

Presenting Kulturprinsen




Kulturprinsen
THE CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDRENS CULTURE

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Inspirational fuel for children and the young

Objective: On a solid basis of knowledge and insight Kulturprinsen must act as an experimenting development centre for culture with children and the young – both regionally, nationally and internationally.

Kulturprinsen with its physical placement in Viborg, is part of a creative centre in the Jutland area of Denmark. The renovated buildings contain offices, workshops and project facilities that provide the framework for the daily running of Kulturprinsen. This is where you find the permanent staff and where meetings, workshops and experimental initiatives take place.

The objective of Kulturprinsen is to be an experimenting development centre for culture with children and the young. The centre will develop cultural services, collect knowledge and work with new forms of commu-

nication of art and culture in relation to children and young people.

Kulturprinsen is an independent institution with a board consisting of seven members. The Centre receives an annual contribution from Viborg Municipality and the state towards running expenses. Apart from this Kulturprinsen's projects are financed with means from foundations, pools and other subsidy schemes.

Kulturprinsen has three permanent members of staff: head of centre, head of development and cultural assistant. In addition administrative and artistic staff are employed for individual projects.

Regional projects. *Kulturprinsen has, under the heading Fra hav til hav (From coast to coast), completed several major art projects with children and young people in Region Central Jutland. Besides children, youngsters and pictorial artists the partners have been a large number of municipalities, art and culture institutions, as well as schools, kindergartens etc. About 10,000 children and youngsters have taken part in the projects. The picture shows the enormous installation in Nordisk Park in Viborg. The formation was composed of 8,000 banners painted around the theme: The place I like the most.*



From grassroots to flagship

Kulturprinsen was established in 2002. The centre was the result of a collaboration between Viborg Municipality and Viborg County in order to direct focus towards children and culture. They wanted to give children's culture a qualified lift as well as sharpen its profile in the Viborg area.

As the Danish municipalities were merged and the counties abolished in 2007, the government took over the financial responsibility for the operational expenditure in relation to Kulturprinsen which had until then belonged to Viborg County.

From the very beginning the centre has become an important developer in the field of children's culture and enjoys general recognition of its initiatives. The awareness of Kulturprinsen's activities is strong among people who work seriously with children's culture in Denmark. Amongst other things, Kulturprinsen and Viborg Municipality were awarded the Spring Prize 2007 for innovation and new ideas relating to children's culture.

Minister of Culture, Carina Christensen has in 2009 commissioned Kulturprinsen's project *Interdiscipli-*

nary exploratorium in connection with Culture Region Østjysk Vækstbånd.

With this project Kulturprinsen wishes to give four municipalities' art and culture facilitators the chance to experiment with new forms of cultural communication which will challenge children and young people's interest and curiosity. Through an inspiring project development process the facilitators will acquire the most recent knowledge about children's culture and project management. It will enable them to create exciting culture projects across professional and municipal boundaries. In this way a library collaborating with a museum and a theatre group will develop models for conveying culture which will produce a new dialogue with children and young people.

This national commission was given to Kulturprinsen on the basis of its rather unique competences within the special field of children's culture, and according to the minister of culture the centre is well ahead and instrumental in further developing and enhancing the qualitative level in cultural life.

Model municipal experiment. *Viborg municipality and Kulturprinsen have in 2007-2009 participated in the model municipal experiment Children's culture in the municipality with the role play project Fortællefrø (Seeds of Storytelling). The aim was to develop role plays with an artistic touch together with children of 5-12 years. The role play was put together gradually at a number of workshops and culminated with two major plays with each 200 children taking place at Lake Hald. The picture is from the play Stjernefrøet (The Starseed) in 2009.*



Creative minds unfold themselves

Kulturprinsen has been put into the world for the purpose of experimenting. The aim of the centre is to develop cultural offers of high quality and with an innovative element.

This the centre achieves by launching a large number of experimental projects. The projects exploit ideas for alternative ways of thinking in relation to children, young people and culture, and different ways of conveying culture and cultural heritage to children and

Kulturprinsen works with children and the young as well as with adults within a large number of professional groups: artists, architects, teachers, art historians, mediators – and researchers who develop theories about culture for children and the young.

the young, often in a collaboration between several professional groups and the children and young people themselves.

Kulturprinsen strives to renew children's culture at two levels. Partly by giving children and the young the

chance to encounter art and culture in a creative way, and where the objective is to find new ways of including the participants' skills. Partly by working with persons and professional groups such as artists, cultural workers and teachers, who communicate culture to children,

Kulturprinsen edits its own series of publications featuring experiences and research from the projects, just as the centre annually publishes a newspaper *Krollede Hjern* about the activities of the year.

thereby helping them to develop new competences and perceive new possibilities which will prove useful in their practical work with children.

Each individual project is a process where the participating children, youngsters and adults examine which qualities and possibilities a specific cultural experience can provide. Subsequently the experiences are passed on, so that others may use the idea in their work with children or youngsters and culture.

Kulturprinsen want to be recognized in the broadest sense, also geographically, and experiences from the

***Development projects.** Experimenting with new forms of cultural communication is one of Kulturprinsen's main issues. A number of development projects have tested new angles for collaboration between i.a. museums and theatres. The projects have been interdisciplinary artistic cooperations around the staging of exhibitions, interactivity, use of new media etc. The picture is from the exhibition *Velkommen til Nactalius (Welcome to Nactalius)* at Skive Art Museum.*



centre are spread nationally, but also internationally. This means that the centre's results must be communicated, and spreading the results and experiences therefore takes high priority at Kulturprinsen.

Kulturprinsen wants to be an inspiration to cultural institutions, artists and professionals, and the centre offers access to its experiences through its homepage, own publications, scholars' publications, lectures etc. Kulturprinsen has a large number of cooperation partners who contribute to the centre's projects. The basic idea is normally formulated at Kulturprinsen, but after this the participants will join in the further development. This applies to the children in school, institution or youth club, but also artists, teachers, pedagogues, researchers as well as members of staff in museums, theatres and cultural institutions. Apart from this, Kul-

turprinsen collaborates with children's cultural centres, associations, politicians, municipalities, VIA University College, Region Midtjylland, the Ministry of Culture (Network for Children and Culture) and a number of foreign cultural contacts.

Kulturprinsen is often entrusted with the function of coordinator and is responsible for developing the idea, applying for financial means, coordinating the practical processes, as well as evaluating and communicating the projects.

Kulturprinsen's projects may address themselves to just a few children or up to about the 10.000 who have participated in the big regional projects.

***The room of our own stories.** The first story room was created in The Kindergarten Prinsen, Viborg, and since then another has appeared in Århus in Børnehuset Herluf Trollesgade. The room is a magic world built around a number of stories composed by the older children in the kindergarten and related during "ting-finder-ture" (thing finder trips) with two artists. The room is the children's special place and when they leave the kindergarten for school they hand over the stories to the next group of children who will expand on them in their own way. The picture is taken in The Kindergarten Prinsen.*



Kulturprinsen involves children and the young

Kulturprinsen's activities are established on the basis of the views the centre holds concerning children. Kulturprinsen sees children as a potential in every possible way. Kulturprinsen wants for children and the young

The basic philosophy is that children should be seen as multifaceted people with a great variety of competences. The task for Kulturprinsen is to make sure that children have a positive meeting with culture and with some different and exciting projects which contribute to their personal development and quality of life.

to become active participants meeting cultural offers and art. That is why Kulturprinsen develops creative cultural offers to children and the young and highlights all the things that children are good at.

The view of the child as an active and competent individual is directly reflected in the way Kulturprinsen formulates children's culture: Children should interact actively with art and culture.

Interaction is one way of stirring children and young people's interest in and curiosity about art and culture. Children and young people want to take an active part in relation to their surroundings. They want to play and to explore, use their whole body and all their senses, and they find it natural to use their knowledge in terms of the

new media – competences which they master efficiently and creatively. Kulturprinsen considers the child to be competent and knowledgeable, and the centre finds it inspiring to receive input from the children.

As a natural consequence of Kulturprinsen's philosophy of children, all projects contain an element of children's involvement. The children and youngsters who are participating in the projects are invited to involve themselves and contribute with ideas and input. They are primarily involved in the practical part of the project. Often they help to create material and select areas which they find interesting.

This kind of inclusion fuels the interest. Children and youngsters become more enthusiastic and like to make their bids as to ways of expressing themselves with e.g. words, body, brush or sound. Both the processes and the end results bear witness to how children and young people experience their day-to-day life and the world around them, mediated through art and culture.

Kulturprinsen acknowledges that children and young people have a qualified opinion about art and culture and how to transmit it. They get involved through workshops, and produce written and spoken opinions during the projects. They are also involved in the evaluation, because they possess valuable knowledge about the experiences of the project, and the benefits to themselves.

***Architecture.** Art Ark is the name of a number of projects which allow children to meet architecture in a more sensual way. The various activities are meant to give the children a feeling of how a room can influence a person and how human beings can influence a room. In the project Mit rum trækker vejret (My room breathes) 200 children arranged an exhibition together with an architect and a pictorial artist in a process which gave them the chance to create a town of white houses, engrave, paint, climb and model. The picture is from Mit rum trækker vejret. (My room breathes).*



Collaboration with the universities

A number of Kulturprinsen's projects have researchers attached, who follow the project and contribute to the mediation of its experiences and qualities.

The researchers follow the project at close range, discuss ideas and processes with the participants, observe and watch developments in the projects and in the children or young people who take part. The researchers follow the practical part of the project in order to form an impression of what works for both the adults, who arrange, develop, hold workshops and are in charge of various processes, and for the participating children.

Subsequently, the researchers describe methods and experiences from the project.

The associated researchers themselves choose an angle for their research that stems from their specialist area and field of interest. A general picture is formed, while the researchers delve further into one or more themes from the project.

Kulturprinsen has cooperated with researchers from i.a. Southern University of Denmark, Aarhus University, Copenhagen University and the Royal School of Library and Information Science.

***Cultural workshop.** The cultural workshop is an artistic meeting between children, teachers and professional artists, e.g. pictorial artists, performers, dancers, scenographers, authors, etc. A large number of workshops with different themes have given children and artists insight and new opportunities for self-expression. Children and teachers are active in the process so that each workshop somehow reflects the children and adults who take part. The picture is from the cultural workshop Flagermusen. Alting på hovedet (The bat. Everything upside down) which took place in Mønsted limestone quarry.*



Culture is fuel for children and young people

Kulturprinsen seeks to strengthen and develop the possibilities for a good life for children. On the basis of a belief in children's cultural competences, qualitative offers will be developed, which activate children's creative skills.

Children of today live a life where to a great degree they are active co-creators of their own daily lives, where they have an influence on the world around them, and where they interact with life in every possible way. Kulturprinsen therefore sees it as its task to develop new fascinating, involving and interactive meetings with art and culture, and methods of transmitting that arouse interest and curiosity in children and young people.

Kulturprinsen endeavours to meet children and young people exactly where they are, and follow their development in a modern society.

Kulturprinsen is convinced that the good life for children requires that they relate to the aesthetic – that they experience the productions of other people and themselves produce art and culture. Art and culture is a means to create and express oneself. It is a kind of refuge where many perspectives can inspire new creative

and innovative efforts. Art and culture offer an opportunity to sense and experience things by oneself, but also together with others, so that cultural meetings open up for developing and extending social networks.

Kulturprinsen's projects must appeal to the modern child and develop their own competences, skills and talents, as well as strive to communicate culture to children and young people, and make it both interesting and relevant. The ideal is to deliver fuel to children and young people's own culture-creating processes so that they are able to 'create' themselves at the same time as being introduced into the culture of the community, our common cultural heritage.

By expanding creatively children become innovative. In time society will benefit and be able to enjoy the creative competences which will unfold in the society of tomorrow.

Read more about Kulturprinsen's activities at:

www.kulturprinsen.dk

Contact:

Kulturprinsen,

Development Centre for Children's Culture

Kasernevej 11 A, 8800 Viborg

Telephone: +45 86 60 14 15

E-mail: kp@kulturprinsen.dk

***International projects.** Kulturprinsen has a number of international partners and participates in a cultural exchange project in 2008-2009 with a children's cultural centre in Burkina Faso. Children and young people from Burkina Faso have visited Denmark and participated in workshops with professional artists from both countries. Together with a group of Danish children they performed for each other, but also let the two cultures interact by performing together. The picture is from a workshop in 2008.*



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Author: Gro Ørting

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By: Kulturprinsen,
The Center for Development of Childrens Culture

Kasernevej 11 A

DK-8800 Viborg

Denmark

Phone: 86 60 14 15

Mail: kp@kulturprinsen.dk

www.kulturprinsen.dk

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Kasernevej 11A
8800 Viborg