

Editorial

THE IDEA OF A FESTSCHRIFT

Sometime in early 2013, three people got together (first on the email, later also in the flesh) with the idea of doing a Festschrift for Per Aage Brandt, on the occasion of his completing the sixth decade of an enormously productive life. Per Aage was someone they all three had a special relationship to: either as a colleague, a friend, a co-author, a co-worker, a source of inspiration (or even of life itself), and/or all of the above.

And thus it came about that on March 13, 2013, Bent Rosenbaum, Line Brandt and Jacob Mey found themselves deciding on the initial necessary steps to be taken towards realizing the plan. This included, first of all, locating a willing publisher; here, the early efforts were not too promising – the market for 'a bit out of the ordinary' books, especially for Festschriften, not exactly being of the bullish category. However, when the idea was broached to the Committee on Publications of the Department of Language and Communication, University of Southern Denmark, things started to look up. And when the Chair of the Department, Steffen Nordahl Lund, who also happened to be an old student of Per Aage's, decided to throw his weight behind the plan, the idea eventually took a giant step toward becoming reality.

The *modus operandi* of this realization was deceptively simple: one could incorporate the Festschrift as a regular issue of the semi-annual

journal RASK, published by the University of Southern Denmark under the aegis of the Publications Committee, and supported by a subvention from the University. But the next step was more complicated, as it involved securing the needed 'coalition of the willing', in this case a sufficient number of potential contributors. To this end we emailed invitations to people we knew had some connection to Per Aage in his multifarious activities and ways of life. The initial list comprised about one hundred names from all segments of society, both nationally and internationally, and in the end we succeeded in securing contributions from roughly one third of them: they were writers, poets, scientists, philosophers, literary theoreticians, musicians, painters, and sculptors, each and all sharing generously of their many successful endeavors to make our world a more beautiful, more intelligible, more inspiring, and not least more fun, place to be – entirely in the spirit of the festschriftee and in accordance with his inimitable work ethos.

Per Aage Brandt's many interests in life, love, the letters, art, music, and science are reflected in the variety of the contributions found in the present volume. Not only are represented here the usual scholarly articles (about half of the works deserve this epithet), but a great number of the remaining pieces deal with life in many artful and artistic ways: there are poems, paintings, songs, sculptures, and personal remembrances – all converging towards a portrait of the festschriftee as young of mind and heart, despite the many years.

That this ideal became possible to realize is not least due to the relentless efforts of the RASK support team, who took care of the layout, the pre-, and publication stages, but also thanks to the incredible assistance the editors received from the individual contributors, who lent their expertise and inventiveness to create a truly memorable bundle of 'hommages' – not to forget the four-footed helpers whose little 'ode' opens the volume; to all of you, the editors say a heart-

felt thanks. We hope that the present collection will be more than a moment's effusion: may it be instrumental in marking an event whose time not only has come, but also will last, if not forever, at least 'ad multos annos'!

Odense, April 2014

Alexandra Holsting & Jacob Mey

