

# PÅ FINANSLOVEN

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Portrætter af danske kunstnere på livsvarig ydelse – Jiro Mochizuki  
*Jiro Mochizuki's Portraits of Recipients of the Danish Lifelong Artist Grant*

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## Et tredive år gammelt løfte opfyldt

Det var en meget kold dag i december 1978. Jeg husker ikke, hvorfor det lige blev arkitekten Mogens Koch, jeg først forsøgte med. Jeg havde ikke nogen aftale. Jeg tog bare hen til hans hus og bankede på døren. Mogens Koch lukkede selv op. Jeg præsenterede mig og begyndte at forklare, hvorfor jeg var kommet. Han afbrød: »De står ude i kulden. Kom med ind!« Han bød mig indenfor og jeg spurgte lige ud af posen: »Må jeg tage Deres portræt?«. »Lige nu?« spurgte han. Jeg nikkede. Og resten behøvede ingen forklaring.

Mogens Koch virkede ikke det fjerneste forbavset over at en fuldkommen fremmed, ja, oven i købet en japansk fremmed, bankede på hans dør og kom med en så usædvanlig anmodning. At være japaner i Danmark var dengang noget meget eksotisk. Jeg kunne se Kochs milde øjne bag hans briller. Hans venlige stemme og opmuntrende ord fik mig til at falde til ro. Det var i de gode gamle dage, for mere end tredive år siden ... Jeg husker det, som var det i går. Hvis han havde afvist mig, ville jeg ikke have haft mod til at gå videre med projektet.

Min første dag var en stor succes. Derefter kørte jeg hid og did og bankede på døren hos kunstnere og forfattere, der var på finansloven. Jeg fik deres adresser fra Kulturministeriet. De nød stor respekt i den danske kulturverden. Og jeg var helt ukendt.

Grundlæggende var ideen at tage »snapshot«-portrætter af disse mennesker i deres hjem, i de intime omgivelser, de havde skabt til sig selv. Min ide var at arbejde hurtigt: Ingen aftale, ingen lang præsentation, ingen forsinkelser. Bare gå ind og uden videre fange personligheden og stedet. Jeg valgte husets mest fotogene plet og begrænsede mig til brugen af kun én rulle film, hurtigt skudt, godt eller dårligt. Jeg forsøgte at opnå en særlig blanding af min egen tid med deres tid og rum.

Det, der forbløffede mig, var, at de åbnede deres døre og gav mig en så varm velkomst. Kun nogle få – og de var alle forfattere – tøvede lidt og bad om lange detaljerede forklaringer, før de sagde ja. Ingen afviste mig nogensinde.

Alle, uden undtagelse, spurgte de: »Hvad skal De bruge portræterne til?«. Jeg måtte svare: »Jeg ved ikke hvornår eller hvor, men jeg har tænkt mig at lave en udstilling eller en fotobog.« Det var, hvad jeg lovede dem. Tredive år senere mødte jeg Søren Møller Christensen fra Forlaget Vandkunsten. Han blev begejstret og besluttede at publicere bogen og at få arrangeret udstillingen, som Frederiksborgmuseet hus til i 2011. Ny Carlsberg Fondet tilbød at støtte projektet. Jeg er glad for at have holdt mit løfte nu, mere end tredive år senere.

Paris, marts 2015

Jiro Mochizuki

## A thirty year-old promise fulfilled

It was a very cold day in December 1978. I can't remember why I chose the architect Mogens Koch for my first try. I didn't have an appointment. I just went to his home and knocked on the door. Mogens Koch himself answered. I introduced myself and started to explain why I had come. He interrupted: "You're standing in the cold. Come on in." He welcomed me in and I asked straight out, "Can I take your portrait." "Right now?" he said. I nodded. And I didn't have to explain any further.

Mogens Koch didn't seem the least bit surprised to see a stranger, what's more a Japanese stranger, knock on his door and make such a strange request. Being Japanese in Denmark in those days was very exotic. I could see Koch's gentle eyes behind his glasses. His kind voice and encouraging words made me feel comfortable. Those were the good old days, more than thirty years ago ... I can remember it as if it were yesterday. If he had refused, I wouldn't have had the courage to go on with the project.

My first day was a great success. So I drove here and there, knocking on the doors of artists and writers of the Finansloven group. I got their addresses from the Ministry of Culture. They were highly respected in Denmark's cultural world. And I was completely unknown.

The basic concept was to take "snapshot" portraits of these people in their homes, in the intimate environment they had created for themselves. My idea was to work quickly: no appointment, no long introductions, no delays. Just walk in and immediately capture the personality and the place. I would choose the most photogenic spot in the house and limit myself to just one roll of film, shooting quickly, good or bad. I wanted to make that particular blend of my time with their time and space.

What amazed me was the way they opened their doors and gave me such a warm welcome. Only a few – all of them writers – were hesitant and asked for long detailed explanations before they said yes. Nobody ever refused me.

Every one, without exception, asked: "what are you going to use the portraits for?" I would reply: "I don't know when or where, but I'm thinking to do an exhibition or photography book." That's what I promised them. Thirty years later I had the chance to meet Søren Møller Christensen, Forlaget Vandkunsten KS and show him the collection of portraits. He was enthusiastic and decided to publish the book and arrange for the exhibition. The Carlsberg Foundation offered their support for the project. I am happy that more than thirty years later I have kept my promise.

Paris, March 2015

Jiro Mochizuki

En fotograf bankede på. Men han anede ikke hos hvem. Det var den japanske fotograf, Jiro Mochizuki. Hans ofre var de personer, som var på finansloven, 1980. Hvor så de gamle ud dengang! Eller er modtagerne af den livsvarige ydelse blot blevet yngre?

Fotografierne udgør et snapshot af de førende kulturpersonligheder i Danmark anno 1980.

De havde alle ydet »en betydelig og helstøbt kunstnerisk indsats«, og flere af dem skulle yde endnu mere.

Uden at vide noget om dem og deres værk får Mochizuki alligevel – eller netop derfor? – fanget deres personlighed og arbejde.

Billedkunstnerne hviler i deres arbejde. Forfatterne hviler i sig selv. Billedkunstnerne befinder sig gennemgående i en arbejds-situation. Forfatterne er mere opstyltede.

Her ser vi den majestætiske Palle Lauring som en alvidende superlektor skue ned mod sine uvidende elever – os. Han ved, hvad han taler om, og hver bog står på sin plads. Han har orden i kronologien.

Willy-August Linnemann skuer mod inspirationen og mod syd, hvorfra hans litterære univers stammer.

Halfdan Rasmussen har lige lavet et rim og nyder det.

Finn Methling ser lige så spartansk som hans sprog ud mod den tomme fremtid med fortiden bag sig.

Steen Eiler Rasmussen, kaldet Stenalderrasmussen, er lige så barket som træet bag ham.

Og Erik Knudsen er lige så fortvivlet som i sine digte.

Alligevel kendte fotografen dem ikke!

Malerne glider i ét med deres malerier. Carl Henning Petersens trøje matcher med hans to malerier.

Richard Winthers manke over den nøgne overkrop går i ét med maleriet bag ham.

Mogens Andersen er i sort og hvidt som hans egne malerier.

Knud Nullemann udgør selv en figur blandt sine figurer.

Og Henry Heerup? Ja, han er naturligvis sin egen nisse.

Bladr selv i bogen og se disse og andre ansigter og kroppe tone frem mod beskueren og i fotografiet afsløre deres væsen.

Her møder kunstnerne sandelig en kunstner – og vi kunst.

A photographer came knocking. But he didn't even have a clue about whose door he was knocking on. It was the Japanese photographer, Jiro Mochizuki. His targeted "victims" were certain people whose livelihood was figured into the Danish state's annual budget for 1980. My, how old they looked at that time! Or have the recipients of the lifetime stipend simply gotten younger?

The photographs, taken together, constitute a snapshot of the leading cultural luminaries in Denmark anno 1980.

They had all made "an important and solidly-cast artistic contribution" and several of them would come to contribute even more.

Without knowing anything about them or their work, Mochizuki manages, anyhow – or maybe this is exactly why – to capture their personalities and their work.

The visual artists are resting (at equilibrium) in their work. The authors are resting (self-contained) in themselves. The visual artists are generally situated amidst a working situation. The authors appear to be more high-flown.

Here we see the majestic Palle Lauring as an omniscient super-teacher looking down towards his uneducated students – us. He knows what he's talking about and each and every book is standing in its place. He's got the chronology in order.

Willy-August Linnemann looks toward inspiration and toward the south, from where his literary world stems.

Halfdan Rasmussen has just made up a rhyme and he's enjoying it.

Finn Methling gazes, ever so austere as his language, out toward the empty future, with the past behind him.

Steen Eiler Rasmussen, known as StoneAgeRasmussen, is just as bark-covered as the tree behind him.

And Erik Knudsen is just as disconsolate as in his poems.

And even so, the photographer didn't even know them!

The painters converge smoothly with their paintings.

Carl Henning Petersen's shirt matches his two paintings.

Richard Winther's mane of hair falling over his bare torso merges with the painting behind him.

Mogens Andersen is, in black and white, like his own paintings.

Knud Nullemann constitutes, in himself, one figure among his own figures.

And Henry Heerup? Of course, he's naturally his very own gnome.

Leaf your way through the book and watch these and others' faces and bodies loom up in front of you, the beholder, and watch them disclose their essence in the photograph.

Here, the artists are indeed meeting an artist – and we are indeed meeting art.

I 1978 møder en ukendt japansk fotograf op i Kulturministeriet. Han har hørt, at vi i Danmark følger den antikke tradition at hædre visse borgere ved at lade dem bispise på byens rådhus, og ønsker derfor navne og adresser på kunstnere på livsvarig ydelse fra den danske stat. Han vil efterfølgende opsøge kunstnerne på deres adresser og tage et billede af dem.

Hvis man modtager Kunstfondens livsvarige ydelse, er man ikke en Hr. Hvem-som-helst. Man tilhører en lille udvalgt skare. I dag modtager 275 kunstnere den livsvarige hædersgave. I 1978 var det 207. Netop i 1978 blev hædersgaven indtægtsreguleret. Det var faldet mange borgere for brystet, at velaflagte kunstnere kunne få statsstøtte.

Men der er nu snarere tale om hæder end reel støtte, og mange af de udvalgte er derfor godt oppe i årene, inden de har gjort sig fortjent til gaven. Med Kunstfondens egne ord skal der allerede være ydet en betydelig og helstøbt kunstnerisk indsats, før man kan forvente samfundets største anerkendelse. Den japanske fotograf har næppe kendt til begrebet rindalisme. Han ville portrættere Danmarks mest anerkendte og respekterede kulturpersonligheder.

Tanken er lige så besnærende, som den er afskyelig. Kan det ikke være lige meget, hvordan en kunstner ser ud? Jo, egentlig. Alligevel fascinerer portrætter af kunstnere som Picasso, Giacometti, Schönberg, Samuel Beckett mig umådeligt. Mit blik går på opdagelsesrejse i deres kontrafejer på jagt efter svaret på, hvordan et geni ser ud.

Jeg reagerer på samme måde, hvis jeg præsenteres for portrætter af nobelprismodtagere, seriemordere, storsvindlere, statsmænd. Jeg forestiller mig, at jeg kan se de kvaliteter, de egenskaber, som bragte de portrætterede på alles læber, på magtens tinde eller bag tremmer.

Sådan begyndte den videnskabelige racisme. Den begyndte med Darwins evolutionsteori, teorien om den naturlige selektionsproces. De mindre egnede sorteres fra, mens dem med de bedste arvelige egenskaber bispises på rådhuset. Darwins fætter, Francis Galton, udviklede portrætfotografiet, så det kunne bruges til at indfange de arvelige egenskaber hos et menneske eller en gruppe af mennesker. Han opfandt kompositfotograferingen. De egenskaber, som et enkelt portrætfoto ikke afslører, viser sig måske, hvis man lægger flere billeder oven i hinanden. Filosoffen Ludwig Wittgenstein overførte Galtons tanke på sin sprogfilosofi. Nogle fællestræk, såkaldte familieligheder, definerer et sprogspil.

Galton udsendte i 1869 bogen *Hereditary Genius* – arveligt geni. De geniale mennesker bærer på visse fællestræk. Teorien kan udvides til at gælde hele den hvide race. Engang var det tydeligt for enhver, at afrikanere ikke ser helt så vakse ud, som vi hvide. Før portrætfotoet kunne man se det på hjerneskallens form. Frenologien blev til fysiognomik i kraft af portrætfotoet. Den italienske kriminolog, Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), konstaterede og dokumenterede fotografisk visse familieligheder, altså fysiognomiske fællestræk, hos kriminelle.

Om man er født som geni eller forbryder, kan næsten gå ud på et. Der er jo ikke så meget at gøre ved det. Lombroso slog fast, at »Genialitet er en af galskabens mange former«. For Lombroso var genialitet et degenerationsfænomen, nærmest et ledsagefænomen til epilepsi. I folkedybet har der vel til alle tider været udklækket forestillinger om en udlignende retfærdighed sådan at forstå, at var mennesker veludstyret på et område, så manglede de til gengæld noget på andre. Et ufordelagtigt ydre kunne eksempelvis opvejes af et veludviklet og rigt indre liv. Den fysiske dværg kunne måske være en åndelig kæmpe. Niels Bohr og Winston Churchill, en genial fysiker og en genial politiker, var jo begge nærmest sinker i skolen. I 1894 opfordrede en lærer i München en 15-årig elev til at forlade skolen, for som læreren sagde: »Du vil alligevel aldrig drive det til noget.« Elevens navn var Albert Einstein.

Genialitet er evnen til at frembringe noget, der ikke kan gives en regel for, lyder Kants berømte definition. Genier arbejder dog ikke regelløst. De opstiller bare selv regler. Det samme kan siges om forbrydere, som vi kalder lovløse. Det er derfor oplagt at kalde kunstnere latente forbrydere. Kriminalantropologer ligner til forveksling kunstnerantropologer. De er på jagt efter en gruppes fællestræk og er overbeviste om, at man kan slutte fra det ydre til det indre.

Jiro Mochizuku er en kunstnerantropolog på jagt efter de egenskaber, som kendetegner de bedste danske kunstnere. Til det formål anvender han portrætfotoet. Hans fremgangsmåde kan minde om paparazziernes. Han ankom altid uanmeldt til kunstnerens dør, for

når man portrætterer de ukonventionelle, er det bedst at bryde med konventionerne for, hvordan man tager et portrætfoto.

Et portræt er, som ordet siger, en fremtrækning (pro-trahere) af en person, især af personens ansigtstræk. Men det er tydeligt, at kunstnerne ikke ønsker at træde frem. De træder tværtimod demonstrativt tilbage i den hverdag, de lever og arbejder i, og stiller sig til skue blandt deres værker eller i deres dagligstue eller have. Det er påfaldende så tilbagetrukket, de fleste er. Portrætterne nærmer sig genrebilledet, der på mange måder er portrættets modpol.

Vægrer kunstnerne sig mod at blive diagnosticeret som genier eller gale? Når det kommer til stykket, er hele ideen med at tildele kunstnere en livsvarig ydelse da også at give dem arbejdsro. Vi tror nemlig på miljøets betydning for udviklingen af det geniale. Respekt og anerkendelse er nok mere befordrende for kunstneriske præstationer end medfødte evner. Det kunstneriske geni fremstilles her ikke som iboende, men som boende. Modstandere af kunststøtte mener jo tit, at kunststøtten ødelægger den naturlige selektion. Rigtige kunstnere har det i sig, det er medfødt, og de skal nok komme frem med det. De kan ikke holdes nede. De skal udvælges af kolde tagkamre og ikke af honorerede kunstfaglige udvalg.

jo, der er stadigvæk nogen som mener, at pakker man kunstnere ind i kunststøtte, så svækker man kunstnergenet. De udtrykker det nok på en anden måde, så det forbliver skjult for dem selv, hvad de er for nogle værre racister!

Sometime in 1978, an unknown Japanese photographer shows up at the Ministry of Culture. He's heard that here in Denmark we follow an ancient tradition of honoring certain citizens by inviting them to dine at the Town Hall. Accordingly, he wants to have the names and addresses of artists who are receiving life-long annual honorary stipends from the Danish state. He then proceeds to visit the artists at their respective addresses and take pictures of them.

If you are the recipient of The Danish Arts Agency's life-long annual stipend, you're not just any Tom, Dick or Harry. Today, there are 275 creative artists who are receiving this lifelong testimonial in recognition of their service to the society. Back in 1978, there were 207 individuals being so honored. As a matter of fact, it was precisely in 1978 that a resolution was adopted to regulate the disbursements related to this particular token of respect according to each recipient's annual income. Many citizens had started to resent that certain otherwise well-heeled artists could be receiving support from the state.

But what we have here is actually more an honor than a genuine full-scale support and many of the chosen recipients are well advanced in years before they manage to earn the distinction of receiving this gift. In The Danish Arts Agency's own words, there must already have been "an important and solidly-cast artistic contribution" before anybody can expect to be honored with the society's highest recognition. The Japanese photographer could hardly have been familiar with the concept of Rindalism.\* He simply wanted to portray Denmark's most highly appreciated and respected cultural personalities.

The very idea is as intriguing as it is detestable. Does it really make any difference what an artist looks like? Well, maybe it does. In any event, I find portraits of creative artists like Picasso, Giacometti, Schoenberg and Samuel Beckett to be stupendously fascinating. My gaze sets out on a voyage of discovery in their likenesses, in quest of an answer to what a genius looks like.

I react in much the same way when I am presented with portraits of Nobel laureates, serial killers, big-time swindlers and statesmen. I harbor a sense that I can see the qualities, that I can spot those traits that made the people being portrayed household words, brought them onto the pinnacle of power or put them behind bars.

This is the way that scientific racism began. It started with Darwin's theory of evolution, the theory of natural selection. The lesser fit are sorted out while those with the very best inherited traits are eventually winned and dined at Town Hall. Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton, advanced portrait photography so that it could be used to capture inherited traits in an individual or in a group of people. He invented composite photography. Those traits that a single portrait photo do not reveal might just emerge into view when several pictures are brought together and collocated. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein transposed Galton's way of thinking into his philosophy of language. Certain common features, so-called family resemblances, define a language-game.

In 1869, Galton published the book, *Hereditary Genius*. Individuals that we know as "geniuses" possess certain common traits. The theory could be expanded so that it applies to the entire Caucasian race. All at once, it was clear to everyone that Africans do not appear to be quite as bright as we "whites" do. When confronted with the portrait photograph, you could see the cranium's form. Phrenology was turned into physiognomy, through the vehicle of the portrait photograph. The Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), photographically ascertained and documented certain family resemblances, certain physiognomic features, commonly found among criminals.

Whether one is born a genius or a criminal virtually amounts to the same thing. There's not a whole lot that can be done about this. Lombroso stated very plainly, "Genius is one of many forms of insanity". For Lombroso, genius was a phenomenon related to degen-

eration; it was basically a peculiar, psychological form accompanying larvate epilepsy. Among the lower strata of society, I suppose, a series of notions have – constantly and continually throughout the ages – been hatched about some neutralizing justice which ordains that when people happen to be so well equipped in one area, they will lack something in another, by way of retaliation. An unprepossessing physical appearance could, for example, be counterbalanced by a well-developed and rich inner life. The physical dwarf could perhaps be a spiritual giant. As a matter of fact, Niels Bohr and Winston Churchill, a brilliant physicist and a brilliant politician, were both way behind the other pupils at their schools. In 1894, a teacher in Munich encouraged a 15-year-old high school student to drop out because, as the teacher said, "You'll never amount to anything, anyway." The student's name was Albert Einstein.

"Genius is a talent for producing something for which no determinate rule can be given," is Kant's renowned definition. Geniuses, however, do not work without any rules. It's only that they make their own rules, all by themselves. The same thing can be said about criminals, about those we call outlaws. For this reason, calling artists "latent criminals" is an obvious thing to do. Criminal anthropologists can easily be mistaken for artist anthropologists; they are on the lookout for a certain group's common features and are convinced that inferences from the outer physical appearance can be drawn which can tell us something about inner nature.

Jiro Mochizuku is an artist anthropologist who is on the lookout for the traits that are characteristic of the very best Danish artists. For this purpose, he makes use of the portrait photo. His way of going about this calls the paparazzi's approach to mind: he always arrived unannounced at the artists' front door, for when you are trying to portray the unconventional, it's best to break with conventions related to how a portrait photo is *supposed* to be taken.

A portrait is, as the word implies, a drawing forth (a "protracting") of a person, especially of a person's facial features. However, it is clear that the artists do not want to stand forth. It is more the case that they step, quite demonstratively, back into the everyday setting within which they live and work and choose to pose chiefly among their artworks or in their living rooms or gardens. It is striking to see how very humble and retiring most of them appear to be. The portraits approach the genre picture, which, in many respects, stands as the portrait's antipole.

Are the artists simply refusing to be diagnosed as geniuses or as being insane? When it comes right down to it, the whole idea of allocating a lifetime stipend to the artists has to do with bestowing upon them the peace and quiet required to continue doing their work. The fact is, we believe in the milieu's importance as it bears on the development of the genius. Respect and recognition are presumably more conducive to artistic achievement than congenital abilities. The nature of artistic genius is not being presented here as innate talent but as talent living here. People who are pitted against state support of the arts are typically of the mindset that state-funding of the arts destroys the process of natural selection: real artists have got it in themselves; the talent is something innate, something you're born with; and such artists will inevitably manage to come forth with what they need to say, anyway. They won't be held back. To boot, they're supposed to be singled out by cold garrets rather than by a hired committee of art experts.

Indeed, there are still some folks who believe that when artists are enwrapped and swaddled in state-subsidized funding, the artist-gene becomes recessive. Strangely enough, they give voice to this in a different way, with the result that the type of damn racists they really are remains dark to themselves!

Translated by Dan A. Marmorstein

\* Rindalism was a movement from the mid 1960s designating a widespread opposition to state-funded aid offered to artists and especially to modern abstract art. It was named after its founder, Peter Rindal. [Translator's note]

























