

"AND NOW HE LOWERS THE GOOSE OF HONOUR BETWEEN TWAIN TOMCAT!" - OLE LINDQUIST 1943-2005

© Lars Rasmussen 2005



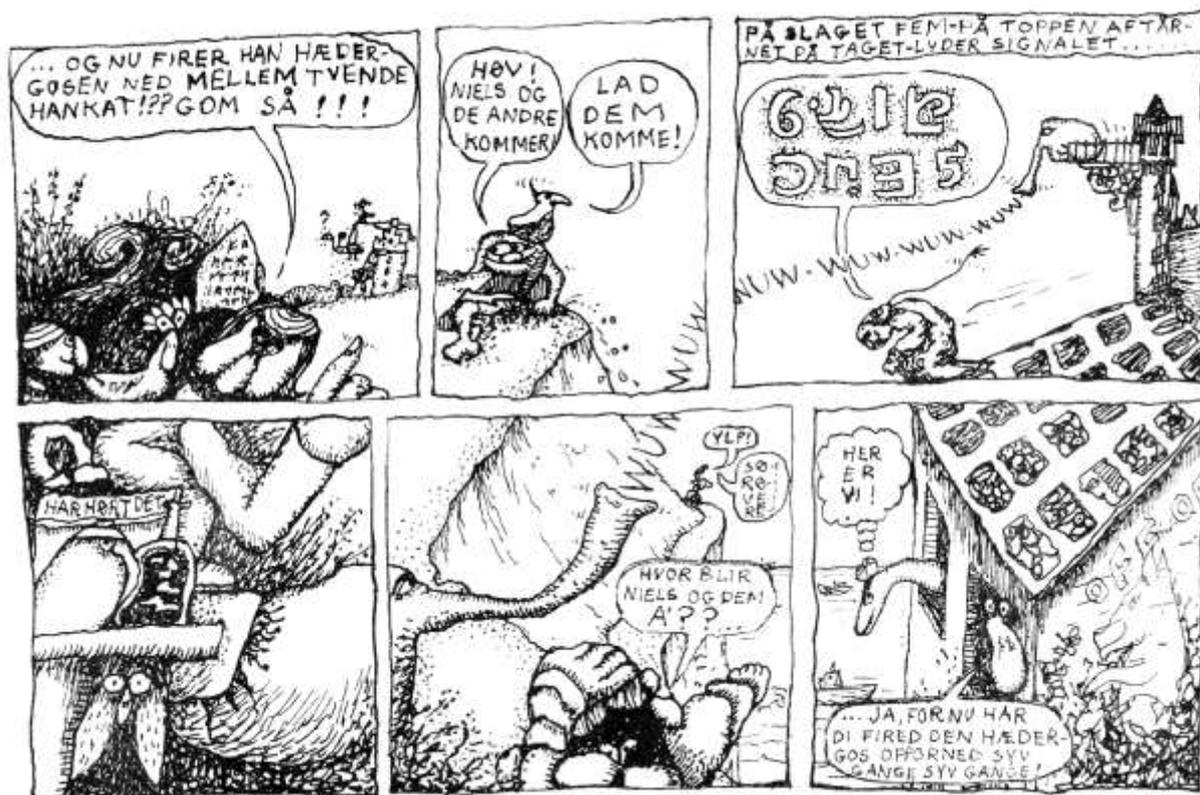
Ole Lindquist in his home in Esbønderup, September 2004. Photo: Lars Rasmussen

Ole Lindquist is undoubtedly the strangest and most original talent ever to emerge in the world of Danish cartoonists. His entire production is limited to four small booklets; three were published around 1970 on Sigvaldi's Forlag, the last one was published by me in 2004, as an insert in *Booktraders Julehæfte* (*Booktrader's Christmas Magazine*). Two of these contain comic strips, the other two are illustrated poems. A couple of poems by Ole were included in the anthology *Vi bor i Danmark* (*We Live in Denmark*), published by Thaning og Appel in 1970, and a few of his drawings appeared in *Superlove* and other underground magazines around the same time. This sums up his creative output.

The two comic books, *I visdommens hænder* [*In the Hands of Wisdom*] and *Mæ bjæller på sjælen* [*With Bells on the Soul*] are works of genius and remain unparalleled, even in the international cartoon world.

Ole was an anarchist who took the comic strip back to its original form where everything was possible and neither censorship or any idea of correctness existed. He never repeated himself and each of his strips will take you by surprise. They do not necessarily form stories leading up to a funny point; each strip can contain several points that may occur anywhere in the strip, even in the very opening, or it may contain no

points at all, but still remain hilariously funny. There are no main characters, and most characters will only appear once or twice in a strip. When they do appear more than once, they may often have changed both size, shape and features. Transformation was a main current in Ole's work.



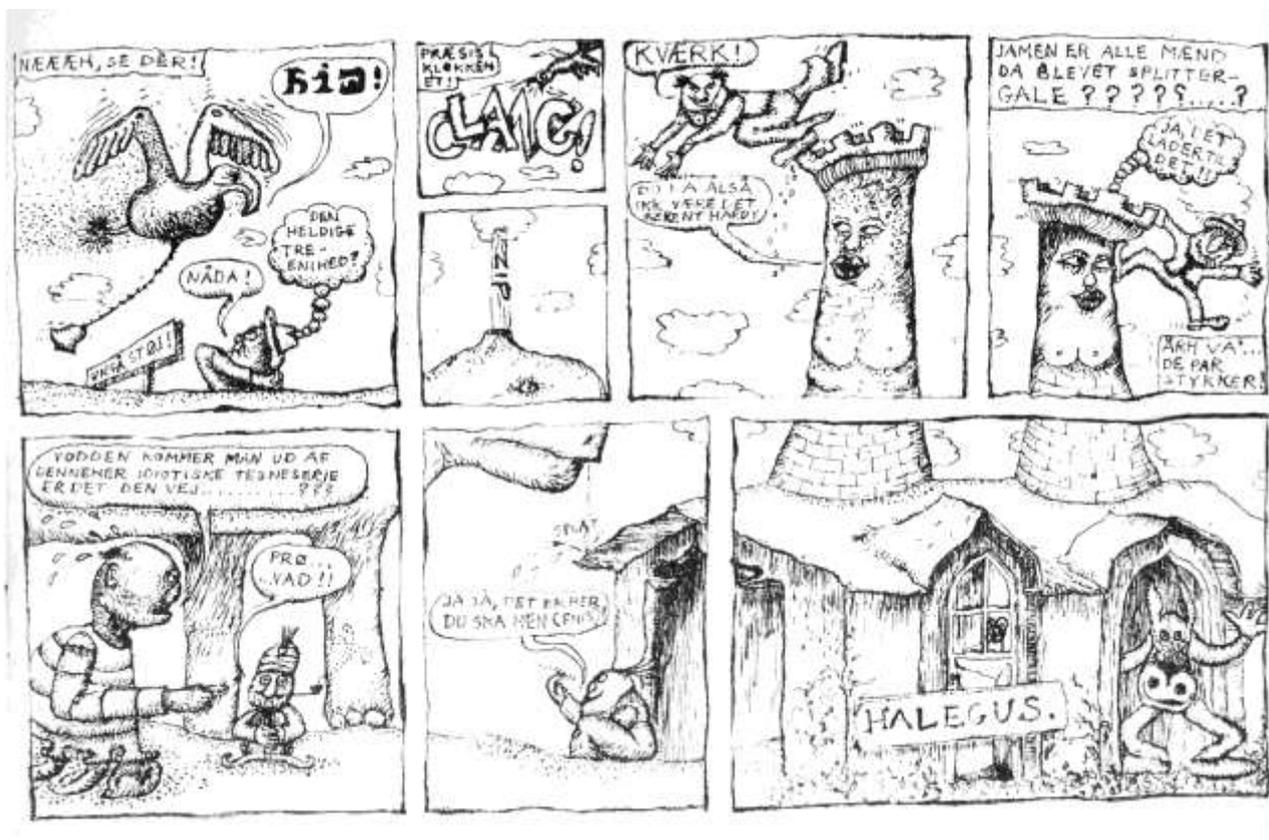
From *Mæ bjæller på sjælen*

Human beings or at least humanlike figures do appear, as well as birds and animals, but a great number of characters are beyond recognition and defies classification. Everything is alive, even landscapes and buildings - among which some fantastic castles. A line from one frame may continue into another and form part of something completely different. What is part of the landscape in one frame thus becomes part of a living being or a building in the next frame, not only creating alarming perspective illusions but sometimes even turning the spectator's whole concept of dimensionality upside down.

Reading Ole's comic strips is like looking into a parallel univers. His style of drawing is unique, and so is his sense of humour. "I laughed so hard I couldn't sleep a whole night", saxophonist Michael Nielsen once told me. Like Alice in Wonderland, the reader is left completely on his own. Ole has no intention of taking you by the hand or giving any explications. "Now he lowers the goose of honour between twain tomcat", a person says. Who this "goose of honour" is, and why it is to be lowered "between twain tomcat" remain mysteries. This is sheer madness, but Ole managed, like few, in his incomprehensibility to combine the deepest darkness with a strange air of innocence and succeeded in creating a disturbing mysticism that leaves no one untouched.

Ole drew upon his own inner sources but, as a poet, was clearly inspired by Lewis Carroll (a well-worn copy of Carroll's works held a prominent place on his bookshelf). The *Croack*, Ole's wild attack on the English

language, owes at least something to Carroll's *Jabberwocky*. The crazy spelling which occurs throughout his opus may derive from the fact that Ole's father was Swedish - some sentences are written in mock Swedish - but should basically be seen as a part of his lifelong clash with authorities of any kind. One should praise oneself lucky for not having been his school teacher.



From *Mæ bjæller på sjælen*

In order to boost his imagination, Ole would use any available drug. "I was introduced to pot before I started drinking," he wrote to me in a letter. "Later I learned that a combination (within certain limits) can be very good. It is all about poisoning yourself as slowly as possible and in the funniest possible way."

Ole grew up in the northern part of Sealand and, as a young man, during his days as a draft resister in the camp for conscientious objectors in nearby Grib Skov, became a source of inspiration for a generation of artistically gifted people such as filmmakers Christian Braad Thomsen and Jannik Hastrup, painter Frank Stelling, and musicians Pierre Dørge and Kim Menzer. Ole himself was at that time a gifted drummer. In the late sixties, he moved to Copenhagen and got in contact with Otto Sigvaldi, who became his publisher. One cannot praise Otto Sigvaldi highly enough for the enthusiasm and creativity he showed as a publisher during that period.

I met Ole several times on the pedestrian street, Strøget, where he was selling his own books out of a basket. I had immense pleasure from reading *I visdommens hænder*, *Mæ bjæller på sjælen* and *The Croack*, and I remember once asking him if he had more publications in the pipe. He replied that he had indeed finished a book in full colour, but that "the tall fellow" - Sigvaldi - couldn't afford to pay for its publication. Little did anyone of us know that, a third of a century later, it would be my lot to publish the booklet, *Ollemor brummer (Granny Hums)*.

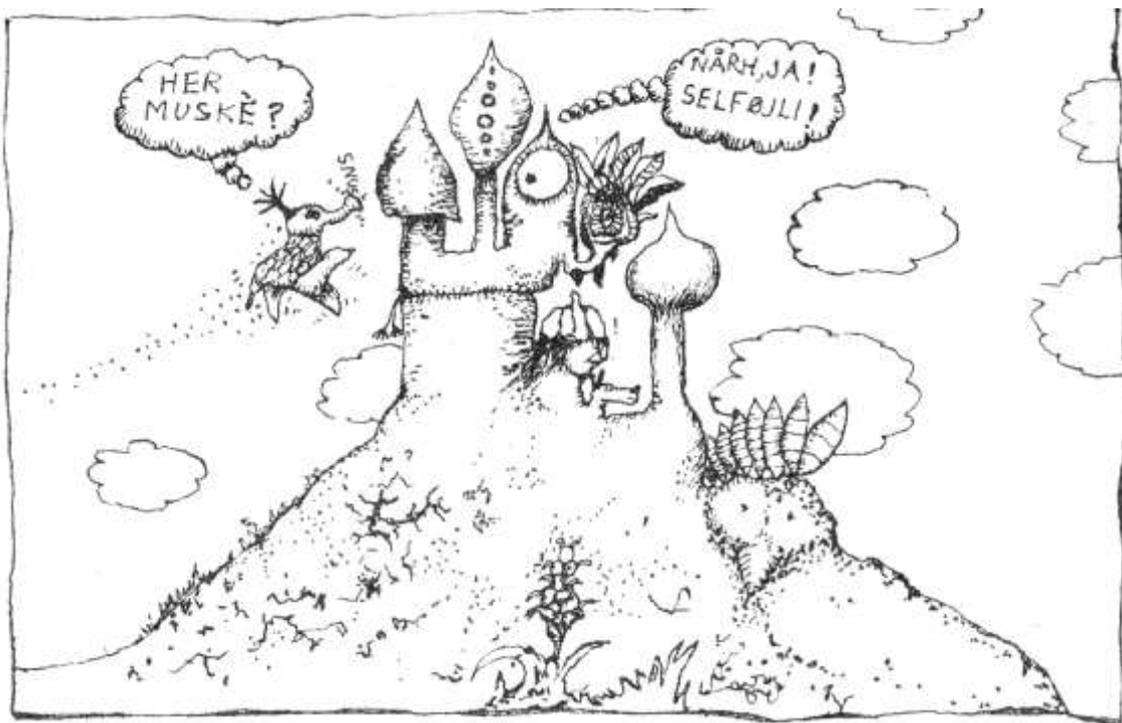
The heyday of the hippies came to an end, and Ole was one of many who disappeared from the scene.

I, however, didn't forget him. In late 2004, after several unsuccessful attempts to locate him, I finally got hold of his address and wrote him a letter saying I was eager to meet him and would be interested in publishing any unissued material from his hand. Ole was surprised by this unexpected attention and sent me a letter ending with the words: "Sammen vil vi lægge åndelige landminer foran normalitetens og konformismens gråmelerede fremmarch!" ("Together we will place spiritual land mines before the mixed-grey progression of normality and conformism!"). I could of course only agree to that.

A visit in Ole's cosy terrace house in Esbønderup ended with me agreeing to publish the booklet, *Ollemor brummer*, which reveals Ole as an excellent colourist, and to include a couple of drawings in the year's Christmas magazine. Ole talked about doing a new comic book in his old style, and we talked about the possibility of having him illustrate a book by our mutual friend, Georg Oldskov.

It didn't go as planned. On the 8th of March 2005, Ole left this world and moved into one of his magic castles.

Everybody who has met him will look forward to one day meeting him there.



"Here, purhaps?" - "Oh,yes! Surtenly!" - From *Mæ bjæller på sjælen*

The present text is a translation of an obituary that appeared in *Booktraders Julehæfte* (Booktrader's Christmas Magazine) in 2005. ©Lars Rasmussen 2005