

A shop unlike any other

(Original title: Man skiltes da med emaljen)

Af Aase Holm

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Foto: Lars Hansen



Bundtens i Næstvedgade er i to rum med 4000 plakater og 6000 emaljer. De er alle for salg, og det er kun muligt at se dem alle på én gang.



Skiltene som disse har i mange år været eftertragtede samlerobjekter. De findes alle på et stykke og sælges i butikken for under en halvkrone.

Reklamebureauet jobber og laver nye plakater og emaljer. De er alle for salg, og det er kun muligt at se dem alle på én gang.

To gamle skolekammerater fik en god ide og reproducerer de kendte samlerobjekter - hvorfor ødelægge byens rum med plastic, når emaljekulturen ikke er nostalgi, men økologi, design og reklame til tiden

Næstvedgade i København har altid været fuld af udsigtsfulde forretninger, der afspejler tidsånden - fra designbutikken Daniel Sjögrens i Metastor-apoteket til de franske og italienske butikker og antikvitetbutikker, som i dag er på vej væk. Men i dag er der kommet nyt ind og ud mellem gaderne smilbarheden.

I nummer 12 ligger en forretning, som ikke findes nogen anden sted i Danmark. Det er en butik, der sælger plakater og emaljer. De er alle for salg, og det er kun muligt at se dem alle på én gang. De er alle for salg, og det er kun muligt at se dem alle på én gang.

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forvundet håndværk! Ikke fortid - fremtid

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Holder i 100 år

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De to mænd, Larsen (til venstre) og Brundt (til højre), står i butikken i Næstvedgade, der er en butik for salg af plakater og emaljer. De er alle for salg, og det er kun muligt at se dem alle på én gang.

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Fagre nye plastik

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Spytning forbudt

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Two old school friends had a good idea and now reproduce well-known collector's items. Why destroy the city's space with plastic when vitreous enamel signs offer sustainability, design and convincing advertising all in one?

Nansensgade in Copenhagen has always been full of unpretentious shops that reflect the spirit of the times - from the women's clothing shop Daniel Skjern in the Matador era to the French and Italian-inspired eateries and book stores that nowadays dot the street.

At number 62 is a shop unlike any other. It once housed a lingerie shop, which is now on display at the Copenhagen City Museum. Today you look from the December darkness into a bright and colourful room with the walls covered with enamel signs, both old and new.

Nick Brandt and Bo Bjørn Hansen, both 28 years old, are the two behind this unique revival of solid Danish signage culture. They started the project one day when they thought it was time to stop seeing the city walls and shop fronts filled with so much junk: fluttering posters pasted on top of each other in a sinful mess and graffiti of varying quality.

"The primitive signage displayed by kiosks and supermarkets defaces the space of the city, and I can't help but associate the advertisements with shoddy quality," says Bo Bjørn Hansen. I don't think that in a well-ordered country like Denmark you should be accustomed to such a lack of respect for the walls of the street.

Not the past, but the future

So is it nostalgia that drives two well-educated guys to abandon their original course to revive an almost vanished craft? Not at all, on the contrary, it is not about the past, but about the future, the two stress.

And here's how it all began. They were in parallel classes at Zahles School without knowing each other. One day one of them accidentally slammed a door in the other's head and a riotous quarrel arose. But, after that a growing friendship occurred. After graduation and travelling abroad, they both went on to business school. Their lectures took place in Nansengade, and Bo soon got the feel of the street's special atmosphere. He was looking for a new address for his comic shop Pegasus, which he bought at the age of 16 with money he had earned himself. Using Nansensgade's own private telegraph system, the street's residents found a basement shop for his comics.

A few years later, the street was haunted again. Both guys had finished their studies and were working various jobs, and both were avid collectors of old enamel signs. A plan to resurrect the never-surpassed art of vitreous enamel signage took shape. One day, they skipped jobs and looked for a new shop in Nansensgade. Today, enamel signs are not only their main interest, but also their livelihood.

Lasts for 100 years

"It's our own collection hanging in the shop. We've spent a few years developing the concept we're working with now, which is a combination of something new and something unique" they say.

Initially, they are targeting business directly. More precisely brand manufacturers, with what they describe as a tried and tested medium. They showcase the vintage

advertisement signs and offer to produce the original as well as new designs.

"The product is superior, it's been proven a long time ago, as many of the signs are today over 100 years old and still look like new" they say.

With this guarantee of durability and a great deal of enthusiasm, the two young entrepreneurs set out on their first customer visit. They had chosen three big names in well-known brands, Tuborg (Carlsberg), Egmont (Disney) and Berlingske Tidende. A week later they had the order from all three customers.

"We come with a total concept, namely a product that is physically ready to use and at the same time a well-functioning design. I guess it also says something about our product that a lot of people are itching to get their hands on the signs. How many other ads can you say that about?" Nick and Bo ask.

Nasty new plastic

Denmark has had several reputable enamel factories, Ravnholm and Glud & Marstrand to name a few, but all gave up during the plastic boom of the 1960's. The young entrepreneurs therefore had to turn abroad for their orders, but for competitive reasons they refused to reveal which country. One thing is for sure, the signs are being produced with the same fine artistic finish and quality as the good old Danish signs.

"What gets people excited about the signs is their textural quality, the fact that your fingers can glide over the letters and the relief of the motif," Nick emphasises. Each colour is printed separately, one on top of the other. It takes a whole day to finish a colour, but then the sign also has the glow and soul that makes it unique. On top of that comes the sustainability value. This is a product that doesn't have to be thrown away and renewed over and over again.

The signs typically cost £20-50 and that is equivalent in purchasing power to prices in the 1930s, when every decent business - from steamship companies to razor blade manufacturers – used enamel signs for their advertisement.

Spitting forbidden

Nick Brandt and Bo Bjørn Hansen are ready with two new promotions for the old enamel art. One is aimed at architects and municipalities and involves reviving the old enamelled street and number signs, especially for the renovation of old city quarters.

"Why not choose signs that are historically correct and in harmony with the cityscapes being renovated?" Bo asks, adding that some streets in Copenhagen's Latin Quarter still have some of the original street signs, which were put up around 1890.

The second campaign is aimed directly at consumers and includes all the familiar black-and-white enamel signs asking people to wipe their feet, use the back entrance, avoid spitting, shut the gate, etc. These signs, when they appear in the New Year in craft shops and well-stocked hardware stores, will cost just under £10.