

Malene Lytken

## Danish Lights — 1920 to Now

**Publication date:** 1 December

**Size:** 272 pages, richly illustrated.

**Price:** DKK 349.95

**Publisher:** Strandberg Publishing  
Also available in a Danish edition

### The first comprehensive account of Danish lamp design

In Denmark, the longest night of the year lasts 17 hours. No wonder lighting is so important in Denmark – not least as a key ingredient of *hygge*. But what is good lighting?

Many Danish designers have created lamps, and *Danish Lights – 1920 to Now* presents lamps by internationally acclaimed designers such as Poul Henningsen, Arne Jacobsen, Piet Hein, Kaare Klint, Verner Panton, Finn Juhl, Hans J. Wegner, Olafur Eliasson, Louise Campbell and Cecilie Manz. In many cases, however, the lamps are actually better known than the designers who made them. This would include, for example the Ball lamp (Benny Frandsen), the Louisiana pendant (Jørgen Bo and Vilhelm Wohlert), the Albertslund Post (Jens Møller-Jensen) and the LED candle (Stig Gerlach).

In text and images the book describes the development of lighting design from the earliest oil and gas lamps to the game-changing innovation of the incandescent light bulbs to the increasingly widespread use of LEDs. The first of the 100 lamp stories look at Poul Henningsen's iconic PH lamps and his lifelong endeavour to create a design that shields the light source to prevent glare and produce pleasant illumination. Danish lamp design is not just about form. The defining quality of Danish lighting culture is the close link between lighting and *hygge*.

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A central aspect of *Danish Lights – 1920 to Now* is the author's inclusion of the designers' own words about the thoughts on light and design that guided the design of the individual lamps: Stig Gerlach's redesign of Christmas string lights to match modern home interiors around the year by replacing the green cord with a white one and using LEDs instead of incandescent light bulbs; Maria Berntsen's inclusion of a USB outlet in her table and bedside lamp Stay so it could charge a mobile phone; Peter Bysted's addition of a soft rubber top to his bollard lamp Rubbie so it could double as a seat during the day; and Olafur Eliasson and Frederik Ottesen's use of solar power in Little Sun and Little Sun Diamond as a way to provide affordable lighting to people living without access to electricity.

Today, vintage lamps fetch high prices, historical models are being relaunched as design icons, and the Danish lighting design has a strong position abroad. *Danish Lights – 1920 to Now* offers the first in-depth introduction to the history of Danish lighting design.

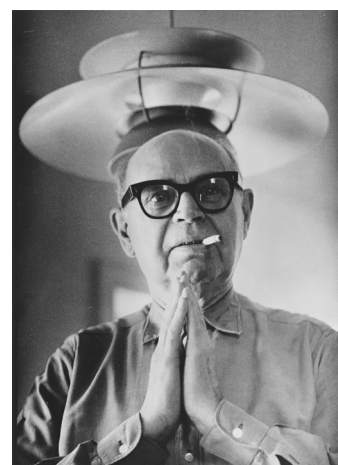
#### About the author

Malene Lytken (b. 1967) trained as a designer at the art academy École Nationale des Beaux-Arts de Lyon and subsequently earned an MA in art and design history at the University of Copenhagen. Among other engagements, she has taught at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design, where she also earned a PhD for the dissertation *Lys og Lamper til de Danske Hjem. Sagkundskabens Formidling af en Formålstjenlig Kunstbelysning* (Candles and Lamps in Danish Homes. The Experts' Views on Serviceable Lighting) (2016).

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Poul Henningsen



Bent Karby, 1946



Poul Henningsen, 1958



Lars Eiler Schiøler, 1960



Verner Panton, 1968



Cecilie Manz, 2005



Norm Architects, 2016



Olafur Eliasson, 2019