

# Building New Collaborations With Old Networks: The Early Years 1945-59

Marta Edling

Why was the Nordic Art Association (NKF) started? The idealist rhetoric of the advantages of an artistic Nordic community and the much longed for reunification of artists from their sister nations after the war is emphasized in the documents reporting on the inaugural meeting in Stockholm November 1945, as well as in the historical survey of the NKF presented by Martin Strömberg in Swedish in 1972.<sup>1</sup> Some years later, however, the idea of an artistic Nordic community had faded. In 1985, when the association held its 40th jubilee, the start of the NKF was described by the Finnish critic Erik Kruskopf as a virtue born out of necessity; dreaming of travelling to Europe, Nordic artists had had to settle with the close-by contacts of the neighbouring countries. The idea of a community was also seen as a way of 'locking in' artists into a stale and misguided idea of imagined similarity.<sup>2</sup>

So, if the *idea* of an artistic Nordic kinship was not as robust and long-lived as the practical side of the collaborations of the NKF, this is not to say that the idealistic ideas of the early years were not important, it is only that ideas alone did not suffice. Taking into consideration that it takes substantial economic and administrative support to transport and display fine art, it is important to ask not only why the associa-

tion started, but also how it started, and how it could last. This article will present a very prosaic answer to these two last questions; the association could be inaugurated because a network of Nordic artists already existed. A network that was already able to deal with the paperwork, could write petitions for needed economic support, and which had the right contacts with public institutions and authorities that guaranteed sustainability through lasting relations. Several of the artists among the founders of the association had by 1945 already collaborated for some time, and these relations were not based in the Nordic countries. Instead, it was a network that had been initiated in Paris, twenty years earlier.

## PARIS

In the first decades of the twentieth century Nordic artists travelled frequently to Paris. The attraction of the city was manifold. It offered young artists a way of life outside of social convention, gave them access to free art academies for study, and to famous art works in the museums, public cafes and salons providing both professional interaction and entertainment.<sup>3</sup> Considering the economic and practical strains of travelling, it was surprising that so many Nordic artists visited the city; between 1920-1932 from Sweden alone, between a hundred and a hundred and fifty artists visited the city each year.<sup>4</sup> These visits to Paris have been presented as a desire for interaction with an international artistic vanguard.<sup>5</sup> A closer look, however, points to the fact that a majority of the contacts with French artists during the 1920s were made in traditional free painting academies, and at best with French artists representing a conventional French modernism of artists such as Andre Lhôte or Othon Friesz.<sup>6</sup> Due to the language barrier, collegial contacts were also to a large extent kept within the Scandinavian language community.<sup>7</sup> To most Nordic artists then, the city of Paris functioned less as a source of innovation, and more as a key-junction. And, the artists in focus in this text were mainly focused on networking and using their Paris sojourn to create art and exhibitions preparing for domestic careers.<sup>8</sup>

In the founding of NKF in 1945 in Stockholm, these contacts established in Paris twenty-five years earlier, provided an important platform. The key figures held lasting relationships, e.g. Danish artist Adam Fischer and his colleague from Paris, the

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Swedish artist Otte Sköld.<sup>9</sup> They had been active in the founding of the organisation *l'Association des Artistes Scandinave à Paris* (AASP) in 1922, and had also collaborated in the creation of a series of Scandinavian exhibitions in Norway, Denmark and Sweden, called *Unionalen*, in 1927, 1928 and 1931.<sup>10</sup>

Representing Finland, it was the Swedish speaking artists Gösta Diehl and Lennart Segerstråhle who already had contacts with Scandinavian networks, that became chair and secretary for the Finnish section.<sup>11</sup> The artist Erkki Kulovesi also attended the inaugural meeting and like Diehl, he had lived in Paris in the 1920s.<sup>12</sup> The contacts in 1945 also connected generations of professors and alumni; the Norwegian artists Rediar Aulie and Finn Nielsen attended the meeting in Stockholm in 1945 and were alumni of Axel Revold and Georg Jacobsen professors at the Oslo Academy who took part in the activities in Paris of the AASP in the 1920s.<sup>13</sup>

### RELATIONS

Exhibitions of Nordic art would become the main focus of the NKF. <sup>14</sup>Already in the statutes from 1945, it was stated that exhibitions would be held, showing “a selection of the best art of now living Nordic artists” being recently exhibited. It was also emphasised that young artists would be represented.<sup>15</sup> Between 1946 and 1959, the NKF presented nine large and well-attended exhibitions of Nordic modern art. A few examples suffice to demonstrate the impressive scale; 10 000 visitors in Oslo 1946, 17 000 in Helsinki in 1950, 20 000 in Bergen 1953, and 15 000 visitors in Gothenburg 1957.<sup>16</sup> Also the total number

of art works and artists presenting is striking; counting art works in the catalogues 1946-59 amounts to ca. 5500, and the total number of artists was 705.<sup>17</sup> Clearly, these exhibitions were major artistic events in the Nordic region.

To realise this kind of grand scale exhibition it obviously took more than artistic muscle, and the presence of different state officials as members of the NKF was a key factor. Participating at the inaugural meeting of NKF in November 1945 in Stockholm were an Icelandic minister, Vilhelm Finsen, as well as several representatives of public museums; Erik Wettergren, Swedish head of museums in Stockholm, Leo Swane, the Danish head of the National museum, and Bertel Hintze, the Finnish curator of Helsinki Taidehalli. These relations may be seen as key factors behind the economic and practical support given the NKF from early on. The presence of these public representatives reflects the different forms of backing that were provided; governmental financial grants, but also disposal of the facilities of Nordic public museums, including curatorial support, packing and shipping.<sup>18</sup>

The representatives of public offices mirror also the fact that the majority of the Nordic artists active in the starting of the NKF in 1945 also held careers in line with public and political life. They were (or would soon become) leading names, taking up public appointments and commissions, being members of committees for grants and awards, jurors for scholarships, or writing occasional art criticism, and most importantly, becoming professors at the art academies, or taking on the role of academy members.<sup>19</sup>

### REPRODUCTION

The connected and closed nature of the Paris network is characteristic also of the selection of artists in the NKF exhibitions.<sup>20</sup> When looking at the Norwegian artists presented in the NKF exhibitions 1945-1959 we find a striking presence of alumni of the professors of the school of the academy in Oslo, Jean Heiberg, Per Krogh and Georg Jacobsen, all part of AASP in the 1920s and early

1930s. The dominance of alumni and professors from this school is also striking, representing 71% of all Norwegian artists exhibited 1945-59.<sup>21</sup> Among the Swedish artists exhibited, the professors and alumni from the school of the academy amounts to a little more than 50%, and the reproduction also of other alumni network in the capital is indicated by the many alumni of private art schools such as the painting school of Otte Sköld, Ahltins målarskola, Wilhelmssons målarskola etc. In lesser numbers alumni of design schools in Oslo, Copenhagen and Stockholm are represented in the exhibitions, underlining further the extreme centrality of the Scandinavian art scenes. The most striking example of this is Norway where almost all artists presented in NKF exhibitions were educated in Oslo, no more than approx. 10% were autodidacts or educated in other Norwegian regions.

These figures illustrate the fact that most careers were built out of homosocial alumni networks in the capitals, dominated by professors of the academies controlling the juries for exhibitions, and even more importantly, the stipends and awards. These professional networks are also evident when mapping the members of the juries of the committees making the selection for each national section. In the juries one finds not only alumni selecting their professors, or the professors of the professors, and professors selecting their alumni, but also colleagues in professional organizations choosing each other, and, last but not least, artists choosing themselves.<sup>22</sup> Some artists also kept coming back; frequently exhibited were the Danish painter Jens Søndergaard, represented in all exhibitions 1946-1957, the Swedish painter Sven Erixson, represented between 1946-1947, 1949-1957, the Icelandic painter Jóhannes S. Kjarval 1947, 1949, 1950-59, the Norwegian painter Erling Enger 1946-1955, 1959, and the Finnish painter Tyko Sallinen 1946, 1948-1950, 1955.<sup>23</sup>

The intention of the association of presenting a wide overview of the state of art in each domestic context was not neglected and even if few, there are still odd names to be found in all the catalogues of the exhibitions 1945-1959. Choosing Sweden as

an example, we can find artists with more nonconformist careers and most of them were not alumni of the Academy. In this group we find for example women artists, regional artists with careers outside the capital Stockholm, autodidacts or artists with other nationalities. In the majority of cases they share the characteristic of being represented at the NKF exhibitions late in their careers and only once or twice, or being presented in the graphic art section alone. Examples of artists from Sweden include such names as Nils Nixon 1947, Siri Derkert 1946 and 1959, Esaias Thorén 1949, Olle Baertling 1955, Egon Möller Nielsen 1957, Nisse Zetterberg 1949, Endre Nemes 1953 and 1959, Alf Lindberg 1953 and 1955, Gösta Adrian Nilsson 1947, Olle Olsson Hagalund, 1946.

#### COLLABORATIONS

This text has highlighted the collaborative aspect of the early history of the NKF. The term ‘collaborative’ indicates a shared interest, expectations in a certain outcome and some kind of lasting commitment. It sums up well the social interconnectedness of the artists forming the activities of the NKF in the first fifteen years of its association.

‘Collaboration’ points to a founding condition for most artistic careers; to be a part of a community of practitioners that provides peer support. Being educated in an art school often offers access to such a network. In the early history of the NKF, the opportunities offered by the small-scale of Nordic art markets and the still financially embryonic state of cultural policy, as well as the dominant position of the major art schools, limited career opportunities and future prospects for young artists. The lists of members in national juries of the association and the selections of artists in the exhibitions show the importance of professional networks and the dependence on former professors.<sup>24</sup>

The collaborative nature of the activities of the early history of the NKF also points to how perfectly ‘normal’ network relations create social reproduction, and exclusion. Collegial influence meant at this time a reproduction of a ‘brotherhood logic’, giving

restricted access not only (as we saw in the Swedish example) to women, but also for ‘deviant’ male artists, a majority of them not being part of alumni networks in the capitals and who by being autodidacts, or choosing odd expressions, styles, or odd media, or by following deviant career paths were making art outside of the prevalent normative standards.<sup>25</sup>

Considering these two aspects of the collaborations of the NKF, one might say that this view *inside* the early history of the association highlights a quite well-known function in artistic fields, where social selection and gate-keeping are two central features.<sup>26</sup> A wider view from *outside* however, shows that the history of the NKF also points to other less researched features of artistic collaboration in the early post war period. Firstly, by demonstrating the importance of regional networks in the building of transnational contacts of modern art. The expansion of the large-scale international and global circulation of art after world war II was dependent on supporting structures of transnational or regional collaboration.<sup>27</sup> There is a gap in knowledge on such cross-border contacts in the Nordic region. Secondly, it demonstrates how self-organized artists in the developing welfare states were given the opportunity, by the financial and institutional support of their nation states, to create a long-lasting artistic collaboration, organizing major public events that could communicate modern art to a wider Nordic audience. The contributions of such initiatives in civil society in the building of cultural democracy also deserves greater critical attention. For future research, both the regional and the cooperative side of the collaborations of the NKF, and its democratic underpinnings, offers material for stories yet still to be told.

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<sup>1</sup>Redogörelse för Nordiska Konstförbundets och dess bildande Nordiska konstförbundet [1945]. Kungliga biblioteket Vardagstryck. Martin Strömberg. *Konstliv i Norden* Stockholm 1972 pp. 5–8.

<sup>2</sup>Beate Sydhoff "Ett nordiskt konstliv", Erik Kruskopf "En lång väg till Sveaberg" and Yngve Bäck "NKF i backspegeln", see also Even Hebbe Johnsrud "Hvordan skal det nordiske samarbeidet i kunsten set ut idag for å overleve og tilføre noe nytt?" in *Nordiska konstförbundet 40*, Göteborg, 1985.

<sup>3</sup>Kjell Strömberg *Svenskarna i Frankrike: en historik*, Stockholm, 1953, Thomas Millroth & Per-Olle Stackman, *Svenska konstnärer i Paris*, Stockholm, 1989, Rolf Söderberg *Otte Sköld*, Stockholm 1968, pp. 69–79.

<sup>4</sup>Frank Claustrat *Les artistes suédois à Paris 1908-1955: tradition, modernisme et creation*, Diss. Université de Paris I, Paris 1994, vol I p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Frank Claustrat "Nordic Writers and Artists in Paris before, during and after World War I" in Hubert van den Berg, ed., *A cultural history of the avant-garde in the Nordic countries 1900-1925*, Amsterdam, 2012.

<sup>6</sup>Claustrat 1994 vol I, pp. 76–162. On the conservative turn in French art in the 1920s and 30s, see Romy Golan, *Modernity and nostalgia*, New Haven, 1995, and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel "Provincializing Paris. The Center-Periphery Narrative of Modern Art in Light of Quantitative and Transnational Approaches." *Art@'s Bulletin* 4, no. 1 2015. Emilie Anne-Yvonne Luse *Erasing the Avant-Gardes* Diss. Duke University, Durham 2019.

<sup>7</sup>On closed character of the networks of the Nordic artists in Paris see e.g. Arna Sköld *Otte Sköld* Stockholm 1960 and Söderberg 1968.

<sup>8</sup>On the strategic coalitions and career enhancing ventures of Otte Sköld and his Paris compatriots, see Söderberg 1968, pp. 69–79, 92–104 and Sköld 1960. On the Norwegian painters in Paris, being later appointed professors at the School of the academy in Oslo, see Åse Markusens article "Camorraen på Statens kunstakademi" in *Kunst og kultur* no. 4, 2004 vol. 87. Also Karj J. Brandtzaegs article "Unionalen – a travelling Scandinavian Exhibition Platform" in Benedikt Hjartarson, Andrea Kollnitz, Per Stounbjerg, & Tania Ørum, ed., *A cultural history of the avant-garde in the Nordic countries 1925-1950*, Leiden, 2019, give evidence of the strategic intentions of the network.

<sup>9</sup>On the contacts of Otte Sköld and Adam Fisher, see Sköld 1960.

<sup>10</sup>Claustrat 1994 pp.192–194. *Unionalen* 5-27 februari 1927, Stockholm, 1927, *Unionalen* Oslo 2.-15. Mai, Oslo, 1928, *Unionalen: Stockholm, Oslo, København*. 1931. 7-30 November, København, 1931. See also Brandtzaeg 2019.

<sup>11</sup>Kristina Linnovaara *Makt konst elit* Diss. Helsinki Univ. Helsingfors 2008, p.92-93. Erkki Antonen "Lennart Segerstråhle" *Biografiskt lexikon för Finland* 4. *Republiken M-Ö*, 2011. URN:NBN:fi:sls-4300-1416928956906, Marja Sakari "Gösta Diehl" *Biografiskt lexikon för Finland* 5. *Republiken A-L* 2011, URN:NBN:fi:sls-4291-1416928956897

<sup>12</sup>Bengt von Bonsdorff "Erkki Kulovesi" *Uppslagsverket Finland* online edition 2012, CC-BY-SA 4.0.

<sup>13</sup>Claustrat 1994 pp.192-97. Participating in the inaugural meeting 1945 were the Danish artists Folmer Berndtsen, Adam Fischer, Erick Struckmann, the Swedish artists Otte Sköld and Sven Ericsson, the Norwegian artists Reidar Aulie, Ornulff Bast, Finn Nielsen, and the Finnish artists Gösta Diehl, Erkki Kulovesi and Lennart Segerstråhle. Island was represented by the minister Vilhelm Finsen.

<sup>14</sup>Strömberg 1972 p. 41

<sup>15</sup>Redogörelse för Nordiska Konstförbundets och dess bildande Nordiska konstförbundet [1945]. Kungliga biblioteket Vardagstryck.

<sup>16</sup>Strömberg 1972 pp. 9, 18, 26, 32.

<sup>17</sup>Nordisk konstförbunds utställing. *Maleri og skulptur* Kunsternes Hus, Oslo 1946. Gustaf Lindgren, ed., *Nordisk konst. 1946-1947: grafik i Nationalmuseum Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 1947*, Gustaf Lindgren, ed. *Nordisk Konst 1946-47. Maleri og skulptur. Liljevalchs konsthall katalog 158*, Stockholm. *Norraa lisi Reykjavik 1948. Den store nordiske kunstudstilling i København 1949*, København, 1949. *Pohjoismaiden taidetta Nordisk konst* Helsinki 1950. *Nordisk Kunst Bergen Oslo 1953. Arte nordica contemporanea Roma, 1955*, Gustaf Lindgren, ed., *Nordisk konst 1947-1957*, Stockholm, 1957. *Nordisk kunst gennem 10 år 1949-59*, Odense 1959.

<sup>18</sup>On the inaugural meeting see Jolo [sign.] "Nordens konstnärer sluter fast förbund" *Dagens Nyheter* 1945-11-09. The entangling of state officials and artistic representatives mirrors also the formal organization of the *l'Association des Artistes Scandinave à Paris*, started in Paris in 1922, see Claustrat 1994 pp.180 and 194. Records from the meetings of the NKF 1946-1959 give witness of a continuous, however somewhat unstable financial support from the Nordic governments.

<sup>19</sup>On the close contacts between the authorities of the nation states and the NKF, see Sydhoff 1985, Bäck 1985 and Linnovaara 2008 pp. 8, 92-93.

<sup>20</sup>The Nordic artists oriented towards geometric abstraction in the 1920s, e.g. the Dane Francisca Clausen, the Swedes Otto G. Carlsund and Erik Olson, the Norwegians Thorvald Hellesen and Charlotte Wankel, all studying at the atelier of Fernand Léger were, even if some of them being exhibited together with Léger in the facilities of the AASP in 1924, not members, and neither taking part of the social network of the AASP, compare Claustrat 1994, pp.182-197.

<sup>21</sup>On the central roles of Heiberg, Jacobsen, Krogh in AASP, see Claustrat 1994 p. 194.

<sup>22</sup>In 1949, 6 of the 7 members of the Finnish jury exhibited their own art, as well as 5 of the 11 members of the Norwegian jury in 1950 and 5 of the 8 members of the Icelandic jury in 1957.

<sup>23</sup>The reproductive nature of the selections was commented upon by the Swedish critic Gotthard Johansson in his introduction to the catalogue of the exhibitions in 1957 in Gothenburg, see Lindgren 1957, p. xiii.

<sup>24</sup>For examples of the closed circuits of Nordic art scenes, see Linnovaara 2008, Markusen 2004 and Martin Gustavsson, Mikael Börjesson & Marta Edling eds. *Konstens omvända ekonomi. Tillgångar inom utbildningar och fall 1938-2008*, Stockholm 2012.

<sup>25</sup>For an example of this kind of gate-keeping in Sweden, see Marta Edling "A Radical Academy of Fine Art? Power and social dimensions in recruitment to the fine art professorships at the Royal College of Art in Stockholm, Sweden 1938-2000" *Passepartout - Skrifter for kunsthistorie*, nr 36 2015.

<sup>26</sup>For Nordic examples see Linnovaara 2008 and Martin Gustavsson and Anders Melldahl "The Social Closure of the Cultural Elite. The Case of Artists in Sweden, 1945-2004" in *Researching Elites and Power* eds. Denord, Francois, Palme, Mikael, Réau, Bertrand, Cham 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45175-2>

<sup>27</sup>Charlotte Bydler, *The global art world inc: on the globalization of contemporary art*, Diss. Uppsala Univ., 2004, Gardner, A. & Green, C. "Biennials of the South on the Edges of the Global" in *Third Text* vol. 27 Issue 4 2013, Chelsea Haines and Gemma Sharpe "Art, Institutions, and Internationalism, 1945-73" *ARTMargins* Vol. 8, Issue 2, 2019.

#### UDSTILLINGERNES BETYDNING

Vedrørende disse danske Udstillingers Betydning maa i første Række fremhæves, at de saa godt som alle er revideret i, at de store udenlandske Statsgallerier og offentlige Samlinger har købt betydelige danske Kunstværker, som saaledes for al Fremtid repræsenterer dansk Kunst og Kultur i Ulandet. Saaledes har blandt andet Statensmuseet i New York — Nationalgalleriet i Helmsinge, Oslo og Berlin — Stats- og Stadsbibliothek i Lübeck, Amsterdams, Budapest, Riga og Venedig, alle købt en Række danske Kunstværker, blandt andet af Malere Rostgaard, Bayens, Olaf Haast, Jens Sandberg og Ernst Zenithen og af Billedhuggerne Gustfred Eickhoff, Gerhard Hennings, Kaj Nielsen og Uzun-Frank m. fl. samt udvalgt en Række Afskrivninger til danske Kommuner i Form af Statuer og Bæmmer store Guld- og Sølvmedaljer til Gustfred Eickhoff, Anton Hansen, Alvar Jørgensen, Kristen Iversen, Paul Søndergaard, Svend Rindboch og Uzun-Frank m. fl. — Ligeledes har Ulandets ledende Museer, Kunsthistorikere og den førende Presse skrevet store og rigt illustrerede Artikler saavel om den ældre som om den yngre danske Kunst.

Naar endvidere Nationalgalleriet i Berlin, Udstillingen i Bruxelles, Oslo og Bismarck i Venedig, hver med udelukkende danske Natidkunster, har samtlige være øvrige danske

Kunsthedlinger i Ulandet efter de indflydende Saters særlige Ønske haft en retsoplysende Karakter som Regel viende dansk Maler- og Billedhuggerkunst gennem de sidste 50 Aar.

#### DE SENERE DANSKE UDSTILLINGER I UDLANDET ER GENNEMFØRT UNDER HØJ KUNSTNERISK STANDARD

I vore officielle danske Kunst-Udstillinger i Ulandet har Aftensvis i de forløbne Aar deltaget 106 Malere og 87 Billedhuggere. Men, efter de indhentede Erfaringer er Kunstnerudvalget med Tilslutning fra hele Komiteen i stadig højere Grad gaaet over til en Repræsentation af kun fem, men stærke Kunstnere hver med en faldig Repræsentation i Medbragtning til de første Udstillingers altfor mange Kunstnere ofte med kun et Arbejde hver! Det har ligeledes været af stor Betydning, at de sidste Udstillinger har haft en meget stærk og smuk — Skulptur-Representation med 12 Statuer i Legationsbygningen i London, Statuer og Kædemasker. De mange store og kunstnerisk værdifulde Statuer har sammen med vor ledende og strengt udvalgte Malerkunst givet vore Udstillinger i Ulandet en dobbelt festlig og monumental kunstnerisk Virkning, saa stærk som ingen af vore hjemlige Udstillinger. Dette er lykkedes ved, at vore Statuører, Præparatører og vore ledende Privatsamlere har støttet disse Udstillinger med me-



Fra Danmarks udstilling i Kunstnerhuset.

get værdifulde Ullaas. Ligeledes har Kunstnerkomiteen i stadig højere Grad tiltrækket og opmærksomt, at disse repræsentative Udstillinger ikke virker saa overfløede som de hjemlige Forarrangninger, men at hvert enkelt Kunstværk faar Lov til at virke fuldt smukt og stærkt under velberede og rigelige Pladsforhold. — Alt dette har i højeste Grad medvirket til disse Udstillingers store kunstneriske Succes i Ulandet.

Alene det stadig voksende Antal af Ledende fra Ulandet viser vor Kunsts Anseelse, men foruden de udenlandske Statsgalleriers Indkøb af dansk Kunst har disse Udstillinger tillige deres Betydning langt ud over selve Kunsten. De er i Ulandet en smuk og meget virk-

som Propaganda for alt, hvad dansk er, idet Ulandets førende Presse ikke alene hævder vor Kunst, men ogsaa skriver indgående Artikler om vort lille Lands høje Kulturstande, vort fulgte Oplysningsarbejde, vort hermed Landbrug, vor Sværindustri, herunder ganske særligt vor Skibbygning og Metalindustri, og sidst men ikke mindst vor fremragende Ingeniørkunst stadig stigende Anseelse i Ulandet.

#### DEN DANSKE KUNST PAA BALKAN

Vore store Udstillinger paa Balkan afholdes i Bukarest den 2. December 1936 og sluttede den 2. Januar 1937 hvorefter Udstillingen overføres til Beograd. For den, der

ble ekkert åbnet af Kong Haakon, havde vi smukkelig og del vanskeligheder av lignende karakter som den vi nu maa møde i alle sine ømter. Men i det psykologiske øyeblikk kom gudslyset alt til å klaffe. Usædvanlige fløker løstes ved mirakler. Sta jæveler ble til komplimenterende engler.

Når til tyvende og sist ble den sukkes som det ble, så skyldes det først og fremst den ting at selve Kunstforbundets ide ble foretatt. Det norske kunstforbund ble ikke mistenksomt som en tom frase. Fra alt ansvarlig hold og langt utenfor det, ble de som hadde gledd i arbeidet av virksomheten av denne første utstilling — selve prøven på Forbundets livsevne og evne — møtt med enstemmig tillit. Vi fikk den støtte vi had som hver vi ventte oss.

Utstillingen — Fem lands kunst i fem år — ble en suksess. På en tid av året da folk ellers har innstilt sine utstillingsbesøk, var det rekordartet tilstrømming både til Kunstnerens Hus og til grafikkens i Nasjonalgalleriet. Et nytt og populært innslag var plasseringen av skulptur i Stortorget. Denne oppstilling hadde også den utmerkede virkning at Oslo Kommune fikk lyst til å gjøre innkjøp til sine parker. Byen sikret seg bronsestatuen «Josef» av Jørgen Guldmand-Holgreen, Danmark og Orsmulf Bast «Kvinnefigur» i granit.

Våres utstilling ble Oslo meststed for en lang rekke kunstnere fra alle kanter av Norden. Det verdifulle ved å se seg selv i sammenheng med det som samtidig foregår i nabolandenes atelierer, ble fullt erkjent. Men en ting til. Det betydde utvilsomt meget å møte smukt til smukt. Det ble i juni og juli i Oslo stiftet vennskap mellom kunstnere fra de fem land i en grad som det sjelden skjer på nordisk jord. Ellers har vi mittet reise til Paris for å bli riktig venner. Den tradisjonen har selvsagt også opprettholdes. Det kan jo sgar tenkes at det melder seg behov for filialer av Nordisk Kunstforbund både i Paris og Roma.

Kunstnerkongressen som ble holdt i Nasjonalgalleriets foredragsaal, hold på fire foredrag om kunstlivets organisasjon i Danmark, Finland, Norge og Sverige. Island var desværre ikke med her. Det ble av kongressen besluttet at disse foredragene skulle trykkes og gis som den første årsbok for Nordisk Kunstforbund. Som arrangement av N.K.F.'s første utstilling og alt som knytter seg til den, har Norges seksjon av Forbundet påtatt seg utgivelsen av denne årsbok.

FINN NIELSEN,  
Formann i Nordisk Kunstforbunds Norske Seksjon.



UDSTILLINGEN I BISTEN — Bildetopp fra de enkelte utstillingspartene.