

AKS FESTIVAL

FILM • ART • DIALOGUE



COPENHAGEN 2015

August 7th - 14th

www.aksfestival.com

The Third Gender
Africa: The LGBTQ Frontier
Love Without Boundaries
Brown Feminism
QTIPOC



CKU

HUMANITY IN
ACTION

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YESS



**AKS FESTIVAL
COPENHAGEN 2015**



**EXHIBITION
@VESS**

AKS Festival welcomes you to our first festival in Copenhagen:
“Beyond gender norms and rainbow sexuality.”

WELCOME

AKS Film, Art & Dialogue Festival goes where mainstream LGBTQ-cinema often can't. We explore the world of queer cinema and art, and encourages dialogue that goes beyond gender norms and rainbow sexuality. In 2015 AKS Festival in Copenhagen takes the lead from ancient transgender traditions in South Asia, the rising LGBTQ-movement in Kenya and Uganda, and brings forth feminist ideas from queer, trans and intersex people of color around the world.

AKS Festival offers 8 exceptional days of film screenings, art and dialogue in the heart of Copenhagen. We acknowledge funding from the Danish Center for Culture and Development (Center for Kultur og Udviking, www.cku.dk), which makes this festival possible. Additional funding from Humanity in Action and DANIDA is greatly appreciated. We also thank our collaborators at Humanity in Action, VESS, Cinamateket, Copenhagen Pride and Sabaah for their support.

Sincerely,

*Saadat Munir, Curator
Jeppe Larsen, Director
Nadia Narejo, Project Manager
Fahad Saeed, PR Manager*

ABOUT AKS

AKS is a Danish-Pakistani initiative and politically independent non-profit organization founded in April 2014. In December 2014, AKS presented its first Festival in Lahore and Islamabad, with help of the Danish Embassy in Pakistan.

AKS was created to promote visibly and empower the transgender and queer community via film, art and dialogue. AKS aims to promote a global and open approach to gender and sexuality everywhere in the world.

QUEER KITCHEN

AKS Festival presents a new platform for dialogue: Queer Kitchen. Here you have a chance to meet-and-greet our official guests and other participants. We encourage everyone to join us. The Queer Kitchen is presented in collaboration with Sabaah.

We will open the first Queer Kitchen on Sunday August 9th at VESS with Pakistani brunch made by activist Neeli Rana. The following Queer Kitchen events will take place at Pride Square where we will serve tea, coffee and handy food for a symbolic price. However, we encourage the visitors to contribute with donations to our Transgender Literacy and Empowerment Program in Pakistan.

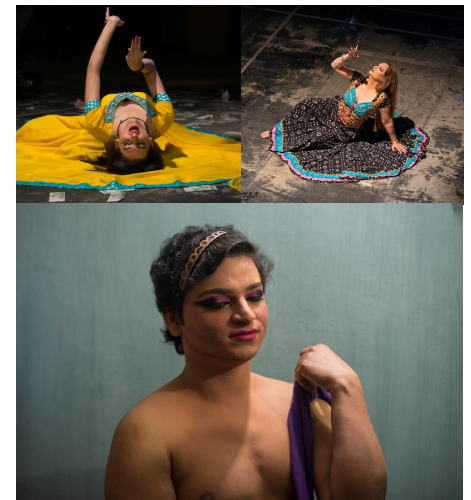
TransPakistan by Vincenzo Floramo
A visual journey through Lahore's transgender community

PHOTO EXHIBITION

Transgender communities maintain a nebulous position in conservative Pakistan. While they are tolerated as dancers at weddings and other celebrations they still carry a social stigma in daily occurrences. Historically, transgender, often referred to as Hijras, have been a visible part of Pakistani society, dating back to the Mughal Empire where they served queens on the royal courts. However, the nuances are thick, and despite public acceptance mirrored by frequent distaste depending on the circumstance, the supreme court passed a landmark legislation that allows for third gender registry. TransPakistan was shot in Lahore in 2015 where Vincenzo Floramo lived with the women in their dormitory. The exhibition will be held from August 1st to 12th at VESS from 12:00 - 18:00.

VINCENZO FLORAMO

Beginning in 1992, Floramo began to live nomadically between Asia, South America, North America and Europe, which he still continues. He is committed to exploring, learning and connecting through photography the diverse expressions of human experiences that he encounters within the diverse cultures. Floramo has been published in The Guardian, Lo Donna, Foreign Policy, Aljazeera, El Pais, Bangkok Post, South China Morning Post and Internazionale, and been honored with various prizes around the world.



Friday 31/7 : Pre-Festival Opening

TRANSPAKISTAN | 17:00 - 21:00 @VESS
Exhibition and Artist-talk by Vincenzo Floramo.

Friday 7/8 : Gallery Grand Opening

TRANSPAKISTAN | 17:00 - 21:00 @VESS
Exhibition and Artist-talk by Vincenzo Floramo. Meet our three Pakistani transgender activists.

LGBT Pakistan | 18:00 - 18:30 @VESS
Short documentary. See description on page 10.



**OFFICIAL GUESTS
ARTISTS/ACTIVISTS**

We encourage you to take the opportunity to meet our official guests. Look out for //DIALOGUE.

Neeli Rana, activist (PK)



Neeli Rana is a very well known activist working on transgender rights in Pakistan. She has been involved in this activism for many years and raised her voice for the community at many occasions, including murder cases and

several other violent episodes against transgender people in Pakistan. She is involved in community advocacy on third gender rights, and helps community members getting identity cards. She is currently working as board member for AKS Transgender Literacy and Empowerment Program in Pakistan, and also work as a field supervisor for a non profit organisation for health and prevention of HIV/AIDS. Recently, Neeli had her breakthrough in the theatrical world by performing as lead actress in "The Third Tune" a drama based on true stories of transgender lives in Pakistan.

Jannat Ali, activist & dancer (PK)



Jannat Ali is a recipient of a gold medal from the University of Punjab in MBA degree program, and has also a degree in performing arts research. She is a transgender and LGBTQ activist and happens to be the first transgender

project manager of community-based organization working for prevention of HIV/AIDS, sexual health and human rights in Pakistan.

In the past, Jannat successfully ran a literacy program as an educator for the transgender community by mobilizing and motivating the community members. She is a professional Kathak (Classical Indian dance) dancer with more than 4 years experience and has performed at several national and international platforms.

Jannat's strength lies in capacity building and community advocacy, which is why she has attended several trainings, workshops, seminars in many countries.

Kami Choudhry, activist & dancer (PK)



Kami Choudhry is a dedicated and highly motivated rights and development based activist with many years of work experience with the LGBT community in urban Pakistan. Her areas of work include; human rights, gender, health advocacy, leadership, education and project management. She has represented Pakistani queer youth at many national and International conferences on gender and sexuality. She also happens to be part of the international renowned and award winning documentary "CHUPPAN CHUPAI – HIDE AND SEEK".

Jonny von Wallström, director (SE)



Cinematographer turned self-shooting director, Jonny von Wallström is the filmmaker behind THE PEARL OF AFRICA. This is his second documentary, following by the successful film Zero Silence, which was Official

Selection at Sheffield Doc/Fest in 2011. Jonny tries to capture strong personal stories about life changing issues around the world, that merge raw realism with beautiful cinematic visuals. His previous work as a cinematographer ranges from broadcasters such as Arte, SVT, Al Jazeera, TV6, MTV, Kanal 5 and ZTV.

Fawzia Mirza, actor & comedian (US)



Fawzia Mirza acts, writes, produces and also happens to be the only south asian female queer one woman show performer. She uses personal storytelling and comedy to break down stereotypes across a multiplicity of identities: race, religion, sexual orientation and gender and defy the concept of the "model minority" often portrayed in the mainstream. She is famous for her web series like Kam Kardashian

about the long lost lesbian Kardashian sister and not to forget Brown Girl Problems, a series about South Asian women who also happen to be regular people with regular problems too.

Fawzia Mirza as queer artist, stand up comedian and activist is known for her daring and outspoken performances. She has been published in many prominent international media and her short films tend to be darling choice for the programs of LGBTQ film festivals.

Faizan, journalist & filmmaker (UK)



Faizan is a Pakistani journalist and filmmaker who has researched and written about LGBT issues for many years. Utilising their extensive network across the country, they have produced the first wide ranging study of LGBTQ

lives in Pakistan. Currently, Faizan is working on a documentary, which evidents a profound understanding of historical and contemporary existence of transgender community and sexual minorities in Pakistan.

Nausheen Khawja and Cloudberry, directors of Glitch QTIPOC Festival (UK)



Nausheen and Cloudberry, Glasgow (UK) based artists and activists run the Digital Desperado project offering free film making courses to women and trans women of color. They are also founders of GLITCH Glasgow QTIPOC

Film Festival running a stunning selection of films, video art, spoken word, Q&As, live music, and free haircuts. GLITCH creates an international platform for films and video art made by people of colour. QTIPOC stands for queer, trans, intersex, people of colour – The festival program focuses on films either made by, or about QTIPOCs. GLITCH and AKS Festival work partnership and help each other curating film and art programs.

www.digitaldesperados.org/glitch/



SATURDAY 8/8 : Official Opening Ceremony

SUNDAY 9/8 : Love Without Boundaries

AKS Festival welcomes you to the official opening ceremony with Bollywood musical comedy, live dance performance and drinks

DEDH ISHQIYA | 18:45 @Cinamateket

Dir: Abhisek Chaubey | India | Year: 2014 | 148 min | Language: Hindi with English subtitles

Dedh Ishqiya (one- and a half love story) chronicles the romantic adventures of Khalujaan (Naseeruddin Shah) and Babban (Arshad Warsi), two pretty thugs, who pretend to be bourgeoisie to beguile the wealthy widow Begum Para (Madhuri Dixit) by participating in the Urdu poetry competition at her palace. Their hidden agenda would not only be swindling Begum's money but also for a chance to fulfill Khalujan's desire to become Begum's new husband. Unfortunately, they have no clue about the gorgeous Begum and her clandestine ladylover Muniya (Huma Qureshi) have a little plan of their own that brings a fatal yet sarcastic twist to the game of love and betrayal.

The title "Dedh Ishqiya" meaning "one - and - a half love story," "half" being a vigorous reference to an undertone love story between the two leading ladies.

In this film, Vishal Bhardwaj, famous for "Maqbool", "Omkaara" and "Haider," a trilogy of Shakespearean adaption into Bollywood, pays homage to feminist Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai by mixing in flavors of modern day Bollywood cinema with some fading essences of Urdu literature and poetry.

EVENT //ART //DIALOGUE

Live dance performance and drinks

After the screening Jannat Ali (trained classical dancer from Pakistan) will perform Kathak (classical dance form). AKS will serve wine and nibbles in ASTA bar after the screening.

ADDITIONAL INFO

Feminism and sub-continental Literature

The lesbian love-story of Begum Para and Muniya is inspired by the short story "Lihaf - the quilt" by the eminent Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai. "Lihaf - the quilt" was her most controversial writing and is still banned from publication in many Muslim territories. She was considered the grand dame of Urdu fiction and was known for her indomitable spirit and a fierce feminists ideology. She explored feminine sexuality, middle-class gentility, and evolving conflicts in modern India. Her outspoken and controversial style of writing made her the passionate voice for the unheard, making her an inspiration for the younger generation of writers, readers and intellectuals.

"Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries." Jimmy Carter

ALEX & ALI | 16:00 @Cinamateket

Dir: Malachi Leopold | USA | Year: 2014 | 90 min | Language: English and Persian with English subtitles

"Alex & Ali" tells the true story of two men: Alex, a former American Peace Corps volunteer; and Ali, an Iranian Muslim. In 1967, while Alex was working with the Peace Corps in Iran, the two met, expressed their love, and kept their relationship secret for 10 years. With political unrest escalating, and the Iranian revolution fast approaching, Alex was forced to leave Iran - and Ali - in 1977. But through letters, phone calls, and eventually emails, the two remained in touch. In May 2012, Alex and Ali were reunited for the first time in 35 years.

PURPLE SKIES | 18:30 @VESS

Dir: Sridhar Rangayan | India | Year: 2014 | 66 min | Language: Hindi, English with English Subtitles

This insightful documentary looks at the lesser known, and often misunderstood terrain of the Indian LGBTQ women community. Weaving together heartrending stories of LGBTQ women victimized by the law, family and society, as well as hopeful stories of youngsters who have bravely come out of the closet. By placing it in the context of the historic struggle of the LGBTQ community, and juxtaposing personal stories with critical analysis of issues by activists and advocates, Purple Skies offers compelling insight to Indian LGBTQ lives.

EVENT //DIALOGUE

Guest speaker from HAREM CPH

HAREM CPH - was founded in 2010 in CPH's meat packing district with an aim to take parties for LGBTQ women to a new level. They focus on female artists whether it's within the music, art, photography, drawing, design or dance. In past the group have worked with talented female artists such as: Goodyn Green, Werkaholics, Lust, Thora Margretardottir, Rosa Lux, Bend Over Magasin, FemaleElectric etc. www.facebook.com/HaremKBH

EVENT //DIALOGUE

Talk on the asylum system with LGBT Asylum

LGBT Asylum is a group of LGBT people - asylum seekers, Danish citizens and persons residing in Denmark. LGBT Asylum works for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in the Danish asylum system, and provide support and counseling for the applicants. LGBT asylum is a volunteer based organisation motivated to work for the betterment of LGBT asylees. www.lgbtasylum.dk



MONDAY 10/8 : Queer, Trans, and Intersex People of Color

TUESDAY 11/8 : Africa - The LGBTQ frontier

"We are a glitch in the system; Our lives deny the lies; Our complexity is dissent; We fight for love." **GLITCH QTIPOC FESTIVAL**

**GLITCH FESTIVAL PRESENTS
QTIPOC SHORTS | 17:00 @VESS**

This program is curated by our partner festival GLITCH Glasgow QTIPOC festival. All films in this program are made by queer people of color from around the world to show solidarity and start dialogue about the importance of QTIPOC art and community.

The shortfilms are subtitled in English for deaf and hard of hearing audiences. Duration of the screening is 80 min.

- Drone | 1:53 min | Canada.
- 1000 Cum Shots | 1 min | Canada
- The Homecoming | 17 min | UK
- Group of Seven Inches | Canada
- Ladies Lounge | 12 min | Australia
- Purging | 1:32 min | USA
- Holy Mother | 7:15 min | Canada
- Ashes | 20min | Thailand
- Magnetics | 4:43 min | USA
- Voguing Train | 3:19 min | USA
- Child's Play | 5 min | Turkey

ADDITIONAL INFO

GLITCH is a Glasgow (UK) based QTIPOC Film Festival run by Digital Desperados (Nausheen Khawja and Cloudberry) with a stunning selection of films, video art, spoken word, filmmaker Q&As, panel discussions, live music, and free haircuts.

QTIPOC stands for Queer, Trans, Intersex, People of Color – The festival program focuses on films made by or about QTIPOCs. GLITCH creates an international platform for films and video art made by people of color.

For more info visit:
www.digitaldesperados.org/glitch/

EVENT //DIALOGUE
GLITCH Festival founders talk about QTIPOC
Nausheen Khawja and Cloudberry, directors of GLITCH QTIPOC Festival, will present the shortfilm program. After the screening they will talk about the importance of QTIPOC art and film.

Detailed information on the shorts above can be found on our website: www.aksfestival.com

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."
Martin Luther King, Jr

THE PEARL OF AFRICA | 19:00 @Cinamateket

Dir: Jonny von Wallström | Sweden | Year: 2014 | 120 min | Language: English with English subtitles

A film about love, hate and being transgender in one of the world's most transphobic places.

Once referred to as 'THE PEARL OF AFRICA' by Winston Churchill, Uganda is a small land-locked region in East Africa; blessed with diverse ethnicity, gender, flora and fauna. Yet in all this richness are struggles to recognize the very things that make it unique.

Enter the life of Cleopatra Kambu, a 27 year old Ugandan transwoman. Having been born biologically male, she, against all odds transitioning into the beautiful woman we see today. In the film we follow Cleopatra as she questions gender expression and identity, reshaping attitudes while uncovering the reality of a people who's lives have been shrouded in myth and prejudice.

In a feature length documentary we embark on a life changing journey. We follow Cleo as she attempts to shine light on the intricate concepts of her gender identity. She rewrites the story of a transwoman that has for long been shrouded in darkness and misunderstood.

EVENT //DIALOGUE
After the filmscreening we present Q&A with filmmaker Jonny von Wallström and LGBTQ activists from Queer Youth Uganda.

ADDITIONAL INFO
This screening and event are co-presented with Humanity in Action (HIA). HIA is an international educational organization, which work to educate, inspire and connect a global network of students and young professionals. They aim promote future leaders committed to human rights, diversity and active citizenship – in communities and around the world.



WEDNESDAY 12/8 : The Third Gender

THURSDAY 13/8 : Brown Feminism

Seven countries in the world have officially acknowledged a third gender right for trans*people - what have we learned so far?

THIRD GENDER PROGRAM | 16:00 @VESS

AKS presents a shortfilm program and workshop on the Third Gender in South Asia.

LGBT Pakistan

Dir: Faizan | UK | Year: Under prod. | 25 min | Language: English and Urdu with English subtitles

A sneak peak into the short independent documentary by British journalist Faizan studying the hidden LGBTQ communities in Pakistan. Faizan travelled around the country for this film, narrating the subject to give an unique insight on the broad range of those who identify as LGBTQ in modern day Pakistan. The film examines alternative gender identities in the history of the region, with reference to colonialism and socio-political change.

Hide and Seek

Dir: Saadat Munir and Saad Khan | Denmark, Pakistan | Year: 2013 | Duration: 21 min | Language: Urdu with English subtitles

A debut film by Saad Khan and Saadat Munir. Hide and Seek features four individuals and focuses on their internal conflicts during their continual play of 'hide and seek' with the mainstream public in the urban areas of Pakistan. We follow Jenny, a transgender college student who recently underwent gender reassignment. Kami, a fearless

and flamboyant dancer, who openly lives with his boyfriend, Waseem, an effeminate wedding entertainer and a veteran dancing boy, and Neeli an transgender activist who played a huge part when the supreme court in Pakistan changed the constitution to allow 'the third gender'.

ABU

Dir: Arshad Khan | Canada | Year: Under prod. | 3 min | Language: English

A sneak peak into the promotional trailer of a new documentary about the contentious relationship between a fundamentalist Muslim father and his gay son, told through still photographs, VHS recordings and travelogues.

EVENT //DIALOGUE

Meet the transgender activists from Pakistan

After the screenings meet Neeli, Kami and Jannat from Pakistan and the filmmakers Faizan and Saadat Munir. They will be in attendance to talk about the third gender in Pakistan.

EVENT //ART | 20:00 @Pride Square

Experience the magic of traditional transgender dance by Neeli, Jannat and Kami live on stage.

"I am a Black Feminist. I mean I recognize that my power as well as my primary oppressions come as a result of my blackness as well as my womaness, and therefore my struggles on both of these fronts are inseparable." Audre Lorde

FAWZIA MIRZA: ONE WOMAN SHOW ME, MY MOM & SHARMILA | 20:00 @Vela bar

AKS Festival is honored to host an evening with the pioneer female stand up comedian and brown feminist, Fawzia Mirza. Experience her critically acclaimed show "Me, My Mom and Sharmila". A solo play written by herself exploring intersecting identity, family, and growing up South Asian and Queer in today's world.

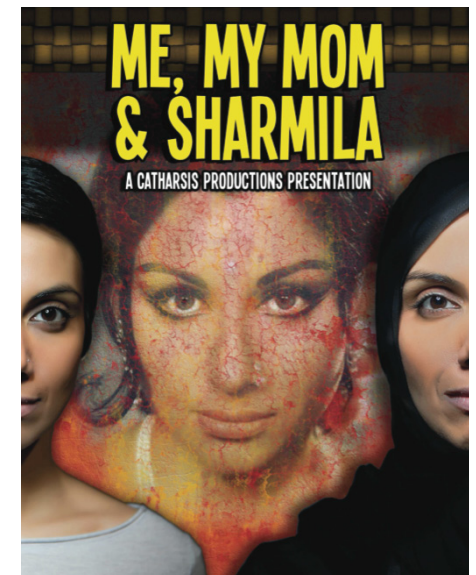
Me, My Mom and Sharmila

A hilarious and heartbreaking coming-of-age story told by a first generation American fighting for acceptance as a queer woman of color.

At some point, we all realize we are not exactly the person our parents expected us to become. How do we find our own voice and embrace our personal identity in the face of societal and familial pressures? Told with humor and deep insight, dynamic writer-performer Fawzia Mirza shares a journey of self-discovery and strength that carries her all the way from childhood as a Pakistani Muslim in small-town Canada to living out as an actress in the heart of Chicago.

Told through the lens of two women's shared love for glamorous Bollywood film star, Sharmila

Tagore, using personal anecdotes, pop culture and even some South Asian history lessons, this is a profound and exciting new program about family and finding yourself.



FRIDAY 31/7 - 2015	FRIDAY 7/8 - 2015	SATURDAY 8/8 - 2015	SUNDAY 9/8 - 2015	MONDAY 10/8 - 2015	TUESDAY 11/8 - 2015	WEDNESDAY 12/8 - 2015	THURSDAY 13/8 - 2015	FRIDAY 14/8 - 2015
<p>VESS</p> <p>17:00 – 21:00 //ART Pre-Festival Gallery Opening with artist-talk</p>	<p>VESS</p> <p>17:00 - 21:00 //ART Gallery Grand Opening with artist-talk.</p> <p>18:00 - 18:30 //FILM Short doc: LGBT Pakistan</p>	<p>Cinematket</p> <p>18:45 //DIALOGUE Official Festi- val Opening: Welcome Speech</p> <p>19:00 //FILM Bollywood: Dedh Ishqiya</p> <p>21:35 //ART Indian dance performance</p> <p>21:45 - 22:30 //DIALOGUE Get-together and drinks in ASTAbar Mingle with guests</p> <p>Vela Bar</p> <p>23:00 - 04:00 AKS Afterparty</p>	<p>VESS</p> <p>11:00 - 14:00 //DIALOGUE Queer Kitchen: Meet and great brunch</p> <p>Cinematket</p> <p>16:00 //FILM Doc: Alex and Ali</p> <p>17:30 - 18:00 //DIALOGUE LGBT asylum in Denmark</p> <p>VESS</p> <p>18:30 //FILM Doc: The Purple Skies</p> <p>//DIALOGUE Guest speakers from HAREM CPH</p>	<p>VESS</p> <p>17:00 – 19:00 //FILM Shorts: QTIPOC</p> <p>//DIALOGUE Workshop on the QTIPOC commuity with GLITCH festival directors</p>	<p>Pride Square</p> <p>12:00 – 14:00 //DIALOGUE Queer Kitchen with Sabaah</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 //DIALOGUE HIA-AKS presents: Queer Youth in Uganda</p> <p>Cinematket</p> <p>19:00 //FILM Doc: The Pearl of Africa</p> <p>//DIALOGUE Q&A with the director Jonny von Wallström and activists from Queer Youth Uganada</p>	<p>VESS</p> <p>17:00 – 18:30 //FILM Shorts: Third Gender Program</p> <p>//DIALOGUE Q&A with the filmmakers and Pakistani TG activists</p> <p>Pride Square</p> <p>19:00 – 19:45 //DIALOGUE HIA-AKS presents: The Third Gender – Experiences from the Frontline</p> <p>20:00 //ART Traditional Pakistani dance by TG activists</p>	<p>Pride Square</p> <p>12:00 - 14:00 //DIALOGUE Queer Kitchen with Sabaah</p> <p>16:30 - 17:15 //DIALOGUE HIA-AKS presents: LGBTQ in West- ern Kenya</p> <p>1730 - 1815 //DIALOGUE HIA-AKS presents: LGBTQ Rights are Human Rights</p> <p>Vela bar</p> <p>20:00 - 21:30 //ART One-woman stand-up show by Fawzia Mirza</p>	<p>Pride Square</p> <p>12:00 – 14:00 //DIALOGUE Queer Kitchen with Sabaah</p> <p>16.30 – 18.00 //DIALOGUE HIA-AKS presents: Gender & Identity in Development</p>
<p>VENUES & INFO</p> <p>VESS Oehlenschlägersgade 36 1635 Copenhagen V <i>All events are free</i></p> <p>Cinematket Gothersgade 55 1123 Copenhagen K <i>Filmscreenings require tickets</i></p> <p>Vela Bar Viktoriagade 2 1655 Copenhagen V</p> <p>Pride Square City Hall / Rådhuspladsen Regnbuepladsen 1550 Copenhagen V</p>								