

FRIENDSHIPS AND PORTRAITS IN THE AGE OF ROMANTICISM *REFLECTIONS ON EIGHT PORTRAITS BY C. A. JENSEN*

[ABSTRACT]

Friendships play an important part in our lives, but few of us think about how the cultural convention of friendship makes us act. Studies of the nineteenth century show that during the period of German romanticism it became fashionable amongst poets, writers, and artists to celebrate and visualize friendships. In the 1810s, Rome seemed the perfect incubator for young artists forming friendships and cultivating artistic communities. The most remarkable output of the painter C. A. Jensen's Italian sojourn, starting in 1818, was eight small portraits of his circle of friends. These portraits reflect the importance of fellowship, of networking amongst friends and also what Rome meant to young artists in terms of finding one's artistic identity. The aim of this article is to illuminate how a romantic culture of friendship influenced C. A. Jensen's decision to paint his circle of friends at Rome. Taking Jensen's portraits as its point of departure, the article touches upon some artistic and sociological aspects of friendships in the age of romanticism.

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KEYWORDS *Artist Identity, Rome, Transition, Culture of Friendship, the Nazarenes*

In an early self-portrait (ill. 1), made in Copenhagen in 1815, C. A. Jensen (1792–1870) depicts himself at a desk with a pair of compasses and a piece of chalk lodged in a holder, pointing to the importance of accuracy and sketching from life. On the wall behind the artist are two small portraits of his parents and a copy of the Greuze painting *Girl with a Dog*. The presence of the tools reflects a young man still training at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, while the portraits of his parents were his debut works as a portrait painter, shown at the Charlottenborg exhibition at the Academy the previous year. Jensen was the son of hard-working burghers and with this painting he clearly paid tribute to his parents who partly paid for his training. In 1816, the artist had to break off his training as his parents could no longer support him financially.¹ From that point onwards, he had to support himself and went first to Flensburg in 1817 to paint portraits and later that year to Dresden, where he stayed until 1818. As Jensen grew up in Bredstedt in the southern part of Schleswig, he spoke and wrote both German and Danish, and it must have seemed natural to him to seek clients

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in the German-speaking areas of Schleswig-Holstein. Even though Jensen did not finish his training at the Academy in Copenhagen, he could still apply for a travel grant through the Foundation *ad Usus Publicos*. He did so successfully from Dresden, but the travel grant was less than he had anticipated. A portrait painter such as Jensen was expected to supplement his income whilst abroad by making portraits.² Once in Dresden, Jensen kept himself busy copying old masters, which he had been commissioned to do in the Gemäldegalerie, and he also attended the Dresden Art Academy. In 1818, before leaving for Rome, he met with his friend, the painter J. C. Dahl (1788–1857), whom he knew very well from his time at the Academy in Copenhagen. Dahl would settle down in Dresden, where in 1824 he was appointed professor at the Academy and became a colleague of the painter C. D. Friedrich (1774–1840).

Besides the travel grant, Jensen was commissioned by the president of the Academy in Copenhagen, the Danish Crown Prince, Christian Frederik (who later became King Christian VIII), to copy a number of masterpieces in foreign collections. Unfortunately, the painter suffered great difficulties in receiving timely payment for his work for the Crown Prince whilst in Rome, and, as a result of financial difficulties, it is known that he borrowed money from, amongst others, the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) and the archaeologist P. O. Brøndsted (1780–1842), who also served as envoy of the Royal Danish Court in Rome.³ Despite his lack of funding, it is significant that Jensen found it important to portray his immediate circle of friends in Rome without getting paid.

Jensen painted eight small portraits which are the most significant output of his Roman sojourn. The group of friends consisted largely of young artists, intellectuals and academics who were thought to have a promising career ahead of them and therefore had been awarded public or private funding to travel abroad. Jensen made portraits of the composer Rudolph Bay (1791–1851); the poet B. S. Ingemann (1789–1862) (ill. 2); the sculptor H. E. Freund (1786–1840) (ill. 3); the critic and writer Peder Hjort (1793–1871); the adopted son of the already mentioned Brøndsted, a Venetian nobleman Nicolo Conrad de Lunzi (1798–1885); the historian H. F. J. Estrup (1794–1846); the theologian H. N. Clausen (1793–1877); and the connoisseur of art Georg Ernst Harzen (1790–1853) from Altona, who, on his return to Germany, would establish the Art Society of Hamburg.⁴ Freund was already a friend of Jensen's from his years of training at the Academy in Copenhagen. During his time in Rome, Jensen also made larger portraits of Freund and also of Estrup, with whom he had been become acquainted in Dresden. The latter portrait he began in 1818, but he had still not completed it, when Estrup left Rome for France in the spring of 1819. The size of the painting suggests that this was a commissioned portrait.⁵ The series of small portraits clearly attracted attention since, in July 1819, Brøndsted reported home to the Crown Prince that

III. I [C. A. Jensen, *Self-portrait*, 1815. Oil on canvas, 63.3 x 48.3 cm.

The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle, photo: Lennart Larsen]

Jensen had painted portraits of, amongst others, Bay, Ingemann, Freund, Hjort and Lunzi 'alla prima'. The portrait of Estrup must have been amongst these works, while the portraits of Harzen and Clausen are dated to 1820.⁶

Out of Friendship

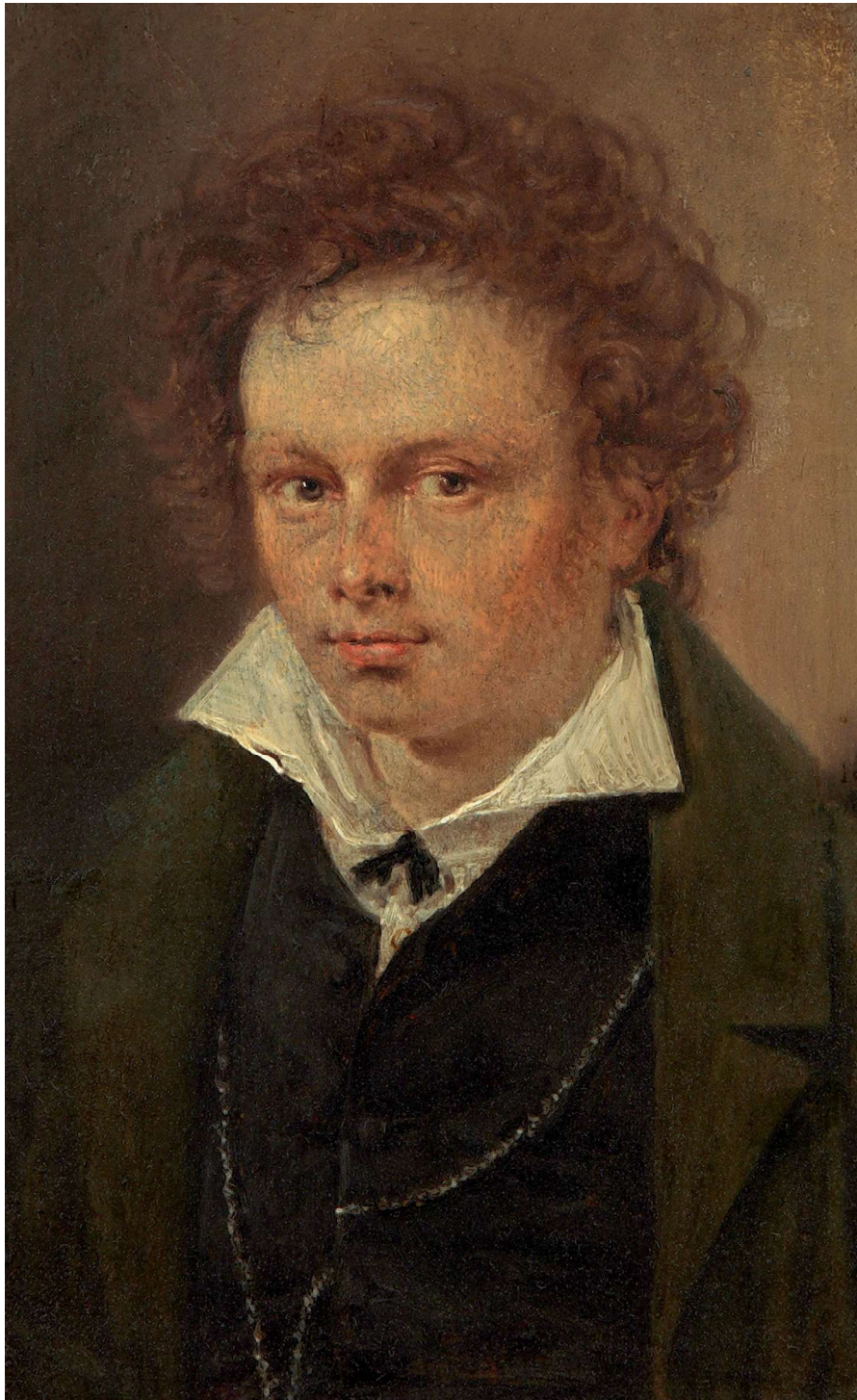
The art historian Sigurd Schultz who, in 1932, published his two-volume monograph *C. A. Jensen*, understood the Roman portraits – small in size and with sketch-like qualities – as the cornerstone of Jensen's subsequent success as a portrait painter upon his return to Denmark.⁷ Schultz recognized in these early portraits what he saw as Jensen's trademark, i.e. the ability to adjust the size of his canvases to match the finances of the middle class in Copenhagen. Furthermore, Schultz has pointed out that Jensen's years abroad enabled him to establish a network of future clients at home. This observation by Schultz is essential in understanding how an artist works in order to secure commissions and earn a living. Jensen's eight portraits are indeed a category of artworks apart, as they were intended for his friends and not for display at exhibitions. Schultz has called the group of small pictures *Venneportrætter* [Portraits of friends] as they reveal who Jensen associated with during his sojourn.⁸ These portraits were hardly done without a purpose, whether it was emotional or strategic or some combination of the two. Hence it seems reasonable to consider the artworks as part of a friendship-economy, i.e. in which the receipt of a gift creates an obligation to reciprocate the gesture.⁹

Drawing on these ideas, I aim to examine the artist's motivation in making these portraits, and the influences on that motivation, which requires an exploration of the cultural-historical circumstances in which the portraits were made. What other reasons might Jensen have had for making these portraits beyond seeking to establish a network of future clients as Schultz has suggested?

As a group, these small portraits do seem to testify to the importance of fellowship, of what Rome meant socially to young travellers, trying to find a place amongst the like-minded in artistic communities less conventional than those they left at home. In this respect, Rome was the perfect incubator for networking, forming friendships, making the transition from training to becoming an artist at the academy, and for finding a way to express one's personal identity as an artist.

In a letter of November 1819 to his friend in Denmark Gottlieb Schønheyder, the aforementioned Rudolph Bay explained why Jensen had made his portrait:

Nu har jeg dog den Trøst at være kommen in effigie til mit kjære Fødeland at hilse paa mine Venner. Gudskelov, at I finde det ligt. Vor brave Landsmand, *Jensen*, som studerer i Rom, og som jeg dagligen omgikkes med, har malet det af Venskab for mig og uden min Anmodning, naturligviis uden Betaling.



III. 2 [C. A. Jensen, *The Poet B. S. Ingemann*, 1819. Oil on copper, 18 x 11.5 cm.
The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle, photo: Kit Weiss]

[It comforts me to know that I have arrived in effigy to my dear native land to greet my friends. Thank God you find it resembles me. Our respectable fellow countryman *Jensen* who studies in Rome, and with whom I met daily, has painted it out of friendship without my request and without payment of course.]¹⁰

In the letter, Bay encouraged Schönheyder, who had recently received the portrait from Rome, to place it on the wall of his living room whilst they were apart.¹¹ With only a few words, Bay describes how the act of having one's portrait painted played a significant role in sealing the friendship between the painter and the sitter. The portrait was not done on Bay's request, nor was it commissioned by someone else, and therefore the question of payment was never raised. The portrait was a gift, as Bay let his friend know, and the gesture of painting the portrait, i.e. the investment of time in front of the canvas whilst letting a dear face emerge on its surface, should be understood as a token of friendship. The gesture of presenting that very same portrait to a close friend at home as a keepsake whilst away, underlines not only the symbolic value of the portrait itself, as a substitute for a missing friend, but also testifies to the importance of friendship, which clearly is articulated in the letter. At the same time, Jensen was aware that his circle of friends in Rome, the ones travelling on scholarships like the artist himself, had limited means and therefore could hardly afford to buy or to commission portraits whilst abroad.

Six of the eight small portraits were painted on copper which distinguishes them from the other portraits Jensen did in Rome.¹² With the use of copper, the artist deliberately chose to work in an old tradition used by the most skilful Renaissance and baroque masters, involving a painting technique far more difficult than using canvas because of the smoothness of the surface. This effort emphasises the artist's ambition to explore the challenges of working on metal sheets and, in so doing, to evoke the glossy and more colourful visual effects of oil paint applied to metal. These images were to be understood as keepsakes and their importance is also stressed by the choice of the more expensive copper plates instead of the use of canvas. In this way, the small-scale portraits resemble the exquisite miniature, its significance largely personal as it belonged to the private sphere of exchange and was often used as a gift to strengthen the tie between the portrayed and the receiver of the miniature. As small images, they were also objects to be held, handled and moved about with ease, which the shipping of the Bay portrait to a close friend in Denmark illustrates. Bay could just as easily have put the portrait (just 23 x 16 cm) in his suitcase, but still he chose to ship it to Denmark. That Jensen would not again paint a series of friendship portraits also establishes the significance of the works done in Rome, which belong to a category outside the usual realm of commissioned portraits. During the spring of 1819 Jensen also did four, presumably small, portraits of Brøndsted, who kindly lent him money, and of the diplomat and baron Herman Schubart (1756–1832), and of the landowner P. B. Scavenius (1795–1868), and the officer C. E. von Scholten (1786–1873).¹³ Unfortunately these four portraits have been lost and



III.3 [C. A. Jensen, *The Sculptor H. E. Freund*, 1819. Oil on copper, 20 x 13 cm.
The National Gallery of Denmark, photo: SMK Foto]



III. 4 [C. A. Jensen, *Self-portrait*, c. 1821. Pencil on paper, 17.3 x 13.2 cm. Private Collection]

relevant information on material and size, and whether the artists received any payment or not, is missing today. The time at which Jensen made these portraits suggests that they, and especially the ones of Scavenius and von Scholten, might form part of the series of friends, as the two men were of the same age as the rest of the circle. As to Brønsted and Schubart, they were older men of another league and influence, and both moved in the inner circles that consisted of among others Thorvaldsen and the Danish Crown Prince. Jensen might have painted their portraits as a way of attracting attention from the Crown Prince who was his most important patron.

Rome: A Place of Transition

Despite its poverty and decay in the beginning of the nineteenth century, Rome was a picturesque, pulsating, and cosmopolitan city with its colonies of artists from Germany, Denmark, Holland, England, Norway, and Sweden. Adding to the cultural sphere was the presence of the Academie de France á Rome and the Roman Academia di San Luca. Rome was where most artists went to experience not only the greatness of the past, but also the shifting styles and trends of the dominating movements of classicism and romanticism even though Paris had started to take on the role as the capital of the art world.¹⁴ In more than one respect, Rome was a place of transition. For most artists, the stay in Rome marked the transformation from being a student to becoming an artist. In Rome they went through their last formative years of studying before they had to return to their homeland and prove their worth. The years abroad meant both an artistic and a psychological transition for the artist. In their encounter with a different culture and a community governed by artists and intellectuals, they would need to position themselves in a new context and they should find a way of expressing their identity as artists among artists. In his book *Renaissance Self-fashioning. From More to Shakespeare* (1980), the literary critic and theorist Stephen Greenblatt has dealt with the prominent English authors of the sixteenth century and the formation of identity as a deliberate process. Greenblatt investigates not only the process of fictional characters shaping their identity, but also the ways in which authors themselves fashioned their identities as authors. Greenblatt uses the term *self-fashioning* and points out that in the period described ‘there appears to be an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process’.¹⁵ The notion of the deliberate performance of the self, a self-fashioning, is useful in order to identify how the Italian sojourn not only served educational purposes for artists like Jensen but was also involved with their formulation of an artistic identity. The comparison of portraits of artists made before the journey to Rome with those made after their arrival very often demonstrate this process of self-fashioning. Hats, a different hairstyle, another type of clothing or the growing of a beard, are some of the visual markers which can be seen in self-portraits and portraits of other fellow artists painted in Rome.

Compared to the portrait of 1815, the drawing from 1821 (ill. 4) gives a quite different impression of a much more self-confident artist. Jensen has depicted himself with long hair and wearing a hat in the style of Raphael, which became very fashionable among artists in the wake of the Raphael cult during the romantic period: very much a suitable self-portrait for an artist whose transformation began as he diligently copied paintings of Raphael in Florence and Rome. The drawing is a personal statement of an artistic identity coming into shape, influenced by the Romantic cultivation of the artist who lives and breathes art. Thorvaldsen was known to be wearing the same type of hat (ill. 5) and Freund is also seen wearing a similar hat in the portrait by Jensen (ill. 3). The choice of clothes,



III.5 [Wilhelm von Schadow, *Self-portrait with his brother Ridolfo and Thorvaldsen*, 1815/16. Oil on canvas, 91 x 118 cm. Nationalgalerie, Berlin]

hats, as well as hairstyle, was then, as it is today, a way of signalling one's identity and of positioning oneself in society.

The circles of friends and the communities developed by artists could serve as a sort of stronghold or fraternity comparable in some respects to the guilds of past times. By the end of the eighteenth century, Rome was referred to as the *Frihedsstad* [The city of freedom]¹⁶ and had become the ideal place to go since the spirit of the French Revolution seemed to find an outlet amongst artists who found in Rome a place of freedom and equality. Here it was possible openly to express your sympathies, as did several artists, even when it meant opposing the

rules of the academies in their home countries.¹⁷ In Rome there was an opportunity to become part of circles dedicated solely to art and the artistic life, to dress and to behave differently, and be part of what has been labelled a *republic of artists*.¹⁸

In the portraits of Jensen and Freund, the collar, the hat, and the long hair, reflect a fashion which was not only associated with certain German artists in Rome, and with the Nazarenes in particular, but also with the rebellious students from Kiel, Heidelberg, and Munich, the opponents of an ultraconservative political atmosphere – which led to the prohibition of this manner of dressing in 1819.¹⁹ In other words, the style of clothing was a visual statement that one sympathised or affiliated with a certain group of artists within the republic of artists. C. A. Jensen's biographer, Schultz, has been reluctant to see the painter as more than a *Provins-Kunstner* [small-town artist] in Rome who was afraid of changes, but the self-portrait testifies to the opposite, i.e., to a personal transition and positioning as an artist that only Rome could enable. One's place in the republic of artists was something to be proud of and to be made visible: hence Thorvaldsen, often a role model to the younger artists, on one occasion insisted on wearing his Bajocco decoration awarded by the German artist society together with the royal decorations he had also received.²⁰ When Jensen chose to portray his circle of friends, he demonstrated a growing self-confidence as an artist by articulating, through his art, a responsiveness to ideas prevailing within certain artistic circles in Rome. In the remainder of this essay, these eight artworks will be seen in the light of a cultural phenomenon where visualizing and paying tribute to friendships was considered very important.

Friendships in the Age of Romanticism

Naturally, friendships have long been a theme in the visual arts, but from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards the importance of friendship became a prominent subject to German poets, theologians, and writers such as Herder and Goethe and later of the brothers Friedrich and August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Novalis, and Wackenroder.²¹ What was new in terms of friendships in the age of romanticism was the intensity with which the bonds of friendships were tied. Friends were praised in romantic poetry and the number of albums dedicated to friendships appearing in the late eighteenth century illustrates how fashionable it became to articulate one's affection. Around 1800, the theme of friendship was cultivated by various artists which gave way to new visual modes of representation in German romantic painting, with friends being portrayed on their own, in pairs, or as a larger group. In Dresden in 1819–20, Friedrich painted his *Two Men Comtemplating the Moon*, a portrait he shortly after gave to J. C. Dahl as a proof of their friendship before Dahl went to Naples and Rome.²² In Rome, artistic communities such as Die Lukasbrüder, and artists affiliated with the Nazarenes, as they were nick-named, such as Wilhelm von Schadow (1788–1862) and Carl Philipp Fohr (1795–1818), interpreted the subject of friendship in different ways.

In German art history, images of friends are often termed *Freundschaftsbilder*. It was the art historian Klaus Lankheit who, in his seminal work *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik* [The friendship image of romanticism] from 1952, identified a visual display of affection in the romantic movement and outlined an intense sense of community and solidarity within groupings of friends. With the characterization of what was going on as a cult of friendship, Lankheit showed how friendships were idolized as the focal point in life. In its most radical practice, to the revolutionary minds of the late eighteenth century, friendships could even be seen as a substitute for religion or, as Lankheit puts it, as an *Ersatz-Religion*.²³ Lankheit's study offers a different understanding of artists and intellectuals in the nineteenth century, as he sees the cult of friendship as an ideology opposed to the norms and values of the middle class. This approach makes room for a renewed understanding of the importance of friendships amongst young men such as C. A. Jensen and his friends in Rome. Friendships offered a basis for forming an identity within the group and, in this respect, Jensen fashioned himself into the role of portrait painter for the group every time he painted a member of the circle. Seen thus as a part of a process of shaping one's identity, portraiture is not limited to the painter's interpretation of the sitter, which is turned into an image: the painter himself is also very much a part of the transformation.

The romantic culture of friendship was not exclusively, but largely a movement finding its expression amongst the younger artists. In this respect, the Nazarenes became the most significant artistic group who visualised publicly the importance which they attached to their friendships. The members of this artist community, founded in 1810 by Johann Friedrich Overbeck and Franz Pforr, strived to revive ideals found in the art of the early Renaissance, looking to Raphael, Michelangelo and Dürer for inspiration. Today the members of the group are known for their religious motifs and historical topics and for their creation of a brotherhood of painters. But, and no less importantly, in the 1810s these painters were conspicuous for their old-German garb and long hair *alla Nazarena* which attracted a lot of attention. And not surprisingly, they found in Rome just as many who advocated as who opposed their ideal of a society of artists serving art only.

The group's cultivation of an artistic brotherhood was one way of interpreting and expressing the romantic culture of friendship. The numerous portraits (mainly drawings and a few known oil paintings) of themselves and of their friends were another way of visualising the importance they attached to their friendships. These intimate portraits circulated amongst friends as gifts and were not intended for sale.²⁴ This gesture may have been known by Jensen and might very well have influenced him. As a member of Thorvaldsen's circle, he must also have been familiar with members of the Nazarenes, such as Overbeck, Wilhelm von Schadow, and Peter von Cornelius, and their distinct culture of friendship. Ingemann also joined the circle of artists and much later, in his memoirs, the young romantic poet recalled:

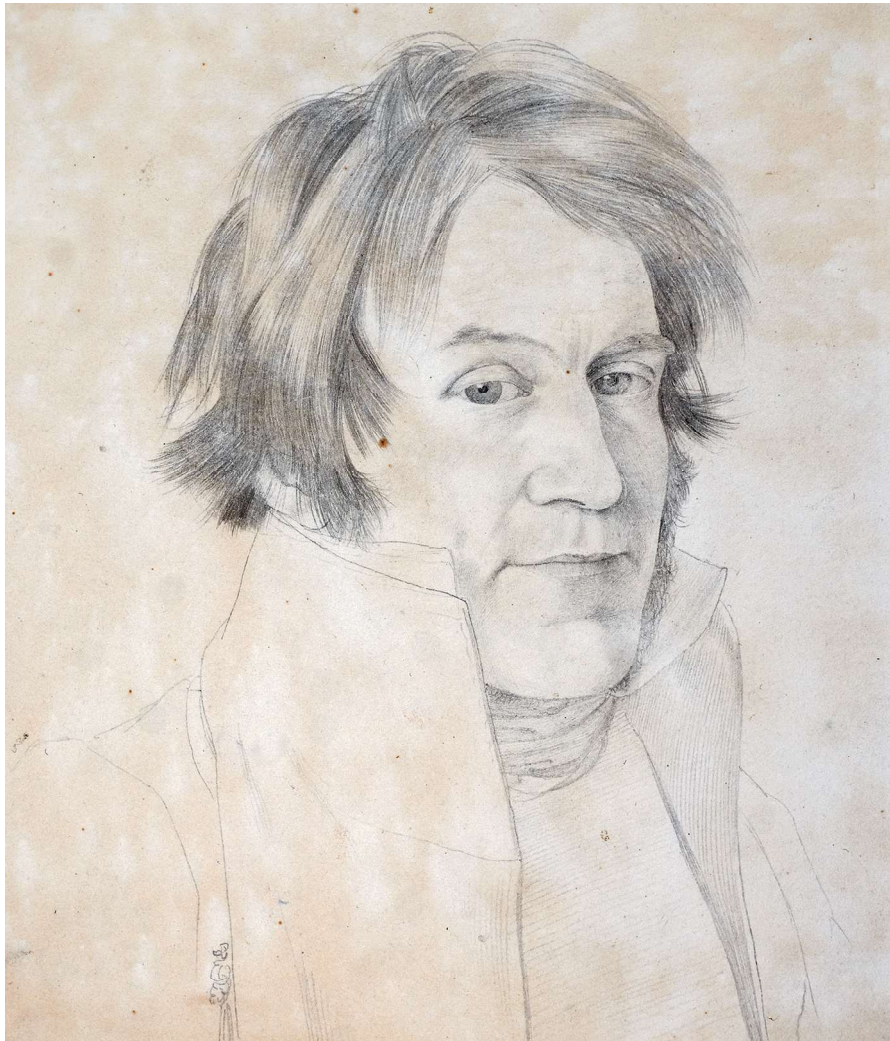


III. 6 [Samuel Amsler (after Carl Barth), *Carl Philipp Fohr*, 1818.
Engraving/etching, 14.6 x 11.4 cm. Kurpfälzisches Museum der Stadt Heidelberg]

Den nytydske Kunstscoles Heroer, Cornelius og Overbeck, traf jeg i Rom. Thorvaldsen, Freund og alle Kunstnerne i Rom på den Tid hørte her til min jævnlige Omgangskreds.

[In Rome I met the heroes of the new German art school Cornelius and Overbeck. Thorvaldsen, Freund and all the artists staying in Rome then formed part of my social circle.]²⁵

Just as important in Thorvaldsen's circle was the painter J. L. Lund (1777–1867), like Jensen also a friend of Freund's, who was affiliated with the Nazarenes and their artistic ideals. While private images of friends made by the Nazarenes might



III.7 [Carl Philipp Fohr, *Portrait of J.L. Lund*, 1817. Pencil on paper, 17.3 x 14.8 cm. Kurpfälzisches Museum der Stadt Heidelberg]

have influenced Jensen in choosing to portray his circle of friends, yet another young German artist in Rome could also have inspired Jensen. In 1817, Karl Philipp Fohr, who was associated with the Nazarenes, began making drawings for a composition of artists gathering at the famous Caffé Greco in Rome, a motif which he intended to turn into an etching. Fohr drowned in 1818 in the Tiber before finishing the project, but fifty-three portraits in five different sketchbooks testify to the ambitious plan of making an image of the republic of artists in Rome. After Fohr's tragic death, a print by Samuel Amsler, made after a drawing of Carl Barth, was sold in order to raise money for a monument commemorating the deceased (ill. 6). This gesture emphasized the intensity of the romantic

friendships amongst artists and the way in which the loss of a friend also found an outlet in a very public display of sorrow.

In April 1819, Fohr's friends succeeded in arranging a show of his drawings for the group portrait at Caffé Greco in Palazzo Caffarelli and, as such, the first exhibition of works by German artists in Rome was mounted.²⁶ Amongst the participants was J. L. Lund who showed two oil paintings and who at the same time was represented in a drawing by Fohr intended for the group portrait (ill. 7).²⁷ Public exhibitions were rare in Rome and this was organized on the occasion of the official visit by the Austrian emperor and empress. It was an event which attracted a large number of artists, including Thorvaldsen who attended the opening. Here, the group portrait by Wilhelm von Schadow picturing the artist himself, his brother the sculptor Rudolph von Schadow, and Thorvaldsen, must have been of particular interest to Thorvaldsen and his friends (ill. 5). The painting, with its celebration of artist friendships, was a tribute to the renowned sculptor and on public display for the first time in Palazza Cafferelli. It seems reasonable that Fohr's delicate and small drawings of fellow artists served as inspiration for Jensen in 1819–1820. And even if Jensen did not see the works exhibited by Fohr and the other German artists, he could hardly have avoided noticing the cultivation of friendships amongst artists or still less avoided hearing about Fohr's many portraits for his ambitious manifesto of a society of artists located in Caffé Greco, the most important meeting place for Germans and Scandinavians in Rome.

The Caffé Greco was where established artists such as Thorvaldsen were regulars and where the more rebellious artists such as the Nazarenes would make their public appearances. The café in Via Condotti was partly where the fashioning of one's artistic identity began, where one's style of clothing was noticed, and also where artists could meet old or make new friends. Here Jensen himself was a newcomer, when he arrived in the autumn of 1818 and less so when he was forced to leave Rome in 1821 due to his financial difficulties. Jensen tried without success to get commissions by foreigners visiting Rome, but as he explained in a letter of 1821 to J. G. Adler (1784–1852), the private secretary to Crown Prince Christian Frederik, they preferred to have their portraits done by the Nazarenes.²⁸ This observation is significant in two ways. First, it illustrates how the Nazarenes had become popular outside their own circles and were sought out by grand tourists who commissioned portraits. Secondly, Jensen's remark shows his interest in the success of the Nazarenes in attracting clients. His ambition had been to earn a living by painting copies of old masterworks in collections in Florence and Rome, but the constant waiting for money to arrive from Denmark must have made him realise, perhaps too late, that commissioned portraits of clients in Rome might have helped him out of his financial difficulties.²⁹ The expected payments from Crown Prince Christian Frederik for the copies of works by Raphael failed to come, while Jensen was in Italy. Adding to the artist's frustration of not being able to secure an income so he could stay, another important commission of copies of Raphael's paintings made by the patron Johan Bülow (1751–1828) also failed



III. 8 [C. A. Jensen, *H.E. Freund*, 1835. Oil on canvas, 29 x 22 cm.
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, photo: Ole Haupt]

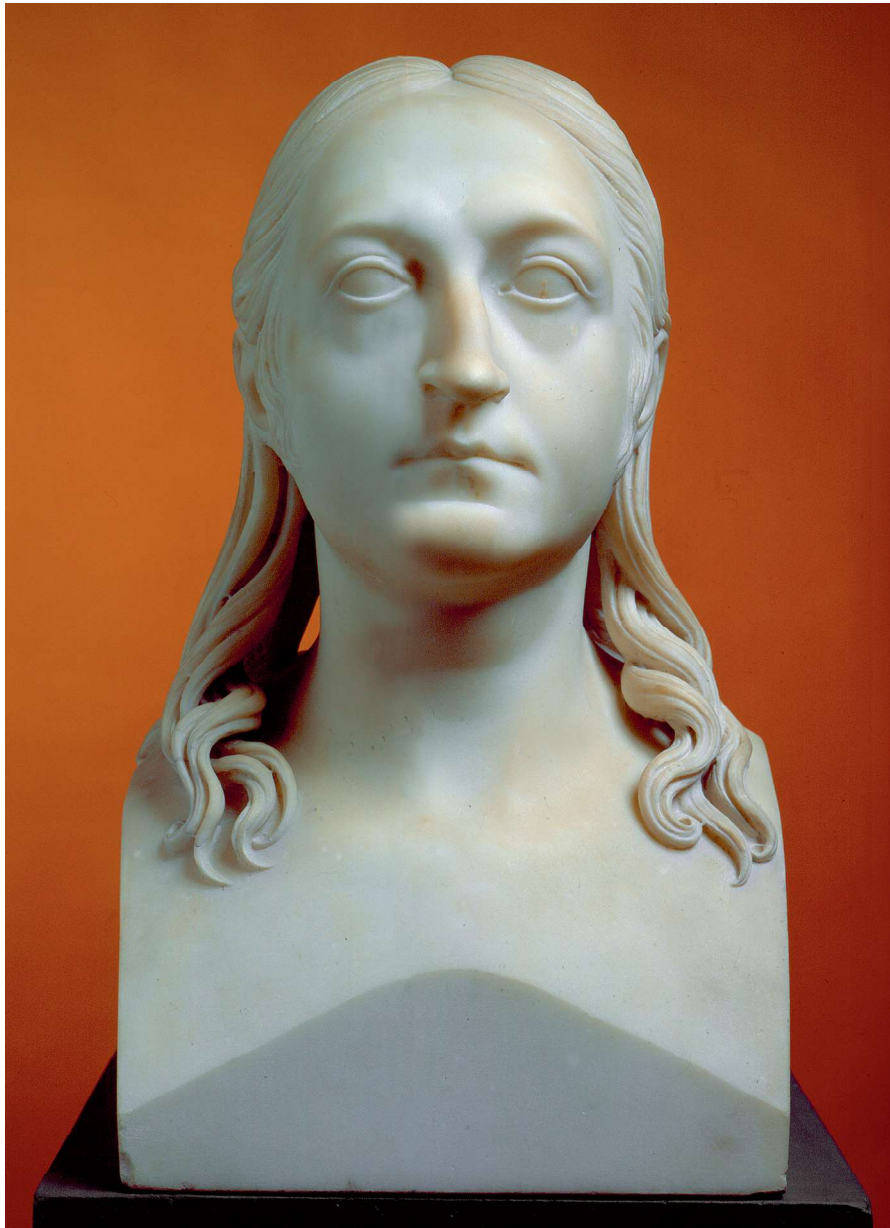
to materialise. These circumstances were the main reason for Jensen's decision to leave. He was not able to pay off his debts to his patrons in Rome, Brøndsted and Thorvaldsen, and was reluctant to keep borrowing money.³⁰ The painter then travelled back to his parents in Schleswig, had a short and unsuccessful stay in Hamburg hoping for commissions, and returned to Copenhagen in 1823. The following year, Jensen became a member of the Academy in Copenhagen which

officially marked the beginning of a career as a portrait painter. Several of the influential Danes, with whom Jensen had come into contact in Rome via the circles of Thorvaldsen, of Brøndsted, and of the Crown Prince, did not have their portrait painted by the young artist whilst abroad, but were to appear as clients later in Jensen's career.³¹ As member of the Academy, Jensen was also appointed to take on several official, commissioned portraits, but the small-size portraits that had made him popular in Rome no doubt ensured him commissions in Copenhagen.

Portraits and Gifts

In his book *The Gift* (1925), Marcel Mauss points out that receiving a gift confers an obligation to reciprocate the gesture. As studies of Rembrandt have shown, Rembrandt used gifts strategically by presenting patrons and friends with artworks as a way of furthering his career.³² Did Jensen also act strategically in Rome whilst waiting for payments and commissions? As this article has suggested, part of Jensen's decision to portray his friends seems to correspond to the romantic culture of friendship, which he experienced in Rome. Acting on a cultural phenomenon, as Jensen did, he embraced the role of being a generous friend. Essential to the story of these eight portraits is the aspect of gift giving. The much admired Thorvaldsen might have served as a role model for Jensen, as it was well known that Thorvaldsen presented a selection of friends with a ring as proof of friendship.³³ When Jensen chose to portray his circle, he must have given thought to the fact that they were men with promising careers ahead of them and painting their portraits was a way of visualising a network, from which he could later benefit. In this respect, the artworks mediated or secured a connectedness with the recipients, whether the presenting of the gift was based on emotional exchanges or motivated by strategies of a future outcome. As tokens of friendship, the portraits came to circulate in a network in Rome based on shared values, interests and emotions, a network of friends which also could be described as an 'emotional community', using a term from Barbara H. Rosenwein.³⁴ This was an 'emotional community' coming into being in Rome which, for some of its members, would mean a lasting friendship and which, for others, would be confined to the sojourn abroad. As the example of Bay's portrait shows, the portrait was not necessarily a gift which the recipient and friend kept in his own possession. The portrait could also be passed on to a third party, another friend, which meant it entered an extended social network of the painter within the same emotional community.

As seen in the case of Rembrandt, the way of returning a gift from an artist could be commissioning artworks from him, recommending him to potential clients, or in other ways to work in his favour. Of the eight men portrayed in Rome, six returned to Denmark and four of them sat again for Jensen. In 1822, H. N. Clausen was appointed professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen and five years later Jensen did a small-scale portrait of Clausen, followed in 1836 by another small portrait. In 1828, Jensen did a larger portrait of H. F. J. Estrup



III.9 [H. E. Freund, C.A. *Jensen*, 1820. Marble, 47 cm.
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, photo: Ole Haupt]

who, after his return, worked as a lecturer at the Academy of Sorø. In 1844, B. S. Ingemann, who also took up a position lecturing at Sorø Academy, had his portrait made on commission for the Picture Gallery of Frederiksborg Castle, where, in 1832, Jensen had been appointed as portrait painter by Crown Prince Christian Frederik.³⁵ This suggests that part of the network of friends established in Rome did work in favour of Jensen, which a later incident also confirms: in 1849, Claus-

en secured for Jensen, still suffering financial hardship, a much needed income by helping him to a position at the Royal Collection of Graphic Art.

Between the two artists, Freund and Jensen, the exchange was of a different kind. In 1836 at the annual exhibition at Charlottenborg, Jensen presented several portraits of fellow artists and amongst these was a small portrait of his close friend Freund, painted the previous year in Copenhagen (ill. 8). A much larger portrait of Freund, presumably after the 1835 portrait, was later commissioned for the Picture Gallery at Frederiksborg Castle and entered in 1845 the collection, where Ingemann was already represented. Freund is seen wearing an ornamented smock, a red scarf, and a knitted hat which he himself had designed. Posing as a free spirit, the sculptor has placed his left arm on the back rest of a chair, and rests his head on his right hand while looking calmly at his friend. This charming, self-assured pose derives from the formative years in Rome, where the artists spent time capturing their transitions from newcomers to self-confident men. Shortly after Jensen's arrival, Freund had modelled a bust of both Jensen and Ingemann which, in 1820, he carved in marble (ill. 9).

In the meantime, Jensen reciprocated the gesture and painted a larger portrait of his artist friend which preceded the small-size pictures of 1819. Freund and Jensen, both sons of working-class families, had, by the end of the 1810s, made it all the way to Rome. Now they were moving in the circles of the great Thorvaldsen and some of the most prominent German artists. As friends, they played a significant role in fashioning each other through portraiture. The busts of Ingemann and Jensen were sent home from Rome and exhibited at the Charlottenborg exhibition in Copenhagen in 1826. The decision to display publicly these two busts is remarkable, as Freund had not before turned portraits of his own friends into marble. Ingemann was now a celebrated poet and writer, and Jensen's career seemed very promising. The painter was represented with a hairstyle *alla Nazarena* which undoubtedly attracted attention in Copenhagen. The life-size marble bust illustrated that the artist's transition in Rome had been successful. At this point, C. A. Jensen could hardly have foreseen the hardships he would later face in his career.³⁶

Notes

- 1 Sigurd Schultz, *C.A. Jensen. Hans Liv og Hans Værker*, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: Kunstforeningen i København, 1932), 23.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 27.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 4 For information on the eight portraits, see Schultz, *C.A. Jensen*, vol. 2., no. 20–5 and 28–9. The portrait of H. E. Freund, no. 25, is painted on copper and not tin as Schultz has suggested. See Marianne Brøns et al., *Ældre dansk malerkunst. Bestandskatalog* (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 2002), 203.
- 5 See Schultz, *C.A. Jensen*, vol. 2, 65, no. 19. The size of the painting is 62.5 x 49 cm. In 1932, the portrait belonged to the Estrup family at Skaføgaard.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 189, n. 170.
- 7 Schultz, *C.A. Jensen*, vol. 1, 145.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 9 On gift giving, see Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Routledge, 1990). For more recent studies on the subject, see, for example, Mark Osteen, *The Question of the Gift: Essays Across Disciplines* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002); and Michael Zell, 'The Gift Between Friends: Rembrandt's Art in the Network of His Patrons and Social Relations', in *Rethinking Rembrandt*, ed. Alan Chong and Michael Zell (Zwolle: Waanders, 2002), 173–93.
- 10 Letter from Livorno of 12 November 1819; see Julius Clausen og P. Fr. Rist, *Memoirer og Breve. Af Rud. Bays efterladte Papirer*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel Nordisk Forlag Kjøbenhavn, 1920), 133. My translation.
- 11 The portrait of Rudolph Bay arrived in Copenhagen with Bertel Thorvaldsen in the autumn of 1819.
- 12 The portraits of G. E. Harzen and H. N. Clausen were not painted on copper: the first portrait was painted on cardboard, the latter on canvas.
- 13 Schultz, *C.A. Jensen*, vol. 2, 152, no. 478–81.
- 14 Schultz, *C.A. Jensen*, vol. 1, 28–33, and Kasper Monrad, 'Kunstlivet i Rom 1800-1820 set med danske malerøjne', in *Inspirationens skattekammer. Rom og Skandinaviske kunstnere i 1800-tallet*, ed. Hannemarie Ragn Jensen, Solfried Söderlind and Eva-Lena Bengtsson (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2003), 53.
- 15 Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning. From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago; London, University of Chicago Press, 1980), 2.
- 16 Rome was referred to as 'den uvante Frihedsstad', see the historian H. F. J. Estrup's biography on Bertel Thorvaldsen and his arrival in Rome in 1797, <http://arkivet.thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/dokumenter/m29I,nr.1-2>
- 17 Lionel Gossman, *Unwilling Moderns. On the Nazarene Artists of the Early Nineteenth Century* (www.19thc-artworldwide.org: Nineteenth-Century World Wide, vol. 2, no. 3, 2003), 20.
- 18 Rainer Schoch, 'Rom 1797 – Fluchtpunkt der Freiheit', in *Künstlerleben in Rom. Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844). Der dänische Bildhauer und seine deutschen Freunde*, ed. Wolfgang Pülhorn (Nürnberg; Schleswig, Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 1991), 20–2.
- 19 Ejner Johansson, *De danske malere i München* (København, Spektrum, 1997), 26.

- 20 Ursula Peters, 'Das Ideal der Gemeinschaft', in *Künstlerleben in Rom. Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844). Der dänische Bildhauer und seine deutschen Freunde*, ed. Wolfgang Pülhorn (Nürnberg; Schleswig, Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 1991), 164. The Bajocco decoration was part of a welcoming ritual, where artists would become members of the Roman republic of artists.
- 21 Klaus Lankheit, *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter – Universitätsverlag, 1952), 72.
- 22 Petra Kuhlmann-Hodick and Gerd Spitzer, 'Anschauung and Aneignung der Natur', in *Dahl und Friedrich. Romantische Landschaften* (Dresden; Oslo, Sandstein Verlag, 2014), 97. In 1840, after the death of Friedrich, Dahl sold the painting to the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden, today Galerie Neue Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.
- 23 Lankheit, *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik*, 71.
- 24 Gossman, *Unwilling Moderns*, 13.
- 25 Bernard Sev. Ingemann, *Tilbageblik paa mit Liv og min Forfattervirksomhed fra 1811-1837* (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1863), 40. My translation.
- 26 Ulrike Andersson, Annette Frese, *Carl Philip Fohr und seine Künstlerfreunde in Rom*, (Heidelberg: Kehrer Verlag Heidelberg), 22; and Robert McVaugh, 'Nazarene Art', in *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era 1760-1850*, ed. Christopher John Murray (London: Routledge, 2013), 796.
- 27 On J. L. Lund's portrait and his participation in the exhibition in Palazzo Cafferelli, see Ulrike Andersson, Annette Frese, *Carl Philip Fohr und seine Künstlerfreunde in Rom*, 112–3. On Fohr's never-finished group portrait, see Georg Poensgen, *C.P. Fohr und das Caffè Greco* (Heidelberg: F. K. Kerle Verlag, 1957), 28. Fohr deliberately chose whom he wanted to include in his artwork, and his intention was not to make a true rendering of regulars and artists. He left out prominent figures such as Thorvaldsen, who daily visited Caffè Greco, and included others not in Rome, when he made his drafts.
- 28 Schultz, C.A. *Jensen*, vol. 1, 43.
- 29 The very few portraits which Jensen made during his three years in Rome seem to testify to his original ambition of focusing primarily on painting copies of old masters.
- 30 Schultz, C.A. *Jensen*, vol. 1, 43.
- 31 The aim of this article is mainly to consider how Jensen was influenced by a romantic culture of friendship when painting the small portraits of his friends. The relation between the influential men, to whom Jensen was introduced whilst in Rome, and the commissions he later received, are also worth a study as they throw light on how a nineteenth-century artist might work to secure future clients. It is, however, outside the scope of this article to account for this relevant aspect of the artist's broader networking.
- 32 See Michael Zell, 'Rembrandt's Gift. A Case-Study of Actor-Network-Theory', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, 3, no. 2 (2011), (<http://www.jhna.org/index.php/past-issues/volume-3-issue-2/143-zell-rembrandts-gifts>)
- 33 Torben Melander, 'Thorvaldsens slangering – en drillepind', in *Meddelelser fra Thorvaldsens Museum* (Copenhagen: Thorvaldsens Museum, 2008), 109.
- 34 Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca; London, Cornell University Press, 2006), 24–5.
- 35 See Schultz, C.A. *Jensen*, vol. 2, 138, no. 377. The portrait of Ingemann is 83.3 x 67.3 cm in size and still in the collection of The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle (formerly known as Frederiksborgmuseet).
- 36 I wish to thank the art historian Jan Gorm Madsen for his support while writing this article and for asking the right questions.