the paintings bought for the Danish national collection at the Statens Museum for Kunst give an indication of the lost glories.

COLLECTIONS IN COPENHAGEN IN THE 19TH CENTURY

As has been shown, the collections which were accessible to the Danish general public in the first half of the 19th century were of a character comparable to those found in any major European city at the time. The Royal Collection and the Moltke Collection, to a great deal formed in the 18th Century, may be compared to the collections at Schwerin or Braunschweig. Prince Christian Frederik collected works by young and established artists of his

own day to the best of his abilities, as did Ludwig I in Munich, and finally, Christian Albrecht Jensen, within his limited budget, assembled a collection of works he felt an affinity with, sprinkled with a few spectacular paintings by the Old Masters. His collection may be compared, on a lesser scale, to those of Sir Joshua Reynolds in London or the Danish sculptor, Thorvaldsen. At the latter's museum in Copenhagen, it is still possible to get an idea of the 19th-century Danish collector's tastes.

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THE PRINCE, THE NOBLEMEN AND THE PAINTER:
COLLECTIONS OF WORKS OF ART IN COPENHAGEN BETWEEN 1800
AND 1848

Summary

The history of collecting in Denmark and Norway in the 19th century is intimately connected with the history of the painters and sculptors active during that period. Only in Copenhagen were the Royal and private collections accessible to the artists, for whom copying paintings by Old Masters formed an important part of their curriculum. Major collectors of the Age were Prince Christian Frederik (later King Christian VIII of Denmark), who mainly acquired paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists, and the portrait painter Christian Albrecht Jensen, whose preference was to buy and sell the works of Old Masters. In Copenhagen, the collections of the Counts Moltke, which mainly consisted of works by Dutch painters, was open to the public, while the Royal Collection (today a part of Statens Museum for Kunst) could only be visited from 1827 onwards. None of the three collections dealt with in the present article have survived until today, while the works of art and the antiques belonging to the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen are at present housed in the museum bearing his name.

Keywords:

Copenhagen, collections in the first half of the 19th century, Kunstkammer, king Christian VIII, Dutch paintings in Denmark, artists' art collections, Christian Albrecht Jensen, J.F. Willumsen

