

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the gallery, Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *Copenhagen 93*, a group exhibition featuring works by Ann Lislegaard, Henrik Olesen, Jens Haaning, Jes Brinch, Joachim Koester, Magnus Wallin, Michael Elmgreen, Olafur Eliasson and Peter Land.

With this exhibition, Galleri Nicolai Wallner looks back at Copenhagen in 1993—the year of the gallery’s creation—and on some of the critical artists working in Copenhagen at that time, as well as the evolving role of the gallery.

While in New York this past May, Nicolai Wallner had a chance to visit the *NYC 1993* exhibition at the New Museum. *“As I walked through the gallery, I was struck at the honesty and the strength of the works, and I began to reflect on what 1993 had meant for me. It was a highly inspiration time for artists in Copenhagen, and I feel that it is a period that deserves to be reconsidered. Our gallery was the first in Copenhagen to work with this new generation of artists, and as such provides an interesting point of departure.”*

The early 1990s was a time of great change, both politically and culturally. The world was in upheaval, and with it was Copenhagen. The city would be marked by several decisive events, and resulted in a sense of disillusionment. A new generation of artists was coming of age in Copenhagen, and in reaction to this sense of disillusionment came a radical push to move art in a new direction. Full of awareness and the desire to engage both themselves and the spectator, these new artists felt a need to turn to their own political and social environment for inspiration, and they began creating dynamic works that reflected the fragility of the human condition and the instability of the times. The result is a diverse body of seminal works spanning a variety of ideas and materials, which are united through their common aim of evoking emotion and interact with the viewer.

In conjunction with this change in artistic practices in Copenhagen in 1993 was a change in the role of the gallery. Artists were requiring more and more dynamic, new exhibition spaces. Wallner was ready to meet these challenges and when the gallery opened in October, it would alter the nature of how galleries were run in Copenhagen, creating a paradigm shift. The gallery was founded on the idea of creating more interactive relationships. This would result in a more collaborative relationship between artist and gallerist, and would create a dialogue between artist, work, and spectator. In both contexts art was underlined as a means of communication, effectively entering into a greater (and more international) dialogue and putting the Copenhagen art scene on the map.

*Copenhagen 93* explores the origins of the gallery and the origins of this double shift in practice.

The exhibition features significant works that were made in Copenhagen in and around the time of the opening of the gallery, and that were involved in the fundamental creation of this new dialogue. The exhibition reexamines and underlines the cultural significance this period had on contemporary art, and points to Copenhagen in 1993 as an influential moment in current art history.

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