DAG SVEEN

When Art Came To Norway: A Perspective On Norwegian 19th Century Painting
When Art came to Norway: A Perspective on Norwegian 19th Century Painting

The title might seem to be a problem, because it could imply that art is a fairly modern phenomenon. And according to some - it is. There is no art before we have a modern concept of aesthetics, that is - there is no art in a modern sense of the word before Kant's *Critique of Judgment* in 1790. That's not my opinion, but I'm not raising this issue here. The choice of title is very simple. Before the 1820s all picture production in Norway was part of a craft production. No one could live on picture making alone. The market wasn't big enough for that. A painter had to share his time between various commissions, like painting walls, ornaments, furniture, coffins etc. and pictures. Within this world of production - actually going back to the Middle Ages - some specialized more on picture making than others, but no one could live on this alone. Within this context a painter was socially defined as a craftsman, and painting pictures was a higher sort of craft. (But that doesn't prevent us from looking at them as art.)

One necessary condition for a painter to be socially defined as an artist, and the paintings to be qualified as art is that he or she has left all kinds of craft production and given all his/her time to picture production alone.

So the story about when art came to Norway is a story of the development of Norwegian painting from craft to art. Simple as that. Art came very late to Norway, but all western countries have gone through the same development, but at different times, so there are some basic features in this Norwegian history that is of general relevance.

But the title has a double meaning. It doesn't only refer to the rise of art as the result of the separation of picture production from craft production. When this separation took place during the 19th century in Norway, it took place within the context of early modern art with all its concepts and ideas, that are also more or less our ideas and concepts of what art is. The title of this paper could therefore just as well have been "When art and modern art came to Norway".

But the development of art is always accompanied by the development of an art world. They are mutually dependant on each other. So a third title could also be possible: "When the art and the art world came to Norway".
This paper is only concentrated on painting. Sculpture has been left out, not only for the sake of concentration, but also because the development from craft to art went slower within the art of sculpture, much thanks to a poor state - sculpture is more dependent on public commissions than painting - and a very small private market.

Some remarks ought to be said about the structure of my presentation of the history from craft to art. It might be read as a story of an evolution of progress, of art's liberation from craft. If so, it is written on the premises of the painters themselves. Since the renaissance it was a central issue for artists to have their profession acknowledged as a so-called "liberal art", that is as an intellectual activity. In the minds of many people, highly educated or belonging to the upper levels of society, the art of painting and sculpture was looked upon as a manual activity far into the 18th century.

In the middle ages painting and sculpture were categorized among the mechanical arts, and picture production was part of a craft production. The institutional contexts for medieval picture production and modern 19th and 20th century production are therefore fundamentally different. But this difference can't be the basis for a comparison of quality. The development of picture production from art to craft is not a development in the terms of artistic progress.

But when this is said, it's difficult not to look at the paintings of I. C. Dahl, the first Norwegian professional painter, as paintings of a higher quality than the paintings of his Norwegian forerunners in the previous century. Medieval and modern painting can't be compared concerning the question of quality, because they are made on quite different terms. But Dahl's and his forerunner's paintings can be compared, because they had one basic premise in common; the picture should be a convincing representation of the human figure, objects or a piece of nature. And Dahl is simply a better painter on this central and measurable quality.

**PICTURE PRODUCTION AS CRAFT**

The following simple model can exemplify some basic characteristics of picture production as craft, in a western, post-reformation context:

1) The picture producers (in Norway only males) had their training as craftsmen in a master's workshop, first as apprentices, then as journeymen, and after a few years some of them could become masters with the right to keep a workshop of their own.
2) Concerning picture making all training in the workshop was a training to copy - pictures as well as ornaments - after engravings or woodcuts made after works by well-known artists.

3) Picture production was part of a craftsman's many-sided production: Painting pictures, walls, ornaments, furniture and all kinds of painted objects.

4) All pictures were made on commissions, and the commissioner gave both motif and size of the picture.

THE PRACTICE OF COPYING
When the painters had finished their workshop training, the more skillful painters tried to make their living mainly from picture making. That meant to be on the move, to go where the commissions had been given or where commissions could be found. Church commissions were one of the most important commissions for these painters, and here they continued the practice of copying other master's works which they had learnt as apprentices and journeymen. It seems that almost every religious painting was made after a model, given in black and white as engravings or woodcuts. The coloring then had to be added.

This is illustrated by the painting of St. Matthew from the pulpit of Orre Church in Rogaland. It's from 1625 and painted by one of the most prominent 17th century painters in Norway, Gottfried Hendzschel. An engraving made by Crispin de Passe has obviously been the model.

PORTRAITS AND LANDSCAPES
But in two cases they could not rely on models, but were confronted with nature itself - that was when they were commissioned to paint portraits and landscapes. But the portraits were usually rather conventionally painted with a low degree of individualization, as we can see in the portraits of the married couple Johan Witte and Gesche Wulst from the epitaphium in Bergen Cathedral, painted in 1652 by an unknown artist. But in the upper part of the painting, the artist has copied Raphael's and Giulio Romano's famous Transfiguration from 1517, probably from an engraving.

Prospect paintings/vedutes
Not many landscapes painted after nature are preserved from the 17th and 18th century, and those that are preserved are all what in Norway was called "prospect paintings", more or less synonymous with the more widespread term "vedute". The prospect painting was a subgenre of the
major genre "landscape". Its function was to be a truthful copy of nature and buildings.

There was a distinction, going back at least to the 17th century, between copying and imitating. Copying was mainly a mechanical activity, and a copy was therefore not considered a work of art. An imitation on the other hand implied a process towards a more ideal representation, of a human body or a piece of landscape. Imitating was therefore a creative activity, it was art.

The most advanced landscape painter of the 17th and 18th century was undoubtedly Mathias Blumenthal, of foreign heritage, probably Danish, as so many of Norwegian craftsmen at this time. He came to Norway in 1747, probably on a commission, to paint a series of paintings from the southeastern part of Norway.

In the Prospect of Fredrikshald (today Halden) from 1748 we see the city in the background, and the stack of boards in the foreground, referring to the economical basis for the city's existence. But we also see the painter sitting in front of his motif, making his sketch. He has set up a square net on the table in front of him, making it possible to transfer the image of the city to the paper part by part through the squares of the net. The reason for depicting this scene was to tell that "I was there". It was a guarantee for the picture as a truthful copy of the cityscape he was commissioned to paint.

It was not unusual that a prospect painter copied another prospect painting. There was therefore no guarantee that such a painting was painted after nature. That is the background for the frequent use in prospect paintings of the figure of the artist drawing the sketch for his painting. The figure is never to be found in ordinary landscape paintings, which I in this connection prefer to call "art landscapes". These were "imitations", not copies.

The prospect painting differed in many respects from the ordinary "art landscape" where the artist was expected to go beyond the mere copying and give an idealized, romanticized, dramatized or idyllicized version of a motif. It's symptomatic for the art situation in Norway in the 17th- and 18th century that what was made of landscape painting was limited to the genre of prospect painting.

PICTURE PRODUCTION AS ART
After this brief introduction to some characteristic features of Norwegian painting in the 17th- and 18th century, it's time to look at
Norwegian art of the early 19th century, the initial phase of picture production as art. Let me start with a presentation of a simple model for picture production as art, a parallel to the former presentation of picture production as craft:

1) The picture producers have an academy education, or some training from specific art schools.

2) Besides the acquisition of the basic technical skill, they are trained and encouraged to add something personal and individual to their products.

3) They are specialists on making pictures, and nothing else.

4) Pictures are basically made for an open and anonymous market, where the picture producers alone are responsible for their works.

I. C. DAHL
On the continent the development from craft to art goes through many centuries, in fact it started already in the Italian renaissance in 15th and 16th century, in Norway it takes place within one painter's career - within the career of Johan Christian Clausen Dahl - I. C. Dahl. He was born in Bergen in 1788 of poor parents, and was put into a workshop to be trained as painter craftsman from 1803 to 1809. In 1811 he was sent to the Academy of Copenhagen, on money collected among the upper middle class in Bergen, still the largest city in Norway.

Dahl remained in Copenhagen till 1818. The market was still not big enough for a painter to live on his art. Dahl therefore chose to live the rest of his life in Dresden in Germany, where he became professor at the Academy in 1824. A life abroad with frequent visits to Norway became the normal situation for Norwegian painters right up to the 1880s. Norwegian painters were therefore operating on two equal markets - a Norwegian and a foreign, mainly a German because most of the artists went to German academies. The Academy in Diisseldorf was especially popular in the 1840s, 50s, partly also in the 60s together with the Academy of Karlsruhe where the Norwegian landscape painter Hans Gude had become professor in 1864. Many Norwegian painters therefore went to the Karlsruhe Academy also in the 1870s, but the Academy of Munich was the academy that attracted most of the ambitious Norwegian artists in this decade.

The Diisselforf academy had a high reputation around the middle of the century, attracting painters from most European countries. Even
American artists went there. William Morris Hunt was enrolled in the academy in 1845, John Whetton Ehninger in the late 40s, Eastman Johnson in 1849, and Albert Bierstadt in 1853, to mention the earlier ones.

In Copenhagen Dahl had chosen to become a landscape painter, and painted a great variety of landscapes, many within a realistic tradition concerning the choice of motif, like the small sketch The Tenement at Pizza Falcone, made in Italy in 1820 (29.5 x 44 cm), a picture with an insignificant-looking building, but poetized through the effects of light and by drawing out the esthetic and painterly potential in the broken colors of a decaying wall. Among his fine works are also the many small sketches from the area around Dresden, like Dresden in Evening Light from 1845 (25.5 x 37 cm). It's a typical sketch with its free brushwork, clearly different from his finished works. But a modern eye, used to looking at modern paintings, might prefer his sketches to his finished works which have been more worked out in detail.

The Norwegian landscape was important for Dahl. He therefore made five visits to Norway through his life, and during these he made a great amount of sketches - drawings or water colors - which he brought with him back to Dresden where they made up the basis for his large oil paintings. The practice of finishing oil paintings in front of a landscape motif is of a later date, primarily from the 1870s with the French impressionists.

The most ambitious paintings within Dahl's production were probably his large panoramas from West Norwegian landscapes, like Stedje in Sogn from 1836. There are at least two levels of romanticism in the Stedje painting. There is a general romantic level - referring to the primitive and untouched nature. And there is a more specific one - referring to the national. In the Stedje picture we find all the three most powerful national symbols of the 19th century: 1) Nature, 2) historical monuments or remnants from the golden age of Norwegian history - here the medieval stavechurch - and 3) the Norwegian peasant. These symbols are still in function, not least in typical tourist products.

The growing prestige of landscape painting
The large size of the Stedje painting, 121 x 172 cm, confirms the new authority now attained by landscape painting. Large scale signified ambition. With the Netherlands in the 1700th century as an exception, it was earlier a genre with low prestige, especially in circles connected to art academies. If one wanted to be an ambitious painter, one had to choose history painting. I shall later briefly explain the main features of
this genre. All training at the academies, from their early beginnings in 1593 in Rome till around 1800 was only concentrated on the study of the human figure. At the annual exhibition arranged by the Academy of Copenhagen, also at the time when Dahl was enrolled in the academy, the gold medal was reserved for figure painters. A silver medal was the highest possible reward for a landscape painter.

There could be many reasons for the increasing prestige of landscape painting. But the growing importance of the concept of the sublime in philosophical literature in the last half of the 18th century has undoubtedly played its role. When the experience of the sublime should be epitomized, one often turned to the experience of the greatness of what I. C. Dahl would call "nature in its free and wild condition". The discovery of wild and primitive nature is one of the many preconditions for the new prestige of landscape painting.

But the Stedje painting is not the type of painting that would produce the experience of the sublime. It's too balanced and lacks the more awful character of the sublime. Thomas Fearnley's painting *The Glacier in Grindewald* (in Switzerland) from 1838 is probably more suited to produce this aspect of sublime experience, not the least because of the painting's huge scale, 157.5 x 195 cm.

Fearnley, one of the most outstanding Norwegian artists in the 19th century, is often mentioned as the pupil of I. C. Dahl, though he had his full academy education before he visited the Dresden professor for privat instruction from 1829 to 1830 (Copenhagen 1821-23, Stockholm 1823-27).

The growing value given to landscape painting can be seen already in the writings of Diderot in France in the 1760s and 70s, but nowhere as strongly as in Dresden early in the 19th century where landscape painting could be considered *the* supreme genre. One context for this is the spiritual and religious character given to nature in the German philosophy of nature. In the paintings of one of the great landscape painters of the 19th century - Caspar David Friedrich - landscape painting was given authority by being the new religious genre, as seen in his striking picture *Monk by the sea* from 1810. The small man in the huge landscape, a backturned figure contemplating and being one with nature. Depicting him as a monk was a way of connoting the religious in his act. Through his unity with nature, he was one with God.

**Individuality/authenticity and art.**
When placing Dahl within the development from pre-modern to modern art, it might be worth saying a little about his relation to Friedrich who was a close friend of Dahl in Dresden. Dahl was aware of the differences between the two, Friedrich was a mystic, Dahl was not. And this came to expression in their art. But Friedrich's art was the right art for Friedrich, like Dahl's art was the right art for Dahl. Friedrich's art was a true art because it was an *authentic* expression of his character, his personality. Such a statement is a typically romantic - and modern - statement, breaking drastically with the whole classical tradition going back to Italian renaissance. Within this pre-romantic tradition little room was left for the individual expression. Art was to be about the *general*; to open up for the individual, that means the special, was to devalue art.

For Dahl, as for most painters through the 19th century, all great art had to have an element of the subjective to be authentic. But art had to be more than mere individual expressions. It should also communicate on a general level. To express the general through the individual became the solution of the problem in the 19th century, and it still is. To think of art in terms of authenticity and sincerity was also mainly a product of last century.

**I. C. Dahl as initiator in the building up of art institutions**

Dahl was an impressive man. Not only was he a great artist, he also played a crucial role in Norwegian cultural life. That is a little surprising, considered his very humble ancestry. He was the first to take the initiative to save the Norwegian medieval stave churches from total destruction. He was among the initiators to the foundation of The Society for the Preservation of Antique Monuments, to the foundation of The National Gallery (1837), and also important in this context - he was the initiator of the foundation to the first two Societies of Art ("kunstforeninger") in Norway - the models he had from Germany - the first in Christiania in 1836 (Christiania was the former name of Oslo), the next in Bergen the year after. Then followed Trondheim in 1845 and Stavanger in 1865. Today a Society of Art is to be found in many Norwegian cities.

A Society of Art was, and is, a private institution. Its economical foundation was based on membership fees and art sales. (Today it's also dependent on public support). It had two main functions: To educate a broader public into the world of art, and to give exhibition possibilities for Norwegian artists. Throughout the century the exhibitions held by the Societies of Art, and mainly the one in Christiania from the 1840s and 50s, were the central fora for art exhibitions. They were in fact the only exhibitions of importance right up to the early 1880s. As such they played an important part in the building up of a modern art world in Norway.
The Academy of Düsseldorf played a crucial role in the professionalization of Norwegian art during the 19th century, attracting as it did most of the Norwegian painters in the 1840s, 50s and parts of the 60s. Adolf Tidemand was the first Norwegian to be enrolled in the Academy, in 1837. He had then already been at the Academy in Copenhagen from 1832 to 1837.

Dahl was the father of modern Norwegian painting, and the one who established the very strong national line in Norwegian landscape tradition. Adolf Tidemann has the same position concerning figure painting. He had the ambition of becoming a history painter, history painting could still be experienced as the most ambitious genre, though it had lost much of the prestige it had in the 16th-, 17th- and 18th century, when the genre was developed.

**History painting and the American contribution**

The only possible motives for traditional history painting were important scenes taken from the bible or from antique history, mythology or literature. There might be exceptions, but they were very few. America's first important contribution to modern western art was to break the hegemony of the biblical and antique motives within the genre, and to establish *a modern* history painting. This was done by Benjamin West, the prime innovator in modern history painting, John Singleton Copley and John Trumbull, and most of their important history paintings were made in London, in the case of Benjamin West, in close connection to the Royal Academy.

The paradigmatic picture for this modern history painting from the last decades of the 18th century is Benjamin West's famous *The Death of General Wolfe* from 1770. West depicted his persons as he thought they were dressed in Quebec in 1759, rather than in Greek or Roman attire. The Archbishop of York and Sir Joshua Reynolds, the prominent English painter and director of The Royal Academy in London, strongly disliked what they saw when they visited West during the early stage of his work. They urged him to "adopt the classical costume of antiquity, as much more becoming the inherent greatness of [the] subject that the modern garb of war." Such a statement shows the enormous authority of the classical tradition within the supreme genre of painting, it is not only a result of the time's strong neo-classical attitudes.
But with the exception of modern motif and modern dress, West's picture followed the rules and traditions of history painting. It had an important motif - the death of the great man for the sake of the good, with the death of Socrates as the model figure in history painting. And West unfolded the story by the display of a manifold of responses among the people experiencing the central event. That was also an important part of history painting, inviting the beholder to identify him or herself with each of the figures through the process of reading the painting.

**History painting in the 19th century and the national**

But what came to characterize history painting during the 19th century, besides its general decline, particularly during the last half of the century, was its concentration on national themes, in Norwegian painting that would be themes taken from Old Norse sagas and mythology. But history painting of the 19th century didn't only represent a change in motives. The old established conventions for the genre disappeared more or less without being replaced by any new ones. 19th century history painting was therefore a genre without fixed rules. It was enough to have an important motif, taken from past history or mythology.

**The Death of Earl Haakon**

After this brief introduction to history painting, let us go back to Tidemand. His most important work within the genre is probably *The Death of Earl Haakon* from 1846. (151 x 138 cm). The main motif shows a scene from the story of Earl Haakon, the last heathen king in Norway. He wasn't popular among the well-to-do farmers in Troendelag, much because he made passes after their wives. He therefore had to hide from them in a hole made under a pigsty. But he was screaming so loudly while sleeping, that his thrall, Tormod Kark, had to kill him to save his own life. What Tidemand made as the main motif was the moment just before the thrall puts the knife in his master's throat. For that the later King Olav had him beheaded.

The death of Earl Haakon was not the death of the great man for the sake of the good. It was a rather embarrassing story, and not very appropriate for the genre. It showed an interest in an important historical event in its own right, totally neglecting the earlier moralizing and idealizing function of the genre. When Tidemand went to the professor of history painting in Munich with his picture - here the genre had a much stronger position than in Diisseldorf - the professor's response was negative: "Here is one more of the Diisseldorfer murder
stories", was his comment. According to him, the scenes in the painting's lower zone should have been the picture's main motive.

The scenes below are related to the history of the christianizing of Norway, the central motif being the destruction of the large sculpture of the god Thor from the pagan temple, the "hov", in Hundorp in Gudbrandsdalen. Through many years food offerings had been brought to the figure, but when destroyed by King Olav's men, rats, lizards and snakes came out. Confronted with this, the farmers in Gudbrandsdalen were willing to give up their old religion and to be baptized.

On Tidemand's first travel to Norway in 1843 his intention was to find Nordic types for his history painting, and they were expected to be found in the peasant population. But it was the current peasant culture that caught his attention and interest, and he returned to Diisseldorf as a genre painter (= a painter who paints stories of folk life).

"Haugianere" and genre painting as an ambitious genre
Tidemand was the first Norwegian painter to make ambitious painting with motives taken from the life of the Norwegian peasants. His main work within this genre is Haugianere (The Haugians), painted in three versions, the first one from 1848, the painting presented here from 1852. The picture's large scale - 147 x 183 cm) - was unusual for genre paintings, and signifies a high level of ambition. The so-called haugianism was an important, but controversial, religious lay movement founded by Hans Nielsen Hauge around 1800. The movement was still active on the countryside in the 1840s. The model for the old man in the "kubbestol" (a chair carved from large section of log) was the local sheriff, a member of the Hauge movement. As far as it was possible, Tidemand used local models, but for some of the figures, among them the preacher, he had to find his models in Diisseldorf.

In the picture a preacher reads from a text, probably from the bible, under the smoke vent (in the middle of the ceiling) in a typical WestNorwegian "røykstove" from Hardanger. A "røykstove" is a cottage, usually of logs, containing an open fireplace in one of the corners and with a smoke hole in the ceiling. The cottage is still existing, now in a local museum in Hardanger. The light from above connotes the religious, setting the whole atmosphere to the picture.

The story of the picture is related to the depiction of the many individual responses to the preacher's reading, differing according to age and gender of his listeners. In the middle of the picture there are two elderly men, deeply pondering. Behind the man in the "kubbestol" there
is a standing young man, looking at and listening to the preacher with the devotion of youth. Left to him, sitting on the table, there is also a man looking directly at the preacher. But he is older and more mature, and in his face is showed a more thoughtful attitude. To the right of this figure stands a stately, bald headed man, attentive and alert. As a contrast to the watchfullness of the latter, a man on the right side of the preacher is drowsing against the bed pole. To the very left of the picture there is an old couple actively following the text being read. The alertness of this old man is seen in contrast to the frail old man in the bed, to the picture's right. Contrasts are also the young woman in the front of the picture and the older women right opposite her. It's the young woman's total surrender to the religious message in contrast to the clear equanimity of age.

The picture shows a panorama of human states within the context of a religious meeting. That's what makes Haugianere an ambitious painting, because this was earlier the domain of history painting. The genre didn't only demand an important and ideal action, it was also essential to display a great variety and diversity of individual responses to a central event, through gestures and facial expressions, all related to the picture's main subject, and differing according to gender and age, as we can see for instance in Nicolas Poussin's picture The manna in the Desert from 1639.

The picture shows the Jewish people on their way from Egypt to the holy land, in the moment when they are saved from thirst and hunger by God who transformed the dew in the desert into manna and let quails fall down from heaven. Some have not yet discovered the miracle. To the left a man gives expression of his own dismay by seeing the mother who in despair has to give breast to an old woman instead of to her own child. Others have discovered the manna, and express wonder and gratitude. In the middle, but in the rear of the picture, are Moses and Aron, Aron folding his hands in a gesture of thankfulness, Moses pointing towards heaven to show from where the miracle came.

Despite the similarities in the principles of story telling between the two pictures, there are of course differences. Poussin's painting is a 17th century painting, and his figures express their feelings in a dramatic and baroque manner. Tidemand's figures belong to the 19th century's more realistic and natural representations.

Right up to the end of the 18th century important stories, told in this manner, was reserved for history painting. Genre painting was about the trivial and everyday life of current peasant- or middle class population.
But Tidemand showed that modern ambitious paintings could now take their motives from the lives of ordinary Norwegian peasants, and not only from the lives of antique heroes or biblical figures. And he gives authority to his painting by using the central artistic means originally belonging to history painting, not only the display of a manifold of human states, but also through a compositional means typical for this genre in the 18th century, the pyramidal composition with the head of the picture’s leading character in the pyramid’s crown. French art theory of the 18th century had a name for this, “la figure pyramidae”.

I think the transferring of means from a higher genre to elevate a motif of a lower one was a conscious strategy. After all Tidemand started his career as a history painter and must have been acquainted with the specific language of the genre. It had taught him how to give an idealized picture of current Norwegian peasant life.

For that Tidemand has been strongly criticized by later painters within more realist traditions, not the least in the 1880s. He didn't give the true picture of the Norwegian peasant. But may be Lorentz Dietrichson, the first Norwegian professor of art history, has a point when he writes, in his book on Tidemand in 1877/79 (two volumes): "The life of the Norwegian peasant is no "Cycle of celebrations" ("Festcyklus"), but for the time, for which Tidemand painted, a time for which one should for the first time be introduced to the grace-given poetical sides of our peasants' lives, it was surely the right move, first to explain to us, that also this life with its depressing and dreary outside, in which we still could not find any poetical side, nevertheless had its festively transfigured moments of beauty."

Before leaving Tidemand and the Haugianere it can be worth noting the chair to the left, the so called Blaker chair, a medieval chair from Vaagaa in Gudbrandsdalen. It doesn't belong to the house, so here Tidemand left his intention of making an authentic situation in an authentic interior. The symbolic function of the Blaker chair was more important. It signified the continuity from the Middle Ages to present time’s rural culture.

**GENRE SPECIALIZATION**

Dahl had chosen to be a landscape painter. Tidemand chose history painting as his genre, but changed it to genre painting. In the 19th century, like in Dutch painting in the 17th, one wasn't only an artist, a specialist on painting, one was also a specialist within the art of painting, a specialist on one specific genre. Of course there were exceptions, but
not many. In the 17th century Rembrandt was of course the exception, though he was mainly a portrait and figure painter.

_A Bride’s Journey to the Church in Hardanger_

The national painting in Norway, still hanging as reproductions in thousands of homes, can illustrate the phenomenon of genre specialization in the last century. I’m thinking of _A Bride’s Journey to the Church in Hardanger_ (93 x 130 cm) from 1848, painted by "Mr. Genre painter Adolf Tidemand" and "Mr. Landscape painter Hans Gude," that's how painters were often addressed at the time.

The landscape is probably a truthful rendering of a part of the Soerfjord in Hardanger, but the stave church had been added by the artists. An ambitious national painting like this, where the two leading Norwegian painters met in collaboration on one and the same canvas, couldn't be without all the three national symbols we also found in Dahl’s Stedje painting - nature, peasants and the medieval historical monument - the stave church.

The picture was presented as a so-called "tableau vivant" (= live picture) at the theater in Christiania in 1849. The boat scene was shown "live" with a big painted background. The presentation was accompanied by music, composed by Halfdan Kjerulf, and a recitation of a poem, written for the occasion by the leading national romantic poet Andreas Munch. The whole presentation was received amidst enormous acclaim.

Tidemand and Gude also collaborated in other paintings, and there are also other examples of this type of collaboration between genre specialists, although not many. The first documented example of this phenomenon is the picture _The Temptations of St. Antonius_ from 1515 by Joachim Patinir, the first known landscape specialist since antiquity, and Quentin Matsys, a figure painter, both from The Low Lands. Nowhere was production for an open market so widespread, so early, as in this region in Europe. A growing specialization is a well known response to a growing competition.

**The main genres**

As a part of the secularization process within the arts starting in the renaissance, there developed a number of secular genres, especially in the 16th- and 17th century. The main genres were the following seven: the allegory (almost non-existent in Norwegian art), history painting, portrait painting, stil life, animal-, genre- and landscape painting. The two last mentioned genres were the most widespread genres in Norwegian 19th century painting. But the all dominating genre was
landscape painting. I don't think there were any countries where a so great percentage of the painters chose this genre as in Norway.

Let me give a very short presentation, with the exception of history painting, of a very few representatives of these genres before the 1880s and 90s, two decades that will be treated separately in the next lecture.

**History painting**

History painting was, as mentioned, the most important genre in the 17th- and 18th century, but in decline through the 19th century, almost to disappear at the century's end. The background for this development is probably to be found in the following:

1) It was originally a genre painted mainly on royal or princely commissions. The canvases were large with many figures; it was an "expensive" genre. It took its motif from past history and was often full of symbols and allegories. This means it was a genre that required great knowledge. During the 19th century production for an open market, aimed at the growing middle class, was the new situation. That made demands upon less expensive paintings, and paintings that didn't require a high standard of knowledge; in other words - genre paintings, landscapes and still lifes. If history painting should survive on this new market, it had to change, for instance into murder stories à la Dusseldorf.

2) Within the avant-garde painting from the middle of the 19th century there was a move away from literature and story telling in paintings (history painting was an extremely narrative genre), and a move towards concentration on the pure artistic means specific for painting as medium. Edouard Manet in the 1860s and the impressionists in the 70s were early forrunners of this development.

As mentioned Tidemand wanted to be a history painter. In the 1840s it could still have a high prestige. But as we have seen, he left history painting in favour of genre painting. History painting became a not very widespread genre in Norway, mainly because of the reasons mentioned above. In addition there was absolutely no Norwegian tradition for the genre in previous centuries.

**Peter Nicolai Arbo and Aasgaardsreien**

The painter who most consistently made history paintings throughout his career was Peter Nicolai Arbo, also trained at the Academy of Dusseldorf, but one of few Norwegian painters who stayed a long part of his artist life in Paris (1863-74). The majority of his history paintings have motives related to important historical events from Old Norse history, but his main work has a mythological motif, or what was
believed to be a mythological motif, the *Aasgaardsreien*. It's a large scale painting, 169 x 241, and based on a well known poem by the Norwegian poet Welhaven.

*Aasgaardsreien* means something like "The ride coming from the home of the Gods". (The Old Norse "ass" are the common denominator for the Old Norse gods. "Aasgaard" is the name of the home of the gods. "Rei" is in many popular dialects the word for ride.) In front of this horseback ride is the god Thor, redhaired and with the hammer in his right hand. Left to him is a so called Valkyrie, a women choosing among the dead on the battlefield, those who are to have a life after death in Valhalla, the place of the Gods. ("choose" and "kyrie" have etymologically the same root. "Val" = battlefield in Old Norse))

Behind these two we see the god Odin, crowned and with a spear lifted in his hand. (In another version of the painting from 1872, Odin is the front figure of the ride.)

The lightly dressed and floating female figures in the background may be the so called lightelves, often appearing together with the gods.

The naked, non-riding figures to the right obviously don't belong to the world of gods. They might be human beings that the Aasgaardsrei captured through its wild nightly ride, as we know it did in the popular stories of the Aasgaardsrei.

It is difficult to identify all the figures in Arbo's painting, this because a repertoire of attributes for the Old Norse gods had never been established (unlike the situation for antique gods and medieval saints), due to the lack of preserved old representations of Nordic gods, to the extent that they have existed.

No notions about a ride of gods have been preserved from Old Norse texts. It's in all likelihood a misreading by early scholars - Jacob Grimm in Germany and Per Christian Asbjoernsen in Norway - of the word Oskerei, referring to popular Norwegian stories of a ride of frightening creatures of a supernatural character. There could be different names of the leading figure in the Oskerei, in Nordfjordeid his name was SterkeTor (The strong Tor), in Valdres it was Trym. These names were read as derivations of the name of the god Thor. That's probably the reason for why he is in front of the ride in Arbo's painting. But Oskereia has nothing to to with the Old Norse "ass". "Oske" is related to the Swedish word "aaska", which mean thunder. The name was probably given because of the terrible noise made by the Oskerei.
Scholars' reconstruction of the many stories of a Oskerei as a popular remnant of a non preserved Old Norse ride of gods, fits well with contemporary notions about, and need to find, the continuity from Old Norwegian viking time culture to contemporary rural culture.

Animal painting
Siegbald Dahl, son of I. C. Dahl, was the first Norwegian animal painter, trained by his father in Dresden and by the famous English animal painter Landsdeer in London, in 1851. In the painting *Forman travels across Filefjell* from 1851 Siegbald Dahl painted the animals, his father the landscape. (Formann, who commissioned the painting, was a prominent landed proprietor from Fana outside Bergen, Filefjell is a mountain between Valdres and Laerdal.)

Still life painting
A not very widespread genre in Norway before the end of the century. The first more specialized production started in the 1850s and 60s.

Landscape painting
Besides Thomas Fearnley, who has already been mentioned, Peder Balke has also been named a pupil of Dahl. He had his background as a country painter, but went to the Academy of Stockholm (1829-33) before he visited Dahl in Dresden in 1836 and 1843-44. But Balke stands more in the visionary landscape tradition of Friedrich than the romantic-realistic tradition of Dahl, especially in his later works based on his sketches from a visit to the north of Norway, to Nordland and Finnmark, in 1832, as seen in the small painting (18 x 23 cm) *The Fortress of Vardoehus, seen from the sea*, probably from the 1870s. He was the first important artist to visit this part of Norway.

Among the Norwegian Dusseldorf painters Hans Gude was the most prominent landscape painter, here represented with one of his main works *The High Mountain Plateau (Høyfjell)* from 1857.

But landscape painting in Dusseldorf gradually moved away from the big panoramas of nature and into the forest interiors, of western as well as southern Norway, as seen in Lars Hertervig's extremely suggestive *Lake in the Forest* from 1865.

Hertervig's works are today considered highlights in Norwegian landscape painting. But in his own time he was a forgotten figure. He was at the Academy of Dusseldorf as pupil of Hans Gude from 1852 to
1854, when he got an outbreak of schizophrenia, and was sent back to his home region not far from Haugesund on the southwestern coast of Norway. Here, and in the areas around Stavanger, he spent his later years in total isolation from any art life. But despite of his isolation, he created in these years, from 1855 to 1865 (1856-58 he spent at Gaustad Asylum in Oslo) some of the real masterpieces in the history of Norwegian art.

**Portrait painting**
The first Norwegian women painters in Norway started their careers around the middle of the 1840s. Hedvig Erichsen was among the very first ones, and she was probably the finest Norwegian portrait painter in her time, her finest work being the portrait of her mother *Abel Marie Erichsen* from 1846. As with so many other women painters in the 19th century, her career stopped more or less after marriage.

Quite many women were drawn to the profession of painting in the 19th century, in Norway as in Europe in general. There could be many reasons for that. Unmarried middle class women were not taken care of by their families in the same way as earlier, and the women painters of the 19th century were all middle class women, some of them came from the upper middle class. It was therefore important to learn a profession. And there were no guilds or other institution that refused them a professional career as painters, though they did not have access to any academy till the end of last century. The study of the nude played an important part in all academy training. That excluded women of moral reasons. They therefore had to take private lessons, often with well known painters, as did Hedvig Erichsen in Diisseldorf, with Carl Sohn.

Being a painter was also an acceptable profession for middle class women because the art of painting was no longer connected to crafts. A profession as a painter within the context of craft production would probably not have been acceptable. (Women were excluded from University education in Norway until 1888.)

**Genre painting**
Tidemand was the leading genre painter in Norway for more than twenty years. Genre painting was a widespread genre, and many painters could be chosen to represent it. Here it's represented by Nils Bergslien, himself from Hardanger, having tourists as an important market.

Tidemand made the genre painting into an ambitious genre. So did also other painters, but not many. The typical of the genre was the slightly
idyllic, or the humorous, as in Bergslien's *The Lord and the Dish with Clabbered Whole Milk strewn with Sugar and Crumbs*, probably from the 1870s. The English lord is visiting a Norwegian summer dairy, probably in the mountains in Hardanger, note the packsaddle in the left corner. He looks pleased, but that is before he has tasted this characteristic Norwegian food. The young woman and the boy look with great expectation of the reactions to come.

The tradition for the humorous and caricatured within the genre goes back to the genre's origin in 16th- and 17th century Dutch painting.

**CRITICAL EYES ON THE GENRE SPECIALIZATION**

The background for the widespread genre specialization in the 19th century, which was a general western phenomenon, is probably to be found in market mechanisms - in a liberalist economy that promoted a free competition for an open market. The 19th century was a century for a realistic picture culture, there is no coincidence that the photography was one of the century's many technological inventions. And contemporary taste in art required very high standards in realistic renderings of a motif. It was difficult to satisfy these demands in all genres for one painter - to be equally good in depicting human figures, animals, landscapes and still lifes. To be able to compete on the market, it was necessary to specialize.

Some critical voices were raised against this specialization. And they were raised from two different perspectives, the one concerning the question of fragmentation, the other the question of "Fagvesen" (trade system). They are both interesting in this connection, although the critical voices are French.

**Fragmentation and art as "the paradigme of reconciliation"**

For Jules Astruc, a French painter, critic and friend of Manet, genre specialization was a symptom of the fragmentation of art. In 1860 he writes:

"Painting is not fragmented - it is one. It sees everything, it analyzes everything: it is the expression of the colorful whole that sums up the world. (...) Specialities only end up trivializing art. (...) The categories [= the genres] must disappear and leave room for the joined representations [pour faire place au resume]."

By giving art the function of expressing totalities he connects himself to a critical tradition going back to the German writer and philosopher

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Friedrich von Schiller at the end of the 18th century. Schiller saw the growing specialization and division of labour, which was consciously promoted at the time for the sake of economical development, as a threat to mankind because it led to a fragmentation of man. Traditional religion had no longer the authority to solve these modern problems for mankind. Only art could take care of the synthetic perspectives, and recreate the whole man. It "sums up the world."

Here we see one of the first signs of a new, almost religious function being given to art. Art becomes a substitute for religion. It becomes the "paradigme of reconciliation", a concept introduced by the German historian of literature Peter Burger. It reconciles the contradictions and complexities of the modern world.

The discourse of fragmentation, to use a popular formula, is not a new discourse created by post modern society. It goes back to the end of the 18th century, and is continued in the following. The statement of Jules Astruc epitomizes that. Also for Karl Marx the question of fragmentation was a crucial issue. The root of much evil was the division of labour, it "parcelled" man. But Marx didn't seek refuge in art to solve the problem, but in political revolution. In principle it was impossible to foresee the future, therefore it was also impossible to be too detailed concerning the description of a future communist society. But one thing he believed for sure; in his future Utopia there wouldn't be any division of labour.

The new and very ambitious function being given to art by Schiller and his followers, comes clearly to expression at the end of the 19th century, in the paintings of artists like Edward Munch, Gauguin and van Gogh. They wanted to give mankind an understanding of the complexities, but also the totalities of life. But no longer as conscious responses to the fragmentation of modern life. May be that was a forgotten discourse at the end of the century. The widespread division of labour had become the natural situation for man.

**Art as "Fagvesen"/trade system**

The other critical perspective concerns the question of genre specialization as a symptom of "Fagvesen", a critical Norwegian term when used about art, which it was. It means something like "trade system", a term giving association to crafts and guilds. To be an artist in the modern meaning of the word, wasn't to have a profession, a trade. That belonged to the past. Modern art was an **intellectual** or **spiritual** activity, not a display of technical skill. And sometimes it was to follow the call.
Also in Norway it was possible to see a parallel between the growing division of labour and genre specialization. It came to expression in a newspaper article in 1868 on the very popular landscape painter Knut Baade. He wasn’t only a specialist on landscapes, but had become a specialist on moonlight landscapes. The article has no critical attitude to this, it just establishes the parallel between the division of labour and the growing specialization in the arts.

But this extreme specialization is ridiculed by the French writer Edmond About in his critics of the Salon in Paris in 1868 where he writes: "With the miraculous perfection of techniques, the division of labor, the law of modern industry, has gradually taken over painting. The time may not be far away when some genre painter will spend his entire life painting over and over a woman seated by the fire, and always the same woman."²

In the process of the liberation of art from craft it was important to do away with the picture of the artist as a professional specialist.

The genre specialization comes to an end in the last decades of the 19th century, and there are many reasons for that. But seeing Edward Munch’s The Scream, we immediately understand that it's no longer necessary with a long experience in painting nudes, human figures and facial expressions to paint the screaming figure in the picture’s foreground. But you need a considerable competence in the mastering of the artistic means specific for the art of painting.

**THE 1870s AND THE ACADEMY IN MUNICH**

Before introducing the 1880s and 90s two crucial decades in this context because they marked the real introduction of a modern art world in Norway, a few words ought to be said about the 1870s, a decade where the Academy in Munich was the most attractive academy for young Norwegian artists. Many of the main figures in Norwegian art life in the 80s had their background from this academy.

Here the history painting had a stronger position than in the Diisseldorf Academy. Düsseldorf was mainly a middle class city, Munich had more of a traditional upper bourgeois and aristocratic culture. One of the leading Norwegian painters of the period, Eilif Petterssen, made some important works within this genre in the 70s. But in contrast to Tidemand and Arbo he chose his motives from the 16th- and 17th

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² Ibid., p. 169.
The turning away from medieval to post medieval themes in painting had its parallel in Norwegian history writing. In P. A. Munch's eight volum publication from 1851 to 63, The history of the Norwegian Pople, the history stopped in 1397, the year of the Kalmar union where Norway lost its independence. Ernst Sars, the next great historian, 25 years younger than Munch, concentrated his research on the centuries of union with Denmark, from the so-called "fem hundreårs natten" ("the five hundred years night"). But it was important for Sars, a left wing historian, to emphasize that Norway preserved a central national feature through these almost five hundred years - the democratic tradition, specially signified by the free peasant.

But Old Norse themes continued to capture the minds of Norwegian artists, and surely also the Norwegian public, but no longer the minds of the more outstanding artists. Among artists in Munich there was a movement away from national themes, medieval as well as modern. When we enter the 1880s, we meet a more directly antagonistic attitude against the national tradition in painting, at least among the more radical artists within the so-called naturalist movement.

**THE NATURALIST MOVEMENT AND THE 1880s**

The 1880s mark the end of artists in exile. In this decade most of the established artists returned to Norway, that means Christiania, to settle for good. The new generation, starting their careers in the 80s, like Edward Munch, didn't seek any academy education as the former generation did. Like the women painters before them they took private lessons in the studios of prominent Norwegian painters, and had shorter study tours to France and Paris, the new centers for inspiration, also for parts of the more established generation with their educational background from Germany. The foundation was laid for a larger community of artists in Norway for the first time.

The National Gallery, established in 1837, had grown, so also had the art public, and the 80s also saw the growth of a more professional art critics. Two professional art dealers had opened their galleries in the end of the 70s (a book seller and a guilder, still continuing their old professions). Something looking like a modern situation was being established in the Norwegian capital.
THE SPLIT IN TASTE BETWEEN ARTISTS AND PUBLIC
Also other features connected to a modern art situation appeared in the 1880s, for instance the appearance of the artist bohemian, very different from the solid middle class painters of the Dusseldorf generation. It was the bohemian as a dandy as well as the more declassed bohemian, as we see him in Gustav Wentzels *The Morning After* from 1883, a painting depicting the studio of a sculptor. When it was exhibited in Christiania in 1883 it was discussed in a commentary in a newspaper, where the following was written: "At the art exhibition in the Castle Park a picture is exhibited that should not be there, and which we, in the name of decency, must demand to be removed."

Wentzel had also provoked the public two years earlier with *The Workshop of the Cabinetmaker* (1881), a painting that exemplifies how the genre painting had moved to town, in this case into a hunchbacked cabinetmaker's workshop. Here is no narrative or symbols that could elevate the motive into a higher reality of art, and the board of The Society of Art refused to exhibit the picture. Wentzel then sent it to a newly established art dealer in Christiania where it was shown. And it started a heated debate in the newspapers. This is the first picture to be refused and to be the object of a debate in media, a situation we know very well from the modern art situation.

The refusal of the picture from the exhibition was one of many reasons for the famous artist's boycott of The Society of the Art's exhibition. The artists' claim was to have a majority of artists in the board, i.e. a majority of people with competence for judging art works. The claim was refused, and the artists made their own exhibition in 1882, the origin of the so-called Autumn Exhibition, from 1884 supported by the State. From the very beginning it stood forth as the most important exhibition in Norwegian art life, an annual manifestation of the current trends in Norwegian art. And it still is.

The reactions against Wentzel's pictures and the artists' action against the board of The Society of Art in Christiania marked the new split in taste and notions about art between the majority of the middle class public and the young artists. There was no longer the former harmony between the artists and their public.

A SPLIT IN TASTE BETWEEN THE AVANT-GARDE AND THE REAR GARDE/THE TRADITIONALISTS
But there wasn't only a split in taste between the artists and their public, there was also a split between the artists themselves. The Norwegian art world had become modern, it had become an arena of
battles between different trends and art conceptions. It had got its left wing and its right wing, and the right wing consisted mainly of artists still continuing the national tradition in art, in landscape painting as well as in genre painting. They were popular painters with a broad public. Among them was Hans Dahl. (He is not related to I. C. Dahl.)

He was a late Düsseldorfer and lived in Berlin, where he was a friend of the German Emperor Wilhelm 2. He had a summer residence in Balestrand in the Sognefjord where he spent his summers, and here he found the motives to his art. Like the many other painters who continued the national tradition after the the Düsseldorf period had come to an end (roughly speaking during the 60s and early 70s), he lived abroad. They continued the old tradition with a double market - the Norwegian and the foreign. And their market value they had as Norwegian painters painting exotic landscape and countryside life, as seen for instance in Knitting woman in a mountain landscape, probably from the 1880s or 90s.

But the market alone doesn't explain the national motives in Hans Dahi's art - a healthy countryside population in a sunny West-Norwegian mountain- or fjord landscape, far from the degeneration of continental city culture.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CONCEPT OF AVANT-GARDE

An important background for the deep split between the artist and his public as well as the split among the artists themselves, was the introduction of the concept of avant-garde in the last half of the 19th century. The term was taken from the military terminology where it denoted a vanguard in a military advance. The concept, transformed to the art world, showed a belief in an artistic vanguard, in an art that was more "advanced" than other art. And what made it advanced was its being in the front, it discovered new "land" for the art, it broke barriers etc. The avant-garde art was therefore always the new art operating in unknown land.

With the introduction of the concept of avant-garde, which in our own century has become the very ideology of the art world, an internal dynamics had been introduced into the art world. The privilege of being avant-garde is of course reserved for an elite. If everybody was avant-garde, there wouldn't be any avant-garde.

I think it could be justified to use the concept of avant-garde concerning the art of Wentzel and other radical Norwegian painters in the 80s. But I prefer to call the it "local" avant-garde, because it wouldn't have been
avant-garde in a Paris context. When I still prefer to label it as such, it is because it functioned as avant-garde, it divided the art world in different camps where they could fight each other with their different conceptions of what art was to be about.

Also I. C. Dahl and Tidemand could surely look at their own art as more advanced than the earlier Norwegian art production. But this view would definitely have been shared by the earlier painters themselves, lacking Dahl's and Tidemand's professional skill. The difference between their paintings was not mainly a difference in art conceptions, it was a difference in measurable skill.

**NATURALISM AS A MOVEMENT**

In the 1880s we have also for the first time something that could be called an art movement in Norwegian art, among the so-called naturalists, a term established in the 1880s by the naturalists themselves. They were not an established group with a common manifest or program for their art. But they constituted a fairly large group of artists feeling that they had something in common, something that represented a new approach to art and separated them from earlier traditions. The painter Christian Krohg and the writer Hans Jaeger were their ideologists.

Krohg had his background from the Academy of Berlin (1875-79. Here he met the famous Danish author and scholar Georg Brandes who introduced Krohg to the French naturalist literature. Smile Zola's works came to be particularly important for Krohg, who was an eminent writer himself. He once made Zola's words his own: "We must do away with the word Art - it's a disgusting word - we must not create art - we must create life."

As nearly all programmatic statements in art, they are more radical in theory than in practice. So also with Krohg. But they indicated directions for the new art. A more moderate understanding of the statement above is to see it as a wish to bring art in contact with neglected realms in earlier art, realms that could signify "reality" and "life".

**Strategies for bringing art in contact with "life" and the "real"**

1) For a landscape painter to move the canvas into the open air and paint his picture directly in confrontation with his motif, was to bring art closer to the real, in contrast to I. C. Dahl and others who finished their paintings in the studio. "Friluftsmaleri" (open air painting) became one of the many new slogans in the 80s. That gave the pictures a brightness that separated them clearly from the brownish, so-called
gallery tones of more traditional paintings as can be seen in Fritz Thaulow's *Street in Kragerøe* from 1880-89. But this was on its way already in the late 70s in the art of the Norwegian Munich painters as a result of contact with French painting.

2) To bring so-called "ordinary" people in their everyday activities on the canvas was another strategy for bringing art in contact with the "real", as did Wentzel with his hunchbacked cabinetmaker.

3) To make paintings not to look arranged or composed was also a way of connoting closeness and presence. This could even be done in still life paintings, as Fredrik Kolstoe did in his *Still life with cods* from 1881. By putting the cods in the extreme foreground of the picture, and having no accessories to take the attention away from the dying or recently dead cods, he created a sudden meeting between painting and beholder. A strong here and now situation was created, and our experience of the painting is one of a very momentous character.

To give this quality of the immediate, it is necessary to escape the character of the arranged, that is to compose the picture as if it were not composed. Traditional still life paintings are typically arranged pictures, as they are within the more traditional, non-modern art works in the 1880s, for instance the *Still life* from 1885 by the still life specialist from Bergen, Ella Ellertsen. In addition to the obviously arranged, the use of symbols of life, death and decay are features going back to Dutch still life painting in the 17th century. (Here symbolized by the dead rabbit and the overturned jug - there are hundreds of them in Dutch paintings - and the spruce needles, the twigs and the catkins.) That too excludes an experience of instantaneousness.

4) To bring the picture's figures, or the main figures, right to the foreground of the picture, as Christian Krohg did in his *Sleeping mother* from 1883 was a very widespread means in the 80s to give a painting the character of the immediate, and therefore of presence and of the real, as we have also seen in Kolstoe's still life. As beholders we get no opportunity visually to move gradually into the painting. We are invited to view the picture as a momentous experience. A reduction of the openly narrative is also a necessary quality for this purpose.

5) Another widespread means to create the feeling of the real was what they called "tilskjæring av motivet", "the cutting off of the motif", as we see to the left in Krohg's painting where the table, the bowl and the bed are continuing outside the picture's frame in the beholder's imagination.
This was supposed to give the painting the character of what they called "et tilfeldig utsnitt av virkeligheten" ("an accidental segment of reality").

To connect art to modern life was also a means of bringing art in contact with "real life" or to make "true art". For the naturalists modern art should mirror modern life. Rural culture symbolized tradition and continuity, urban life, technology or industry signalled the modernity. Boulevards, trains and train stations were the symbols of modernity for the impressionists in the 1870s. For Fritz Thaulow the *Factories in St. Denis*, painted in 1879 could serve the same purpose.

**Christian Krohg's Albertine in the Police Physician's Waiting Room**

As mentioned Christian Krohg has probably contributed to the current use of the term naturalism as an overall description of the 1880s. And he has also painted some works, usually called "social painting" ("sosialmaleri"), the most important of them being *Albertine in the Police Physician's Waiting Room* from 1886/87 (211 x 326 cm). The huge size is still a sign of ambition, giving the work a character of an artistic program: Modern art should be engaged in the central political and moral issues of the time.

To get a full understanding of the picture it is necessary to have some knowledge of his book *Albertine*, published in 1886, but confiscated the day after it came out, mainly because of its attack on the police. And Krohg was fined. But he had made a perfect regi. A few days after the confiscation of the book, the picture was exhibited and seen by thousands. It was later shown in many Norwegian cities, and in Copenhagen, Stockholm, Malmoe and Gothenburg. And all over it created heated debates.

The story of Albertine is the story of an innocent seamstress who was seduced by a policeman. That turns her life upside down and leads her gradually into prostitution. One of the strongest scenes in the book is when she for the first time is being subjected to the compulsory medical examination for public prostitutes. The painting describes the moment just before the medical examination which signifies that she has become a regular prostitute.

The waiting room is filled with other prostitutes, made after photographies, one of the first examples in Norwegian painting of using the new medium instead of traditionally painted studies. They represent a manifold of reactions to what they see. Some find pleasure experiencing the humiliation of Albertine; at last this originally innocent
and nice girl had become one of them. Others take more neutral or thoughtful attitudes.

The book as well as the picture was a contribution to the ongoing debate about public prostitution in Christiania. Public prostitution was abolished in 1888.

The picture *Albertine* is one of a very few pictures that would fit into the concept of naturalism as it is defined in literature, an art that concentrates on the description of the darker side of human existence, in this case prostitution. Naturalist literature is defined as "determinist literature", which would also be an adequate description of Krohg's book. Albertine just had to end on the street, given the time and the social milieu surrounding her. Seen in the context of the book, the picture could also be defined as "determinist" art.

**A national tradition within a naturalist ideology**

As mentioned, the naturalists of the 1880s were in strong opposition to the whole national-romantic tradition. But there were exceptions, painters who wanted to continue the national tradition, but on the premises of naturalism. "Truth to nature" was one of the many naturalist slogans. According to Erik Werenskjold, one of the leading artists in Norway from the 1880s and through the 1920s, the only nature that could be truthfully depicted, was the nature experienced by the artist himself through childhood and manhood. His conclusion was therefore that only Norwegian nature could be truthfully rendered by a Norwegian painter. A consequence of naturalism was a national art. Werenskjold, who was a very influential painter, continued a national tradition, with many moderations, and far from any Düsseldorf tradition, right through the 1920s.

*A Peasant Funeral* from 1885 shows how his national art in the 1880s differed from the earlier, national tradition. Here is a national landscape - Telemark - one of the most symbolically loaded landscapes in Norway. But artistic means are used to trivialize and deromanticize the event - the old man, tired after digging the grave, leans over the spade, and the man behind the fence wipe away the sweat from his forehead. And here are no national costumes, because here is no real funeral. On the Norwegian countryside there could often be long distances and bad communications between the churches, and on small places there could go weeks between every time people were visited by a minister. Concerning funerals, this could be a problem, specially in a hot summer, as here depicted. They had to bury the dead body before it started to smell and decay. A layman, he may be a local teacher, was reading a
text, and a pole was put into the earth and down to the coffin. When the minister came and carried out the solemn funeral, he ended the ceremony by removing the pole and throwing the earth down the hole left by the pole - "Of dust thou art and to dust thou returnest."

Besides the national there is still another element in the picture that connects it to more traditional art, and that is the large component of the narrative in the painting, which it shares with Krohg's picture of Albertine. This in contrast to Gustav Wentzels *The Workshop of the Cabinetmaker* where the narrative was strongly reduced, compared to traditional genre paintings. And the reduction of story telling, of the literary element in a painting, is one of the many characteristic features of modernism in art.

**THE FORMALIST TRADITION**

Fritz Thaulow's *Factories in St. Denis* has been used above to exemplify the preoccupation with the modernity in the 80s. But there is an other possible reading of the painting, not as a pictorial statement for the modern, but as a program for pure formalism. What counts in art are the painterly and formal values, and nothing else. These are the painting's main content. This is probably a reading more in accordance with Thaulow's own intentions. He once wrote about the difference between himself and Christian Krohg: "When we together painted workers [they were in Paris] who unloaded a coal ship, his intention was to display the crushing weight of work. I just thought of matching the filthy white pants against the white snow."

*Also Factories in St. Denis* is about the display of the esthetic potential in the trivial, even in the ugly. The choice of a factory, factory smoke, piles of laundry in poluted surroundings was to show that also this could be made into art. In fact everything could be made into art if there was some painterly potential to be found. Here there is painterly beauty in the transitions and shades of colors from white over grey to black.

Thaulow continued his painterly artistry in the 90s, as shown in *The Garden of Melons* from 1898, and he often gave his pictures titles that called attention to the colors of the painting, like *Red Churchwall*.

So did also Harriet Backer in her picture *Blue Interior* from 1883 with its beautiful shades of blues. The picture can also epitomize the modern genre painting, here from an urban middle class interior, and also with a minimum of narrative.
Harriet Backer was the leading woman artist in the 80s, and a woman artist with a great reputation already from the late 70s in Munich till her death in 1932. She is today considered one of the great painters in Norwegian art history. She remained unmarried and could therefore concentrate one hundred per cent on her career.

In the art of Fritz Thaulow, we meet for the first time in Norwegian art an almost pure formalist, though he was working within a more or less naturalistic style through all his career. But a formalist view on art had influenced every artist of importance in the 80s. The choice of everyday motives cannot only be explained as a part of a realist program. The growing emphasis on the pure artistic and formal means of painting excluded motives that would take too much of the attention away from the picture's formal aspects. That is also an important background for the simple motives of everyday life.

The very symbol of the formalist tradition came to be the abstract painting, being developed as an important avant-garde art between 1910-20. It was a work with a minimum of references to a world, or worlds, outside the art work itself. A selfsufficient world of art had been constructed on the basis of pure artistic means.

**TO SUM UP THE 1880S**

There are different traditions within the movement that has been characterized as the naturalist movement. It included both Krohg's social paintings (they represent a small percentage of his total production in the 80s), the realists with their more or less programmatic "low" motives, the national line of Erik Werenskjold's art, and the formalism of Fritz Thaulow. Outside the naturalist movement we have the more traditional painters, for instance Hans Dahl with his national motives or Ella Ellertsen with her arranged still lifes in the tradition of Dutch 17th century art. And we have of course the many artists working in between all these categories.

**MODERNITY AND MODERNISM**

Although the art of the decade was made within the mimetic paradigm, that is the paradigm of art as imitation, the art of the 80s marks an important step towards the 20th century art. The preoccupation with the modern, so characteristic for the naturalism of the 80s, has been a striking feature in much 20th century art. American pop art could epitomize the phenomenon in the 1960s with cartoons (Roy Lichtenstein) and Campbells soup cans and Brillo boxes (Andy Warhol) as the new symbols of modenity. American pop art is strongly related to earlier realist traditions.
But the formalist tradition, the reduction of the narrative and the emphasize on the immediate and momentous in the reception of a picture, are all characteristic modernist qualities, according to a definition of modernism that has gained considerable authority in the last decades.

The concept of modernism that I refer to is connected to two outstanding American art critics who have brought important contributions to the modernist debate. I'm thinking of Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, Fried was also an art historian. Clement Greenberg developed his theories from c. 1940 to 1970, Fried basically in the 1960s.

For both of them modernism was a question of a discipline's concentration on its area of competence. For the art of painting that would be a concentration on what is specific for painting as a medium. For Greenberg the special and unique qualities for painting was "flatness" and "delimitation of flatness". Flatness was the very definition of the medium of painting, because that was a quality that painting didn't share with any other media. The abstract painting was naturally the very symbol of modernist art. Early modernist art, starting with Edouard Manet's works in the 1860s, was characterized by a growing reduction of pictorial depth and with a growing concentration of the non-mimetic, that is the formal aspects of painting.

This is a concept of modernism that excludes dadaism, surrealisme, the art of Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Jones and pop art from being modernist art. They are today instead classified as early post modern (dadaism and surrealism) or post modern.

In addition to flatness and delimitation of flatness, Fried contributes to one more, and central, painting-specific quality, and that is to be located in the painting's special dimension of time. (This is definitely a crucial aspect of modernist art for Fried, but I'm not sure whether he would consider it an essentially medium specific quality). Literature is a temporal medium, it tells a story over time. The experience of painting is not of a temporal, but of a momentous kind. "Instantaneousness" is therefore a central term in Fried's writings on modernist art. Any narrative and story telling had to be left out, that was reserved for literature as medium.

If one accepts Fried's additional definition of modernism, not only the formalist art of Thalow could be characterized as an early moderate
modernism, moderate because of the traditional pictorial depths in his paintings. Also
the still life of Kolstoe and other paintings that reduce the narrative and make use of
means to accentuate the momentous, could fit in with Fried's concept of modernist
art.

(The main articles by Clement Grenberg on modernism are: "Avantgarde and Kitsch"
John O'Brian, Chicago 1986, pp. 5-22; "Towards a newer Laocoon" (1940), reprinted in
*The Collected Essays, vol. 1, pp. 35-46; "Modernist painting" (1960), reprinted in The
Michael Fried's central articles, reviews and essays from the 1960s are reprinted in
Michal Fried: *Art and Object hood. Essays and Reviews, Chicago 1998. See also his

**THE 1890S: THE EXPRESSIVE TRADITION AND EDVARD MUNCH**

The formalist tradition is the central contribution to modern Norwegian art in
the 80s, what I call the expressive tradition is the early modernism of the
90s, with the art of Edward Munch as the unique example. The art of Wentzel,
Krohg and other naturalists was a "local" avant-garde, the art of Munch in the
90s was a radical avant-garde art also in a general western context.

**THE ART WORK AS AN EXPRESSION IN ITS OWN RIGHT**

The central issue, especially at the end of the century, was no longer to create ideal,
romantic or realistic representations of the phenomenal world, as it had been
for more than 400 years, but to create pictorial expressions in their own rights.

The term "expression" had been a central term in Italian and French art theory
in the 17- and 18th century (espressione, expression) referring to bodily
expressions of inner emotions or states of mind, as we have seen epitomized in
history painting. But they were made within the mimetic paradigm (= art as
imitation) that had ruled all art production since the Italian renaissance. In the
new type of expressive painting the "expressions" were not only located in the body,
but just as much in the painting itself - in colors, free brushwork, line and
composition. They referred to mental and spiritual realities outside the picture -
to moods, emotions and ideas - here the expressive tradition differed from pure
formalism which tried to limit the references to a world outside the picture to
a minimum. In his *Nightcafe* from 1888 van Gogh wanted to depict man's most horrible
emotions - in red and green.
For others the colors could refer to irrational, mystic and spiritual realities that simply couldn't be expressed through bodily expressions, like in Gauguin's paintings at the end of the century and in Kandinsky's abstract art in the years shortly after 1910. For both of them, color was the central vehicle of expressions. In addition to color, deformations of figures and objects were also means that contributed to the expressiveness of painting.

THE ART WORK AS EXPRESSION OF THE ARTIST'S EMOTIONS
The picture's expression could also refer to the artist, to his or her personality, emotions or life experiences. Already in the Italian renaissance there was some awareness of these kinds of relationship between artist and his work, but they were of minor importance. Art should express the general, not the special and individual, as it was also expected to do in much 19th century art, cfr. to what has earlier been said about I. C. Dahl and Caspar David Friedrich. But it is at the end of the 1880s and 1890s, in so-called symbolist art - an extremely vague and ambiguous term - that this relation becomes of crucial importance. The free brushstrokes became then the very sign of the artist's presence on canvas, as physical traces of the creative process, as seen for instance in van Gogh's *Selfportrait* from 1887.

A culmination of this close relation between artist and his or her work within the expressive tradition - in the 20th century labeled as expressionism - is Jackson Pollack being "in the painting" (Pollock's own formulation) on the outstretched canvas on the floor. He is close to being physically one with his art. We are then at the end of the 1940s.

THE BREAK WITH THE MIMETIC TRADITION
In conjunction with the formalist and the expressive tradition contributed strongly to the death of a more than 400 years tradition of art as imitation. They opened up for deformation and abstractions of landscapes, objects and figures, and for the liberation of color and line from their former functions of imitating objects in the phenomenal world. The concentration on medium specific qualities is characteristic not only for formalist art, but just as much for paintings within the expressive tradition.

The formalist tradition, with Cezanne as its foremost exponent at the end of the 19th century, is brought further in the 20th century in French cubism in the art of Picasso and Braque, and later in many of the traditions of abstract art. The expressive tradition is continued in the 20th century with artists connected to the French "fauvism" (Henri
Matisse, Andre Derain and others) and German expressionism (Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde and others), c. 1905-1915. After the second world war the American abstract expressionism is the most marked follower of the expressive/expressionist tradition.

The above mentioned painters are prototypes of the two traditions, but many painters moved in the space between them, and a formalist's work was seldom without features from the expressive tradition, and vice versa.

EDVARD MUNCH AND THE BREAK WITH THE NATURALISM/REALISM IN THE 1890S

The 1890s represents a revolutionary break with naturalistic/realistic art, on the level of content as well as on the level of form. Edward Munch writes something like an art program in 1889, and here it is said: "We shall paint no more interiors with men reading and women knitting." He was then referring both to his own art in the 80s as well as to the general art of his painter colleagues from the same decade. Instead: "There should rather be living people breathing and feeling, suffering and loving." In Norwegian painting no one goes as far as Edward Munch in the break with the tradition of imitation, and no one has the same level of ambition concerning the will to give expressions to the deeper emotions of existential character. None of his works epitomizes this better than The Scream from 1893.

The Scream

There is, no doubt, in Munch's art a will to seek a very strong unity between the artist and his work. According to Munch himself, his works are painted with his own "heart blood". This gives him the opportunity to deform the figure and the landscape more dramatically than any one before him - in the service of strong feelings and expressions.

Typical for much of the expressive tradition was, as mentioned, the conscious will to relate the art work to the artist's own life experiences. Munch's own narrative of the background to The Scream is the following: "I was walking along the road with two friends. The sun set. I felt a tinge of melancholy. Suddenly the sky became a bloody red. I stopped, leaned against the railing, dead tired, and I looked at the flaming clouds that hung like blood and a sword over the blue-black fjord and city. My friends walked on. I stood there, trembling with fright. And I felt a loud, unending scream piercing nature." (This is the first of several versions, written down 01. 22. 1892.)
What does then the picture mean? Among the many possible interpretations of Munch's *The Scream* is to see it as an expression of man's existential *angst*, that is an angst not directed towards identifiable problems, then you can go to a therapist and get rid of them, but an angst directed towards the existance as such. An existentialist would say that there is a good reason for such an angst, it's not a problem for a therapist.

But I'm not going deeply into the question of interpretation here, but want to stress one important difference between pre-modern and modern art: In the former art it was only through established symbols and themes taken from antique literature and mythology or from the bible that artists could say something important about Man and Life. That was to use a common and well-known language giving the painting a high degree of unambiguous content, at least for those who had the sufficient knowledge to read such ambitious art.

In modern art the artists had to find their own and personal formulations, as Munch did in *The Scream*. Antique or biblical themes and symbols were no longer experienced as a possible language to speak or paint through. Ambitious modern art is therefore always an ambiguous art, often extremely ambiguous. This is because it doesn't work with well known symbols, and because so much of the message is expressed through formal means. These are far more equivocal concerning communication of deep emotions or states of being than the bodily expressions of recognizable feelings in pre-modern art. This is what makes much of modernist art so difficult to understand.

This problem of communication reaches a crisis when it comes to abstract art with the intention of bringing important messages about Man and Life, cfr. Barnett Newman's famous *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* from 1951 (95\(\frac{1}{3}\) x 202 inches). A huge and very ambitious painting.

Flatness, together with other means breaking down a naturalistic representation, is one of the many striking features of *The Scream*. The railing going from the right corner and into the picture has something of a traditional perspective where the lines tend to meet in an imagined point outside the picture. But the perspective effect is counteracted by a conscious will to "lift" both the road and the railing, I wouldn't say towards flatness - that would be to exaggerate - but railing and road are not "lying" in the picture the way they should have done in a naturalistically rendered picture.
Munch does not tell a narrative, opening up for what I would call a sequential reading of the picture. And here are no nuances in emotions or moods, as we have seen in Tidemand's *Haugi anere*, a picture that invites to a sequential, part by part reading. In *The Scream* all the artistic means are subordinated to one expression alone, and that contributes to the picture's enormous expressive strength. And it contributes to an experience of instantaneity.

The character of the momentous is also expressed through the frontal figure. Typical for Munch's art in the 90s is the way in which he pushed his main figure right to the front of the picture. That doesn't give the beholder the opportunity gradually to move into the picture. The carrier of the picture's total expression meets the beholder as an immediate shock, and contributes to the momentous character of the painting.

There is still something of a traditional expression in *The Scream*'s front figure, but otherwise the expressive means are now mainly located in the painting itself, not in the body, as in traditional painting, - but in colors, in lines indicated or described by the marked brushstrokes - that would say in means that are special to the medium of painting.

*Selfportait with Cigarette*

Individualized portraits of artists have their origin in renaissance art, mainly as selfportraits. An important function of the more ambitious of these portraits was to show the artist as a "gentiluomo", a gentleman. This was one of the many strategies to elevate the painter from the general conception of the artist as a craftsman.

With a possible background in Byzantine and medieval portraits of saints - masklike, with enlarged, wide open eyes - a new type of artist portraits was developed during the 19th century, the artist as a visionary seer. It's a type of portrait that was nearly completely reserved for artists, displaying a unique person with access to hidden realities through his extraordinary power of imagination.

This type of portrait comes to Norwegian art in the 90s, in the so-called neo-romantic decade. Munch's brilliant *Selfportait with Cigarette* from 1895 (43 1/3 x 33 2/3 inches) is both the best and also the most ambitious of these portraits.

The traditional representation of the artist within this romantic portrait tradition has been to show his head with the staring eyes, the shoulders and upper part of his arms - a traditional type of portrait, in painting as well as in sculpture. The other main type of portrait, the standing figure,
is a far more ambitious category. And it's close up this posture that Munch paints himself, almost in full size.

The play of lights and shades are of major importance in the characterization of the figure. The strong contrasts between darks and lights have the function of giving a mystic aura to the portrayed. He is surrounded by darkness, but the light, coming from the front and from down below like a limelight, plays an important part in the characterization of the artist, falling as it does on his face and his hands. The refined hands, and the way in which he holds the cigarette, gives an air of elegance to the portrayed, so typical for the widespread estheticism among artists in the 90s, cfr. Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde in England.

The light also draws our attention to the face, which is not the face of an "elegantier", but of a man with intensely staring eyes looking beyond the beholder and into another world. Although the figure is drawn quite to the picture's foreground, there is still a gap between the world of the seeing artist and that of the beholder.

The bohemian has earlier been mentioned as the role of the artist in the modern world, entering the Norwegian art scene in the 1880s. A product of the 19th century is also the notions about the artist-genius as a unique being with the capacity to look into worlds and realms, unaccessible for other mortals except through the art of the artist genius. This image has been visualized in Munch's Selfportrait with cigarette.

**The art that "sums up the world"

As earlier mentioned the French painter Jules Astruc regretted the fragmentation of the art as a result of the growing genre specialization. Art should give expression to the totality of life, it should "sum up the world". This was to bring further the quasi religious function given to art by Schiller and others already at the end of the 18th century - art as "the paradigme of reconciliation".

This very ambitious function of art comes fully to expression a century later, expressed in the formidable ambition of many artists to describe a synthesis of life in one work of art, like Gauguin's *Whence Come We? What Are We? Whither Go We?* from 1897 and the French sculptor Rodin's *The Gate of Hell* from 1880-1917. Edward Munch's *The Scream* also has the ambition to say something fundamentally about the human situation. But his ambition to expose the totality of life in his art came
primarily to expression in a whole series of paintings which he called "The Frieze of Life", and which should be a poem of life and death.

**TO SUM UP**

**THREE STAGES OF A DEVELOPMENT**
There are three important stages in the development towards a modern art situation in Norway. The first stage is represented by I. C. Dahl, Norway's first really professional painter (introduced to the Academy in Copenhagen 1811, professor at the Academy in Dresden 1824), and the founder of a Norwegian landscape tradition. Adolf Tidemand, the founder of a Norwegian *figure painting* tradition, represents the next stage. So does also the Academy of Dusseldorf in the 1840s and 50s where many Norwegian painters were trained. The foundation of a community of artists on a grander scale than earlier in the century was laid in Dusseldorf. The 1880s and 90s, when a modern art situation was developed, represents the last stage. The former artistic "exile" had come to an end, and a community of artists in Norway had been established.

**THE INTRODUCTION OF MODERN IDEAS ABOUT ART AND ARTISTS**
Towards the end of the century the modern ideas about art and artists had been established: i) The idea of the artist as a bohemian, ii) the idea of art as a value in itself, with no other function than being art (art for art's sake), iii) the idea of art as avant-garde with the result of a split between the artist and a broader public as well as a split within the artists themselves, and iv) the idea of art as expression, in its own right and/or of the artist's emotions and states of mind.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL ART INSTITUTIONS**
At the end of the 19th century all the characteristic institutions belonging to a modern art world have been established: 1) A CENTRAL ART MUSEUM. The National Gallery was opened in 1837. 2) FORA FOR ART EXHIBITIONS. The Society of Arts’ exhibitions, The Autumn Exhibition, and exhibitions in the two art dealer's galleries (Blomqvist and Cammermeyer). 3) ART CRITICS AND AN ART PUBLIC. Connected to art exhibitions on a grander scale. 4) ART HISTORY AS A UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE. Lorentz Dietrichson was appointed professor of Art history in 1875, and published his important two volumes book on Tidemand in 1877/79. Andreas Aubert's *Det nye Norges malerkunst. Attenhundre og fjorten til nitten hundre* was published in 1900 (*The modern Norway's Art of...*)
Painting. Eighteen hundred and fourteen to the 20th century). These were the first two larger publications on Norwegian art. 5) SCHOOLS FOR ART EDUCATION.
i) A drawing school was founded in 1818, but mainly for the purpose of raising the standard of the capital's craftsmen. But the school became later a starting point for many Norwegian painters. ii) A private scool of painting, founded by the painter Johan Fredrik Eckersberg in the 1860s, later taken over by the painter Knut Bergslien in the 70s. Many Norwegian painters got their first training in this school before they went to a foreign academy. An academy in Norway was founded as late as 1909.

ABOUT THE ART WORLD
A modern western art world is of a relatively recent date. Before the 19th century it's difficult to talk about an art world at all, with a certain exception for Paris in the last half of the 18th century. Roughly said, the only professionals to live on art before the 19th century were the artists themselves.

What then about the modern situation? Not only has there been a tremendous increase in the number of artists - I'm now talking about pictorial artists - also seen in relation to the growing population as a whole. (In 1876 Norway had a population of 1.8 million and 65 artists, in 1920 a population of 2.6 million and 378 artists. Today there is a population of about 4.3 million and 1950 registered artists). But there are today thousands of other professionals living on art. There are art historians, art critics, curators and art dealers, to mention the most important professions in this context, in addition to a very broad art public. They make up the modern art world together with the art world's many institutions: museums and galleries (the first museums in the last decades of the 18th century, Louvre 1793), and other arenas for art exhibitions (the first regular ones in Paris from 1737), art academies (the first: Rome 1593, Paris 1648) and other institutions for a specific art education, and of course, departments of art history.

The art world has become a relative autonomous sphere, or sector, in a modern society. What does that mean? Primarily that it's within the art world itself that decisions are taken concerning what is art, and what is not. (The artists' demand for a majority of artists in the board of The Society of Art in Christiania in the early 1880s was a beginning sign of this situation.) Any interference from outside institutions or individuals on this issue, from the church, the government etc., are considered illegimate by the representatives of the art world.
But the modern art world is not a homogeneous unity. The coexistence of many different art directions and art expressions is a typical symptom of the modern art situation, as we have also seen in the 1880s. But they don’t live in peace with each other. For Pierre Bourdieu, the famous French culture sociologist, a typical sign for the relative autonomy of a "world", others would call it an "institution", he himself calls it a "field" ("champ") is that it has become an arena for battles. And what they fight for in the art field is the authority to decide what kind of art is going to hold the highest esteem within the art world.

Conclusion
One should always be sceptical when a story fits too well into a scale of time being based on periods of decades and centuries. But I still think it can be justified to make a grand narrative that starts at the beginning of the 19th century and comes to an end in the 1880s and 90s. When we have come to the end of the century, the most central notions about art and artists have been introduced to Norway, and the most important modern art institutions have been established. Not only had art and modern art come to Norway - there are worlds separating the artisan painter of the 17th- and 18th century and the artist genius Edward Munch - but also a modern art world had been established, although on a limited scale.