"Those ships did meet"

The Story behind the painting: "The Battle of Zealand Point"

Research and writing
Erik Winther Paisley

Design and layout
Kasper Sevel Gant

Those ships did meet at dusk, at sea
And as the air began to glow,
They played across the open grave
And painted red each wave

Here I stand, a monolith
To bear witness for the bloodlines of the North:
Danes they were, those whose tender bones
beneath me do crumble in the earth:
Danes of tongue, of kin, of deeds
And thus they shall be known, as time proceeds:
Their fathers' worthy sons

1810, N. F. S. Grundtvig

Contents

Introduction

The menace of the ship is what strikes you. It is towering, too close for comfort. Sails whipped somehow full of wind, ship still untouched by the enemy, *Prinds Christian Frederik* is resolute, and yet the scene is uneasy.

A starboard blast from *HMS Stately* breaks the line, but she is far, leaning back away from us, and for that moment, we wonder if whether The *Prinds* will hit us as it passes.

The horizon cuts through at the bottom third, giving us a relative degree of intimacy, but *Prinds Christian Frederik's* height covers almost every inch of the painting, leaning back. It looms dangerously close; the roll of the waves suggests it could almost fall from the painting.
The English ships - *Stately* to the right of the image, *Nassau* and *Quebec* to the left, with *Falcon* watching and logging from afar - are in close pursuit.

The *Prinds* is still free, dominating the image, but even in the composition, the enemy ships are beginning to encroach on its space. This painting is almost a ship portrait, but as a stolen moment. The pursuing ships will not allow it; they press *Prinds Christian Frederik* down from the horizon toward us as viewers, like hounds at a hunt.

At a steeper descent, but running the same downward diagonal as the ship's course, the sky shifts from a cool mist to a warmer teal blue. We have bright green beach to our left. In this little corner, there is peace, but as the eyes move across the horizon line, the sky darkens turns a sickly yellow-grey, and rain-heavy clouds crowd the sun's last rays into a thin band against the blackish shoreline.

The sky opens and closes with *Prinds Christian's* story. The light is ours for now, but it will not last, and a shadow that renders the sheen of the waves matte reminds us that something is hanging overhead.
Only the crack of a single cannon tells us what.

Map of the battle. *Prinds Christian Frederik*'s course in solid line, arrows indicating the wind.

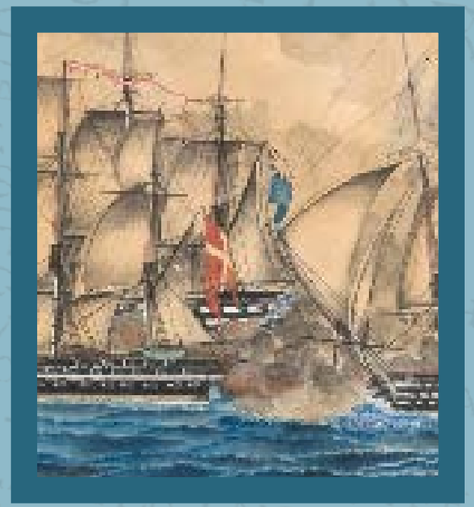
Reproduced via https://www.navalhistory.dk, originally J, "Den dansk-norske Sömagts historie 1700-1814". (H. Schubothes, 1852)

Background

History does not always lend itself well to neat periodization, but when it does, it is generally to the sound of battle.
After hundreds of years of naval tradition as a seafaring power, Denmark-Norway's claim to be a major naval power struck ground on the night of March 22, 1808, only to be blown up by the British and sink into the sea.

This painting is a deviation from Rye's previous body of work, though it brings together two lasting seams of interest to the artist: Historical craftsmanship and landscape painting. He leapt at the opportunity when Niklas Nikolajsen, the patron, offered him the commission.
The commission is a chance to add a piece to Danish art history that in its attention to detail and careful execution lives up to its importance in history. As the Oxford Companion to Art notes rather dismissively, 'the British naval victories in the second half of the 18th c. were subjects for many uninspired painters." This battle was unfortunately no different.
While there are a number of existing paintings and popular representations, notably ink-wash drawings, none of them are notable for their artistic qualities—or indeed even accuracy. From lacking the original ship's characteristic swept stern to highly naïve depictions, none of the existing works do the events honour.

Detail from one of the drawings by H. P. Dahm (1808).
Item NSM.K02738 at the Norwegian Maritime Museum.



For a large exhibition in 2014, which was opened by the Crown Prince, the Danish National Museum had acquired two works by H.P. Dahm (1787-1844), who is less well known in Denmark than his native Norway.

Like many similar painters, he had a personal connection with the navy, as the son of a captain and part-time lieutenant. Norwegian sources place him on *Prinds Christian Frederik* during the battle, but the inaccuracies of the drawings suggest that he may not have been, and overall, the work is dark and naïvely executed.

Also well-known is the 1901 romantic depiction of the death of Lieutenant Willemoes, a naval hero of the Battle of Copenhagen, done by Christian Mølsted (1862-1930). A smattering of smaller inkwash drawings and watercolours are held in Danish and Norwegian museums.

Other works
- A lovingly but not masterly executed watercolor by A.G. Gross, held at the Maritime Museum of Denmark
- An ink and wash drawing by HP Dahm (44.5 x 33.7cm), again held at the Norwegian Maritime Museum, with a typical explainer text at the bottom
- Another, much darker ink and wash drawing, also by HP Dahm, which show holes being blasted in the rigging
- A small, unsigned watercolor (38.5 x 18.5cm) held at the Norwegian Maritime Museum

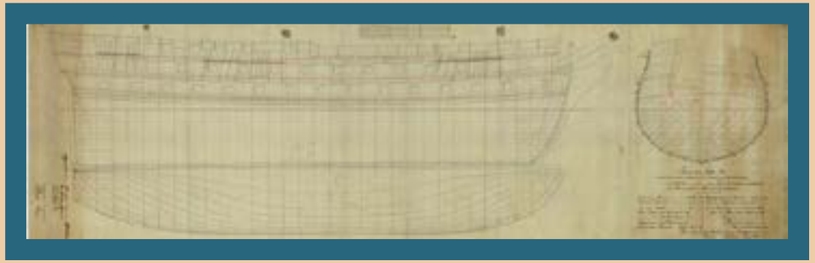
The Events of March 1808

1808.
Denmark is at war with Britain again.
The main fleet at Copenhagen has been seized or destroyed, but one ship of the line remains:
Prinds Christian Frederik, a modern ship of the line, which had been stationed in Norway during the attack.
Desperate to carry on its war effort, the government recalls it to Danish waters with a risky mission:
They must clear the Great Belt of British ships, to make way for troop transports to Zealand.

But tragedy ensues in the passing: Disease breaks out and a third of the crew must be exchanged at the last minute.
They press on, under the command of Captain C. W. Jessen, because the situation is dire: Denmark must prove to Napoleon that it is fit to carry on the war, worthy of France's support in the struggle with Sweden, who are plotting to dismantle the kingdom.

But *Prinds Christian Frederik* is spotted on its way down, and unknowingly falls into a trap laid in those cold waters by a British squadron three times its strength.

An original drawing for the "mass ship" line designed by Hohlenberg, measuring nearly more than 1.67 meters in length. These drawings inspired first the model makers, then the painting. Accessed via Orlogsbasen.dk.



Build-up to the battle

Ships of the age operated under technical restraints that can be difficult to imagine today. Guns had to be fired at point blank range to break through the thick oak sides of the ships. A heavier ship, shooting downward on the roll could best a smaller vessel in one-to-one combat. It was this concentration of force that made the ships of the line so deadly.

So, the Danish Captain Jessen pressed on, giving chase to the frigates in a game of cat and mouse, push and pull, played out across an open grave, as N.F.S. Grundtvig would later put it.
Seven local fishermen from Hornbæk had spotted the British ships of the line. The fishermen had attempted to reach the Danish ship with the message, but were unable to catch up.

Not knowing of the presence of the British ships of the line, and not knowing he had been spotted in his approach to Denmark, Capt. Jessen carried on his mission of flushing out British ships in the Belt.
As he was outnumbered, but far from outgunned:

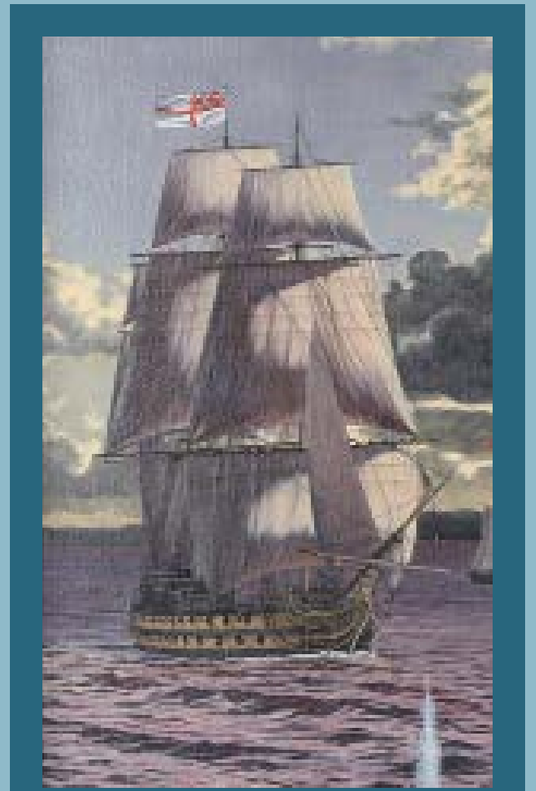
"I now saw that it was evidently the intention of the Enemy to run His Ship on shore, and as the Night was approaching he might hope, that in our pursuit of him in the dark, we would have the same fate."

Looking back to the painting, there's a drama just under the surface. These are the inner Danish waters, in March. There is no stormy drama. The weather is good; the waves hold their breath. But right underneath the waves, hidden sandbanks jut up ready to paw at ships, narrow waterways are safe but tricky to navigate, and the maps are often rudimentary.
It takes nerve and gut to sail these waters.

Fleets relied on pilots to guide them.
And the Danish captain's plan would have required exceptional seamanship: Jessen's gut instinct was to find a safe anchorage off the small island Nekselø, or to weave the ship between the tiny island of Sejrø and the much larger Zealand and down to the Great Belt, trusting the British would not follow him down that narrow passage.

But though the pilot, Peter Jacobsen Schmidt, was an experienced sailor, he wasn't familiar with these waters. He lost his nerve, and did not dare to guide the ship through the narrow gap south of the islet. It is said he demanded to be set ashore.

The three British ships of the line, which were anchored between Hornbæk and Høganæs, had been warned about Jessen's approach, and two of them, *Stately* (64 guns) and *Nassau* (formerly *Holsteen*, a Danish ship) also of 64 guns, set off in pursuit, while *Vanguard* held back to cut off Jessen's escape route.



A detail from the painting. Note the placement of the ensign at the top of the rigging, unlike the Prince's.

At no loss for honor

Now outnumbered and outgunned, Jessen convened a Council of War. He and his officers decided to use their greater knowledge of the local waters to slip past the reef off Zealand, which stretches ten kilometres into the Kattegat.
For 3.5 hours, they managed to keep abreast of the pursuing ships, hugging the reef as they went, but as evening neared, the wind shifted, forcing the Danes to alter their course. By 5, it cruelly dropped to a gentle breeze. Dead in the water, they would have to fight.
Jessen was forced to execute a fighting withdrawal to the relative safety of the fortress of Kronborg at Elsinore, intending to take his ship as close to the sandbanks as possible, hoping to lure the British close enough to shore that they would run aground The Danes would have no such luck.
Falcon and *Nassau's* logs record that at 7:50pm *Prinds Christian Frederik* fired the first shot. Around 7.30 in the evening, *Prinds Christian Frederik's* stern chasers — a small fraction of the ship's full battery, but enough to destroy rigging and harass the British pursuers — lit up the evening sky:

The hunt persisted.
Naval guns of the time had an effective range of less than 2000 meters, but combat was fought at as close a range as possible. 1000, 500, 100 meters — even so close that the enemy's muzzle gasses risked setting fire to its opponent's ship.

And on March 22, the ships came very close indeed. The Danish losses were far heavier than those of the British, which has puzzled Rye consistently throughout the process.
A digression into naval tactics can help clear this up. We know from both captains that the British ships saw their rigging and masts heavily damaged, whereas the Danish side suffered terrible losses of men.

Prinds Christian Frederik was a good gun platform, despite not being equipped with as heavy armament as the designer had originally envisioned, but naval gunnery during the age of sail had some clear limitations. For one, there was a very limited arc of fire. It took 8-10 men to man each gun, and it was far easier to aim the ship than the guns.

And because these ships bob up and down in the water — with less freeboard than in the in the beginning of the Age of Sail — the roll of the ship affects aiming as well.

It was British naval doctrine to fire the guns as the ship rolled downward toward the enemy, directing fire into the hull and at the crew, whereas many other navies, notably the French, preferred to fire on the upward roll, hitting rigging and sails, potentially disabling the attacking ship. *Prinds Christian Frederik* shares its fate with many that had the poor fortune of being unable to escape a superior force.

Drawing by C.W. Eckersberg, one of the most prominent Danish marine painters. "The ship of the line 'Prinds Kristian Frederik' launches."

End of the Battle

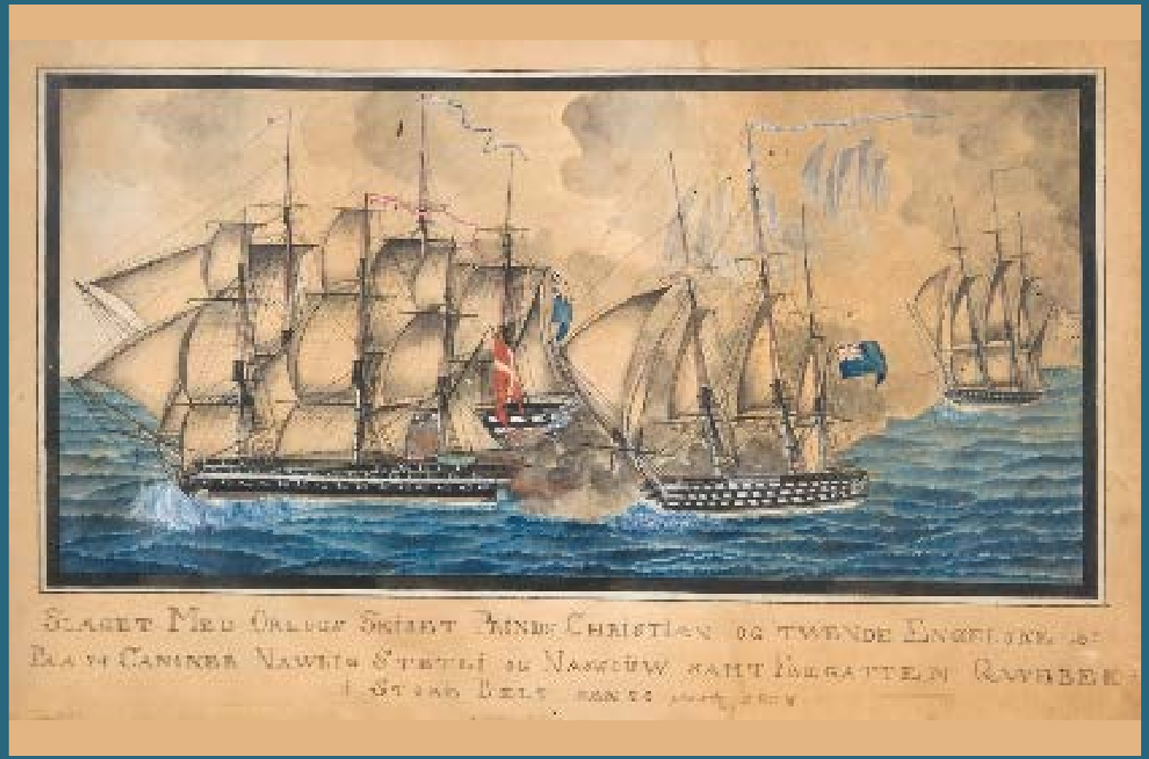
"This heavy attack from two sides lasted for more than 2½ hours. It was returned by us, with such a power, that I am sure it honours all my brave officers and men. Even under the so honourable Danish flag"

- Capt. Jessen, the Danish commander.

The wind was blowing the ships toward shore, and on land, Danish artillery was beginning to assemble. Instead, the British set the *Prinds Christian Frederik* ablaze, and on the night of the 23rd, it exploded. The wreck sank into the sea around 300 meters from the coast, where a marker has been erected.

As the British Captain Parker put it, "a running fight was now maintained for a considerable Time, the Enemy fighting with great obstinacy, until we succeeded in getting very near, and gave some close Broadsides, on which he surrendered, struck his flag, about half past 9 P.M."

Parker continues, "At this moment the ships were within two cables'
length of the shore of Zealand; and before my first Lieutenant, who took possession of the Danish ship, could cut away her anchor, she grounded."
The British were unable to secure the Danish ship, but spent the remainder of the night removing prisoners, including H. P. Dahm, to be transported back to England.



A Norwegian watercolor painting, typical of popular representations.
Unsigned and with a characteristic long-form caption.
Item NSM.K01241 at the Norwegian Maritime Museum.

Aftermath

"It is with much satisfaction I have to acquaint you with the capture & destruction of the Danish ship of the Line Prince Christian Frederick of 74 guns"

- Capt. Parker

Stately had four men killed, and 31 officers and men wounded. *Nassau* lost one man killed, 17 officers and men wounded, and one man missing. *Prinds Christian Frederik* lost 55 men killed and 88 men wounded, which Parker described as "a loss sufficient to prove, that her commander did not surrender his ship earlier than was consistent with the honour of the Danish flag."

Parker later reported back to the Admiralty that they received "considerable Damage in our Masts and Rigging," but that their losses are 'trifling' compared to those of the enemy.

The loss of the ship was reported with proud fatalism in the Danish newspapers in the following days. "A battle against a superior force of two ships of the line and three frigates will in one way always have a lamentable outcome, and yet be highly honourable to the flag. Denmark now found itself entirely robbed of a navy and without the means to create a new one, lacking the timber, funds, iron and men. *Prinds Christian Frederik*'s loss put an end to the kingdom's ability to wage war on the high seas during the Napoleonic Wars.

What followed was a seven-year guerrilla campaign — the Gunboat War — fought from the narrows and fjords against an overwhelming Royal Navy presence, in a vain attempt at keeping Denmark-Norway in good standing with its then ally, France. The hope had been to strengthen the monarchy's bargaining position, but neither lone men of war nor massed gunboats could prevent the fall of Napoleon, which would ultimately lead to catastrophe.

In the subsequent peace, Denmark lost Norway, the northern half of the realm, and with it the source of its shipbuilding timber and two-thirds of its sailors. It would be decades until Denmark was able to rebuild its fleet, and by then, the Age of Sail was coming to an end.

While not as celebrated as the frigate *Jylland* (1857), *Prinds Christian Frederik* has nevertheless been widely commemorated. A monument was erected in 1809/1810 with a poem by J.F.S. Grundtvig, with further addition in 1883 of a granite stele dedicated to Lieutenant Willemoes, which was donated by the Danish Naval Lieutenants' Association, which also donated a votive ship model of Prinds Christian Frederik in 1915. It can still be seen to this day.

Text reads: "The ship of the line "*Prinds Christian Frederik*" sank 300m directly from this stone after a courageous battle against a superior force on March 22, 1808."

Creation of the painting

Finn Knudsen's model of Prinds Christian Frederik as exhibited at the Danish War Museum alongside H.P. Dahm's gouache painting.

Research

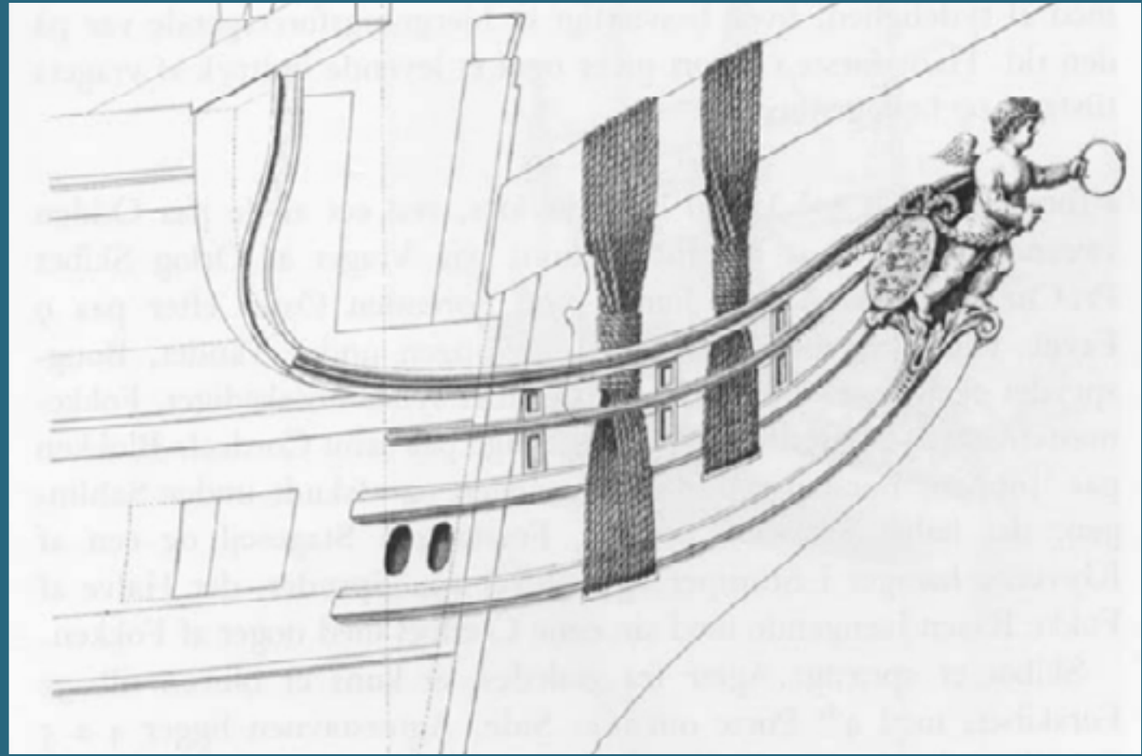
Like most realist painters since the mid-19th century, Rye bases his paintings on photographic examples. Working with a professional photographer, he builds out the basis of the painting.

In Rye's realist style, photographs are in many ways analogous to the notes of a classical musical composition. They do not make the performance, but they underpin it.

With *Prinds Christian Frederik*, of course, there were no photographers present during the battle itself, although there were eyewitnesses. He had to look elsewhere for materials and models, and it would become a quest involving archives, experiments, interviews and academic discussion. It took detective work to find materials he could work from, piecing together pictures, texts, snippets and facts into not just an accurate description, but an accurate painting.

On a very practical level, lighting seemed to be the main challenge. While many of the ship's plans had been preserved in the archive — huge, scroll-like drawings on fading paper — Rye's technique requires realistically lit models that would match the composition. He needed more than just design or side-view drawings.
Rye quickly realized that to achieve an authentic rendering, he would need more than even a working model. At this point onward, Rye contacted the Navy Model Ship Guild, who proved to be dedicated, extremely knowledgeable and at times challenging sparring partners throughout the process.

In September 2018, Rye was given permission to photograph a 1:48 model of the *Prinds Christian Frederik*, but gaining access to the model was challenging in itself.
Ultimately, they had to seek permission from the head of the Danish National Museum.



The Prince Himself, later King, adorned the ship as a figurehead.
Original drawing reproduced in Helge 1993

The Naval Model Makers

"They really do everything. Casting cannons, hammering copper lining under the keel of the ships. I was dumbstruck when I saw how detailed their approach was."

– Mads Rye

Finally, one night, after closing hours, toward the end of the season, Rye and his designated photographer were able to make their way into the museum and set up lighting and screens while a security guard hovered nearby until he was satisfied that they were not going to steal the model. That was one ship; there were still four to go.

Through multiple visits, the modelmakers have weighed on in aspects from the height of the waves, the precise state of the rigging at the time of battle, and choice of battle ensign. This unique collaboration was possible thanks to a 7-year project that had relatively recently been concluded by model maker Finn Knudsen and Poul H. Beck, who was responsible for research and rigging.

Beck provided Rye with a densely typed, multipage guide to all of the different ships, showing dimensions, gun ratings and sizes, which was tacked to his drawing board alongside model drawings so as never to be out of hand.

Unlike many earlier ship designs, the Prinds Christian Frederik was built to a standardized and well-documented design by F.C.H Hohlenberg, who has left a series of large drawings, some up to 1.67m by 51cm, which have been preserved in the Naval Museum Archive.

Knudsen, a seasoned ship modeler, had been asked to build a model of *Prinds Christian Frederik* to coincide with the bicentennial commemorations of the bombing of Copenhagen and loss of the fleet.

Although these models were too flat to be of much use to a painter, these intricate line drawings of the structure of the ship, as well detailed drawings of its interiors and equipment, in addition to drawings of its sails, rigging and ornaments, enabled the construction of a remarkably accurate model.

Gaps were filled with inspiration from contemporary manuals, and by referring to an existing contemporary model of a sister ship's rigging.

Indeed, model ships had often been made during the Age of Sail before construction commenced on larger ship projects — it is a historical craft of its own, supporting education, building and commemoration of shipbuilding.

The artist, Mads Rye, during one of his countless visits to the historically accurate model of *Prinds Christian Frederik* at the Danish War Museum in Copenhagen.

Creation of the painting

Style and composition

Striking a balance between realism and storytelling was the main challenge. In his approach, Rye draws on two somewhat distinct traditions of maritime art, marine painting and ship portraiture.
Maritime themes in art appear in antiquity, but it was not until the Renaissance that maritime art as such begins to emerge as a distinct sub-tradition. In the medieval and Renaissance period, European painting often features ships and the sea, but as incidental elements of other battles or landscapes.

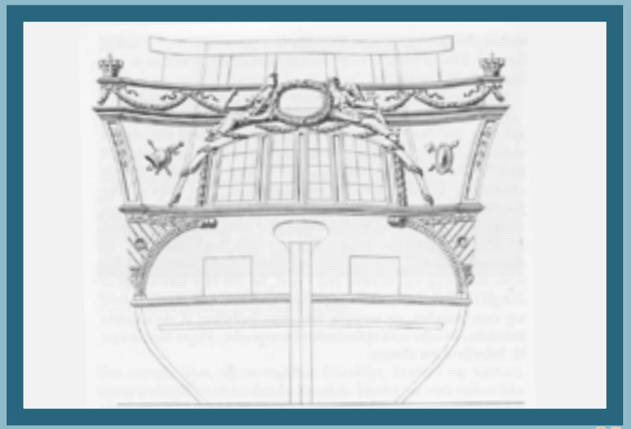
It is in many ways the Dutch masters who shaped the tradition of marine painting, even as it grew and matured from the 17th and 18th century, changing from mere documentation and ornament to what modern audiences would consider expressive art. Compositions become freer and more dramatic; as artists like J.M.W. Turner increasingly focus on conveying the mood or emotion of a scene, even at the expense of its legibility as a historical event.

On the other end of the spectrum, we find ship portraiture, which differs from other maritime art in that it always depicts a specific, named ship. These images comprise a body of work that spans hundreds of years, deeply entwined with naval drawing, architecture and modelmaking. This craft, a sort of applied art, is rooted in maritime circles, the navy and merchant fleet.

Marine painting differs from ship portraiture in that it more strongly emphasizes context, action and setting, even if the ship takes centre-stage. However, the two genres of maritime art cannot always be sharply separated, and there is an increasing appreciation today for maritime art as a whole.

These paintings are not just of interest as works of art, created by skilled painters, but as historical sources. Even today, marine paintings in maritime museums are often not captioned or explained as art, but dealt with purely as historical documents.

The painters often did not see themselves as artists, but as skilled craftsmen who made their works to commission. Because ship portraits were commissioned by patrons with deep personal investment and knowledge in the topic, accuracy was of the essence and they were often captioned in great detail to rule out any ambiguity.



Detail of the transom, drawings as used by later builders, painters and modelmakers. Reproduced from the original, which is held at the Danish National Archive.

Setting the scene

Rye's painting was first pieced together digitally as a collage, using found imagery to get the perspective and composition right. This required examining the archives and stories of the battle to find possible vantage points and determine which vessels would have been visible from these locations.

In this case, the composition is compressed to allow more of the combatant ships to be depicted – a common technique in historical painting.
The ultimate composition captures much of the story of the battle. As Rye put it, "We should almost worry if it is going to hit us! I wanted it right in our faces. For us to be there, to be right there."

Another compromise was the timing of our depiction. This was, after all, an evening battle, which was itself unusual. By 8 o'clock on a March 22, it would be dark. In the final edition, we have a dusk scene, and the design of the sky and the clouds show a darkening in the direction of travel, suggesting a setting sun.

"Detail of the painting before completion. Note the warm tone of the base, which is in line with the historical tradition, and the traced outline of the bow."

The Painting Process

Once time comes to transfer the collage to oil, Rye lays a base of optical grey, a warm ombre colour that was used in the Renaissance before the bright white canvases we know today became popular under Impressionism.
After surfacing, the painting is divided into squares to allow the motif to be multiplied and to maintain perspective and composition. With paintings of this size and complexity, control is as important as execution.

Rye has chosen a restricted, conservative palette for the landscape itself. Balancing clarity with the darkness of a night-time setting has been a challenge throughout. Compared to his earlier works, this has a more muted, controlled palette. The sky and clouds, for instance, were made using just three base colours.

Rye painted painstakingly from the outward in, starting from the most remote figures in the background - the clouds and the horizons - and finishing with the detail work on the main ship.

As a self-taught painter, Rye strives to be unusually open about his methods and materials. He speaks openly about the challenges and even frustration of working in the historical European realist tradition.

Overall, these are the hallmarks of a later piece by Rye. Earlier in his career, his expression was very polished, edges very sharply drawn and colours evened out. “In my younger days,” he says, “I did not want the individual brushstrokes to be visible. But at some point, I realized it was silly — it was taking the life out of the image, taking away its painterly quality.”

Satisfaction is also derived from this discovery process. Rye imagines himself sitting with exactly the same conundrum as an Italian master would have found himself in four hundred years ago.

The idea was never to create a painting that looked old-fashioned, but to further a tradition that existed for hundreds of years. There is no aging, for one, so even his controlled palette has rendered a painting that is brighter and fresher than what we associate with historical imagery as they are seen in museums today.

On top of the grid, he traces a gentle outline of the motif with an erasable colour pencil. And once more, he applies a burned ombre colour with a thin brush to retrace his sketch.
The sketch itself is a water-soluble. If he leans an arm against the drawing, the faint outline of the motif will vanish.

Copies

Three official high-quality oil paint copies of the original painting were also made, under the supervision of and signed by the artist (Mads Rye) for use in various historical and private exhibitions.

Another detail:
Note the fine linework and tension in the fabric.

Striking a mood

In Rye's paintings, the story you imagine, its context and the subtleties that are hinted at, form what he refers to as a superstructure that emerges from the structure of the painting itself.

In this case, the challenge was to convey the gravity of battle. The overall effect created has been tension rather than clashing drama, but the beauty of the ship and sky easily gloss over how frightful it would have been.

He cannot draw the tension of battle directly, nor can he draw what would have been the most significant expression of the battle, its thunderous booms. Afterall, "a painting doesn't have a soundtrack." Instead, the clouds, which are a favourite motif of his, carry the heavy lifting.

"To the right, a detail of the ships in pursuit. Note how close the gunports are to the surface of the water, the warm glow from within the ship, and the textures of the cloth and rigging.
The anchor, to the far right of the image, has been recovered from the wreck and can be seen in Odden today."

Title: “De snekker mødtes i kvæld på hav / og luften begyndte at gløde”
Dimensions: 110x150cm.
Oil on canvas (Belgian linen).
Painted by: Mads Rye
Commissioned by: Niklas Nikolajsen
Begun: September 2018
Completed: October 9, 2019 (211 years, 6 months and 16 days after the sinking).

1/ Sky and Clouds

"The clouds were very important to me. I have chosen to paint them to create a sense of drama," Rye explains. Clouds are indeed a frequent theme in his work, the most obvious personal touch of his in a piece full of thousands of his touches. He draws heavy inspiration from observations at the tiny island of Orø and Isefjord, where the painter has a summer
house.
The sun has set, it is dusk, but we still get the light coming through the clouds and playing off the waves. As Rye said, "We almost went out on a boat to catch the light, but we would have been out there for days before find the right conditions."

2/ Ocean

Weather charts were consulted. As the sea was calm that night, and the waves in the internal Danish waters are not violent, the painting has a relatively smooth, reflective surface – a cold, dark, glossy sea, as a background to the black and white ships themselves. "The challenge of the water is to capture the movement, the shimmering," Rye said. They have been painted with minute movements over the course of months.

3/ Prinds Christian Frederik

A/ Rigging

As we see find the ship now, the ship is preparing for battle. The sails are raised, as they are on the British ships.
The mainsails would have been doused with water.
When the order "klart skib!" was given, you had to get the sails up. With cannon fire, even the slightest upwind could blow sparks and set fire to the rigging. This was a major point of contention in the design of the painting. "Two of the model builders did not believe the two top sails would have been up. Others disagreed, but finally, we had to settle on a traditional depiction – to really show the scale of the rigging."
Painting the rigging was a major
challenge. Rye had to return to the old masters, who did not leave many notes: The linework could not be entirely straight, because gravity will give a slight curvature. Technically, you cannot use a ruler since the colours would seep and fray at the edge. Slowly, he found a technique to convey the right slack, after hours of experimentation.

B/ Armament

Gun ports are open, and ready. *Prinds Christian Frederik* had been designed for a slightly heavier armament than she was equipped with on the night of the battle, but she was still a fearsome vessel.

C/ Decoration of the ship

The decorations of the ship are sparse, mostly consisting of a painted line along the length of the hull, a figurehead, and
some simple linework. Even this work was a challenge to deliver, as sources differ on how the ship would have been
painted. The model in Odden Church, created in 1915, has two white stripes, which was common for ships of the line. But later research revealed a contemporary drawing, so we know there was only one stripe. The ship's figurehead reflects the name of the ship: a gilded carving of Prince Christian Frederik, the later king Christian VIII

D/ Crew

We see 19 of the ship's then 576 men, both officers and enlisted men, Danes and Norwegians. A handful are climbing the rigging to stand on the platform between the sails. Perched here, they would be ready to fire muskets at the enemy crew, in particular the enemy officers, which would have been incredibly dangerous, but meant to inspire the troops.
Many, such as Lieutenant Peter Willemoes, a celebrated war hero, would pay the ultimate price for this bravado. Others are scouting the situation, while a detachment of soldiers are filed up along the gunwale. Many were recent recruits, as 200 of the ship's had been exchanged just days before because of an outbreak of sickness on the passing down from Norway.
Note especially the mix of blue and red uniforms: the flashes of white we see are the tails of the coats, which were folded up during combat to allow greater freedom of movement.

As a ship of the union fleet, *Prinds Christian Frederik* was carried a detail of Norwegian sharpshooters, who were red uniforms, in addition to the Danish crew in blue. Historian and PhD Karsten Skjold Petersen of the National Museum had been consulted to advise on the colour and composition of the uniforms.

4/ HMS Nassau, *formerly HDMS Holsteen*

The *Nassau*, a 60-gun ship of the line built by Frantz Hohlenberg's predecessor, M. Krabbe, launched in 1772. Originally a Danish ship, she was seized by the British after the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801. She returned to harrow Danish waters with heavier guns as well as further armament at the forecastle and quarterdeck and ironically participated in the sinking of the last Danish ship-of-the-line

5/ HMS Stately

A 64-gun Ardent-class ship of the line, designed by Sir Thomas Slide. This class includes the *HMS Agamemnon*, which had been commanded and much loved by Lord Nelson.

6/ HMS Quebec

With 32 guns and a complement of 250, Quebec was a lighter ship meant to operate on its own, capturing merchantmen and chasing down privateers. Spotted and chased by *Prinds Christian Frederik* on its mission to deliver 200,000 pounds Sterling to the Swedes, it was ultimately the ship that doomed the *Prinds Christian Frederik*.

7/ HMS Falcon

14-gun sloop, complement of 75, also been raiding and seizing ships in Denmark before. On 22 March 1808 Falcon was among the smaller British warships at the battle of Zealand Point. She watched from a safe distance and recorded the course of the battle in her logbook.

Present at the battle, but not depicted:

HMS Vanguard (1787)
A 74-gun Arrogant-class ship of the line, which had taken part in the Battle of the Nile. The Arrogant class was a class of twelve ships designed by Sir Thomas Slade. At the time of the battle, she lay waiting off the coast of Zealand to prevent the *Prinds Christian Frederik*'s escape to Copenhagen.

HMS Lynx (1794)
HMS Lynx was a 16-gun ship-rigged sloop of the Cormorant-class in the Royal Navy, launched in 1794 at Gravesend. She had been at the Battle of Copenhagen, and ultimately ended up as a whaling ship.

Painter; Mads Rye

B. 1956, Denmark

Mads Rye began his career as an artist in earnest in the summer of 1997, but had painted intermittently since 1992. He began his career as a designer for the Danish toymaker LEGO before his career as a painter kicked off in the late 1990s with a series of prominent exhibitions, including the Charlottenborg Spring Exhibition, Den Frie Autumn Exhibition and Sophienholm.

Today, he is most widely known for his portraits, and has in the last few years completed works for both private and corporate clients in Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Japan and the USA. He works out of two studios in the Copenhagen area.
In 2017, his work was the subject of a retrospective exhibition at the Museum of National History at Frederiksborg Castle. In this connection, he was offered a position of guest professor at the Beijing Art Academy.
His style is figurative and realist, drawing on the meticulous reconstruction of the techniques used by the old masters in their workshops.

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The Danish Naval Museum Ship Modelers Guild

DE SNEHVER MODTES I KVELD PAA HAV
OG LUFTEN BEGYNDTE AT GLØDE
DE LEGED ALT OVER DEN AABNE GRAV
OG BOLGERNE GIORDES SAA RØDE

HER ER JEG SAT TIL EN RAUTASTEEN
AT VIDNE FOR SLÆGTER I NORDEN
DANSKE DE VARE HVIS MORE BEEN
UNDER MIG SMULDRE I JORDEN
DANSKE AF TUNGE AF ÆT OG AF ID
THI SKAL DE NÆVNES I LØBENDE TID
FÆDRENES VÆRDIGE SØNNER