

*Hans Edvard Nørregård-Nielsen:*  
What Did Købke Really Think?

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Christen Købke was subject to many different artistic influences during the course of his life, and it is characteristic of his art that, without being given to profound speculations, he intuitively succeeded in maintaining the views of his contemporaries regarding the means and goals of art. When, in 1830, he was about to emerge as an artist, several of his works revealed a strong attachment to the na-

tional programme advocated by the historian N. L. Høyen. But in his *View of the Cast Collection at Charlottenborg*, he demonstrates a considerable influence of the Danish sculptor H. E. Freund. During his extended studies in Rome (1818-28), the latter became a great admirer of Archaic and Classical Greek sculpture. Freund participated in a change of taste which began to manifest itself all over Europe – nurtured not least by the transference of almost the entire sculptural decoration of the Parthenon to the British Museum.

Plaster casts were collected all over Europe. Købke painted a couple of those to be found in Copenhagen, and – influenced by Freund – in a manner bordering on the religious. Købke's strength as an artist declined when, after Freund's death in 1840, this source of inspiration was lost to him. The article takes a stand against the intellectualization that in much of present-day Danish art history is creating a barrier between the work of art and the observer.