

Happy new year from the polar bears at Paris



Dear [FIRST NAME]

We wish you a happy new year. We hope it will bring you much joy and little sorrow. And thank you for still wanting to hear about the art projects, that we produce at Gallery Galschiot in Denmark.

We finished the year in Paris with a lot of climate-art in connection to COP21 - the important climate summit. Here we exhibited the big Unbearable (impaled Polar Bear) sculpture in the middle of Paris and we brought a small polar bear “army” with us. The demonstrations were forbidden, so we acquired ten 2,5 meters high polar bear costumes, and made a number of small happenings here and there, walking around like “ordinary” polar bear tourists in Paris. At the same time we handed out over 10.000 COP21 posters. We were 17 employees and volunteers in Paris and we had an amazing time.

The polar bear army got load of attention and almost became climate heroes in Paris and in the press. The whole art happening culminated when the NGO’s and the polar bear army, got the permission to make the demonstration. The police simply gave up stopping us J, but then again there weren’t any reason for this, since we were peaceful demonstrators who wanted to demonstrate our concerns for the climate.

Check out this film about our activities (unfortunately its in Danish, but there are many good nonverbal pieces) [from the end of our journey in Paris](#) made by Niller Madsen, who also made 3 other good documentary movies from the 14 days we were at Paris. See: [Unbearable exhibition](#); video poem about the refugees and [Statue of liberty at NGO festival](#) as well as a short movie on [how to treat the polar bears visiting the official Cop21](#).

We received a lot of press attention and all the polar bears were frequently interviewed. Even The Guardian, New York Times and the Independent participated. We've put a [small selection](#) on the internet. You can also look at the [cool photos](#) from Paris.

When I look back at 2015, I have to admit, that we've had a fantastic and very productive year. 3 huge art projects: The sculpture "Fundamentalism", "550+1" and finally the "Unbearable" in Paris. These sculptures were launched from our workshop and in the years to come they will find their own life in their own context, where they will be exhibited and create dialogue, amazement and maybe new acknowledgements. I am quite unsure whether art can make the world a better place, but it is definitely worth a try.

It hasn't been an easy year, but by joint forces we swept nearly all the problems aside and managed to get through with almost everything we had planned – and one should not complain because one meets a little resistance, so I won't.

Below I have a summed up the past year with descriptions of some of our studio workshop activities in 2015. I will also take the opportunity to thank the people that has supported us, and my colleagues and volunteers, who has made all this possible.

WITH GREETINGS AND WISHES FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jens Galschiot

Galschiot's discription of the last years art projects:

January:

We started of the year ending a fundraising sale, in which we collected almost 539.653 DKK (90.000\$US). Making it possible to finish the dialogue and art project "the Children of Abraham" with the giant sculpture "Fundamentalism", which we had been working on for over 5 years.

The Children of Abraham exhibition, which focuses on the monotheistic religions, was launched on January 17th at Art Centre "Silkeborg Bad" in Denmark. To put up the exhibition we had to use several fork-lifts, large trucks and the entire staff of employees from the studio-workshop and Art Center. We set up the entire exhibition in a week. [Check out photos and info](#)

One week before the project had its opening launch the terror attack on the French satire magazine "Charlie Hebdo" in Paris took place. I had my worries when we launched the project, which is about religious fundamentalism. And the local police, supported by the civil police, guarded the exhibition - just in case. It turned out to be a formidable launch with 700 visitors and many good experiences and speeches. Here is a rather fun [Time Laps](#) showing the work in setting up the huge sculpture, overlaid with the opening speech by Bishop Henrik Stubbjaer.

See the English infomail January: [Giant Fundamentalism-sculpture exhibited](#)

February:

The Fundamentalism exhibition received a lot of attention, and the visitor numbers kept increasing. The dialogue concerning the monotheistic religions worked out just perfectly. Art Center "Silkeborg Bad" had, with director Iben From in charge, made a formidable work of communication, and the project succeeded in capturing both young and old, art interested and others that where just interested.

In mid February terror struck Denmark. I wasn't surprised, but still I had hoped that we would not experience this. I participated in the debate and send out a press release about bullying, war, dialogue and reconciliation. In connection with the memorials I was invited



by the political youth organizations to give the memorial speech with the city mayors of both Odense and Fredericia. This resulted in a rather heated discussion and the Danish politician from "Venstre" Lars Christian Lilleholt (now climate minister) who believed that I belittled the actions of terror, because I spoke about reconciliation, friendship and stigmatization.

I send a letter to all members of the Danish Parliament informing that I was willing to provide my art- and dialogue project to initiate a sort of healing process in Denmark, and to prevent new terror. I received many kind mails, but neither Art Institutions nor politicians were willing to follow up and get a project started, and since I couldn't carry a national healing process by myself, nothing further was done about it. That is except the politician Bendt Bendtsen (Conservative EU parliamentarian), who suggested that we exhibited the sculpture in front of the EU Parliament, and I have been working on getting the sculpture exhibited there ever since.

See infomail from February: [Religious Fundamentalism-art is a crowd-puller in Denmark](#)

March:

At **Art Center Silkeborg Bad** however the dialogue continued and the audience continued to come to the exhibition. During the exhibition there were several well visited and exciting dialogue meetings discussing fundamentalism, the monotheistic religions, the good and the evil in the holy books, art, terror and much more.

The Art Center invited a long list of the important European art museums for a conference and a special presentation of the project "the Children of Abraham". See [Invitation to exclusive presentation of exhibition](#)

See March/ April infomail: [About the dialogue project The Children of Abraham & the sculpture 'Fundamentalism'](#)

April:

In mid April the Fundamentalism exhibition was at an end. It was a little sad to put the sculpture back in the trucks. It was I formidable exhibition which doubled the Art Center's regular visitation numbers. Usually the visitation numbers decrease during an exhibition, but Silkeborg Bad experienced the opposite in this case - the visitation numbers kept increasing. In the last period of the exhibition the numbers increased to several hundred visitors per day. It is my understanding that there is a huge need for the learning and understanding and to talk about fundamentalism and religions influence on our world.

13.499 visited the exhibition, amongst them 50 school classes. A lot of press covered the exhibition. The visitors wrote 1520 commentaries about the exhibition on post-it notes – see [all the comments here!](#) A big thanks to Iben Frim, who arranged the dialogue process and made this exhibition possible. It is good that we have a museum director like her in the world. We could use a lot more like those J

April was also the month were we arranged two big debate meetings with 6 Danish members of parliament at Gallery Galschiot – one about terror with Hans Joergen Bonnichsen, Holger K. (SF), Anette Wilhelmsen (SF), Tine Brahmson (S)- The other was about tax havens with politicians Carl Valentin (SF), Camilla Hersom (RV), and Merete Riisager (LA) and the NGO Mellemløkeligt Samvirke.

Three exhibitions were launched in Denmark:

In Oelgod I and 60 other sculptors from all over the world populated the town of Oelgod with 170 sculptures, including amongst others my crucified teenager, which created a bit of a stir in the town. The sculptor Henrik Vilhelm Voldmester was behind the exhibition see [the catalogue](#)

Frederikshavn's Art Museum made a separate exhibition with my sculptures, which we name "the Scream, the Shame and the Women". This turned out to be a very interesting exhibition. I was a little surprised that I had made so many "Scream"-sculptures. Alongside the exhibition, the museum gathered funds for my 2.5 meters large masks in copper, which is now displayed as a landmark outside the museum. It looks pretty good.



Frygt og fornuft i terrorens tidsalder

Debatmøde i Galleri Galschiot
Blanevangvej 22, 5270 Odense N
Torsdag den 30. april kl. 17 – 19
mellem SF's forsvarsordfører, tidl. udenrigsminister Holger K. Nielsen og kommentator og tidl. PIIT-chef Hans Joergen Bonnichsen. Ordstyrer er undervisningsordfører for SF, tidl. socialminister Anette Vilhelmsen
Arrangerer SF FYN

Gimsinghovd presented the art exhibition "Homelessness – a feeling of being lost" where my homeless sculptures in bronze and my refugee sculptures had a central space. A lovely exhibition which ended with the museum purchasing one of my homeless sculptures. It is now a part of their permanent collection, and thus one of the homeless sculptures is no longer homeless.

May:

The famous cake company "Kelsens cookies" contacted me in 2014 asking for permission to use my Hans Christian Andersen sculpture on their cookie jars – a sculpture which is a part of a decoration I've made for the H.C. Andersen Hotel in Odense. Most artist would probably have seen this as a mocking and an unforgivable belittling of the art piece. I however were really pleased to have made a sculpture important enough to make to the cookie jars alongside the Tivoligarde and the Little Mermaid. I gave the permission and the cookies went on the market in May.

Another H.C. Andersen chapter were ended by distribution of 175.000DKK to young artists. The money was the remainder from the funding to finance my "Fortællerbrønd". The sculpture was originally meant as a memorial sculpture in connection with the 200th anniversary of the birth of H.C. Andersen. But the project failed many years ago, and I drowned my large H.C. Andersen sculpture in the harbor of Odense with a great celebration. The money was distributed in my workshop and I am pleased it came to the benefit of other artists.

Juni:

June 4th is the anniversary day of the massacre in the Tiananmen Place in Beijing. Since 1997 where I placed a memorial sculpture "The Pillar of Shame" in Hong Kong, I have sent out around 100.000 mails around the world with an invitation to download a collection of documentation about the massacre. I have gathered it on my servers and give it to any Chinese people to make them know about the event. This contains a several thousand page collection of documents in both Chinese and English about the massacre. These documents are collected by a democracy movement in Hong Kong. They are on my servers in Denmark, to keep them save from Chinese censorship. The invitation is named: [Give the Chinese students their history back!](#)

The summer is getting closer and so is my controversial exhibition in and by the EU parliament. After a very successful "[Children of Abraham](#)"-exhibition, the first of its kind with the full Fundamentalism-sculpture, I look forward towards a possible "freedom of speech-crisis" in the EU parliament.

28 EU parliamentarians have come together to present our art and dialogue project "The Children of Abraham" this October. This is usually not a big deal. But due to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen the exhibition is now discussed in the very highest levels in the bureau. Artist Jens Galschiot is not sure if this attention is to be considered an honor, a scandal or a catastrophe. MEP Bendt Bendtsen who initiated the application of the exhibition cannot imagine that a peaceful exhibition could be prohibited, just because it shows the dark and bright sides of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. If it is actually prohibited it will trigger a new standard for artistic freedom of expression in Europe.

Meanwhile other art happenings are being prepared. Galschiot and his employees have started the modeling of a [full size polar bear](#) which is to be spiked on a 20 meter long, 5 meter tall graph showing human CO2 emission. The sculpture is called UnBearable and it will be presented at the crucial climate summit COP21 in Paris this November/December. As it is rather costly to make a sculpture of this size, we plan to finance it through Crowdfunding. If it becomes a success we hope to be able to crowdfund even more of our art in this way.

550 + 1 is another sculpture we are eager to present. The 60 (!) meter long sculpture depicts a year in a prostitutes working life. We are working full time making the small copper-torso sculptures that are to represent the 550 men. The sculpture is presented at the political summit "Peoples Summit" in Bornholm, Denmark in June.

30 of my refugee sculptures were exhibited in Germany in the town Husum, where they



focused on the problematic concerning refugees.

Back in Denmark in connection with the sand sculpture festival there were an exhibition of my sculptures in Blokhus and Viborg had an exhibition of my homeless sculptures around the city.

30 af mine flygtninge skulpturer var udstillet Tyskland i Husum, hvor de satte fokus på flygtninge problematikken. I forbindelse med sandskulptur festivalen var der en udstilling af min skulpturer i Blokhus og Viborg havde en udstilling af mine hjemløse skulpturer rundt omkring i byen

See infomail from May/June: [EU top discusses Galschiøts Fundamentalism-sculpture + 2 new art-happenings.](#)

July:

I went on a much needed holiday in the southern France with my wife Colette, who originates from the Narbonne area, where we own an old farmworker house, which we have used as a sanctuary for the past 30 years. We stayed a whole month, and this gave me time to “recharge”.

Gallery Galschiot was open during the summer holidays and had many visitors. The refugee ship M/S Anton had my 80 refugee sculptures on tour in Germany and were for the first time exposed to German neo-Nazi demonstrates. An unnerving development.

We also spend July introducing our thoughts about Crowdfunding to our Info list.

See Infomail July: [Can Art Crowdfunding support controversial art?](#)

August:

I started August by preparing my fundraising for the next big sculpture project: “Unbearable” in Paris. I wanted to see if I could use Crowdfunding as a means to raise funds for the transportation of both the sculpture and the activist to Paris.

Galschiot Refugee Ship, with its load of 70 copper refugees is more relevant than ever. The ship has gradually visited a great many ports in the Nordic countries, putting focus on the increasing number of desperate refugees moving towards Europe, in hope of a life without war and poverty. I plan to place a refugee sculpture for permanent installation in each of the ports the ship has visited, to remind people of the less fortunate and our responsibility as human beings.

See Infomail from August: [A Bronze Climate Refugee in every harbor](#)

September:

We spend a lot of time the last three months on preparing our Crowdfunding, and we were very excited to see how it went, when we started on 2th September. Our goal was to raise 10.000 Dollars for the transportation of the sculpture and the activists to Paris, and Crowdfunding was very new to us.

We got an overwhelming start. People in great numbers visited our Crowdfunding site and even better: they actually bought the support sculptures, and in just 5 days we had raised the 10.000 Dollars, and during in the following 2 months we reached 15.000 Dollars.

I think this was pretty. So thanks to all supporters. Still it is not easy to raise money by Crowdfunding. The problem is that it is many and relatively small amounts of money, and it takes a lot of management. But I am hopeful and this will definitely not be the last time I use Crowdfunding for one of my projects.

In the midst of the joy over the Crowdfunding we received some alarming messages from the EU parliament concerning the exhibition of the “Fundamentalism” sculpture in Bruxelles. Troubles had risen, and we did not know if the sculpture would be exhibited in weeks 42 and 43.

Also I had to order 28 new screens for the sculptures from China, which is specially made to be looked at in sunlight. These screens are necessary if the sculpture is to be exhibited outdoors. The dilemma is that the screens costs 225.000 DKK, and they keep decreasing in price, which makes it important to buy them as late as possible. In the end I



had to believe that the EU parliament wouldn't try and stop the exhibition and I ordered (and bought) the screens.

See Infomail September: [Art, Climate and Crowdfunding – and an impaled polar bear.](#)

Presse release: [Climate Enthusiasts Collect 10,000 Euro To Impale Polar Bear](#)

October:

It turned out to be a bad decision to trust in the EU. They wouldn't grant me permission to exhibit the "Fundamentalism" sculpture. They meant it would create a disturbance, and that they would not be able to protect the sculpture. We are awaiting a summary of the meeting to get a precise explanation as to why they rejected it. *Der Spiegel* wrote an article on the subject, and I decided to leave the matter be until after New Year, since I had to put all my concentration on the Unbearable exhibition and the activities during COP21 in Paris.

We worked with the WWF in the making of the Unbearable for COP21 in Paris, and they found a spot for the Unbearable sculpture in "Cité Universitaire" in the center of Paris. We flew to a meeting in Paris where we inspected the spot and prepared for the exhibition. It was some very successful meetings and we found a perfect spot to place the sculpture. WWF were really nice to work with.

See October Infomail: [Unbearable exhibited in the heart of Paris.](#)

November:

On November 14th Paris was again struck by a terrible terrorist attack. All were in chock and the attacks logically put restrictions on the civil society activities during COP21. France declared state of emergency and this had consequences for the arrangements connected to COP21.

It was understandable that France forbade the two mass demonstrations on 29th November and on 12th December, but in return they allowed the NGO's climate festival in the Montreuil area to pass, and I was able to exhibit my sculpture "Freedom to Pollute" (the statue of liberty) which was assigned an important role.

The cancellation of the demonstrations in Paris meant that we had to change a lot of our planned activities. We were lucky to borrow 10 polar bear costumes from WWF. With these we made a small polar bear army, which received a lot of attention in the streets of Paris. It is not every day you see 10 polar bears going sightseeing in Paris, and the state of emergency mentioned nothing about no gatherings of polar bears. J

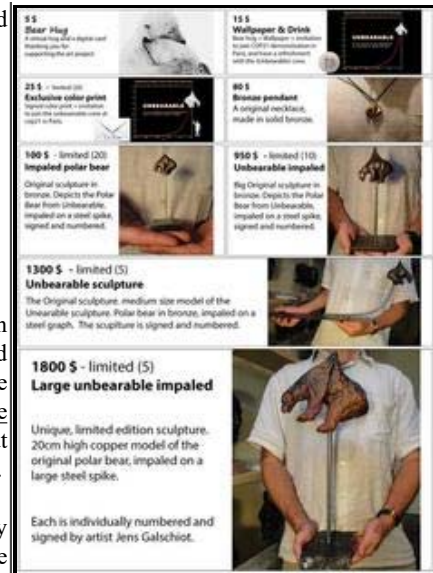
With the cancellation of the demonstration on 29th November in Paris it instead became a possibility for us to participate in the demonstrations in Copenhagen, where we brought the Unbearable and the polar bear army, and it got a sort of pre-premiere before Paris. Returning from Copenhagen we started packing for Paris, and the next morning the Unbearable and the refugee sculptures were shipped to Paris by truck. We drove in our own car with the Statue of Liberty installed on a boat trailer.

See Infomail November: [Invitation to opening of exhibitions; 'Unbearable' \(Galschiøt\) & 'Mountains' \(UNESCO\), Dec. 3rd, Paris.](#)

December:

As soon as we arrived in Paris, we began the preparations for the exhibition of the Unbearable at Cité Universitaire. As we had to work within the French Bureaucracy this was not as easy said as done. Everything had to be signed, planned and permitted. Fortunately my competent administrator Lasse Markus was well prepared. Documentarist Niller Madsen made a small film about the erection of the sculpture [putting up Unbearable](#) .

Now the workers had to pull their weight. Kurt Hansen, my production leader in Denmark, relentlessly controlled the work. After 10 hours of hard work for all three of us, the sculpture was ready for the inspection by the French authorities. They were very impressed by the elegant construction and gave their approval.



During the setup we talked with a lot of people, amongst others we talked to an Arctic research team, who, after seeing my project, invited me to give a speech about climate art and communication at their conference at the Sorbonne University, which I did a few days later. They needed inspiration and inputs for how they could communicate their research results. It was a surprisingly exiting meeting with a lot of good discussions and questions.

The following day we had a really good launch of the Unbearable sculpture. There was given speeches by CEO Gitte Seeberg from danish WWF, made interviews and champagne was served. Many participants – and even Japanese TV had arrived. All in all a nice, and productive day and evening.

In the weekend we drove put to the NGO festival in the Montreuil area. The French NGO's had made sure that the Statue of Liberty (Freedom to Pollute) was given a good spot in the center of the area, and we set it up with 15 refugee sculptures. It became a cool art installation, and with a minor polar bear army consisting of some French activist and us the happening was also rather cheerful. All in all the festival was a party with lots of good music, a procession, and theater. (See Niller Madsens small film from Montreuil)

We went out to the official meeting (COP21) to see the exhibition, the part which was publicly accessible, to test if we could bring the entire polar bear army. It was a good idea to test this: After three hours and four police detainments, we finally managed to get in to the area to see the exhibition – thanks to our press cards. (See Nillers small movie about polar bear issues at COP21)

At the end of the week all the others from the workshop arrived, at this point we were 17 people in Paris. We went through with our plan to use the polar bears to attract attention, and managed to get in contact with the press, the citizens of Paris and many others both through dialogue and by handing out our COP21 flyers.

See Infomail December: [Galschiot occupies Paris with sculptures and happenings](#)

See [photos](#) of our activities in Paris and COP21

15 min movie about our trip to Paris: [Danish Polar bears tour against global warming!](#)

January 2016:

Already on 4th January my two coworkers and I and a huge truck went to Paris to collect the Unbearable sculpture. We packed the huge sculpture in the truck, and went back to Denmark.

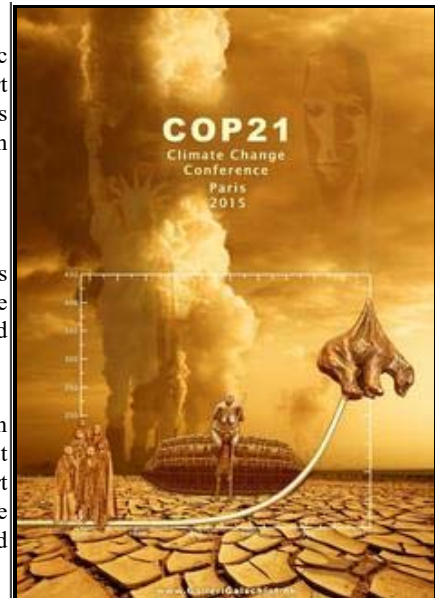
At the moment we are checking to (very) expensive Chinese monitor screens, and when they are installed in the Fundamentalism-sculpture, we are ready to exhibit the three sculptures "Children of Abraham", "550+1", and "Unbearable" at different placed throughout 2016.

During a big part of 2016 I will work on a sculpture installation for Denmark's second largest city "Aarhus". The sculpture is to be erected in the new modern harbor area, which is to be a central part of the city. The sculpture is showing the old workers environment on the harbor. It is going to be a very exciting assignment, which will take most of mine and the workshops time until the summer of 2017. It will then be launched in connection to Aarhus being announced "European City of Culture 2017".

So there is no risk of us falling asleep in this new year :-)

About Jens Galschiot:

General information about Galschiot can be found at:



[See Wikipedia:](#)

[Portrait of the sculptors CV \(PDF\)](#)

[To Gallery Galschiot](#)

[To Galschot webside](#)

Galschiot is a sculptor who works with international art installations. Amongst other things he is working on a gigantic project about the religious tensions in the world.

He has named this art and dialog project 'The Children of Abraham'. The focal point of the project is the 3.5 meter tall and 70 square meter sculpture called F.U.N.D.A.M.E.N.T.A.L.I.S.M. It is made of these letters made in 8,000 copper books symbolizing the Torah, the Bible and the Quran. 24 big monitors constantly display the 'brightest' and the 'darkest' quotations form Judaism, Christianity and Islam. [See See concept](#) [click for the art project](#) [English](#) - [German](#) - [Danish](#)



WELCOME TO GALLERI GALSCHIOT

The entire area is approximately 10.000 m2 and it is open for audience all working days between 9am and 5pm. It is open at sundays between 12am and 4pm. - Closed during the saturday and other holidays. You can book a guided tour. Free admission.

Gallery Galschiot is the sculptor Jens Galschiot's 2500 m2 studio and museum. The place is one of Denmark's most spectacular and biggest private art workshops. The place is full of activities, and besides the artist's workshop, there is also a bronze foundry, gallery shop, art schools, wicker workshop, TV-studios, Sculpture Park and a 400 m2 art gallery.

If you visit Jens Galschiot at his great atelier and workshop, with dedicated people, you will get a feeling of witnessing something great, and as time goes, the life's work will start to form and be seen in the greater perspective, you will understand that this art goes further than the borders of Denmark.

Jens Galschiot is one of a kind on the international and Danish art scene, and his artistic activities have attracted much attention all around the world. His intense commitment, energy and artistic talent has something to say, and his sculptures and art happenings touches everybody who sees them. The entire artistic work is mainly about having something to say and having the heart in the right place - to make the world's sufferings and taboos visible and make the viewer think and make up his own opinion about the matter.

This is art that is not subject to the bourgeois norms. It dares to move against the stream, and that is what great art is about. The strength of the work is that it does not end up in a rigid protest, but offers genuine indignation paired with emotions, aesthetics, sensuality, energy, and humor.

- Recommendation from a visitor at [Gallery Galschiot](#).





This mail has been sent from the sculptor Jens Galschiøt's workshop.

Contact to the workshop:

Galleri Galschiøt
Banevænget 22
5270 Odense N

Tlf : (+45) 6618 4058
Fax:(+45) 6618 4158
E-mail: aidoh@aidoh.dk

websides:

[To Gallery Galschiot](#)
[To Galschot webside](#)
[to "The Children of Abraham"projekt](#)

Overview over Galschiøt sculptures

Portrait of a sculptor Jens Galschiøt (PDF)

[Forward this email](#)

Subscription and unsubscription of informations from Jens Galschiøt

Unsubscribe from this infolist: [Unsubscribe](#)

Update your name, e-mail etc. on this list: [Change Profile](#)

Subscribe this infolist: [Subscribe to Galschiøts infoliste](#)

Powered by YMLP.com