

ARKEN

PRESS RELEASE

BJØRN WIINBLAD

13 June 2015 – 17 January 2016

Bjørn Wiinblad - one of a kind in Danish art on show at ARKEN

Triangular noses and almond eyes surrounded by intricate curlicues and intense colours. For some people Bjørn Wiinblad evokes memories of tiled tables and mantelpieces, for others his colourful flourishes and luxuriant forms are the essence of retro-cool. ARKEN Museum of Modern Art presents the most comprehensive exhibition ever of this unique figure in Danish art, design and artist-craftsmanship.

ARKEN invites members of the press to a meeting on **Wednesday 10 June at 11:00**. First the director of the museum, Christian Gether, will welcome the press, then the museum curator Julie Thaning Mikines will introduce the exhibition. After the press meeting there will be lunch in the ARKEN café.

Registration deadline Friday 5 June at 10:00 to lea.bolvig@arken.dk.

From 13 June ARKEN is showing the biggest exhibition to date of the well known artist and designer Bjørn Wiinblad. With drawings, posters, gouaches, one-of-a-kind ceramics, scenography and large tapestries the exhibition reveals new and surprising sides to the Wiinblad we all know, and paints a picture of a phenomenal image-maker and modern all-round artist who was much more than the popular plaques.

Unique in his time

Bjørn Wiinblad (1918-2006) graduated from the Graphics School of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 1943 and made his debut just two years later with his first exhibition in small rented premises in central Copenhagen. The exhibition attracted great attention and in its wake followed decoration and design commissions in Denmark and abroad. The young Wiinblad made his entry on the arts and crafts scene at a time when straight lines and simple design were at the forefront in Danish design. From the outset, with his characteristic curving lines and magical visual universe, Bjørn Wiinblad occupied his own unique position in Danish cultural life and became one of the most well-loved artists in the second half of the 20th century.

A modern all-round artist

As a human being and image-maker Bjørn Wiinblad wanted to communicate a world of beauty, dream and luxury with his art. He wanted to create objects that were accessible to everyone and expressed himself with as much enthusiasm whether it was in plaques, large one-off ceramic objects, costumes for the Royal Ballet, stage curtains or everyday objects such as biscuit tins, gift-wrapping paper and jigsaw puzzles. Wiinblad embraced it all – both the hand-made and the

mass-produced – and he was not afraid to break down the boundaries between art and design; an approach that is more relevant today than ever, when the commercial is no longer an artistic taboo and when artists and designers to a great extent share a palette.

International impact

Wiinblad won great international recognition and is represented in museum collections all over the world, including the V&A in London, MoMA in New York and Design Museum Denmark in Copenhagen. He executed a long succession of prestigious decoration commissions all over the world and for several years functioned as director of design for the German design company Rosenthal.

Bjørn Wiinblad occupies an important position in the Danish cultural heritage as an all-round artist ahead of his time. ARKEN's exhibition presents a nuanced picture of Wiinblad's work and shows both the familiar Wiinblad and works that have rarely been shown to the public in the form of bronze sculptures, one-off ceramics and a series of large tapestries that once graced The Apparel Mart in Dallas, Texas. The exhibition also presents selected interiors from Wiinblad's fairytale Blue House in Kongens Lyngby.

The exhibition BJØRN WIINBLAD can be seen at ARKEN Museum of Modern Art in the period 13 June 2015 until 17 January 2016.

Bjørn Wiinblad quotes

"It can never be the quantity of a thing that is wrong – it can only be the quality. I put just as much thought, just as many deliberations, and just as great zeal into doing the right thing in my work when I make wrapping paper as I do when I create a decoration for the Royal Ballet." Bjørn Wiinblad, 1998.

"I have chosen to create things that can make people's everyday life richer and more beautiful." Bjørn Wiinblad, 1981.

"I have become a designer because it is natural for me to make things that are to be used in everyday life, just as it is natural for me to use things – I love to have guests and to make it as beautiful for them as possible. And the objects look as they do because I love to decorate. Sometimes I think perhaps I should have stopped a bit earlier!" Bjørn Wiinblad, 1998.

Press photos

Press photos for the exhibition can be downloaded at: www.uk.arken.dk/press

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