

Denmark's largest-ever Kay Bojesen exhibit to open at Sophienholm!

Kay Bojesen (1886-1958) is one of the greatest Danish designers of the 20th century and is best known for "putting a smile into Danish design". Until 21 September 2014, Sophienholm in Lyngby will host Denmark's largest-ever exhibition of this popular designer's most iconic masterpieces. His charming and original universe of functional design will also be reflected in a new book about Bojesen; a colourful, cultural character who enjoyed a long life and was the father of the famous wooden monkey, the Guardsman, Grand Prix cutlery and much, much more.



Say the name "Kay Bojesen" and his wooden monkey springs to mind. No design is as synonymous with Bojesen and the playfulness of Danish design as this diminutive jungle swinger with the large personality, and with about 300,000 monkeys sold to date, he has every reason to smile. However, the wooden figurines represent just a fraction of the productive designer's accomplishments. On his death, Bojesen, an industrious functionalist who constantly strived to make everyday life more cheerful and easier, left a legacy of more than 2,000 works of art made of various materials such as wood, steel, copper, bamboo, tin and melamine.

Kay Bojesen began his design career far from the toy department as a silversmith trained by Georg Jensen. Here he made a name for himself as one of the most talented Danish

silversmiths of his generation; e.g. at the World's Fair in Paris in 1925 - and in Milan in 1951, where his silver cutlery from 1938 won first prize. The cutlery, which he christened "Grand Prix" after receiving the impressive accolade, is now a modern design icon gracing thousands of homes. Perhaps because the cutlery, like his wooden toys, reflects an intuitive and appealing design style that is created to fit well in the hand and be appealing to the touch.

Kay Bojesen's international breakthrough came in the 1930s when his quirky wooden toys captured hearts worldwide. Many models are now costly collectors' pieces, but the new figurines which Kay Bojesen Denmark has produced for a number of years in close collaboration with Bojesen's descendents, now also enjoy cult status. With their good humour, proud tradition of craftsmanship and decorative designs, Bojesen's wooden figurines are true design icons that are also generally available at affordable prices.

Kay Bojesen was an original, but also very much a man of his times. He lived in Bellavista, Arne Jacobsen's modernistic masterpiece North of Copenhagen, where every Sunday he hosted a salon for his cultural and design contemporaries, which provided this elite group with plenty of creative headroom in more than one sense. While his fellow designers Wegner, Arne Jacobsen and Finn Juhl designed mainly furniture and lamps, Bojesen focused mainly on smaller objects, such as jewellery, cutlery and toys, and throughout his life was strongly involved in promoting Danish design. For instance, he was an initiator of Den Permanente (The Permanent), the leading exhibition of Danish design in Copenhagen until 1981.

The Kay Bojesen exhibit at Sophienholm comprises a wide array of objects from Kay Bojesen's multifarious design universe, including pieces from the largest private collections in Denmark. To coincide with the exhibition, Gyldendal is publishing a biography of Kay Bojesen, written by journalist and author Lars Hedebo Olsen that sketches an interesting portrait of the designer, while exploring more facets of both the designer and person Kay Bojesen.

The Kay Bojesen exhibition at Sophienholm runs from 28 June to 21 September.

Exhibition hours:

Monday - closed

Tuesday – Sunday 11 am – 5 pm

Thursday - 11 am – 7 pm

Tours available on some Sundays at 3 pm

Address:

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For more information:

Many of Kay Bojesen's products have been relaunched. Work in silver and steel is carried out by Kay Bojesen's granddaughter, Susanne Bojesen Rosenqvist, under the company name Kay Bojesen Aps, while his wooden figurines have been produced and marketed for many years by Rosendahl Design Group A/S under the brand name Kay Bojesen Denmark.

Kay Bojesen Aps (silver and steel)
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