

THE MURMUR

COPENHAGEN
EDITION

Legal weed
could be
the answer
to tackling
gang crime

University
students
who don't
drink are
more likely
to drop out

The world
mourns
the death
of Swedish
journalist
Kim Wall

NEWS

CULTURE

POLITICS

COMMENTARY

SEPTEMBER 2017 VOL. 4 ISSUE 8



The disaster artist sails home

Eske Kath ponder society's trajectory in a collaborative work with singer Oh Land

THE MURMUR is a Danish newspaper, which just happens to use the English language. Through original reporting and photography, we tell stories about what it's like to live in Denmark.

THE MURMUR



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LAWS that are designed to protect people can sometimes do more harm than good. Drug laws are a good example. The human and economic cost of criminalising drugs far outweighs the harms we know they cause. We need only look to the US's war on drugs, which has failed to stop drug use, financed violent cartels, and torn families apart with the incarceration of millions for non-violent drug offences.

The situation is far from this bleak in Denmark, but we are still suffering from outdated laws, especially when it comes to cannabis. It's a drug that 42 percent of 16-24 year olds have used, and which is readily available, despite the criminalisation of its cultivation sale and consumption.

In rare circumstances, cannabis can cause psychosis resulting in long-lasting psychological illness. This shouldn't be understated in the debate about legalisation. I know people who have suffered, and it's been painful to watch them struggle.

But there is little evidence to suggest that legalising cannabis will create more users. Far from it. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction found that "no simple association can be observed between legal changes and cannabis use prevalence".

There is strong evidence, however, that criminalising cannabis has given unscrupulous criminal networks an easy source of income. These groups are a burden on our police force and disrupt the lives of ordinary citizens, who are kept awake by circling police helicopters and feelings of insecurity after the shooting of five innocent people by gang members this summer.

It doesn't have to be this way. Copenhagen City Council has repeatedly tried to introduce a trial legalisation of cannabis that would make the state the dealer instead of the gangs. I believe that Copenhageners should have the right to purchase cannabis safely without having to go to the dealers in Christiania or on their street corners – the same street corners that sell alcohol at all hours of day.

The state has no moral high ground in the matter. The money it makes from tobacco and alcohol finances the very welfare state that treats alcoholics and lung disease.

Controlled sale and easy access to health services is the answer, and establishing state-run cannabis dispensaries could serve both by providing high-quality products as well as information on how to seek treatment. Taxes on the sale of the drug – whose market is valued at one billion kroner in Copenhagen alone – could be put toward a range of social services.

But the government is afraid. Legalising cannabis would mean that Denmark would be violating its obligations under the UN drug control treaties that formed the basis for Denmark's narcotics laws decades ago. The fear is that it could signal the start of a slippery slope when countries realise there are no repercussions for unilaterally neglecting their international obligations.

The UN is a slow-moving machine, however, and by taking a stance on cannabis, Denmark would join a number of forward-thinking countries, cities and regions around the world that have realised that prohibition has failed. Adding momentum to this movement may ultimately result in fairer resolutions that finally take the cultivation and sale of cannabis away from criminal gangs around the world.

If that doesn't convince you, maybe the promise of a good night's sleep once that police helicopter is finally grounded, will. **M**

We're losing a huge number of young men from disadvantaged residential areas who finish primary school without basic, functional reading skills.

AYDIN SOEI, P12



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[miav]

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MONTH IN REVIEW

Hate crimes at Pride

The annual Copenhagen Pride event this August was marred by five separate hate crimes, according to Copenhagen Police. Among the victims was a 21-year-old man who was kicked in the head at Nørreport station.

Exit programmes for gang members hailed a success

Gang members stand a good chance of staying out of crime by participating in an 'exit' programme, according to a recent assessment carried out by Copenhagen Municipality. The study found that half of gang members who joined an exit programme were not convicted of serious or violent crimes in the year after joining. Four out of five also avoided convictions for less serious crimes. "A 50 percent relapse of course sounds like a lot, but without the exit programme, it would have been almost 100 percent who wouldn't have found a way out of a criminal life," Lord Mayor Frank Jensen told Berlingske.

Rise of gang violence

Parts of Copenhagen have been designated stop-and-search zones following a rise in gang violence across the city. Several innocent bystanders have been shot as the gang known as Loyal to Familia attempts to extend its territory.

BORDER BLUES

The temporary border control with Germany has proven effective in stopping criminal activity, according to the national police Rigspolitiet. Since January 4, 4,323 people have been turned away at the border, while 130 kilograms of amphetamines, 23 kilograms of cocaine, and around 1,500 ecstasy pills have been confiscated. But the border control has also been criticised for diverting scarce police resources. "The results aren't good when you measure them against the use of resources," MP Zenia Stampe of the Social Liberal Party told Berlingske.

Peter Stanners

End of an oil era

Shipping conglomerate A.P. Møller-Mærsk has sold its oil and gas division to the French energy company Total for 47 billion kroner. Total will maintain Mærsk Oil's offices in Copenhagen and Esbjerg, and Denmark will remain its base of operations for activities in Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. Mærsk's decision last September to sell the oil and gas division followed dropping oil prices, which resulted in a 2.1 billion kroner loss in 2015. Competition authorities must first approve the sale.



Maersk Oil

UBOAT MYSTERY

The partial remains of Kim Wall were discovered on the coast of Amager by a runner in August. Wall was last seen heading out to sea aboard the submarine Nautilus with its inventor Peter Madsen, who has been arrested in connection with her death. Madsen was rescued from the scuttled submarine, and Wall's blood was found inside after it was recovered from the seabed. Madsen has admitted to disposing of Wall's body at sea after she allegedly died in an accident onboard the submarine. He denies the manslaughter charges.



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EU support rising

Support for the European Union is growing among Danes, according to the latest Eurobarometer survey. The share of respondents with a positive opinion of the EU grew from 32 to 42 per cent over the past six months.



flickr / berin_land_bridge

Invasive salmon caught in Danish rivers

A foreign invader entered Denmark's waterways this summer. Pink or humpback salmon are native to the Pacific Ocean, but have been caught in increasing numbers in eight Danish streams since July. The last confirmed catch was in 2007, but the fish has returned to Danish, Norwegian and Brit-

ish waters in large numbers. Expert Henrik Carl from the Natural History Museum of Denmark told Politiken newspaper the salmon are a cold water species and the cool summer weather may have allowed them to head further south than their usual territory in the Arctic.

Uber drivers fined

Four Uber drivers received fines from Copenhagen City court for running illegal taxis in 2015 – the highest total-ling 486,500 kroner. The drivers appeared on a list of Uber drivers registered by tax authorities in the Netherlands, where the company is headquartered. The police used the list as evidence of how much the drivers had earned, which informed the size of the fines. "We are very disappointed by the verdict, not least the size of the fines, which we don't think reflects what they have done," defence attorney Eddie Omar Rosenberg Khawaja told Ritzau. After the successful prosecution of the four drivers, the remaining 1,500 drivers on the list have now also been charged and can expect to receive fines in the mail.

Frank Jensen / facebook



GOLD FOR AXELSEN
Badminton player Viktor Axelsen, 23, is World Champion after beating Lin Dan in the finals 22-20, 21-16. The 23-year-old won Bronze in the 2016 Olympics and the 2014 World Championships.

His 33-year-old Chinese opponent is a legend in the sport, having won the World Championships five times and Olympic Gold twice, in 2008 and 2012.

Axelsen was the first Dane to reach the finals of the World Championships in 16 years, when Peter Rasmussen won in Glasgow.



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CITY

City centre may go car-free to prevent terror attacks

Cars may no longer be able to drive in Copenhagen's medieval city centre under a proposal from left-wing parties in City Hall. The parties have commissioned a study of the impact of closing the city centre to car traffic before a final vote on the proposal in 2018. The parties estimate that closing the area – home to the pedestrian district – would cost between 80 and 120 million kroner a year.

While Copenhagen's mayor for technical and environmental affairs Morten Kabell has previously argued for a closure of the city centre to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, the new push to exclude cars from the city centre is a security measure suggested by the intelligence agency PET.

The city has already installed concrete blocks at a number of access points to prevent vehicles from carrying out attacks such as those witnessed in Nice, France, and Barcelona, Spain.

"We have a responsibility to protect the many pedestrians, cyclists, Copenhageners and tourists who every day spend time on the many squares and streets in the medieval city centre," Kabell stated in a press release.

Three different scenarios have been proposed for how to restrict traffic in the city centre – in one it is completely closed to traffic, while the two others keep open one transport artery along Frederiksholm canal.

Kabell also wants to beautify the bare concrete obstacles.

"We are following the recommendations for speed slowing measures that have been made by PET and the police. But terrorists should not be setting the agenda in our city. That is why we would like to replace the current concrete blocks with trees, benches and other things that would give the same effect and contribute to a better city."

Green issues pivotal in municipal election

Ever since 1938, when the office of Lord Mayor of Copenhagen was established, the role has been occupied by a member of the Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater). But their run may come to an end at the

We have a responsibility to protect the many pedestrians, cyclists, Copenhageners and tourists who every day spend time on the many squares and streets in the medieval city centre.

MORTEN KABELL, COPENHAGEN MAYOR FOR TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Peter Stanners



Steffen Rasmussen with his daughter, out on the section of Amager Fælled that is slated for redevelopment. He is a leading figure in the campaign to prevent the redevelopment.

Peter Stanners

upcoming municipal elections in November due to deepening divisions between the left-wing parties.

Copenhagen Municipality is governed by eight mayors, each with their own department and responsibilities. The top job belongs to the Lord Mayor, who runs the powerful economy committee, and who is typically the mayoral candidate belonging to the largest party in the winning electoral bloc.

Socialdemokrater have been losing ground to other parties in the left-wing bloc, especially to the far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) – both are polling at about 20 percent of the vote.

Complicating the equation further is the arrival of The Alternative, a centre-left green party that is expected to secure ten percent of the vote in its first municipal election.

The party's mayoral candidate,

Niko Grünfeld, says that time might be up for Frank Jensen, Copenhagen's Lord Mayor for the past eight years.

"Socialdemokratiet has had the post for more than one hundred years, but that doesn't necessarily mean it will continue. It could be someone from Enhedslisten," Grünfeld told Berlingske, adding that they would prefer a "seriously green" Lord Mayor.

According to a Gallup poll taken in June, it would be possible for Enhedslisten and Alternativet to form a majority in City Hall together with the Social Liberals (Radikale) and Socialist People's Party (SF), locking the Social Democrats out of influence for the first time ever.

"We would be naïve not to look at different options. But Frank Jensen is a clever politician and an experienced man, so he can read the po-

litical landscape. And we will see if he lives up to his promises for a green direction," Grünfeld added.

And Jensen is unlikely to take the threat lightly. Alternativet and Enhedslisten both oppose a planned development on Amager Fælled, a green space south of the city. The sale and development of the land has been in the works for decades, and is required to finance debts incurred in building the Metro. Scraping the housing development would mean the city would have to find another way to raise 1.5 billion kroner.

But tens of thousands of Copenhagen residents have signed a petition demanding just that, given that this particular plot of land has a high level of biodiversity. Their votes could tip the balance and result in the most substantial political upset in Copenhagen's modern history. **M**

How many foxes do you need to make a fox cake?

40
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POLITICS

More powers for digital spy agency

Security services need more powers to combat the threat posed by hackers, argues Defence Minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen. But experts are worried that the new powers would threaten privacy.

This summer, Frederiksen submitted a report to Parliament arguing that the current laws controlling the scope of the security services limited their ability to protect Denmark's digital infrastructure from hackers.

"It is increasingly apparent that threats to our cyber security is one of our greatest problems," Frederiksen told Berlingske. "In the future, wars will take place in the digital arena, with the potential to paralyse all of society. It scares me. There is the potential to influence the views of an entire society, as well as to paralyse central IT systems such as the pensions system, payments systems, and health services."

Frederiksen wants the Centre for Cyber Security (CFCS), a department of the military intelligence agency FE, to be able to carry out surveillance in local networks within national institutions. CFCS is currently only allowed to spy on ingoing and outgoing network communications from national institutions.

Experts warn, however, that the new powers would threaten privacy.

"CFCS already has very broad powers," IT security expert Søren Debois of the IT University told Berlingske. "But now they will also be able to access local networks and bypass encryption. For example, they will be able to see internal communications and data in Health Region Hovedstaden, or in Parliament."

Other critics argue that CFCS will be able to access databases such as private health journals. But in a comment on its website, CFCS argues that these are not areas of focus.

"CFCS may only gain access to data that are thought to be the target of malicious activities in the form of hacker attacks. CFCS' role is to contribute to protecting these and other forms of data against foreign attempts to steal or manipulate them," writes CFCS. **M**

TAX REFORM FOCUSSES ON CHEAPER CARS AND LOWER INCOME TAX

The government argues that Danes will benefit equally in proposed tax reforms, while critics argue that the wealthiest will walk away with greatest gains

TAX CUTS worth 23 billion kroner have been proposed by the minority right-wing government, which would slash both income tax and the cost of cars. According to the government, economic growth has strengthened public finances enough to pay for the tax cuts that, they argue, will benefit all types of families.

There are three main points to the tax reform, the first being that there should be a greater economic incentive to work. Low-income workers will receive an extra tax deduction, while socially vulnerable Danes will be able to earn up to a certain sum tax-free. And to encourage Danes to work harder, the threshold for the top tax bracket, *topskat*, will be raised next year instead of in 2022.

Danes saving for retirement will benefit from a new tax deduction for certain pension contributions, as well as lower taxation on pension payments.

Finally, the price of an average-sized family car will be made around 20,000 kroner cheaper by lowering registration taxes to a maximum 100 percent of the cost of the car, down from 150 percent.

FISHING QUOTA SCANDAL

The Food and Environment Ministry is accused of not doing enough to prevent fishing fleets from illegally amassing high concentrations of fishing quotas

FISHING QUOTAS WERE privatised in 2002, allowing fishermen to buy and sell their quotas on the free market. Over the past fifteen years, the quotas have been concentrated in the hands of a few powerful fishing fleets, leading many small fishing villages to suffer economic decline.

But according to a scathing report by state auditor Rigsrevisionen, measures to prevent the concentration of fishing quotas



Cars will be much cheaper if the government manages to pass its tax reform. Time to splurge, then.

According to the Finance Ministry, the lowest-income workers – those earning 18,500 kroner a month before tax – will pay 5,000 kroner less in tax per year, while a manager earning 87,000 kroner a month will have 26,700 kroner more disposable income. But while those with high incomes benefit more in absolute terms, the ministry stresses that high-income workers will see a relative tax cut of 5.7 percent, as opposed to 7.1 percent for a low-income worker, according to Politiken newspaper.

Unions argue, however, that the reform overstates its benefits to low-income workers. By including the benefits from cheaper cars and the tax deductions on household work, those with high incomes ultimately end up benefiting far more.

"People with high incomes get the most benefit, whether expressed as kroner or percentage," said Jonas Schytz Juul, head of analysis at the Economic Council of the

Labour Movement, to Politiken newspaper.

Tax negotiations will be launched this autumn, and have so far proved a difficult area for the government. For while the Liberal Party (Venstre), Liberal Alliance (LA) and the Conservative People's Party (Konservativer) largely agree on the need to cut taxes, the opposition disagrees. To pass the cuts, they will require the support of their populist support party, the Danish People's Party (DF), which is generally opposed to tax cuts that could affect welfare spending.

In August, the government had to accept that it couldn't find the support to cut the rate of *topskat*. This was especially damaging for LA, which had promised to topple the government if the policy was not enacted.

DF has so far rejected elements of the proposed tax plan, however, such as bringing forward the planned increase of the *topskat* threshold to 2018. **M**

were not adequately implemented by food and environment ministry. They also found that the ministry passed on incorrect information to Parliament, utilising conflicting and incomplete data to assess how quotas were changing hands and to determine the concentration of ownership.

As a result of this lack of oversight, Rigsrevisionen argues, fishermen were able to break the law and bypass quota limits by establishing straw man businesses to buy additional fishing quotas.

The food and environment minister has now requested that the police open an investigation to determine whether a number of fishing companies have broken the law.

Prior to the release of the report in August, prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen chose to take the fisheries portfolio from Esben Lunde Larsen, environment

and food minister, and give it to Karen Ellemann, who is already minister for Nordic cooperation and equality.

Larsen was officially criticised by Parliament earlier this year for failing to hand over important documents during the negotiation of a new fisheries law. His staff had provided him with 16 initiatives that could prevent the concentration of fishing quotas, but didn't turn them over when they were requested by the opposition parties.

The parties ended up passing new laws in December, without the minority government, to improve conditions for small fisheries. Larsen subsequently attempted to sabotage these laws by mobilising fishery organisations to publicly condemn the new law and demand the minister intervene and reopen negotiations. **M**

DR faces cuts

State broadcaster DR has become too large and powerful and needs to be whittled down, argues the Danish People's Party (DF).

"We need to ensure that there is space for actors in the media market other than DR in the future, and this requires making some decisions and being prepared to limit DR's size," DF leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl told Berlingske.

In addition to cutting a quarter of DR's budget, DF also wants the institution to be funded through taxes rather than through the 2,500 kroner licence fee that all Danish households have to pay, which raises around 3.7 billion kroner in revenue a year.

Tougher sentences

Sentences for extremely violent behaviour should be lengthened, argues the government, which has set aside 65 million kroner in the budget to pay for longer jail terms.

Justice minister Søren Pape Poulsen points to a three-year-old case in which a couple was subjected to an unprovoked attack. Two men were given ten-month sentences for the assault, and a third received a one-year term in prison. Poulsen argues the sentences were too lenient.

"It was too little given the damage they inflicted. We are now increasing the punishment by a third. It's a signal to judges that they should crack down harder on extreme violence," Poulsen told BT.

Konservative want to expand compulsory national service

More men should be conscripted into compulsory national service so that Denmark is able to respond to threats to its national and regional security, argues the Conservative People's Party (Konservativer).

All Danish men resident in Denmark must present themselves to the military once they turn 18 for six months of military service. Far from all end up serving, however, since the military is allowed to accept a maximum 4,200 young men and women every year for a minimum four months of service. The vast majority of these volunteer to serve.

But the party's defence spokesperson, Rasmus Jarlov, now wants to double both the number of conscripts and the length of time they must serve.

"We have a historically low number of military conscripts," Jarlov told TV2 News. "Compulsory military service functions as a real military capacity that should form an important part of Denmark's defence."

The Danish People's Party agrees, but wants to increase the number of conscripts even further, to 10,000. Both argue that conscripts ought to be made available to serve in

conflicts both in Denmark and abroad if needed.

"Even when there is war, it would have to be an extreme situation before we sent military conscripts to the Baltics," Jarlov told Politiken, responding to the possibility of a war between a NATO ally and Russia. "But in the most urgent situation, it should be possible to compel them, yes."

The Danish constitution permits conscription to defend Denmark at home and abroad.

Coralling unvaccinated kids

Unvaccinated children should be grouped together in public institutions, argues Liberal Alliance and the Social Democrats in Frederiksberg Municipality.

The ambition is to protect children who cannot be immunised, either because of their age or because they have a weakened immune response.

"Measles is an incredibly dangerous illness that the WHO warns could make a comeback," said MP Laura Lindahl, who serves both in Parliament and in Frederiksberg Municipality, to Berlingske.

"There are threats due to migration from countries where there is no vaccination, as well as the increasing number of parents who oppose vaccination. That is why we need to address how to deal with this problem."

The two political parties also want the health services to be more assertive with parents about the need for vaccines and increase spending on information campaigns on the importance of vaccination.

Measles outbreaks have been reported across Europe, and in Denmark, three men were diagnosed with the disease in August.

2018 budget proposed

In late August, the government presented its proposed 2018 budget. Central elements are:

- Increased spending on public services. 2.3 billion kroner
- Increased spending on the tax authority. 6.7 billion kroner
- Cuts to state rail operator DSB. -207 million kroner
- Increased spending on foreign aid. 4.5 billion kroner
- Continuation of tax deductions for household help
- Driving over the Great Belt Fixed Link will cost 25 percent less
- Increased spending on research and development. 400 million kroner
- Increased oversight of taxes in small and medium sized businesses. 400 million kroner

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The Danish constitution permits conscription to defend Denmark at home and abroad.

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The risky reform of the Danish tax system

Following a number of damaging scandals at the tax authority SKAT, the government has announced plans to close it down and divide it into seven parts. It's a bold decision, but is it enough to fix a lack of funding, a culture of mismanagement and a lack of government oversight?

AN IT SYSTEM so dysfunctional it had to be put out of its misery. A collective tax debt of 92 billion kroner that the state can't recoup. 12 billion kroner lost to foreign connen on falsified VAT rebates on Danish stocks.

These are just some of the shocking scandals to have plagued SKAT over past few years. This summer, the government decided to finally take action and close it for good, replacing the current system with seven different authorities, each with its own area of responsibility.

The question is whether it will it make any difference at all.

In June, tax minister Karsten Lauritzen held a press conference. With Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen at his side, he announced that nothing could be done. SKAT had to be given the coupe-de-grâce. Rebuilding from scratch, we were made to understand, was easier than repairing the crippled system.

"The time has come to take stock of our tax authorities and decide what kind of tax system we want in the future. I have to say that the tax authorities of the future will be without SKAT. This conclusion was reached after recognising that the current organisational framework is simply not adequate to the task of giving the tax payers the system they rightly demand," Lauritzen told Berlingske in June.

A DECADE OF MISMANAGEMENT AND COSTCUTTING

In 2006, the government fused the municipal and state tax authorities to create SKAT, a massive organisation with almost 9,200 employees. Every year since, both left and right-wing governments attempted to centralise and streamline the organisation with budget and staff cuts. This has widely been recognised as having backfired.

The time has come to take stock of our tax authorities and decide what kind of tax system we want in the future.

KARSTEN LAURITZEN, TAX MINISTER

Joshua Hollingdale



Tax minister Karsten Lauritzen from the Liberal Party (Venstre) has decided to split the tax authority SKAT into seven, following more than a decade of mismanagement and scandals.

Around 3,000 fewer staff now work at SKAT, based on the expectation that their roles would be replaced by automated systems, including the EFI automatic debt collection system. But the system faced lengthy delays, and when it was finally implemented in 2015, it was discovered that it was attempting to collect debt that was obsolete.

EFI was shelved in 2015 at a cost of 1.2 billion kroner, which means that SKAT must now collect the debt owed by Danish tax payers semi-manually. This is a slower method and, as a result, the debt exploded to 92 billion kroner – of which at least 40 billion is now thought to be impossible to collect.

The delays to EFI meant

that SKAT was effectively understaffed, making it vulnerable to fraud. Foreign investors can choose to pay the VAT on profits made from Danish stocks in their home country, and can submit to have the Danish VAT repaid if they live abroad. So far, foreign connen have made off with 12.3 billion kroner by submitting falsified purchase agreements for Danish stocks – the criminals were reimbursed for money that SKAT never received.

Other scandals were the result of poor management and political oversight. In 2011, the state auditor Rigsrevisionen concluded that SKAT had incorrectly valued homes in three out of four cases. The tax ministry had been aware of the issue since 2007, but had

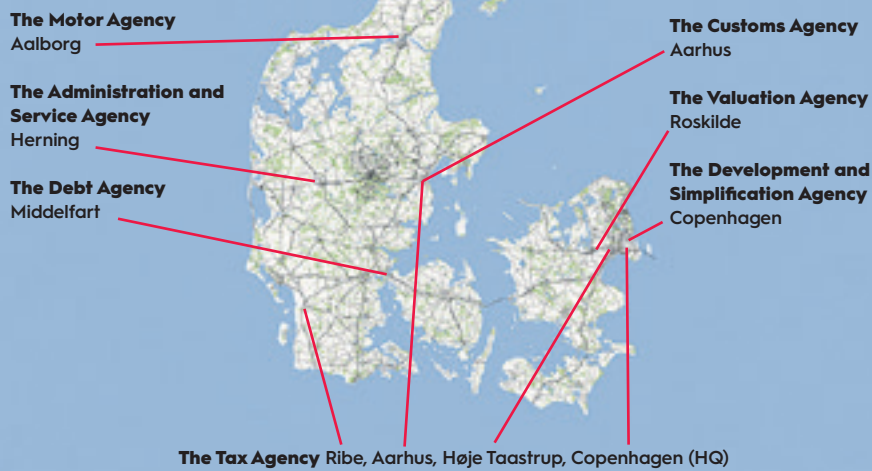
done nothing to correct the flaw. In 2019, homeowners are expected to be paid nine billion kroner in compensation for inflated taxes on their homes.

SEVEN NEW TAX AUTHORITIES

The scandals and decade-long political neglect of SKAT led the government to pull the plug in June. To replace SKAT, the government is establishing seven brand-new tax authorities with different areas of expertise, to be spread across Denmark.

While Lauritzen has been commended for finally taking decisive action, some experts and commentators are concerned. In an editorial in June, Berlingske called the tax minister a "brave man," citing the huge complications that

The New Tax Agencies



are likely to result from moving roughly 1500 jobs from Copenhagen to different parts of the country. Previous attempts to decentralise government workers have shown that civil servants are often reluctant to leave the capital.

Tax spokeswoman for government coalition member Venstre, MP Louise Schack Elholm, says they have addressed this issue, however.

"For example, we have moved the Tax Appeal Agency to Odense, as we estimate it will be easier to find qualified employees in that particular area, and moved part of the Evaluation Agency to Haderslev to ensure the jobs aren't lost in that area," she says.

The government is not alone in looking forward to a reformed tax system. Deputy head of the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI), Kent Damsgaard, is quietly optimistic about the reforms.

"We are deeply dependent on getting back a strong tax administration. So we view it as positive that a plan has taken shape. However, it is far too soon to begin grading the initiatives. The whole thing is completely dependent on how it is executed," he told Berlingske Business.

The unions representing SKAT's employees, however, are worried about the potential consequences of pushing such significant organisational changes on a tight schedule. Sara Vergo, chairwoman of DJØF Offentlig, is concerned by the prospect of losing large numbers of qualified employees.

"If only one out of five employees stays in the organization, then it is self-evident that there will be a huge loss of competencies," she told Information newspaper, adding that she is happy that the government plans to hire roughly 1000 new staff in connection with the relocation and establishment of the new agencies.

THE CHALLENGE OF AGE

Despite these new hires, SKAT is challenged by an ageing workforce. 2000 employees currently working in the tax system will be retiring in the next few years. Replacing them will be a huge challenge,

but one that the government is dealing with, ensures Elholm.

"It is true that the staff in the tax system are relatively old, because people tend to stay in the tax system for a long time. Their age is a big challenge, but that is why SKAT has had a specific focus on offering employees senior benefits in order to make them stay on a little longer," the spokeswoman says, adding that the government is also actively training new, younger staff.

"We have taken an important step in the right direction with the new diploma education in taxation at the Metropolitan University College in Copenhagen, which was designed to provide the right background for the training of new tax employees. We are aware of the serious structural challenges connected to the age of the employees, but we are attempting to establish a foundation for the training of the future of the tax system," she says.

COMMISSION TO ASSIGN BLAME

At the end of June, a majority of MPs bypassed the minority right-wing government to establish a new Tax Commission that will attempt to assign responsibility for the scandals that have crippled SKAT. It will have three main areas of focus: the wrongful collection of debt, fraud of VAT rebates on stocks, and the cuts and centralisation of responsibilities that have dominated the tax policies of the last three governments.

MP Louise Schack Elholm says she understands why MPs and voters alike want to hold someone accountable for the scandals, but argues the commission is unlikely to assign responsibility in a manner that satisfies MPs.

"The government doesn't think anything significant will come from the commission's work, mostly because it takes such a long time to finish this sort of work. We never wanted a commission, although we respect the majority's decision, but we don't think it is likely we will see responsibility assigned clearly. Generally, commissions do not produce results that get people convicted of anything." **M**

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Superkilen in Nørrebro is the epicenter of the gang conflict, as groups compete to control a lucrative cannabis trade and attempt to settle scores in long-lasting feuds.

Make GANGS illegal

– starting with the Hell's Angels

It's been a violent summer in Nørrebro with more than 26 shootings. But this increase in gang activity arrives as gang membership and youth crime is dropping. Sociologist Aydin Soei argues that earlier intervention is a better tool than tougher penalties

T

here's another cop. That's the fifth one on this block alone!" says a woman near the Red Square in Nørrebro to her partner, appearing shocked.

Anyone who has been close to outer Nørrebro in the past month will have experienced a district in a subdued state of emergency. Police patrol the streets in cars and motorcycles, or simply on foot. Helicopters borrowed from the Defence Command circle the neighbourhood, their doors open so that armed officers can take swift action.

The aerial surveillance produces a constant low-frequency drone that permeates the cobbled streets. While some families appear to go about their daily routines seemingly unfazed by the sudden police presence, not all of Nørrebro's residents can block out the background buzzing.

"Those helicopters are fucking annoying!"

One of them is Aydin Soei, a writer, journalist and sociologist whose work has focussed on crime in socially and economically disadvantaged residential areas, and specifically on angry young men – which is also the title of his second book.

"I lived on Rantzausgade when the gang conflict emerged in the autumn of 2008. That street was probably the place with the most shootings in the entire country. There were areas you just wouldn't go if you were a young man with an immigrant back-

They feel like they don't have the same future possibilities, so they adopt this gangster identity.

AYDIN SOEI

Hana
Hasanbegovic

ground. Most of the people who were shot then had no connection to the gangs – and the shootings today remind me of that," he says.

According to Soei, the primary goal of the shootings is for different criminal groups to show they aren't afraid of entering the other's territory. The groups aren't concerned whether the targets of the shootings are rival gang members or innocent civilians – the key is the signal it sends.

A number of explanations have been given for the escalation of tension over the past few months, but according to Soei, it has mainly to do with one particular gang, Loyal To Familia.

"They are trying quite aggressively to expand their territory and to say that no one is above them."

Their recruitment drive and territorial expansion is leaving rival groups – particularly those in the nearby suburb of Husum,

the housing project Mjølnerparken, and in the northwest district – feeling threatened and under pressure. But it's also the culmination of feuds that have been building between the groups.

"There is a notion within the gangs that one does not turn the other cheek. This gang war has been going on for nine years now, and the different members have been holding grudges and getting into conflicts all this time. And when you have people jumping from gang to gang, you end up bringing your conflict with you. So all of a sudden, you have a conflict that becomes the conflict of the entire brotherhood – and not just of the individual."

SHOOTINGS ARE BAD FOR BUSINESS, BUT GOOD FOR THE EGO

Since June of this year, there have been 26 shootings in Copenhagen. Soei argues that the source of this conflict is not simply con-

trol of the illegal cannabis market, which is worth around a billion kroner in Copenhagen alone. If it were, the gangs would keep a low profile, since increased attention from politicians and the police would only reduce sales.

Instead, these shootings are a testament to changes that have taken place within the criminal subcultures following the last gang conflict.

"Before 2008, it was considered extreme if you carried a knife as a young person. Then, overnight, the number of firearms exploded, and it suddenly became normal to see guns in these criminal environments. This also means that the generation that was around 10 years old at the time of the first conflicts has now grown up with firearms, shootings, violence and gang-related conflicts as a part of their everyday life. It's become a part of their subculture – and they are more willing to turn to violence. So naturally today's conflicts escalate much faster," he explains.

ANTI-GANG INITIATIVES AND GANGSTERS ON WOMEN'S BIKES

Earlier this year, the Danish government presented 35 concrete initiatives to combat criminal gangs and outlaw motorcycle clubs. According to the Justice Department's website, the ambition is to keep gang members incarcerated for as long as possible, while ensuring safety and peace for the average Danish citizen.

The initiatives are threefold, encompassing housing and urban renewal, education, and crime prevention with even harsher punishments. The latter also includes a series of exit programs for gang members who want to break free of their criminal paths.

Soei approves of the initiatives, especially if the main objective is to put an end to the shootings. But there is one big gap in the strategy.

"The problem is that on the one hand, you have an ambition to get as many people into these programs as possible, but on the other, by increasing the penalties, you end up punishing those who have a real chance at getting out

of these criminal environments," he argues.

As Soei sees it, gang members who are higher up in the hierarchy use the members on the periphery to do the dirty work for them. They are used as cannon fodder, which is why you see 15 and 16-year-olds riding on women's bikes and shooting people.

These young, peripheral members also happen to be the easiest to convince to join exit programs, because they have yet to develop a strong affiliation to the gangs.

"Unfortunately, you have these outer-circle members who are affected by the harsher punishments. And when they get out of prison, they often end up becoming even more hardcore, and move up the criminal ladder," he explains.

This devolves into a vicious cycle – young foot soldiers end up in jail, where they are more likely to become hardened criminals.

FEWER GANG MEMBERS, BUT MORE ORGANIZED GANGS

Crime prevention can have a colossal long-term impact, according to Aydin Soei, and if that can be paired with getting more young people with immigrant backgrounds through primary school, there's a chance of achieving lasting results.

"We're losing a huge number of young men from disadvantaged residential areas who finish primary school without basic, functional reading skills. That essentially means that they're not able to read and understand the meaning of a regular newspaper. If you combine that with living in a socially disadvantaged area, where you are more likely to take on a gangster attitude at an early age, you end up with a dangerous cocktail," says Soei.

So why do so many young men seek this environment out, thereby destroying their future prospects? Soei argues that the answer is complex, but straightforward. The gangs offer a subculture in which recognition has nothing to do with one's educational ability, exam records or labour market attachment. Instead, loyalty to the group and its val-



Aydin Soei is a writer, journalist and sociologist whose work has focussed on disadvantaged youths. He is worried that increased punishment for gang members will backfire.

If these street gangs attract kids from urban environments, then Hell's Angels definitely attracts those disenfranchised ethnic Danish youths.

AYDIN SOEI

ues are the focus – especially the principle of not turning the other cheek.

"Having an inflated sense of masculinity earns you credit in the gangs, and they overcompensate for the feeling of being an outsider in wider society. They feel like they don't have the same future possibilities, so they adopt this gangster identity," Soei explains.

But there is a paradox at the heart of the gang debate.

On the one hand, gang membership is shrinking. Around 1,400 people are registered by the Danish Crime Prevention Council as belonging to a gang – a reduction of 400 members since 2013. In addition, the number of young people turning to juvenile crime is historically low, and the number of young people from socially disadvantaged residential areas who continue on to tertiary education is larger than ever. These are all success stories that don't get enough media time, argues Soei.

On the other hand, existing gangs are getting more organised and violent. They have adopted the Hell's Angels' playbook,

forming clear hierarchies, making patches for their backs, and establishing local divisions.

"We need to keep in mind that these gang-related issues have been around for a long time – not just in the wake of the immigration wave of the 1960s. And we shouldn't fool ourselves. Hell's Angels is a franchise on par with 7Eleven. If these street gangs attract kids from urban environments, then Hell's Angels definitely attracts those disenfranchised ethnic Danish youths on the outskirts of the country," Soei argues, adding he is not opposed to Justice Minister Søren Pape's proposal to ban gangs.

"Sure, that could work. But we need to start with Hell's Angels for good measure."

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS TO TAKE ACTION

As an attempt to take back their neighbourhood, Nørrebro residents organised a series of peaceful marches. Soei approves, but argues that the local community needs to focus more on long-term solutions rather than on vague gestures.

"People need to put their money where their mouth is. By this I mean that the middle class needs to take action. Because Nørrebro isn't the gangs. Nørrebro is people like you and me and the middle class that lives here," he says.

Soei points to French suburbs that witnessed a middle class exodus after riots, with knock-on effects in the public school system on isolated children who were left behind.

"The Nørrebro middle class needs to actively choose the public schools, the local institutions and leisure centres and show that Nørrebro is a place where these values can thrive," he says.

"The most important societal task that parents, teachers, and anyone else who deals with children from disadvantaged neighbourhoods has is to tell them that the gangsters that seem so appealing are not. Romanticising the gangs needs to stop," Soei says, before heading off to pick up his kid from a local Nørrebro kindergarten. **M**

Rasmus Degnbøl



CAPTURED

Rasmus Degnbol

March against gang violence

On August 21, around 1,500 Copenhagen residents marched through the districts of Nørrebro and Nordvest to demonstrate against the rise in gang related

shootings in the city. The shootings are thought to be related to attempts by the gang Loyal to Familia (LTF) to grow into a nationwide criminal organisation.

While Copenhagen has witnessed an escalation in gun crime related to gang

conflict before, it is the first time that random civilians unrelated to gang culture have been the target of shootings – at least three men not connected to the gang community were victims of random shootings. **M**





Cannabis users currently have no choice but to turn to criminal dealers. This image does not depict Daniel*, the cannabis user interviewed in the article.

End the GANG war by setting cannabis free

While parliament is divided over whether to legalise cannabis, Copenhagen City Hall is in favour, arguing that it could undermine the violent gangs that control the lucrative billion-kroner industry

T

he air is brisk one spring afternoon when I bump into an old acquaintance, Daniel*, hanging out in a quiet park between Vesterbrogade and Istedgade. We chat, and I ask what he's doing here all alone.

"Buying weed," he answers curtly, and I follow his eyes to a corner of the park where a group of young men are hanging around a picnic table.

Until the early 2000s, Copenhagen's cannabis trade was centred in Christiania, an autonomous enclave of the city featuring around two dozen stalls where a variety of cannabis products were sold to locals and tourists.

But after a succession of police crackdowns on Christiania in the early 2000s, the cannabis trade became more decentralised, spreading throughout the city. Dealers

could suddenly be found on street corners, even in the city centre.

Ever since, gangs have been fighting to control the street trade of cannabis, and this summer the conflict flared again. One local gang based on Blågårdsgade in Nørrebro has been pushing into new territory, leading to confrontations and shootings. Police have designated large parts of the city as stop-and-search zones, and the helicopters that seem to perpetually hover above the city have infuriated residents.

Several people have been shot, none with any connection to the

gang community.

Daniel knows that buying his drugs from these street dealers contributes to the escalating conflict – but he doesn't have any choice.

"If you go to Christiania, you have to prepare yourself mentally, and not just because of the risk of being stopped by the police while you're out there," he tells me later.

For while the cannabis trade still exists in Christiania, it's been taken over by a tough criminal community that hides behind camouflage netting to sell their wares. A year ago, the district's residents

Peter Stanners

tried to evict these dealers, but it didn't last long, and they were powerless to stop the gangs from returning.

"Before the crackdown, Christianity was completely different – relaxed and idyllic. Music would be playing, and you could ask the dealers about what you were buying like it was a straightforward business transaction. But it's no longer like that – you can't engage in polite conversations with these pushers."

FREE THE WEED

The solution for many is obvious: legalise cannabis. Lord Mayor Frank Jensen has long supported the idea of a three-year trial legalisation programme, in which the municipality would run five or six dispensaries around the city selling cannabis products at the same prices as the criminal markets. Only adult residents of Denmark would be eligible to buy the products at dispensaries, which would also provide information and access to counselling and treatment for heavy users.

Representing the Social Democrats (Socialdemokrater), Jensen has submitted five applications to launch a trial legalisation, but has been rejected by both left and right wing governments. With criminal networks remaining resilient despite a raft of legislation passed by left and right-wing governments to curtail gang crime, however, the idea of a trial legalisation is enjoying strengthened political support in parliament.

In an op-ed in Politiken newspaper, two members of the far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) – MP Pernille Skipper and Copenhagen mayoral candidate Ninna Hedeager – point out that allowing for the legal cultivation, sale and consumption of cannabis can raise a lot of money for the state.

"We want a state-controlled hash market, inspired by the Swedish control of alcohol where children are denied access but where adults can buy legally under the supervision and information of

knowledgeable people, and where the money goes into the pockets of the state, not the gangs," they write.

"It wouldn't solve all the problems, but it would reduce the gangs' income and make them less able to recruit members, while also minimising the black market that they are shooting at each other to control."

There is also support from Liberal Alliance – the only right-wing party to champion legalisation.

"The gangs are fighting for a share of the market, which we have made criminal," MP Laura Lindahl told Jyllands-Posten newspaper, adding that the time had come to legalise cannabis.

"Year after year, justice ministers have presented initiative after initiative, but the problem just continues to escalate. That's because of the illegal market."

POLITICAL PRIORITIES

While the Socialdemokrater in City Hall support legalisation, their colleagues in Parliament rejected an application for trial legalisation in 2014 when they were last in power. Socialdemokrater MP Tine Bramsen was justice minister at the time and argued that there was no evidence that the programme would be better at reducing crime than the government's other anti-gang initiatives.

"I want to see more responsibility being taken by residents who buy cannabis and put money directly into the pockets of gangs," Bramsen told Politiken newspaper at the time.

That the Socialdemokrater disagree on the national and local political level is a matter of diverging priorities, explains Associate Professor Kim Møller from the Department of Sociology at Aalborg University.

Most countries, including Denmark, base their narcotics legislation on international conventions, such as the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. The few countries, regions and cities that have

decriminalised recreational cannabis use have been met with condemnation by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

"When Frank Jensen was justice minister for the Social Democrats in the 1990s, he was opposed to legalised cannabis, but as Lord Mayor of Copenhagen, he supports it," says Møller, whose primary area of research is drug markets and organised crime.

"This is because as justice minister, his primary concern was Denmark's responsibility to international conventions and protecting Denmark's reputation in an international context. Denmark is a small country with an open economy and benefits little when it goes against partners in the EU and US. But as Lord Mayor, his priority is addressing the conflicts that are playing out on the city's streets, rather than abstract international commitments."

A BILLION KRONER MARKET

International embarrassment could be a risk worth taking, however. While the US state of Colorado has shown that recreational cannabis can generate significant tax revenue, Møller argues that it would also go some way to limiting gang activity.

"These gangs have a limited list of income-generating crimes available to them – sale of drugs, protection money and racketeering, prostitution, robbery and burglary. But many of these activities are much riskier and more complicated than selling cannabis, which takes place where they are normally spending time – on the streets. The sale of cannabis also has a lot of accessible jobs, such as being a lookout or a runner, which makes it easy for gangs to recruit members," says Møller.

According to a number of different surveys, including the National Police's own estimates, the cannabis trade is worth around a billion kroner every year in Copenhagen alone. Møller argues that the gangs will continue to control a small share of this trade even if it is legal-



These gangs have a limited list of income-generating crimes available to them – sale of drugs, protection money and racketeering, prostitution, robbery and burglary. But many of these activities are much riskier and more complicated than selling cannabis.

PROFESSOR KIM MØLLER, THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AT AALBORG UNIVERSITY

ised, as they will be able to retain customers willing to take the risk of buying it through illegal channels in exchange for lower prices.

But with fewer sales and reduced income, they are likely to weaken and become less attractive to potential members.

"They would lose a lot of easy revenue. The gangs will have to put more effort into dealing hard drugs and other crimes, but these crimes are more cumbersome than selling cannabis, which is currently their primary source of income and the least risky. So although they will continue to be criminals, they will have a harder time doing so, and crime will be displaced."

In January the right wing coalition government again rejected an application from City Hall to trial a legalisation of cannabis. Ahead of the decision, Copenhagen's Mayor for Social Affairs Jesper Christensen (Socialdemokrater), argued that state run dispensaries would enable social workers to identify young people at risk of drug abuse.

"Through the legalisation and destigmatisation of cannabis we could rid it of its connection to crime, and provide a path for young people who want to exit criminal environments," Christensen told Information.

Daniel supports the idea, and says he would pay a premium to buy cannabis from the state.

"It makes no sense that it is currently impossible. You can buy alcohol at any kiosk, and there is virtually no difference. Many studies have shown that alcohol is riskier than cannabis. I have no clue why we are spending billions of kroner fighting the side effects of keeping a drug illegal when we could end crime and make money by legalising it. No one I know who buys weed wants to support criminal gangs. We are just ordinary law-abiding citizens – we just happen to want to harmlessly intoxicate ourselves, too." **M**

***Daniel is not his real name. His identity is known to the editorial staff.**



Copenhagen's Lord Mayor Frank Jensen speaks to a march on August 21, organised in response to the increase of gang crime. Jensen argues that legalising cannabis is one strategy to reducing gang activity in Copenhagen.

"Despite the rise of GANG crime, youth crime has been falling"

A

s Justice Minister between 1996 and 2001, **FRANK JENSEN** opposed legalising cannabis. But after becoming Lord Mayor of Copenhagen in 2010, he changed his mind, arguing that legalising cannabis could both reduce gang crime and raise money for the state.

Jensen explains why he still supports the measure and why despite the increase in gang crime, there are reasons to be hopeful.

In 2012, you held a conference to develop a Copenhagen Model for legal cannabis. Do you still believe that gang activity can be reduced by legalising cannabis?

We are currently in the midst of

a gang war with crazy shootings taking place on the street that have targeted innocent people. We cannot solve this immediate conflict by legalising cannabis. What we need right here and now is for our police to accomplish the enormous task of getting the gangs off the city streets.

Having said that, I still believe that legalising cannabis would remove a significant contributing factor behind the gang rivalry. And if we can bring the open conflict to an end by taking the cannabis market from the criminal underworld, then I'm willing to try it.

I have repeatedly called on the government to introduce a trial legalisation of cannabis, most recently in December last year. We are currently enabling a billion-kroner market to be run as an underground economy by hardened criminals. If we can make as much money as the criminal underworld does through legalisation, then we must try it. I was once an opponent of legalisation, but I can now see that prohibition has not solved the problem.

I was once an opponent of legalisation, but I can now see that prohibition has not solved the problem.

**FRANK JENSEN,
LORD MAYOR OF
COPENHAGEN**

Peter Stanners

Are you concerned that a trial legalisation of cannabis could increase the number of users, and only push the activity of gangs toward harder crime?

In places that have tried the legalisation of cannabis, such as some US states, the evidence does not suggest that it results in more users. But we must of course pay attention to whether legalisation actually takes the illegal market away from gangs, and whether it results in more users. This is why I want to start with a trial legalisation of cannabis, so that we can better understand the consequences and make a decision on an informed basis.

What other thoughts and ideas do you have to address the increase in gang crime?

Despite the rise of gang crime, youth crime has been falling in recent years. We have had a strong focus on preventing and fighting youth crime through security partnerships and social work-

ers that visit at-risk youth in their homes, as well as exit programmes that help gang members put their criminal lives behind them. We are doubling down on this effort with more social workers that will intervene at an even earlier stage by visiting a youth's family if they are getting into bad company.

But with the level of conflict that we are currently experiencing due to the gang war, it is the role of the police to put the gangs under constant pressure. The police have already established stop-and-search zones and mobile police stations, as well as increasing their visibility in areas affected by shootings. In a series of raids, they have arrested a number of gang members, including the leader of Loyal to Familia.

We are now seeing results in the form of confiscated weapons and the arrest of gang members. That is what is needed. They must be sentenced and taken off the streets to prevent them from carrying out insane shootings that affect innocent Copenhageners. **M**

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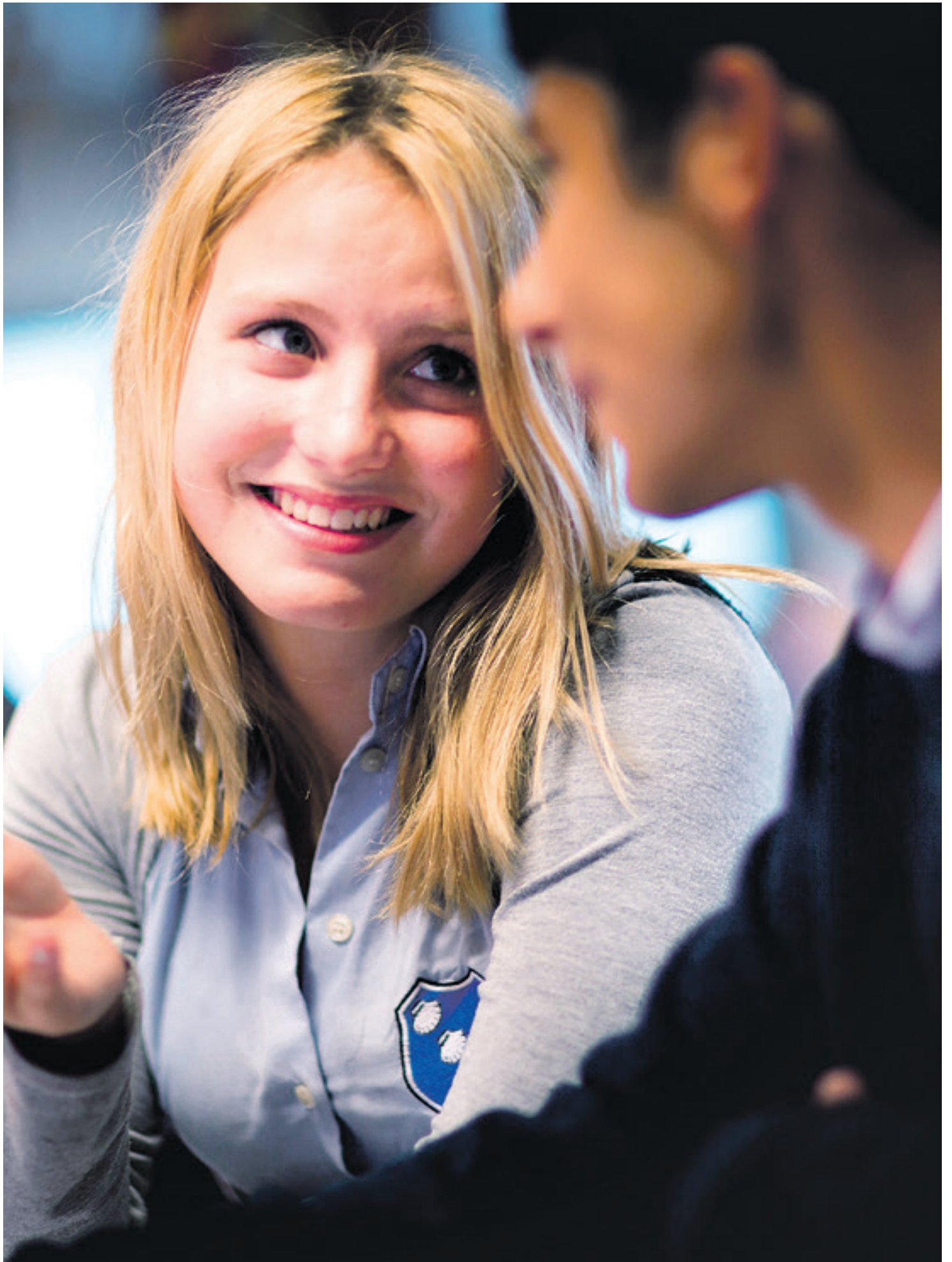
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Transferrable
and flexible, an
international
education is a
solid choice



Choosing an international education

A look at the many international school options outside the Danish capital region

GET AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF COPENHAGEN

WHEN INTERNATIONAL WORKERS consider moving to a country, a major factor is whether they can provide their children with a high-quality international education. Danish government and industry stakeholders have recognised this demand, leading to the founding of international schools across Denmark.

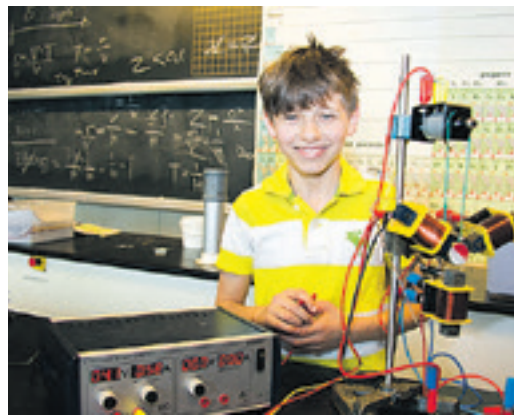
These increasingly popular primary and secondary educational institutions are no longer limited to Copenhagen, as businesses draw international workers to locations around the country. There are now international schools in Aalborg, Aarhus and Odense offering primary and secondary instruction in a variety of foreign languages.

This supplement is a guide for prospective parents and students to the ins and outs of international education in Denmark, with a specific focus on schooling outside the Copenhagen region. Much like the entire Danish education system, international schools are considered to be at an exceptionally high standard – subsidised by the government, and equipped with modern facilities and dedicated staff.

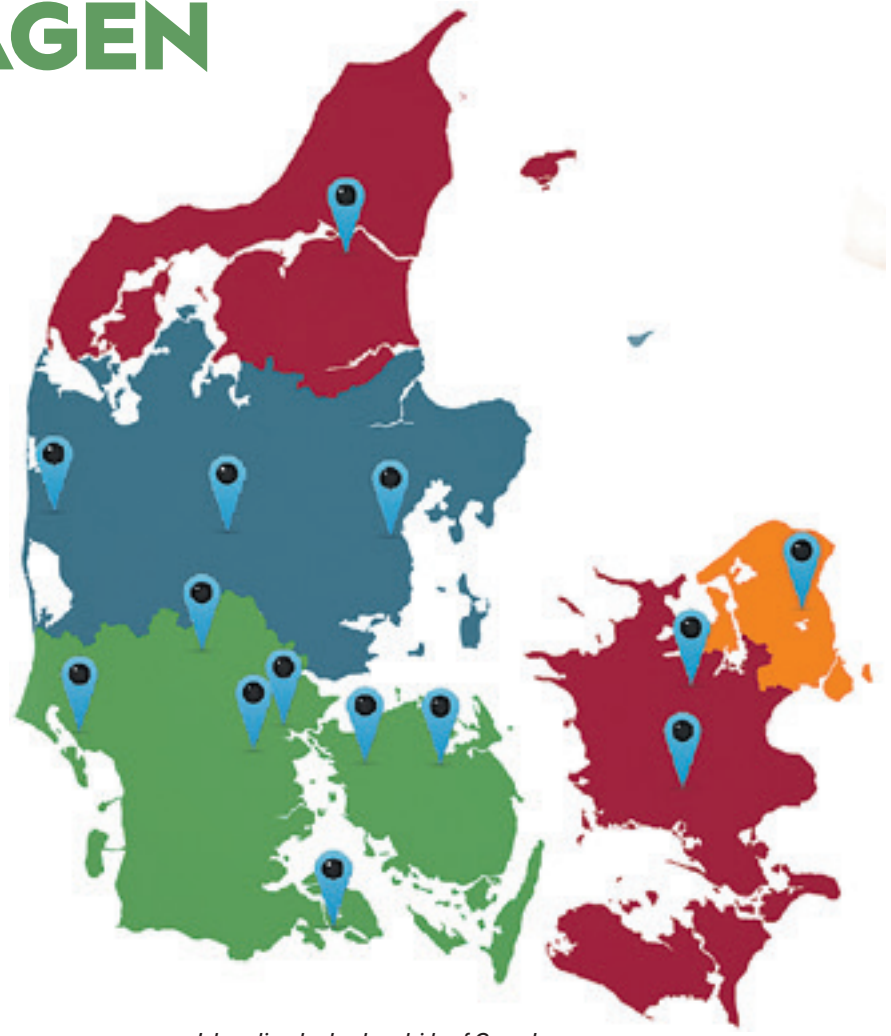
International schools come in many different shapes and sizes. The term covers a variety of school systems, formats and curricula. Some are more internationally-oriented, while others

maintain a strong Danish culture in their approach to teaching and learning. Primary instruction can be offered in any language – and multiple languages are usually taught – but is most commonly in English, French, Spanish, German, or Japanese.

The main benefit of international schooling for mobile knowledge workers is that the education is transferrable. For example, the Cambridge programmes and International Baccalaureate are educational systems that are taught around the world, providing for an easy transition between schools – from France to Vietnam, with Denmark along the way. **M**



NGG International School



International schools outside of Copenhagen

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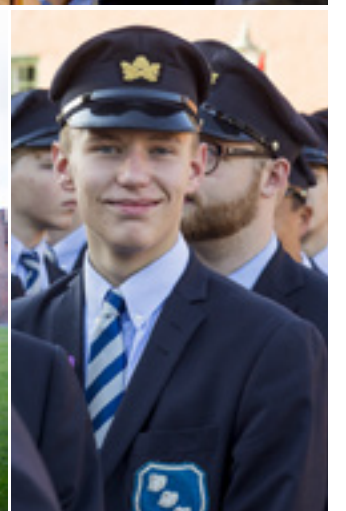
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A DANISH INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



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LEARN LOCAL OR GO GLOBAL?

There are benefits and drawbacks from taking an international education rather than joining the Danish system. Experts and educators share their views



Herlufsholm - Steen Brogaard



NGG International School



NGG International School

International Schools are the default choice for many expats, as they provide transferrable and globally-recognised qualifications. Expat parents who send their children to international schools sometimes draw criticism from those involved in the local education system, who argue that international schools isolate children from the local culture. This presents a dilemma for expat parents trying to choose the most appropriate school for their child and circumstances.

THE PROS AND CONS OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

It is worth remembering that international school students are taught Danish as a second language as part of the curriculum through the lower secondary grades. This is a precondition that international schools must meet in order to receive government education subsidies. As long as this condition is met, the school can teach the remaining courses in the language of their choosing, most commonly English, but sometimes French, German or another language.

International schools are often sheltered from the wider Danish society, however. Relocation expert Kay Xander Mellish

argues that many international schools don't do enough to foster integration.

"I've met adults in Denmark who grew up going to international schools and speak very poor Danish," she says, adding that international schools are less stable from a social perspective compared to Danish schools.

"Your child's circle of friends changes constantly, as embassies or multinational corporations rotate parents in and out. A good thing about Denmark is that people have very deep and long-lasting friendships, so it's a shame to miss out on that."

On the upside, international schools in Denmark are academically very good and may offer more specialised and personalised teaching. This can come at a price, even though international schools are eligible for state funding.

At Herlufsholm International School, the school's student-to-teacher ratio is six to one, and every student is assigned a personal mentor to help with their academic and personal development.

"[An international] education is based on a comprehensive view of teaching, giving each student the opportunity to excel academically, to develop their



Herlufsholm - Steen Brogaard

International schools vary widely, from cost and teaching language to level of formality and teaching style.

social skills, and to become responsible world citizens," the school states on its website, adding that they do ensure there is a degree of integration into the Danish society.

For example, international students completing primary schooling must have a good grasp of the Danish language in order to qualify for upper secondary and gymnasium programmes. It is at this level that students in the Danish education system prepare for school leaving and tertiary-qualifying examinations.

CHOICES APLENTY

There are several international schools outside of the Copenhagen area that offer the best of both – an international curriculum with a local Danish per-

spective. Herlufsholm states that their school offers just such a balance.

"Our curriculum is based on the Danish system, and the administrative language is Danish, but most resources are available in English."

Most schools enrol children from age three until the end of lower secondary, at age 16 or 17. This means that parents have the option enrol children at any stage in the primary and secondary levels. Parents should be mindful, however, that waiting lists can be lengthy and getting a place is subject to availability.

International schools vary widely, from cost and teaching language to level of formality and teaching style. So do your research and make sure the school is a good fit for you and your child. **M**



NGG International School

CHOOSING THE BEST CURRICULUM FOR YOUR CHILD



Herlufsholm - Steen Brogaard

International Baccalaureate or Cambridge? We guide you through two of the best options for getting an international education in Denmark



Aarhus Academy for Global Education

As Denmark has become an increasingly popular destination for knowledge workers from around the world, the number of international schools has boomed to meet the demands of teaching their children. Offering a range of programmes in a number of languages, international schools are a reliable alternative to the Danish public system, preparing students for upper secondary and tertiary education in Denmark and beyond.

The two main curricula followed by English-language international schools in Denmark are the International Baccalaureate and the Cambridge International Curriculum. Both provide routes to the International Baccalaureate Diploma and to the British A Levels. It is also possible to find schools that offer curricula that combine elements of the Danish system with the French or German systems.

GET A CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION

There are several international schools located outside of Copenhagen that are certified to offer the Cambridge International Examination (CIE) programmes and qualifications.

These include the IGCSEs, the world's most popular leaving qualification for students aged 14 to 16 years old. There are over 70 subjects available through Cambridge IGCSE, including 30 languages, and schools can offer them in any combination. It is recognised internationally and can be found in thousands of schools in more than 140 countries around the world. It is al-

so a gateway to upper secondary qualifications such as the Cambridge International AS & A Level programmes.

The standardised curricula mean that students can easily move between schools in different countries that offer Cambridge qualifications. And because they are recognised by leading universities and employers worldwide, they are an international passport to success.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

Some international schools in Denmark offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme. Best known for its upper secondary qualification, the IB Diploma, the IB also provides a Primary Years Programme for students aged 3 to 12 and a Middle Years Programme for students aged 11 to 16. The Middle Years Programme does not provide a leaving qualification equivalent to the IGCSE, however, and is best seen as the

gateway to the IB Diploma.

The language of instruction is typically English and, like the Cambridge examinations, provides a high-quality, standardised and transferrable education that opens doors to tertiary education around the world. IB Diploma students take six subjects – which must include a first and second language, science and social science – as well as a mandatory course on epistemology, Theory of Knowledge. IB Diploma students must also complete 150 hours of community service in order to receive the Diploma.

The IB is taught in 4,000 schools around the world and is accepted by the world's top universities. A holistic and child-centred education, the IB is characterised by a focus on metacognitive approaches to learning, while encouraging personal development and fostering a sense of global citizenship. **M**



Herlufsholm - Steen Brogaard

International schools are a reliable alternative to the Danish public system, preparing students for upper secondary and tertiary education in Denmark and beyond



Herlufsholm - Steen Brogaard

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS:

HEAR IT FROM THOSE IN THE KNOW

This supplement has sought to offer prospective parents and students insight into the many international schools located around Denmark and the range of their educational offerings. To give you a better perspective, and to go beyond what the standard brochures and official guidelines will tell you, we spoke with those in the know – international school students and teachers. They offer their impressions of international schooling in Denmark to give their best advice to students who are thinking about enrolling in an international school.

THE VIEW FROM THE SCHOOL

Niels Koefoed, Head of Boarding at Herlufsholm, says the school offers an environment conducive to learning for young people from all over the world, as well as a global outlook on everyday life.

"I believe that an international education and the Danish education curriculum offer students equal qualifications. But I would recommend an international education to a young person who has been taught in English all of his or her life."

His advice to students considering an international school education: "Be yourself and integrate with your Danish fellow students. They love to speak English, but you should also do your best to try to communicate in Danish."

Hayley Rawlings, Middle School Principal and IB Middle Years Programme Co-



NGG International School

ordinator at Aarhus Academy for Global Education (AAGE), concurs with Koefoed, arguing that an international school education is ideal for students who move around the world often. She adds that international schools such as AAGE provide a stable learning environment by offering curricula like the International Baccalaureate (IB).

"IB schools from all over the world share the same curriculum framework and mission, of which there are over 4000," Hayley explains, adding that students moving away from their home country and educational system are generally able

to continue at the same grade level when they join an international school, without the need to study academic subjects in a completely new language.

Karen Böttger, Head of School at NGG International School, says that a long-term view of your child's education is also important when choosing an appropriate school.

"Choosing a school with an internationally-recognised curriculum, such as Cambridge or IB, is really important for families that are likely to relocate internationally in the future. It can ease the transition to the next country in a num-

ber of ways. The learning goals will be similar from school to school, so the chances of missing essential learning are minimal. The teaching and learning styles are likely to be familiar, and your child or children will learn with others who understand how it feels to move to a new country and make new friends," Böttger says.

THE VIEW FROM THE DESK

Josephine Ditlev Houman, a student at Herlufsholm, says that an international education gave her what she didn't know she needed.

"Engaged, spirited teachers, inquisitive classmates with backgrounds resembling mine in their dissimilarity, and structured lessons with enough freedom to incorporate personal expressiveness and motivation. I watched myself grow academically and personally, and credit my final results to the discipline and will to learn, yet also the ability to prioritise, which I gained from the unique environment facilitated by the encouraging surroundings."

Helena, in year 10 at NGG International School, says that she loves international schools because the environment makes her comfortable being herself.

"Going to an international school, or just being in an international environment, makes you so much more open-minded, and you gain so much knowledge about other countries and cultures different from your own," she says, adding that expats should seriously consider an international school regardless of where they are in Denmark. ■



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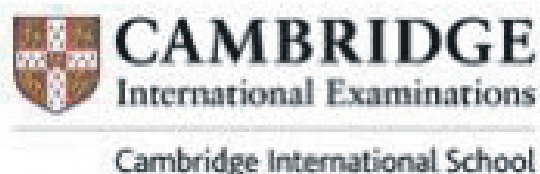
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International



Death of a journalist

It's a plot straight out of a Nordic Noir. But this is real life, and the death of Swedish journalist Kim Wall following her trip on a submarine is a tragedy that has been mourned around the world



Kim Wall.

WHEN KIM WALL didn't come home on the night of August 10, her boyfriend called the police. She had set out from Copenhagen in the submarine UC3 Nautilus with its creator, Danish inventor Peter Madsen, at around 19:00 the previous evening.

The next morning, Madsen was rescued off the sinking submarine by leisure boaters, taken immediately into police custody, and charged with manslaughter. In early questioning, Madsen claimed to have dropped Wall off at the Halvandet restaurant on Refshaleøen the previous evening.

On August 21, a female torso with no head, legs or arms was found on the southwest shoreline of Amager. Before DNA tests later confirmed that the remains belonged to Wall, the police released a statement:

"The defendant has explained to the police and the court that there was an accident on board which caused Kim Wall's death, and that he consequently buried her at sea at an unspecified location in Køge Bay."

We now know that Madsen changed his explanation soon after his arrest, but that the police had kept the information from

It's actually really scary to think about the fact that journalists go to many dangerous places all the time - and yet, the one that went to my home country ended her days on a submarine in peaceful Copenhagen.

**PUK DAMSGÅRD,
MIDDLE EAST
CORRESPONDENT DR**

Peter Stanners

the press. In the meantime, Wall's disappearance captured the imagination of the domestic and international media, which fuelled speculation into what had befallen her.

And we still do not know. The Copenhagen Police have kept a tight lid on information about what took place on board the submarine, and why Madsen attempted to dispose of the body in a way that suggests he didn't want it to be found. Madsen says he is innocent of the manslaughter charges.

What we do know is that a 30-year-old Swedish journalist lost her life pursuing a story. After earning her Master's degree from Columbia University, Kim Wall travelled the world for her stories. In Cuba, she reported on how locals get their pop culture fix without the internet, and in Uganda she wrote

about the legacy of Idi Amin's torture chambers. From nuclear waste to LGBT rights, Wall covered it all.

In articles published following her death, friends reflected on her legacy.

"[Wall] doesn't see the West as morally superior," her friend Sruthi Gottipati wrote in *The Guardian*. "As the empathetic reporter she is, she writes with nuance and gives her characters, however downtrodden or peculiar or disenfranchised, agency."

Gottipati observed a certain irony that Wall would be killed in a country known for its gender parity. This was a recurring theme, echoed by Puk Damsgård, Middle East Correspondent for state broadcaster DR.

"It's actually really scary to think about the fact that journalists go to many dangerous places

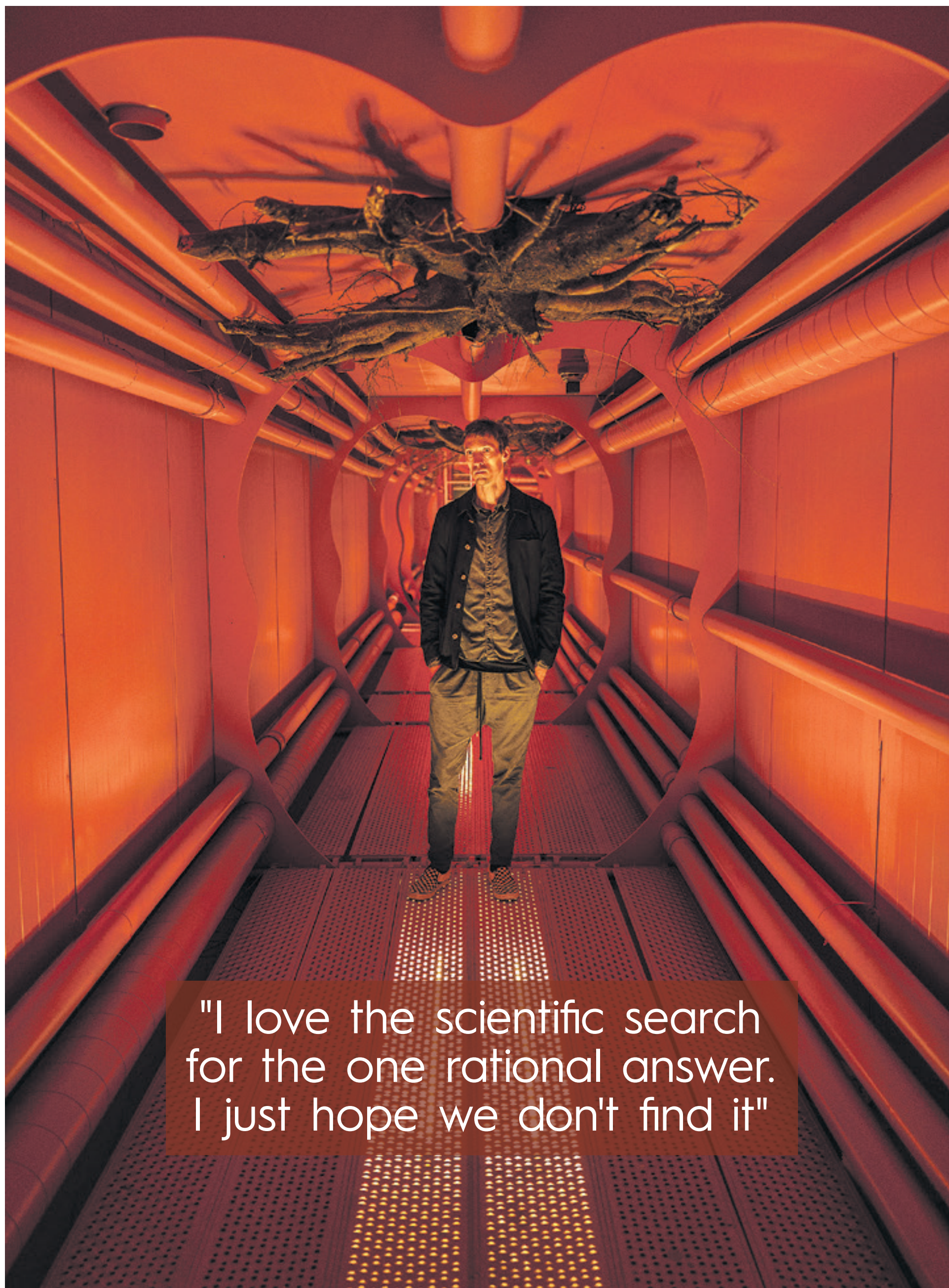
all the time - and yet, the one that went to my home country ended her days on a submarine in peaceful Copenhagen."

New Yorker staff writer Alexis Okeowo reflected on meeting Wall in New York, calling her warm, silly and bold.

"I probably would have gone down into the submarine with Madsen—so would a lot of female journalists I know," Okeowo wrote. "So much of reporting relies on placing a certain amount of trust in the people you are covering, and Kim's instincts led her to believe that she would be safe. In a parallel reality, one where her subject was more decent, she could have returned with a fascinating story, as she always did—offbeat, insightful, entertaining. Instead, we are left with thoughts of what could have been, and a devastating sadness." **M**

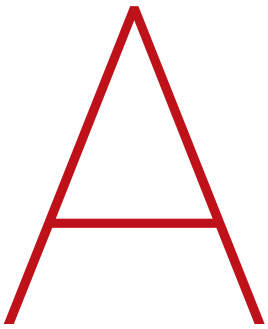


The submarine UC3 Nautilus sailing in Copenhagen harbour in April this year.



"I love the scientific search
for the one rational answer.
I just hope we don't find it"

Artist Eske Kath and singer Oh Land have created a container ship inside a church that asks questions about humanity's relationship with nature, what the future holds, and whether we can ever really change course



ship is taking shape in the nave of a former seaman's church in central Copenhagen. Seven shipping containers are stacked high to the ceiling, and waves made of foam cascade outward from the prow. Off to the sides, colourful boxes jut out of the floor, as though they were precious cargo, lost at sea.

I'm greeted by 41-year-old artist Eske Kath, who has created the installation – aptly named *The Ship* – together with his partner Nanna Fabricius Øland, otherwise known as the singer Oh Land.

Covered in dust and grime, Kath has taken a break from shaping the foam waves to give me a tour.

"It's a picture of humanity," he says, his voice almost drowned out by the drilling above us. "It's moving with a lot of momentum in one direction and not really trying to slow down."

It's a stark image, and one that won't be lost on visitors when the installation opens in Nikolaj Kunsthal, the contemporary art gallery that occupies Sankt Nikolaj Kirke just off the walking street, Strøget.

Kath walks us to the entrance of the ground floor container, the ship's engine room, shaped like the belly of a whale. He explains that it will have the feeling of being in a submarine whose pipes rumble and shake, with an opening at the end that only children will be able to squeeze through. Nikolaj Kunsthal presents art for the entire family, so Kath and Øland's installation needs to connect with adults and children – it must be both playful and cerebral.

"Nanna is making the sounds, but it won't be a soundtrack – we want it to be a physical part of the visuals so you can't pull them apart. They stick together," says Kath.

Up a set of stairs is the second floor container that is dimly lit and clad in mirror foil.

Kath explains it is meant to represent society as it sees itself – smug in its self-satisfaction and unable to realise its limitations. Finally, the top container acts as the ship's bridge, with tv screens showing the internal workings of the ship and ropes that, when pulled, play the church's organ like a musical foghorn.

But this container is askew, teetering over the edge and the sea below.

"This container represents how we see the world, and at some point, when it is no longer useful, it will fall off too. Everything that is no longer needed by society is pushed off the ship. Things like myths and old ideas about how the world worked. Then new ideas will arrive, and a new container will take over," Kath explains.

"You will get a sense that the ship is ploughing past these floating containers, old ideas that it lost the last time it went around. It's sort of a picture of where we are right now, hitting our old ideas and coming full circle."

THE END OF HUMANITY

The tense relationship between humankind and the natural world is the focus of much of Kath's work. A 2003 graduate of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, he is recognised for his stylised paintings of apocalyptic scenes and natural disasters in which colourful swirling landscapes engulf houses. The houses are a recurring symbol in his work, and represent anything relating to humanity – their sharp edges contrasting with the soft contours of the natural world.

"In the beginning, it was more symbolic – I wanted to talk about inner turmoil in a country like Denmark, where we don't have natural disasters. But even though the old work was abstract, the audience didn't always think that, and I got tired of being 'the natural dis-



Eske Kath created *The Ship* with his partner Nanna Fabricius Øland, AKA the singer Oh Land.

It is really hard to change course, and we are so close to getting to a point where we can't stop it with the technology that we have.

Words:
Peter Stanners

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

aster painter'. Many people took it literally, that they were about natural disasters, but that wasn't really the original idea."

The Ship is a mix of Kath and Øland's ideas, and he repeatedly emphasises that it's not meant to be read a certain way. And yet there are some inescapable metaphors. He explains that by making the engine room feel like the belly of a whale, it communicates that humanity is driven more by its animalism than its rationality.

"You can see in my work that although we try to move away from nature, we are still swallowed by it. We cannot remove ourselves from it – whether we like it or not, nature is always there," he says.

"When we talk about global warming, we talk about it being the end of the world. But it's not the end of the world – it's the end of humanity."

Kath and Øland have been working on the immersive piece for more than a year, coinciding with their move back to Denmark from New York and the birth of their first child. Their initial inspiration came from a conversation they had with their movers, who explained that most people could fit their en-

tire life's possessions into one 20-foot shipping container.

He explains that Øland sees the containers as representing children – we can equip them with knowledge and tools, but we are helpless to change the conditions they face at sea.

"Having a child changed everything," says Kath. "We used to have complete freedom. We saw each other maybe half the year if we were lucky, and now it's more like a traditional family. I definitely wouldn't be without it. I don't miss all the freedom. When I did my last show, it was a completely new way of working, from morning until he got back from kindergarten. That worked out – just the fact that I couldn't work all the time made working more interesting. And having a perspective that some things are even more important than working."

STEAMING AHEAD

Standing in the middle of the church in the midst of the building site, I try to visualise the final exhibition and wonder whether the audience will pick up on Kath and Øland's metaphors. Will the children squeezing out of the engine room understand the message that while adults are hard to change, children can escape their preordained paths? How will they respond to the contrast between the installation's engaging visual aesthetic and the pessimistic worldview that informed it? Will they pick up on what Kath and Øland are saying about society, with their rudderless container ship forever ploughing on into the distance?

"It is really hard to change course, and we are so close to getting to a point where we can't stop it with the technology that we have," Kath says, referring to the fight against climate change.

"It's a picture of that, but without trying to say we are all doomed. I don't know any more than most people. I am concerned of course. When we got this idea, we thought of the earth as a spaceship just floating in space. There is a lot of talk of abandoning this planet and taking up sanctuary on another. But it is much easier to save the ship that you are on. It's like being on the Titanic, heading toward the iceberg, and looking for another ship on the horizon instead of steering away. It's just a weird mentality. But it's also not very surprising. Humanity has never really changed direction in a sense, we have just moved forward and seen our time as the pinnacle of human evolution. And now we are seeing that there is a natural limit to where we can go."



Eske Kath at the helm of *The Ship*.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF DISASTER

Kath brings many of his recurring symbols to the installation. There's the sunrise on the Eastern horizon, and the glowing houses attached to an anchor chain running through the second floor, like a bunch of mussels.

But one character is conspicuous by his absence: Namazu, the giant catfish, which started appearing in Kath's paintings around 2008. In Japanese folklore, Namazu lived in the mud beneath the islands and caused earthquakes when he wriggled about.

After a major earthquake shook Japan in the 18th century, Namazu was depicted in woodcuts trying to make amends by forcing wealthy people to literally excrete money to help the poor rebuild. Namazu recognised he was responsible, but he didn't mean to do harm – he just couldn't help doing what catfish do.

"The Japanese saw natural disasters as natural and not always bad, because they allow us

to rebuild and move forward. But in Europe, we saw these events as punishment by the gods – we are much more self-centred," says Kath.

In *The Ship*, Kath seems to have discarded Namazu in much the same way that the containers that float around us have been shed by the ship – Namazu is no longer useful, at least not for this exhibition.

I have a thought – if we are having such difficulty taking action on climate change despite all the science telling us we are approaching disaster, maybe mythology could help? Maybe it's myths like Namazu that have helped make Japanese society so highly organised that it was able to bounce back so effectively from catastrophes like the 2011 tsunami.

But Kath isn't convinced.

"I see why we need myths, but I am too embedded in the western rational way of thinking. I am very interested in natural sciences. What I really like is when science makes discoveries that change what we thought was true – I love it when things get opened up. So in that sense, I like when things are connected to rational thinking but can surprise you. When there is mystery. The worst thing that could happen would be finding the end-all answer to everything. That would be so tragic. And still I love the search for it. I love the scientific search for the one rational answer. I just hope we don't find it."

THE NEXT GENERATION

The development of Kath's work suggests a change of perspective in recent years. While earlier paintings depicted catastrophic scenes, his newer work appears to show Earth after the disaster has passed. The houses are embedded in eroded and windswept landscapes, and hidden beneath an overgrowth of green plants. The message is that life will go on, even if it is without humans.

That's the worst-case scenario. But if we are to develop a more sustainable relationship with our planet, our future is in the hands of the youngest members of the audience.

"I want to try and connect with more hopeful thoughts. This is a show for the whole family. And there is still reason to be hopeful. Sure, it doesn't look like we are going to do what is needed. So let's hope that this new generation will." **M**

The Ship

Eske Kath & Oh land

Nikolaj Kunsthall / nikolajkunsthall.dk

August 23 – January 7, 2018

I see why we need myths, but I am too embedded in the western rational way of thinking.

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Give up booze, give up school

Universities are being asked to be more mindful of students who do not drink alcohol, after new research shows they are at higher risk of dropping out



Rasmus Degenbol

University student Amalie Ulla Pontoppidan Witt quit social drinking over a year ago and thinks there should be more alcohol free socialisation at university.

IN JULY, 65,165 new students were admitted to Danish universities. It can be an exciting moment for those with a dream career in mind, as they continue on the path toward their goal. And for those still uncertain about what to do with their lives, going to university can be an important stage in their journey of self-discovery.

But not everyone makes it through, and around one in three university students in Denmark drop out, most in their first year. According to a recent study conducted by the European Commis-

Gabriele Dellisanti

sion, Denmark has the highest university dropout rate in Europe, followed by Norway and the Netherlands.

"The high dropout rate represents a major issue in the Danish education system, considering that it is very expensive for society and institutions, and disruptive for the students who are likely to experience psychological problems because of dropping out," says Bjarke Tarpgaard Hartkopf, special adviser at the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA).

He was project leader and prin-

cipal investigator in a recent study conducted by EVA into the high dropout rates among university students in Denmark.

"Dropout rates are important, but we found that the research isn't advanced in this area, so we decided to dig into the topic in depth," he says.

The study assessed how experiences early on at university often influence the decision to either continue studying or abandon the course. They found that the increased likelihood of dropping out during the first year is often direct-

ly linked to the student's social experience, especially during induction week.

"One of the most important parts of any university programme is the beginning, as it's a vulnerable time in the lives of many students," observed Hartkopf.

"Many students move to a new city, find their own place, and start a new life, so the socialisation is very important to them. It is this vulnerability in the student's life that may be one of the factors that links the duration of induction programmes to lower

dropout rates. The study found that the duration of the induction program had a direct effect on dropout rates – the longer the induction week, the lower the dropout rate."

THE DRINKING HABITS OF DROPOUTS

The EVA study highlights a possible relationship between the drinking habits of students and their decision to either drop out or continue their studies. According to the research, students who don't drink and those who drink excessively are more likely to drop out than those with a moderate approach to alcohol consumption.

Given the social function of alcohol, it is not surprising that different drinking habits can affect a student's social life at university.

"If you drink, you are more likely to socialise," says Hartkopf. "One of the possible explanations of these findings is that if you don't drink, it's harder to be part of activities, meaning that you are at greater risk of being excluded."

"If you drink, you are more likely to socialise," says Hartkopf. "One of the possible explanations of these findings is that if you don't drink, it's harder to be part of social activities, meaning that you are at greater risk of being excluded."

Amalie Ulla Pontoppidan Witt was born in Copenhagen and is currently a theatre, performance and musicology student at the Institut for Kunst- og Kulturvidenskab (IKK). Pontoppidan quit social drinking over a year ago. While she still enjoys a glass of wine with her food every now and then, she gave up alcohol consumption at parties and other social events.

"I stopped drinking because I am tired of this culture. And I am sick of being hung over and having blackouts on a night out," she explains.

Pontoppidan points out how induction week at university often involves excessive drinking, so she understands why students who don't drink could feel socially excluded.

"Alcohol is an extremely large part of the induction week, and it is very hard to imagine the week without any alcohol involved. In a way, alcohol is used to help

students socialise, but sometimes it feels drinking is more important than getting to know new people and the course you just started."

Pontoppidan no longer attends the traditional Friday bar at university, put off by the excessive drinking. And her friends and peers haven't always been particularly supportive of her decision.

"I once experienced a guy who got offended when I told him about my decision not to drink. He was worried that I would remember everything he said and did while he was drunk and I was sober. This gives you an idea of how embedded alcohol is in our culture, and explains why it is so rare to find people who decide not to drink at all," she said.

ALCOHOL DOMINATES

The EVA study recommends that educational institutions introduce alcohol policies that ensure social inclusion for students who decide not to drink alcoholic beverages at social gatherings.

Pontoppidan agrees that alcohol-free choices at the Friday bar can be a positive signal to those who don't drink. She adds that tutors, who bear some responsibility for fostering social inclusion, should not take for granted that all students enjoy binge drinking.

"I think that serving a wider variety of non-alcoholic drinks at the student bar would be a small step towards a greater understanding of how to socialise without alcohol, or still being able to socialise with those who do drink," she observed.

Some universities have already taken steps to better include students who do not drink. The Technical University of Denmark (DTU) has given students the option of an alcohol-free intro week for the past three years. The intro week is otherwise the same – the students go on a trip together to play games and get to know each other – just without getting drunk in the process.

"I think that the drinking culture in Denmark dictates way too much what to do and how to behave at a social event," says Pontoppidan.

"If you decide not to drink, you must have a valid reason for it, and it is never good enough to just say you don't feel like it or simply don't want to." **M**

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Green is the New Black

Copenhagen's latest landmark recycling initiative promises to help the city accomplish its sustainability goals – if they can collect enough organic waste to make it profitable



Leif Jørgensen / Wikimedia Commons

The new 5C bus line in Copenhagen runs on biogas produced using organic waste.

Years after many other urban hubs started collecting organic waste and turning it into biogas and fertiliser, Copenhagen has finally begun to follow suit. As part of its strategy to be the first carbon-neutral city by 2025, Copenhagen will use its residents' organic kitchen waste to fuel shiny new carbon-neutral busses.

Copenhageners appear willing and ready to accept changes – even inconvenient ones – in order to become more sustainable. One survey commissioned by Copenhagen Municipality shows that 78 percent are willing to support initiatives to make Copenhagen more green.

That level of commitment to sustainability is a boon for Morten Kabell, Mayor for Technical and Environmental Affairs, who this summer equipped the first 85,000 Copenhagen households with or-

I've definitely not given up the idea of a biogas plant in Copenhagen or in one of the surrounding municipalities.

**MORTEN KABELL,
MAYOR FOR TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Bradley Axsmith

ganic waste bins – all 280,000 apartments should have an organic waste bin within the next four months.

"This is a testament to the fact that Copenhageners value recycling, the environment and the climate," Kabell said.

The small green tubs arrive with a starter pack of 100 bags that can be deposited into larger bio-bins located in the courtyards of apartment blocks. Stand-alone houses and villas have the option to refuse the inconvenience of an additional bin cluttering their yard and kitchen.

The measure was agreed upon two years ago and is designed to help meet the city's ambition to recycle and reuse 45 percent of all municipal waste by 2018. According to Kabell, the initiative will also save the city around 77 million kroner a year.

Around 40 percent of household waste is organic and compostable, so sorting it will reduce

pressure on the city's waste disposal system.

QUALITY OR QUANTITY OF WASTE?

While recycling seems intuitively good, critics argue that forcing residents to sort waste might actually result in a lower participation rate and less bio-waste for recycling.

The alternative is a "single stream" system that would allow residents to toss paper, metals and plastic recyclables into one container, to be sorted later at a processing plant. DONG energy's RENescience firm bid on a contract to build and operate such a plant in Copenhagen, which would have used state-of-the-art enzyme-based technology to process the waste into products that can be sold onward, such as biogas.

A single-stream approach has proven cost-effective in similarly-sized cities around the world. Among its benefits is allowing cities to streamline their fleet of col-

lection vehicles. Copenhagen currently has a number of different collection vehicles, and has added a new vehicle dedicated to collecting biowaste. Using a single vehicle allows for more frequent pick-ups, as well as greater flexibility when containers are unexpectedly overwhelmed, since municipalities only need one standardised truck to collect waste.

DONG's single-stream plant was never built, however, because City Hall voted instead to exclusively support increased source separation and the introduction of the bio-bin, which joins the paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, metal and electronics containers.

Kabell decided against the single-stream option after weighing the willingness of Copenhagen residents to sort their waste alongside questions concerning the quality and reliability of the RENescience product. An analysis by the municipality showed levels of mercury and plastic in their bio-

The Green Bin

Organic waste must be collected in the accompanying BIO bags, which are made of cornstarch and are biodegradable. Do not use regular plastic bags. The BIO bags must be knotted to minimise odours before being placed in the dedicated courtyard container. No "loose waste" should be placed in the container except items like cut flowers, corn cobs and rhubarb leaves that have not begun to biodegrade.

These items CAN be recycled:

- Food waste, raw and cooked
- Rice, pasta and breakfast products
- Meat, fish and bones
- Bread and cakes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Sauce and fat
- Spreads
- Eggs and eggshells
- Nuts and nutshells
- Coffee grounds and coffee filters
- Tea leaves and tea filters
- Used paper towels
- Cut flowers

These items CANNOT be recycled:

- Soil
- Animal bedding (eg kitty litter and straw from rabbits)
- Food waste in packaging
- Potted plants

Source: Copenhagen Municipality



liquid and would-be fertilizer that exceed safety levels set by the Environment Ministry. This would render the waste byproduct unusable in agriculture and therefore not conducive to the goal of reaching 45 percent recovery rates of waste under the current rules.

A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

The city's biogas programme has run into trouble, however. Under the original plan, the wastewater utility Biofos was to have been equipped with a biogas facility to treat the organic waste. But they need 50,000 tons of organic waste a year for the enterprise to be profitable, and when waste-to-energy plant Vestforbrænding decided not to cooperate with the programme earlier this year, only 30,000 tons of waste could be guaranteed, leading Biofos to pull out.

As a result, the organic matter will have to be treated and converted into biogas by Hashøj Biogas in West Zealand. This facility

will not be able to treat all the organic waste, however, and the remainder will have to be transported all the way to South Jutland.

"We chose to follow suit with Vestforbrænding when we saw that they put the project on hold," Biofos' director John Buur Christiansen recently told Ingeniøren, adding that they might decide to rejoin the programme if it looked like there was enough organic waste being collected to make the project viable.

"I've definitely not given up the idea of a biogas plant in Copenhagen or in one of the surrounding municipalities," admits Kabell.

"Copenhagen once led the charge toward a goal in which several municipalities from around the country joined forces to establish facilities capable of recycling plastic. And I'm quite sure that we can find a group of cities similarly interested in partnering up to deliver organic waste to a new plant." **M**

Recycling organic waste in Copenhagen

Copenhagen City Hall decided to sort organic household waste in September 2016, after 78 percent of city residents responded in a survey that they want to sort and recycle organic material if it is possible.

The programme began its rollout in August 2017, and it will take four months before all 280,000 households are equipped with the green tubs and bags for recycling organic waste. 20,000 houses can sign up to the scheme too.

Organic waste accounts for 40 percent of all household waste. An average home produces 3.5 kilograms of organic waste every week. 57,000 tons of organic waste is produced in Copenhagen every year.

Copenhagen City Hall has set a target that by 2018, 45 percent of recyclable household waste must be sorted. In February 2017, that number was 37 percent.

When organic waste is unloaded at the receiving facility, it will be mashed together to break up the waste bags. It is then mixed with wood chips and converted into biogas. When no more biogas can be extracted, composting starts. The biogas is used to produce electricity and heat, and to power busses, while the compost is used in agriculture.

Source: Copenhagen Municipality



Michael Kvium, *The Duke*, 2017.

Circus of the Uncanny

Michael Kvium's work walks a delicate tightrope between baroque beauty and the grotesque. He invites us to join the circus at his latest exhibition, 'Circus Europa', this month at Arken

In 1997, Danish painter Michael Kvium gave his exhibition at Aarhus Art Museum the title *Circus Humanus* (The Human Circus). The title encapsulated the performative themes of his work, which delights and disturbs the viewer who is confronted with grotesque performers. 20 years on, Kvium returns with new paintings, sculptures and film in *Circus Europa*, which presents his audience once again with the uncanny bodies he has become known for.

Kvium's distinctive style has made him a standout figure in contemporary Danish art ever since his breakthrough in performance art and film with the performance group Værst in the 1970s and 80s. His figurative paintings satirise the grotesque nature of humanity and frequently utilise black humour, absurdity, and even disgust to elicit strong reactions from its viewers: grossly fleshy figures are surrounded by symbolic objects, making eye contact with the viewer and confronting them with grotesque elements of themselves.

Over the past 20 years, Kvium's work has of-

ten returned to the idea of the circus through his visualisation of entertainers and performers. At *Circus Humanus*, Kvium played with the innate and grim fascination we experience when looking at things that unsettle us. There's a childish element to gawking at dancing ponies, contortionists, clowns, sword swallowers. But the circus as a concept is not limited to nostalgia. In a world of reality TV, big brother, gossip rags, and even the 'political circus', we are fascinated by looking at things we ought to avoid. And so it only seems appropriate for Kvium to return to the idea of humanity's sadistic voyeurism, as seen through the prism of the tragicomedy of modern politics.

A CONFRONTATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Dea Antonsen, curator at Arken, describes the symbolic and theatrical effect of the circus in his latest exhibition.

"The circus has become Kvium's way of visualising contemporary times and the political reality. This exhibition is bigger than just the paintings – it is the creation of a whole theatrical universe, where, as a viewer, you experience a kind of display of a circus. It is a reimagining of a circus from the olden days – a place

These deformed or monstrous figures relate to our sense of our inner selves.

**DEA ANTONSEN,
CURATOR**

**Words:
Emily Tait**

**Photos:
Anders Sune Berg**

where you would go to experience a satirical vision of reality."

Antonsen makes clear that the exhibition is not limited to solely what is hanging on the walls, and that Kvium has also worked closely with the museum in the creation of the entire exhibition space.

"Viewers will see his characters come to life through silicon sculptures and two films made especially for the exhibition. Taken together, they stage the circus that the viewer is invited to engage with. It is a performative approach that the audience will move through, and the experience will shift from room to room. It will be an experience in time and space."

Kvium hasn't merely produced canvases and handed them off to Antonsen to arrange on the wall. Rather, he has envisioned his paintings as part of a wider whole, much as performers are only part of the wider confusion and magic of a circus.

"Kvium has produced everything," she says. "The artist had a model of our exhibition space with him in his studio and produced everything for each room, tailored to the situation of each space. Our audience will



Michael Kvium, *The Gallery (V)*, 2017 (detail)



Michael Kvium, *The Justice*, 2017. Part of the series *Contemporary Clowns*.



Michael Kvium, *Illusion*, 2016.



Michael Kvium.

feel this engagement when they experience it."

Not wanting to give too much away – Kvium wants visitors to be in the dark about what they will experience – Antonsen describes how they worked to maximise the confrontational power of Kvium's figures via the theatrical setting of the total installation.

"The figures in Kvium's work perform for the audience; they hold your gaze and confront you. They ask us: what do you feel? What do you recognise? You can't avoid them, especially in this kind of space. These deformed or monstrous figures – both human and non-human in their nakedness – relate to our sense of our inner selves. They dredge up the monster inside us, expose authority figures, or in modern life in general. They draw attention to the ugly side of life. Not to point a finger, not to say what the right way is, but to raise questions about the human experience."

UNABLE TO AVERT OUR EYES

Kvium's utilisation of stunningly beautiful painting skills to depict something nasty is often regarded as paradoxical, but Antonsen explains how this cutting satirical style belies his classical influence. Though some critics have

been repulsed, Antonsen notes that the powerful use of humour and detailed brushwork draw us closer to recognising the ugliness beneath the surface.

"Kvium is inspired by the baroque masters, whose work was also quite grotesque. They would paint elaborate, exquisite paintings, often in churches, but they hid critique within these works, with some kind of ugliness subtly prodding a reaction from the viewer."

Though subtle may not be an accurate descriptor for Kvium's work, there is certainly more than a nod to the kinds of epic baroque paintings that unite ugliness and beauty to prove our morbid fascination with the cruel and the uncanny. Because no matter the contortions, the dangers of sword-swallowing, and the uncanny face paint of clowns, we go to the circus because we enjoy it – because we can't look away.

With Kvium's work, it's impossible to be a passive spectator, so *Circus Europa* promises to be more than merely an exhibition, but a kind of theatrical event. His paintings speak to us with taboos and often with cruelty, but also with their humanity and even their beauty. **M**

OP-ED

Lets make media serve our democracies in the digital age

We need new financial incentives to encourage media platforms to write stories that help people make informed decisions

MEDIA isn't just entertainment, it's a pillar of democracy. It is as essential as the legislature and judiciary in its role of educating the public and enabling them to form opinions on matters that affect them.

But as media revenues have become increasingly decoupled from the quality of the content they produce, we need to establish a mechanism to measure how people become informed, and reward the channels that cultivate better-informed and critically-thinking citizens.

Media is under increasing scrutiny due to so-called "fake news" and the deterioration of fact checking, while what sells is taking priority over what's important. We know that phony news articles and shallow, uninformed reporting and speculation made a difference in both the election of Trump and the Brexit referendum.

It is often the case that the media that target the poor and the angry are actually owned and controlled by the rich and powerful, who misinform them with their one-sided and self-serving portrayal of the world. The media campaigns against Bernie Sanders and British Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, whom the tabloids do their best to paint as extremists and unelectable, are good examples.

We need to remember what media means for society and democracy. A democracy without a parliament or courts is unable to function. This is true of a democracy without proper media too. Media isn't (just) entertainment! It must ensure that citizens are well informed when they cast their votes.

This issue is compounded by the problem that most people don't pay for their news. But that doesn't mean it's free. Most media consumption is routed through social media, where the performance of an article is measured in the advertisement dollars it can generate. Facebook will serve you the article if you're likely to click on it. Engagement has become more important than quality or truthfulness.

The Smart Media Fund would combine free speech and market forces with the values we need to express to protect our democracy and our social contract.

Erdem Ovacik



The term "alternative facts" was memorably coined by Kellyanne Conway, an advisor to US President Donald Trump

The results are catastrophic. The United States, home to the most sophisticated social research on everything from childcare to education to healthcare, is unable to turn this research into policies and legislation that would help its citizens. The public has been fed misinformation for so many years that it unknowingly votes against its best interests. Respect for the sciences has been undermined, while opinion, speculation and "alternative facts" are defended in the name of free speech. We have become so focused on having a conversation that "sells" that we seem to have a problem cutting someone off when they are lying or talking bullshit. It would seem that a stupid statement or fight is better for ratings than a boring explanation of the truth.

THE "SMART MEDIA FUND"

If we accept that society has a lot to gain from educating its citizens properly on issues of public concern, then we can agree that informing citizens is a public good that the public sector should incentivise.

We can do so by rewarding media organisations that do a good job of keeping citizens informed, and levying additional taxes on

those that do not. This could easily be determined by asking citizens to take short surveys about the media they are consuming, and comparing the result to how informed they are on a range of issues.

We already measure which media people consume. This information is used to establish the pricing of various media channels, as well as to allow marketers to better target their audiences. We also have the technology to track who consumes what media, down to the level of which articles have been read, or videos watched.

Imagine a public fund – let's call it the Smart Media Fund – that is financed by taxes on advertising and spent to support platforms that do a good job of informing the public. While it would need hundreds of millions, if not billions, of kroner, the Smart Media Fund wouldn't be an expensive investment. We are talking about education, and education is a public good that we all benefit from. A good article, documentary or debate has great economic value – not only for the viewer, but also for the rest of society – and deserves to receive our tax money.

Now imagine Facebook under such a system: Zuckerberg and

his gang would need to optimise not only for clicks and advertising revenue. They'd also need to optimise to promote high-quality media in order to benefit from the Smart Media Fund. They'll change their algorithms so that instead of counting clicks, they're measuring quality.

You may be thinking that this is the purpose of public television – providing media in the public interest. While well-intended, public media ends up being consumed by only a select few, other media outlets, which constitute by far the majority of the content we consume, remain unobliged to serve the public interest. Instead of using our public funds to steer the broader conversation, we create small islands on which the self-selected few seek refuge, and end up preaching to the choir.

The Smart Media Fund would combine free speech and market forces with the values we need to express to protect our democracy and our social contract. We cannot let a pillar of our democracy, the media, run its course with no connection to its public impact. The opportunities in the digital age are here, and we need policy-makers to think innovatively to capture them. ■

China Coming Back as "Kingdom of Bicycles"

When cycling-loving Danes visit China these days they are sure to be fascinated by the numerous colorful bicycles on the streets of Chinese cities, big or small

CHINA used to be known "kingdom of bicycles" prior to the 1990s. There were over one billion bicycles in China in the 1980s, almost one bicycle per person. However, with growing economy and rapid urbanization, China has entered the era of cars and the number of Chinese riding bicycles has dropped sharply, resulting in traffic congestion and air pollution which pose serious challenges for the sustainable urban development.

The trend is changing again since 2015. As bike-sharing services are springing up and bicycles are back on streets, it seems that China, all of a sudden, has regained its traditional title as kingdom of bicycles. However, the colorful bikes on Chinese streets are not owned by the riders themselves, instead, they are of high-tech models owned by over a dozen of bike sharing companies. A cyclist uses a smartphone app to locate and unlock a bike as well as pay for the use of the bike. The bike can be picked up and dropped off whenever the user wants. It is simple, economic, environment-friendly and healthy to use bike sharing service, which has become stylish among young Chinese generations.

The '2017 White Paper on Bike Sharing and City Development' shows that Chinese bike sharing companies provided about two million bikes to users in 2016 and the amount will increase to nearly 20 millions in 2017, which is about 10 times of number of last year. There were 700,000 shared bikes available in Beijing city in May 2017.

In less than one year of operations in Chinese cities, innovative and smart bike sharing has more than doubled the use of bicycles (from 4.8% to 11.6%), and reduced the rate of car travel by 3.2%. Bike sharing is now the fourth most popular means of travel in China after private car, public transport and subways.

Bike share users' mileage from 2015 has exceeded 2.5 billion kilometers, which is about 3,300 round-trips from the earth to the

Chinese companies are willing to share their experience and have successfully introduced their bike sharing business in Singapore, UK and Italy.



Chinese bike sharing companies provided about two millions bikes to users in 2016.

moon. It also means a reduction of 540,000 tonnes of carbon emissions, a reduction of 4.5 billion µg of PM2.5 particles, or a reduction of total mileage of 170,000 cars in one year. Bike sharing also helps save urban space by relieving cities of building car parking lots which are equivalent to the total area of 600,000 average-sized apartments.

The rapid growth of bike sharing in China can be attributed to the fast, massive, integrated and innovative applications in China of high-technology such as internet, internet of things, intelligent terminals, mobile payment, big data and navigation. China is ranked 22nd in 2017 and 25th in 2016 in the Global Innovation Index Report published by World Intellectual Property Organization and Cornell University. It is also the only medium-income country among the 25 most innovative countries.

Experts attribute China's innovation capacity to the fact that China has been implementing a national strategy of innovation-driven development, making great efforts in energy conserva-

tion and emission reductions, and introducing active and ambitious policies for addressing climate change. The booming bike sharing service has become a showcase of China's outstanding performance in innovation.

Currently bike sharing services cover 50 cities in over 20 Chinese provinces (autonomous regions and directly-controlled municipalities). Chinese companies are willing to share their experience and have successfully introduced their bike sharing business in Singapore, UK and Italy. Mobike, the world's largest bicycle operator, started its operation in Manchester, UK, in 2017 and provides a bike rental service at 50 pence (four kroner) for 30 minutes. A deposit of £20 (180 kroner) is required, but refundable at any time. Such a low tariff has astonished the British public who are used to expensive living.

Negotiations are under way for bike sharing businesses to enter Australia, USA, Japan and Malaysia. Recent votes by young people of 20 countries along the Belt & Road route have concluded that bike sharing, high-speed rail, Ali-

pay (also known as zhifubao) and online shopping are the four new great Chinese inventions. China, a nation whose ancient "four great inventions" had historically promoted world progress, is now impressing the world with the new concept of green development supported by strong capacities in science, technology and innovation.

Denmark has been a kingdom of bicycles for many years. It has rich experience in cyclist-friendly policy, management, safety, infrastructure, and smart cities. China's bike sharing is a rather new and innovative business, which has to brace the challenges of bike loss, damage and abandonment, safety management, urban planning, and social credibility. In this regard, there are great potentials for complementary and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and Denmark, both known as kingdom of bicycles. Strong and innovative cooperation between China and Denmark in the sector of bike sharing will provide a novel solution of sustainable transportation and make great contributions to green global growth. **M**

WHAT'S ON • SEPTEMBER

ALL MONTH

CROSSING BORDERS
A new exhibition explores how artists crossed great distances during the years 1300 to 1800 – driven first by necessity, then by an urge for adventure.

Statens Museum for Kunst
Sølvgade 48-50, KBH
Smk.dk



Michael Kvium
Michael Kvium's grotesque, caricatured figures have, since the 1980s, both fascinated and disgusted us and, in the process, have become part of the Danish cultural heritage.
Arken
Skovvej 100, 2635 Ishøj
Arken.dk
All month

ALL MONTH

3 X HITCHCOCK FILMS
Through August and September, Cinemateket has been hosting screenings of three of Alfred Hitchcock's most iconic films, namely Notorious, Topaz and Psycho.

Cinemateket
Gothersgade 55, KBH
dfi.dk/filmhuset/cinemateket

2

CELEBRATING COPENHAGEN
Copenhagen turns 850 years old in 2017 and the people behind Distortion will be hosting a great birthday party to celebrate. The celebration marks the first day of the Golden Days festival.
Locations across Copenhagen
goldendays.dk/program



TECHBBQ 2017
TechBBQ is a two-day experience in Copenhagen designed to open your eyes to new technologies and the companies behind them.

Øksnehallen
Halmtorvet 11, KBH
Techbbq.dk
September 5- 6

6

8 STRING PERFORMANCES
The Black Diamond presents performances by The Danish String Quartet and Ensemble MidtVest of music by Mendelssohn and Gade.

The Black Diamond
Kb.dk



COPENHAGEN MAKERS
A new festival in Copenhagen presenting trends and innovations in technology, craft and design.

Stødpudelageret
Pasteursvej 28, KBH
Copenhagenmaker.com
September 8 – 10

9

LIVE CUBAN SALSA
The band, 'Gilito entre Amigos' is coming to Absalon to provide the music for Cuban Salsa Night in connection with the Copenhagen World Music Festival.

Absalon
Sønder Boulevard 73, KBH
Absaloncph.dk

17

COPENHAGEN HALF
The third edition of the Copenhagen Half Marathon is Northern Europe's only IAAF Gold Label race, attracting more than 22,000 runners a year.

Copenhagen Half Marathon
CPHHALF.DK

21

CITY LINK FESTIVAL
City Link is a festival celebrating cities and city-dwellers through 50 urban and cultural events. The theme of this year's event is bridge building physically, socially, culturally and internationally.
Various locations
city-link.org
Ends September 24

22

WORLD PRESS PHOTO
The World Press Photo Exhibition 2017 is an opportunity to see some of the most groundbreaking visual journalism of the last year.

Politikens Hus
Rådhuspladsen 37, KBH
politiken.dk/wpp
Ends October 2

Emily Tait



TORI AMOS
Singer-songwriter Tori Amos unveils his long-awaited album Native Invader. About the new album, she says it 'looks to Nature and how, through resilience, she heals herself'.
DR Koncerthuset
Ørestads Boulevard 13, KBH
bit.ly/toriDK
September 23

WHAT'S ON • OCTOBER



ROLLING STONES

It's worth haggling for tickets now as the iconic rock group come to Copenhagen, for a one night only opportunity to see them live in Denmark.

Telia Parken
Per Henrik Lings Allé 2, KBH
Teliaparken.dk
October 3

5

CHAI N' TALES

Chai and Tales is a laid back scene for story-telling and chai drinking (and even some jazz poetry on the side).

Ukirke
Dannebrogsgade 53, KBH
ukirke.dk

6

Mikkeller & Maisel Oktoberfest

With kegs shipped in from Germany, MIKKELLER & Maisel's Weisse are hosting DAS OKTOBERFEST and spreading the event over three days.

Mikkeller Baghaven
Refshalevej 169b, KBH
mikkeller.dk/event
Ends October 8



SIGUR RÓS

Finally, you can experience the big-scale compositions of the three Icelanders in Copenhagen when the dreamy noise rockers enter the Forum with 'An Evening with Sigur Rós'.

Forum Copenhagen
Julius Thomsens Plads 1, FRB
sigur-ros.co.uk/tour
October 7

COPENHAGENCARD

SEE MORE. PAY LESS.

COPENHAGEN CARD APP

The Copenhagen Card guide is also available as an app for iPhone or Android.



Free access to 79
 museums and
 attractions

Free transport by train,
 bus and Metro
 in the entire
 metropolitan area

One adult can bring
 along 2 children
 under the age of
 10 for free

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a pink and white plaid shirt, is looking towards a whiteboard. On the whiteboard, the Danish words "Stumt d" and "Hund" are written in cursive. The word "Hund" has a double underline under the 'd'.

DANISH. CONCENTRATED.

INTENSIVE DANISH COURSES
IN HELLERUP AND LYNGBY



SPROGCENTER
HELLERUP

sprogcenterhellerup.dk