Fig. 17

Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of a Young Scholar of the Kerckring Family*, 1660, oil on canvas, Hamburger Kunsthalle

Fig. 18

William Dobson, *Portrait of Sir Edward Walker*, c.1645, oil on canvas, Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust

Fig. 19

N.L. Høyen sketchbook from Italy, Kunsthistoriske Samlinger, NKS 1553 folio, 16,6: Notesbøger, Royal Library, Copenhagen

Fig. 20

Ditlev Blunck, *Street Scene*, 1828, oil on canvas, private collection

Fig. 21

Johan Christian Dahl, *Winter at the Sognefjord*, 1827, oil on canvas, National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design

Fig. 22

Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, *A View towards the Swedish Coast from the Ramparts of Kronborg Castle*, 1829, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 23

Bertel Thorvaldsen, *Monument to Pius VII*, 1827-1830, marble, St. Peter's Basilica, Rome

Fig. 24

Christian Daniel Rauch, *Wolfgang von Goethe*, 1820, marble, National Museum in Warsaw

Fig. 25
Jørgen Sonne, *Harvest Scene in Zealand*, 1842, oil on canvas, private collection

Fig. 26
Jørgen Sonne, *Wine Harvest in Naples*, 1841, oil on canvas, private collection

Fig. 27
Jørgen Sonne, *An Old Fisherman Putting Out His Net at Sundown*, 1844, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 28
Frederik Christian Kiærskou, View of the fishing village, 1882, oil on canvas, private collection

Fig. 29 and Fig. 30

Peter Christian Skovgaard, Notebook, 1848, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 31

Peter Christian Skovgaard, *Højerup Church on the Cliffs of Stevns, Zealand*, 1842, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 32

Johan Thomas Lundbye, *A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor*, 1847, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 33
Johan Thomas Lundbye, *Danish cliff. Motive from Kitnæs from Roskilde*, 1843, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 34
Jørgen Roed, *Interior of Ribe Cathedral*, 1836, 35,5 x 33 cm, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 35

Jørgen Roed, *Street in Roskilde. In the Background the Cathedral*, 1836, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

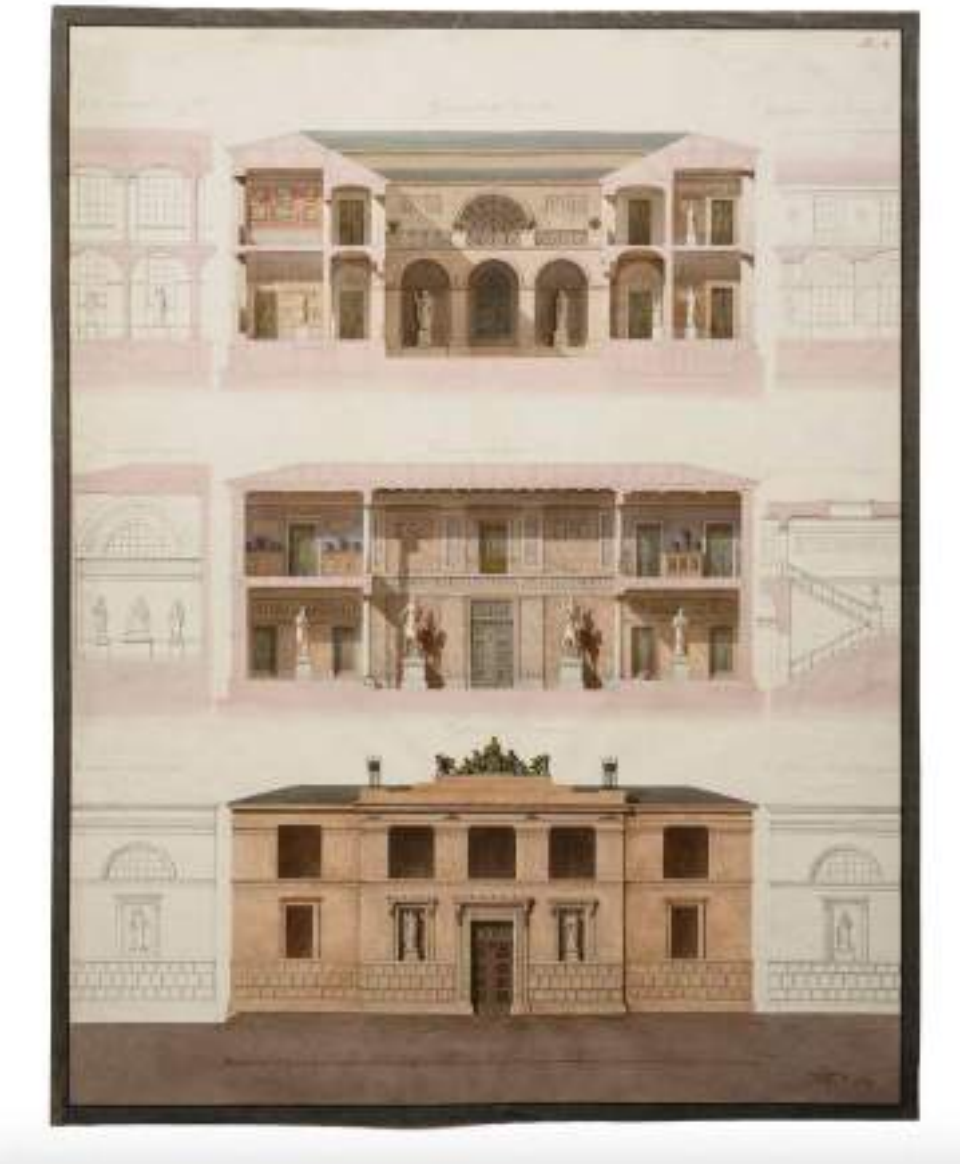

Fig. 36
Gustav Friedrich von Hetsch, Project of the Thorvaldsens Museum, 1839, drawing, Thorvaldsens Museum

Fig. 37
Georg Sophus Seligmann, *Corridor in the Thorvaldsens Museum*, 1903, oil on canvas, Thorvaldsens Museum

Fig. 38
Edvard Petersen, *Interior of the Thorvaldsens Museum*, 1909, oil on canvas, private collection

V Two Inspectors

5.1. Christian Jürgensen Thomsen and Danish Museums in the First Half of the 19th Century

Le directeur de ce curieux établissement, où sont entassées des merveilles qui permettraient de reconstruire l'histoire du pays avec ses vieilles armes de pierre, ses hanaps & ses bijoux, était un savant, l'ami du consul de Hamburg,
M. le professeur Thomson. Mon oncle avait pour lui une chaude lettre de recommandation.
En général, un savant en reçoit assez mal un autre. Mais ici ce fut tout autrement.
M. Thomson, en homme serviable, fit un cordial accueil au professeur Lidenbrock et même à son neveu.[1]

Just as the description of Copenhagen in the *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* is true to reality, so was the figure of the director of the Royal Museum of Northern Antiquities visited by two main characters of Verne's novel. Famous Danish scholar and museologist Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (1788–1865), whom Verne might have met in person while staying in Copenhagen in 1861, served as a museum director from 1819 to his death in 1865. Thomsen was also a collector and antiquarian, who contributed significantly to the development of modern archeology by developing a system of periodization of prehistory divided into three epochs.[2]

[1] Jules Verne, *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1864), 63-64.

[2] Engaged in the organization of archaeological collections at the Museum of Northern Antiquities, Thomsen conceived a chronological framework that delineated prehistory into three distinct epochs: the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. It is this particular accomplishment that frequently takes center stage in the association with Thomsen.

Although he was not actually a professor, he undoubtedly played an important role in the process of shaping Danish museology in the 19th century.[3]

Thomsen's recognition predominantly stems from his accomplishments within the realm of archaeology, frequently overshadowing his significantly broader impact on the evolution of Danish museology. To focus solely on the Museum of Northern Antiquities would merely skim the surface of his contributions. As aptly stated by Jørgen Jensen, "Thomsen was neither a poet nor a philosopher. He did not like to express himself in print […] the museum collections were his means of expression."[4]

Descended from a merchant family, Thomsen quickly became interested in collecting, propelled by his adept discernment of art and his immersion in the company of contemporary young artists, such as J.C. Dahl and J.Th. Lundbye.[5] Proficient in German, English, and French, Thomsen not only fostered significant scholarly and artistic affiliations, but also stayed abreast of important publications in the realms of archaeology and art history.[6] Through journeys to Sweden, Vienna, Paris or London, he forged international connections and deepened his knowledge in art.[7] All his interests converged in the pursuits of building his own collection and

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[3] Kasper Risbjerg Eskildsen, "The Language of Objects. Christian Jürgensen Thomsen's Science of the Past," *Journal of the History of Science Society* 103, no. 1 (2012), 25.
Thomsen refrained from seeking a university post, and his relatively sparse body of work predominantly comprises articles and critiques tailored for a wider readership. In his autobiography from 1864, as cited by Eskildsen, Thomsen articulated: "The ability to write has been withheld from me, consequently my written contributions are meager. Nevertheless, I consistently endeavored to structure and arrange the materials within my grasp."

[4] Jørgen Jensen, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsens museum – en guldaldervision," *Nordisk Museologi*, no. 1 (1993), 19.

[5] Andreas Aubert, *Maleren Johan Christian Dahl: et stykke av forrige aarhundredes kunst- og kulturhistorie* (Kristiania: Aschehoug, 1920), 34-36.
Thomsen shared a close camaraderie with Dahl, acquiring his artworks, embarking on journeys to Sweden, and maintaining a consistent correspondence. Within the auction catalogue of Thomsen's collection of paintings, a total of six pieces by Dahl were prominently featured.

[6] Auction catalogue of Thomsen's collection of books listed nearly 5000 volumes. An extensive section devoted to the history of art [*Konsthistorie*] has been divided into: catalogues of paintings and sculptures, museums and private collections catalogues; collection of engravings, lithographs and drawings. Books in this section also included the publications of N.L. Høyen. See: *Afdøde Conferentsraad Christian Jürgensen Thomsens Bogsamling* (Kjøbenhavn: Trykt hos J.D. Qvist, 1866).

[7] The social and economic standing of the Thomsen family, which facilitated educational pursuits and travels, finds validation in the portraiture of Christian Thomsen (father) and his wife by Friedrich Carl Gröger, an artist working for both the royal court and aristocracy.

paving a way within the museum work. Commencing his collection pursuits at a tender age, Thomsen's initial focus centered predominantly on coins and medals, but over time his collection burgeoned to encompass an array of paintings and engravings. By participating in auctions, he refined his connoisseur skills and engaged with fellow collectors including Moltke, Bodendick, or West. By the early 1820s, Thomsen's collection of nearly 12000 coins was one of Copenhagen's most substantial ones and together with his copper engravings garnered recognition as a noteworthy attraction in the city.[8]

In 1816, Thomsen assumed the role of secretary of the Royal Commission for the Preservation of Antiquities [Den kgl. Kommission til Oldsagers Opbevaring], established in 1807 by Christian VII in order to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the antiquities held within the royal collections, whilst also attending to the preservation of the most significant archaeological findings.[9] These activities were later combined with the dissolution of the Kunstkammer in 1821, resulting in the dispersal of its contents. Notably, the painting collection was moved to the Gallery at Christiansborg, and the Royal Museum of Art (situated at the Dronningens Tværgade 7), opened in 1824, was entrusted with a diverse array of cultural and historical artifacts, including ethnographic specimens or handicrafts.[10]

Under Thomsen's direction, the archaeological collections were systematically organized and opened to the public in 1819 within the Museum of Northern Antiquities. Under Thomsen's direction, the museum quickly became one of Denmark's most respected institutions. Appraisals akin to the one featured in *Söndagen* in 1836 garnered resonance not solely among critics but equally among the museum's public. The sentiment expressed in *Söndagen* was unequivocal: "The Museum of Northern Antiquities belongs to these collections, which for its richness, interest in the objects, and expertise in their arrangement, are indeed worth seeing. Its director is

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[8] Kirsten-Elizabeth Høgsbro, "N.L. Høyen og Chr. J. Thomsen," in *Meddelelser fra Thorvaldsens Museum* (1994), 175.
After Thomsen's death, in 1866, the Art Society in Copenhagen organized an exhibition of Danish and foreign artists from his collection. His collection of coins was eventually sold to the Royal Coin and Medal Collection.

[9] Morten Axobe, "Syv kobberstukne Tavler. C.J. Thomsen of guldbrakteaterne: Nationalmuseets forste forskningsprojekt," *Aarboger for nordisk oldkyndighed of historie* (2009), 57.

[10] Bente Gundestrup, "Kunstkammeret, Kunstmuseet og Thomsen," *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* (December 1988), 58.
Objects from this collection were eventually incorporated into the National Museum of Denmark, and Museum of Art was dissolved in 1867.

the distinguished Thomsen, who combines a thorough knowledge of his profession with insight into many other fields, especially in the field of fine arts."[11]

At that time, the museum comprised an assortment of specialized collections, including Nordic antiquities, medieval artifacts, or numismatic items. Concomitant with the aforementioned holdings, the ethnographic segment was separated to form the Royal Ethnographic Museum [Det Kongelige Etnografiske Museum]. Thomsen, an early visionary who drew inspiration from institutions in Leiden and Paris, demonstrated a prescient understanding of the latent potential encapsulated within the ethnographic objects, and his aspiration was to create "universal ethnographic museum, that should cover not merely singular cultures, but rather the entirety of nations devoid of a European culture."[12]

Thomsen's endeavors also bore fruit with the establishment of the Museum of Sculpture and Crafts [Museet for Sculptur og Kunstflid] in 1853. Furthermore, during the period from 1842 to 1865, he held the directorship of the Numismatic Cabinet [Mønkabinettet], and from 1830 to 1840 he assumed responsibility for the antiquities and medieval collections at Christiansborg Castle.[13] Notably, from 1833 to 1836 he served as a commission member responsible for the new arrangement of the royal collection at Rosenborg Castle.[14]

Above all, Thomsen demonstrated an exceptional organizational acumen. His proficiency extended not only to the orchestration of work on a designated collection but also to the astute arrangement and accessibility thereof for public engagement. Although at times he was characterized, as seen in the painter Christian Holm's correspondence, as one of those who "change a fly into an elephant," being overly pedantic and convinced that he knew how to do things right, his profound influence on the establishment and restructuring of numerous museums

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[11] Unknown author, "Kjøbenhavn, skildret af en Svensker", *Söndagen* (a supplement to *Dagen*), November, 1836.

[12] Charlotte Christensen, *Guldalderens billedverden* (København: Gyldendal 2019), 55.

[13] Jensen, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsens museum," 23.

[14] Mogens Bencard, "The Royal Danish Collections at Rosenborg," *The International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, no. 3 (1984), 222.
Rosenborg was founded in 1605 as a summer royal residence of Christian V. Since 1710, alongside Amalienborg and Koldinghus, it served as a repository for the collection of Danish kings, which encompassed personal items of the royal family, such as portraits, silverware, porcelain, attire, or weaponry. In accordance with the royal edict of 1833, the commission, which included Thomsen among its members, was entrusted with the task of arranging the collection in a chronological sequence, so that "a stroll through the castle becomes a voyage traversing the annals of Denmark, commencing from the era of Christian IV and extending to the contemporary epoch."

in Copenhagen cannot be overlooked.[15] Thomsen also demonstrated remarkable oratory skills while actively engaged in disseminating knowledge about the collection: “Each opening of the museum’s doors heralded his presence at the forefront of the displays, poised to expound to visitors the significance of objects. Women, children, soldiers, peasants were for him listeners as worthy of attention as a great lord or a scholar.”[16] As concluded by Charlotte Christensen, “it must be admitted that Thomsen possessed the most important quality of a great museologist: the ability to fall in love with objects and works of art, combined with the desire to imbue others with his fascination and professionalism.”[17] [fig. 39]

Nevertheless, Thomsen’s engagement extended beyond the realms of collecting and organizing museums. Archival documents from the Art Society in Copenhagen elucidate his participation as its dynamic board member, and insights gleaned from correspondences and diaries of artists provide a window into his vibrant interactions with the Danish artistic and scientific communities.[18] Given Thomsen’s active involvement in Copenhagen’s art and museum circles, it was almost inevitable not to cross paths with Niels Laurits Høyen.

5.2. Thomsen and Høyen

On March 12th, 1839, Høyen assumed the role of inspector at the Royal Picture Gallery. However, he was not the sole appointee at that moment as another inspector was concurrently chosen. While Thomsen is typically not associated with the Picture Gallery in common

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[15] Christensen, *Guldalderens billedverden*, 20.

[16] Bencard, “The Royal Danish Collections at Rosenborg,” 226-227.

[17] Christensen, *Guldalderens billedverden*, 20.

[18] *Formandens instruks underskrevet af medlemmer af den præliminære kunstforeningen*, 18 XI 1825, Kunstforeningens Arkiv 1825-1925, https://kunstforeningen.ktdk.dk/.
Thomsen was one of the signatories of the statute of the Art Society in 1826, in the years 1826-1841 he was active on the board, and from 1831 to 1833 he served as a member of the board of the art committee.
Considerable insight into Thomsen’s involvement within Copenhagen’s artistic circles is gained from the diary of Eckersberg, who repeatedly documented Thomsen’s attendance at Academy exhibitions and in the Royal Picture Gallery. For instance, Eckersberg’s chronicles Thomsen visit to the Picture Gallery on February 8th, 1837, when accompanied by J.C. Spengler, and Academy professors J.P. Møller and J.L. Lund, he saw paintings dispatched from Kiel, presented as a gift to the Danish monarch. See: Villads Villadsen ed., *C.W. Eckersbergs dagbøger. 1837-1853*, (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 2009), 1:721.

discourse, attributing all activities related to it solely to Høyen, this distinction was not so obvious from the beginning. Thomsen, who exerted a significant influence on the development of museums in Copenhagen, in 1838 he assumed the role of assistant to Johan Conrad Spengler at the Royal Art Museum, as well as at the Picture Gallery. It was upon Spengler's recommendation that Thomsen was slated to assume leadership of both institutions.[19] Nevertheless, in March 1839, following Spengler's demise, Høyen sought employment at the Royal Picture Gallery in Christiansborg. Crown Prince Christian Frederik was initially hesitant to appoint Høyen as the inspector of the painting collection, as he suspected that Høyen was vying for the role of private librarian, after Carl Heger.[20] Høyen did not explicitly outline his motivations, but it can be inferred that it was thought as a logical progression in his career path, building on his earlier appointment at the academy, lecturing activities, involvement in art associations, and the practical museum experience he had garnered. Christian Frederik and Høyen held contrasting preferences regarding contemporary art, and they also disagreed on which artistic directions should receive support through official acquisitions. In fact, the art acquisitions made between 1840 and 1848 reflect their inability to establish a unified direction. Nonetheless, given the upcoming coronation of Christian VIII in 1840, which served as an occasion the Gallery in Christiansborg was to be reorganized and improved in terms of arrangement, the decision was reached to divide the responsibilities of the inspector position between Thomsen and Høyen. Thomsen later conveyed in a letter to a friend, "I was put to a great test [...]. It was crucial to retain my friend [...] whose knowledge and integrity I held in high regard."[21] Thomsen was well aware that Høyen excelled as an art connoisseur, particularly in the realm of old masters, which was crucial for the royal collection. While there is no evidence of it in the documentation, it can be presumed that Thomsen, recognizing his own limitations in the domain of painting expertise, advocated for and endorsed Høyen's appointment.

Thomsen and Høyen likely crossed paths before 1820, as evidenced by a letter from Thomsen to Sven Hylander in which he referred to Høyen as one of his friends.[22] It is also reasonable to assume that Thomsen participated in the Friday evening gatherings held at Høyen's

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[19] Gundestrup, "Kunstkammeret," 58.

[20] Christensen, *Guldalderens billedverden*, 53.

[21] Cit. per: Jørgen Jensen, *Thomsens Museum. Historien om Nationalmuseet* (København: Gyldendal, 1992), 169.

[22] Høgsbro, "N.L. Høyen og Chr. J. Thomsen," 172-186.

house from the mid-1830s.[23] Thomsen and Høyen shared numerous common activities. For instance, both were involved in the Society of Art, where they collaborated on various projects, including serving in a committee that evaluated design proposals (e.g. in 1837, the design of a bronze baptismal font for a Danish church near Copenhagen was rejected by them because the sketches were "not worthy execution").[24] In 1837, they were instrumental in forming a committee dedicated to the construction of a museum for Thorvaldsen.

Both Thomsen and Høyen possessed strong and determined personalities, earning recognition as authoritative figures among artists and art connoisseurs. Thomsen gained reputation as a skilled museum organizer, evident in the numerous institutions he helped to establish and manage. On the other hand, Høyen showcased his expertise in art history, serving as a lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts and offering critical reviews of the annual art exhibitions at Charlottenborg. Høyen was undoubtedly a controversial figure in several regards, yet he remained an undisputed authority in the field of art research, he served as a lecturer while Thomsen was a tour guide at the museum.[25] Thomsen held deep respect for Høyen, as evidenced in a letter he wrote to a Swedish antiquarian in February 1829: "In art history I have finally found a superior, we often disagree — unfortunately, usually the thorough superior in knowledge but younger in age is right. However, we respect each other, and I see in him my successor in matters of art."[26] The misunderstandings between Thomsen and Høyen may be attributed, in part, to the generational gap that separated them. Høyen belonged to a generation deeply influenced by the ideals of younger liberals, and he aligned himself with a burgeoning movement that called for artists to engage actively with society and create artworks with distinct national character. In contrast, Thomsen appeared as a representative of an older, more patriarchal social worldview. He struggled to comprehend the evolving landscape of nascent national societies characterized by competing interest groups. Thomsen's reluctance to fully embrace Høyen's national liberal

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[23] Villadsen, ed., *Eckersbergs dagbøger*, 216.

Eckersberg notes, for example, that Thomsen and Høyen examined Martinus Rørby's paintings together at the Academy exhibition on September 23, 1826.

[24] Protocol from the Society's committee meeting, 27 X 1837, Kunstforeningens Arkiv, https://kunstforeningen.ktdk.dk/d/PuVj?q=J%C3%BCrgensen%20Thomsen [access online: 5.04.2022].

[25] Hanne Westergaard, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsen og de skønne kunster," *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* (1988), 63.

[26] Ibidem, 68-69.

views and engage in political activism can be attributed to his inherently conflict-averse nature, thus he preferred to maintain a neutral stance in the ongoing political debates of his time.

On a daily basis, the two inspectors divided their responsibilities. Thomsen primarily handled administrative tasks, while Høyen took charge of organizing and cataloguing the collection of paintings. A clear and effective division of labor was established with Thomsen overseeing mostly the Art Museum and Høyen focusing on the Picture Gallery.[27] They also collaborated on matters of principle, including regulating public access to the gallery.[28] Moreover, they established principles for borrowing paintings from collections for exhibitions, whether Scandinavian or international. This applied to exhibitions like those in Paris in 1855 and London in 1862. While they initially emphasized that such loans should not set a precedent, the substantial loan for an industrial exhibition in London led to a different understanding. Ultimately, the two inspectors reached a consensus on which paintings the gallery should borrow for various exhibitions.

When Høyen and Thomsen assumed their positions as gallery inspectors in 1839, there was no initial allocation in the budget for the acquisition of new artworks. Consequently, in the early stages of their tenure, Høyen primarily focused on the examination and selection of paintings from the existing collection. However, as time progressed, they successfully secured funding for acquisitions, and the budget gradually expanded. According to gallery inventories, they acquired artworks at the Academy's annual exhibitions, but at the same time the king still continued to make purchases. As a result, during the 1840s, acquisitions for the gallery came from two sources: the king and the inspectors.[29] This dynamic, within the broader context of the transition of art collections into state ownership, vividly exemplified tensions between the king

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[27] The operation of the Picture Gallery and the collaborative dynamics between Thomsen and Høyen can also be elucidated through an analysis of archival documents, predominantly comprising notes, invoices, and official correspondences, preserved in the archives of the National Museum in Copenhagen.
Documents from Christiansborg, folder 29 (billedgalleriet, Den kgl. Malerisamling), National Museum Archives.

[28] Høgsbro, "N.L. Høyen og Chr. J. Thomsen," 172-186.

Thomsen and Høyen each received an inspector's salary of 400 rdl. However, they decided to allocate 200 rdl from their salaries to cover the maintenance expenses of the Picture Gallery, thus enabling free public access for three days a week.

[29] Artworks acquired both before and after 1849 became part state collections with king's official resolve. Inspectors were initially appointed by the court marshal, and after 1849, by the main director of museums in Denmark, from the government side. Initially, only the royal household had a purchasing budget, but Thomsen and Høyen established a separate budget for the gallery under state administration, granting them greater purchasing autonomy, which expanded as political changes unfolded.

and the inspectors (with Høyen predominantly in the forefront), as since 1849 they began to serve as representatives of the nation in the realm of state administration. As previously mentioned, the king and Høyen held differing perspectives on art, which led to conflicts between them.[30] Disputes revolved around matters of style and themes, which became evident in the gallery space where the art historian hung artworks according mostly to his own criteria, while royal purchases were often relegated to storage.[31]

Høyen and Thomsen were officially required to jointly purchase artworks and provide an unanimous opinion, as proved by the analyze of documents from the archives of the National Museum in Copenhagen and the Thorvaldsen Museum. For instance, in a letter from 1848 to Just Mathias Thiele, regarding the purchase of an artwork for the gallery, Høyen mentioned, "I wrote to Thomsen because — in the current state of affairs — I cannot act without consulting him. [...] I really want this work for the gallery, but I can not deny that the price surprised me. This is 7 rdl more than the price in the Weigel's Catalogue."[32] Although they did visit artists and Academy exhibitions together and both signed purchase recommendations and bills, in fact, the final decisions, and consequently, the field of conflicts with the king, were handled by Høyen. During their years of collaboration on the painting collection, it seems that Thomsen initiated the acquisition of a painting only once, specifically a floral still life by Jan van Huysum (the painting is still in the collection of the SMK, inv. no. KMS441).[33]

Høyen never had a strong opponent in Thomsen for several reasons, primarily because Thomsen highly valued his knowledge and skills in assessing artworks. Furthermore, even though Thomsen did not explicitly support Høyen's campaign for national art, he also found points in Høyen's views that he considered to be valuable. For instance, Thomsen supported the idea of turning to the landscape, rock formations or burial mounds, which he believed were among the most conducive ways to maintain the sense that the past is relevant in the present, and

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[30] Jensen, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsens museum," 170.

Thomsen recalled that Høyen was "a person with a fiery soul" and possessed persuasive oratory skills. However, he was also very polemical, and, as Thomsen put it, "his fierceness often led him to confront those in positions of power."

[31] Britta Tøndborg, "Hanging the Danes: Danish Golden Age art in a nineteenth century museum context," *Statens Museum Art Journal*, no. (2005), 121-122.

[32] Niels Laurits Høyen to Just Mathias Thiele, 8 II 1848, m31, no. 63, Thorvaldsens Museum Archive.

[33] Westergaard, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsen," 71.

that one should care for the cultural landscape.[34] Therefore, he was particularly supportive of acquisitions like *A Rocky Coast. Rø, Bornholm* by Vilhelm Kyhn, which was purchased for the collection shortly after being displayed at Charlottenborg in 1843 [fig. 40].

Høyen also acquired several paintings for the Picture Gallery during the auction of Thomsen's collection, organized after his demise in 1866.[35] Among these acquisitions was a seminal work by Christen Købke from 1836, *View of a Street in Østerbro outside Copenhagen. Morning Light*, which continues to be prominently displayed at the National Gallery of Denmark [fig. 41]. In the scene at the rural outskirts of Copenhagen, Købke adeptly captured the quotidian existence of its inhabitants. The suburban architecture, carts making their way to the city, cattle grazing in the pasture, elegantly attired pedestrians, and women carrying baskets to the market—all these elements, meticulously observed by Købke within the vicinity of his own residence, are rendered with remarkable precision and bathed in the evocative morning light. In this sense, Købke's work perfectly aligned with Høyen's vision of selecting subjects for paintings from the artist's immediate environs. Thus, Høyen's purchases made in 1866 were undoubtedly driven exclusively by his own criteria in accordance with his vision on national art. This is evident not only in the selection of paintings like Købke's but also in the decision not to acquire Dahl's paintings due to his Norwegian nationality. In 1866, it was evident that the Scandinavian union had faltered following Prussia's victory in the War of Schleswig and Holstein, and in that time criteria of acquiring works solely by Danish artists gained even greater significance.

The emphasis on the collaboration between Thomsen and Høyen has been infrequently explored in prior studies dedicated to their respective roles. Even if mentioned, it often tends to diminish or omit Thomsen's contributions (notable exceptions include two referenced articles by Hanne Westergaard and, particularly, Kirsten-Elizabeth Høgsbro).[36] However, in an attempt to reconstruct a possibly comprehensive picture of the establishment of the National Gallery's

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[34] Karina Lykke Grand, "Danmark er et dejligt Land. Vilhelm Kyhn og det nationale maleri," in *Vilhelm Kyhn og det danske landskabsmaleri*, eds. Karina Lykke Grand and Gertrud Oelsner (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2012), 82.

[35] Niels Faaborg, "Den unge C.J. Thomsen som kunstsamler og hans forhold til J.C. Dahl," *Fund og Forskning* 25, no. 1 (1981), 107-128.
The collection encompassed a total of 56 Danish and foreign paintings, 74 watercolors and drawings, and an extensive assortment of 7750 prints.

[36] See: Hanne Westergaard, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsen og de skønne kunster," *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* (1988); Kirsten-Elizabeth Høgsbro, "N.L. Høyen og Chr. J. Thomsen," in *Meddelelser fra Thorvaldsens Museum* (1994).

foundations, it is imperative not to overlook the operational mechanisms of the Gallery's acquisition policy. Although it is difficult to question Høyen's position on the Danish art scene, it is nonetheless important to recognize certain circumstances that provide a more nuanced perspective on Høyen's role. The fact that he was not the favoured candidate for the role of gallery inspector, the subsequent tensions between him and the king, as well as cooperation with another experienced museologist, shed light on the intricate dynamics in the process of shaping the Gallery during Høyen's tenure. Ultimately, it also reveals how Høyen evolved into the dominant voice not only in the acquisition decisions but most of all the arrangement of the display, as concluded by Thomsen: "I have no part in organizing the painting collection; it is entirely thanks to Professor Høyen."[37]

[37] Cit. per: Faaborg, "Den unge C.J. Thomsen," 127-128.

Fig. 39

Christian Thomsen showing visitors around the Museum of Nordic Antiquities, woodcut print, 1846, Nationalmuseet

Fig. 40
Vilhelm Kyhn, *A Rocky Coast. Rø, Bornholm*, 1843, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 41
Christen Købke, *View of a Street in Østerbro outside Copenhagen. Morning Light*, 1836, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

VI The Origins of the National Gallery of Denmark

6.1. First Changes. Reorganization of the Royal Picture Gallery[1]

"The Picture Gallery in Copenhagen consists of approximately 1000 pieces, most of which probably do not have exceptional artistic value, however, there is also a number of genuine masterpieces, primarily within the Dutch school. While this collection may not be the rival of many southern European galleries, it holds significant appeal for art scholars due to its thoughtful organization and expert categorization by schools and periods. A comprehensive, well-reasoned catalogue serves as a valuable guide, even though with regard to the attributions, is not entirely reliable."[2] A brief assessment of the Royal Picture Gallery in the weekly *Söndagen* appears to echo the critiques expressed in Copenhagen and beyond, and offers a summary of the Gallery's condition two years before it came under the care of Høyen and Thomsen. The collection's standing is not rated particularly high, and the well-documented issue of overstated attributions of artworks is highlighted. Høyen's biographer, Johan Louis Ussing, also underscored the attribution problem, as well as the appearance of the Gallery: "The Danes were delighted at the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the entire evolution of European art, but connoisseurs expressed reservations about the great names […]. Spengler was assigned a row of rooms on the top floor of the castle, but they were only partially finished. These rooms had bare,

[1] In this study, I exclusively focus on the Royal Painting Collection, abstaining from an analysis of the sculpture collection for several reasons. Firstly, delving into the sculpture collection would entail navigating a broad and expansive terrain, potentially diluting the focused inquiry essential for this study. I argue that the nuances of the Danish national gallery's formation process can be effectively elucidated through an examination of the painting collection alone. Moreover, with the advent of efforts to establish the Thorvaldsen Museum, sculpture has assumed a central role in Copenhagen's cultural landscape, thereby diminishing its prominence within the context of the royal gallery. Additionally, Thomsen's instrumental role in establishing a dedicated sculpture museum in 1852 underscores this shift, creating a parallel institution that mirrors the stature of the Gallery while housing both ancient and contemporary Danish sculptures. Lastly, despite Høyen's personal passion and scholarly engagement with sculpture, his decision to refrain from acquiring it for the gallery's holdings further underscores the distinct trajectory of the royal painting collection's development.
More on sculpture collection was elaborated by Villads Villadsen and Britta Tøndborg. See: Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst: 1827-1952* (København: Gyldendal, 1998), 62-63; Britta Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer to art museum, exhibiting and cataloguing art in the royal collections in Copenhagen, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*, PhD dissertation (London: Courtland Institute of Art, 2004), 143-163.

[2] *Söndagen*, no. 44, November 6, 1836.

plastered walls, and Spengler's initial task was to fill them with paintings to conceal the gray-white plaster."[3] As a result, Spengler's display contained 900 works tightly hanged, and to conceal the unfinished areas, some paintings had to be hung in locations with inadequate lighting or no lighting at all.

It was not until the ascension of Christian VIII to the throne and the grand coronation in 1840, expected to be graced by numerous dignitaries, that the allocation of a budget for the refurbishment of the gallery in the Christiansborg Palace was prompted.[4] In the archives of the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen, one may access documentation pertaining to the renovation of the Gallery, which encompasses Høyen's proposal for a new arrangement, as well as Carl Friedrich von Rumohr's commentary on the necessary improvements.[5] These records underscore the active involvement of both figures in shaping the design of the revamped gallery.

One of the key considerations addressed in the projects was the reorganization of the Gallery's entrance and exit, in response to Rumohr's observations that "whenever there is a noisy crowd and a single access point that serves both entrance and exit, various difficulties arise [...] this is particularly noticeable in public galleries, where the crowd can easily disrupt one

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[3] Johan Louis Ussing, *Niels Laurits Høyens Levned med Bilag af Breve* (Kjøbenhavn: Samfundet til den danske Litteraturs Fremme, 1872), 284.
Ussing's description is corroborated by documentation from the National Museum archives, especially correspondence exchanged between Thomsen and Høyen concerning the renovation, along with bills and reports. See: Documents from Christiansborg, folder 29 (Billedgalleriet, Den kgl. Malerisamling), National Museum Archives.

[4] Since the time of Spengler, the gallery had been situated in the Christiansborg palace, built in the neoclassical style by Christian Frederik Hansen (1756–1845). It retained the same six-story structure as the first Christiansborg. The construction of the palace commenced in 1806, and by 1828 it was not entirely finished but deemed ready for official use. It is important to note that by this time, Christiansborg was no longer the primary residence of the royal family. After a devastating fire of the first Christiansborg in 1794, the royal family relocated to Amalienborg palace, which remains the principal royal residence in Copenhagen to this day. Since 1849, a major part of Christiansborg was allocated to the parliament [Rigsdagen], which commenced its operations in January 1850. Unfortunately, Christiansborg's history was marked by another fire in 1884, which further complicates efforts to accurately reconstruct the appearance of its rooms.. The current Christiansborg was rebuilt between 1907 and 1928 under the supervision of Thorvald Jørgensen.

[5] Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Ueber die Zugänlichkeit und Aufstellung der Königlichen Bildersainlung*, Statens Museum for Kunst Archives, Museets Bygning 1835-1894.

another."[6] Thus, both Rumohr and Høyen undertook the task of establishing a new, separate entrance for the gallery.

Following this, fundamental aspects such as lighting and wall colours were deliberated upon. Of particular significance was also the concern surrounding the appropriate illumination of the gallery, a topic that had already received considerable attention from Høyen, especially in the context of the Thorvaldsen Museum. Rumohr and Høyen concurred that the existing gallery space was afflicted by the problem of closely positioned windows, which resulted in excessively harsh lighting conditions detrimental to the displayed paintings.[7] Rumohr proposed to implement supplementary screens — extending from the windows to at least two-thirds of the room's overall height — and relocate the finest paintings from the southern to the northern side to optimize their exposure to superior lighting quality.[8] In the final execution of the gallery design, additional screens were indeed employed, and the windows were partially obscured, thereby creating more space and eliminating the problem of cross-lighting.

Further insights into the configuration of the Gallery can be gleaned from analyzing the plan and comparing it with that of Spengler's [fig. 42, fig. 43]. The floor plan of Høyen's Gallery exhibits several adjustments in spatial arrangement compared to the previous one. A notable alteration was the removal of the partitioning wall within the chamber designated for Danish paintings. Instead, an additional screen was installed on the opposite side of the room, thus expanding the display space. Moreover, a similar addition of a screen was implemented in room no. 3, allocated for Dutch paintings. Conversely, room no. 9 was reduced in size, with separate compartments designated for storage purposes.[9]

Another notable concern centered on the use of colour, an issue that should be viewed within the broader context of evolving perceptions of colour in European art museums. It is essential, however, to first comprehend the prevailing aesthetic in the interiors of Christiansborg Palace in the 1820s — when the Spengler's gallery was open — which if fundamental to understanding Høyen's subsequent alterations. While a complete reconstruction of the gallery interior presents challenges due to the scarcity of historical written sources, such as room

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[6] Peter Hertz, "Malerisamlingens Tilvækst og Tilpasning gennem Tiderne. Galleriet under Spengler og Høyens Revision," *Kunstmuseets Aarsskrift* (1924-1925), 347-349.

[7] Ibidem.

[8] Ibidem, 319-320.

[9] Ibidem, 316-318.

descriptions or inventories detailing furnishings, it is feasible to develop a preliminary understanding of the colour choices by referencing the preserved architectural and decorative drawings. One valuable source of insight are Christian Frederik Hansen's designs for furnishing of the rooms. When analyzing Hansen's drawings, several noteworthy aspects merit attention. Notably, all wooden elements (panels, windows, and doors) consistently display a uniform light hue. Additionally, wall colours generally fall within a medium intensity spectrum, with pale blue or grey being common choices, unless obscured by marble. A more pronounced contrast was achieved by introducing vibrant colours in curtains and draperies, with gilding further enhancing this effect [fig. 44]. Following the changes overseen by Høyen, the walls in the gallery rooms were adorned with a "single-coloured Damascus paper set on red leather," and the same covering was used to coat the interiors of the window blinds, with the primary objective being the preservation of a serene colour scheme, known to exert a profound influence on the overall impact of the displayed works.[10]

The painting by Carl Christian Andersen (1849-1906) may allude to the gallery's appearance, particularly when considering the scrutiny of archival documents and reports, which does not reveal that any significant alterations were implemented in the Gallery's configuration during Høyen's oversight [fig. 45].[11] Andersen's work portrays a gallery featuring red walls as its dominant colour, complemented by unadorned cornices and a seamless ceiling. In the adjacent room, partially discernible in the background, a dark blue curtain obscures the window, and the overall dimly lit interior strongly implies deliberate management of lightning.

The prevalence of red as the main colour can be interpreted within the framework of evolving colour schemes and lighting strategies emblematic of the transformations occurring in xthe 19th-century museums. This issue has been comprehensively analyzed by Charlotte Klonk: "When the National Gallery [in London] opened in 1838 the walls were painted in olive green […]. The walls of the Belvedere Gallery in Vienna were still painted in a dark greenish-grey in 1850, and during the refurbishment of the Louvre after the revolution […] it was decided to paint the walls of the grande galerie in olive green […]. Nevertheless, in the early nineteenth century green was progressively abandoned in favour of a stronger statement. Red walls had already

[10] Ibidem.

[11] The painting was created two years prior to the Christiansborg fire in 1884, rendering it one of the last surviving visual testimonies to the configuration of the gallery within Christiansborg, which never reverted to its previous form. In 1896, the collection of paintings was transferred to a newly constructed building, expressly designed for museum purposes, which continues to serve as the residence of the National Gallery of Denmark.

been standard in private collections in Italy, Germany and Britain and adopted in those newly opened privately owned London galleries […]. Similarly, both the new public museums in Berlin and Munich, which in 1830 and 1838 respectively, had rich red paper as the background to the pictures."[12]

Beyond the documented range of colours in Andersen's painting, its restrained decorativeness is particularly striking, which may correspond to Høyen's conceptualization of exhibition space. Even though Høyen did not explicitly articulate his ideas, one can infer his perspective from the extant correspondence and notes. Høyen's inclination toward minimalism in spatial design is supported by his statement quoted by Peter Hertz, emphasizing the desirability of unrestricted usage of space without encumbrances typically associated with architectural embellishments, as this would considerably restrict the exhibition area.[13] Høyen's concerns correspond with prevailing concepts of 19th-century curators, who aspired to create an optimal exhibition setting wherein artworks were presented with minimal distractions.[14]

As the ultimate phase of preparation for the grand coronation on June 28th, 1840 drew near, refurbishments within the exhibition rooms were carried out in strict conformity with the recommendations put forth by Høyen, and to a large extent, by Rumohr. According to Ussing, "rooms underwent renovation, and the walls were painted in a dark red hue that served as an appropriate backdrop for the artworks. This transformation made it possible to display a considerable number of outstanding paintings in an optimal light and arrangement, allowing for

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[12] Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven-London: Yale University press, 2009), 31-32.

[13] Hertz, "Malerisamlingens Tilvækst," 316-18.

[14] Klonk, *Spaces of Experience*, 49.

Also according to Waagen, "the decoration of the rooms must be simple, and its effect always subordinate to the pictures; rich and heavy ceiling ornaments, in which gold is freely used, as in some of the saloons of the Louvre newly decorated in this manner, are especially to be avoided. A white ground, one with light ornaments in clear, broken colors, such as Schinkel has employed in the Picture Gallery of the Royal Museum in Berlin, is specially recommended by the effect of lightness and elegance it imparts to the rooms." See: Christopher Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum in Nineteenth Century Britain The Development of the National Gallery* (London: Routledge, 2017), 14.

their full appreciation."[15] The renovation of Denmark's most significant gallery also received detailed coverage in the Danish press. In July 1840, *Fædrelandet* reported on the progress of the work, giving an insight into the gallery's appearance: "Visitors to the Picture Gallery in Christiansborg these days will be pleasantly surprised by the transformation which is taking place. In the past, paintings were tightly packed […] on raw walls. Now, all the walls have been decorated in the Pompeian style, and the paintings are positioned at a distance from each other, allowing unobstructed viewing. The arrangement is meticulous and tasteful."[16]

The final interior of the Gallery embraced a minimalist aesthetic, influenced by design principles akin to those observed in the Berlin museum. This covers the use of red as the predominant wall colour and a simple system of side-lighting.[17] In parallel with the practices employed in Berlin, supplementary screens were also installed in Christiansborg to facilitate the display of paintings.[18] Although there are numerous indications that certain changes characteristic of other European museums have been incorporated in Copenhagen, not all requisites were satisfactorily addressed. One of these demands pertained to an ongoing debate concerning the dense multi-tiered hanging scheme, which still adhered to the conventional aesthetic of the 18th century. This arrangement encountered mounting criticism, as attested by John Ruskin's commentary on the National Gallery in 1847, wherein he advocated to abandon the crowded display in favour of positioning all artworks at the eye level: "every gallery should be long enough to admit of its whole collection being hung in one line, side by side, and wide enough to allow the spectators to step back and acquire a distance at which the largest picture was intended to be seen."[19]

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[15] Ussing, *Niels Laurits Høyens Levned*, 284.

C.J. Thomsen also provides a more comprehensive account of the technical aspects of the gallery's refurbishment in his correspondence with a friend Emil Hildebrand. In a letter from June 28th, 1840, he noted that "on March 1st, not a single painting adorned the walls of the ten rooms, but by then, 25 carpenters were diligently at work in the spacious main chamber", and as a result "the entire gallery was repainted, the walls were decorated, and the necessary preparations for hanging the artworks were completed." See: Jørgen Jensen, *Thomsens Museum. Historien om Nationalmuseet* (København: Gyldendal, 1992), 177.

[16] *Fædrelandet*, no. 216, July 14, 1840.

[17] Villads Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst: 1827-1952* (København: Gyldendal, 1998), 46.

[18] Klonk, *Spaces of experience*, 36.

[19] Ibidem, 28-29.

Even with a reduction to a half of the number of paintings on display, it was unfeasible to abandon the multi-hang scheme in Copenhagen. On the one hand, it was due to new purchases for the collection, focused especially on the Danish section. On the other hand, it was the result of the transfer of works from other royal residences to Christiansborg, as noted by Karl Madsen, "in the comprehensive reorganization of the gallery space, originally designed for approximately 400 paintings […] Høyen also brought paintings from other castles, including Rembrandt's portrait that would have otherwise been lost in the fire of Frederiksborg."[20] The only collection treated as a separate entity by Høyen, and consequently not displayed in the painting gallery, was the collection of portraits housed in the Frederiksborg Castle.[21]

Another important factor to consider regarding the number of artworks on display was their state of preservation, which prompted the removal of many paintings in suboptimal condition to the storage. In this regard, Høyen closely collaborated with conservator Fritz Ferdinand Petersen (1816-1900), as commemorated in C.C. Andersen's print [fig. 46]. Petersen's conservation practice later came under significant criticism, particularly from Karl Madsen. Much to his dismay, Petersen's "extensive cleaning left the pictures as pure ruin […]; mercilessly with his varnish [he] robbed them of their glazes and part of their colours."[22] Nevertheless, beyond Petersen's conservation methods, the changes introduced by Høyen held utmost significance, and at the same time, sparked vigorous reactions and heated discussions.

Høyen's primary objective was to present the most significant paintings from the royal collection, a task that involved identifying copies, damaged artworks, dubious attributions, and inferior pieces — all based on his own judgment. Thus, he removed all the copies from the exhibition walls, comprising Michelangelo's *Leda*, Titian's *Venus and Danae*, several copies of paintings by Guido Reni and Paolo Veronese, as well as works previously attributed to artists from other schools, such as Rubens or van Dyck. The impact of Høyen's discerning selection

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[20] Karl Madsen, *Fortegnelse over den Kongelige Malerisamling Billeder af ældre Malere* (København: Nordisk Forlag, 1904), 9.
Madsen is referring to the painting *Young Man in a Pearl-trimmed Cap*, now attributed to Samuel van Hoogstraten (inv. no. KMSsp467), and which Høyen saw in Frederiksborg already in 1814.

[21] Prior to assuming his role at the gallery in Christiansborg, Høyen had already dedicated efforts to cataloguing the portrait collection at the Frederiksborg.

[22] Madsen, *Fortegnelse*, 9-10.

was succinctly summarized by Ussing: “the wise were delighted to see what treasures we truly possessed, while others painfully missed the prominent names.”[23]

As a result of these efforts, there was a considerable decrease in the number of displayed artworks, dwindling from over 1000 to 580.[24] This reduction was especially evident within the Italian schools (with only 79 out of the original 160 paintings remaining on exhibition).[25] Conversely, the number of works in the Dutch and Flemish schools declined from over 600 to just over 400 pieces.[26] Høyen’s focus on selection was particularly pronounced in the Danish section, where the number of works decreased significantly from 225 to 81.[27] The principal rationale behind this reduction was his insistence that for an artwork to be considered Danish, it must have been created by an artist of Danish origin. This criterion led to the exclusion of a substantial portion of works shown in the Spengler’s gallery, which comprised pieces by foreign artists who had worked in Denmark.[28]

Høyen’s reformation extended beyond mere artwork selection, as he also fundamentally restructured the entire exhibition. This marked a significant departure from Spengler’s approach, who categorized artworks by schools and their respective subdivisions. Høyen abandoned the historical order and, drawing inspiration from the principles advocated by Rumohr, prioritized aesthetic considerations. Instead of grouping paintings strictly by schools, he scattered works from the same schools and even the same artists across separate rooms.[29] His aim was to enhance the visual appeal and coherence of the exhibited pictures.[30] In contrast to the previous emphasis

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[23] Ibidem.

[24] With the number of works on display, the Copenhagen Gallery ranked among the smaller ones, particularly when considering the scale of painting galleries open to the public at that time, as noted in Anna Jameson’s memoirs from 1842: “I will only observe that in the collection in Berlin, which was begun about the same time as our National Gallery [in London], there are now about 900 pictures admirably arranged; in the glorious Pinakothek at Munich there are 1600 pictures, the arrangement of which appears to me perfect. The Florentine Gallery containing about 1500 pictures, that of the Louvre containing about 1350, that of Dresden about 1200, the of the city of Frankfurt about 340.” See: Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, 14.

[25] Ussing, *Niels Laurits Høyens Levned*, 285.

[26] Hertz, “Malerisamlingens Tilvækst,” 329.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] Ibidem.

[29] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 46.

[30] Britta Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer*, 46.

on rigid categorization, Høyen's methodology was anchored in a thorough examination of individual artworks and stylistic analysis. His overarching goal was to orchestrate a seamless and cohesive ambiance within all Gallery rooms where each piece contributed to a unified aesthetic narrative. As a consequence, considering spatial and lighting conditions (e.g., the advantageous illumination in rooms facing the palace square), upon entering the Gallery, one encountered a succession of late Italian paintings, while early Italian works were primarily situated in the last rooms adjacent to the exit.

Høyen's methodical application of aesthetic criteria was succinctly articulated by Julius Lange, who observed that the arrangement of paintings in the Gallery adhered to few principles: "When [Høyen] organizes a hang in a gallery according to decorate principles, the paintings are put together according to the demands of symmetry, the grading of colours and their internal relations."[31] Høyen's approach to the Gallery hang was further endorsed by Thomsen in a letter to Bror Emil Hildebrand: "the collection is of such high quality that we do not require questionable attributions — in this context, we prioritize not just strict scientific order but also the aesthetic delight derived from presenting the finest artworks in the best lighting and at the most favorable background, to achieve harmony."[32]

6.1.1. An Eye and a Heart to Look: Old Masters

The gallery plan from 1840 illustrates a general reorganization of the collection into three distinct groups: Italian, Dutch, and Danish. Italian paintings were displayed in room A, facing the palace garden, as well as in rooms no. 9 and no. 10. Dutch paintings were housed in rooms B and C, overlooking the garden, and in the rooms no. 2 through no. 8, facing the palace square. Room no. 1 was specifically allocated for Danish artworks [see fig. 43 on page 188]. Although the floor plan does not reflect the detailed division, elucidation from gallery guides indicates that artworks from the German or French schools were not entirely absent. Rather, they were integrated into display of the Italian and Dutch sections, which constitute the foundamenal pillars of the old masters collection. The Dutch segment was distinguished as the most opulent, which was articulated by Philip Weilbach: "this had become suspended in such a way that the main works, among which especially the Dutch landscape painting was beautifully represented, came

[31] Ibidem, 65.

[32] Cit. per: Jørgen Jensen, *Thomsens Museum. Historien om Nationalmuseet* (København: Gyldendal, 1992), 177.

to their full rights, while more subordinate works were used to fill the spaces, so that the individual rooms, and every single wall in them, came to form a harmonious whole."[33]

Høyen provided a concise explanation of his display methodology in the introduction to the 1846 gallery guide. In a brief commentary, he highlighted the uneven composition of the collection, noting the presence of exceptional Italian and Flemish works, while emphasizing that the majority of high-quality pieces were found within the Dutch school. He attributed this disparity to the collection's haphazard growth, akin to most old collections, rather than being assembled according to a set plan. From this observation, he concludes: "The collection thus offers the pleasure that can be obtained by studying the virtues of each painting, rather than studying a survey of the development of art and its importance in certain periods. As a consequence of the nature of the collection, the strict arrangement of the paintings according to schools of art had to be abandoned, and instead, a presentation of the major characteristics of the Italian and Dutch paintings was attempted."[34]

Much can be inferred about the character of this collection from the fact that even after Høyen's reductions and changes, the most abundant — both quantitatively and qualitatively — part of the collection remained Dutch painting. In this area, Høyen made many attribution changes, which resulted from his own in-depth study of 17th-century Dutch art.[35] This knowledge was also visible in the reorganization of the Gallery, wherein a substantial portion of Italian artworks was supplanted by Dutch paintings procured from various royal collections.

Commencing his study of art history with German and Italian art, Høyen swiftly redirected his scholarly gaze toward Dutch painting, considering it closer to truth: "I often

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[33] Philip Weilbach, "N.l. Høyen, Paa 100 aarsdagen for hans godsel," in *Kunstbladet*, ed. Emil Hannover (København: Winkel & Magnussens Forlag, 1898), 157.

[34] Christian Ludvig le Maire, *Fortegnelse over Den Moltkeske Malerisamling* (Kjøbenhavn: Udgiverens Forlag, 1846), 3-5.

Although Høyen was the author of the introduction, the gallery guidebooks were published almost annually by Christian Ludvig le Maire. Regrettably, information concerning C.L. le Maire is very limited. What is known is that he was already employed at the Gallery during Spengler's tenure, where he was involved in the preparation of guidebooks. In the archives of the Statens Museum for Kunst, there are also lists of paintings in the gallery that he compiled, indicating his administrative role in the collection. Remarkably, he continued his work at the Gallery, persisting through the administrations of Høyen and Thomsen, until his departure in 1855. From this, one may infer that he likely served as a gallery-caretaker or held a similar position.

[35] Høyen lectured on Dutch art in Copenhagen, studied Dutch paintings and prints in the royal collection, and also worked on the catalogue of the Count A.G. Moltke collection, which included works by Dutch old masters.

wondered why, in the works of these distinguished Dutch painters, water resembled dirty milk [...] but when I arrived in Holland and once sailed across the Zuydersee lake, I saw that it was pure, unadulterated truth."[36] During his travels in Holland, Høyen also observed another aspect, namely the representativeness of the Dutch school through the art of a specific period: "Amsterdam, and I assume properly speaking all Holland, only possesses significant painting and sculpture from a single period, that is to say 17th century; the extent of this period of art, however, was something of which I was not aware, and it has exceeded my expectations."[37] He expected the same from Danish art, and since, in his view, the Danes had not yet created a school, it was necessary to build one based on contemporary art.

Moreover, the undeniable influence of Dutch landscape and genre painting on Danish art of that period cannot be overlooked here. It is therefore unsurprising that the prominence of old Dutch masters in the Gallery may be related to the fact that this art was a particularly important inspiration for the young generation of Danish artists. The two most notable genres — landscape and genre scenes — were intended to hold a central position in the emerging Danish section of the Gallery, echoing the tradition observed in Holland.

Danish artists studied Dutch painting in the Gallery and discovered numerous shared characteristics with compositions from the Low Countries, such as the lowered horizon, views of fields and rivers, the national naval fleet on the open sea, and port scenes. Johan Thomas Lundbye wrote, "I also visited the gallery of paintings today for the first time this year and viewed all the Dutch landscapes."[38] Similarly, Christen Købke's interest in Dutch and Flemish painting, which he studied early on in Spengler's display, is evident in the undeniable influence of Jan van Goyen's *View of the City of Arnhem* (acquired in 1837) on his own painting *A View of Lake Sortedam from Dosseringen Looking towards the Suburb Nørrebro outside Copenhagen*.[39]

Although the works of van Goyen or Ruisdael served as direct inspiration for particular compositions, and the paintings of artists like Allaert van Everdingen could impact the defining

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[36] *Niels Laurits Høyens Skrifter: udgivne paa Foranstaltning af Selskabet for nordisk Konst*, ed. Johan Louis Ussing (København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1876), 3:162.

[37] Lene Bøgh Rønberg, "Introduction," in *Two Golden Ages. Masterpieces of Dutch and Danish painting*, eds. Lene Bøgh Rønberg, Kasper Monrad, Ragni Linnet (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 2001), 10.

[38] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 52-53.

[39] Kasper Konrad, "The Dutch Dimension in Danish Golden Age Landscape Painting," in *Two Golden Ages*…, 40.

of Scandinavian landscapes, Høyen found a deeper significance in this art.[40] It was not merely the impact of the individual works, but rather the idea of art emerging from a specific country, fully rooted in its nature and the life of its people. Høyen affirmed this in a letter to Wilhelm Marstrand: “Holland and its old masters are the best proof that it is not the grandeur that makes a work of art, but that even a country as monotonous as Holland, and a life as simple as that led there, is sufficient for a painter when he has the eye and heart to look.”[41]

6.1.2. The Place of Contemporary Art

Changes introduced by Høyen align the Copenhagen gallery with the ongoing discussion on museum arrangement in Europe. The debate on how to display paintings — whether according to historical principles with a chronological arrangement of works, as in Vienna, or based on aesthetic considerations, as in Dresden — was still vibrant in museums during Høyen’s initial reorganization and throughout his tenure at the Gallery. The dispute about arrangement and narrative is exemplified by the Louvre exhibition, which was criticized in 1850 by Benjamin Guerard, a professor at the École des Chartes. Guerard condemned the school classifications and chronological arrangement, deeming them to have a “nasty effect.”[42] He also outlined two essential conditions for a properly organized gallery: firstly, each painting should be illuminated adequately, and secondly, it should harmonize with the adjacent paintings in terms of subject matter and style.[43] Høyen implemented these two principles precisely in his Gallery hang. He adhered to the general division — used in the German museums that he was familiar with — by separating works into Northern and Southern schools.[44] Furthermore, he adopted another approach, common in German museums until the 1880s, as he does not exhibit paintings

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[40] Wolfgang Stechow notes that after his visits to Sweden and Norway in the 1640s Everdingen developed a pattern for Scandinavian scenes with mountains, sheer steep rocks and stately fir trees brought together in pleasant unison. See: Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Phaidon, 1966). 143.

[41] Cit. per.: Ussing, *Niels Laurits Høyens Levned*, 75.

[42] Krzysztof Pomian, *Muzeum. Historia światowa. Tom 2: Zakotwiczenie w Europie 1789-1850,* trans. Tomasz Stróżyński (Gdańsk: Słowo/obraz terytoria, 2023), 2:324-326.

[43] Ibidem, 327.

[44] Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer*, 216.

preceding the Renaissance; Raphael is also the starting point for his exhibition.[45] At the same time, in the detailed arrangement, he followed the aesthetic principle exclusively, selecting paintings to ensure a visually pleasing overall display. He sought harmony between adjacent paintings, ensuring they corresponded with each other in various features.

The principal impetus behind Høyen's departure from Spengler's arrangement lay in the insufficiency of high-quality paintings available to construct a display that could effectively encapsulate the survey of art history. This opinion is shared by Britta Tondobrg, who further elucidates that certain schools and historical epochs were unevenly represented after Høyen's reorganization, with notable omissions among the names of prominent masters.[46] Another crucial factor to consider was the minimal acquisition of works by old masters, as Høyen's primary objective was to purchase art by contemporary Danish artists.[47]

However, the adoption of the aesthetic principle does not appear to have been a concession on Høyen's part. In his annotations, he frequently deliberated on the aesthetic attributes of the works, and in his reflections on museums, he underscored the significance of aesthetic considerations in exhibitions, such as the importance of symmetry and harmony. According to Høyen, the pleasure derived from contemplating the merits of an individual painting held greater importance than the ability to trace the evolution of art over time.[48] Ultimately, Høyen emerges here foremost as a connoisseur who eschews rigid classification and embraces an expert's viewpoint in presenting the old masters. In his segment of the exhibition, he does not fulfill his primary mission, which he envisioned to carry a broader educational significance in the social dimension. Høyen focused on his vision of the museum as a bastion of Danish national art, and placed paramount importance on implementing a concept fervently debated in other European museums: the integration of contemporary art within the display.

Although in the discourse of the nineteenth century, art museums were widely regarded as repositories of artistic history, there was less unanimity regarding their role in exhibiting contemporary art, and the recurring emphasis on assembling collections of works by living artists has been a persistent theme in the development of European museums. For instance,

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[45] K. Pomian, *Muzeum. Historia światowa. Tom 1: Od skarbca do muzeum*, trans. Tomasz Stróżyński (Gdańsk: Słowo/obraz terytoria, 2023), 1:529.

[46] Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer*, 65.

[47] Regnskaber: 1844-1852, Statens Museum for Kunst Archives.

[48] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 46.

already Antoine Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849) proposed to incorporate a contemporary French collection within the Louvre, juxtaposed with the works of old masters.[49]

This emphasis in the ongoing museum debate was closely linked with the imperative of promoting national artists, which was seen as vital within the broader context of nation-building processes. The conceptualization and establishment of a national museums dedicated to the foremost painters and sculptors of a given nation constitute a pivotal aspect of the states' cultural agenda.[50] For example, discussions in Belgium in 1835 centered on the proposition that the national museum should be exclusively dedicated to exhibiting the most distinguished Belgian artists.[51] In turn, in Luxembourg, the museum established criteria to ascertain what qualifies as national artwork, including the requirement that it should be created by artists of Luxembourgish nationality, those born or married into Luxembourgish families, or individuals who have primarily resided in the country.[52] The museum that combined the idea of displaying artworks by living native artists was the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris, which in 1818 became the first museum of contemporary art. Conversely, in established museums across Germany, contemporary works of art held a peripheral position, and support for them emanated mostly from art associations, like in Berlin, Düsseldorf, or Munich.[53] The situation changed with the opening of the Neue Pinakothek in Munich in 1853 — which introduced a modern approach to exhibiting paintings on unobtrusive walls and showcased 300 paintings by contemporary artists — as well as the establishment of the Nationalgalerie in Berlin in 1876.[54]

Also from the artists' standpoint, exhibiting in museums held paramount importance. Beyond mere commercial success and critical acclaim, the inclusion of their works in museums guaranteed their enduring legacy and recognition within the art canon. As aptly summarized by Sheehan, "Museums promised permanence and preservation; they also provided immediate

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[49] Pomian, 2:320.

[50] Dominique Poulot, "The changing roles of art museums," in Peter Aronsson, Gabriella Elgenius, eds., *National Museums and Nation Building in Europe 1750-2019: Mobilization and Legitimacy, Continuity and Change* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 99-100.

[51] Ibidem.

[52] Ibidem.

[53] James J. Sheehan, *Museums in the German Art World. From the End of the Old Regime to the Rise of Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94.

[54] Pomian, 2:411-412.

recognition and material rewards, improving an artist's market value while shielding them from the indignities of commerce. Museums carried the prestige of official, even royal patronage, but at the same time they were instruments of public culture, accessible to everyone."[55]

In Denmark, the initiative to establish contemporary works as a cornerstone of the Royal Painting Gallery was spearheaded by Høyen. However, his advocacy for living artists extended beyond the Gallery's purview, as evidenced by his initiative of founding the Society for Nordic Art [Selskabet for Nordisk Kunst] in 1845. The Society primarily focused on acquiring Danish art, and owing to Høyen's influence, the collection found a showcase in the vestibule of the Painting Gallery in Christiansborg.[56] Høyen was also a co-founder of Kunstforeningen, which between 1830 and 1850 purchased 551 paintings mostly by the same artists that he favoured most.[57]

Upon assuming the position of inspectors in the Royal Painting Gallery, Høyen and Thomsen initially lacked separate budget for acquisitions. Over time, however, they advocated for annual sums specifically designated for procuring Danish art.[58] Concurrently, King Christian VIII (1786–1848) continued to make independent purchases, which resulted in two distinct sources of acquisitions during the early stages of the reorganization period: works selected by Høyen and those chosen by the king.[59] Høyen made a deliberate effort to delineate between works acquired by the king and those purchased by himself, documenting relevant information in the collection inventory.[60] This dual acquisition system persisted until 1848, marked by the death of Christian VIII and the ensuing changes in the state system. Following this transition, Høyen assumed sole control over acquisitions and instigated further modifications in the exhibition of Danish art.

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[55] Sheehan, 95.

[56] Hanne Westergaard, "Christian Jürgensen Thomsen og de skønne kunster," *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* (1988), 64.

[57] Britta Tøndborg, "Hanging the Danes: Danish Golden Age art in a nineteenth century museum context," *Statens Museum for Kunst Art Journal*, no. 24 (2005), 122.

[58] The problem of purchases was discussed in more detail by: Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 51-59, and Tøndborg, "Hanging the Danes," 119-126.

[59] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 51.

[60] This is briefly mentioned by: Tøndborg, "Hanging the Danes," 122. Moreover, relevant annotations can be found in the collection inventories: Inventarium over Malerierne i den kgl. Malerisamling. Accession 1827-1855, Statens Museum for Kunst Archive.

Villadsen and Tøndobrg further discussed the issue of acquisitions by highlighting Høyen's divergence from the king's artistic preferences. Villadsen cited instances where the king acquired works by Niels Simonsen, Johan Laurentz Jensen, or Johannes Boesen, whereas Høyen opted for paintings by Lundbye or Skovgaard.[61] For instance, when the king bought Niels Simonsen's painting *An Arab Family in the Desert* from an exhibition at Charlottenborg in 1847, Høyen openly criticized its style, regarding it as an endeavor to import French aesthetics and techniques into the Danish art field. Concurrently, he promptly offered a programmatic counterpoint by acquiring Jørgen Sonne's work *Midsummer's Eve* in the same year, which aligned with his vision of national folk painting, thereby illustrating his ideological stance.[62] Tøndobrg further underscored that the majority of paintings purchased by the king were historical depictions, seascapes, and landscapes, primarily excluding works by the younger generation of painters. Notably, one genre particularly acquired by the king for his residences was flower paintings.[63]

Nevertheless, the matter becomes increasingly nuanced upon closer examination of royal acquisitions dating back to the 1830s and prior to 1839, preceding Hoyen's assumption of his role within the Gallery's echelons. Notably, the collection already consists of an array of works by artists such as Christen Købke, Wilhelm Bendz, Ditlev Blunck, Martinus Rørbye, and Wilhelm Marstrand — all of whom were later included in Høyen's selection. Moreover, according to the gallery guides, some of these works were displayed well into the 1870s, enduring throughout Hoyen's tenure as director.[64] Yet, a deeper exploration of the acquisitions and exhibition unveil that the collection antecedent to Høyen's stewardship not only showcased works by artists he esteemed but also encapsulated motifs he deemed quintessentially representative of the nation's artistic ethos.

Among the over 200 paintings exhibited in the Danish section during Høyen's tenure (from the 1840s to 1870) more than half were acquired in the late 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. The remainder comprised works purchased in the 1830s or earlier. Notably, of the pieces bought

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[61] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 52-53.

[62] Ibidem. 58-59.

[63] Tøndborg, "Hanging the Danes," 122.

[64] Christian Ludvig le Maire, *Fortegnelse over den kongelige Malerisamling paa Christiansborg Slot* (Kjøbenhavn: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1840-1870).

before 1839, roughly half were displayed in the Gallery during the 1840s to the 1860s.[65] Some of these paintings were reintroduced to the exhibition after a prolonged hiatus, while only a dozen or so, procured by the king, were exhibited only in the 1840s. This latter group comprised works by non-Danish artists such as Carl Gustaf Pilo (1711–1793) and Johann Salomon Wahl (1689–1765), or landscapes that did not correspond with Høyen's vision of Danish scenes. However, there were also paintings, purchased prior to Høyen's arrival, that consistently remained on display — enduring through various curatorial changes — and become a permanent fixture in the Danish canon (e.x. Ditlev Blunck's *Portrait of the Copperplate Engraver Carl Edvard Sonne*, Wilhelm Bendz's *A Young Artist Examining a Sketch in a Mirror,* Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg's *Moses causes the Red Sea to return and Pharaoh's army is flooded*, or Constantin Hansen's *Reciter of Orlando Furioso at the Molo, Naples*).

The exhibition, as will become evident upon closer analysis, was dominated by landscapes and genre scenes. At the same time, there were few still lifes and no portraits of the king or paintings lauding the monarchy. Høyen's decisions and selections were influenced not merely by divergent tastes, but primarily by a political agenda. The changes he implemented, particularly intensifying after 1848, mirrored his aspiration to forge a canon of national art, aligning it with the preferences of the nation rather than those of the monarch. The more influence Høyen exerted on the purchasing policy, the more the collection evolved in accordance with his vision and the overarching aim of creating a national art gallery. However, this politicization of the exhibition space had its repercussions, transforming the Gallery into a forum for a much broader discourse that extended well beyond the conflict between the king and the curator.

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[65] Ibidem.

Inventarium over Malerierne i del kgl. Malerisamling. Accession: 1827-1855, 1856-1894, Statens Museum for Kunst Archives.

6.2. “It is all about the national!” Høyen’s Concepts in the Museum Practice

6.2.1. In search of the “Danish Character”

“There are truly good paintings by old masters hanging in our gallery, and as long as these paintings remained the primary focus of the gallery, and there was less works of Danish artists […] the gallery received a tolerable number of visitors. However, since the moment that paintings depicting folk life and deeds of the people were included, the Danish section received so many visitors that the wear and tear on the floor indicated their concentrated interest in this area, rather than [in] the old masters. The older, more distant pictures speaks with a foreign language, whereas today, when our motherland speaks through these artworks, we understand this language and find joy in it. It is all about the national!”[66]

The establishment of a permanent exhibition of contemporary Danish art at the Royal Picture Gallery unfolded through several distinct phases. Høyen initiated the process by evaluating the Danish paintings, both those displayed during Spengler’s tenure and those in the overall collection. Nationality became the primary criterion in this scrutiny, as Høyen staunchly believed that to be qualified as Danish, the work must be created by a Dane. Consequently, a significant portion of works from Spengler’s era had lost their “Danish character” due to the non-Danish origins of the authors (Høyen made the decision to allocate 140 out of about 200 works attributed to Danish painters to storage).[67] In the following stage, he faced the imperative task of establishing priorities, determining which works by which artists could be involved in the exhibition. Furthermore, he had to oversee the acquisition of suitable artworks to augment the Danish section. The bulk of information pertaining to these movements can be extracted from

[66] Niels Laurits Høyen, “Om national Konst,” in *Niels Laurits Høyens Skrifter*, 3:174-175.

[67] Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer*, 80.

catalogues and inventories. However, the selection of paintings on display is discernible within the gallery guides published annually by Christian Ludvig le Maire.[68]

Documentation related to acquisitions and exhibition, including lists of objects, inventories, as well as Le Maire's guides, has been instrumental in reconstructing the arrangement of the Gallery and changes within the display from 1840 to 1870. Based on this, a list of paintings displayed in the Gallery at Christiansborg in that period has been compiled, forming the foundation for further analyses (see Appendix, pp. 196-228).

The first guidebook from 1840, subsequent to Høyen's revisions, comprises a concise introduction that merely acknowledges the general changes in the Gallery: "The division of paintings by schools was abandoned, and the rooms were marked with numbers [...] to facilitate the location of paintings."[69] The guide's concise format encompasses only essential information like the author's name, date, dimension of work, inventory number, and the room number where the painting is displayed. All the works are listed in accordance with Spengler's old inventory numbers, which makes it somewhat challenging to locate references to their new arrangement. Nevertheless, among the 535 paintings listed in the guide, 45 fall within the section dedicated to contemporary Danish artists (marked as the "living artists"). Notably, figures such as Jens Juel (1745–1802), Nikolai Abildgaard (1743–1809), Christian August Lorentzen (1749-1828), Christian David Gebauer (1777–1831), and Wilhelm Bendz (1804–1832), representing the Danish artistic scene, are listed towards the conclusion of the general section. All works by contemporary Danish artists and those from the older generation, like Juel and Abildgaard, were exhibited together in the room designated by number 1 on the floor plan attached to the guidebook. Therefore a thorough examination of the artworks within this room will yield profound insights into the Danish section following the Gallery's revision in 1839-1840.[70]

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[68] Regrettably, information concerning Christian Ludvig le Maire is very limited. What is known is that he was already employed at the Gallery during Spengler's tenure, where he was involved in the preparation of guidebooks. Within the archives of the Statens Museum for Kunst exist also lists of paintings from the gallery authored by him. Remarkably, he continued his role at the Gallery, persisting through the administrations of Høyen and Thomsen, until his departure in 1855. From this, one may infer that he likely served as a gallery-caretaker or held a similar position.

[69] Christian Ludvig le Maire, *Fortegnelse over den kongelige Malerisamling paa Christiansborg Slot* (Kjøbenhavn: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1840), 1.

[70] All the works mentioned in this chapter are listed in the appendix to this thesis, see pp. 196-228.

Amidst the displayed works, a significant portion comprised landscapes, such as views from Denmark and Switzerland by Jens Peder Møller (1783–1854), three landscapes by Johan Christian Dahl (1788–1857), a seascape by Friedrich Thøming (1802–1873), a view of Kullen Cliffs by Louis Gurlitt (1812–1897), Peter Christian Skovgaard's (1817–1875) Danish landscape from Arresøen, as well as Italian landscapes like *View from Hadrian's Villa* by Fritz Petzholdt (1805–1838). Moreover, the genre scenes were well represented in the exhibition, as exemplified by paintings such as *A Reciter of Orlando Furioso at the Molo, Naples* by Constantin Hansen (1804–1880), two works by Johan Vilhelm Gertner (1818–1871), *Thorvaldsen's Studio in the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen* and *A Shepherd Boy Tending a Flock of Sheep*, as well as Albert Küchler's (1803-1886) *A Girl Selling Fruit in an Artist's Studio*, and Jørgen Sonne's (1801–1890) *Roman Peasants Going to Market*. Fewer artworks within the display were centered around biblical and mythological themes, e.g., *Moses causes the Red Sea to return and Pharaoh's army is flooded* by Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783–1853), Christian Høyer's (1775–1855) *Hero waiting for her lover, Leander*, Heinrich Eddelien's (1802-1852) *A young faun picking grapes* or *Pyrrhus and Andromache at Hector's Tomb* by Johan Ludwig Lund (1877-1867). Additionally, display contained also floral still lifes by Johan Laurentz Jensen (1800–1856) and Claudius Ditlev Fritzsch (1765–1841), as well as portraits like Jørgen Roed's (1808–1888) *Girl with a Basket of Fruits* or Ditlev Blunck's (1798–1853) *Portrait of the Copperplate Engraver Carl Edvard Sonne.*

This broader listing of artworks displayed within the Danish section in 1840 leads to several conclusions concerning the nature of Høyen's revision. Although Peter Hertz, Villads Villadsen, and Britta Tøndborg have addressed the subject, none of the authors provided a detailed analysis of the exhibited artworks by Danish artists. While there is consensus regarding the overall reorganization of the Gallery, the true scope of changes was aimed at establishing an exhibition space dedicated to Danish art. Even though Høyen executed it during the 1839-1840 revision, after a thorough analysis, it is difficult to support the authors' claim that the Danish section was fundamentally shaped in this specific time frame. The scant literature focused on Høyen's influence on the Gallery primarily emphasizes the significance of the general revision and the new arrangement transpired within the initial year of Høyen's tenure. However, the substantive formation of the Danish section ought to be extended to the 1840s and 1850s, as Høyen continued to develop the display and introduced further changes.

Upon closer examination of the works exhibited in 1840, it becomes apparent that Høyen does not consistently apply his theory at that stage. One notable instance is that paintings by

Norwegian artists J.C. Dahl, F. Thøming from Schleswig, and L. Gurlitt born in Holstein, were showcased alongside those of Danish artists. Furthermore, the selection comprised themes from Greek mythology rather than the widely promoted Nordic mythology. The exhibition featured only a limited number of Danish landscapes alongside European ones and encompassed both Italian and Danish genre scenes. Thus, the Danish section, in this form, bore a closer resemblance to the Academy's exhibition in Charlottenborg, and could not fully conform with Høyen's concepts and aspirations.

Høyen's decision regarding the chosen artworks could have been influenced by a multitude of factors. Firstly, he confronted the challenge of managing the existing collection without the allocated budget for new acquisitions, which was bestowed upon him and Thomsen in the following years. Hence, at the beginning Høyen's selections were limited to works already purchased by the king. Secondly, the display may indicate a form of compromise between the king and the inspector, inherently balancing the inclusion of still lifes and historical paintings, preferred by the king, with the incorporation of works by young Danish artists like Skovgaard, supported by Høyen. Moreover, in terms of applying the criterion of exhibiting in the Danish section solely works by artists of Danish descent, Høyen progressively adopted a more radical stance in the ensuing years. The implications of the Schleswig-Holstein conflict, particularly its visible repercussions in marginalizing artists born or educated in Germany and diminishing their standing within the Danish art scene, hold significant relevance in this context.

Thus, while Tøndborg points out that "the 1839-40 revision was [Høyen's] greatest achievement in his gallery career," through examination of the direction in which Høyen developed the exhibition until 1870 it may be implied that the revision should be regarded rather as a starting point than a culmination.[71] To ascertain the extent to which Høyen's theory of national art influenced the display in Christiansborg, it is imperative to examine the Gallery's state in the ensuing years, both preceding and following the transfer of the royal collections to state ownership.

In the first half of the 1840s, the major part of works from 1840 remains unchanged. However, notable alterations have been introduced in types of paintings that augment this section. Specifically, there is visible inclusion of landscapes, primarily acquired at following exhibitions at Charlottenborg in 1843 and 1844. Noteworthy additions consist of works such as Dankvart Dreyer's (1816-1852) painting from North Funen, as well as Christen Købke's

[71] Tøndborg, *From Kunstkammer*, 71.

(1810-1848) *A Rocky Coast, Capri. After Sunrise.* The collection boasts two landscapes by J.T. Lundbye (1818-1848), one of which was created under Hoyen's supervision — *A Danish Coast. View from Kitnæs on Roskilde Fjord. Zealand*. Additionally, the section covers paintings by Anders Christian Lunde (1809-1886), like *Beach area near Tårbæk*, P.C. Skovgaard's *Oak Trees in Nordskoven near Jægerspris, Zealand*, and a *View of the North Coast of Zealand at Dronningmølle.* With the exception of the Købke's painting, the other added artworks strongly reflected the significant influence of Høyen's views on the selection of purchased and displayed paintings. These works predominantly showcase Danish landscapes, and were created during the early 1840s, a period marked by the maturation of Høyen's concepts on national art, collected and expressed in his lecture from 1844. Moreover, several of the artists whose works were on display in 1846 were Høyen's students who followed his vision of national art. The mid-1840s can, thus, be regarded as a period characterized by more discernible evolution of the Danish section in accordance with Høyen's directives, evident in the acquired works.

According to the available documentation, there are no recorded changes in the Gallery in 1849. However, there are significant indications implying that Høyen might have been working on some modifications. In the early 1850s, paintings by Gurlitt and Jensen were withdrawn, and in their place, landscape and genre scenes were hung. New additions appeared to correspond closely with the content of Høyen's lectures, as included works such as Jørgen Roed's *Zealand Harvest Girls at a Well,* and Godtfred Rump's *A Wood near Frederiksborg Castle.* Additionally, Jørgen Sonne's *The Morning After the Battle of Isted 25 July 1850* found its place in the Gallery, and in the guide from 1853 was the only painting with description of its composition and recognition of the characters depicted. This nuanced attention was significant in light of the First Schleswig War, indicating a deliberate effort to provide context and relevance to the artworks in the changing political landscape.

Upon further analysis, it can be inferred that an intensive development of the Gallery took place during the 1850s and 1860s through new acquisitions and changes at the display (the number of works in the Danish section grew to nearly 180 in the 1860s).[72] The transformations within the Gallery since the 1850s were fundamentally influenced by a broader political context.

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[72] It is evident that the Danish collection itself must have been more extensive at this juncture. For instance, the gallery guide lists 8 paintings by Jørgen Sonne, yet the inventories reveal a total of 14. Similarly, in the case of Jensen Juel, the gallery guide enumerates 11 works while the collection encompasses a total of 18 pieces.
The collection significantly expanded, as indicated by the fact that the 1900 collection catalogue lists 484 Danish paintings.

Firstly, the evolving political landscape galvanized efforts to accentuate the national identity by expanding the exhibition segment devoted to Danish art. In this respect, Høyen garnered substantial support, functioning as a network actor with the political endorsement of national liberals, a variety of institutions, and the press.[73] Secondly, the post-First Schleswig War atmosphere further reinforced these initiatives. Simultaneously, the art scene was marked by escalating tensions between artists labeled as "Cosmopolitans" (also called "de brunettes") and those regarded as "Nationals" (also referred to as "de blonde" or "Høyenians"). These multifaceted dynamics were reflected in the evolution of the Royal Picture Gallery.

6.2.2. Towards the National Gallery

The development of the Gallery — coupled with numerous acquisitions for the Danish section — resulted in significant changes in the selection of paintings and denser arrangement, with works hung in two rows. Among the nearly 180 paintings integrated into the exhibition due to Høyen's adjustments in the 1850s and 1860s, the final shape of the Gallery — which remained intact after the inspector's death — was characterized by landscapes, including marinas, and genre scenes. Less represented were mythological and biblical themes, as well as still lifes and portraits. Of the older generation of artists, Høyen distinguished only two: Nicolai Abildgaard (1743–1809), represented by no fewer than 19 paintings, and Jens Juel (1745–1802), with 12 paintings. He removed works by artists such as Christian Gottlieb Kragenstein-Stub and retained only single pieces by artists like Christian August Lorentzen (1749–1828).

Høyen generally excluded paintings by artists of foreign origin, though he was not entirely consistent in this approach. For instance, he removed works by the Swede Carl Gustaf Pilo (1711–1793), Germans Johann Salomon Wahl (1689–1765) and Victor Grolig (1805–1862), as well as artists of German-Danish origin like Frederik Theodor Kloss (1802–1876), but in case of Danish-German landscape painter Louis Gurlitt (1812–1897), Høyen replaced two of his Swedish landscapes with views from Jutland and Skanderborg. Another inconsistency is that while Høyen withdrew Gurlitt's landscapes from Sweden, he retained *A Swiss Landscape with the Mountain Wetterhorn* by Jens Peter Møller (1783–1854), whom he admired and who was a co-founder of Copenhagen's Kunstforeningen. Høyen also excludes landscapes from Saxony

[73] Sine Krogh provides a detailed account of this network in her doctoral dissertation. See: Sine Krogh, *Grænsegængere: Konflikter om nationalæstetik, kunstneridentiteter og danskhed i 1800-tallets kunst*, PhD dissertation, Aarhus University, 2021.

and Bohemia by Johann Hermann Carmiencke (1810-1867), an artist of German origin who graduated from the Copenhagen Academy and worked for Christian VIII. In turn, since the revision, paintings by Holstein artist Ditlev Blunck (1798–1853) or J.C. Dahl have also been continuously exhibited.

Furthermore, Høyen imposed restrictions on the exhibition of works by the still-life painter Johan Laurentz Jensen (1800—1856) by limiting his display to just one painting. In contrast, he showcased six still lifes by Otto Ottesen (1816—1892). The display also featured four Danish landscapes by Christian Gebauer (1777–1831), e.g., views from Frederiksborg and Dyrehaven. Additionally, the work *Thorvaldsen's Studio at Charlottenborg* by the young Johan Gertner (1818–1871) was continuously on display. Notably, three paintings by Wilhelm Bendz (1804–1832) were incorporated, despite Bendz's criticism of Høyen and the fact that he hailed to Munich in 1830. The exhibition also presented three paintings by Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783—1853), one biblical theme and two marinas. Although Eckersberg would later be acclaimed as the "father" of Danish art, this title was attributed to Abildgaard at the time. Consequently, the significant disparity in the number of works by these two artists was not unexpected.

However, the enduring inclusion of landscapes and genre scenes from Italy (e.g., Fritz Petzholdt's view of Tivoli, August Boesen's prospect of Palermo, and Christen Købke's view from Capri) might be surprising, especially given Høyen's emphasis on promoting the "Danish character" of the display. As a note, the continued travels of many Danish artists to Italy resulted in a notable portion of paintings created during their Italian studies and displayed annually at the Academy Salon in Charlottenborg. Accordingly, Italian landscapes garnered such public acclaim that in the 1840s they were so popular that even J.T. Lundbye had to concede that "the Campagna is the most exquisite thing I have seen, so grand, so noble; I have never seen such nature anywhere else."[74] The presence of Italian works may have been justified by high artistic production, and perhaps audience expectations, although it did not line up with Høyen's intentions, hence these themes were in the minority.

Nevertheless, the core of the display was centered on Danish landscapes and genre scenes from the Danish countryside. The most represented artists were those whom Høyen supported, as their works aligned with his vision of national art. The Danish landscape stood out prominently in the works of J.T. Lundbye, who contributed five works, such as *A Danish Coast. View from*

[74] Kasper Monrad, *Dansk Guldalder. Lyset, landskabet og hverdagslivet* (København: Gyldendal, 2013), 274.

Kitnæs on Roskilde Fjord and *Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand*. Peter Skovgaard was also represented with five landscapes, such as *Oak Trees in Nordskoven near Jægerspris* and *View of the North Coast of Zealand at Dronningmølle*. Similarly, Vilhelm Kyhn (1819–1903) had five paintings on display, like views of Jutland and Zealand, and Godtfred Rump (1816—1880) contributed five works depicting the forests near the Frederiksborg Castle.

In terms of genre painting, the greatly exhibited works were by Julius Exner (1825–1910), who had six paintings on display, such as the *Episode of a Feast at Amager* and *The Black Persian Players*. The exhibition also covered three to five paintings by artists such as Christen Dalsgaard (1824–1907) (e.g., *Fisherman Shows His Daughter a Boat Sailing Away*) or Jørgen Roed (1808–1888) (*Zealand Harvest Girls at a Well*; F*amily Life in a Small Fishing Village North of Helsingør*). Wilhelm Marstrand (1810–1873) was represented with key works like *Church-Goers Arriving by Boat at the Parish Church of Leksand on Siljan Lake*, and Frederik Vermehren (1823–1910) with pieces such as *A Seed Man* and *The Interior of a Farmhouse*. The core of the collection was further enriched by the works of Constantin Hansen (1804–1880), e.g., *Housewife at Her Ribbon Loom Talks to Two Children*, and paintings by Otto Bache (1839–1927), Carlo Dalgas (1821–1851), and Anton Dorph (1831–1914). Jørgen Sonne (1801–1890) was also exhibited. In addition to his battle scenes — of which there were only a few in the entire exhibition — his landscapes and scenes from the Italian campaign were displayed, along with Danish genre scenes such as *An Old Fisherman Setting Out His Nets in the Evening*.

The presence of five landscapes by Dahl, including not only views of Denmark but also of Norway, might seem surprising given Høyen's criteria emphasizing the artist's nationality and the depiction of native landscapes. However, considering Dahl's significant influence on the development of Danish landscape painting and his role in shaping the perception of Danish nature, his work can be seen as paving the way for many Danish artists of a younger generation in their quest for capturing the truth of nature.[75] In the lecture *On National Art*, Høyen also highlighted that Dahl received his education in Copenhagen, but at the same time he exemplified devotion to his homeland: "Although in our gallery we have beautiful examples showing that he understood how to paint Danish regions, he preferred to paint Norwegian mountains and

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[75] Ibidem, 267.

Kasper Monrad provides an example of Dahl's rugged landscapes, which influenced artists like Fritz Petzholdt. In Petzholdt's painting *A Bog with Peat Cutters. Høsterkøb, North Zealand* (1828), the landscape may not immediately be recognized as typically Danish, as the fir trees and hilly terrain give it the appearance of a Norwegian mountain region.

waterfalls."[76] Moreover, Dahl's understanding of landscape, which he believed "should not only refer to a specific country or region but also encompass the characteristics and nature of the land," likely resonated with Høyen's own interpretation of the role and meaning of landscape painting.[77]

The explanation for many of Høyen's choices can be found not so much in his most frequently cited lectures from 1844 and 1863, but in his lecture *Art in Denmark in the Last Half of the Previous Century from* 1859. While there is no doubt that among all the artists of the older generation, Abildgaard and Juel must have occupied the most space in the Gallery, as they were widely regarded as the pioneers of Danish art, Høyen provides his own explanation for this choice. His judgments, however, are ambiguous, as on the one hand he criticized Juel for being influenced by the French school.[78] On the other hand, he saw the beginnings of patriotic art in Juel's landscapes, especially those from the "idyllic areas in Jægerspris and Fredensborg."[79] Similarly, in the case of Abildgaard, whom Høyen did not consider to be engaged in national matters and whose style must have seemed foreign and peripheral to him, he nonetheless appreciated his attention to detail.[80] For example, regarding Abildgaard's seminal work *Philoctetes* he wrote: "Look at how he stands in this spacious area, how well-modelled is that arm, which bends and grasps the foot! Have we had an artist who could later model an arm with all these details marked in this way?"[81] For the Gallery, Høyen also selected a series of Abildgaard's paintings that illustrate the Danish fantasy novel *Niels Klim's Underground Travels* by Ludwig Holberg (1684–1754). Høyen described the paintings from this cycle as characterized

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[76] Høyen, "Om national Konst," 3:181.

[77] Monrad, *Dansk Guldalder*, 310.

[78] Høyen, "Om national Konst," 3:115.

Høyen notes: "Even a man like Juel, whom I would prefer to mention first, a man in whose individual Danish landscapes in the royal collection we feel that he has been influenced by his paternal air, unfortunately became smooth and slick in the French school."

[79] Niels Laurits Høyen, "Konsten i Danmark i den sidste Halvdel af forrige Aarhundrede," in *Niels Laurits Høyens Skrifter*, 3:214-216.

Høyen describes Juel's landscape: "He had a sense not only of man, but also of nature. How many beautiful landscapes he painted! […] It was the quiet, friendly and peaceful nature of the forest, the calm farmhouse during stormy weather, the beautiful idyllic areas in Jægerspris and Fredensborg. […] In these landscapes we see the first real artistic feature of domestic painting."

[80] Charlotte Christensen, *Maleren Nicolai Abildgaard* (København: Gyldendal, 1999), 10.

[81] Høyen, "Konsten i Danmark," 3:202.

by great skill; moreover, he could relate them to the requirement of selecting themes from native literature or mythology.[82]

Incorporating a significant number of Abildgaard's and Juel's works into the display can therefore be interpreted as a desire to indicate the lineage of Danish art. A trace of such thinking can also be found in Høyen's lecture *A nation's obligation to protect its art* from 1866, in which he explains: "Denmark belongs to the countries that have received works of art completed abroad. [...] Art in this country has existed since the mid-16th century [...], but it could not take root here because it is constantly overwhelmed by new, foreign impressions"; and he concludes, "the first landscape through which one can say that the national spirit passes, we owe to Juel — so late!"[83] This finds support in the fact that Juel's *Storm Brewing behind a Farmhouse in Zealand* was constantly on display in the Gallery.

In his lecture from 1859, Høyen also highlights Eckersberg, later acknowledged as the "father" of Danish art. Although represented in the Gallery by both an Italian landscape, a biblical scene, and two seascapes, for Høyen, he was "the first artist in whom we begin to sense elements [...] of what is national [...]. It was from Eckersberg that nationality in art began to develop in earnest."[84] In the same lecture Høyen highlights other artists whose paintings were particularly distinguished in the Gallery. Among them was Jørgen Sonne, whom Høyen noted as the first artist in the country to demonstrate the potential of themes where ordinary people played the central role.[85] Additionally, Lundbye, Rump, and Skovgaard (each represented by five paintings) are credited with advancing landscape painting, as well as Constantin Hansen for his contributions to genre and historical painting.

Høyen's lecture, illustrated with examples of artists whose works he intended for the Gallery, provides insight into the foundations of the canon of national art according to his concept. Simultaneously, the artists mentioned by him are the focal point of debate in the Danish press, which categorized them as "Nationals" and juxtaposed them with "Cosmopolitans" artists who exhibit foreign influences. Although both factions were represented on the walls of the Gallery, the proportions were unequal. While artists like Exner, Khyn, and Vermehren had

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[82] Ibidem, 210.

[83] Niels Laurits Høyen, "Et Folks Forpligtelse til at værne om sin Konst," in *Niels Laurits Høyens Skrifter*, 3:598-601.

[84] Ibidem.

[85] Ibidem.

between four to six paintings respectively, others such as Balsgaard, Simonsen, Monies, and Buntzen were represented by only two paintings each.

Thus, the display of the Gallery reflected the ongoing conflict on the Danish art scene since the 1840s, which gained strength in the 1850s. In this context, it became not only a field of tensions between two opposing sides but also of manifestation of power. A good example is the case of P.C. Skovgaard's painting *Delhoved Wood near Lake Skarre, Zealand. Afternoon Light*, which was exhibited in Charlottenborg and criticized by *Flyveposten* as evidence of how destructive the influence of others could be on an artist's endeavor.[86] Behind the statement about the influence, there is a clear critique of Høyen's strong impact on the topics chosen by artists. In response to that, Høyen purchased and promptly displayed the painting at the Gallery after the exhibition.[87]

Similar debates arose in the Danish press concerning other paintings exhibited in the Gallery, with criticism extending even to Marstrand, who himself often criticized Høyen. When he displayed his work *Church-Goers Arriving by Boat at the Parish Church of Leksand on Siljan Lake* in 1853 — created after his honeymoon trip to Sweden — he faced negative review from *Flyveposten* for selecting a Scandinavian motif, thereby sympathizing with Høyen's national agenda.[88] However, prior to the exhibition at Charlottenborg, the painting had already been acquired directly from the artist for the royal collection.

Another aspect to consider is that the work was influenced by Marstrand's journey to Sweden and depicts scenes from the Swedish landscape. When combined with the fact that there were slightly more works in the Gallery featuring views of Sweden or Norway, it reveals another dimension of Høyen's approach to promoting "Danishness" in art. Of course, these works were relatively few compared to the entirety of the Gallery, but their presence, or rather the actions related to them, such as removal and suspension, may also reflect the evolving or rather

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[86] Monrad, *Dansk Guldalder*i, 340-341.

[87] Høyen, "Om national konst," 3:178.

Høyen does not explicitly state it, but he subtly implies in his lecture that artists who heed advice tend to achieve greater success: "It is certain that there are artists who are like sensitive plants that close under every touch. We must respect such artists; let them keep their freedom, let them work as best as they can! But there are other artists – and often they are the most distinguished and important – who yearn for encouragement."

[88] See: Sally Schlosser Schmidt, "National kunst & national kunst. Wilhelm Marstrand og P.C. Skovgaards opfattelser af national kunst omkring 1854," *Perspective Journal*, September 2020, https://perspectivejournal.dk/national-kunst-national-kunstwilhelm-marstrand-og-pc-skovgaards-opfattelser-af-national-kunst.

radicalizing approach of Høyen. Even in the 1840s, there were more such paintings on display, aligning with Høyen's thesis from his 1844 lecture, where he emphasized the shared history of the Nordic region in the context of a common revival and the strengthening of bonds. However, the situation changed and in his lecture from 1863 — following the experiences of the First Schleswig War, which influenced the flourishing of national artworks — he states that "the safest and most appropriate way to continue to establish closer contact with our brothers in Sweden and Norway is to solidify our position as Danes, also in our art, to legitimize our nationality, our country, our legends, to show that we do this without needing to use foreign feathers to adorn ourselves."[89] This was reflected in the Gallery's exhibition, where Nordic themes were increasingly replaced with strictly Danish ones, thereby further strengthening the representation of nationally oriented artists.[90]

Looking at the themes of the works represented in the exhibition, the majority depicted Danish landscapes and genre scenes portraying everyday life, primarily of peasants rather than the bourgeoisie (those works were kept in private collections). The display did not include paintings of Danish history, with the exception of a few battle scenes, nor did it feature royal portraits. This was partly because those works were displayed in other parts of Christiansborg Palace or in Frederiksborg Castle, and partly due to the aim of reflecting the transformations within the state. After the abolition of absolute monarchy in 1849, royal art collections became state property, and the Gallery was intended to serve the entire nation.

The situation with the exhibition of still lifes is somewhat different. Although it was customary for the king to purchase paintings primarily to decorate royal residences, and Høyen did not particularly value this genre, the display still included several still lifes (e.g., works by Claudius Ditlev Fritzsch and Otto Ottensen purchased in the 1850s and 1860s). Initially, the king might have influenced this inclusion, and later, it is possible that Thomsen did as well. Additionally, the exhibition maintained, albeit in a visible minority, works by non-Danish artists and subjects unrelated to Denmark, such as foreign landscapes; and while issues of

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[89] Høyen, "Om national konst," 3:182.

See also: Niels Laurits Høyen, "Om Betingelserne for en skandinavisk Nationalkonsts Udvikling," in *Niels Laurits Høyens Skrifter*, 1:359-360.

[90] These tensions often pertained to the relationships among the artists themselves, as evident in Vermehren's critique of Sødring: "What a little conscience he held is lost and is now borrowing from the Düsseldorf School. His pictures are the spitting image of the Norwegian painters". See: Sine Krogh, "The Challenge of Crossing Borders: Danish Art in Paris in 1855," in *Culture and Conflict: Nation-Building in Denmark and Scandinavia 1800-1930*, eds. Sine Krogh, Thor J. Mednick, and Karina Lykke Grand (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2022), 68.

Scandinavism remained present, the emphasis was clearly on Denmark. At the same time, Høyen continued his pro-national campaign in lectures. In 1863, pointing to Dutch artists as an example, he argued that those who traveled to Italy and then painted southern landscapes became monotonous compared to those who chose their own homeland as the subject of their paintings.[91]

The contribution of the older generation of Danish artists was also significant, as their works played a crucial role in shaping the entire Danish section of the exhibition. The substantial numbers of works by Abildgaard and Juel likely reflect an ambition to trace the origins of Danish art, and might resonate with Kugler's concept of art history's continuity from its beginning to the present, which framed the construction of national art and what would later be recognized as the nation's heritage.

The emerging picture of the Gallery is ambiguous, defying the clarity longed for by critics, as non-Danish themes persist on the walls and the final selection consists of paintings of two conflicted factions. This reflects the tensions accompanying the process of transition of the Gallery to its new role as a space that presents a panoramic vista of contemporary Danish artistic expression. Undoubtedly, a paramount force in this context was Hoyen, whose intellectual acumen in the sphere of national artistic theory was symbiotically intertwined with his practical stewardship of the museum practice. His views permeate the evolutionary trajectory of the Gallery's curation, evident in the transitions observed from the revisions of 1840 through to the zenith of the 1860s.

Hans Vammen aptly articulates this notion when discussing the trajectory of political thought in Denmark. Vammen explained that as long as critical romanticism dominated intellectual life, Høyen's ideological position was consistent with this trend. However, after 1838, Høyen became closer to national liberalism — which historically can be described as a split within critical romanticism — and his views on history, nationality, as well as the role of art were developed through his interactions with the younger national-liberal environment.[92] The political endorsement Høyen garnered in the mid-1840s from the national liberals, and consequently from sympathetic press outlets such as *Fædrelandet*, along with his pervasive influence across Copenhagen's artistic institutions, are crucial to understanding the strength of his position and the legitimization of his actions in the Gallery. In this sense, as rightly

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[91] Høyen, "Om national konst," 3:180.

[92] Hans Vammen, "Kritisk romantik – om opfattelsen af den danske guldalder. I anledning af en disputats om N. L. Høyen," *Historisk Tidsskrift* 15, no. 2 (1987), 22.

underscored by Sine Krogh, Høyen ought to be viewed as a representative figure of the supportive network that underpinned his initiatives.[93]

However, Høyen's power encountered significant resistance. During the initial revision, the primary source of tension lay between the king and the inspector, evident in both purchasing policy and exhibition strategy. While Høyen championed the acquisition of works by "Nationals", the king preferred a more cosmopolitan approach, striving to counterbalance the inspectors' preferences. The presence of works that deviated from Høyen's canon in the display can therefore be understood as a result of a compromise between the royal collection and the inspectors' acquisitions.

In turn, in the later stages of the Gallery's development, following political changes, as Høyen's views matured and became more radical, the artistic community itself partly turned into an opposition force. For instance, in 1860, the Art Association submitted a request to the ministry demanding intervention in the organization of the Gallery. The protests centered on Høyen's selective acquisition and display policies.[94] Although this request was ultimately rejected, a purchasing committee appointed by the ministry began to operate. This committee, possibly in collaboration with Thomsen, took over the royal purchasing approach after Christian VIII, striving to maintain balanced representation in the development of national art.

The accusation of selectivity was certainly not unfounded, as Høyen's favoritism towards national artists was evident in his actions. Høyen was biased and excluded many artists, regardless of the quality of their work if it did not match his criteria. Charlotte Christensen emphasizes this point, stating that "Høyen had a catastrophic blindness to the qualities that make a great painter [...]; thus, in his zeal for national education, he was blind to the desires of Danish artists."[95] Christensen rightly notes that artists were trapped in enforced loyalty to the academy, the king, and the inspectors responsible for acquisitions for the royal painting collection.

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[93] This topic is further developed in Sine Krogh's doctoral dissertation. See: Krogh, *Grænsegængere: Konflikter om nationalæstetik*, PhD dissertation, Aarhus University, 2021.

[94] Villadsen, *Statens Museum for Kunst*, 68.

On Høyen's initiative, a counter-association called the the Society for Nordic Art was established, with about 200 members, and began to buy contemporary Danish art. The Association was an active "Høyenian" stronghold in the following years of fighting, but was not as profitable as the Art Association. It operated until 1876.

[95] Charlotte Christensen, *Guldalderens billedverden* (København: Gyldendal, 2019), 54.

For an extensive analysis of Danish landscape painters who extend beyond the traditional canon see: Gertrud Oelsner *En fælles forestillet nation: Dansk landskabsmaleri 1807-1875* (København: Strandberg Publishing, 2021).

Therefore, the canon of 19th-century Danish art would look entirely different if these acquisitions had better reflected the actual artistic scene in Denmark, as evidenced by the artists who exhibited at Charlottenborg but whose works never appeared on the Gallery's walls.

Ultimately, the tension in the process of shaping the Copenhagen's Gallery revolved around defining the character of this museum. Høyen, backed by a formidable network, orchestrated the inaugural permanent exhibition of Danish national art, proclaiming, "If we create an arrangement according to what we think is best, the audience must like it [...]. The audience needs to learn the right things, if not now, then in ten or twenty years."[96] In its final shape, the core of the exhibition consisted of works by artists whom Høyen personally championed, with themes that corresponded to his vision of national art. Many of these artists have since become integral to the canon of Danish art, and their works still resonate within this framework.

6.3. Fluctuating Fortunes. Reception and Meaning of Høyen's Display

The initial attention should be turned to C.C. Andersen's painting from 1882, portraying the Royal Painting Collection in Christiansborg [see fig. 45 on page 190]. Amidst crimson walls adorned with paintings framed in subtle gold, a sculpture portraying Berthel Thorvaldsen stands prominently, illuminated by a radiant beam of light from the left.[97] While this significant portrayal carries much symbolic resonance, the paintings adorning the Gallery walls around it are far more important. Commencing from the the left side of the door, one encounters Wilhelm Marstrand's *The Suitor's Visit* (1857), positioned below Heinrich Hansen's *View from Gammel Strand towards Christiansborg* (1868, acquired in the same year). Positioned above the door is Vilhelm Groth's landscape, *Heath with a bog* (1874, acquired in the same year). To the right of the door, Anton Melbye's *An Episode of the Naval Battle in Køge Bugt* (1677) hangs alongside Jørgen Roed's *Zealand Harvest Girls at a Well* (1850). Moving to the wall on the right, the top row features Carl Neumann's *Ships after a Storm* (1867), C.G. Kratzenstein Stub's *Ossian and*

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[96] Cit. per.: Kirsten-Elizabeth Høgsbro, "N.L. Høyen og Chr. J. Thomsen," in *Meddelelser fra Thorvaldsens Museum* (1994), 180.

[97] This is a cast of the original from the Thorvaldsen Museum, although there is no such work in the catalogues of the Christiansborg collection.

Alpin's Son (1816), and Anton Melbye's *Eddystone Lighthouse* (1846). While three paintings adorn the bottom row, only two are readily identifiable: Jørgen Sonne's *Jutland Farmers on their Way Home from Market with their Horses* (1870) and Constantin Hansen's *Ægir's Feast* (1870), both acquired in the same year.

Out of the ten paintings that can be identified, six hung in Høyen's gallery, while the remainder largely adhered to his established direction. H. Hansen's genre scene situated in front of Christiansborg Palace depicts an ordinary trading day, featuring fishmongers and pedestrians, alongside the historic landmarks of Copenhagen, such as the Royal Palace and the Old Stock Market [Børsen], which loom over the canals. Additionally, the *Jutland Farmers* represents one of the most highlighted artists in the Gallery, and C. Hansen's *Ægir's Feast*, which explores Nordic mythology, is a painting acquired from the collection of a prominent national liberal politician Orla Lehmann. Simultaneously exhibited are works by Melbye, who, despite being "cosmopolitan", found a place in Høyen's final Gallery configuration, as well as Groth's landscape, a modernist-oriented painter whose aim was to challenge the national romantic tradition represented by Høyen.[98]

Hence, if this portrayal should be considered representative of the Gallery's state a decade after Høyen's tenure, it reveals a continuation of the trajectory he established. The canon of Danish national art, as defined by Høyen, persists, as further confirmed by subsequent catalogues of the collection. The framework presenting works from both national and cosmopolitan perspectives also endures, albeit with the latter occupying a minority position. This continuity underscores that despite facing opposition and criticism, Høyen's narrative is perpetuated by his direct successors, notably Otto Rosenørn-Lehn (1821–1892), director of the Royal Collection of Paintings [Den Kongelige Malerisamling] and the National History Museum at Frederiksborg Castle [Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot]; and the art historian Emil Bloch (1836–1914). Bloch, employed as an inspector in the Royal Painting Collections in 1870, ascended to the position of director in 1896.

Rosenørn-Lehn as director and Bloch as curator of the collection continued to focus on Danish art, and led to the expansion of dedicated exhibition spaces. This development was highlighted in a press report from 1875, which noted: "Under Bloch's curatorship, significant transformations were made to the physical layout of the collection. An entire row of spacious, bright rooms was added to accommodate the growing Danish department. Over time, these walls

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[98] John Hutchinson, "Introduction. Denmark as a Zone of Conflict," in Krogh, et al., *Culture and Conflict*, 21.

became adorned with annual acquisitions of Danish paintings, including significant and valuable works of art."[99] The reception of the Gallery by Høyen's successors was therefore intertwined with activities aimed at continuity. At this juncture, it is crucial to examine how this reception unfolded within a broader context.

The impact of Høyen's decisions is discernible not only in the discourse within the Danish press but also in the accounts of visits to the Gallery by travelers and authors unaffiliated with the art scene. One such example is Andrew Hamilton, a Scottish traveler who spent six months in Denmark between 1849-1850. In his review, he initially provides a general overview of the entire royal collection, deeming it small and largely unremarkable, yet sufficient to enjoy for a great deal of time.[100] Regarding Danish art, he observes that "within recent time the art of painting has made much progress in Denmark. There reigns an admirable taste over the school, as is evident from the changing character of its production"; however, he also highlights that not all displayed paintings are of the highest quality and suggests that those inaccessible to the public should in turn be made available.[101] Of particular interest is his commentary on P.C. Skovgaard, whom he lauds as an artist of eminent reputation: "one landscape of his, in the National Gallery, of a beech forest, took my fancy, and I found that he excels in delineations of Danish scenery; he has not traveled, nor does he intend to do so in the meantime, as he believes he can find ample inspiration in the tranquil landscapes of his homeland."[102]

Hamilton's comments presents several noteworthy aspects. Firstly, his use of the term "school" in reference to the Danish section is significant, as this terminology had rarely been employed previously. Even the gallery guidebooks typically referred to the artists as "living artists"or "Danish masters". Secondly, his choice to label the institution as the National Gallery, despite its formal designation as the Royal Painting Collection, is notable, as it may mark one of the earliest instances of an external source using this name in such a manner. Finally, Hamilton's emphasis on the artist's attachment to the native landscape is not without a meaning. Such a nuanced interpretation of Høyen's vision, both concerning art itself and the establishment of a national art school and institution, is unlikely to have been coincidental. The fact that Høyen personally guided Hamilton through the Gallery and was among the individuals whom the

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[99] *Dagbaldet*, no. 128, June 7, 1875.

[100] Andrew Hamilton, *Sixteen Months in the Danish Isles* (London: Richard Bentley, 1854), 1:74-75.

[101] Ibidem, 76-78.

[102] Ibidem.

traveler met during his stay in Copenhagen strongly suggests Høyen's palpable influence on Hamilton's perspective.

Nonetheless, the presentation offering an insightful panorama of contemporary Danish art — though marked by subjective curatorial selections — resonated significantly not only within descriptive narratives but also in city guidebooks. For instance, Baedeker's guide from 1890 remarked: "The Danish section of the gallery encompasses nearly all the modern paintings, affording a comprehensive overview of contemporary Danish artistic endeavors. The Danes distinguished an earlier, classical tendency, of which Abildgaard and Carstens are the chief representatives, and a modern school, headed by Eckersberg.[103] Thus, while accentuating the lineage of Danish artistic heritage, the guidebook also acknowledges the twenty-year trajectory of the Gallery's evolution, wherein the eminence of Eckersberg was distinctly underscored, with his oeuvre and that of his disciples forming the cornerstone of the exposition on contemporary Danish art. The guidebook then proceeds to enumerate the displayed artworks, with prominence granted to pieces by Vermehren, Skovgaard, Marstrand, Rump, Kobke, Lundbye, and Dalsgaard, whereas works by Sondring and Simonsen are relatively scarce.

Another interesting observation is found in a guide to Copenhagen published in 1857, where the author, while expressing admiration for the arrangement of the exhibition, raises concerns about the influence of the artistic association founded by Høyen and hints at a discernible bias in the arrangement of the collection: "The paintings are rather fortunately placed, featuring the best or most highly regarded works of Danish artists, over whom the Society for Nordic Art seems to watch. It also seems that some bias in artistic views may be intentional."[104] He also argues that the suspended paintings could be replaced with others from time to time, so that connoisseurs could discover the hidden treasures of the collection.[105] Thus, echoes of Høyen's initiatives and their evaluations reverberate not only within artistic circles or the art-focused press but also in a slightly broader context.

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[103] Karl Baedeker, *Northern Germany as far as the Bavarian and Austrian frontiers with excursions to Copenhagen and the danish islands. Handbook for travelers* (Leipsic: Karl Baedeker Publisher, 1890), 206-207.

[104] Claudius Nosenhoff, *Illustreret Beiviser og beskrivelse over Byen og Omegnen* (Kjøbenhavn: Forlag af Rittendorf og Aagaards, 1857), 168-169.
He also suggests that it would be beneficial, especially for the general public, who may sometimes struggle with finding their way around the gallery, to include plaques next to the paintings displaying the name of the painter and the work, also to prevent individuals from getting too close to the paintings.

[105] Ibidem.

When it comes to criticism, however, it is chiefly articulated by subsequent generations of art historians. A certain degree of shift in perspective is already visible in the circles of Høyen's students, like Julius Lange (1838-1896), who in 1870 assumed Høyen's position at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, and from 1875, he held a similar role at the University of Copenhagen. Lange observes that "what Høyen taught regarding the relationship between nationality and art no longer holds practical relevance in our era," highlighting a certain anachronism in Høyen's conceptual framework, which "evolved […] long before Denmark saw the first railway or telegraph lines."[106] Viewing matters from the standpoint of a generation for whom the changes of the 1840s had already become historical events, Lange perceives his country's situation to be vastly different from the crises and conflicts of the preceding half-century. Within artistic circles, motivations for art were now sought from entirely distinct sources, with a growing openness to the evolution of art from a European standpoint: "There is no resistance to the influence of foreign art, especially French […], whose opulence and brilliance are admired, in contrast to domestic scarcity."[107] Simultaneously, Lange questions whether art should strive for internal national unity at all, concluding that the absence of heated debate on this issue is indicative of the absence of a force capable of advocating for it.[108]

At any rate, dissenting voices were abundant, as critics expanded their scope to target not only Høyen himself but also the artists he championed. One of the most scathing critiques came from art historian Emil Hannover (1864-1923), who stated: "The ringing appeal to the nationalist consciousness was enunciated by Hoyen, whose propensity for aesthetic preachment even rivaled that of Ruskin. This movement, which paved the way for Dalsgaard, Exner, Vermehren and similar exponents of peasant genre, failed to achieve significant results for the reason that its devotes were lacking in technical proficiency. […] If the school of Eckersberg taught the Danish artist what to paint, it was the school of Skagen that taught him how to paint."[109] Hannover's critique emanates from a stance of backlash against conservatism, both culturally and politically, and from the viewpoint of a generation that rebelled against traditional cultural motifs, particularly during the Romantic period. In contrast to the Eckersberg school, the artists from Skagen epitomize a perspective that resonates with the radical departure from tradition occurring

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[106] Julius Lange, *Vor kunst og udlandets, et foredrag* (København: P.G. Philipsens Forlag, 1879), 7.

[107] Ibidem, 9.

[108] Ibidem.

[109] Emil Hannover, et. al., *Scandinavian art* (New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1922), 22.

across Europe, notably in France. Although the Skagen artists portrayed the everyday lives of those around them, their style diverged from idealization and nationalization of subjects. In the face of mounting criticism, shifting attitudes and sentiments, as well as emerging new trends, has the approach to represent Danish national painting in the National Gallery evolved?

6.3.1. Deconstruction of the Canon?

The photograph by Holger Damgaard captures a fragment of the exhibition within a newly constructed building exclusively designated for the art museum in Copenhagen, completed between 1889 and 1896 [fig. 47]. The decision to build it arose following the fire of Christiansborg Palace in 1884, rendering the need for a separate venue for the collection. Subsequently, upon relocation of the collection to its dedicated premises, the museum officially opened its doors in 1896 under the direction of Bloch. However, it was no longer named the Royal Painting Collection [Den Kongelige Malerisamling], but the National Gallery of Denmark [Statens Museum for Kunst].

Although this photograph was taken in the first half of the 20th century, it appears to encapsulate the enduring spirit of Høyen and his curatorial vision within the exhibition space. The entire room is dedicated to showcasing works by artists whose works formed the cornerstone of the canon established by Høyen's gallery. Among the identified paintings are those originally displayed at Christiansborg Palace, such as Frederik Kraft's *View of Færgelunden at Jægerspris* (1848), Vilhelm Kyhn's *After Sunset on the Outskirts of a Village* (1863), Johan Thomas Lundbye's *A Cowshed on a Farm at Vejby, Zealand* (1844), as well as Wilhelm Marstrand's *From Ludvig Holberg's 'Erasmus Montanus'* (1844), and *Church-Goers Arriving by Boat at the Parish Church of Leksand on Siljan Lake* (1853). Additionally, Constantin Hansen's *Portrait of a Little Girl, Elise Købke, with a Cup in front of her* (1850) and Johan Thomas Lundbye's *A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor* (1847) are featured, although they were acquired for the collection during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Dominating the upper right corner is a portrait of Høyen by Marstrand, serving as both a testament to his enduring influence and a symbol of his role as the architect of this artistic canon.

Paintings depicting scenes of rural life and the Danish countryside served as vehicles for fostering a collective sense of community and national pride in Denmark. This endeavor was intricately linked to the overarching vision championed by Høyen, wherein the artworks in the Gallery were intended to articulate the experiences of ordinary individuals. Through these

depictions, the display sought to construct a network of cultural references that resonated with the broader Danish populace, thereby fostering a heightened awareness of Danish national identity. In this light, the impact of Høyen's initiatives can be understood as inherently canon-formative, echoing Jan Assmann's characterization of canon as "the principle governing the collective construction and stabilization of identity, which concurrently underpins individual identity."[110] Furthermore, as Assmann suggests, the formation of a canon often coincides with periods of societal upheaval — a context that was palpable in Denmark during this era. From a broader perspective, the process of canon formation within the Danish artistic milieu mirrors broader shifts occurring in European museums during the 19th century, intertwining with romantic ideals of folk culture and national history.[111]

Høyen's canon exerted a profound and lasting influence, with specific paintings emerging as quintessential representations of their respective genres. This enduring impact is apparent not only in the part of permanent display at the Statens Museum for Kunst during the 1950s but also in subsequent exhibitions. While a comprehensive analysis of all exhibitions devoted to 19th-century Danish art is beyond the scope of this discussion, a discernible pattern can be identified in several instances.

The first example to consider is the catalogue *Dansk Guldalder. Hovedværker på Statens Museum for Kunst*, which showcases the most significant artists and works from Statens Museum for Kunst's Danish collection. This catalogue enumerates 17 seminal artists whose works are regarded as quintessential, including V. Khyn, J.T. Lundbye, P.C. Skovgaard, C. Købke, W. Marstrand, F. Sødring, J. Roed, Constantin Hansen, W. Bendz, M. Rørbye, D. Blunck, C.A. Jensen, C.W. Eckersberg, J. Juel, and N. Abildgaard. Notably, only C.A. Jensen was not originally featured in Høyen's gallery. Furthermore, the list features pieces, such as Abildgaard's *Philoctetes*, Juel's landscape with farmhouse in Zealand, Blunck's *Portrait of the Copperplate Engraver C.E. Sonne*, Wilhelm Bendz's *A Young Artist Examining a Sketch in a Mirror*, Købke's view of Sortedam Lake, P.C. Skovgaard's *Delhoved Wood near Lake Skarre*, and view of a

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[110] Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1992), 127.

[111] Dominique Poulot, "The changing roles of art museums," in *National museums and nation building in Europe 1750-2019. Mobilization and legitimacy, continuity and change*, eds. Peter Aronsson, Gabriella Elgenius (London: Routledge, 2015), 99.

Danish coast by J.T. Lundbye's Danish Coast.[112] These selections underscore the lasting impact of Høyen's curatorial choices, as they continue to be displayed as exemplars of 19th-century Danish art, reinforcing the canon established under his influence.

The long-lasting influence of Høyen's thought is further illustrated by a critical review of the permanent exhibition of the Danish collection at Statens Museum for Kunst, opened after re-arrangements in May 2011 under the title *Danish and Nordic Art 1750-1900*. In his review, Stuart Burch criticized the museum for a nationalistic approach that seems to actually follow Høyen's adivice: "For if Høyen were alive today he would surely be delighted to see that in, the year 2011, Statens Museum for Kunst had the audacity to give the title 'Danish and Nordic Art' to an exhibition in which 356 out of 392 works are by Danish artists."[113] The advantage of Danish artists and the inclusion of works by foreign artists solely to bolster Danish national identity, exemplified by figures like C.G. Pilo, echo Høyen's narrative about the significance of artists such as Dahl for the generation of Danish artists.

Two years after the opening of the new permanent exhibition at Statens Museum for Kunst, the temporary exhibition *Gold - Treasures from the Danish Golden Age* was opened in Aarhus with the aim of presenting lesser-known narratives and offering a fresh perspective on the Danish Golden Age period, subtly challenging traditional interpretations. The exhibition began with a section dedicated to society portraits of the era, while the next section focused almost exclusively on Danish landscape, featuring a considerable number of works by Skovgaard and Lundbye. Additionally, there was a section titled *Pictures of Denmark*, which effectively encapsulated all the motifs central to Høyen's vision. Therefore, in seeking new perspectives, one must turn to sections devoted to drawing, cloud or architecture studies, and artistic journeys. While the essays in the exhibition catalogue, particularly those expanding on new themes, partially introduced a different narrative, the exhibition's structure largely adhered to traditional frameworks, reinforcing the established perception.

In the recurring narrative about the so-called Danish Golden Age and its firmly established art canon in Danish museology, a shift occurred with the 2019 exhibition at Statens Museum for Kunst, titled *Danish Golden Age: World-class Art Between Disasters*. The very title of the exhibition marked a departure from the traditional confines of the Golden Age, which is

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[112] Kasper Monrad, *Dansk Guldalder. Hovedværker på Statens Museum for Kunst* (Københavns: Statens Museum for Kunst, 1994).

[113] Stuart Burch, "Ude godt, hjemme bedst," *Danske Museer*, no. 5 (2011), 10.

typically considered to have ended around 1850 with the First Schleswig War and the fall of absolute monarchy. Instead, the timeframe was extended to encompass 1864, the year of the Second Schleswig War. Within this scope, the exhibition provided a broad overview of Danish art and culture. It began with an exploration of Copenhagen's role, set against the backdrop of the changing political landscape and armed conflicts, and examined the rising power of the bourgeoisie, particularly as new patrons of the arts. Moreover, it highlighted the influence of Art Academy and artistic networks, offering a nuanced portrayal of Copenhagen's art circles. In addition, there were themes already known from the exhibition in Aarhus, such as artistic journeys and outdoor studies. The critical question, however, is what impact did extending the chronological framework have on the exhibition's narrative?

The rationale behind this expansion was to broaden the artistic scope, creating space for a greater number of marginalized artists, as well as examination of the later development of the work of those painters who established Danish art, such as P.C. Skovgaard. This was achieved at the exhibition by highlighting artists such as Johan Ludvig Lund, Louis Gurlitt, and Ditlev Blunck, and by broadening the selection of flower painters to include Otto Ottensen and Johan Laurentz Jensen. The exhibition also featured works by women artists, notably Elisabeth Jerichau-Baumann, Hermania Neergaard, and Christine Løvmand. However, when examining the inclusion of artists in the Gallery in Christiansborg, it becomes evident that, apart from Jerichau-Baumann and Løvmand, the majority of these artists were already represented in the collection. Consequently, the ratio between canonical and excluded artists remained skewed in favor of the former, thereby challenging the extent to which the criterion of exploring late development could be adequately met. On the other hand, the fact that numerous key artists of this era did not live into the latter half of the 1860s, impede efforts to capture the entirety of this period's artistic evolution.

Although the exhibition provided an unprecedentedly broad perspective on this period in Danish art, the attempt to deconstruct the canon by extending the time frame — and thus to include new artists and new themes — revealed the entrenched nature of the Golden Age art canon. It also underscored the inherent challenges faced by an institution such as National Gallery, which historically served as an arena for nation-building processes, in the efforts to redefine its foundational narratives. Operating on the premise that a national museum encapsulates the essence of a nation, its people, culture, and history makes the task of redefining established canons particularly difficult. This was demonstrated by the Copenhagen exhibition,

revealing how deeply rooted canonical narratives are and how resistant to transformation they can be, even with efforts to broaden and diversify the artistic scope.

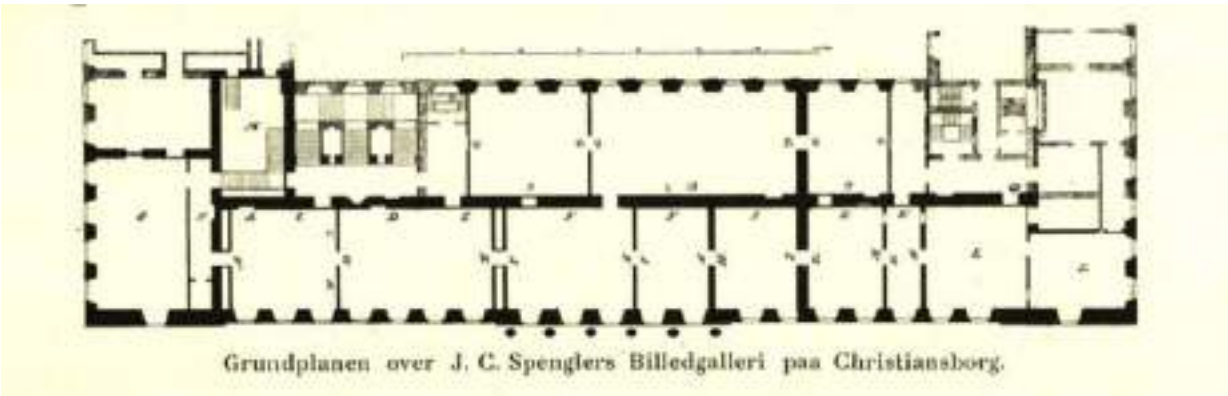

Fig. 42

Floor plan, Royal Picture Gallery in Christiansborg. Source: Peter Hertz, “Malerisamlingens tilvækst og tilpasning gennem tiderne. Galleriet under Spengler og Høyens revision,” *Kunstmuseets Aarsskrift* (1924-1925)

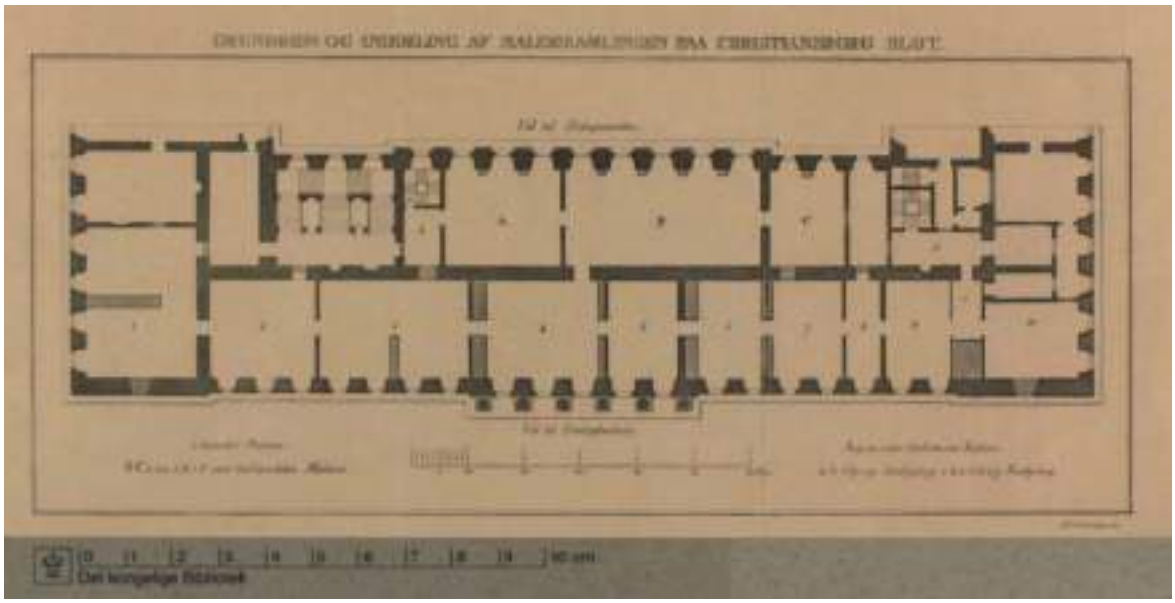

Fig. 43

Floor plan, Royal Picture Gallery in Christiansborg, 1840, Billedsamlingen. Topografisk samling, København, Royal Library, Copenhagen

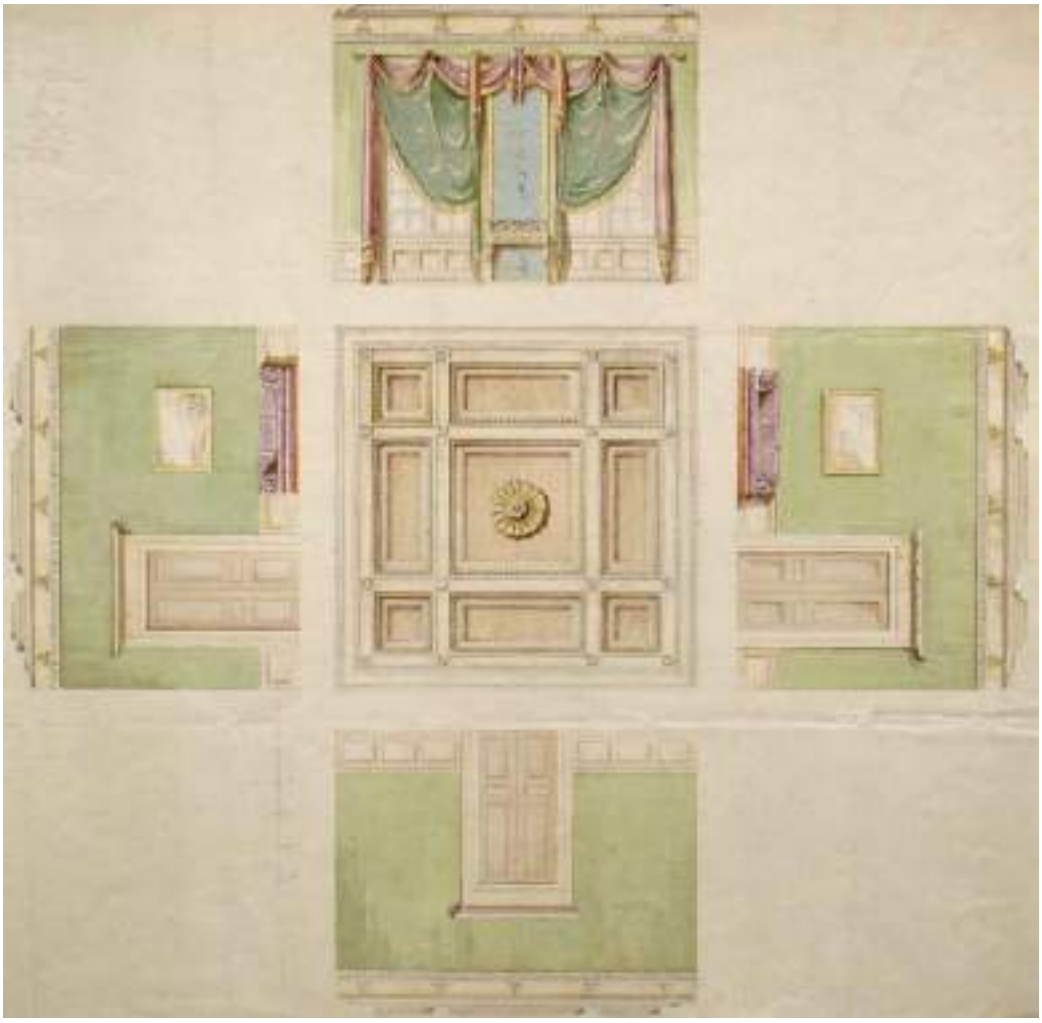

Fig. 44

Hansen Kock, Project of the furnishing for Christiansborg Palace, 1827, Kongernes Samling, Amalienborg

Fig. 45

Carl Christian Andersen, *View of the Royal Collection of Paintings at Christiansborg Palace*, 1882, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst

Fig. 46

Carl Christian Andersen, *Portrait of Niels Laurits Høyen and Fritz Ferdinand Petersen*, 1870-1880, etching, Statens Museum for Kunst

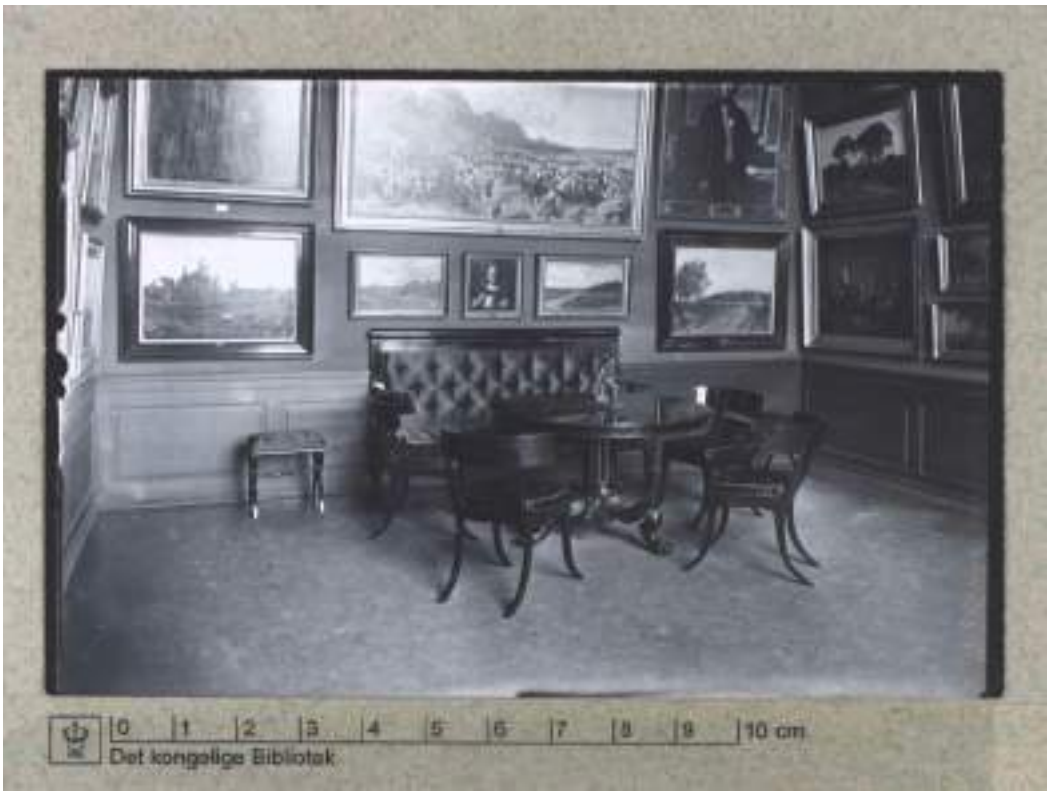

Fig. 47

Holger Damgaard, Permanent Exhibition at the Statens Museum for Kunst, 1900-1945, photography, Billedsamlingen. Topografisk samling, Royal Library, Copenhagen

CONCLUSION

At the frieze that still adorns the Thorvaldsen Museum, created by Jørgen Sonne — one of the foremost artists of the Danish Golden Age — one can find depiction of Bertel Thorvaldsen's return to Copenhagen in 1838 after many years spent in Rome [see fig. 2 on page 57]. The crowd welcoming the eminent artist comprises both ordinary residents and prominent figures from Copenhagen's artistic and political spheres in the 1840s. Among them are poets and philosophers, such as Hans Christian Andersen, Adam Oehlenschläger, and Nicolai Grundtvig, as well as politicians like Orla Lehmann. The gathering includes artists such as Jørgen Roed, Constantin Hansen, and Christen Købke, alongside with the art historian and director of the royal collections, Niels Laurits Høyen.

The frieze is not only a vivid record of a time when absolutism was waning in Denmark, and a new force was emerging in the form of the bourgeoisie, with artistic life vibrating more intensely than ever before. It also perpetuates the symbolic moment of the return of Denmark's key artist, whose presence on the artistic scene in the country and beyond was closely linked to the perception of the role of art and culture in shaping national identity. It was within this context that Høyen's vision of national art was shaped, rooted in celebrating Danish heritage and cultivating national sentiment.

Just a year after Thorvaldsen returned to Copenhagen and intensified efforts on a museum dedicated to his works — the first in Denmark to be established through national efforts rather than to be based on royal collection — Høyen assumed the position of inspector at the Royal Gallery in Christiansborg Palace. Sonne's frieze, created by an artist within Høyen's circle, encapsulates the atmosphere of the milieu that nurtured both Høyen and his supportive network. His positions in the most important artistic institutions in Copenhagen, direct contacts with artists, and impact on their educational process, along with political support in national liberal circles, underscore his role as an actor representing a complex network of influences. As the first to hold a chair of art history in Denmark, serving as a docent of art history at the University of Copenhagen and a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, as well as an active lecturer and critic, Høyen wielded profound influence on the development of art history as an academic discipline in Denmark. Furthermore, his actions had a long-lasting impact on shaping the foundations of the most important Danish art museum.

Therefore, the overarching objective of this study was to address a previously uncharted facet of Høyen's tenure as a museologist, scrutinizing the degree to which his theory concerning

national art permeated his curatorial methodologies and the ensuing ramifications thereof. In pursuit of this goal, it became imperative to delineate, on the one hand, the intricacies involved in the formation of national identity and historical consciousness in 19th-century Denmark. Thus, contextualizing the major transformations and profound socio-political upheavals characterizing the Danish landscape during that epoch was essential, given their considerable impact on the conceptualization of national identity. On the other hand, a critical aspect of this research entailed examining the contextual backdrop of the museum domain. Tracing the trajectory of Danish museums, from their origins as royal collections during the era of absolute monarchy to their transformation into state-sanctioned institutions, served to elucidate the evolution and significance of the Royal Picture Gallery in shaping Danish national identity. Investigating the inception of the Gallery at Christiansborg, opened to the public under the stewardship of Johan Conrad Spengler, not only revealed the origins of the Royal Painting Collection and underscored the achievements of its early custodians, but also shed light on further contributions made by Høyen.

With the broad scope of his activity, Høyen was among the pioneering art historians affiliated with academies and museums, who were crucial figures in the early stages of professionalization of the museum field. In this context, art history assumed fundamental role in fostering and advancing national identity, and scholars engaged in establishing national art institutions carried the foremost obligation of advocating for their cultural legacy. An exploration of Høyen's functions as an art historian and museologist, significantly enriched by archival materials, unveiled a notably intricate portrayal of the scholar, including shifts in emphasis within his methodologies, and his conception of national art. This examination allowed for the illumination of his less emphasized contributions to Danish museology and impact on the cultural landscape beyond his tenure at the Royal Picture Gallery, including his considerations regarding the arrangement of museum space.

Examining the complexities of Høyen's efforts to curate the display at the Royal Picture Gallery according to his theory of national art, revealed how his evolving perspectives impacted his selection criteria for artworks and sparked debates within the Danish art scene. The endeavor to encapsulate the theory of national art, which aimed to mirror the essence of the Danish nation, was crucial in determining Høyen's criteria for display at the Royal Picture Gallery. Central to Høyen's vision was the cultivation of Danish national sentiment, predominantly through the exhibition of contemporary Danish art. From his perspective, a piece of art could only be deemed Danish if it was created by a Danish artist and executed in a style distinctly recognizable as

Danish, often grounded in themes drawn from Danish history, mythology, everyday life, and the landscape. Although initially enthusiastic about themes derived from Norse history and mythology as a shared heritage among the Scandinavian nations — thus fostering a sense of collective cultural identity amidst conflicts with Prussia — Høyen's views eventually evolved into a more radical stance, placing the notion of "Danishness" at the forefront.

Thus, this research not only demonstrated the primary criteria employed by Høyen in organizing the Gallery but also delineated the critical points of discussion surrounding the artists and displayed works. Just as Høyen's ideas and actions demonstrated considerable complexity, mirroring the intricate political landscape of the era, the establishment of the foundation of Denmark's National Gallery was deeply intertwined with broader political and ideological currents. Consequently, Høyen's efforts to shape a national artistic canon encountered criticism from various quarters. The artistic community, in particular, scrutinized Høyen's selectivity with a discerning eye. Furthermore, the Danish press hosted extensive deliberations — arguably the most significant in the Danish art realm of that time — dividing artists into "Nationalists" or "Cosmopolitans" based on the themes they explored and whether their works were selected for the Gallery in the first place.

The study adeptly delineates the tensions inherent in the establishment of the Gallery, while simultaneously emphasizing the crucial role of Høyen, bolstered by his influential network, in conceptualizing the Royal Picture Gallery as the cornerstone of the National Gallery of Denmark. Furthermore, the comprehensive analysis of the transformative changes in the Royal Picture Gallery unveils another significant yet often overlooked collaboration between Høyen and Christian Jürgensen Thomsen. Insight into their collaborative efforts in shaping purchasing policies and operational mechanisms provided a nuanced understanding of the Gallery's evolution during their tenure. Despite the limited documentation of their collaboration, extracting Thomsen's contribution enabled to glean a more nuanced understanding of the exhibition creation processes, while also revealing the origins of inaccuracies and ambiguities in Høyen's arrangement. While it was affirmed that Høyen was the primary agent of change, it became apparent that his vision for the gallery was not fully realized, as the final selection of paintings necessitated compromise to some extent. Initially, opposition to Høyen's choices stemmed from the king, yet this compromise persisted—albeit on a smaller scale—even after the royal collections transitioned to state ownership. Subsequently, the purchasing committee and, to some extent, Thomsen himself, sought to reconcile Høyen's selection with broader considerations, perpetuating the necessity for compromise within the Gallery.

The detailed review of the changes implemented by Høyen underscored also transformation in the arrangement of the collection of old masters. The shift from a chronological order to an aesthetic display of the old masters collection represented a noteworthy departure from conventional methods. Furthermore, the scrutiny of the segment devoted to contemporary Danish art unveiled the Gallery's evolution from a repository of royal collections to a vibrant platform showcasing the tensions and innovations in modern Danish art. Despite encountering resistance and controversy, Høyen's efforts ultimately elevated the Gallery to a a central hub within the Danish art scene.

This research unveiled the complexities inherent in Høyen's theory and museum practice, elucidating the entanglement with broader political and ideological currents of the era. Traditionally, he has been predominantly discussed for his theoretical perspectives, yet the extent to which these perspectives manifest in exhibition practices, and the interplay between Høyen as a theorist and practitioner, remained largely unexplored. Thus, a key aspect of this thesis involves the first reconstruction of Høyen's gallery from 1840 to 1870, which serves as the basis for defining the canon of art in 19th-century Denmark. The reconstruction, achieved through meticulous archival research, including procurement documentation, object lists, inventories or gallery guides, facilitated a critical analysis of the Gallery's development, challenging prevailing narratives. Contrary to conventional assumptions, the revealed image of the Gallery is significantly more nuanced, reflecting the tensions within the Danish art scene and featuring works by artists who diverged from Høyen's criteria. While Høyen successfully established a permanent exhibition of contemporary Danish art based on his vision, the study underscores the intricacies and controversies inherent in his endeavors.

By scrutinizing Høyen's theory alongside the alterations made to the Gallery's display, it became feasible to underscore the dynamic interplay between theory and practice in shaping Danish museology during this period. This not only encapsulated the essence of Høyen's exhibition but also delved into a previously unexplored inquiry concerning the reciprocal relationship between his exhibition methodologies and theoretical constructs. Høyen's lectures, which articulated his theory of national art, spanned from the mid-1840s to the mid-1860s, aligning with transformative processes occurring within the Gallery. However, while his lecture in 1844 still touched upon Nordic themes and was marked by tensions between the king and the curator, subsequent years witnessed a crystallization of his perspectives. Lectures during this period elucidated his visions of national art, and these evolving theoretical stances directly influenced exhibition practices, particularly evident in the significant changes observed in the

Gallery's configuration in 1850s and 1860s. Consequently, the evolution of Høyen's theoretical framework mirrored the development of the Gallery, serving as a dynamic arena where Høyen promptly translated his theoretical assumptions into practical application. As a result, a significant shift is made in the existing approach, as what was previously considered the key revision of the Gallery, namely the changes implemented in the 1840s, was merely the beginning of further changes. As demonstrated in this study, the culmination of Høyen's actions occurred in the subsequent decades, with the establishment of the Gallery falling within the timeframe of the 1850s-1860s.

Lastly, this study delves into the nuanced issue of the Gallery's reception and probes the enduring discourse surrounding Høyen's canon. The findings elucidate the entrenched nature of the Golden Age art canon, unveiling the formidable challenge in dismantling it by extending the timeframe to embrace new artists and themes. This underscores the deeply ingrained nature of canonical narratives and their steadfast resistance to evolution, despite concerted endeavors to broaden and enrich the artistic landscape. Hence, it becomes increasingly imperative to conclude by positing a call for further research on the reception of Høyen's canon, advocating for an analysis of subsequent catalogues and exhibitions spanning to the present day, along with an exploration of the factors underpinning its undeniable endurance.

Appendix: List of Paintings displayed in the Gallery in Christiansborg 1840-1870

No.	Author, title, year, acqusition year, inventory number	Illustration	1840	1850	1860	1870
1.	Carl Frederic Aagaard, Autumn morning in Jægersborg, 1866, acq. 1866, KMS845		-	-	-	✓
2.	Emil Andersen, Charles I of England bids farewell to his children in prison, 1838, acq. 1839, KMS354		✓	✓	-	-
3.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The finding of Moses at the Nile, 1790, acq. 1810, KMSsp862		✓	✓	-	-
4.	Nicolai Abildgaad, Hamlet delivers the letter written by himself to the Queen of Scotland, 1776 (acq. 1778), KMSsp863		✓	✓	-	-
5.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The wounded Philoctetes, 1775 (acq. 1849), KMS586		-	-	✓	✓
6.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Ossian. The old blind Scottish bard sings his swan song to the harp, 1780–1782 (acq. 1841), KMS395		-	-	✓	✓
7.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Niels Klim dreams of the Clerk in Fanø Church when the Bull wakes him up with his roar, 1785–1787 (acq. 1849), KMS593		-	-	✓	✓

8.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Potuans are Surprised to see Niels Klim Genuflect in front of the Wise Prince, 1785–1787 (acq. 1849), KMS594		-	-	✓	✓
9.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Triumph of a Potuan, whose Reform Proposal has been Approved, 1785–1787 (acq. 1849), KMS7456		-	-	✓	✓
10.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Niels Klim Attends the Sentencing of the Deceased Potuan Prince, 1785–1787 (acq. 1849), KMS3903		-	-	✓	✓
11.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Doctor´s Wife Reveals her Husband´s Intention of Anatomising Niels Klim, 1785–1787 (acq. 1849), KMS597		-	-	✓	✓
12.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Allegorical representation of the oldest, wide life in Europe, 1784 (acq. 1849), KMS600		-	-	✓	✓
13.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Allegorical Representation of the Dominion of Rome, 1784 (acq. 1849), KMS601		-	-	✓	✓
14.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Hierarchy at its Peak at the time of the Crusades, 1784 (acq. 1849), KMS602		-	-	✓	✓

15.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Revival of Learning, the Invention of Printing and Gunpowder and the Discovery of America, 1784 (acq. 1849), KMS603		-	-	✓	✓
16.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Abolition of Adscription in 1788, 1790 (acq.1849), KMS598		-	-	✓	✓
17.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Midwife Taking Leave of the girl from Andros. From Terence´s Andria, 1801 (acq. 1849),KMS589		-	-	✓	✓
18.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Pamphilius and his sevant Davus. From Terence´s Andria, 1802, acq. 1849, KMS588		-	-	✓	✓
19.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Simo and his former slave Sosia. From Terence´s Andria, 1803, acq. 1849, KMS587		-	-	✓	✓
20.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Slave Davus and the Maid Mysis. From Terence´s Andria, 1804, acq. 1849, KMS590		-	-	✓	✓

21.	Nicolai Abildgaard, The Oath of Fealty in 1660, 1806, acq. 1849, KMS599		-	-	✓	✓
22.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Housekeeper comforts the young girl. Motif from Apuleius: The golden donkey, 1808, acq. 1849, KMS592		-	-	✓	✓
23.	Nicolai Abildgaard, Fotis sees her Lover Lucius Transformed into an Ass. Motif from Apeleius' The Golden Ass, 1809, acq. 1849, KMS591		-	-	✓	✓
24.	Otto Bache, A Kneading Cart outside a Tileworks in Jutland, 1864, acq. 1864, KMS833		-	-	-	✓
25.	Carl Balsgaard, Arrangement with wine glasses, oysters, lemon and other fruits, 1848, acq. 1848, KMS548c		-	-	✓	✓
26.	Carl Balsgaard, Fruit and flower painting, 1857, acq. 1858, KMS748		-	-	✓	✓
27.	Christian Blache, From Begtrupvigen near (Hels) Mols, 1864, acq. 1864, KMS834		-	-	-	✓

28.	Carl Bloch, Samson and the Philistines, 1863, acq. 1863, KMS830		-	-	-	✓
29.	Carl Bloch, The Daughter of Jairus, 1863, acq. 1864, KMS835		-	-	-	✓
30.	Ditlev Blunck, Portrait of the Copperplate Engraver Christian Edvard Sonne, 1826, acq. 1826, KMS51		✓	✓	✓	✓
31.	Ditlev Blunck, The Battle-Painter Jørgen Sonne in his Studio, c. 1826, acq. 1826, KMS57		✓	-	-	-
32.	Ditlev Blunck, The Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel, 1830, acq. 1831, KMS200		✓	✓	✓	✓
33.	August Wilhelm Boesen, View from Bagheria towards Palermo and Monte Pellegrino, Sicily, 1848, acq. 1848, KMS542		-	-	✓	✓
34.	Heinrich Bunzen, Coast at Tårbæk. Afternoon, 1835, acq. 1835, KMS270		✓	✓	-	-

35.	Heinrich Bunzen, Forest Landscape (An oak and beech thicket near the Dyrehaugen), 1839, acq. 1839, KMS369		✓	✓	✓	✓
36.	Wilhelm Bendz, A Young Artist Examining a Sketch in a Mirror, 1826, acq. 1826, KMS280		✓	✓	✓	✓
37.	Wilhelm Bendz, The Life Class at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, 1826, acq. 1826, KMS54		✓	✓	✓	✓
38.	Wilhelm Bendz, A sculptor works from a living model in his studio, 1827, acq. 1827, KMS62		✓	✓	✓	✓
39.	Adolf Carl, Falkenstein Castle in the Harz, c. 1836, acq. 1836, KMS298		✓	✓	-	-
40.	Hermann Carmiencke, Kriebstein Castle at Zschoppau in Saxony. Morning, 1838, acq. 1838, KMS334		✓	-	-	-
41.	Hermann Carmiencke, A view of Bohemia from Oberlausitz, 1840, acq. 1840, KMS390		✓	-	-	-

42.	Asmus Jacob Carstens, Bacchus and Cupid, 1796, acq. 1834, KMS243		✓	-	✓	✓
43.	Asmus Jacob Carstens, Fingal´s Battle with the Spirit of Loda, 1797, acq. 1849, KMS607		-	-	✓	✓
44.	Janus la Cour, On the edge of an oak forest on an early spring morning, 1863, acq. 1863, KMS831		-	-	-	✓
45.	Carl Dahl, Slaget ved Helgoland 9. maj 1864, 1864 (Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot)		-	-	-	✓
46.	Johan Christian Dahl, Winter Landscape near Vordingborg, Denmark, 1829, acq. 1829, KMS167		✓	✓	✓	✓
47.	Johan Christian Dahl, A Shipwreck on the Coast of Norway, 1832, acq. 1832, KMS216		✓	✓	✓	-
48.	Johan Christian Dahl, Mountainous Landscape with a Waterfall, Norway, 1817, acq. 1818, KMS43		✓	✓	✓	-

49.	Johan Christian Dahl, Norwegian Landscape with a Rainbow, 1821, acq. 1848, KMS550		-	-	✓	✓
50.	Johan Christian Dahl, The Etsch Valley near Roveredo, 1824, acq. 1864, KMS838		-	-	✓	✓
51.	Carlo Dalgas, A flock of sheep. The motif from Faxingeskoven near Nysø, 1848, acq. 1848, KMS534		-	-	✓	✓
52.	Christen Dalsgaard, Fisherman shows his daughter a boat sailing away, 1854, acq. 1854, KMS715		-	-	✓	✓
53.	Christen Dalsgaard, The Bailiff Calls on a Poor Cooper in Salling, 1859, acq. 1859, KMS750		-	-	✓	✓
54.	Christen Dalsgaard, Woman's Solemn Churching after Childbirth, 1860, acq. 1861, KMS820		-	-	-	✓
55.	Dankvart Dreyer, Tybring Banker. North Funen, c. 1842, acq. 1842, KMS400		-	✓	-	-

56.	Anton Dorph, Peasant girl, 1854, acq. 1854, KMS718		-	-	✓	✓
57.	Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, Moses causes the Red Sea to return and Pharaoh's army is flooded, 1815, acq. 1826, KMS69		✓	✓	✓	✓
58.	Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, The Russian Ship of the Line "Asow" and a Frigate at Anchor near Elsinore, 1828, acq. 1851, KMS608		-	-	✓	✓
59.	Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, Ships under sail, 1847, acq. 1848 (Society for Nordic Art), acq. 1872 (SMK), KMS1056		-	-	✓	✓
60.	Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg, Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, Rome, 1815, acq. 1854, KMS723		-	-	✓	-
61.	Heinrich Eddelien, Young faun picking grapes, 1817-1830, acq. 1830, KMS174		✓	✓	✓	✓

62.	Eiler Rasmussen Eilersen, Landscape from Frijsenborg Zoo. Thunderstorm day, 1864, acq. 1864, KMS837		-	-	-	✓
63.	Julius Exner, Mourning wife from Amager, 1852, acq. 1852, KMS615		-	-	✓	✓
64.	Julius Exner, Visiting Grandfather, 1853, acq. 1860, KMS758		-	-	✓	✓
65.	Julius Exner, Country Dance in the Hedebo District, Zealand, 1855, acq. 1856, KMS737		-	-	✓	✓
66.	Julius Exner, Episode of a feast at Amager, 1854, acq. 1854, KMS713		-	-	✓	✓
67.	Julius Exner, The Black Pers players, 1862, acq. 1863, KMS828		-	-	-	✓
68.	Julius Exner, Granmother's visit to the little Convalescent, 1867, acq. 1867, KMS854		-	-	-	✓

69.	Claudius Ditlev Fritzsch, Cactus Grandiflora and Other Flowers in a Porphyry Vase, 1780-1835, acq. 1835, KMS275		✓	✓	✓	✓
70.	Claudius Ditlev Fritzsch, Wicker basket with flowers, 1808, acq. 1829, KMS272		✓	✓	✓	✓
71.	Claudius Ditlev Fritzsch, Vase with flowers, 1780-1841, acq. 1864, KMS839		-	-	-	✓
72.	Curt Victor Clemens Grolig, Hussar Picket, before 1836, acq. 1836, KMS297		✓	-	-	-
73.	Frederik Fabritius de Tengnagel, The Northern Lights, the night from 16 to 17 September 1838, seen from Hellebæk's coast, 1839, acq. 1839, KMS352		✓	✓	-	-
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