



## The Court Theatre in 250 years

The Court Theatre opened in 1767, i.e. 250 years ago, and it is still the oldest working theatre building in Denmark. However, The Court Theatre was more than that. Little changes have been added to The Court Theatre several times and on one occasion in the 1840s it was subjected to a major renovation. Each time it has happened to preserve and nurture the original Court Theatre whilst renovating the theatre, so that over 250 years it has been a central institution located on Slotsholmen (Castle Island), as an environment for artistic and cultural activities. The Court Theatre is both architectural history, cultural history and theatre history – a living piece of cultural heritage.

The Court Theatre is situated above The Royal Stables in the building which is the only surviving part of the first Christiansborg, which was built during Absolutism from the 1730s to replace the old Copenhagen Castle.



In 1766 the French architect Nicolas-Henri Jardin was given the task of converting King Christian VII's armoury into The Court Theatre. Similar to other European court theatres the Copenhagen one was a neo-classical room in pearl gray and gold. On the floor were lodges, and during the masquerades the audience floor could be hoisted level with the stage floor. It was following a masquerade at The Court Theatre that the King's physician Struensee and Enevold Brandt, director of the theatre, in January 1772, were captured and later executed for treason.



The first Christiansborg burnt already in 1794, around 30 years after the inauguration of The Court Theatre, but this wing, in which The Court Theatre was situated, avoided the fire. In 1842 The Court Theatre was renovated by the architect Jørgen Hansen Koch and the style changed for the Biedermeier red theatre with lodges as we see today.

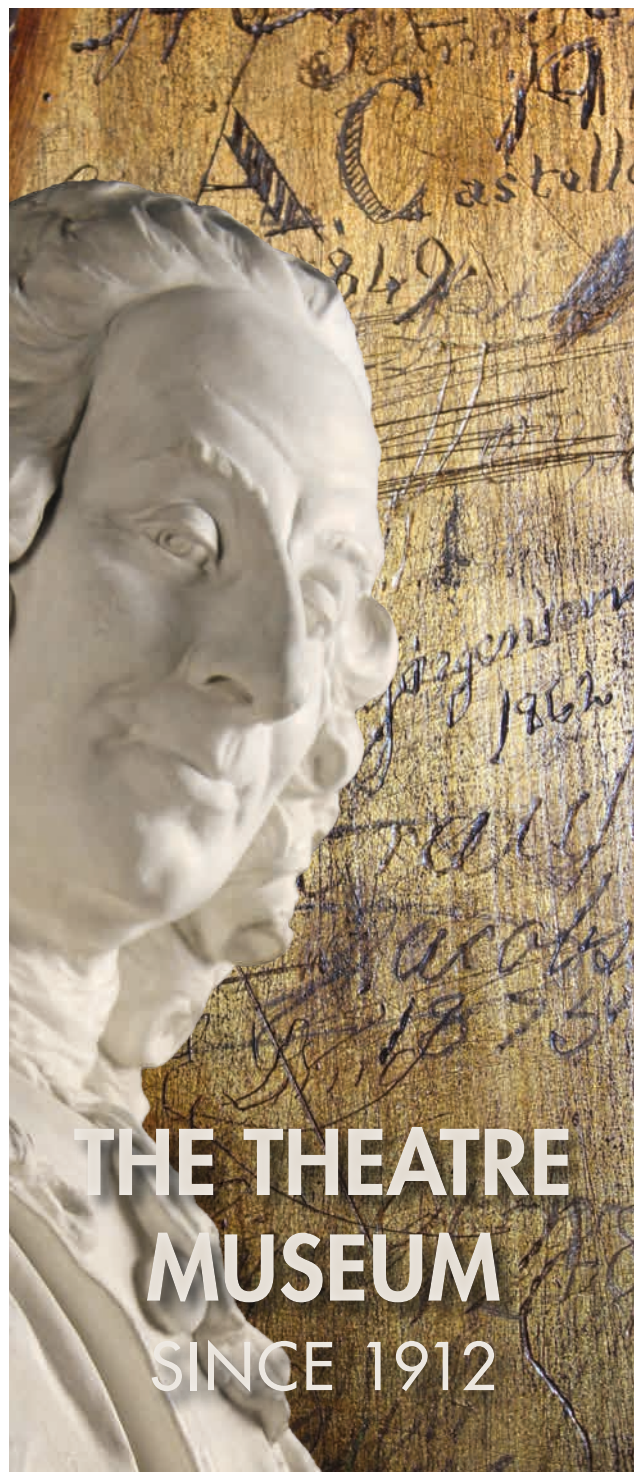
From the beginning and until 1881 the theatre functioned as Court Theatre and for a period as an annexe scene for The Royal Theatre and among other things housed the ballet school where H.C. Andersen was a student in 1820-21. A major fire in a theatre in Vienna in 1881 resulted in the closure of all wooden theatres in Europe, including The Court Theatre. From then onwards the theatre was used as magazine until The Theatre Museum moved in in 1922 (see opposite page).

A visit here to the 250 year old Court Theatre with exhibitions will hopefully give you a sense of the rare historic and atmospheric Court Theatre and the old, but more than ever vital art form which theatre is.

You may move freely anywhere in The Court Theatre just as King Christian VII and Countess Danner did in their time: on the balconies, in the galleries, in the auditorium where you may try out the almost 200 year old sound machines and on the stage where you may test the unique acoustics of The Court Theatre.

**Welcome!**





## The Theatre Museum

The Theatre Museum has existed since 1912 and in 1922 it moved into the old Court Theatre. Thus the Museum of theatre is situated in an old theatre, and the actual theatre space is the most important 'object' of the museum, although many different things continue to take place from the stage and in the auditorium almost every day – this is how it is with The Theatre Museum.



The museum is filled to the brim with archives and collections documenting the development of Danish theatre over 300 years: Manuscripts, instruction booklets, set design models, costumes, costume drawings, shoes, props, make-up equipment, personal records, books, interiors, lighting, sound machines and other sound technology, tickets, programmes, posters, public facilities, photos, records, dvds, video recordings, sound recordings, paintings, drawings, reviews and all sorts of curiosities such as medals, furniture and more. Each little object and interior contain stories, showing the art of theatre's relationship

with the world outside the theatre. A court theatre is much more than a court theatre. Collections are more than collections.

The museum presents changing special exhibitions about everything relating to Danish and international theatre culture. The international cooperation was seen for example in the summer of 2015, when the travelling exhibition *The History of Europe – told by its theatres* was showing in this house. The exhibition came from Warzaw and has subsequently been shown in Vienna, Munich, Ljubljana and now in 2017 it will be shown in London at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The themes of the exhibition among other things are religion, war, national self-understanding and 'crossing borders' – themes, which are reflected direct in the current public debate and the art of theatre in the Nordic region and in Denmark. In 2016 the exhibition *Holberg remixed in sound and pictures* was shown at the Holberg Museum in Bergen.

The Theatre Museum at The Court Theatre is an active partner in The Copenhagen Cultural District.

### The Theatre Museum at The Court Theatre

Christiansborg Riding Ground 18  
1218 Copenhagen K

There is a café and a bookshop in the museum

Office address:

Christiansborg Riding Ground 10  
1218 Copenhagen K

tel: 33 11 51 76

info@teatermuseet.dk

www.teatermuseet.dk

Opening hours:

Tues-Thurs. 11 – 15

Sats and Suns: 13 – 16

Guided tours in and outside

normal opening hours

Special events by arrangement

