

Leila Krogh: Aladdin, Willumsen, and Thorvaldsen

In several periods, J. F. Willumsen was fiercely preoccupied with his great predecessor in Danish art, Bertel Thorvaldsen. Willumsen identified himself with Thorvaldsen and dreamed of attaining the same kind of international recognition. In his self-portrait photograph, with a carefully planned setting, Willumsen placed Thorvaldsen's *Self-Portrait Statue with Hope* beside his own ceramic self-portrait.

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In addition to a preoccupation with Thorvaldsen's person and life, Willumsen on a few occasions created works of art that were clearly inspired by Thorvaldsen's sculptures. The source is evident in *Solidarity* from 1899 and in his *Figure of Christ* from 1947, and when he designed his own museum in Copenhagen in 1930, Willumsen clearly had the Thorvaldsen Museum in mind. In Albert Repholtz's book about Thorvaldsen from 1911, Willumsen wrote on the title page "Aladdin": his image of Thorvaldsen.