

Attemosevej 170 / DK-2840 Holte / T: +45 45 80 08 78 /

E: gl-holtegaard@rudersdal.dk / glholtegaard.dk / CVR 89155711

gl Holtegaard

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Yinka Shonibare MBE, *Earth*, 2010.
Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.
Photo: Stephen White



Fritz Melbye, *Charlotte Amalie*, 1851-52, Maritime Museum of Denmark. Photo: Jørgen Als

Colonial Stories – power and people

August 25th - December 30th, 2017

Exhibition opening: 17.00-20.00 on Thursday August 24th

How was Denmark's role as a colonial power portrayed by artists in the past, and how is it addressed by contemporary art today? Gl. Holtegaard's new exhibition juxtaposes historical and contemporary artworks, bringing relevance and perspective to the themes that have arisen in the wake of our shared colonial history.

2017 is the centenary of the sale of Denmark's colony in the West Indies to the US. There has been intense debate about how to describe and represent this complex aspect of Danish history. The exhibition *Colonial Stories – Power and People* investigates our shared colonial history, exploring the mechanisms of dominance and subjugation that comprise this dark chapter of the nation's past.

The exhibition at Gl. Holtegaard presents older works and historical material, as well as contemporary art from Denmark and abroad. The nostalgia and idealisation that permeate views of distant, 'exotic' colonies form a historical point of departure for the more critical narratives of contemporary art. The juxtaposition of historical and contemporary art focuses on themes like enslavement, race and collective national narratives.

The Historical Roots of Gl. Holtegaard

Gl. Holtegaard was built by the royal architect Lauritz de Thurah in 1756, at the same time as he was completing the Frederiksstaden district of inner Copenhagen. Frederiksstaden was built on the wealth Denmark accumulated by bringing arms and manufactured goods to the African Gold Coast, shipping enslaved Africans to the Danish colony in the West Indies, and bringing sugar and other goods back to Denmark. Gl. Holtegaard is therefore an obvious setting for an exhibition on the colonial period, rooted as it is in the transatlantic slave trade.

Artists

The participating artists include: La Vaughn Belle (b. 1974, VI), C.W. Eckersberg (1783-1853, DK), Jeannette Ehlers (b. 1973, DK), Jens Juel (1745-1802, DK), Patricia Kaersenhout (b. 1966, NL), Joachim Koester (b. 1962, DK), John Kørner (b. 1967, DK), Hugo Larsen (1875-1950, DK), Fritz Melbye (1826-1869, DK), Wangechi Mutu (b. 1972, KE), Yinka Shonibare MBE (b. 1962, UK/NG) and Frederik Visby (1839-1929, DK).

Exhibition Opening

The exhibition opening is from 17.00-20.00 on Thursday August 24th. Welcoming address by Gl. Holtegaard's director Maria Gadegaard, followed by opening speeches by scriptwriter and actor Anna Neye, and editor of the news site Føljeton Lars Trier Mogensen. Gl. Holtegaard then invites guests to join us for food, drinks and the relaxed music of DJ Master Fatman.

Exhibition Period

From August 25th - December 30th, 2017.

Opening hours: Tues-Sun, 12.00-17.00, Thurs 12.00-20.00 (closed Monday).

Gl. Holtegaard is closed for Christmas from December 23rd-25th, but reopens as usual on December 26th.

A Weekend of Debates, September 16th-17th, 2017

The exhibition *Colonial Stories – power and people* is a visual contribution to the debates that have emerged in conjunction with the commemoration of the centenary of the sale of the West Indian islands St Thomas, St Jan and St Croix earlier this year. With increasing awareness of Denmark's role as a colonial power, a series of questions, issues and dilemmas have arisen in connection with the history of Danish colonialism. The exhibition is therefore supplemented by a full weekend of debates on September 16th and 17th, when politicians, opinion makers, artists and researchers discuss the issues at stake. Among the subjects on the agenda are: How should Denmark relate to its dark past as a nation? What does this chapter of Danish history mean for the national identity of Danes? Should Danes redress the deeds of the past? What are the implications of the absence of an apology by the state of Denmark? Have the focus and debates of the centenary year changed attitudes and positions? And if so, where does Denmark stand now - and where is it heading?

The debate weekend is moderated by the journalist, historian and public radio host Christoffer Emil Bruun.

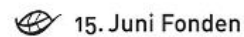
Press

For further information please contact Gl. Holtegaard's director Maria Gadegaard at mgad@rudersdal.dk or press and communications officer Nina Peitersen at ninp@rudersdal.dk. Or on +45 45 80 08 78

Press photos can be downloaded [here](#)

The exhibition is supported by the Augustinus Foundation, the Beckett Foundation, Edith and Godtfred Kirk Christiansen's Foundation, the Husman Foundation, the June 15th Foundation, the Knud Højgaard Foundation, Nordea-fonden, the Obel Family Foundation and the Louis-Hansen Foundation.

The Danish Art Foundation supports Gl. Holtegaard's two-year exhibition programme.



STATENS KUNSTFOND