

**COPENHAGEN
EDITION**

**Illegal weed
farmers in
Jamaica
don't have
any other
alternative**

**The handi-
capped
politician
that no one
wanted to
listen to**

**We crown
the best,
greasiest
tourist trap
the city
has to offer**



ISSN 2246-6150

The Peter Pan of Party

Thomas Fleurquin succeeded by pretending not to act his own age

THE MURMUR

By the time our next issue is published, Denmark will probably have a new government. The election was called just before we went to print, so you won't find much about it inside. But perhaps that's for the best. The political chatter will reach a deafening volume over the coming weeks, and hopefully we can be a refuge from that.

We are a monthly, after all. We can hardly keep up with the micro-scandals, slip-ups and gaffes that make politics seem so trivial. But politics is anything but trivial, and the choice of government will have an enormous impact on Denmark, particularly on unemployment benefits, taxation and immigration.

When we interviewed Johanne Schmidt-Nielsen of the far-left party Enhedslisten in November, we asked her how she could be friends with her political opponents. Her answer was that conflicts of interest are a fact of life – you just have to learn to negotiate them.

We think this is an important message. Danish politics is rather special because it is consensus-seeking rather than adversarial. Our hope – however naive – is that this culture of compromise and negotiation continues regardless of who wins.

But if there were one policy that needs to be kicked to the ground, it's the right wing block's proposal to reduce the age of criminal responsibility

from 15 to 12. It's stupid, counter-productive and unnecessary. Stop it.

Enough politics. This issue, we've got some really interesting content. On the cover is Thomas Fleurquin whose Distortion Festival turns Copenhagen into a massive rave party for one week each year. We also interview both an 'exopolitician', who thinks governments might be hiding information about UFOs, and an ordinary local politician, whose handicap caused him to be excluded from negotiating the disability services budget.

Steffen Stubager goes to Jamaica and meets an illegal cannabis farmer who is struggling to pay the bills, and Alice Minor explains the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean. Henry Richards helps us understand the problem with surveillance, while radio station The Lake gives us some amazing music tips.

We released our first issue in June 2014, which means we have now existed for one year. We are so happy to still be here, and couldn't be thankful enough for the thousands of readers and dozens of contributors that have helped make it happen. We hope we are living up to our promise of providing a serious English-language platform in Denmark.

Please get in touch if you have an idea for a story, or some feedback to our coverage.

THE MURMUR

"Increasingly, it seems that you have to buy something to enjoy a space. You can't just go out and sit when you're not spending money. The city makes you feel unwanted if you're not a consumer"

NINNA HOEGH
DIRECTOR OF
PROJEKT UDEN-
FOR (PROJECT
OUTSIDE)

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CONTRIBUTORS



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Lesley Price A freelance journalist and copywriter hailing from Australia, Lesley has been living in Copenhagen for the past three years. She currently works for Danish NPO, INDEX: Design to Improve Life®. This month she interviewed UFO researcher Frederik Uldall.



Alice Minor Hailing from Seattle, Alice is working to understand Danish society through the lens of intersectional feminism. This month she helps us understand the European migrant crisis.



Lesley-Ann Brown A Trinidadian-American freelance writer, translator and editor living in Copenhagen, Lesley-Ann studied writing at The New School, NYC. Her column this month deals with the politics of learning Danish.



Oliver Raassina An editorial intern at The Murmur, Oliver focuses on art, culture and nightlife. In this issue, he selected three locations to eat, drink and party in the city.



Henry Richards An English born, Australian grown writer who calls Denmark home, Henry likes everything here except the herring. This month he ate some terrible food for journalism, and investigated the threat of surveillance.



Rasmus Degnbol an award winning documentary photographer and filmmaker, Rasmus took the photographs for Lena's story about architecture and inclusion.



Lena Rutkowski An Australian law graduate, human rights intern and freelance journalist, reported this month on how architecture can be used to exclude and include people from using public space.



Rasmus Cleve Christensen A freelance writer and radio producer, Rasmus is part of The Lake – a 24-hour online radio initiative – and served us up some musical suggestion in this issue.



Nereya Otieno A writer and creator with a background in cognitive science, musicology and communication, Nereya likes to discuss all three while eating sandwiches. She wrote our research column this month.

MASTHEAD

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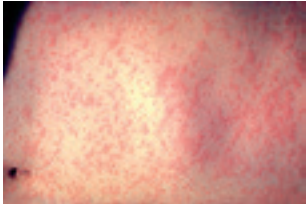


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MONTH IN REVIEW

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Measles outbreak

Four members of the same family in North Zealand have contracted measles, the youngest just three years old. The strain of measles is the same that recently caused a large-scale outbreak in China. None of the four was vaccinated against the disease.

ELECTION FINALLY CALLED

After months of waiting, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt finally called for an election to be held on June 18. The three weeks of campaigning might seem short to our American friends, but the election campaigns have been running in earnest for months. While immigration and unemployment benefits have been the focus of the political debate, the central issue of the election will be the size of the welfare state. The liberal party Venstre leads the opposition in the right-wing block of parties, and is calling for the size of the welfare state to be frozen in order to allow for tax cuts. Thorning-Schmidt's left-wing block argues that unless it is allowed to grow at least according to the rate of inflation, Venstre would need to axe public sector jobs. The day before the election announcement she presented a 39 billion kroner package to strengthen welfare for children and the elderly. At the time of going to print polls give the right-wing block 52 percent of the vote.



DENMARK SHOULD JOIN EU REFUGEE PLAN
Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard wants Denmark to drop its reservations regarding the EU's refugee policy and instead be fully involved in tackling the critical situation in the Mediterranean. Germany wants EU countries to more evenly distribute the migrants, but France and the UK are opposed to the plan.

Elias Thorsson

Wikimedia



NEONAZIS & MUHAMMAD DRAWINGS AT CONFERENCE
The group Stop Islamiseringen af Danmark (Stop the Islamisation of Denmark) wants to exhibit a number of Muhammad drawings at the annual political Folkemøde (People's Conference) in Bornholm this June. The festival will also feature a number of other far-right participants as well. The free press association Trykkefrihedsselskabet has invited Dutch MP Geert Wilders (left, with wife), who is known for his provocative stance on Islam. In addition, Georgios Epitideios of the Golden Dawn Party in Greece, has been invited by local far-right party Danskernes Parti.
Organisers of the Folkemøde have green-lighted speeches by the controversial politicians, but argued that displaying the cartoons goes too far. "This is a completely unnecessary provocation, and they have completely misunderstood what the Folkemøde is about," said Bornholm mayor Winni Grosbøll. "This is about dialogue and debate. If you want to exhibit Muhammad drawings, then you should find another place to do so."

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VETERANS DEMAND MORE SUPPORT FOR INTERPRETERS

Danish veterans of the war in Afghanistan have written an open letter in which they criticise the lack of support for Afghani interpreters who aided them in the conflict against the Taliban. In 2013, the government launched a plan to provide support for interpreters and other local personnel whose lives were put at risk by helping Danish forces.

Despite this, 42 interpreters have had their asylum applications turned down, leading the signatories to call the 2013 agreement an "immoral and disgraceful document". The letter has caused MPs from SF and Enhedslisten to demand an explanation from Defence Minister Nicolai Wammen.



Wikimedia

CHILD INTERPRETERS

A number of children are still being used to translate for non-Danish-speaking family members at medical visits, despite last year's ban on using children under age 18 as interpreters.

Researcher and interpreter Bente Jacobsen told Berlingske newspaper that using family members as interpreters compromises the necessary neutrality. Doctors and patients risk receiving incorrect information that can cause problems with diagnosis and treatment.

MÆRSK ACCUSED OF BRIBES

Danish shipping giant Mærsk has been accused by Brazilian authorities of being involved in the country's biggest corruption case to date. Prosecutors in Brazil have been investigating the country's largest oil company, Petrobras, and have discovered that the president of the company received bribes from Mærsk in exchange for insider information, which gave the shipping giant an unfair advantage over its competitors. Morten Niels Jakobsen, head of the Danish national police's serious fraud unit, confirmed in an interview with DR that his unit was now involved. "We are now in a phase of the investigation where we are collaborating with the Brazilian authorities to receive the necessary documents to take the case further," he said.



Flickr / Kees Torn

TOTALLY OUT

French energy giant Total has put a stop to its plans to drill for shale gas in North Zealand. The company claims that its reasons are based purely on technical problems with the soil, and are not due to local protests. Energy Minister Rasmus Helveg Petersen says there are no plans to allow another company to take over. "We have put the issue aside and have no plans to take it up again. I have no intention to grant new drilling permits," he told Politiken newspaper.



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RESEARCH

PETROL FROM THIN AIR

In this age of global warming and thinking green, cars powered by petrol and diesel cause us much modern guilt. But German automobile king Audi may now be able to ease a bit of that pain. The carmaker reported in May that it has produced a carbon-neutral diesel fuel that can run Audis without significant performance changes.

To be carbon neutral requires that the fuel have a zero net carbon footprint. Currently, petrol and diesel are created using petroleum, which is essentially carbon that was buried millions of years ago. When these are burned, CO₂ is released, adding to the carbon already in the atmosphere and contributing to global warming and climate change.

But Audi's 'e-diesel' is rather different. They take water and split it, using electricity provided by renewable energy sources like windmills. They are left with oxygen – which they release into the atmosphere – and hydrogen. By combining the hydrogen with CO₂ that they extract from the atmosphere, Audi can produce a fuel that is equivalent to crude oil, which they call 'blue crude'. This can in turn be refined into diesel to power cars.

This carbon-neutral fuel might not increase carbon emissions, but it is not without its detractors. Creating it requires more energy than the fuel can generate itself, so it could be argued that the process creates more problems than it solves.

Be that as it may, the production of fuel using water and CO₂ is an impressive feat. Audi is now producing 160 litres (one barrel) of their e-diesel per day, in partnership with clean technology company Sunfire.

"Production on a larger scale could technically be realised, however its commercial profitability depends on several legal parameters. At the moment, several rules make the production of e-

diesel economically challenging – for example, the renewable energy fee," Danish PR Manager for Audi, Britt Stelling, said when questioned as to the commercial viability of the e-diesel. "An industrial production over and above 3,000 litres has not been decided yet."

MAKING SEX SAFER

Sex would be so much better if it weren't for all the diseases. Some researchers must agree, as the University of Copenhagen (KU) and the State Serum Institute (SSI) have been working on banishing the most common STI of them all – chlamydia.

If you've never had it, chances are that someone you spoke to today has. 24,000 people contract it each year, most of them under the age of 25. While it is a treatable disease, most of those infected by it show no symptoms. It is far from harmless, however, and can cause infertility in women if left untreated.

KU and SSI have been analysing the structure of the chlamydia bacteria to try and find a way to stop it in its tracks. They have found that if a vaccine targets the portion of the bacteria that attaches to cells in the body, it can attract the attention of the body's own immune system, which then springs into action to take the bacteria out.

The vaccine has been effective in trials with mice and pigs, and is now being tested on monkeys

Sex would be so much better if it weren't for all the diseases

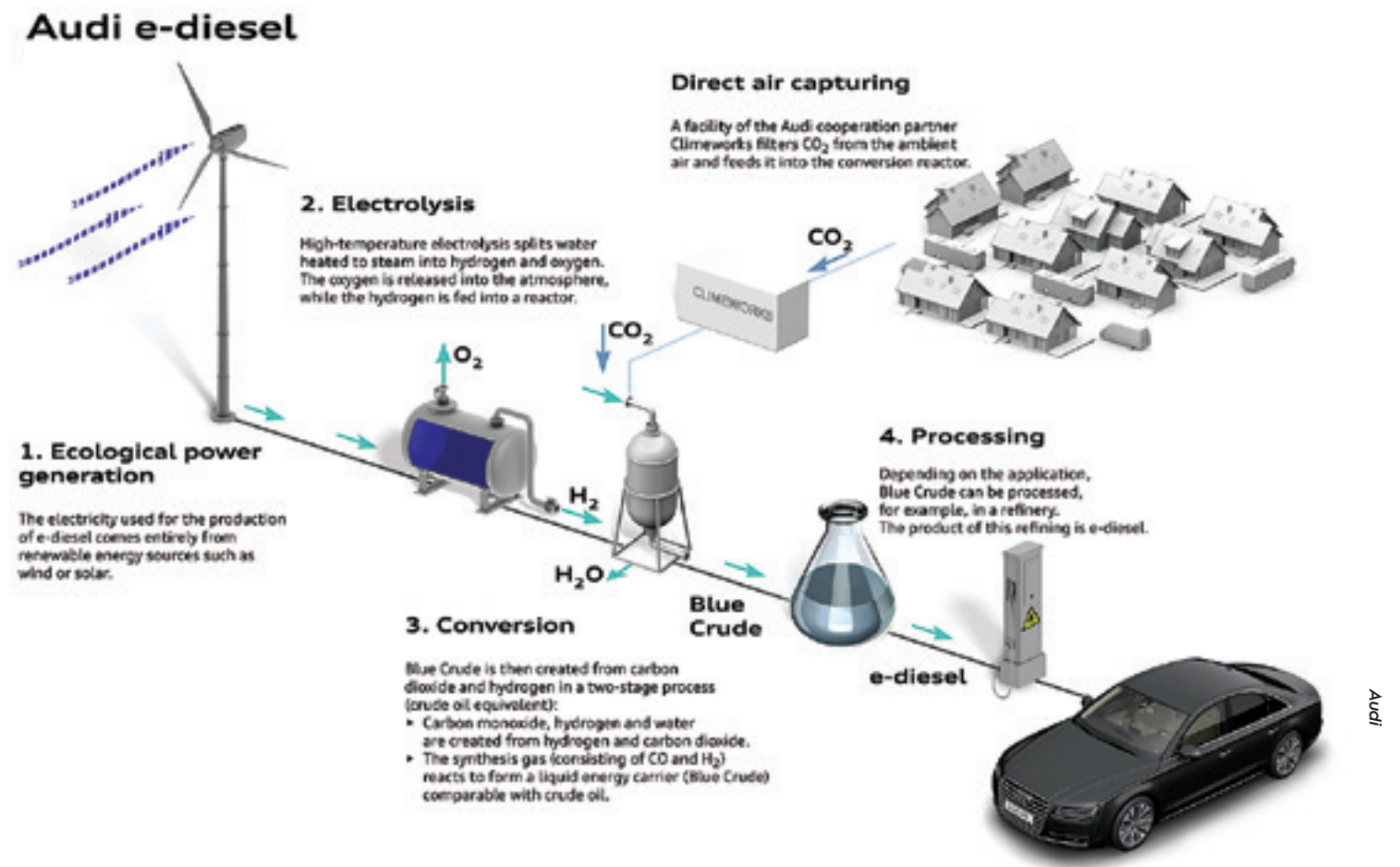
Nereya Ofieno

in France. SSI is optimistic that human trials can begin next year and – hopefully – a viable vaccine will be ready for consumers in 5 to 10 years.

"Our hope is that with our newly-developed vaccine, we can make people's immune systems ready for action when the chlamydia bacteria announces its arrival after intercourse," SSI Professor Peter Lawøtz Andersen told Politiken newspaper.

"It will be a major step in the fight against this widespread sexual disease, and could help prevent childlessness as a result of infection."

If the vaccine does come to market, it'll make sex that little bit safer. But if you're ever in doubt, wear a condom. Every time. **M**



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Q&A

THE QUEEN OF VEGETABLES

METTE HELBÆK – FOOD WRITER AND CHEF

Author of the 'vegetable bible' cook book, *Grøntsagsbiblen*, Helbæk opened Stedsans restaurant with her husband, Flemming Schjøtt Hansen, this May. Integrated into the city's first rooftop farm, ØsterGro in Østerbro, guests can dine in a green oasis high above the city. She has been called 'the vegetable queen', so it makes sense that she has some rather strong opinions about the state of our agriculture and the importance of eating right.

Can you explain where your interest in food and produce comes from?

Like so many others, I come from a family where we cooked all our food ourselves and never really went to restaurants. It was never anything too fancy, but when I was ten, I started to help out in the kitchen and cook. Growing up, dinnertime was always a very sacred time with the family, and the act of eating together was very important.

What is the concept behind your restaurant Stedsans, and what is your collaboration with the rooftop garden ØsterGro like?

I work as a food writer and have worked on recipe books, and the food I write about in my books is the same as the food we make in our kitchen—delicious yet easy. Our concept is based a lot around sustainability. My husband believes that you can never be too sustainable, and that is how we approach everything, from dishwashing to produce. We can be pretty dramatic about it, and we don't allow any kinds of chemicals in our kitchen. But it is also very important for us to have a good, positive working relationship with our staff in order for that to translate into the food.

ØsterGro was started last year as a membership organisation that



Mette Helbæk and her husband use the food produced in Østergro in their restaurant Stedsans. Why more roofs don't have gardens, is a mystery.

It's not just ecological nerds that are thinking about the importance of eating organic food

Elias Thorsson

allows consumers to track the food from the harvest to their table. When people dine up here, they do so surrounded by the food they are eating.

What do you think is the most interesting thing about our food culture today, and do you find that the way we think about food has changed?

I think we are now in a new green wave, as we have started to realise that we live in an ecosystem that we all have an impact on. It's not the case anymore that it's just ecological nerds that are thinking about the importance of eating organic food – it's also just average people.

The other thing that has changed is that people have become more interested in eating local produce. This has been apparent with gourmet restaurants like Noma, but many other restaurants have started to take the principles of local produce to heart, too. In my work as a food writer, I also go to plenty of restaurants, and I have

noticed that things don't need to be as formal any more. There is a lot less focus on waiters standing in the right spot, or the napkin being in the right place. Today things revolve more around creating a nice, cosy atmosphere where people can enjoy themselves.

Last year, Denmark chose a national dish. What do you think of that concept, and how do you rate the work of agricultural minister Dan Jørgensen?

I didn't really follow the debate about the national dish too closely, but I think that the winner stegt flæsk (fried streaky pork) is a very bad example of what Danish gastronomical culture has to offer. It is not healthy to eat a lot of it, and our pigs are treated terribly. I like stegt flæsk when it is prepared properly, but I can go a really long time between servings. I think we should have chosen some of Denmark's outstanding produce, such as our cream or our potatoes.

With regard to our agricultural policies, I think we should change the VAT so that eating green costs less than eating things that are bad for us. Our policies also seem to be very shortsighted. We should focus more on the pesticides we are using and how we treat our ecosystem. I think Jørgensen is a nice guy, but I fear he is stuck between some very big interests.

What are your favourite restaurants in Copenhagen, aside from your own?

There are so many top restaurants, but if I had to pick a few, it would be AOC, which is different without being too avant-garde. Bar'vin is a place I often go with my husband to have a nice evening. There is Lumskebuksen if I want some traditional smørrebrød, and you can't really beat Copenhagen Street Food on a nice, sunny day. **M**

CHECK OUT

CHARLOTTENLUND STRANDPARK

Built to defend Copenhagen from sea attacks in the 19th century, Charlottenlund Fort now offers refuge to those seeking a tranquil day by the sea and in the sun.

Charlottenlund Fort's twelve cannons were built to protect the city from naval invaders. But in 1932, the facility was closed, and the surrounding grounds turned into Charlottenlund Beach Park, one of the more distinctive summer relaxation spots the city has to offer.

The park can be reached by bike in under thirty minutes from the city centre by following the picturesque coastal road. This originates in the inner city as Østerbrogade, becomes Strandvejen as you cross over the S-train tracks at Svanemøllen, and then leads you into the wealthy suburb of Hellerup, with its old centre and numerous cafes.

Unlike other beaches, such as Amager Strandpark, the beach around the fort is greener, with a sense of history the newer ones lack. People have been basking here for over eighty years, walking along the defensive ramparts and diving into the ocean to cool down.

During the summer, several open-air concerts, ranging from



Peter Lassen

Now a sunbathing prop, the cannons once meant business

operetta to rock music, are held on the field by the ocean, offering a variety of things to enjoy throughout the sunny season.

Atop the fort, you can get a bite to eat at Restaurant Charlottenlund Fort, which provides its guests with a panoramic view of the area. Reasonably priced and with a large Sunday brunch menu, it is a great way to spend a nice time in good company. If that's fully booked, the round Café Jorden Rundt a little farther up the road also has a nice view of the sea.

If sitting on the beach for a day makes you bored and restless, cross the street to the woods that encircle Charlottenlund Palace. Its new look was completed in 1881, when it still served as a summer residence for the royal family.

Although the palace is now part of the Danish Technical University, its surrounding woods retain a romantic feel, with small surprises and odd constructions scattered within them. This unique charm makes it the most visited wooded area in the country.

If it's a sunny summer (fingers crossed, this May has been miserable) and the city is getting you down, buy a few beers, jump on your bike and enjoy a beach with a bit of history. **M**

Elias Thorsson

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The truth is (maybe) out there

INTERVIEW It seems absurd that we are alone in the universe, but is the study of extraterrestrial life a political and academic issue? "Yes," says Frederik Uldall, founder and director of Exopolitics Denmark.

"WE'RE NOT PURE SKEPTICS and we're not absolute believers," says Uldall. "But we do think the phenomenon is complex and that it needs to be addressed by society." Exopolitics isn't just concerned with the study of UFOs, but the movement in Denmark is focused on starting a discussion of – what they consider could be– credible sightings of extraterrestrial activity. "There's no rock-solid definition of what we do, but Exopolitics is all about answering questions that aren't related to this planet," explained Uldall. "Overall, there's compelling evidence to suggest there is something out there bigger than us – we want transparency from governments and for the issue to be seen as a legitimate form of study." NASA's leading scientist Ellen Stofan instilled hope for millions of truth-seekers on CNN recent-

The UFO-Nuke connection is well-documented

FREDERIK ULDALL, FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF EXOPOLITICS DENMARK

Lesley Price

ly when she asserted that answers to big questions about life beyond earth were on the horizon. As we get better at knowing where to look and our technology develops, she estimates that we will have definitive evidence of extraterrestrial life within 30 years time. But according to Uldall, many believe this evidence is already in the possession of governments. "Just recently we saw President Obama's own former advisor urge the US government to release all classified UFO documents," he says. Uldall is referring to a tweet sent by Obama's senior adviser John Podesta after he stepped down in February, in which he stated that, "my biggest failure of 2014: Once again not securing the disclosure of the UFO files." "Governments cannot withhold information from the public of this magnitude, particularly if this

knowledge could potentially benefit human existence," Uldall says. **CREDIBLE SIGHTINGS?** Uldall acknowledges that 98 percent of sightings have reasonable explanations not related to extraterrestrial life, but argues that a small percentage of reports could be legitimate. The Phoenix Lights case from 1997 is a particularly compelling example, he says. On March 13 across the state of Arizona, thousands reported lights of varying descriptions in a space of approximately 480 kilometers, from the Nevada line, through Phoenix, to the edge of Tucson. There were allegedly two separate events reported. First, witnesses claimed to have observed a huge 'V-shaped' dark UFO moving soundlessly through the sky, containing five spherical lights or possibly light-emitting engines. The

second was a series of stationary lights seen "hovering" in the Phoenix area. Despite the thousands of accounts, the events weren't accepted as extraterrestrial activity. Officials explained the first event as planes flying overhead in 'V' formation, while the second event was attributed to flares dropped by the US Air Force during a training exercise. "Fife Symington was the governor at the time and was one of many to witness the incident. He originally denied the idea that it was extraterrestrial, but several years later he publicly acknowledged that he felt it was a UFO." In his statement on CNN, Symington said the event "defied logic and challenged my reality" before stating that he had never seen any manmade aircraft that resembled what he saw, in all his years as a pilot and Air Force Officer. The flares

On Thursday, March 13, 1997, thousands of people reported seeing a series of lights in the sky above Phoenix, Arizona. The then-Governor Fife Symington witnessed the lights and later said they were "otherworldly". Skeptics argue that the objects were either balloons or flares, however, as their movement was consistent with the prevailing wind at the time.

explanation also did not hold up, he argued, as flares cannot keep the formation he witnessed.

Uldall says there have been hundreds of testimonies from soldiers who claim to have witnessed UFO activity during their service. He treats these reports from former military personnel as some of the most credible sightings.

"A number of former employees from the US armed forces have come forward claiming they've seen extremely advanced aviation machinery. A lot of these crafts reported are said to have moved at an astounding pace – indicating dramatically superior technology."

One strange coincidence is the large number of sightings that take place close to nuclear weapon facilities.

"The UFO-Nuke connection is well-documented," he says. "And it is logical that these facilities could possibly be of most interest to any outside parties."

LIFE-CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES

Uldall not only believes that there is strong evidence to suggest extraterrestrial visits, he also says it is plausible that the US government is in possession of extraterrestrial craft and potentially groundbreaking technology. Disclosing this information is vital, Uldall argues, as it could have a momentous positive impact on our standards of living.

"If these highly advanced technologies exist, why are we not making this knowledge of physics public?" he asks. "It's been suggested that we could vastly improve our human existence, revolutionising our world of technology and potentially solving our global environmental and energy concerns."

Uldall's vision of Exopolitics would be to base discussion and debate on the testimonies collected by noted researchers like Robert Hastings, who has studied the UFO-Nukes connection for more than 40 years. To date, Hastings has interviewed more than 150 former and retired US Air Force personnel who have been involved in UFO-related incidents at missile sites, weapons storage facilities, and nuclear bomb test ranges.



Frederik Uldall, founder and director of Exopolitics Denmark

Skeptics might argue that secretive military installations are likely to produce activity and phenomena reminiscent of extraterrestrial activity. But Uldall says exopolitics needs to pressure governments to provide 'truth-amnesty' to whistleblowers who are prepared to testify under oath, but are constrained by security protocols.

"We also want to pressure other countries to declassify documents and conduct hearings or in some circumstances re-open cases about a possible extraterrestrial presence. These aren't accounts from UFO enthusiasts looking for signs in the skies, these are people with serious credentials and they cannot be ignored."

UFO STUDIES IN THE EU

Exopolitics Denmark are hoping to lead the way by advocating for dialogue within the EU and United Nations framework, as well as pushing to bring UFO studies into universities on the Danish state budget.

"These accounts are overwhelming and are events you could spend a whole lifetime researching," says Uldall. "I really think people have moved beyond the skepticism, but there's still a huge democratic gap. Right now we can't confirm existence and can't draw any solid conclusions, but we should all be asking questions and actively seeking answers." **M**

IS LEARNING DANISH TOO BIG A CHALLENGE?



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Nicole Jonasson

Surveillance makes criminals of us all

Being snooped on has become an ordinary part of our daily lives. We expect to be recorded, watched and monitored at all times. But do we really know what we've signed up for?

WE ARE UNDER constant surveillance. Our phones can be tapped, our emails read and our movements tracked through leaky mobile devices and widespread video surveillance.

We sacrifice our privacy for the security it can offer. Police tracked down Omar Hussain after his terror attack in February thanks to video surveillance. So perhaps it's not a surprise that soon after the attack, 48 percent of respondents said they supported more public video surveillance, in a Megafon poll for TV2.

The public is also generally in favour of online surveillance. In March, a Wilke survey for Jyllands-Posten newspaper found

that 45 percent of Danes were in favour of letting the military intelligence agency FE tap people's phones without having to ask a judge first. And back in August 2013, a YouGov poll for metroXpress found that 48 percent had no issue with letting intelligence agencies spy on people over social media.

Should we be so willing to sacrifice our privacy in the name of security and safety? Niels Bertelsen, spokesman for the IT trade union Prosa, is concerned that authorities are gathering evidence that could be used against us at a future date. This undermines the cornerstone of Western justice systems in

which we are innocent until proven guilty.

"In essence, these laws criminalise all people in Denmark and assume that everyone is guilty," he says.

FREEDOM FOR SAFETY

Surveillance is often sold as necessary to public safety, suggesting that people with nothing to hide have nothing to worry about. But Bertelsen says that this argument is misguided, because the general public is still not aware of the extent to which their private information is retained. If they were, their opinions would be different.

"The problem with data sur-

veillance is that you can't see it. People don't know what is going on. But if you told the postman to copy and store all the letters that he delivers every day, there would be public outrage. Because people can't see the surveillance, the effect is different. When you actually tell people what information is being recorded about them, they are shocked."

Anders Bjerre from think tank called The Copenhagen Institute of Future Studies (CIFS), agrees.

"People are used to surveillance. There was debate about the introduction of the CPR number and how much information was held via this system, but now that debate is over. CPR, credit cards and social media have all made people accustomed to being watched.

Henry Richards

We might protest at first, but we soon become accustomed to it. In the context of Facebook, people actually want to be watched. Danes in particular have a history of acceptance towards being watched."

His colleague at CIFS, Klaus Æ. Mogensén, shares the view that we should be more critical of the surveillance systems that are in place. His concern is that while governments use the information relatively benignly now, the situation might be different if a new type of government took over.

"If extreme right-wing parties were to take charge, what would they use surveillance systems for? That is something to worry about. If this situation became a reality, we could find ourselves in a society similar to East Germany, where the Communist party kept any potential critic under surveillance. But far more surveillance is possible with today's technology than was possible back then."

Political extremists could certainly do damage to liberal democracies with the surveillance tools now available. The small European country of Macedonia is currently experiencing turmoil following leaks showing that the government has kept almost 20,000 of its residents under surveillance in order to manipulate the media and courts.

SESSION LOGGING

New surveillance laws often follow terror attacks, and both the Danish and French governments proposed new rules following their respective attacks this winter. Some say, however, that these are not pragmatic methods to prevent terrorism, and are unlikely to be effective.

Following Hussain's attack this February, the Danish police asked the government to reinstate so-called session logging of internet traffic. This would require internet service providers to keep a record of their customers' internet metadata that, in theory, reveal which websites they visited.

Session logging was first introduced in 2007 to comply with an EU directive on internet surveillance that was itself drawn up following the 2005 London bombing. It was roundly criticised, however, because the information that was stored was often useless – you might know which website was visited, but not which page and by whom – and simple tools could hide internet searches and traffic.

In 2012, Rigspolitiet, the national police, revealed that over 3.5 billion pieces of information were being stored each year, but that in only one case was the information useful in an investigation. In March 2014, the government determined this was out of proportion, and decided to end the

practice. The same year, the EU annulled its internet surveillance directive after European courts ruled that it violated fundamental rights.

The session logging now demanded by the police is far more wide reaching than its predecessor, and was met with widespread concern. Twenty organisations – among them the heavyweight Confederation of Danish Industry – called for the government to ask the European Commission to investigate whether the practice would violate the EU human rights charter.

Even if the police and government use the information wisely, the enormous databases of information risk being hacked. According to Mogensén, intelligence agencies in the US and Europe routinely access these immense data logs illegally, while their governments turn a blind eye.

"Often the government allows them to do things that are against the law. There is also a history of politicians lying to the public in the name of what they believe to be the greater good. So we shouldn't always trust authorities to stay within the law, even though that is what they say they are doing."

INFORMED SCRUTINY

Surveillance does not always have to take the form of the goliath Big Brother. Little Brother uses surveillance and hacking to protect the people, too. Take the case of Walter Scott, an unarmed man who was shot eight times while fleeing a policeman. If it weren't for a video taken by a passer-by on a mobile phone, the policeman might not now be charged with homicide. The local mayor later announced that officers would wear body-cams in future.

Bjerre agrees that, in some cases, surveillance can serve the public good.

"When it comes to surveillance of big business, banks and politicians, for example, most of us would agree that surveillance should be increased. In terms of certain societal issues such as exposing cheats and fraudsters, perhaps more surveillance is necessary and not less. Surveillance and data retention can be extremely useful."

Surveillance is inherently neither good nor bad – it merely carries risks. But we can't make an informed decision about what level of surveillance is acceptable if we aren't aware it's going on in the first place. We need to understand how and why our lives are being watched before asking about the greater implications. We should be sceptical without being paranoid. Because whatever we do, surveillance is here to stay.

"I doubt that politicians will stop increasing surveillance. There might be backlash and issues, but surveillance will only increase," says Bjerre. ■

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Destination anywhere but here

Thousands of migrants die every year trying to enter Europe. But who are they, why do they take such risks, and why are our politicians still fumbling for solutions? Alice Minor explains

THE TRAGIC DEATHS of migrants travelling to Europe across the Mediterranean are becoming a headache for Europe's leaders and citizens. 1,727 migrants perished in the first four months of 2015 compared to 56 during the same period the year before. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) predicts that the death toll of migrants in the Mediterranean could top 30,000 in 2015.

While immigration remains high on the political agenda in European countries, not least Denmark, the debate often oversimplifies the reality of who migrants are and why they set out for Europe. Two things are certain. First, the increase in the numbers of migrants to Europe is directly linked to major upheaval in Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, and elsewhere. Second, the rising use of maritime routes is a response to heightened EU border control measures along Eastern Mediterranean land routes from Turkey to Greece and Bulgaria.

WHO IS MIGRATING?

Anyone arriving to Europe without proper documentation is called an 'irregular migrant'. This label applies to anyone from asylum seekers and refugees to people compelled to leave their homes due to a lack of opportunity.

The line between an asylum seeker and economic migrant can be murky. To receive refugee or humanitarian status, a person must prove they are escaping persecution or generalized war. In Denmark, asylum seekers often have to demonstrate they faced individual persecution in order to be granted protection. People who migrate due to profound insecurity in their home country are often denied asylum.

As crises across the Middle East and Africa unfold, they both reveal and predict the profiles of people seeking refuge in Europe. Irregular migrants to Europe tend to be men in their twenties, while Syrians are the most common nationality.

Data from the UN High Com-



The Italian Harbourmaster Corps (Coast Guard) in Rome rescues migrants bound to the coasts of Italy

International Organization for Migration

mission for Refugees (UNHCR) suggest that 75 percent of Syrian refugees in countries neighbouring Syria are women and children, while 74 percent of Syrians arriving in Greece are men, predominantly aged 20-28. The reason for this is that while children and women are more vulnerable than young males in conflict zones, the prohibitive cost of traveling to Europe means many families opt to send one person ahead. When forced to choose, it makes sense to send young, single males.

WHY EUROPE?

While tens of thousands seek entry to Europe each year, the continent is no golden ticket. It's a far-off destination that requires a journey fraught with risk, which might explain why eighty percent of refugees flee to nearby countries. While the international community agrees that caring for refugees is a collective task, countries like Kenya, Jordan and Lebanon bear the heaviest burden.

When people do decide to mi-

grate without documentation to Europe, it is often after attempting to make a living in regional urban centres or neighbouring countries. Still, individual motivations for striking out for Europe are as numerous as the migrants themselves.

Social networks, language, and colonial connections play significant roles, while anthropological research has documented that economic migrants from the same local area often congregate in the same European urban areas, supporting each other as they attempt to find work.

WHY MIGRATE WITHOUT PAPERS?

If there were an accessible legal pathway for seeking asylum in European states, more migrants would seize that opportunity. A select few refugees are relocated to European countries by the UNHCR according to a quota system. But, for most, seeking asylum in the European Union requires physically coming to Europe to lodge an application.

Migrants don't resort to illegal methods to enter Europe in order to cut costs. There are regular flights from North Africa and the Middle East to Europe, and a flight from Cairo to Copenhagen, for example, can cost less than 2000 kroner.

But without the proper documentation, these migrants are unable to buy tickets, forcing them into the arms of human smugglers. While the cost of these journeys varies widely depending on how far the migrant must travel, it can cost tens of thousands of kroner to make it into Europe.

The process entails leaving family and familiarity behind and paying sizable sums for a voyage that is typically broken up into several legs. Asylum seekers who do make it to Europe often end up in detention or asylum centres. Amnesty International estimates that around 600,000 migrants are detained each year, mostly without a court decision. EU law allows migrants to be held for 18 months without charge.

Alice Minor

WHY TAKE BOATS?

In 2012, Frontex, the European Union external border agency, detected almost four times more irregular migrants crossing into the EU over the Turkish land border than over the Mediterranean. In mid-July 2012, Frontex instigated Operation Aspida, which rapidly heightened surveillance of the Greek-Turkish border.

Almost nine hundred additional police officers and technicians were deployed, detention centres were expanded, the time period allowed for detected migrants to leave Greece was reduced from thirty to seven days, and raids were conducted across the country.

In just the first month of stepped-up surveillance, detections dropped by half as word travelled that this route was no longer viable. Consequently, traffic along the route reduced drastically, and was only partially diverted to sea routes and the Bulgarian land route.

The UNHCR speculates that many migrants subsequently opted to remain in Turkey. Frontex's annual report for 2012 deemed Operation Aspida a success, since fewer people were believed to have entered Greece without documentation. This reveals Frontex's priorities: to keep undesired foreigners out of Europe rather than to determine who qualifies for the right to asylum.

In 2013, the number of undocumented migrants detected in the central Mediterranean quadrupled compared to 2012. This acceleration can be explained in part by displacement due to the war in Syria. Still, it is widely accepted that closing the common land routes has merely displaced the traffic to the more treacherous sea route.

BROKEN SYSTEM

The policies of European governments toward migrants leave plenty to be desired. In 2010, Human Rights Watch judged Greece's asylum system broken, while a representative for Médecins Sans Fron-



The Italian coastguard intercepts a boat with migrants in the Mediterranean Sea.

International Organization for Migration

this issue. Although Germany is pushing for the deal, British and French opposition will likely scupper it.

This inaction will frustrate the UN, whose High Commission on Refugees has called on North European countries to accept migrants from their southern neighbours. This would increase security, they argue, as it would encourage countries like Italy to register more migrants without also having to process their applications.

"At a time of increased security concerns over movements from Libya, this situation is abnormal," UNHCR's Europe bureau director, Vincent Cochetel, told The Guardian, referring to the high number of migrants that pass through Italy without first being identified.

"Not all those saying that they are Syrians or Palestinians are Syrians or Palestinians. And not all of them are refugees."

Cochetel's point is that not all asylum claims conform equally to the definition of a refugee, and uncontrolled migration into Europe can undermine efforts to support those most in need of protection. Countries around the world have pledged to directly accept 90,000 Syrian refugees on humanitarian grounds, with Germany offering to take a third of that number.

But with over three million Syrian refugees, these pledges hardly lift the burden from the countries that house the vast majority of displaced persons. The European asylum system does not succeed in identifying and offering asylum to those most in need. The high threshold that is needed to attempt seeking asylum ensures means that more resourceful migrants tend to be rewarded.

As the EU steps up border surveillance, migrants will continue to be funnelled toward the more dangerous sea route, while little is being done to limit the numbers who brave the journey. They will keep coming, and what happens when they arrive is our responsibility. **M**

Migrants don't use illegal methods to enter Europe to cut costs. But without the proper documentation, they are unable to buy plane tickets, forcing them into the arms of human smugglers

tières told The Guardian in 2014 that migrants arriving in the country were "being subjected to a living hell".

Italy, too, has shouldered much of the responsibility for rescuing migrants travelling across the Mediterranean in unseaworthy vessels. Between October 2013 and October 2014, its navy launched Operation Mare Nostrum, which rescued over 150,000 migrants.

Italy ended Mare Nostrum after other EU member states refused to support the operation financially. In its place, Frontex launched Operation Triton, which patrolled much closer to the Italian border. Paring-down the rescue effort is thought to be partly responsible for the dramatic increase in Mediterranean migrant deaths. In April, EU heads of state agreed to triple Triton's budget and increase its scope to match that of Mare Nostrum.

This does little to address the central challenge of how Europe treats migrants. Instead of treating migrants as a collective responsibility, the Dublin Protocol dictates that asylum applicants must be processed in the country they

first arrive. This places enormous pressure on Southern European countries like Greece and Italy.

The UNHCR estimates that over two-thirds of irregular migrants arriving in Italy are not identified or fingerprinted, allowing them to travel north and lodge applications in other European countries. Under the Dublin Convention southern countries have no motivation to ensure all asylum seekers are processed because they lack the resources to process these cases.

Distribution of irregular migrants across the continent is very uneven, however. According to Eurostat, while Germany processed 97,275 asylum applications in 2014 and France 68,5000, Estonia processed only 55 and Portugal 155.

NO SOLIDARITY

This imbalance led the EU Commission to propose in April a quota system to share refugees between member states more equitably. Denmark does not participate in these negotiations due to its EU opt-out on defence affairs, but Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard would prefer if Denmark did engage on

Born this way

INTERVIEW Local politician Kristian Hegaard was excluded from decisions about tough budget cuts because he had a conflict of interest – he is disabled. While he has always pursued his dreams, he believes society needs to ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their burdens

YOU CAN'T SHAKE Kristian Hegaard's hand, because it is bent backwards against his wrist. He can still use it to steer his electric wheelchair, which he whips around his sparsely furnished bungalow in Humlebæk, half an hour north of Copenhagen.

The 24-year-old is a parliamentary candidate for De Radikale Venstre and has represented the party as a local politician in Fredensborg council since he was 18. Alongside his political work, he studies law at the University of Copenhagen and volunteers as a football coach. He loves the sport, which gave him his first taste of political success. As a boy – and already in a wheelchair – he was elected president of his student council and lobbied for better goals on the football field.

"I've always looked like this, so I've always looked at life in terms of what my opportunities are, instead of focussing on my limitations," he explains. "I come from a competitive family, so when we choose something, we go all in. My brother is a professional footballer, and my parents are elite badminton players. We always want to be at the top, and we support each other's goals."

This March, he was lifted out of obscurity when he was excluded from the council's negotiations to cut its disability budget. He sits on the social affairs committee, but when five of the seven other members argued that he had a personal and economic interest in the outcome of the cuts, he was barred from participating.

INSIGHT OR INTEREST?

The process was completely legal, but it raised eyebrows and made national headlines. In a time when we are increasingly ruled by career politicians with little real-life experience in the areas they legislate on, it seems absurd to exclude elected officials from having an impact on a field they inherently understand.

It's not a clear-cut case, however. One of the proposed cuts was to the so-called BPA grant, which



"I come from a competitive family, so when we choose something, we go all in."

Words:
Peter Stanners

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

Hegaard receives to pay for help, including a live-in aid. Nationwide, the average BPA grant is around one million kroner per year, and he is one of only nine recipients in his municipality. If the service is reduced, his ability to participate politically would be too, he admits.

Conflicts of interest abound in politics, and it would be naïve to suggest that politicians may only legislate on issues that do not affect them. Politicians, after all, vote on their own pensions and salaries. They decide on benefits that affect

their friends and families, and infrastructure projects that affect their businesses.

"Excluding me shows that they think I only entered politics to promote the handicapped," he explains, adding that it is naturally an area of interest to him given his own physical disability. "I know when making a cut in services might actually prove more costly for us in the long run. I know what makes sense."

Had the negotiations focussed only on the BPA grant, Hegaard's

exclusion would make more sense. Instead, the entire disability budget was being negotiated to find a 10 percent savings, with the overall goal of bringing the council's budget back into balance.

It's impossible to know how many people voted for Hegaard because of his insight into disability services, but the 24-year-old was a popular choice in the 2013 election – his 464 personal votes made him the sixth-most popular politician out of the 66 that ran.

"I think it's disappointing for those people who voted for me, and for the people who met me at the train station in the morning and said that my position in a wheelchair means I better understand their disabled children. So some people definitely voted for me because of the situation I am in, and trust me to have the right priorities."

SOCIAL MOBILITY

While Hegaard's exclusion might have been a blow to these voters, it might have been a godsend for the young politician's career. The story of his exclusion has been carried by most major media outlets, and Politiken even published a leader criticising the council for the decision to exclude him.

He is a rare sight. There are no physically disabled politicians in Parliament, and if Hegaard were elected, he wouldn't be able to address his peers, as the speaker's chair is not handicap accessible. This lack of accessibility extends to many other areas of Danish society, which he thinks is unambitious compared to other countries. He was in London for the Olympics and was surprised to find that taxis must accept wheelchairs. In Barcelona, the city's busses make rolling on and off a breeze.

"Because Copenhagen is hard to navigate in a wheelchair, people are discouraged from trying. This means we see fewer of them in the city, which creates a negative spiral and develops prejudice against them. So we definitely need to create more room for us in our democracy and public space to counter

the idea that there's hardly any of us, so why bother helping us get around?"

Hegaard stresses that he isn't interested only in promoting the rights of the handicapped, he just wants everyone to have the same basic conditions for participating in society. A person's background shouldn't influence their opportunities, no more than having a disability should stop him from participating in politics.

"When I was in school, there were children who hadn't done homework because their parents didn't have the time or ability to help them. Over the years, they fell behind everyone else, even though they had as much potential, and wanted a good future as much as everyone else.

"Our parents and background have a huge impact on our future and opportunities, so we need to work harder to even that out. It's important also because if we want our welfare state to be as strong in the future, we need more people to work. And that's only possible if children are less dependent on their parents' background for their future."

The solution isn't necessarily higher taxes or increasing public spending, says Hegaard. De Radikale are fiscally conscious social liberals that support raising the pension age and keeping public spending down – not necessarily the best choice for someone apparently so interested in maintaining generous social spending.

"People often ask me why I don't represent a more left-wing party. But I think politics shouldn't be about spending more money and raising taxes. That just reduces our ability to compete and the number of jobs by scaring hard-working people out of Denmark."

AMBITIONS

Hegaard wants to be a minister, but he's not yet figured out exactly which portfolio he'd like to take. Most important is the tax system, he argues, as it's the best tool we have to create incentives that target particular political goals.

Excluding me shows that they think I only entered politics to promote the handicapped

KRISTIAN HEGAARD, PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE FOR DE RADIKALE VENSTRE



"Taxing work doesn't create an incentive to get more people into work. So we need to reduce that tax, and maybe increase the tax on polluting companies to get rid of them. So, increase tax on things we want less of, and reduce taxes on things we want more of. That makes sense."

Art, culture and sport are also important for creating identity and value, and he would be keen to encourage a greater focus on bringing

people together through these creative fields.

"Those fields don't care how good you are at placing commas or mental arithmetic, it's a socially blind forum. You can be good at it regardless of your parents' abilities, so it's a forum where people can meet across social layers."

Hegaard was smart to turn a negative into a positive, by spinning his exclusion into a platform to engage voters. His message is

that it's vital we ensure everyone is given the same opportunity to thrive in society. Some of us will need more help than others, but it's a small cost to pay to break cycles of poverty and disenfranchisement.

While he has been buoyed by a supportive family and generous social support, he has had to pay for his own customised van to accommodate his wheelchair.

"I can't exactly jump on a bike," he laughs. **M**



The party prince &

Not everyone loves Thomas Fleurquin. Maybe it's because he brings the city to a standstill for a few days each summer. Maybe it's because he likes to wind people up in the media. He, at least, thinks his Distortion Festival is making the world a better place by opening up the streets to dance music and organised chaos

He speaks with a French inflection and sports a mop of silver hair. He admits to having been a bad husband, taking drugs and engaging in illegal accounting practices. When a journalist started investigating his organisation, he penned an open letter suggesting she give herself an orgasm.

Thomas Fleurquin is the chief architect behind Distortion, a festival that celebrates club culture and "orchestrated chaos" through street parties and raves in Copenhagen every June. Over 100,000 people are expected to visit the two street parties in the city, and thousands more will descend on Refshaleøen for the weekend festival.

"I listen to loud techno music and still live that rave dream," the 41-year-old explains in his office on the island. "It may seem weird, but I'll be there at 5am with my shirt off dancing in front of the loud-speaker. Of course it's a bit ridiculous, but it's honest."

It may seem weird, but I'll be there at 5am with my shirt off dancing in front of the loud-speaker. Of course it's a bit ridiculous, but it's honest

Peter Stanners

Honest it may be. But while Fleurquin is comfortable being a character in the performance he rolls out across the city, his job as its stage director comes less naturally.

"It feels so theoretical and bullshit to me," he says, gesticulating dismissively at wall charts that outline all the tasks that need completing before this year's festival.

"But of course it isn't. In the last two years, I have finally grown up and accepted that this level of organisation is good. I'm still childish, but it's only for entertainment. I know we are a serious organisation. I just still want us to live up to Distortion's profile as a backyard party or a crazy Jewish wedding."

GROWING PAINS

Fleurquin started the festival in 1998 to promote the culture guide he wrote for the English-language newspaper The Copenhagen Post, where he worked until 2008. But what started as raves for die-hard club kids exploded into the mainstream in 2009, when tens of thou-

sands of people descended on the city for the street party.

It was a watershed moment for the organisation. Until that point, his rag-tag inner circle was chaotic and frenetic, and operated in a state of constant damage control. They acted first and asked permission later. When fights broke out, they intervened, and when cleaning groups got drunk and failed to show up in the morning, they would stay and clean up the mess.

But they were overstretched. In 2011, they ordered too few toilets, and the streets stank of urine for days after. The same City Council that had started out funding Distortion in 2008 slapped them with a 350,000 kroner fine. They were forced to professionalise, leading to the establishment of the Distortion Foundation later that year.

The foundation owns Nus/Nus, – the Distortion Secretariat – which employs Thomas Fleurquin as its director. He remains the festival's visionary, while a strong hands-on administrative team has professionalised budgets and finances. The board of the Distor-

I have this beef with the hard-core leftists who think we have betrayed the underground by making partnerships. I don't have a good relationship with them, because I am somehow one of them, or at least I used to be



Above: Thomas at the 'one minute rave' on the bridge Knippelsbro in 2010. (Photo: Christian Tanzweise)

Left: In front of the speakers at the 2008 final party beneath VM Bjerget. (Photo: Peter Stanners)

Below: In his car this May during the interview. (Photo: Peter Stanners)



his kingdom of rave



tion Foundation includes two of the nation's most famous lawyers and two respected CEOs.

This Wednesday morning, I am sitting in on a meeting led by Mads Holm, who is responsible for Distortion's daily operations. Around twenty people are gathered, and they discuss ticket sales and corporate partnerships until Holm turns to the lanky Frenchman.

"Fleurquin, do you have something to say?" and someone sniggers a little because Fleurquin always has something to say.

CREATING A BETTER WORLD

Fleurquin's vision is not universally admired. Pia Kjærsgaard, former leader of the Danish People's Party, penned a letter to Politiken in 2013 criticising Distortion for interfering in ordinary people's lives. When Fleurquin offered Kjærsgaard the chance to host her own party during the festival, she called him a smarty-pants and an 'action man'.

He has also upset the city's left-wing activists, who have accused him of monopolising the city's street party potential and abandoning the underground in exchange for corporate partnerships. This relationship is still rocky, says Fleurquin, with Distortion fielding fresh accusations of selling out after striking a deal with convenience store 7-Eleven.

"I have this beef with the hard-core leftists who think we have betrayed the underground by making partnerships. I don't have a good relationship with them, because I am somehow one of them, or at least I used to be. I don't care about money. I was a 'fuck capitalism' kind of guy in my youth, and I built this project with an unspoilt desire to create a better world. I now know that 98 percent of businesses are OK. There is no group of evil corporate people that consciously try to keep the poor poor. It's simply not true. I believe everybody is fighting for survival, or power, or glory, or ego. But nei-



When I was 19, I thought sleeping was a waste of time. I didn't have a healthy, natural approach to life



From top to bottom:

The 2008 street party on Studiestræde. As its popularity rose over the years, Distortion has had to abandon holding parties in these narrow inner city streets. (Photo: Peter Stanners)

Thomas likes to get involved in the fun. (Photo: Christian Tanzweise)

The Ring of Fire at Enghave Plads is a popular fixture of the Vesterbro street party. (Photo: Peter Stanners)

ther Obama nor any corporate mastermind has any real control over the evolution of things – and I honestly believe the world is getting better, all the time."

Fleurquin doesn't mind taking on his critics, and has used his infamous Human Infomail email list to offer his thousands of subscribers a view inside both his head and the Distortion machine. In 2011, hours before the final party, he complained that while thousands of people had turned out for the free street parties, hardly anyone had bought the tickets to the club night. Distortion faced ruin unless they could turn it around.

"The street is supposed to be the warm-up, friends! I don't know the solution, but four hours of depression was enough. I look forward to the challenge – hey, I'm 'Mr Fleurquin'."

Four years on, Distortion is a different beast. Only two street parties remain in the city before the festival moves to the island of Refshaleøen over the weekend. They've diversified their profile, adding both a classical stage to the party in Vesterbro, and events aimed at children, called Børne Distortion. The party on Refshaleøen is all about the music, with a sharp international profile to rival any competing dance music festival.

ASK FOR FORGIVENESS

Fleurquin's need to put Copenhagen on the map is tied to his position as outsider. He has a Danish mother and was brought up in Paris, where he says he played Dungeons and Dragons with fellow members of the nerdy and sheltered upper-middle class.

He doesn't paint himself as a popular teen, however, and says he only got into clubbing in his twenties.

"When I was 19, I thought sleeping was a waste of time. I didn't have a healthy, natural approach to life. I shunned things that were obvious to lots of people, important things like eating. I thought it was materialist nonsense to have clean shoes. I wasn't making my life easy by putting my theoretical ideas before my own good. I still do. I think I'm an OK father and husband now, but I wasn't ten years ago. I have really pushed it to the edge."

After a stint in the army and a few years cruising around Europe in a camper van, Fleurquin permanently relocated to Copenhagen in his mid-twenties, where he helped establish

The Copenhagen Post. For the next ten years, he would write over a hundred cultural listings a week for the expat newspaper. His close connection to the city's cultural grassroots was akin to an education, he explains. But his position as an outsider also motivated him. He could see the city for what it was, and for what it could be.

"It's a luxury to be able to focus on something that isn't an imperative, but a vision, on making the world a better place," he explains. "Our goals are to use the city in new ways, to showcase new music and artistic progression. But our biggest strength is that we are doing it for the right reason. We are frontrunners, showing people who are doing something new and putting them forward."

Fleurquin's reputation as an enfant terrible, along with the rumours of chaos inside the Distortion machine room over the years, raises the question of how he ever managed to get the city to invest up to a million kroner a year in his project.

But for a man so at odds – politically and emotionally – with authority and conventional living, he has only praise for the city's administration and policing. He thinks Denmark's high level of trust and social cohesion, its public servants act in the interest of the people, and its police are both well-trained and driven by a civic sense.

Distortion would not have been possible if Fleurquin had followed all the rules, and yet the city and the police have forgiven him, because they understood his vision was a good one. They might not get everything right, but the city's support of alternative cultures is unusual in a European capital city.

"It's what makes Denmark an advanced country, its pedagogy. But there is also an unprofessionalism in its laissez-faire attitude, that when your intentions are good, they overlook the bureaucracy."

But while Denmark's social cohesion creates a bureaucracy driven by civic pride, Danes don't fight for principles the way other Europeans do, says Fleurquin. There is no popular opposition to the system, because there is no historical trauma between the state and the people.

"Foreigners who come here don't understand why people are passive against the power, why people just do what they're told. They can't un-

derstand why they trust the system to do what's best for society. But in countries that have suffered, there are stronger bonds between people. Friendships just aren't as strong in Denmark. Danes are better in groups than individually. It's what's good and bad about Denmark."

OUT OF SURVIVAL MODE

We've spent the day talking on the sofa in his office, located in a former industrial facility. Next door, giant laser cutters fashion objects out of cardboard. Hip men, women, boys and girls float in and out. One person starts to cry, and Fleurquin wraps them in a warm embrace.

Later in the afternoon, we drive to a meeting with the Parliament's press staff as they plan publicity for the party celebrating the 100th anniversary of universal suffrage. Fleurquin is in his element, negotiating with his polite yet focussed intensity. At one point during the meeting, his colleague takes over, and Fleurquin puts his head in his hands, overcome for a moment – with boredom, perhaps.

The meeting is over, and he's off to another negotiation with the canal boat operators to reduce the compensation Distortion owes them for closing the canals during the party. He is buoyed by the challenge, because ultimately he thinks he's the luckiest man on the planet.

"I'm driven by the spirit of innovation, of touching that vibe and that chord, that thing that elevates you from the imperatives of daily life. I don't do this to pay the rent. After all, real entrepreneurs and businesspeople don't care about money. Believing in your mission is the way to elevate yourself above the daily trivialities of shopping and going to the dentist. It gives you a magic aura. That's what everyone is chasing after. It's hard on my body and family. It's hard-core. I don't think you can survive if it you're not made for it. It requires physical and psychological devotion."

The hard days seem to be over for the Frenchman. Distortion is stable, floating on a steady income stream, and has transformed into the international event he always wanted it to be. And while he could be forgiven for wanting to romanticise Distortion's early days, without sleep and fuelled by passion and provocation, it seems he could grow accustomed to the new setup.

"I don't feel like I'm surviving any more, I feel like I'm living." **M**



From top to bottom:

A random moment at the 2013 final party.
(Photo: Peter Stanners)

Dancing in the streets.
(Photo: Marcus Palm Andreassen)

Stragglers light a bonfire on Sankt Hans Torv in 2008 following the street party.
The festival has increased its cleanup after a few parties left the city in a state.
(Photo: Peter Stanners)

Rapper Topgunn is carried by the crowd.
(Photo: Marcus Palm Andreassen)



Friendships just aren't as strong in Denmark. Danes are better in groups than individually





The church Mariakirken on the street Istedgade near the Copenhagen Central Station. The square in front of the church used to be a central congregating point for the local drug users and homeless. In 2012, however, the square was redeveloped to make it a less attractive place to stop and socialise.

Designing homelessness away

The new Israels Plads gives the city some breathing space and Istedgade is made pedestrian friendly. While Copenhagen's redevelopment is a cosmetic improvement, does it create a better city for all its residents?

Words:
Lena Rutkowski

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

The most quintessential symbol of modern Copenhagen, must be the construction site. Copenhagen's urban renewal is visible everywhere, as the city reinvents old squares, vamps up central stations, and lengthens its subway system, all to a steady chorus of jackhammers.

What's increasingly less visible in the public space are marginalised Copenhageners – the rough sleepers, the individuals struggling with addiction, the unemployed.

While London garners criticism for planting spikes in doorways to deter the homeless from taking shelter, Copenhagen is celebrated for designing with a social conscience. It provides injection rooms and shelters. This is Jan Gehl's 'humanist city', peppered with bike lanes and designed for the people, an ethos developed by the Danish architect and taken up worldwide.

But in the face of rapid gentrification, are the city's urban 'touch-ups' could be indirectly pushing its most vulnerable citizens out of the public space?

A CITY OF TRANSIT SPACES

For over a decade, Copenhagen's central station has blasted marching band tunes outside its back entrance to discourage local drug users from loitering. However, today's spate of new projects proffer subtler signs about who is, and isn't, welcome.

"It's hard to point to concrete examples of exclusionary design in Copenhagen. I wouldn't say it is necessarily planned," says Esben Neander Kristensen, project manager at Gehl Architects, a firm concerned with inviting citizens to use the public realm. "Crass efforts such as the obviously anti-homeless spikes in London

would cause an uproar here."

That doesn't mean citizens aren't being excluded from the city's spaces by the indirect consequences of design, however. Around town, benches are disappearing from public squares, church properties and metro stations, or are being rebuilt as long metal planks, unfit for rest. These are spaces that discourage lingering, and move citizens along to nearby cafés, parks and bars.

"It's true that many of the metro stations don't currently invite users to linger or to stay. They function as transit spaces," says Kristensen.

This makes life increasingly difficult for Copenhagen's homeless.

"Many years ago, you would hear about rough sleepers in the airport or bus shelters, but that's becoming more difficult to find," says Ninna Hoegh, Director of Projekt Udenfor (Project Outside), which provides support to the homeless and marginalised.



The exit from the Central Station on to the street Istedgade is a congestion point for local street people who defy the classical music that is played loudly to deter them.

"There is also no financial district per se in Copenhagen," says Kristensen. "People actually live in the city centre, which means it doesn't become dead at night. That can make it harder for rough sleepers to find abandoned areas after midnight."

When a refurbished Israels Plads was unveiled last year, the central square offered a vast open space with circular benches separated by metal dividers. While it's a perfect strolling spot for revellers from the neighbouring upscale food market, the bench design means it's not a place to rest.

For Hoegh, catering urban design exclusively to the needs of the middle class in this way sends an implicit message about whom the city values.

"Increasingly, it seems that you have to buy something to enjoy a space. You can't just go out and sit when you're not spending money," she says.

"The city makes you feel unwanted if you're not a consumer."

MIDDLE CLASS CITY

Part of the problem is that vulnerable citizens lack the economic power to assert their ongoing use of an urban space in the face of gentrification, which wants them unseen.

"The middle class are better taxpayers," explain landscape architecture academics Bettina Lamm and Anne Wagner, who have carried out research together.

Nowhere is this tension between competing urban needs more apparent than in the formerly-dicey-cum-trendy neighbourhood of Vesterbro, a rapidly gentrifying area that is quickly burying its working-class origins in organic burger bars and artisanal bakeries.

Urban design has invited the rising middle class population in while further pushing away the area's traditional underbelly of prostitutes, drug users and homeless.

Per, a local in one of Vesterbro's old bodegas, recalls the local square Halmtorvet before it was refurbished in the early 2000s.

"It was a square, there were lots of prostitutes and drug users. Then they built a roundabout, so there was nowhere to stand around anymore. Today it's full of young families who can afford to buy apartments in the area."

For Lamm and Wagner, this kind of indirect exclusion is inevitable as demographics change. Inner Copenhagen is increasingly made up of families, and urban planners need to keep their interests in mind.

"Places where you have gatherings of alcoholics might intimidate children and families, who are growing in population."

While many Copenhageners agree that the city should be more socially inclusive, few want to be exposed to the trappings of marginalised people – drug addiction, poverty and homelessness.

It's this "not at my front door" attitude that pushes out the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

"It's a dilemma. People buy apartments in an urban area to be

part of the city, but then they don't want city life outside their doorstep," Lamm and Wagner write.

INCLUSIVE VESTERBRO

Vesterbro, however, is also the site of several urban development initiatives aimed at social inclusion. The area's injection rooms have been hailed as a success, providing drug users with a safe place to inject. Police report less open drug use, and have credited the initiative with Vesterbro's syringe-free streets.

Lamm and Wagner also point to the drinking shelter in Enghave Park, a collaboration between local alcoholics and artist Kenneth Balfeldt. The group worked together to provide a space for the drinkers, who used to congregate in Enghave Plads before the square was closed for metro construction.

Similarly, Folkets Park (The People's Park) in Nørrebro was designed for all users to feel welcome. Created in 1971 from a demolished social housing estate, it



The new square Israels Plads doesn't encourage anyone to linger overnight. The circular benches have metal dividers, while the long tiered seating lacks privacy and is open to the elements.

was rebuilt this year for the second time in five years after research found that it was unused because people felt unsafe there.

"The area has many different minority groups, so the challenge was to create a park and a design where all felt included," write Lamm and Wagner.

They add that while we don't yet know whether the redesign has been a success, the city has attempted to include everyone and to balance the competing interests. Kristensen agrees.

"Most people would get a voice in Copenhagen's urban design, although some groups have louder voices than others. There are strong examples of urban design in Copenhagen being enjoyed by different groups."

UNSEEN CITIZENS

As plans for further injection rooms are being met with resistance from Vesterbro locals, Hoegh still fears that the city's urban planning is not inclusive enough.

"It's not as if the goal is to keep people on the streets. But the cityscape is not providing enough viable alternatives."

There's concern that another square will suffer the same fate as Halmtorvet. Mozarts Plads in neighbouring Sydhavn has long been a gathering place for individuals with various social problems, as well as for Greenlanders

struggling to adapt to Danish society. However, with plans to build a metro station on the space, this community might also find themselves excluded from their former haunt.

Back at the bodega, I ask Per what happened to the former denizens of Halmtorvet. He doesn't know. Hoegh believes they have been pushed into a more disruptive, nomadic lifestyle. "They move around. Find an area that is less attractive, get pushed around the city."

It seems that may well end up paying a moral price for safer and more attractive urban design, as it can undermine the values of inclusivity and community support embedded in Denmark's welfare system.

"We can all agree that we want a safe city and a fun city," Lamm and Wagner write. "But we might end up with a very boring city if it consists only of people who all belong to the same middle class, and who are never confronted with 'the other'."

Kristensen wonders how the spaces will change after urban renewal. "It will be interesting to see Enghave Plads return to a public space after construction is finished, and to observe whether use of the space will change."

As for those who find themselves shunted out of the city space, "they are there somewhere," says Hoegh, "but unseen." **M**

COPENHAGEN INCLUSIVE DESIGN INITIATIVES

Copenhagen is often touted as a pioneering example of people-oriented urban design. Recent years have prompted a number of design initiatives aimed at addressing social problems and making for a more inclusive city:

• **THE PEOPLE'S PARK (FOLKETS PARK).** Local Nørrebro residents took advantage of an empty lot in 1971 to create this "pocket park", which aims to be "inclusive for all". It was renovated in 2008 to include an events area and seating chairs, in order to make the park more accommodating and have all users feel welcome. It is often used by various minority groups such as unemployed youth, activists and the homeless, and aims to incorporate their needs.

• **PRISMEN** – In 2006, an indoor multipurpose centre was built on Holmbladsgade in Amager. It was designed to better accommodate local youth from the surrounding social housing areas who don't typically

participate in organised sports clubs or activities. Everybody is welcome at Prismen (pictured below), which offers space for both organised and casual sports activities, as well as a site to hold cultural events.

• **FIXING ROOM – THE "FIXING ROOM"** (Fixelancen) in Vesterbro is a health centre offering a sterile, safe space for drug-addicts to inject drugs, under the watch of medics and social workers. Since the Municipality replaced two mobile fixing rooms with the centre in 2012, it has been credited with keeping syringes off the streets of Vesterbro. Its philosophy is one of safety and harm reduction for users.



Prismen on Holmbladsgade in Amager



ENGHAVE PARK DRINKING SHELTER

In 2010, metro construction in the Vesterbro square Enghaveplads pushed out local users of the space, many of whom struggle with alcoholism. In response, artist Kenneth Balfeldt collaborated with the locals to create a sheltered drinking space in Enghave Park, pictured above. The project is a collaboration between local users of the space, architects and the municipality. The stated goal of the park is "pro co-existence". But not all the users are happy.



When we were over on the old Enghave square by the tree and fountain, hundreds of people would come past every day – young, old, addicts, alcoholics, mothers with their children. Everyone came by and said hello. Now we are locked away in this cage. It's just so much more compact and tough.

KÅRE. OTHERWISE KNOWN AS 'HARD KÅRE' IN THE COMMUNITY



I was assaulted by four other homeless people simply because I was selling the magazine Hus Forbi in 'their area'. It has become much harder and more raw to be homeless in Copenhagen over the past 10 years.

HØLMER. HJEMLØS



THE ADVERSITY OF A GANJA FARMER

Jamaica has legalised cannabis but cultivating large quantities remains an offence. Many farmers are now in a precarious position, as demand for other cash crops declines

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of illegal cannabis growers in Jamaica. One of them is Hezitroy Wright, a farmer living in the mountains near the town Accompong. Four years ago, the 61-year-old cut down his banana trees and pulled up his sugar cane. In its place, he now grows cannabis on his 400-square-meter farm, as it's the only crop that can provide for his family.

"We are totally dependent on growing cannabis," he says. "Out of 100 young men, 95 grow cannabis."

It's a risky business, for despite the fact that Jamaica has legalised cannabis, he still produces far more than the legal limit of five plants and 57 grams. The move to allow cannabis is intended to alleviate pressure on the state budget and free up funding for education and social development.

Farmers like Wright don't have much choice but to continue breaking the law, he says. There's simply no other way to put food on the table and send his children to school. Wright was forced to cultivate the psychoactive cash crop after demand for his bananas fell. Meanwhile, sugar cane production is increasingly being centralised on large farms. Around the perimeter of the farm, he still has some banana plants and sugar cane to disguise what else he is growing, but he says the police know what he is up to.

Every three months, he can harvest around seven kilograms of cannabis, which he sells for around 900 kroner. It's not much, but it does provide a regular income. Most other crops take about a year before they can be harvested, and there is no guarantee that there will be any demand for them.

"I also grow bananas, but no one wants them."

We smoke a joint in his small home. Under the bed is a black bag filled with dried cannabis leaves. I ask whether he really thinks he will be able to provide for his family this way.

"There's only one thing I can do," he says, his eyes completely bloodshot. "I'll have to plant some more." **M**





ESSAY

Æ, Ø, ough

Living in Denmark means learning Danish. But the system that is designed to integrate us doesn't treat us all equally

Mit navn er Lesley-Ann Brown og jeg kommer fra Brooklyn, New York.

I didn't learn Danish when I first moved to Denmark. At first, I was skeptical. It took some time to appreciate that no skyscrapers meant being able to see the sky. I eventually couldn't help but value a society committed to helping the socially weak. I loved that you didn't have to pay to visit the doctor. I liked that education was free.

Over time, I learned that Carlsberg and Tuborg were pretty much the same, and that Kierkegaard's favourite spot in the whole of Denmark was on a lookout in the old fishing village of Gillileje. I learned that Denmark had a particular attachment to engineering and functional perfection, and that Danes had a soft spot for the US thanks to World War II. Denmark was cool.

It soon became apparent, however, that I needed to learn the language. Sure, Danes speak English, but while heading home after yet another party where I felt completely out of the loop, I realised a full life in Denmark isn't possible without knowing Danish. I couldn't just space out and feel inadequate as I tried to form the words. I needed to learn.

The first Danish school I attended was a squat 1970s institution in Nordvest, where I quickly befriended Sara, a French-Canadian of Iranian descent who was also in Denmark through marriage. We were the only ones with a Western heritage. There was an Iraqi computer specialist and father of four who had sent out a gazillion CVs and still couldn't find a job. He walked around with a briefcase as if suspended in perpetual readiness for a job that could be just a second away.

There was a female gynaecologist from Afghanistan, Tariq from Pakistan, and Hussein from Iran.



Me, on the left, with a few of my language school friends

All were far from home and eager to learn Danish. Sara and I were among the few that had not escaped war and conflict.

Sara and I often spoke the blatant discrimination that our fellow students suffered. We witnessed how the others lived a parallel existence as a result of the relationship between power, statehood and migration – an existence that seems virtually impossible to escape from despite their credentials and qualifications. We saw that if you had the 'wrong name' or spoke Danish with an accent, you would not be tolerated. That is, unless you were American or Canadian, of course.

The discrimination was also evident in the low standards and ambitions the municipality set for our Danish class. Any excitement we might have had for quickly mastering Danish was immediately quelled. The classes were dull and designed for children. Our teacher shook as though she drank too much coffee. Though our Danish wasn't any good, Sara and I found

ourselves progressing at lightning speed.

It soon became clear that we had landed in the wrong class. The level of teaching was designed for those from non-English speaking countries, and Sara and I quickly found another school that claimed it would prepare us for the Danish exams in less than a year.

We signed up and parted ways – since Sara's Danish was much more advanced than mine, she shot way ahead of me. I started at level 1, and each week had to memorise 15 sentences. The idea was to learn the oral cadences and phonetic nuances necessary for speaking comprehensible Danish. For no matter what the word looks like, it will never sound like you expect. Ø, å and æ might look smart, but good luck getting your mouth around them.

I looked around my classroom that was now full of savvy Europeans and others from the States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Like the other class, these students ready to learn Danish

and make an impact. But unlike my other class, many already had jobs, jobs that probably brought them to Denmark in the first place. Some were engineers, IT professionals or teachers. Some were in Denmark due to marriage, but very few because of war. These students look busy – like they have places to be and people to meet. Unlike the other school, which hung around our neck like a weight, the atmosphere at this new school was one that aimed at success.

I met Andrea from Switzerland and Roxanna from Romania, Gunay from Turkey and Will from England. After class on Friday, we went out and drank beer and compared stories. We studied together and practiced our Danish. Everything was crisp and fast and professional. There was no time for war here, but I often thought about the students that I left behind at that other school. I was lucky, I got out. But many were stuck there because their degrees were not recognised, unlike my American one. How did they fare? Have they fully integrated? Or did some of them fall prey to the realities of immigrant life in Denmark?

I wonder about Tariq, and if he was able to get the job at the restaurant he wanted so badly. I wonder about the desperation that showed on so many of their faces, a desperation to be a part of something meaningful. To be let in. I didn't see people who didn't want to work. I saw people running from war. From bombs dropping on their homes.

These two schools prepared me for Danish society at large. But it also exposed me to a side of Denmark that I love much less – the institutional division between the fortunates and unfortunates. Because it's more than a language that equips you for integration. More important is the sense that you're even wanted at all. **M**

I didn't see people who didn't want to work. I saw people running from war

Lesley-Ann Brown

COLUMN

How will the future judge the age of the marketer?

Social media has made us narcissists, interested only in investing in the parts of our lives that can be shared and liked. Will our grandchildren look back with pity or scorn on this self-centred generation?

It is really hard to understand how and why previous generations thought the way they did, in part because it's such a huge challenge to remove the prejudices and biases of the present. Martin Luther was anti-Semitic, and John Maynard Keynes blamed Russian 'beastliness' for the horrors of the Soviet Union. In our contemporary society, these notions would be condemned as wrong, if not down-right evil. At the time, however, they simply reflected commonly-held views.

For those who study the past, understanding our forebears' mindset is a complicated and difficult task – one the average person spends little time even attempting.

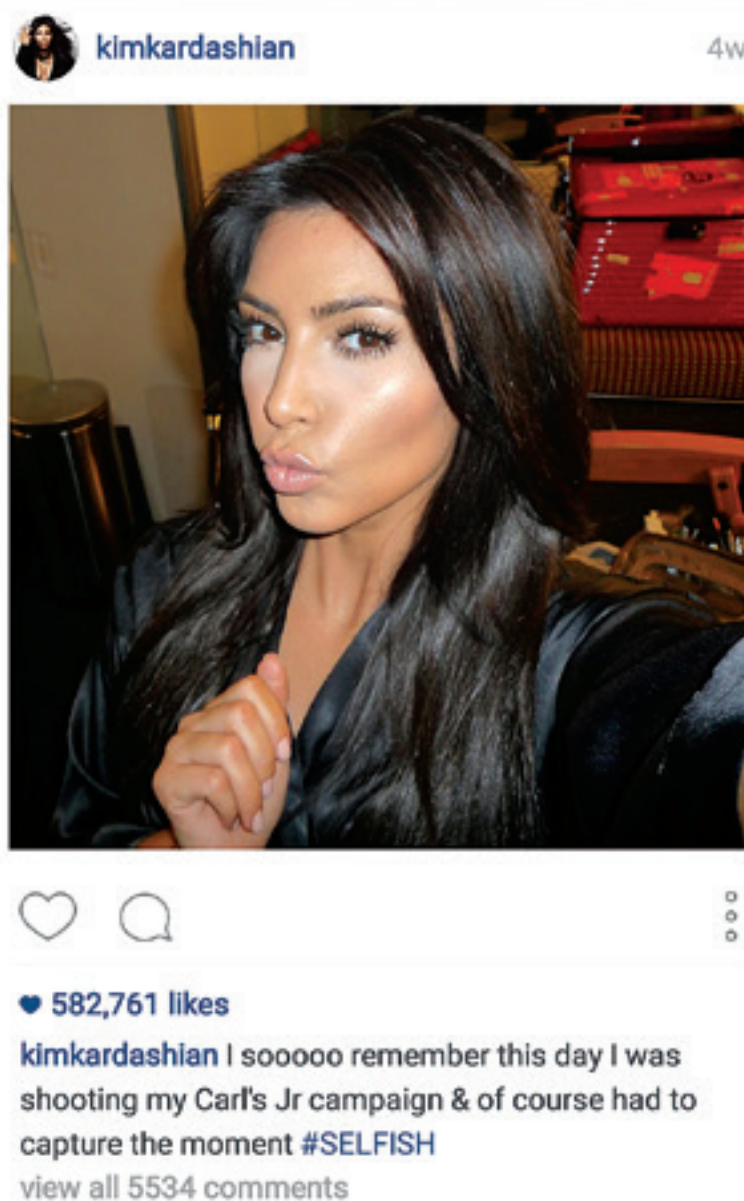
So how will future generations look back on our modern society, which has become entwined with social media? Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have provided us with platforms to express our individuality and share our achievements with others. We have each become our own PR agent, carefully constructing a positive image of ourselves to show the world.

In fact, we probably spend more time showing others how good we are than actually becoming good. We make sure everyone knows that we just earned a degree, had a child, went running, or had loads of fun travelling. It has reached the point where I find going to concerts unbearable, because I end up having to watch the show through someone's iPhone. It is evidently more important to show others how much fun we are having than to actually enjoy the moment.

We are, perhaps, the most self-aware generation in human history. We are in constant competition to appear to have the best lives, the best bodies, the most fun. It's the virtual rat

We have a narcissistic generation of neurotic egoists who feel they are in a constant state of competition for adoration

Elias Thorsson



Kim Kardashian West is, perhaps, the First Lady of narcissism

race. Social media hasn't radically changed how we think. Rather, it has sent certain aspects of our thinking into hyperdrive.

The first major problem is that we are reinforcing narcissism, which is sometimes wrongly equated with self-confidence. Psychologically speaking, it's actually the opposite. Narcissists need other people to adore them and reinforce their greatness,

and therefore lack the quiet inner peace of true self-confidence. As a result, we have a narcissistic generation of neurotic egoists who feel they are in a constant state of competition for adoration.

The second major problem is that we value more highly the aspects of our lives that can be expressed and shared. We privilege things that can be shown to oth-

ers, whether in purely material terms, or in the form of skills that can be translated into material terms. This can be witnessed both in the rapid decline in the humanities faculties around the world, and in how even the left-wing government in Denmark seems to think that Universities are just a training camp for the job market.

It has also impacted our own values regarding self-improvement. We have started to obsess about our physical image, which can readily be shared without explanation. Exercising is self-improvement, reading is entertainment.

I think we don't reflect enough on the real impact that this approach to living is having on our society. We are apologists for our own self-interested world view even as we disparage the problems of others. Most of us agree that the oppression of women in Saudi Arabia, or the treatment of workers in Qatar is despicable, but we often fail to see the problems within ourselves.

It is impossible to predict on how future generations will view this time in history, but since we are often so critical of how people have acted in the past, it seems reasonable to expect that we will face criticism from our children and grandchildren. Maybe they will see us as vain and shallow, or maybe they will continue down this path, and see us as too reserved and private.

However, if history is any indicator, we should witness a backlash, as new generations revolt against the values of the past. That thought makes me happy, since despite my best efforts, I do not live in a void and thus am likely as guilty as you are of this weird and self-centred behaviour.

I will definitely share this column on my Facebook page. **M**

COLUMN

It's the low-wage economy, stupid

Liberal parties want to increase the incentive for the unemployed to find work. At first glance, this sounds like a reasonable proposition, but at its heart is an individualist ideology that threatens to upend Denmark's famous solidarity and social cohesion

Ok, I lied. In this month's leader, I wrote that there wouldn't be much politics in this issue. But it's only three days into the election campaign, and I'm already fed up. Political campaigning is dreary business. Parties make promises they can't keep, attack each other, disagree with themselves, and ignore the most important questions.

But the campaigning from the liberal party Venstre is seriously sad. They think the biggest problem facing Denmark is this: "For too many Danes, it simply doesn't pay to go to work."

This mantra has been repeated by Venstre MPs, not least party leader Lars Løkke Rasmussen. He hopes to win back his seat in the prime minister's office by increasing the pay gap between unemployment benefits and low wage jobs, as well as capping the total amount of benefits a person can receive. In exchange, we all pay fewer taxes.

Let's be clear: people should work if they can, and we shouldn't tolerate people who needlessly and passively live off unemployment benefits, especially *kontanthjælp*. This is the least generous unemployment benefit, and is only given to those who have used up the more generous unemployment insurance, *dagpenge*, which is only available for two years. To claim *kontanthjælp*, you must be constantly available to be sent out to work, and must not have material assets of more than 10,000 kroner.

Letting people sit home on *kontanthjælp* is a social failure and an abandonment of their potential, but there is a stubborn group of Danes who have proved difficult to move into the labour market. Around 170,000 receive *kontanthjælp*, and another 78,000 receiving *dagpenge*. That's a significant portion of the Danish la-

The wealthy now have more in common with other wealthy people in other countries, than with the poor in their own. They don't need the poor in their own country, so why should they support them with their taxes?

Peter Stanners

bour market out of work. But what should we do?

POVERTY AS AN INCENTIVE

Forcing the unemployed into relative poverty is the solution proposed by Venstre, the liberal think tank Cepos and the libertarian party Liberal Alliance. They argue that reducing benefits will encourage more people to find work. Creating a class of people with little spending power is worth it, they claim, in exchange for greater labour market participation. In their view, the real problem is that labour unions price people out of the labour market. The see the de facto minimum wage as being artificially high, as some people aren't skilled enough to earn 100 kroner an hour. Why shouldn't people be able to offer their labour for less?

The glaring problem with the push to make it "pay to work" is the assumption that wages at the bottom end of the spectrum will remain stable once *kontanthjælp* is cut. Because they won't – wages will drop, too. Why wouldn't they? Employers providing low skilled jobs have no incentive to pay their workers a krone more than they can get away with. So as benefits decline, so too do wages.

It's a deliberate double whammy – reducing unemployment benefits saves tax payers money and makes it cheaper to employ people. I can see how that appears to be an attractive solution for business owners.

The problem is that it treats everyone who receives unemployment benefits like they could work but don't. It doesn't take into account that for some people there simply isn't any work, or the jobs that are available don't pay enough to cover their bills. In Germany, which has a low wage economy, some people have to work several jobs just to earn a decent

living. And I don't think that we should accept that.

This is where the ideology comes in. I think that as a society everyone should have a right to a certain standard of living. Not riches, of course, but the very basics that enable people to operate. A warm home, a mobile phone and a computer. They should have access to free health care and education.

This will mean that we end up paying for some people to live a life that another person is working to accomplish. There are definitely people who should have jobs but don't, and we should do what we can to move them into the labour market. But lowering benefits will also make poor people with little opportunity, even poorer.

My willingness to carry the poorest – and even some benefit cheats – is a small price to pay for a society without poverty. I believe that most people work because they want meaning in their lives, and there are certainly many thousands who work even though they could get by on handouts.

Venstre, on the other hand, demonstrates the ideological opposite – that poor people are a cost on society that needs to be minimised. But isn't it incredible, that despite high taxation and unemployment benefits, Denmark remains a wealthy and innovative country? Denmark was ranked the absolute best country in the world to do business by Forbes in December, and despite recent years of sluggish growth, the first four months of 2015 saw a 0.4 per cent increase in GDP and an unemployment rate that continues to slide downward.

TRANSNATIONAL WEALTH

Denmark's wealth was built through solidarity, generous unemployment benefits, progressive

taxation, and consensus politics. Why suddenly consider poor people a cost?

I think globalisation is partly to blame. The wealthy now have more in common with other wealthy people in other countries, than with the poor in their own. They don't need the poor in their own country, so why should they support them with their taxes? Their idea of freedom is to shut themselves away from the responsibilities we have to other people. Freedom is to be an individual, separate from everyone else.

Venstre hopes that creating a low wage economy will kickstart industry. But what's to stop other countries competing to be the lowest wage economy? Denmark simply doesn't need to race to the bottom. Denmark's wealth is created through investment in intellectual capacity, research and know-how. Training more Danes to participate in these economies is the future, rather than forcing them to work manual labour for a meagre living.

Social mobility is at stake if we give up on the poor. Children growing up in poor households are likely to be the real victims. I look to the UK, which has never been more unequal than it is now. This is hardly a surprise given the cuts to social services and skyrocketing cost of education. The poor are becoming isolated from those with means and opportunity. They become a class of people whose only value is providing cheap labour to those who control capital and labour. This social regression is pointless, sad and infuriating.

We must carry those who are not being swept along with the wealth that globalisation has brought us. It's a small price to pay for a humanist future where every individual is worth more than their market-driven hourly rate. **M**

OLIVER'S 3 CITY PICKS

EAT

Instagram / barburrito



BARBURRITO

Take-away: Gothersgade 27
Restaurant: Skindergade 36

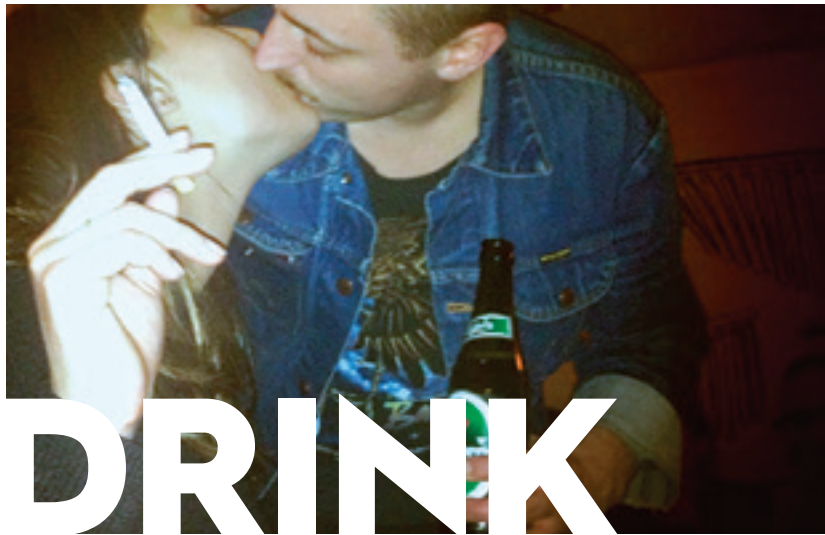
Central Copenhagen by night is the heart of darkness, littered with tacky clubs, overpriced cocktails and the ever-present risk of a violent encounter. But amidst the decadence is a rare jewel called Barburrito. Offering Mexican with a Danish twist, the restaurant was started by two brothers who were inspired by Mexican-style

street cuisine. Rather than recreate it in its purest form, the brothers have integrated seasonal Danish produce in a menu that reflects the freshest ingredients available. The kitchen features alternating guest chefs, who reign for a certain period of time until a new one takes their place. Both their restaurant on Skindergade and diner/take-away on Gothersgade focus on the two mainstays of the Mexican kitchen, burritos and soft

shell tacos, filled with a variety of meats, like braised veal, chipotle chicken, and achiote pork. It's reasonably-priced, hearty food, and while it's not the most refined Mexican cuisine the city has to offer, it's still perfect for filling your stomach before venturing out to taste the city's other vices.

BARBURRITO.DK

Stella Gelardi Malfilâtre



DRINK

MUSIKSMAG

Sankt Hans Gade 19,
2200 Copenhagen N

How do you stand out from the competition? For bars in the hip Nørrebro district, it's not always so easy to find a unique formula.

Musiksmag manages to set itself apart as a bodega for the young and discerning, who want to know their bartender and care more about good music than expensive cocktails.

It's a simple bar, where

beers go for 25 kroner and a bottle of Lambrusco for 120 kroner. The ceiling is low, and the floor carpeted. A rack of vinyl provides the tunes, and in the back room you can sprawl out and smoke cigarettes. The name of course means 'taste in music', and given that it's owned, and even though it's operated by locals in the music industry, it's not half as snobbish as it sounds.

The owner Tobias is the lead guitarist in The Eclectic

Moniker, and can often be found wearing a garish shirt and slinging drinks across the bar.

If you're thinking 'hipster' maybe you're right. But perhaps 'cutester' is a better word, because the clientele tend to be pretty lovely. It's the sort of place you can tap someone on the shoulder and chat. And if you know Copenhagen, you know that's not so common.

MUSIKSMAG.COM



PARTY

DISTORTION CLUB

June 3-5, 2015
Venues around the city

Distortion is more than just street parties, booze ups and chaos – at its core it's a celebration of club culture. And if it's not your style to get blitzed in the streets, or dance till the early hours in the open air, then the Distortion Club nights might be for you. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday night of the festival, venues

across the city will be hosting some of the world's best DJs, bands and artists.

On Wednesday, we suggest you head to Culture Box, where American DJ and techno producer Jeff Mills will finish off the programme. Thursday sees Canada's Cyril Hahn take over Rust, where you can expect his intensely danceable remixes, while on Friday, Jazzhouse will host jazz legend Idris Ackamoor and his ensemble The Pyramids.

Global and Pumpehuset are also hosting shows that are expected to be packed, so get there early or face the wrath of the queue. And, while not strictly a club, the abandoned parking basement beneath the bridge Langebro is also hosting parties on Wednesday and Thursday. We're pretty excited to see Swedish rapper Yung Lean.

CPHDISTORTION.DK/CLUB

Oliver Raassina

In Search of an Authentic Culinary Experience

What are Copenhagen's overpriced tourist restaurants actually like? The Murmur strolled along Strøget to find out, with the aim of awarding one unlucky restaurant this year's least-coveted award: **Strøget's Dodgiest Dish!**



"I'M LOOKING FOR the authentic Danish culinary experience. What do you recommend?" - This was what I asked waiters at restaurants lining one of the world's longest pedestrian streets, Strøget. My mission was to find out if restaurants in the heart of Copenhagen are as lacklustre as they look.

But this is not an ordinary competition, and to win the title of Strøget's Dodgiest Dish, the following rules apply:

- 1. I must play the role of tourist at all times. I must appear ignorant of Danish cuisine but eager to try.

Furthermore, any item recommended to me must be ordered despite any pre-existing knowledge about said item.

- 2. I must explore the full spectrum of options available. However, should I be handed flyers adver-

tising special offers, then I must order them.

- 3. All conventional rules for appraising food must be abandoned. Good is bad and bad is good. Points are awarded for outrageous prices, high grease con-

tent and tackiness - up to five points can be earned in each category. Penalties are deducted for flavourful food, pleasant ambience and good customer service - three penalty points can be deducted for success in each category. **M**

Hereford Village Beef & Spareribs



The first flier I was handed as I wandered down Strøget towards Rådhuspladsen was for Hereford Village. It advertised "All Lunch Dishes for 69 kroner". I asked the man if the food was any good. "Yes," he replied with a smile, "Very delicious."

Once inside, like a good, hungry tourist, I said to the waiter, "I'm looking for the authentic Danish culinary experience. What do you recommend?" She pointed me to the "Classic Danish Lunch Plate", not mentioning that at 139 kroner it was not among the lunch specials that had lured us inside.

"Oh, herring," I said, hiding my hatred for the fish that reminds me of chewy Vaseline. "Is that tasty?"

"It's tasty if you like that sort of thing," she replied.

The lunch plate arrived. Danish roast pork and red cabbage. Un-

specified bread-crumbed fish with remoulade. A single piece of brie. An ominous bowl of curried herring. A basket of rye and white bread accompanied by a package of pork drippings with onion.

I honestly tried to swallow a single piece of herring on rye bread but after a single chew I had to spit it into my napkin.

The breaded fish was greasy but pleasant, though my herring ordeal meant I could enjoy neither the taste of the fish nor the curry in the remoulade. The roast pork with crackling (flæskesteg) was the star of the show, and I was given a generous portion of it.

I sipped meanwhile from my medium-sized "Danish water" for 45 kroner, while my girlfriend opted for tap water costing a cheeky 15 kroner.

I was forced to deduct points from Hereford for good service, as the waitress offered to replace the herring with something else after I expressed my contempt for the stuff. She confessed that she didn't like it either. I told her not to worry.

Over all it was a good, dodgy experience, for the price of 184 kroner. What a bargain! Hereford looks to be a strong contender. **M**

THE VERDICT
Points (Max 15 points)
Grease Factor: 4
Price Extremity: 4
Tackiness: 3
Penalties (Max -9)
Ambience: -1
Customer Service: -2
Taste: -1.5
GRAND TOTAL: 6.5/15

City Kroen

The sun was shining, and the streets were bustling - a perfect day to trap tourists. City Kroen has an ideal location, smack-dab in the middle of Strøget at Gammeltorv, above a kiosk.

I sat outside with many others, in the shade of a parasol. As a tourist, I was pleased that the menu I was given was not only written in English, but also priced in Euros.

My waitress suggested the smørrebrød, specifically recommending the shrimp, herring, roast beef and flæskesteg. After my last culinary experience at Hereford, I wasn't eager for fish, so I went with the latter two options at 16 Euro with a glass of tap water.

My water was free, and even came with ice and a slice of lemon. City Kroen was already bleeding points in the ambience and ser-

vice categories.

However, I had been given a flyer on my last outing by an Eastern European man with a sign for City Kroen strapped to his torso, so points for tackiness were a certainty. Indeed, a plastic grass plant stood on every outdoor table, demonstrating that City Kroen really goes the extra mile when it comes to tack-factor.

My traditional roast beef and flæskesteg open sandwiches were not particularly bad. They weren't particularly good either. I think mediocre would be the most apt word to describe them. I was given a lot of food though. The lowlights of my lunch were the garnish of semi-rotten lettuce and the tough pork "crackling", which was far from crunchy and delicious. There was also a strange sort of chutney de-

posited on top of my roast beef, of which I was not a fan.

I left with a churning stomach. The 16 Euro price translated to 109 kroner of mediocrity.

My City Kroen experience was certainly dodgy, but sadly not dodgy enough. The turbulence in my tummy would have to develop into full-blown food poisoning if this restaurant were to have any hope of taking the title. Fortunately for me, that didn't happen. **M**

THE VERDICT
Grease Factor: 2
Price Extremity: 3
Tackiness: 4.5
Penalties...
Ambience: -2
Customer Service: -1.5
Taste: -1
GRAND TOTAL: 5/15



Dan Dan Restaurant

A culinary Tour de Strøget would not be complete without sampling some Chinese. I had walked passed this place a few times, and it stood out amongst the numerous other dubious-looking Chinese buffets due to the flashing red and yellow stairway at its entrance.

I arrived on time for the lunch deal: 89 kroner, all you can eat.

The walls were decorated with cheesy art, including a large illuminated (though faded) picture of a pre-9/11 New York skyline, complete with fireworks.

Not wasting any time with smiles or small talk, the wait staff were brusque yet efficient. I ordered myself a Carlsberg – the most Danish thing on the menu – and then proceeded to the buffet.

Choosing to ignore the salad and fruit bar, I piled my plate with just about everything they had to offer before returning to my table.

Dan Dan doesn't limit itself to Asian cuisine. I filled the nooks and

crannies of my food pile with potato wedges and Mexican corn chips, which I discovered went great with my Chinese beef curry. The sweet and sour pork was worryingly chewy, and the deep-fried chicken was more like a savoury doughnut, there was so little meat at the centre. I have a weakness for deep-fried foods, though, and with enough chilli mayo, anything can taste good.

I returned timidly to the buffet, no longer hungry but keen to make the most of my money and the all-you-can-eat policy. I noticed a squeeze bottle labelled "EEL sauce" beside the sushi buffet and stayed away – it looked like harmless soya, but I wasn't feeling adventurous with an already full and unstable stomach. It was at that point that I realised how dodgy the cuisine really was. The bastardised sushi with tuna salad and grey avocado, which I had happily eaten the first time round, turned on me – I really had to force

it down. Nauseated, I picked slowly through my second plate of unapologetically poor food.

I sat amongst groups of tourists who seemed pretty content where they were. And I don't blame them. It was my own fault that I'd made myself feel sick, and although Dan Dan is far from high-end dining, it is what it is – it doesn't put up any misleading gourmet façade. My bill arrived, and it had rocketed to 145 kroner. It was the Carlsberg that stung me.

Was I disappointed? Not really. Would I return? No. Would Dan Dan take away the Dodgy Trophy? Their chances were pretty good. **M**

THE VERDICT
Grease Factor: 4
Price Extremity: 3
Tackiness: 4
Penalties...
Ambience: -1
Customer Service: -1
Taste: -1.5
GRAND TOTAL: 7.5/15



Mama Rosa's



Expectations were high – Mama Rosa's is Copenhagen's archetypal tourist trap in the upmarket end of Strøget, opposite the department store Illum. We were greeted at the multi-storey Mexican and international restaurant by an aging bearded man in a suit and bow tie with slicked back grey hair. He could well have been an authentic Mexican, but I didn't dare ask. His general demeanour was intimidating, and I worried that he saw through my touristy pretence immediately. When I asked him if they had anything Danish on the menu, he replied with a terse "No." I asked what he recommended, and he suggested the American Rib-eye 250g steak – the most expensive steak and one of the most expensive items on the menu.

"I'll take it," I told him, and asked for some water to go with it, immediately regretting not having asked for tap. He returned with a fancy-looking bottle of mineral water, which cost me



39 kroner. At least he poured it for me.

While we waited for the food to arrive, my dining partner and I browsed reviews of Mama Rosa's on yelp.com. Rosa's had a rating of 1.5 out of 6 stars on the website, confirming it as a perfect candidate for our rip-off rollercoaster ride through Strøget.

My steak arrived. It wasn't as terrible as some of the reviews had led me to expect. But for 200 kroner, it bloody well shouldn't be. That is not to say that I was satisfied, however. The plate was extravagant-

ly long, probably to make my meal appear bigger than it actually was. I received a clump of broccoli, five or so potato wedges, and a steak swimming in thick béarnaise sauce that had already started forming a skin on top.

The restaurant's walls are decorated eclectically, with sombreros here, a full suit of armour there, and behind where we were sitting, a display case of antique quarrying explosives. Why not?

Mama Rosa's had delivered on all its promises. The competition was looking pretty tight, and it was anybody's game. **M**

THE VERDICT
Grease Factor: 2
Price Extremity: 5
Tackiness: 2.5
Penalties...
Ambience: -1
Customer Service -1
Taste: -2
GRAND TOTAL: 5.5/15

Which means the winner of the Strøget's Dodgiest Dish Championship 2015 is...
Dan Dan Restaurant!

Who would have thought that a Chinese/Japanese/Mexican buffet restaurant would have what it takes to steal the title on Danish home soil? A stellar performance from Dan Dan. After my experience, I would sooner recommend one of the city's many hot dog stands than these restaurants to tourists looking for local cuisine on a budget. But what do I know?



Digging IN TO LOCAL sounds



This month we've teamed up with The Lake to bring you a few music recommendations that come a little off the beaten path.

V/A – DIVE

Complete with a holographic poster sleeve and 3D-glasses, this 10-track compilation's imperative title tells you exactly what to do with it – *DIVE* into the sonic pool of Copenhagen-based cassette tape label Infinite Waves. Many of the city's usual suspects in the noisy, electronic realm and beyond have released music with the label in the two years since its founding, so naturally *DIVE* features tracks by veteran techno-warrior-media-artist Goodiepal, along with contributions by younger ambienteurs Cathaya, Equis and Grøn – the latter being the alias of label founder Bjarke Rasmussen.

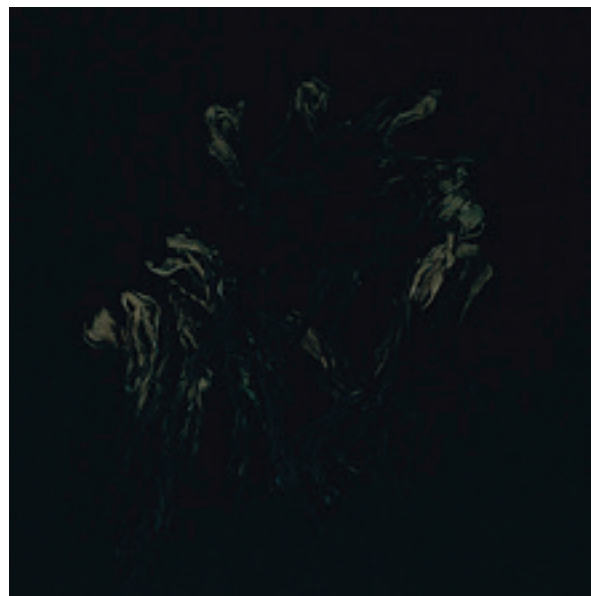
The music is varied, and evolves downwards in intensity. Side A progresses from Claus Poulsen's eerie sawtooth maelstrom opener 'Bolero', through the glitchy rumblings of Equis' 'C39', to Takahiro Mukai's weird, synthetic pond symphony '#181'. Side B leads off with the softer, encompassing ambiances of Isorinne's 'sunlit particles' and Cathaya's 'Kinesio'. At the tail-end of the dive is Tropisk Klima's lethargic, heroine-laden groove 'Jordens Fremtid', followed by EEAOO's slow but trancey closer 'Pois Crispr'.

Be sure to check out the label's back catalogue of 30+ cassette releases. Most of these neatly packaged tapes go for the tidy sum of €5. infinitemwaves.net.



Aerosol – Leave

Behind Aerosol is a one-man army named Rasmus Rasmussen. Known mostly for his efforts in Danish psychedelic stoner outfit Causa Sui, his signature is a kraut-influenced sound on keyboard and various effects. This is his third solo album (his first in six years), and it really is a treat to hear him step away from the role of accompanying player and realise himself as a soloist and composer. Here he skilfully channels the warm, analogue feel of his 1970's German synth heroes and combines it with slow, melodic lines on an airy Stratocaster, creating very dense soundscapes rich in long, saturated notes and delays. However, the endless cosmic jam style of his forefathers is neglected in favour of a strong sense of song structure replete with musical ideas, motifs and refrains. All this makes *Leave* quite a different listening experience from your average kraut album. *Leave* is a collection of instrumental pop songs that may take their cues from the past, but that set a course to a more timeless space, with nods to both 80's Michael Rother and the sunnier sides of Boards of Canada on the way. n5md.com.



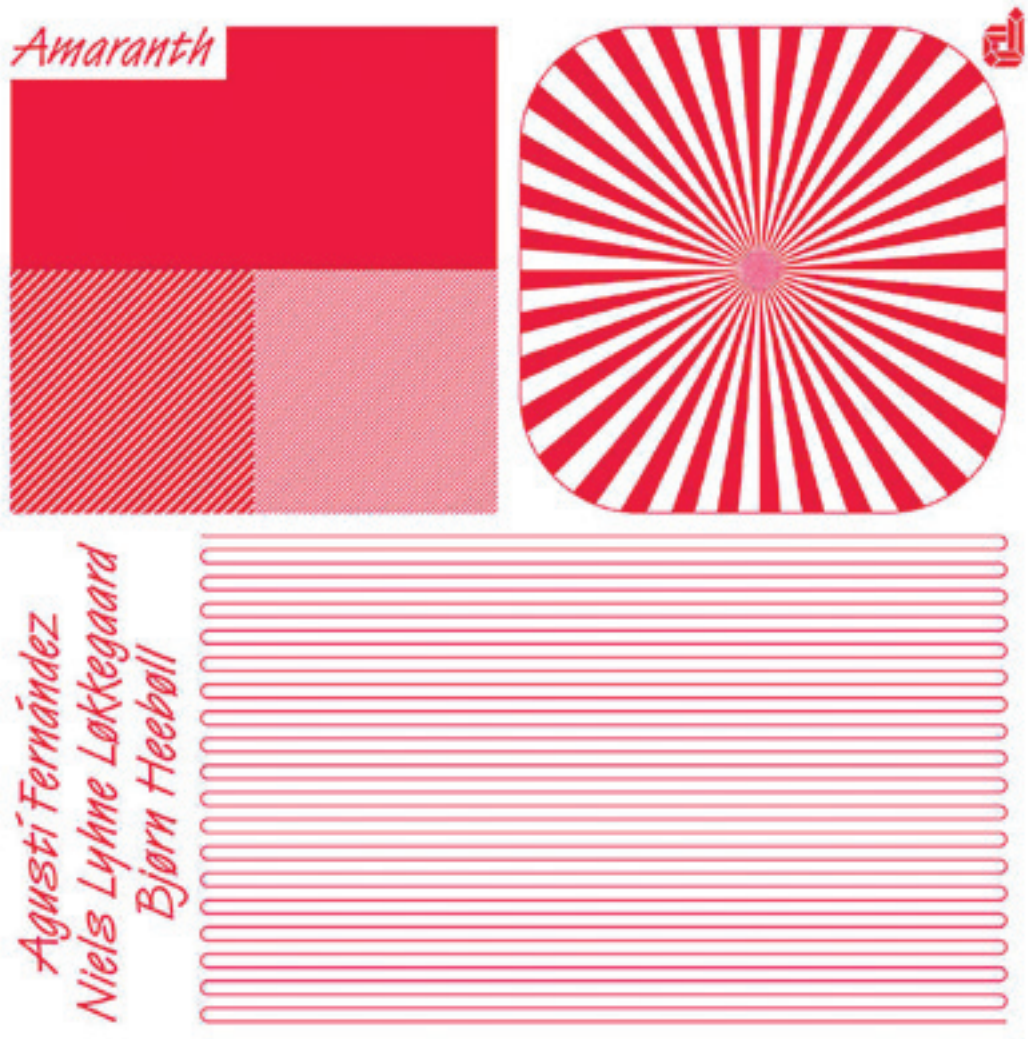
August Rosenbaum – Rhizome

Three tracks put together from live recordings at the Sónar Festival, Copenhagen Jazzhouse and the National Museum of Denmark make up this digital EP from the young and explorative Danish pianist August Rosenbaum. *Rhizome* presents his collaboration with drummer Mads Forsby, bass clarinetist Lars Greve, and electronic musician/producer Mike Sheridan, who has processed the instruments through his Buchla 200 modular synthesizer. There is no distinct 'live' feel to the music here – the listener feels as close to the action as if it were recorded in a studio. The first track opens with the sound of the celesta – a piano-like instrument with metal tubes for strings, which gives an otherworldly (and, well, celestial) timbre to the casual notes and chords Rosenbaum sprinkles over a monotonous bass line. The title track continues this atmospheric approach, building up around a subtle electronic purl joined by long organ notes, and slowly finding itself in a steady groove reminiscent of the great Terry Riley. Cold, mechanical cymbals kick in, setting a faster pace, as the purling of the electronics is joined by squeaks on clarinet and later a frail melody. The groove is almost tribal, and spellbinding at times. It's spectacularly organic and well played, and breathtaking to think that it was all created live. augustrosenbaum.com.

Rasmus Cleve
Christensen

Agustí Fernández / Niels Lyhne Løkkegaard / Bjørn Heebøll – Amaranth

How would you go about playing 'curved' or 'small' music? On *Amaranth*, a 1/3 Spanish, 2/3 Danish trio of piano, alto saxophone, drums, and (occasionally) recorder improvise in a musical space somewhere between free jazz and something with even fewer conventions. The eight different tracks on the record are each named after a gesture, direction or quality that is somehow present in the music. It's interesting how this simple and classic combination of instruments can communicate these different gestures in the absence of any tonal, rhythmic, or melodic centre of gravity. Everything lies in their intuitive interplay and each musician's ability to express himself via his instrument. For the longest movement – 'Natural' – Løkkegaard trades his saxophone for a recorder. He plays it alternately in a soft, folk-like manner (natural), and in an aggressive, overblown manner (unnatural). Herein lies the key to the album's concept. The music explores the duality of each gesture and investigates the eternal problem of grasping musical expressions and pinning them down with words. hiatuslabel.com.



chx – appegio works

Copenhagen-based artist, poet and musician Claus Haxholm plays in different bands and constellations. Sometimes he releases techno music under the alias Assembler, or low-fi synth stuff under the name Henbane, but on this new release, he is simply chx. Whereas Assembler projects are often driven by a beat or pulse, *Appegio Works* presents a lighter sensibility, more easy-going, yet also more demanding to listen to. Still repetitive in its nature, the music constantly shifts its rhythmic focus around arpeggios (the fast playing of successive notes in a chord) that keep breaking up as if played carelessly on a no-good sequencer, creating new, unforeseeable rhythmic structures (the misspelling 'appegio' might point to this). Starkly minimalist harmonic fluctuations mirror the quirky rhythms, resulting in simultaneously unstable and calm tunes. But it's not a conceptual thing – there are many variations on the recipe. It even gets aggressive at times, but in a calm sort of way. It's weird, restrained, and contradictory music that makes your head nod from side to side. soundcloud.com/claus-haxholm.



ABOUT THE LAKE

The Lake is a Copenhagen-based radio station whose goal is to be the antithesis of commercial radio by serving as a platform for experimental and inspiring music and sounds. Streaming online, 24-hours-a-day, without playlists, boundaries or limitations, their carefully curated library spans all decades of recorded audio, crossing geographical borders, languages and genres. **M**

DISTORTION STREET PARTIES

Few cities let its residents cut loose in public like Copenhagen does. The Distortion Street Parties have gained a cult following both among the city's mostly younger generation and international guests in search of a thrill in the city's streets. This year, the parties will take over the Nørrebro district on Wednesday and Vesterbro on Thursday. On Friday, Distortion is hosting the celebrations outside Parliament to celebrate 100 years of universal suffrage. There are more than 80 different parties over the three days, but Distortion's head of communications, Mathilde Friese, has helped us find some of the standout events.

STREET WRISTBAND STAGE

Wednesday – Sankt Hans Torv

Thursday – Corner of Sønder Boulevard and Dybbølsgade

The street parties cost far more to host than they earn. But instead of shutting them down, we decided to let people show their support by buying a 'Street wristband'. We don't host many of our own stages at Distortion, but this year we've set up a stage dedicated to those who buy the wristband and help keep the festival's finances in order. Distortion regular Muchacho is hosting the stage, which is guaranteed to be a banger on both Wednesday and Thursday.



Marcus Palm Andreassen

Thorbjørn Fessel



COPENHAGENER DINNER

The 'Københavner Middag' is an old Distortion tradition that was elevated to new heights last year when they teamed up with the Michelin-starred restaurant Kadeau. Over 800 tickets were sold for the event, which was a massive hit. Kadeau and their sister restaurant Pony return to make the food again this year, bringing high food culture down to street level. The dinner bell rings at 5pm on Wednesday and 6pm on Thursday, but you'll need a ticket. Buy one here: bit.ly/distortiondinner

CLASSICAL STAGE

Thursday – Enghave Park

The Wilhelm Stage in Enghave Park will present six hours of classical music throughout the Vesterbro street party. Last year, it was packed until well into the evening with people more interested in the superstars of the classical world than of dance music. When the street parties close at 10pm, the stage will continue with Max Richter performing his bestselling album 'Recomposed: Vivaldi's Four Seasons', accompanied by the Copenhagen Phil. We hope he's as magical as Nils Frahm (pictured) was last year.



DISTORTION FOR KIDS

BørneDistortion keeps growing in popularity, and this year we are hosting five events for children and their families. Events will be held on Mozarts Plads in Sydhavnen on Monday and Tuesday, and there will be room for kids to get in on the action in Nørrebro and Vesterbro during the street parties, too. On Saturday, there's even a special event on the roof of the mall Fisketorvet. Expect soapy bubbles, balloons and music. Pure hygge. bit.ly/bornedistortion

FACT BOX – GADEARMBÅND

The Gadearmbånd, or 'street wristband', doesn't really give you any perks except the warm feeling that comes from knowing you're supporting the finances of the street parties – which might not even be for you. But if you are venturing out into the street, consider buying one of these to show Distortion your support. The Gadearmbånd wristband costs 100 kroner and can be bought on the street during the festival. gadearmbaand.dk

DISTORTION

GUIDE

Wednesday, June 3 – Sunday, June 7

cphdistortion.dk



Shabab Misaadi

DISTORTION Ø

'Exit Reality' is how organisers are promoting Distortion Ø, or Distortion Island. Set on post-industrial Refshaleøen, over 50 artists will play the nine stages on Friday and Saturday night. The lineup features some incredible international acts, and while it will be a full-on rave in some places, the quality of music is definitely attractive to any who can't help but be moved by a beat. Here are some picks recommended by Distortion's head of programme, Nis Sigurdsson.



WOODEN WISDOM (ELIJAH WOOD & ZACH COWIE)

Saturday / Membrane Tent / 22:00

Distortion's little sister, Action Hygge, brought Wooden Wisdom to Copenhagen last year with massive success. Wooden Wisdom is Zach Cowie and Elijah Wood. Yes, we know – it's Frodo – but he has long since proven that he is much more than just a celebrity DJ. DJ Fitz will be joining them on stage, and together they will invite everyone to the dance floor for an exotic dance party.

SIRIUSMODESELEKTOR

Saturday / Red Bull Music Academy Stage / 02:00

Siriusmodeselektor brings together the world-famous group Modeselektor and Siriusmo, a mysterious DJ who rarely leaves his house because he prefers writing music in his studio. Together they guest Distortion, bringing a euphoric mix of esoteric genres such as euro crunk, acid rap, big bass techno, labstyle, happy metal, and psychedelic electro. Siriusmodeselektor describe themselves as the greatest reunion of a band that never existed.



Birgit Kauffuss



FYRAFTENSBOOGIE (2000F & JG)

Friday / Circus Tent / 16:00

2000F (OHO!!) and JG (Firehouse) are renowned for their considerable exploits in Jamaican and British-inspired bass culture. Fyraftensboogie is quite possibly the only 'raggadisco' in the world, and certainly the only one that can boast a Leroy Burgess dubplate and a mention in The Guardian. After six years of disco heaven at Jolene in Kødbyen, the superduo will tightly pack their hefty crates for an epic 10-hour set at Distortion Ø.



masha mel

SOPHIE FEAT. QT

Friday / Red Bull Music Academy Stage / 22:30

Sophie's audio productions share a number of similarities with the Japanese genre 'kawaii', meaning 'cute'. It's euphoric pop, with references to J-pop and K-pop music videos, featuring child-friendly colour palettes and playful themes. Sophie is producing some of the most unclassifiable and futuristic pop music today, and will undoubtedly be one of the more unusual experiences at Distortion Ø.

DJ KOZE

Saturday / Teepee Tent / 01:00

Behind the alias DJ Koze hides the German DJ and producer Stefan Kozalla, who in the 1990s belonged to the German hip-hop act Fischmob and performed under the alias Ado-If Noise. In the 2000s, he started playing as DJ Koze, releasing three studio albums and lots of remixes and singles. In 2010, DJ Koze founded his own record label, Pampa, and in 2013 he recorded 'Amygdala', his most recent studio album.



FACT BOX REFSHALEØEN

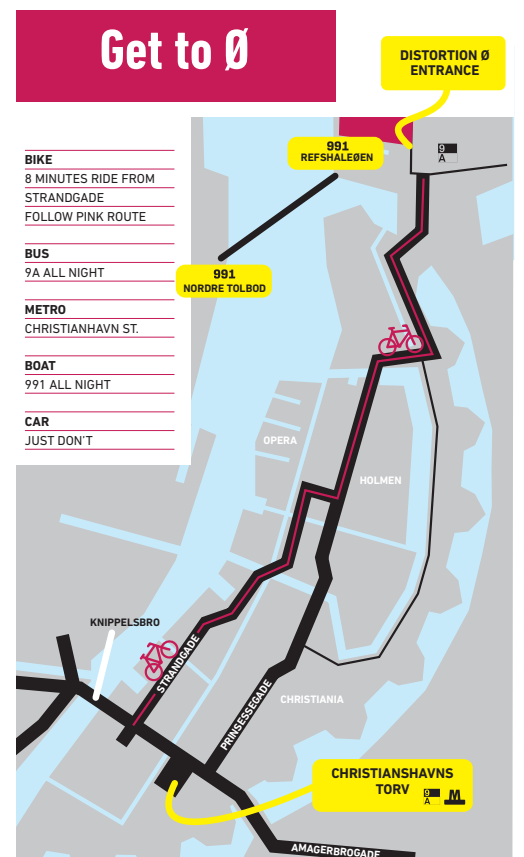
The festival site is a bit out of the way, but thanks to a few new bridges, the bike ride is a little shorter than it used to be. Otherwise, take the Metro to Christianshavn Station and then the 9A bus, which will run all night. So too will the Harbour Boat. Don't drive. Idiots drive.

Friday, June 5 > 16:00-02:00
Saturday, June 6 > 18:00-06:00

Tickets are for both days.
No one day tickets.
Presale: DKK 350
Door price: DKK 400

Address:
Refshalevej 163,
1432 Copenhagen K

Get to Ø



WHAT'S ON • JUNE

ALL MONTH

CANADIAN CINEMA
The Danish Film Institute is presenting a retrospective on the work of Denis Villeneuve, presenting films spanning his entire career.

Cinemathek
Gothersgade 55, 1123 KBH K
Dfi.dk



ARTISTIC UPHEAVAL
The Faurschou Foundation presents a major exhibition of Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, entitled 'Ruptures'.

Faurschou Foundation
Klubbiensvej 11, KBH
Faurschou.com

ALL MONTH

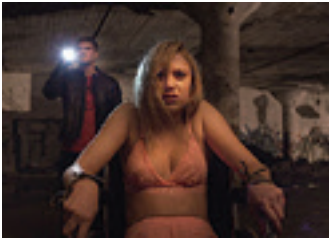
CHINESE HISTORY
The brand new Moesgaard Museum presents 120 objects from the time of the Qin and Han Dynasties.

Moesgaard Museum
Moesgaard Allé 15, 8270
Moesgaardmuseum.dk



OUT TO SEA
You're never far from the Danish coast. Esbjerg's Fisheries and Maritime Museum delves into Denmark's relationship with the sea.

Fisheries & Maritime Museum
Tarphagevej 2, 6710
Fimus.dk/en



FRIGHT NIGHT
Indie horror hit 'It Follows' is finally given a Danish release after playing as part of the CPH PIX festival. Equal parts frightening and intelligent.

Kino.dk
June 4

10

SUMMER PERFORMING ARTS
CPH Stage is an annual celebration of theatre, with over one hundred performances – many in English – over the span of eleven days.

Nørrebro Theatre
Ravnsborggade 3, KBH
Cphstage.dk
Ends 21 June



SURREALIST MASTER
Man Ray, the 20th century artist and Salvador Dali contemporary, will be given a retrospective at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptoteket.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptoteket
Dantes Plads 7, KBH
Glyptoteket.dk
June 11

11

HOMELESS ART
The pop-up gallery, Homeless Gallery, is putting on their latest exhibition that showcases artists whose work would probably not get the opportunity to be seen.

KPH-Projects
Ends June 14

12

NORTHERN ROCK
One of Denmark's major summer festivals, Northside, returns yet again featuring a strong lineup including Wu-Tang Clan, MØ and Interpol.

Ådalen, Aarhus
Northside.dk
Ends June 14



DANISH CONTEMPORARY
Aarhus' modern art museum ARoS presents an exhibition on Danish artist E.B. Itso, focusing on his latest work Building Stories.

ARoS
ARoS Aleé 2, Aarhus
aros.dk
From June 13

19

NORWEGIAN DESIGN
The Danish architecture center is launching an exhibit on the Norwegian architecture firm Snøhetta, who are known for designing the Oslo opera house.

Danish Architecture Center
Strandgade 27B, KBH
Dac.dk



CLASSICAL ATTIVOLI
The Royal Danish Academy Symphony Orchestra perform in Tivoli's Concert Hall, playing the music of Carl Nielsen, Debussy and Ravel.

Tivoli
Vesterbrogade 3, KBH
Tivolifestival.dk
June 21

Oliver Raassina

WHAT'S ON • JUNE

22

LEGENDARY FOLK

American folk musician Mark Kozelek brings his band Sun Kil Moon to Denmark and with them over a decade's worth of work.

Bremen Theater
Nyropsgade, KBH
Bremeteater.dk



MODERN JAZZ

Canadian jazz trio BADBADNOTGOOD make their Danish debut at Pumpehuset. Their influences are eclectic and are known for their jazzy interpretations of hip-hop classics.

Pumpehuset
Studiestræde 52, KBH
Pumpehuset.dk
June 23

26

KOREAN TREATS

The Copenhagen Kimchi Festival returns for its second year, celebrating Korean culture and food at Torvehallerne.

Torvehallerne
Frederiksborggade 21, KBH
Ends June 28



FESTIVAL NEWCOMER

Brand new festival Tinderbox kicks off its first year with three days of music from the likes of Major Lazer and The Prodigy.

Tusindårsskov, Odense
Tinderbox.dk
Ends 28 June

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