

The Pleasures of Tivoli

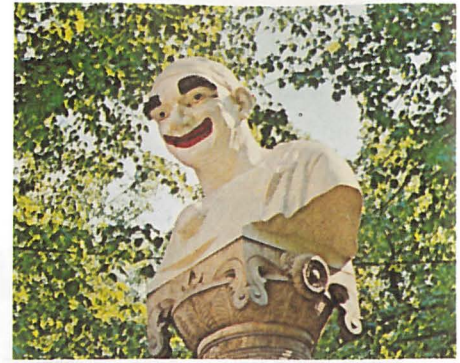
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Something for everyone is one of the more frequently heard battle cries of the entertainment publicist. I have myself used it to sell an ill-assorted bag of miscellaneous performances, none of which would have remotely appealed to my own reasonably catholic tastes if I had been in the position of buyer rather than seller. But there *is* something at TIVOLI for everyone. The Tivoli's own literature does not use the phrase and Copenhagen's guide books do not need to fall back upon it. *Magic* and *unique* are the sort of words that these travel books use, and I am happy to concur. An American journalist found that the Danes have a word for it: *hyggelig*, roughly translatable as *cosy*, and I like it. However, I squirm at *Copenhagen's Danish Pastry*, a gruesome example of the sub-editor's art that attempts to conceal art.

Another phrase that I dislike is *Arts and Entertainment*: it implies that the two are different. I have never been able to under-

stand that difference. Tivoli is full of arts and it is certainly full of entertainment. But above all it is full of *style*. I defy even the most pedantic hair splitter to categorise the myriad of *experiences* that comprise a walk through the Tivoli gardens.

These experiences can include music of all kinds (classical, folk, jazz, pop, rock, brass, the lot), revue, variety, ballet, children's theatre, and a pantomime that is almost certainly the most genuine *com-media dell'arte* that can now be seen anywhere in the world. Plus some two dozen eating and drinking establishments covering the whole spectrum of gastronomy. Many are the varieties of Merry-go-Round and Rollercoaster – something to suit all stomachs, something to excite all nerves. Fountains to calm, flowers to admire. All pulled together at dusk by massed light bulbs into an experience whose ambience fully justifies such worn adjectives as *magic* and *unique*.



Niels Henrik Volkersen, Tivoli's famous 19th-century pierrot who still watches every performance.

Tivoli opened on 15th August 1843. The 25-acre site, just outside the city walls, was until then part of Copenhagen's fortifications. Indeed the lake is said to be a residual part of the original town moat and the zig-zag avenues to follow the lines of the old bastions. The lease was signed on May 29, a company set up on June 8th and the site completed for that August 15th opening. The entrepreneur who succeeded in getting Royal consent and making Tivoli "happen" within such an incredibly short time was Georg Cartensen. Students of the elusive chemistry of that animal whom it is now fashionable to call 'Arts Administrator' may be interested to know that Cartensen was a Danish diplomat's son, early childhood in Algiers, law student, army lieutenant, editor in Paris, publisher in Philadelphia.

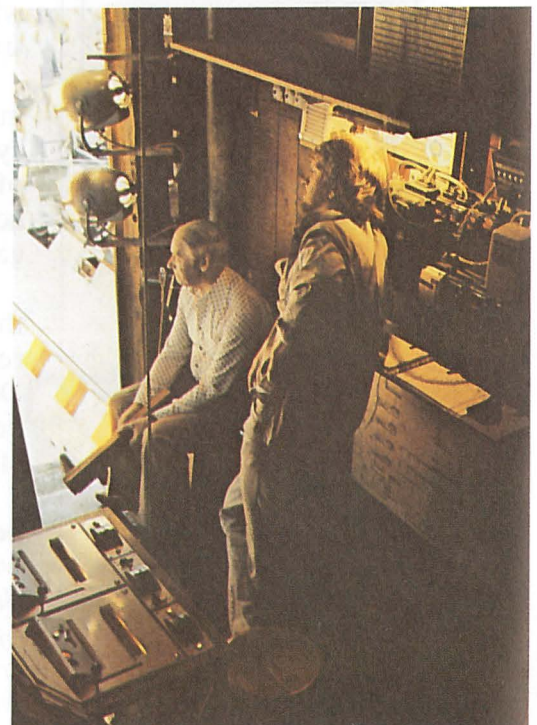
The speed of the original construction is partly explained by the use of light building materials including a lot of timber and canvas: the military authorities stipulated that it must be possible to clear the site quickly



The fantail of the peacock curtain opens to reveal the painted drapery of the act drop.



The Pantomime Theatre (1874)



Prompt corner at the Pantomime Theatre. Sound effects by traditional slapstick, but thyristor controlled lighting memorised on punched cards.