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Exhibition: Gemstone-set jewelry inspired by Karen Blixen

Karen Blixen told in silver, pearls and diamonds
A special exhibition – Silver Tales

Currently on display until April 30, 2023 at the [Karen Blixen Museum](#) in Rungstedlund, Denmark, “Silver Tales,” the exhibition, addresses elements of Karen Blixen’s life, appearance and literary work envisioned into jewelry and hollow ware made of silver – the precious metal that the Danish jewelry business has been particularly enamored with since the beginning of the 20th century.

Goldsmiths, silversmiths and jewelry designers show 42 works inspired by one of Karen Blixen’s stories, a Karen Blixen portrait or an object from the museum’s collection.



Who is Karen Blixen

Karen Blixen (1885-1962) is one of Denmark's major literary figures. Blixen's reputation was established initially in the United States with the publication of *Seven Gothic Tales* in 1934. After the publication of her own Danish version the following year, her fame as a storyteller quickly spread throughout the world. Her most famous tales include **Out of Africa** and **Babette's Feast**, both of which became Academy Award-winning films, *Seven Gothic Tales*, *Winter's Tales*, *The Angelic Avengers*, *Last Tales*, *Anecdotes of Destiny*, and *Shadows in the Grass*.

Jewelry as symbols were used by Karen Blixen in several of her gothic tales and wings and birds were frequently written into the tales as mood indicators, expression of dreams and character descriptions. The fact that Blixen clearly had knowledge of both jewelry and birds is read throughout her body of works.

Jewelry Artists' Inspiration

Mainly Danish jewelry artists have been invited by curator Nina Hald in collaboration with the Karen Blixen Museum to express Karen Blixen and her universe in a piece of jewelry. Each artist has been allotted a motif, an inspirational challenge, in the form of either a portrait of Karen Blixen seen with a piece of jewelry, a tale or quote by Karen Blixen, a bird found in Karen Blixen's literary work or an original object from the Baroness' collection at the Karen Blixen Museum. The jewelry is made of silver, cultured pearls or colorless diamonds, corresponding to the jewelry preferred by Karen Blixen.

Karen Blixen's own jewelry box was limited, and the jewelry she wore throughout her life had a special story rooted in love and friendship. Jewelry appears in several of Karen Blixen's stories and is linked there to experiences of loss and sensuality, to art and eternity.

The exhibition is shown in five sections, each based on such a story by Karen Blixen. It is *A Story of a Pearl*, *The Ring*, *The Immortal Story*, *The Diver* and *Ghost Horses*.

Curator Nina Hald

Nina Hald – master of arts from University of Copenhagen in 2002. Arranger and curator of eight exhibitions; four royal exhibitions, four non-royal exhibitions, at various museums and institutions in Denmark for the past thirteen years. Contributing writer to additional three exhibitions' catalogues. Author of 12 books since 2008.



*In the image above –
Anette Wille, Sidona*

Title: Pierrot, 2022, Photographer: Mousefoto

Materials used: Sterling silver and oxidized sterling silver, 40 brilliant-cut diamonds (total 0.2 carat), two baroque freshwater cultured pearls (15 x 18 mm), four half-round freshwater cultured pearls (3 x 3.5 mm) and two round freshwater cultured pearls (2 mm in diameter)

*dauf & pede
Title: A G-ABAK, 2022*

Materials used: Sterling silver

Ruben Black

Title: Broken dreams/Knuste drøme, 2022, Photographer: Iben Kaufmann

Materials used: Sterling silver, Akoya cultured pearls and diamonds

Karin Castens, Castens

Title: Cloche, 2022

Materials used: Sterling silver, total 19.2 carat faceted rock crystal drops, freshwater cultured pearls (from 6.4 – 9.2 mm in diameter) and a white satin cord

Maria Wulff, Maria Wulff Jewelry

Title: Towards the dream, 2022, Photographer: Morten Knudsen

Materials used: Moonstone necklace, fair trade sterling silver, a 5.66 carat oval-cut moonstone cabochon, a 12.4 carat Ethiopian opal, a total of 1.05 carats of zircons and a freshwater cultured pearl

The Karen Blixen Museum

At the Karen Blixen Museum this fascinating writer's home is unchanged since she lived here, and the original furniture still remains in the north wing of the house, together with several items brought back from Africa. The vases are always full of freshly cut flowers, just as Karen Blixen herself liked to welcome guests. The writer's home is surrounded by the garden and wood lands, which are always open to the public, free of charge, and comprise the protected bird sanctuary, a large bio diversity of plants and wild life, and at the far end Karen Blixen's grave.